

Victims of double fatal accident identified

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STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

MIDDLETOWN — Police have identified the two victims of the fatal car accident in Middletown as Roberto Pereira, 18, of Bath Avenue, Long Branch, and Corinne Quintana, 22, of Throckmorton Avenue, Eatontown.

They were killed this morning when their car veered into oncoming traffic on Newman Springs Road and struck a dump truck, police and the township mayor said.

The car was westbound on Newman Springs Road near Hilltop Circle when the driver lost control and the vehicle rotated and entered an oncoming lane of traffic, authorities said. The car collided with a dump truck that had been traveling in the left eastbound lane, Lt. Craig Weber said. The car and truck then traveled into the right eastbound lane, where the passenger side of the truck collided with a school bus, Weber said.

Police said the accident happened about 8:25 a.m.

Weber said police are unsure whether the car was traveling faster than the posted speed limit of 40 miles per hour. But, he said, it had just stopped raining and the road was wet and police believe the car was traveling too fast for the surface condition of the road.

The occupants of the dump truck -- Dariusz Jablonski, 40, of Lawrence, Mercer County, and his passenger, Edeliro Nazario, 24, of Trenton -- were taken to Riverview Medical Center in Red Bank, where they were treated and released, police said.

The school bus driver, Bette Aldridge, 61, of Dover Township was also taken to that hospital, then released.

Deputy Police Chief Joseph Braun said the Monmouth County Serious Collision Response Team was at the scene. State Police also were at the scene to inspect the truck and school bus.

Police said no children were in the school bus at the time of the accident.

None of the victims' names were released, and police have not "conclusively identified" one of the occupants of the car.

Neighbor Liz Hohenstein, who lives on Newman Springs Road, said she was getting her children ready for school when the accident happened.

"The first thing I saw was the school bus. I thought it was my child's bus," she said.

Charles Hohenstein, Liz Hohenstein's husband, ran from the house when he heard the crash. He said the two victims were in a black Acura.

"It went 'boom, boom.' There was a second in between, he said, "sounded like an M-80 going off."

Hohenstein said the truck was carrying a 20-foot-high coil of orange electrical wire.

Don Weir, general manager of Laidlaw Educational Services in Wall, said the bus had dropped off students at Christian Brothers Academy, also in Lincroft, about "five or 10 minutes prior to the accident."

Hohenstein said he heard the bus driver tell police she had just dropped off students at a private religious school.

Anyone who witnessed the accident is asked to call Middletown police at (732) 615-2000.