

St. Augustine Couple Killed Returning From Honeymoon

POSTED: Friday, March 26, 2004

<http://www.news4jax.com/news/2951841/detail.html>

TITUSVILLE, Fla. -- A chain-reaction accident on Interstate 95 on Thursday left a honeymoon couple dead in a fiery crash and snarled traffic near the Kennedy Space Center.



The wreck, north of state Road 407, closed the interstate in both directions for more than two hours. Vehicles were detoured into Titusville and Port St. John.

According to authorities, a minor accident around 10 a.m. slowed traffic in the northbound lanes. In the slowdown, a semitrailer slammed into the back of an Acura and forced the car into another truck. That touched off a fire, killing the car's driver and passenger, said Florida Highway Patrol Trooper Kim Miller.

The couple was identified as David Mathis, 23, and Mary Mathis, 23, of St. Augustine. David Mathis is the son of Circuit Judge Robert Mathis of St. Augustine.

The couple was married last Saturday, and were returning home from a honeymoon cruise out of Port Canaveral.

"It was the beginning of a new phase of their life," family friend and retired Judge Richard Watson said. "I had not been to a wedding that I thought the people were more in love than this one." Watson said David Mathis was preparing to go to law school and planning to following his father's career path.

The driver of the Winn-Dixie tractor-trailer that struck the Acura suffered non-life-threatening injuries and was taken to an area hospital, Miller said. Two other people were treated for minor injuries at the scene.

A representative for Winn-Dixie told Channel 4 the company has conveyed the deepest sympathy to the victims' families, and is "deeply, deeply sorry for the tragedy."

The truck driver, Roosevelt Jones, 56, from Jacksonville, offered blood for testing, but Miller said alcohol isn't believed to have been a factor.

Winn-Dixie said it is conducting its own internal investigation into the crash, and is working closely with the highway patrol.

A funeral for the couple is scheduled for 11 a.m. Tuesday at St. Augustine Memorial Church, 32 Seville St.

Video



[Church Where Couple Was Wed Prepares For Their Funeral](#)

Copyright 2005 by News4Jax.com. The Associated Press contributed to this report. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.