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TRAFFIC

ACCIDENT

DEATH

MAN KILLED IN WRECK DURING CHASE

Article Text:

A high-speed police chase early Friday in Arlington and Fairfax counties ended when the man being pursued crashed into a light pole on Interstate 66, causing his vehicle to immediately burst into flames.

Police said Edward H. Cranick, 31, of Falls Church, died at the scene of the 1:46 a.m. crash near U.S. 50.

According to a Fairfax County police report, the chase began in Arlington County when an officer there noticed Cranick acting suspiciously and ran the tag of the 2000 Mazda 626 he was driving. Dispatchers informed the officer that the driver of that vehicle had been reported missing and was believed to be armed and suicidal.

Cranick refused to pull over and wound up driving at a high rate of speed, police reported.

Fairfax County police and state troopers joined in the chase before it ended.

Early yesterday morning in Mecklenburg County, 38-year-old James D. O'Keefe, of South Hill, was killed when the 1991 Pontiac Sunbird he was driving ran off state Route 903 and hit a tree. The victim, who was not wearing a seat belt, died at the scene of the 1:57 a.m. crash near Interstate 85, police reported.

And in Albemarle County yesterday, 25-year-old Eric C. Perry, of Afton, was killed when he lost control of a 1998 Honda Civic and hit a tree on the passenger's side. The 1:57 a.m. crash occurred on Plank Road near Edge Valley Road, police said. Perry was not wearing a seat belt.

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