

CHP identifies crash victims

Contributed by Elizabeth Larson
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MIDDLETOWN – Officials have identified the two victims of a fatal Sunday morning crash.

California Highway Patrol Officer Josh Dye said Monday that Kelly Mankinen, 38, and Brian Quinlan, 52, both of Clearlake, died in the collision, which took place Sunday at about 5:40 a.m. on Highway 29, south of St. Helena Lane.

Mankinen was driving a 1999 Volkswagen Cabrio northbound on Highway 29 at an unknown speed, according to the CHP. Traveling southbound was Quinlan in a 2002 Honda Accord.

Mankinen's vehicle drifted to the left across the double-yellow lines and into the southbound traffic lane, causing the two vehicles to hit head-on, Dye said.

Both Mankinen and Quinlan were pronounced dead at the scene, according to the CHP. Both had been wearing their safety belts.

Just what caused the collision isn't known at this point, said Dye. “It could have really been anything at this point.”

Because it was early morning, Dye said Mankinen could have been tired and fell asleep, losing control of the vehicle and causing it to cross into the other lane.

Dye said the investigation is continuing.

Sunday's crash is the 13th fatal auto collision to take place on the county's roads this year, said Dye. In those 13 collisions, 16 people have died.

E-mail Elizabeth Larson at elarson@lakeconews.com.

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