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‘This is Unacceptable’

Father of family out on horseback ride hit by an allegedly drunken driver says crash should be a wake up call

By Natalie Storey

Lone Butte – As his daughter lay on the pavement with a leg broken in multiple places, Scott Scrimshaw, his own arm mangled, tried to keep 12-year-old Emily from seeing her injuries.

“Seeing my daughter laying there- I just said, ‘Don’t look at it. Look at me. Look at me in the eyes,’” he said. “I was trying to get a paramedic to put a sheet over it so she wouldn’t see it.”

Two members of the Scrimshaw family were riding horses and three were walking Wednesday evening near Bonanza Creek Ranch. The Sheriff’s Department said a suspected drunken driver plowed into the horses, injuring three family members and killing both animals. Besides Emily’s broken leg and Scott Scrimshaw’s broken shoulder and wrist, 9-year-old Nathan suffered a head injury. Both horses, Scottie and Ladybug, died from the crash.

The driver of the Ford F-150 who allegedly ran into the family, Thomas K. Tomlinson, 32, of Santa Fe is scheduled to be arraigned on a charge of inflicting great bodily harm by vehicle today in Magistrate Court. His blood-alcohol readings were 0.14 and 0.15 – just under twice the legal limit to drive – Santa Fe County Sheriff Greg Solano said. Deputies found beer cans in his truck, the sheriff said.

Emily, who is part of a dance troupe at the National Dance Institute, suffered multiple fractures in her lower leg and will need skin graft surgery. She is at University Hospital in Albuquerque. Her family said Thursday that the girl was concerned about her leg and hopes she will be able to dance again.

According to Scott Scrimshaw, the truck slammed into the two horses his children, Emily and 14-year-old Dylan, were riding. The rest of the family, Scott, his wife, Anzelle, and Nathan were walking alongside the horses. Anzelle saw a truck coming toward them and she began waving at the driver to give them space, she said. They were walking as far to the side of the road as they could, but trees and an embankment kept them from walking completely off the road, the family said.

The truck hit the horse Scottie first, knocking 14-year-old Dylan to the ground, the family said. The impact from the truck threw the weight of the horse onto Scott. Ladybug was struck second, throwing Emily into the bed of the truck, the family said. The Scrimshaw’s said Tomlinson failed to stop and kept driving at least 200 yards, they said.

At first, they could not find Emily, but then they heard her screams coming from the back of the truck. “Had he not had my daughter in the back of his truck, I’m not sure he would have stopped,” Scott Scrimshaw said.

The Scrimshaw’s believe they met Tomlinson about six months ago, when his dog got loose and the family found it on their property, which is just behind Lone Butte General Store. Scott Scrimshaw said they called the number on the dog’s tag, and Tomlinson came to pick up the animal. They had also called Tomlinson before to work with their horses because they heard he was available for that kind of work, but they hadn’t hired him.

Scott Scrimshaw does not hold a grudge against Tomlinson, he said, but crashes like the one that injured his family and him should wake up the community to New Mexico’s drunk driving problem.

“People have to understand that you can have all the laws you want, but it’s community that says this is unacceptable,” Scott Scrimshaw said. “As a father, I’m

stunned that this happened, but, as a Christian, I realize that this is a man who will need mercy when he realizes what has happened.”

Solano said Tomlinson told deputies his windshield was dirty, and he had reached down to get something to clean it. When he looked back up, he was already upon the horses. Solano said Tomlinson told deputies he lived on Bonanza Creek Road.

Dylan said he will miss the horses, which were a birthday present to Emily last year. The family took walks with the horses about once a week, he said. “The horses were like part of our family to us,” Dylan said.