Merced Police Department

PRESS RELEASE

September 6, 2013

Sgt. Jay Struble
Patrol Division
Office: (209) 385-4739

For Immediate Release

Date and Time: 09-06-13 2:59 PM

Location: E. Highway 140 and Tower Road

Incident: Injury Traffic Collision

Case Number: 13-43699

On 09-06-13 at approximately 2:59 P.M. the Merced Police Department responded to East Highway 140 and Tower Road for a three car injury accident.

When officers arrived they located Althea Stevens (71, Mariposa) pinned in her 1996 Ford Probe. Stevens was eastbound on Highway 140 when she was struck virtually head on by Jose Contreras (29, Merced) who was driving a 2007 Ford Mustang westbound 140. The Mustang then spun out of control and struck a 2013 Toyota Avalon, driven by Lei Cheng (40, San Jose) going eastbound on Highway 140.

Merced City Fire had to extract Stevens from her vehicle since she was pinned in. Stevens was flown to a Modesto Trauma Center for her injuries. Contreras had minor injuries and was treated at the scene. There were no other injuries reported.

Contreras had a juvenile passenger in his vehicle and Cheng had one adult passenger and one juvenile passenger in her vehicle.

Investigators found evidence at the scene indicating that Contreras drove his Mustang off the right shoulder, for unknown reasons, over corrected and struck Stevens vehicle. The Mustang then spun 180 degrees before striking Cheng's vehicle. The Mustang and Probe came to rest on the gravel shoulder while the Avalon was stopped on Highway 140.

Alcohol and drugs do not appear to be a factor.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is requested to call Sergeant Struble (209)385-4739 or the Merced Police Department Tipster Line at (209) 385-4725.

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