

## Pre-holiday crashes claim two in area

A young Tucson man and an elderly Sonoita resident are dead as a result of pre-holiday traffic accidents.

In the first accident, Steven Spontak, 22, of 4741 S. Goldenrod Drive, was killed when he fell out of a moving car his brother was driving late Thursday night, police said.

Spontak died after his brother and a friend picked him up off Pantano Road near Escalante Road, but apparently could not drive him to the hospital because their car was stuck in mud in the median, police said.

"It's the wierdest one I've ever handled," said police traffic investigator Mayo Wilson.

Wilson said the only visible injuries to Spontak were cuts and bruises on his head and signs of skidding on his back. An autopsy will determine the cause of death.

He said Spontak was in the back seat when he lost his cigarette on the floor and said he wanted his brother, Randolph, to pull over.

Since they were only two blocks from home, Randolph refused and Steven kicked out the rear window, Wilson said. Then he opened the rear door, apparently to turn on the car's dome light, and fell out as the car was traveling about 35 miles an hour, Wilson said.

Randolph Spontak made a U-turn and drove onto the median near his brother, where the car sank in mud up to its hubcaps. It took about 30 minutes for him to get help, Wilson said.

In the second accident, the Department of Public Safety said a 76-year-old Sonoita man was killed when he fell asleep at the wheel and his car rolled into a ravine off Arizona 83.

Joseph T. Thomas was driving south from Tucson about 5:15 p.m. Thursday when the accident occurred about four miles north of the Pima County line. Investigators said Thomas' station wagon ran off the right side of the roadway, struck a guardrail and flipped onto its roof before coming to rest in a ravine.

Thomas died in his car of massive head injuries, they said, adding that they believe a seatbelt could have saved his life.

## Stephen Spontak car accident

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