

I-40 rollover kills passenger, injures driver

Written by By Beth Blakeman Associate Editor
Friday, 22 November 2019 07:13



Well-known Gallup locals leave community grief-stricken

It was a single vehicle rollover in the early morning hours of Nov. 10 that took the life of Corey Ritchie Joe, who was two days away from celebrating his birthday.

The crash seriously injured the driver, 32-year-old *Gallup Independent* reporter Maggie Adams.

Adams was traveling westbound on Interstate 40 in her 2006 Mazda when the accident occurred near milepost 102, not far from Acoma Pueblo, at about 2:17 am.

Joe, 25, played Benny Bengal, the mascot for Gallup High for four years. He was a graduate of

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New Mexico State University, where he majored in social work. He also counseled at Linda Middle school, worked with homeless shelters, and liked to leave all he met, happier than he found them.

His mother, Victoria, and older brother, Ben, spoke of him as the epitome of a Mother Theresa quote: "Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness; kindness in your face; kindness in your eyes; kindness in your smile."

New Mexico State Police said Joe, of Las Cruces, passed away at the scene of the accident.

He leaves behind his beloved canine companion, Charlie.

The funeral service will be held at Gallup Methodist Church Nov. 16, starting at 10 am, with a reception to follow at Gallup Catholic Gymnasium. He will be laid to rest at his family plot at Lone Pine Cemetery in Mexican Springs.

On Nov. 20, Pizza 9 is holding a fundraiser at its restaurant in Gallup to raise money for Joe's funeral expenses.

Meanwhile, Adams, was taken to the University of New Mexico Hospital in Albuquerque, where she is currently scheduled for surgery Nov. 15.

She is conscious, but can only move her right arm and is listed in critical condition.

Adams, who has worked as a reporter for the *Gallup Independent* newspaper since 2018, is passionate about veterans' issues and was looking forward to covering Veterans Day festivities in Gallup Nov. 11.

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She has, however, made her mark in her year-and-a-half at the paper, covering city government as her beat. She was missed at Gallup City Council this past week and members composed a letter to wish her well.

Adams has been known to describe herself as an introvert, but those who know her say she has an outgoing personality and everyone she comes in contact with regularly has been asking about her.

Friends have set up gofundme pages in both Maggie Adams and Corey Joe's names to help with expenses for those wishing to make a donation.

The crash remains under investigation by New Mexico State Police.

By Beth Blakeman
Associate Editor