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## Wolf Point Man Charged In Double-Fatal Crash

*Written by The Herald-News*  
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A Roosevelt County employee involved in a double-fatal auto accident near Frazer in August has been arrested and charged in federal court with two counts of involuntary manslaughter.

Ronald G. Keiser III, 37, of Wolf Point, is accused with driving under the influence of alcohol and causing the deaths last fall of Blaine Henry Mack, 56, and Todd Michael Burckhard, 36, both of Minot, N.D.

Keiser pleaded not guilty to the two charges at his arraignment Wednesday, March 14, in federal court in Great Falls.

Each involuntary manslaughter charge has a maximum penalty of eight years in prison, a \$250,000 fine and three years supervised release.

Keiser, the Roosevelt County maintenance supervisor, was being detained last week, although the Roosevelt County commissioners asked U.S. Magistrate Judge Keith Strong to consider releasing Keiser pending his trial.

"Roosevelt County is aware that Ron Keiser has charges pending in federal court," the commissioners wrote Strong on March 12, shortly after Keiser was arrested.

"Ron has been a dedicated employee with Roosevelt County as maintenance supervisor since May 9, 2005. If Ron is released, pending trial, he is more than welcome and encouraged to return to work for the county," the commissioners wrote. "We look forward to Ron's return to work with Roosevelt County."

Keiser had a detention hearing Friday, March 16.

Strong released Keiser pending trial on several conditions, including restrictions that he not drive, consume alcohol or leave Roosevelt County and the Fort Peck Reservation.

Mack and Burckhard were killed in the Aug. 19 two-vehicle crash along U.S. Hwy. 2. They were pronounced dead at the scene and their bodies were extricated from the wreckage by the Wolf Point Volunteer Fire Department.

Keiser was taken to Trinity Hospital for treatment.

The other driver, Timothy P. Rennick, 33, of Glendive, was taken to Francis Mahon Deaconess Hospital in Glasgow and also survived the crash.

Valley County Sheriff/Coroner Glen Meier said the sideswipe collision occurred just beyond a hill just east of Frazer, about 16 miles west of Wolf Point.

The Montana Highway Patrol said the crash occurred at about 11:05 p.m. as Keiser was driving a Dodge pickup east on U.S. Hwy. 2.

The MHP said Keiser crossed into the westbound lane, causing Rennick to swerve his westbound Chevrolet Suburban into the eastbound lane to avoid a collision.

Police said Keiser then drove back into the proper lane and crashed his pickup into the Suburban's passenger side, killing Mack and Burckhard in the impact, who were seated in front and rear passenger seats of the Suburban that was a BNSF transport vehicle.

Keiser, an enrolled member of the Fort Peck Tribes, was initially charged in tribal court.

The crash was also investigated by the FBI.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jessica A. Betley is the prosecuting the case in federal court.

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