



“For Immediate Release”

Auburndale Police Department News Release

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Off duty Auburndale Police Sergeant and Code Compliance Officer Rescue a Driver and 2 Children from Submerged Vehicle

Off duty Auburndale Police Sergeant Mike Peterson and his wife, Code Compliance Officer Nikki Peterson were jogging around Lake Stella this morning at about 7:30 am when a vehicle ran off the road and into the lake.

Elizabeth Ardrey Zabel of 133 Old Nichols Circle in Auburndale was driving a 2003 Toyota Highlander southbound on Lake Stella Drive when she ran off the road into the lake. Ms. Zabel and her two children, 13 year old Justin and 7 year old Jake were in the vehicle. After hearing the vehicle run off the road and into the lake, Sergeant Peterson and Nikki ran to the crash scene and dove into the water as the vehicle was sinking. The left rear window had broken out during the crash and the occupants were climbing out of the window as the Peterson's got to the vehicle. They helped the occupants out of the vehicle and to shore.

Ms. Zabel and her oldest son were wearing seatbelts and her youngest was in a child car seat. They were able to remove their seatbelts to get out of the vehicle. The youngest child was able to un-buckle his car seat to get out of the vehicle.

Only minor injuries reported, they did not seek any medical attention. The cause of the crash is still under investigation although Ms. Zabel said she just 'blacked out'.

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