

Accused killer returned to Kansas

(KNZA)--The woman charged in connection with a head-on crash last November in northern Jackson County that killed three members of a Sabetha family, has been returned to Kansas.

In a news release issued Monday, Jackson County Sheriff Tim Morse said that 49-year-old Maria Perez-Marquez, of Omaha, Nebraska, has been extradited from Omaha and is now in custody in the Jackson County Jail.

During an extradition hearing Friday, Perez-Marquez waived extradition back to Kansas.

She was arrested in Omaha last week on a Jackson County District Court warrant for 3 counts of involuntary manslaughter, 2 counts of aggravated battery and one count of reckless driving.

The warrant was issued as a result of the accident investigation involving the death of three Sabetha residents last year.

The Kansas Highway Patrol reports Perez-Marquez was driving a southbound sport utility vehicle on U.S. 75 the evening of November 25 when she oattempted to pass another vehicle. She and a northbound mini-van driven by 42-year-old Carmen Ukele both swerved to the shoulder to avoid colliding, but instead struck head-on.

Ukele and two passengers in her vehicle, 11-year-old Marlee Ukele and 62-year-old Stephen Ukele, were killed in the wreck.

Another passenger, Lee Ukele, was injured but survived. Also injured were Perez-Marquez and a passenger in her vehicle, Rosalao Perez of St. Joseph.

The Ukele's were returning home from Hutchinson after watching the Sabetha High School football team capture the state 3A championship. Carmen and Lee Ukele's two sons, Tanner and Carson, were members of the team.

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