



Orlando couple on Mexico cruise dies in sand buggy accident

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An Orlando-area couple died in a sand buggy accident during a shore excursion off a cruise to Mexico over the weekend.

Jim Melillo, 43, and his girlfriend Susan Borges, 31, went on a cruise to Cozumel with forty friends from Central Florida over the weekend. They were riding in a dune buggy when it crashed into a guard rail Saturday afternoon. Their close friend, Seliena Crampton, was in the buggy in front of them and saw it all happen. She said Jim was thrown from the vehicle and Susan was pinned inside.

"We all immediately stopped and ran and spent the next 20 to 30 minutes, until the ambulance arrived rendering first aid, rendering CPR, rendering anything we could to save our friends," she said.

Melillo and Borges did not make it.

"They were surrounded by their friends and the love and truly died in the arms of the people who loved them and who were there with them," Crampton said.

"We extend our most sincere and heartfelt condolences to the family and friends," Royal Caribbean said in a statement. "Our care team is providing support and assistance to guests, family and friends. Our thoughts are with their family and friends, and we will continue to do our very best to assist them."

The victims were passengers aboard the Liberty of the Seas, which returned to Port Everglades on Monday.

Melillo and Borges were a couple for five years. They helped raise money for many Orlando charity events each year. Nicole Rego set up Jim and Susan on their first date, and she has watched them change lives together ever since. She shared memories of both of them.

"He has a love for life and a love for people. He would always put everyone else before him. He was definitely a jokester but he was serious when he need to be serious." Of Susan, Rego said, "She had a smile that would light up a room, and she always had that smile on her face. She was just a wonderful person and a very kind person."

Rego said so many family members and friends are stunned by the loss of a couple so full of life. "I don't know what we are going to do the first time we try to get together to be happy but they would want us to be happy."

Jim and Susan's friends are trying to raise money to have the couple cremated and their remains returned to Orlando for a joint ceremony to honor their lives. If you would like to help with that cause and learn more,

www.JimAndSusanFund.com

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