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# 1 killed, 23 hurt as horses bolt at parade in Bellevue

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A woman died and 23 people were injured Sunday after runaway horses trampled through the crowd at a Fourth of July parade in the eastern Iowa town of Bellevue.

The wagon driver lost control of the two horses when one horse rubbed the bridle off the other before they started on the parade route, Bellevue Fire Chief Chris Roling said.

The horses and wagon plowed through the spectators on the curb of U.S. Highway 52 for about seven blocks.

Janet Steines, 60, of Springbrook died at University of Iowa Hospitals in Iowa City, according to a death notice posted on the website of Hachmann Funeral Home in Bellevue.

She was riding in the wagon, which was driven by her husband, Mardell Steines, when the horses bolted, Roling said.

The others who were hurt ranged in age from 2 to 62, firefighters said.

Holly Specht of Peosta was in her hometown for the holiday weekend and was sitting in front of the Subway restaurant when the horses galloped past.

"There were two horses coming at us at full speed, right at the curb," Specht said. "People were grabbing kids. You looked up and it was just like a flash. Everybody was kind of in shock and panic."

She said a little girl windmilled toward her as the horses whipped past. The girl landed next to Specht on the sidewalk. She had some scrapes and her back hurt, but she seemed OK.

Aside from Steines, four people were critically injured. Five people were severely injured and 14 suffered minor injuries, firefighters said. Injuries included broken bones, collapsed lungs, cuts and bruises, firefighters said.

The parade is a decades-long tradition in Bellevue that has often included tractors, bands and horses.

"The mood is shock and disbelief," Bellevue Mayor Virgil Murray said. "We've had this parade forever. We've had horses in the parade forever."

Sandy DeFries, who was standing in her friends' yard along U.S. 52 when the horses went by, said: "It was like slow motion. People were trying to back off, but because the kids were on the curb for the candy, they were some of the victims. It was terrible."

Fifteen ambulances took the victims to hospitals in Dubuque and Maquoketa. Carol Dietzel, the house supervisor at Mercy Medical Center in Dubuque, said of the 10 patients brought there, nine were children. Two children in critical condition were transferred to University of Iowa Hospitals in Iowa City.

Paramedics treated victims in an art gallery near the parade route, said witness Sandie Crilly, 46, of Willow Springs, Ill. A triage area was set up near the Mississippi River where volunteers held up tarps to shield the paramedics and injured from the heat. Others brought the injured ice and water, she said.

"It was madness," Crilly said. "I mean, we were in a triage. The town really came together. It was a huge community effort."

Mardell and Janet Steines and at least one other person were in the wagon, Roling said. The wagon traveled 1,600 feet before the stampede ended near the corner of U.S. 52 and Iowa Highway 62.

"One of the people ahead of this horse unit heard the people hollering and screaming," Roling said. "He pulled his antique haybine out there to kind of slow them down. They ran into that, then they ran into a street sign and into the side of a van before they got them stopped."

Steven Clemen, who lives along the parade route and watched the horses gallop past, said it all happened so fast, it was difficult to get a good look.

"It was like a split second, and those horses were a half-block down the street," he said. "Very scared horses. Very scared people."

Crilly said she was collecting Tootsie Rolls from the street with her 8-year-old son, 12-year-old niece and 2-year-old granddaughter when the horses ran toward them about halfway through the parade.

Someone yelled to get out of the way, she said.

"I could see it was two horses," Crilly said. "I could see they were running at full speed and they were harnessed together and I knew we were going to most certainly get hit, and as soon as it happened, everybody was crying and screaming."

Crilly, who was visiting her parents in Bellevue, said someone pulled her granddaughter to safety, but her niece suffered a broken wrist and had two front teeth knocked out. Everyone else suffered bumps and bruises, she said.

Bellevue, a town of about 2,300, is on the Mississippi River about 25 miles south of Dubuque.

*This article includes reporting by the Associated Press.*