

STILLWATER — Marvin and Bonnie Stone were Oklahoma State University employees, passionate Cowboys sports fans and heavily involved in activities that supported the school. So when the Stones, both 65, left their home early Saturday to find a spot to watch the annual OSU homecoming parade, their neighbors, Ernie and Sallie Robinson, didn't give it a second thought. Ernie Robinson saw the couple on a nearly daily basis for the past 17 years, and knew his friend — not just as a Regents Professor emeritus in the Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering Department, but also as a helpful, generous man who loved to take on all types of projects at his home. Bonnie Stone, who worked in the Institutional Research and Information Management office, often rode her bicycle to work and regularly chatted with Sallie Robinson, an employee with the university's Microbiology and Molecular Genetics Department. The Stones spent nearly all their time together, which included going to the parade before the Robinsons woke up around 10 a.m. Saturday, Ernie Robinson said. He had seen both of them the day before and didn't see any reason that morning to be worried. "There was some aircraft that flew overhead so I came outside to see what was going on," he said. "And that's when I noticed their truck was gone ... they were evidently right there by the motorcycle when she came through the barricades." Just after 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Stillwater police said the driver of a 2014 Hyundai Elantra crashed through a barricade at Hall of Fame Avenue and Main Street, struck an unmanned police motorcycle and drove through a crowd of spectators before stopping outside a local entertainment store. The Stones and Nikita Nakal, also identified by police as Nikita Prabhakar, a 23-year-old graduate student from the University of Central Oklahoma, were reported to have died instantly. Nakal had been at the parade with friends. A 2-year-old boy identified as Nash Lucas was transported to the University of Oklahoma Medical Center, where he died from his injuries. Forty-six others were injured, including more than a dozen children, at least one of whom lives in the Tulsa area. Stillwater Police Capt. Kyle Gibbs issued a

news release Sunday identifying the people injured and killed, and he identified the driver of the Hyundai as 25-year-old Stillwater resident Adacia Avery Chambers. The Robinsons learned of their neighbors' deaths on Facebook Sunday morning, through an article from an Oklahoma City news outlet. "Total shock" I looked over at my wife and I wanted to confirm who it was ... when her mouth dropped open, I knew then," Ernie Robinson said. "Just total shock this morning when we saw the names." Brad Edwards, a next-door-neighbor, knew the Stones for three years and remembered Marvin Stone's assistance with making sure his vehicle's tires worked properly. His neighbor also offered his backyard as a space to temporarily house some Chihuahuas Edwards' parents were raising ahead of their move to Chandler, where the family has land, he said. "We were looking to try to get buffalo out there and he recommended not doing that," Edwards said. "He suggested we raise earthworms as a joke." "My son) said it was real somber," Edwards said of the mood after the crash. "When you see somebody every day for three years, you don't think of something like this happening, especially when it's so random like this." OSU President Burns Hargis described the Stones as dedicated employees in a Sunday afternoon news release and said Nicolette Strauch, Nash's mother, is an OSU chemical engineering sophomore from Weatherford who works for the Parking and Transit office. Gibbs said Strauch was treated for injuries related to the crash and released, but Hargis said she is still recovering. "We extend our heartfelt sympathies to the families and friends of these wonderful individuals," Hargis said. "We offer our condolences to the campus of the University of Central Oklahoma and to OSU's students from India on the loss of UCO student Nikita Prabhakar (Nakal). We also send our thoughts and prayers to all those who are recovering from this incomprehensible tragedy, including a number of OSU students and employees." Ron Elliott, an emeritus biosystems and agricultural engineering professor, was a colleague of Marvin Stone until Stone retired in 2006. He said the professor had a "truly international reputation" and a "wonderful connection" with his students,

pointing out that he has won multiple teaching awards and retired from the university with a host of research-related honors to his name. "He was a genuine expert in his field of agricultural electronics, and his students loved him," Elliott said. "He had a lot of stature in terms of his professional accomplishments." Elliott and Marvin Stone attended a breakfast on Wednesday, where retired faculty and staff from their department had their monthly meeting. He said he had a bad feeling yesterday after learning about the crash because of the number of people who had been hurt. "The first names I saw (Sunday) were Marvin and Bonnie Stone and I just was in total shock," he said of reading the Stillwater Police Department's victim list. "I had to read it multiple times. It can't be happening, but it was." The neighborhood where the Stones lived is quiet, and Ernie Robinson noted many of the homes are rented. The couple's truck wasn't in their driveway across the street from the Robinsons' home, and the only indicator the residence was occupied once was a floral arrangement neighbor Beverly Andrews placed on their front door handle. Andrews declined to be interviewed but said Marvin and Bonnie Stone were outstanding people to have known. The Robinsons and Edwards said they'll miss seeing the couple outside each morning. "He was a good neighbor," Ernie Robinson said. "You can't replace good neighbors sometimes." Ernie Robinson remembered Sunday morning that he needed to leave a note for the postal service, as he has taken over receiving the Stones' mail until family members arrive to handle funeral arrangements. "It's a tragedy. That's all there is to it," he said of the deaths. "But they went together. I'm sure they wanted it to be that way. They're going to be missed without a doubt." Nash Lucas An account will be set up on Monday at BancFirst, 122 N. Broadway St., in Weatherford, in Lucas' mother's name, Niki Strauch. Donations collected will go toward the family's expenses. "He's such a sweet and loving baby and didn't deserve this," said Lucas' cousin, Whitney Sullivan. Nikita Nakal Nikita Nakal of Mumbai, India, a masters of business

administration student at UCO, also was among those who died. "Our students come to Central with their unique goals, hopes and dreams, and Nikita was undoubtedly no different. While we mourn the potential unrealized, let us also honor her life by pulling closer and appreciating the strength of our Broncho family," UCO President Don Betz said in a statement. "It is incredibly difficult to face the death of a close friend or family member. I urge anyone who may need support to contact the Center for Counseling and Well-Being at 405-974-2215 or visit their office on the fourth floor of the Nigh University Center. "As plans are made to honor Nikita, we will share the information with the campus community." World Staff Writer Stacy Ryburn contributed to this story. Samantha Vicent 918-581-8321 samantha.vicent@tulsaworld.com