

**Coroner Report  
Santa Barbara County Sheriff**



4434 Calle Real  
Santa Barbara, CA 93110-1002  
Report Type  
CORONER

(805) 681-4100

**19-11443**

Supplement No  
ORIG

Reported Date  
09/02/2019

Officer  
BAISA, R

Administrative Information																							
Agency		Santa Barbara County Sheriff		Report No	19-11443		Supplement No	ORIG		Reported Date	09/02/2019	Reported Time	03:32	Status	Incident								
Report Type			Coroner's investigation			Location					PLATTS HARBOR SANTA CRUZ ISLAND												
City		Santa Barbara City		Rep Dist	101	Area	1	Beat	10	From Date	08/02/2019	From Time	03:32										
Officer				3542/BAISA, R				Assignment		CORONER BUREAU		Entered by	3542		Assignment	CORONER BUREAU							
RMS Transfer	Report Title		Coroner Report		Approving Officer			3768		Approval Date		02/21/2020											
Approval Time		14:09:42																					
Cause of death (COR only)			Smoke inhalation			Due to (COR only)			Boat fire			Manner of death (COR only)			Accidental			Date/Time of death pronounced			09-02-2019/0443		
Determined by (COR only)			Investigation			Dr. will sign			N			Hospitalization			N			Monuary			Mcdermott Crockett		
Removal Status			Family request			Date/Time NOK notified			09-05-2019/1400 hours			NOK notified by:			Detective Holman			NOK notified via			In person		
NOK relation to decedent																							
Person Summary																							
Inv#	Invl No	Type	Name			MNI	Race	Sex	DOB														
COR	1	I	KURTZ, ALEXANDRA			987637	W	F	[REDACTED]														
Summary Narrative																							
On 09-02-19, at approximately 0443 hours, 26-year-old, Alexandra Kurtz died from smoke inhalation when the vessel she was on, as a second deck hand, caught fire.																							

**Coroner Report  
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<b>Decedent - Coroner Investigation 1: KURTZ, ALEXANDRA</b>									
<b>Decedent - Coroner Investigation</b>				Invt No <b>1</b>	Type <b>Individual</b>				
Name <b>KURTZ, ALEXANDRA</b>				MNI <b>987637</b>	Race <b>White</b>	Sex <b>Female</b>	DOB [REDACTED]	Age <b>25</b>	Juvenile? <b>No</b>
Height <b>5'03"</b>	Weight <b>120#</b>	Hair Color <b>Black</b>	Eye Color <b>Hazel</b>						
Type <b>Home</b>	Address [REDACTED]			City [REDACTED]					
State [REDACTED]	ZIP Code [REDACTED]	Date [REDACTED]							
Type <b>Operator License</b>	ID No [REDACTED]			OLS [REDACTED]					
Relationship <b>Father</b>	Name [REDACTED]			Race [REDACTED]	Sex [REDACTED]		DOB [REDACTED]		
Address [REDACTED]				City [REDACTED]		State [REDACTED]	ZIP Code [REDACTED]		
Phone Type <b>Cell</b>	Phone No [REDACTED]								
Relationship <b>Mother</b>	Name [REDACTED]			Race [REDACTED]	Sex [REDACTED]		DOB [REDACTED]		
Address [REDACTED]				City [REDACTED]		State [REDACTED]	ZIP Code [REDACTED]		
Phone Type <b>Cell</b>	Phone No [REDACTED]								
<b>Medical</b>									
Citizenship <b>US</b>			Place of Birth <b>Illinois</b>	Occupation <b>DECK HAND</b>	Coroner Case No <b>19-11443</b>	NOK Notified? <b>Yes</b>			
Premise Sealed? <b>No</b>	Property? <b>No</b>	NOK Name [REDACTED]			Mortuary Name <b>MCDERMOTT CROCKETT</b>	On Call? <b>No</b>			
Family Request? <b>Yes</b>	Other? <b>No</b>	Injury Place <b>BOAT</b>			Injury Date <b>09/02/2019</b>	Injured At Work? <b>Yes</b>			
Injury Premise <b>PLATTS HARBOR SANTA CRUZ ISLAND SANTA BARBARA, CA 95060</b>									
How Injured <b>DECEDENT DIED FROM SMOKE INHALATION FROM BOAT FIRE.</b>									

**Narrative**

**Continuations:**

Alexandra Kurtz is the decedent. She was a second deck hand on the "Conception."

**Narrative:**

On 09-02-19, at approximately 0516 hours, the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office was notified by the Ventura Fire Department of a vessel on fire in the Channel Islands off the coast of Santa Barbara County. The Coast Guard responded along with Ventura Fire Department and Santa Barbara County Fire Department. Upon arrival at the scene the vessel was found to be fully engulfed in fire. The call had originally come into the Coast Guard at 0332 hours, on 09-02-19.

Reports to the Coast Guard said there were possibly be 34 subjects trapped below the water line, in the vessel. The vessel was identified as the "Conception" and it was in jurisdiction of the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office near Santa Cruz Island, not in Ventura Sheriff's Department jurisdiction. The location was later found to be 300 yards offshore of Platts Harbor on Santa Cruz Island. See Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department case number 19-11415 for full details.

Detective Morris was notified of the incident by Sergeant Valencia. Sergeant Morris requested the response of Detective Henslin, Detective Biedinger, and Detective Carlson to the Coroner's Bureau to assist in the incident at approximately 0525 hours.

Detective Baisa was also called at that time and asked to respond to Ventura Harbor to act as the liaison for the Sheriff's Office.

**Coroner Report  
Santa Barbara County Sheriff**

**19-11443**

Supplement No  
**ORIG**

**Narrative**

It was later found the vessel, the "Conception" contained 33 passengers and six crew members. Five of the crew members were rescued, but none of the 33 passengers had been found.

During the course of the morning four deceased passengers had been located by Coast Guard personnel. The Coast Guard transported the decedents to the Santa Barbara Harbor.

At 1150 hours, on 09-02-19, Sgt. Morris, Detective Henslin and Detective Biedinger responded to the Santa Barbara Harbor to retrieve decedents documented as 1 through 4.

At 1220 hours, on 09-02-19, the decedents were brought to Santa Barbara Harbor. Detective Henslin and Detective Biedinger transported two decedent's each to the Santa Barbara Coroner's Bureau, where physical examinations were later conducted on them.

At that time digital photographs were taken of the decedents along with samples collected for DNA analysis identification and for an expanded toxicology panel. All of the decedents retrieved on 09-02-19, were found to have significant thermal burns to their bodies with limbs missing due to the intensity of the fire. None of the decedents could be identified by physical characteristics.

At 2030 hours, on 09-02-19, Sgt Morris, Det. Biedinger, Det. Henslin, Det. Carlson, Det. Baisa, Deputy Bruening and staff from the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office responded to the Santa Barbara Harbor for retrieval of 16 additional bodies recovered from the Conception, documented as decedents 5 through 20.

The decedents were then transported to Coroner's Bureau for examinations, drawing of fluids for toxicology and DNA analysis, and collection of personal property.

At approximately 2330 hours, on 09-02-19, all the examinations of the decedents were completed and the decedents were placed in a portable morgue provided by the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office.

On 09-03-19, at 1930 hours, Sgt Morris, Det. Biedinger, Det. Henslin, Det. Carlson, Det. Baisa, Deputy Bruening and staff from the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office responded to the Santa Barbara Harbor for retrieval of 13 more remains recovered from the Conception, documented as decedents 21 through 33.

The decedents were then all transported to the Santa Barbara Coroner's Bureau, where physical examinations, digital photographs, and fluid samples for DNA analysis and toxicology where conducted on each recovered decedent.

All of the decedents recovered on 09-03-19 were placed on portable coroner racks and secured in the Santa Barbara Coroner's Bureau morgue.

On 09-09-19, at approximately 1400 hours, Pathologist Dr. Manny Montez, Detective Henslin, Detective Baisa, and Sgt. Morris, along with representatives from the FBI and ATF performed tracheal examinations of the remaining decedents at the Coroner's Bureau.

On 09-10-19, at approximately 1830 hours, Detective Baisa met with Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department Sgt. Nelson, at the National Park Service, 1901 Spinnaker Drive in Ventura, Ca. Sgt. Nelson provided Detective Baisa with a bag of suspected human flesh, a backpack and an air vent from the Conception that had suspected human hair embedded in it. The suspected human tissue and other items were found in the bow of the Conception.

Items later numbered 35 and 36 were transported to the Santa Barbara Coroner's Bureau where digital photographs were taken of the suspected human tissue and suspected human hair, which was removed from the vessel air vent.

The suspected human tissue and hair were later flown to the Sacramento County Coroner's Office in Sacramento, Ca., under the care of Sgt. Morris and Deputy Bruening for DNA analysis.

On approximately 1330 hours, on 09-11-19, Detective Henslin and Detective Biedinger responded to Santa Barbara Harbor, after Divers from the Los Angeles Police Department located the remains of a decedent, near the location of the Conception fire. The Los Angeles Police Department collected the remains, with a section of hair, documented as numbers 37 and 38.

**Coroner Report  
Santa Barbara County Sheriff**

**19-11443**

Supplement No  
ORIG

**Narrative**

The decedent and the remains were then transported to the Santa Barbara Coroner's Bureau, where a physical examination, digital photographs, and fluid samples for DNA analysis and toxicology were conducted on the recovered decedent.

The sample of collected hair was packaged and sent along the DNA samples of decedent number 37 for DNA analysis in Sacramento California, under the care of Detective Henslin, who flew to the Sacramento Airport and provided the samples to Sgt. Morris who was still in Sacramento.

The samples were then taken to the Sacramento County Coroner's Office, for DNA analysis.

**Physical evidence:**

A series of digital photographs were taken of the decedent at the Coroner's Bureau by Forensic Personnel from the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department. The photo card was later downloaded for storage at the Coroner's Bureau.

**Identification of decedent:**

The decedent was positively identified by a DNA comparison, with samples submitted by the decedent's biological father, Robert Kurtz. The DNA comparison was conducted via the Sacramento County Coroner's Office.

Also, additional identification for the decedent was confirmed via a latent print search performed by the Federal Bureau of Investigations, conducted on 09-06-19.

**Physical evidence:**

A series of digital photographs were taken of the decedent at the Coroner's Bureau by Forensic Personnel from the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department. The photo card was later downloaded for storage at the Coroner's Bureau.

**Examination of decedent:**

On 9-3-19, at approximately 2052 hours, an examination of the decedent was conducted at the Coroner's Bureau.

The decedent was received on her right side within a black colored body bag. The decedent was bent at the elbows, waist and knees. A tag with case #19-11443 was attached to the body bag.

The decedent was a well-developed female adult. She had medium length brown/black in color hair. The decedent was not identifiable due to extensive and severe postmortem thermal injuries. She was clothed in a grey tank top, blue yoga style pants and sandals. Severe 4th degree thermal burns were present throughout.

The head displayed extensive 4th degree burns with deep charring through the skin.

The chest and abdomen displayed extensive 3rd and 4th degree burns. The upper left portion of the chest was red from 3rd degree burns. The remainder of the chest and abdomen was charred with 4th degree burns. A tattoo of "daylight" was visible on the lower right abdomen.

The legs and feet displayed extensive 4th degree burns with charring through the skin. The bottoms of the feet displayed charring through the skin.

The arms and hands displayed extensive 4th degree burns that charred through the skin.

The rear of the body was examined. The posterior aspects of the body displayed extensive 3rd and 4th degree burns. The backs of the legs were heavily charred from thermal burns. There were no indications of a struggle or defensive wounds to the decedent, specifically the hands, arms, and chest.

Samples of bodily fluids were obtained from the decedent to include 3 tubes of subclavian blood (including one for DNA) and 1 tube of vitreous humor.

1 tube of subclavian blood was submitted to Alere Forensics for toxicology analysis. The remaining fluid sample was refrigerated at the Coroner's Bureau pending a need for toxicology analysis.

**Post mortem examination:**

Due to the severity of the decedent's thermal injuries and obvious traumatic injuries, along with the circumstances regarding the incident, regarding the vessel she was on becoming ignited, a post mortem examination was

Report Officer

3542/BAISA,R

Printed At

02/27/2020 08:32

Page 4 of 5

**Coroner Report  
Santa Barbara County Sheriff**

**19-11443**

Supplement No  
ORIG

**Narrative**

deferred.

**Forensic toxicology:**

On 9-15-19, a toxicology report was received from Alere Forensics regarding the decedent's carbon monoxide saturation. The report indicated the following:

**Carbon monoxide >75 %**

On 9-15-19, a toxicology report was received from Alere Forensics regarding the decedent's cyanide saturation. The report indicated the following:

**Cyanide Not detected**

On 9-28-19, a toxicology report was received from Alere Forensics regarding a toxicology screen. The report indicated the following:

**Meclizine 20 ng/mL**  
**Volatiles (EtOH, IPA, MeOH, Acetone) Not detected**

The reports were reviewed with Dr. Manny Montez and the carbon monoxide level was found to be contributive to the decedent's death.

**Consultations with Forensic Pathologist:**

I reviewed the circumstance surrounding this death with Dr. Manny Montez. Dr. Montez opined that the decedent died as a result of smoke inhalation due to boat fire.

**In review of the circumstances of this death:**

On 09-02-19, at approximately 0443 hours, 26-year-old, Alexandra Kurtz died from traumatic injuries sustained when the vessel she was on, as a second deck hand, caught fire.

**Cause of Death:**

It was determined that the decedent (KURTZ) died as a result of the following cause;

**SMOKE INHALATION (MINS)**

Due to:

**BOAT FIRE (MINS)**

**Manner of death:**

The manner of death will be certified by the Office of the Coroner as **ACCIDENTAL**.

**Final Disposition:**

The decedent was released to representatives of McDermott-Crockett & Associates Mortuary of Santa Barbara, Ca. No property or medications were collected.

**Case closed**

# Santa Barbara County Sheriff



4434 Calle Real  
 Santa Barbara, CA 93110-1002  
 Report Type  
**FORENSICS**

(805) 681-4100

**19-11443**

Supplement No  
 0001

Reported Date  
 09/10/2019

Officer  
**AVALOS, T**

Administrative Information										
Agency		Report No		Supplement No		Reported Date		Reported Time		Status
Santa Barbara County Sheriff		19-11443		0001		09/10/2019		10:50		Incident
Report Type			Location							
Forensics BOC			FRYS HARBOR							
City	Rep Dist	Area	Beat	From Date		From Time				
Santa Barbara City	101	1	10	08/02/2019		03:32				
Officer				Assignment		Entered by		Assignment		RMS Transfer
4688/AVALOS, T				FORENSICS		4688		FORENSICS		Pending
Approving Officer		Approval Date		Approval Time						
2901		09/23/2019		10:30:09						

## Summary Narrative

This report contains information in reference to the Coroners request for Forensics assistance in photo documenting the bodies recovered from the Conception Boat Fire Incident.

## Narrative

E-FILE ATTACHMENTS:  
 None

### NARRATIVE:

On Tuesday, 09/03/19 Forensics Supervisor Nancy Fabela advised we would continue assisting the Coroner's Office with photo documentation and fingerprint identification on the remaining bodies that were to arrive later today.

At 2015 hours, we were advised that the bodies had arrived at the Coroner's Office. Forensic Supervisor Fabela and I responded, and CSI Tech's Amezola and Sandoval followed.

### PHOTO DOCUMENTATION (Decedent #25, female):

On Tuesday, 09/03/19, at 2052 hours, I began overall photo documentation on a female decedent. Her body was in a body bag with a Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Coroner tag #25 hanging from the zipper. Her body was badly burned. She was wearing a grey colored tank top, multi colored bra, dark colored yoga pants with horizontal white stripes, and a pair of size 8 Chaco sandals. Overall photo documentation of her unclothed body was also taken. Fingerprints were not obtainable due to the nature of the badly burned body.

A "Daylight" tattoo was discovered on the right side of her pelvis and a tattoo of a tribal bird was discovered on her right upper arm.

Photo documentation was completed at 2103 hours.

All digital photos were later uploaded into the South County Forensics digital imaging computer under case 19-11443 for future reference.

-END OF REPORT-



ALERE FORENSICS AT REDWOOD TOXICOLOGY LABORATORY

3650 Westwind Blvd. Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
Phone 866-584-0887 FAX 707-703-1319

Agency # 19-11443

FORENSIC LABORATORY REPORT

AF # 2019-003254

To: Brice Bruening  
Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner

Sample Collection Date: September 3, 2019

Decedent: Alexandra Kurtz

The following evidence was submitted to the Laboratory by a representative of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner on 9/5/2019 via FedEx:

Submission 01: One tape sealed and initialed screw top metal canister containing a second screw top metal canister containing one tube of blood with paperwork marked in part "#25 Doe Jane". The name "Kurtz, Alexandra" was supplied on 9-9-19.

Item # 01-A: One gray top tube with approximately 10 mL of peripheral blood collected at 2200 hours.

Service Request:

FP760B - Carboxyhemoglobin/Carbon Monoxide - Blood

**Confirmation/Screen Results**

Analyte Name	Concentration	Method	Sample Type
Carbon Monoxide	> 75 %	AVOXimeter 4000	Blood



2019-003254-0001

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lauren J. Marinetti", with a small flourish at the end.

Laureen J. Marinetti, Ph.D., F-ABFT  
Laboratory Director

Date of Report: September 15, 2019

*Alere Forensics at Redwood Toxicology is accredited by The American Board of Forensic Toxicology (ABFT) and is recognized by the State of California as a Title 17 Forensic Alcohol Laboratory.*

All samples, including the sample packaging, will be retained at the laboratory for one year after the date of report. After one year, the samples and packaging will be destroyed unless the client requests that the samples be returned or an alternate retention policy has been set up with the laboratory. The laboratory cannot ship controlled substances.

**Comments**

None



ALERE FORENSICS AT REDWOOD TOXICOLOGY LABORATORY

3650 Westwind Blvd. Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
Phone 866-584-0887 FAX 707-703-1319

Agency # 19-11443

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Item # 01-A: One gray top tube with approximately 10 mL of peripheral blood collected at 2200 hours.

Service Request:

F1048B - Misc. Chemicals (Qualitative) - Blood

**Confirmation/Screen Results**

Analyte Name	Concentration	Method	Sample Type
Cyanide	Not Detected	Color Screen	Blood



2019-003254-0003

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lauren J. Marinetti".

Lauren J. Marinetti, Ph.D., F-ABFT  
Laboratory Director

Date of Report: September 15, 2019

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**Comments**

The limit of detection for the cyanide color screen is 0.5 mcg/mL.



ALERE FORENSICS AT REDWOOD TOXICOLOGY LABORATORY

3650 Westwind Blvd. Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
Phone 866-584-0887 FAX 707-703-1319

Agency # 19-11443

FORENSIC LABORATORY REPORT

AF # 2019-003254

To: Brice Bruening  
Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner

Sample Collection Date: September 3, 2019

Decedent: Alexandra Kurtz

The following evidence was submitted to the Laboratory by a representative of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner on 9/5/2019 via FedEx:

Submission 01: One tape sealed and initialed screw top metal canister containing a second screw top metal canister containing one tube of blood with paperwork marked in part "#25 Doe Jane". The name "Kurtz, Alexandra" was supplied on 9-9-19.

Item # 01-A: One gray top tube with approximately 10 mL of peripheral blood collected at 2200 hours.

Service Request:

FP222B - Expanded Pnl (Confirm) - Blood



2019-003254-0002

**Drug Screen Results - ELISA**

<u>Drug Screen Classification</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Limit of Detection</u>
Amphetamine	Not Detected	20.0 ng/mL
Barbiturates	Not Detected	1.0 mcg/mL
Benzodiazepines	Not Detected	25.0 ng/mL
Buprenorphine	Not Detected	1.0 ng/mL
Carisoprodol	Not Detected	500.0 ng/mL
Cocaine Metabolite	Not Detected	50.0 ng/mL
Fentanyl	Not Detected	1.0 ng/mL
Marijuana Metabolite	Not Detected	10.0 ng/mL
Methadone	Not Detected	25.0 ng/mL
Methamphetamine	Not Detected	20.0 ng/mL
Opiates	Not Detected	10.0 ng/mL
Oxycodone \ Oxymorphone	Not Detected	5.0 ng/mL
PCP	Not Detected	5.0 ng/mL
Tramadol	Not Detected	50.0 ng/mL
Zolpidem	Not Detected	5.0 ng/mL

**Confirmation/Screen Results**

<u>Analyte Name</u>	<u>Concentration</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>Sample Type</u>
Meclizine	20 ng/mL	LC-MS-MS	Blood
Volatiles (EtOH, IPA, MeOH, Acetone)	Not Detected	GC-Headspace	Blood



2019-003254-0002

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lauren J. Marinetti".

Lauren J. Marinetti, Ph.D.,F-ABFT  
Laboratory Director

Date of Report: September 28, 2019

*Alere Forensics at Redwood Toxicology is accredited by The American Board of Forensic Toxicology (ABFT) and is recognized by the State of California as a Title 17 Forensic Alcohol Laboratory.*

All samples, including the sample packaging, will be retained at the laboratory for one year after the date of report. After one year, the samples and packaging will be destroyed unless the client requests that the samples be returned or an alternate retention policy has been set up with the laboratory. The laboratory cannot ship controlled substances.

**Comments**

EtOH - ethanol, IPA - isopropanol, MeOH - methanol