

CORONER REPORT
Santa Barbara County Sheriff

19-11451

Supplement No
ORIG



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

Reported Date
09/02/2019

Officer
HENSLIN, T

(805) 681-4100

Administrative Information										
Agency		Report No		Supplement No		Reported Date		Reported Time		Status
Santa Barbara County Sheriff		19-11451		ORIG		09/02/2019		03:32		Incident
Report Type			Location							
Coroner's Investigation			FRYS HARBOR SANTA CRUZ ISLAND							
City		ZIP Code	Rep Dist	Area	Beat	From Date		From Time		
Santa Barbara City		95060	101	1	10	09/02/2019		03:32		
Officer				Assignment		Entered by		Assignment		
2718/HENSLIN, T				CORONER BUREAU		2718		CORONER BUREAU		
RMS Transfer		Report Title		Approving Officer		Approval Date				
Pending		CORONER REPORT		3768		02/21/2020				
Approval Time										
14:35:43										
Cause of death (COR only)		Due to (COR only)		Manner of death (COR only)		Date/Time of death pronounced				
SMOKE INHALATION		BOAT FIRE		ACCIDENT		09-02-19/0443 HRS				
Date/Time body found		Determined by (COR only)		Dr. will sign		Hospitalization				
09-02-19/0443 HRS		INVESTIGATION		N		N				
Mortuary		Removal Status		Date/Time NOK notified		NOK notified by:				
CORONER'S BUREAU		CALL OUT		09-05-19/0938 HRS		DET. HOLMAN				
NOK notified via		NOK relation to decedent								
TELEPHONE		SISTER								
Person Summary										
Invl	Invl No	Type	Name			MNI	Race	Sex	DOB	
COR	1	I	GUINEY, MARYBETH			987610	W	F		
Summary Narrative										
The decedent died as a result of a boat fire located at Platts Harbor, Santa Cruz Island, Santa Barbara Ca. The fire is being investigated by the Unites States Coast Guard, FBI and ATF. The death investigation is being conducted by the Santa Barbara Coroner's Bureau. The manner death is being certified as an ACCIDENT.										

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Decedent - Coroner Investigation 1: GUINEY, MARYBETH									
Involvement Decedent - Coroner Investigation				Invl No 1	Type Individual				
Name GUINEY, MARYBETH				MNI 987610	Race White	Sex Female	DOB [REDACTED]	Age 51	Juvenile? No
Height 5'07"	Weight 130#	Hair Color Brown	Eye Color Blue						
Type Home	Address [REDACTED]				City [REDACTED]	State [REDACTED]			
ZIP Code [REDACTED]	Date [REDACTED]								
Type Operator License	ID No [REDACTED]			OLS [REDACTED]					
Type Social Security Number	ID No [REDACTED]								
Relationship Sister	Name [REDACTED]			Race [REDACTED]	Sex [REDACTED]				
Address [REDACTED]				City [REDACTED]	State [REDACTED]				
ZIP Code [REDACTED]	Phone Type Cell	Phone No [REDACTED]							
Medical									
Citizenship USA			Place of Birth Massachusetts		Occupation SALES	Coroner Case No 19-11451	NOK Notified? Yes		
Premise Sealed? No	Property? No	Vehicle? No	Legal Document No	Other Documents? No	Other Agency USCG				
OA Officer [REDACTED]		OA Case No [REDACTED]		NOK Name [REDACTED]					
Mortuary Name FRIENDS MORTUARY		On Call? No	Family Request? Yes	Other? No					
Nature of illness N/A									
Injury Place BOAT				Injury Date 09/02/2019	Injury Time 03:30:00	Injured At Work? No			
Injury Premise PLATTS HARBOR SANTA CRUZ ISLAND SANTA BARBARA CA									
How Injured BOAT FIRE									
Decedent Driver No	Decedent Passenger Yes	Decedent Pedestrian No							

Narrative

Continuations:

Marybeth Guiney is the decedent.

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 19-11451 for full details.

Det. 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.

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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.

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 were 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.

At 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

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Location of the Conception fire. The Los Angeles Police Department collected the remains, with a section of hair, documented as numbers 37 and 38.

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 [REDACTED]. The DNA comparison was conducted via the Sacramento County Coroner's Office.

Examination of decedent:

The decedent was received at the Coroner's Bureau inside two body bags, the inner bag was black in color and outer bag blue in color. The decedent's remains consisted of a partial spine and pelvis. No other body parts associated with the decedent were located at the time of the incident. The exposed vertebra were white in color due to extensive thermal burns.

Post mortem examination:

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

Statements:

I made telephone contact with the decedent's sister regarding the incident and the Coroner's Role in the investigation into the cause and manner of death for the decedent. I provided her with contact information regarding the fire investigation part of the incident. The decedent's sister eventually made funeral arrangements with Friends Mortuary.

Once the decedent's death certificate was completed, I again contacted the decedent's sister to explain the death certificate and answer any questions she had.

Forensic toxicology:

Due to the severity of the burns to the decedent's partial remains toxicology samples could not be obtained.

Consultations with Forensic Pathologist:

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.

Review of the circumstances of this death:

On 09-02-19, at approximately 0443 hours, 51-year-old, Marybeth Guiney died from smoke inhalation when the vessel she was on, for a diving expedition, caught fire.

Cause of Death:

It was determined that the decedent (Marybeth Guiney) died as a result of the following cause:

SMOKE INHALATION (Mins)

due to:

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BOAT FIRE (Mins)

With other significant conditions:
None

Manner of death:

The manner of death will be certified by the Office of the Coroner as:

ACCIDENT

Final Disposition:

The decedent was released to representatives of Friends Mortuary. Any property that was found to be related the decedent was turned over to the FBI Victim Specialist Unit.

Case closed.