



MIKE SCHMIDT, District Attorney for Multnomah County
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February 3, 2021

DA Mike Schmidt announces indictment filed against person accused of murdering Jean Gerich, injuring at least 7 others

PORTLAND, Ore. – Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Mike Schmidt announced the filing of a 31-count indictment against 64-year-old Paul Rivas for his alleged role in the vehicular homicide of 77-year-old Jean Gerich and the vehicular assault and attempted murder of at least seven other people.

Rivas is charged with one count of murder in the second degree, seven counts of attempted murder in the second degree, eight counts of failing to perform the duties of a driver, seven counts of assault in the second degree, seven counts of attempted assault in the first degree, and one count of resisting arrest.

Among other allegations, Rivas used his motor vehicle to intentionally caused the death of Ms. Gerich on January 25, 2021; that he intentionally caused physical injury to at least seven others using his vehicle as a dangerous weapon; that he also attempted to both cause serious physical injury to and murder those same seven victims and in each instance he failed to stop his vehicle to investigate the crash.

This investigation started on January 25, 2021 when the Portland Police Bureau responded to multiple reports of a vehicle described as a Honda Element traveling at a high rate of speed and intentionally striking multiple people in the areas of Southeast Stark Street and Southeast Belmont Street between approximately Laurelhurst Park and Southeast 17th Avenue.

Law enforcement identified Rivas as the driver of the Honda Element.

During the investigation, law enforcement spoke with numerous witnesses and learned Rivas appeared to be deliberately attempting to strike nearby vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians by swerving towards them while in the roadway and while on the sidewalk.

Witnesses reported that multiple cyclists, vehicles and pedestrians, including Ms. Gerich, were hit and in each case the driver sped away without making any attempt to stop or render aid.

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Officers arrived on scene and located Ms. Gerich with critical injuries. Emergency first aid was already being provided to her by community members. Paramedics transported Ms. Gerich to the hospital where she died.

The Oregon State Medical Examiner's Office determined Ms. Gerich's death to be caused by blunt force trauma and ruled the death a homicide.

Additional police officers found the Honda Element, which was registered to Rivas, crashed into another vehicle. Rivas was being surrounded by a group of community members. Law enforcement took Rivas into custody. Paramedics and law enforcement transported Rivas to the hospital for medical observation. Upon his medical discharge, Portland Police booked Rivas into the Multnomah County Detention Center.

Rivas is scheduled to appear in court on February 4, 2021 at approximately 9:30 a.m. PT.

A charging document is only an accusation of a crime. Rivas is innocent unless and until proven guilty.

#MCDA#

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