



Riverside County District Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

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MAN CHARGED WITH THE MURDER OF A FORMER LAKE ELSINORE CITY COUNCILMAN

MURRIETA – Today, March 19, 2014, the Riverside County District Attorney's Office filed a murder charge with a special circumstance allegation against the stepson of a former Lake Elsinore city councilman who was found dead in his home last year.

On Feb. 15, 2013, George Gregory Alongi, 76, was found murdered in his home on Dolly Drive in Lake Elsinore. Riverside County sheriff's deputies responded to the home and found the body after a 911 call was made by the victim's wife. A coroner's autopsy revealed Alongi sustained numerous stab wounds and lacerations – including an estimated dozen lacerations to his neck damaging both jugular veins and his airway -- as well as blunt force trauma.

Today, March 19, 2014, Simon Last Cortez, DOB: 5-7-73, has been charged with one count of murder with an enhancement of the use of a knife and a special circumstance allegation of lying in wait. The special circumstance allegation makes Cortez eligible for the death penalty. A decision whether to seek the death penalty will be made at a later date by District Attorney Paul Zellerbach.

Cortez currently is in state prison after pleading guilty on 1-31-14 in case SWF1302597 to possession of a controlled substance and receiving a sentence of two years, eight months.

His arraignment on the murder charge is scheduled for April 15, 2014, at 1:30 p.m. in Dept. S201 at the Southwest Justice Center in Murrieta.

Cortez is the son of Alongi's wife from a previous relationship. During the murder investigation by the sheriff's Central Homicide Unit it was determined that Cortez and his stepfather had previously been involved in arguments together. Alongi had previously been convicted in several cases of domestic violence with his wife, the defendant's mother, as the victim.

Investigators were initially unable to connect Cortez to the murder and Cortez told them it had been several months since he had been at Alongi's residence and was at another location the day of the murder.

However, recent follow-up investigation by homicide investigators led them to Cortez as a suspect in the murder. Investigators presented the case to the DA's Office which then filed the murder charge against Cortez.

The case, SWF1400934, is being prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Burke Strunsky of the DA's Homicide Unit.