



PRESS RELEASE

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KEWA PUEBLO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO MURDER CHARGE

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning, Adrian Chavez, 22, a member and resident of Kewa Pueblo, entered a guilty plea to an information charging him with second degree murder under a plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office. At sentencing, Adrian Chavez faces a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. Adrian Chavez has been in federal custody since his arrest on Oct. 24, 2009, and remains detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Adrian Chavez pled guilty to killing Nevin Garcia, a 20-year-old member of Kewa Pueblo, with a machete on Oct. 21, 2009. Adrian Chavez was charged with murder by criminal complaint on Oct. 24, 2009, and subsequently indicted on a first degree murder charge on Nov. 19, 2009. The indictment also charged two co-defendants, Derrick Chavez, 25, and Myron Garcia, 22, both of Kewa Pueblo, as accessories after the fact.

According to the criminal complaint, the Bureau of Indian Affairs learned about Nevin Garcia's murder when Adrian Chavez turned himself into the Kewa Pueblo Tribal Office at 10:00 p.m. on Oct. 21, 2009. Investigation revealed that, earlier that evening, Adrian Chavez, Nevin Garcia, Derrick Chavez and Myron Garcia were drinking alcoholic beverages on a plot of land located within Kewa Pueblo that had a mobile home and camper trailer. At a time when Derrick Garcia and Myron Chavez were inside the trailer, Adrian Chavez and Nevin Garcia started arguing. As Derrick Chavez and Myron Garcia came out of the trailer, they saw Adrian Chavez strike Nevin Garcia in the face with a machete. Nevin Chavez was unresponsive after he was struck with the machete.

The criminal complaint further alleged that Derrick Chavez and Myron Garcia assisted Adrian Chavez remove Nevin Garcia's clothing, wrap him in a plastic tarp, and place him in the back of a pickup truck. The three men then drove to a location a short distance from the mobile home and trailer and buried Nevin Garcia.

In his plea agreement, Adrian Chavez admitted killing Nevin Garcia on Oct. 21, 2009, because Garcia insulted him during an argument. The plea agreement states that the argument between Adrian Chavez and Nevin Garcia escalated into physical altercation. During the fight,

Adrian Chavez then grabbed a machete, and used it to strike and cut Nevin Chavez in the face and neck, causing him to bleed to death.

Under the terms of the plea agreement, the first degree murder charge will be dismissed after Adrian Chavez is sentenced.

Derrick Chavez and Myron Garcia have been in federal custody since they were arrested on Jan. 27, 2010. Both entered not guilty pleas to being accessories after the fact in Jan. 2010. Derrick Chavez and Myron Garcia each is scheduled for a change of plea hearing tomorrow, June 26, 2012.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice Services, Northern Pueblos Agency, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Roberto D. Ortega.

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