



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

June 26, 2012

**KEWA PUEBLO MEN PLEAD GUILTY TO
BEING ACCESSORIES TO MURDER**

ALBUQUERQUE – Earlier today, Derrick Chavez, 25, and Myron Garcia, 22, both members and residents of Kewa Pueblo, entered guilty pleas to being accessories after the fact to second degree murder under plea agreements with the U.S. Attorney’s Office. Each man faces a maximum sentence of 15 years of imprisonment to be followed by five years of supervised release. Both men have been in federal custody since their arrests on Jan. 27, 2010, and remain detained pending their sentencing hearings, which have yet to be scheduled.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Derrick Chavez and Myron Garcia each admitted assisting co-defendant Adrian Chavez bury the remains of Nevin Garcia, a 20-year-old member of Kewa Pueblo, after Adrian Chavez killed him with a machete on Oct. 21, 2009. Chavez, also of Kewa Pueblo, pleaded guilty to second degree murder yesterday. Adrian Chavez also remains detained pending his sentencing hearing, when he faces a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

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 and neck with a machete. Nevin Garcia was unresponsive after he was struck with the machete. 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.

Derrick Chavez and Myron Garcia each pled guilty to Count 2 of an indictment charging them as accessories after the fact to murder. In his plea agreement, Derrick Chavez states that he and Myron Garcia were inside the trailer when Adrian Chavez was arguing with Nevin Garcia. As he stepped out of the trailer, Derrick Chavez saw Adrian Chavez standing over Nevin Garcia

who was on the ground. He also observed Adrian Chavez use a machete to strike and cut Nevin Garcia in the face and neck. After realizing that he could not help Nevin Garcia because he had been severely cut about his head and neck, was unresponsive and appeared to be dead, Derrick Chavez admitted helping Adrian Chavez and Myron Garcia undress Nevin Garcia, wrap his body in a plastic tarp, and bury the body in a ravine about 400 feet away from the murder site.

In his plea agreement, Myron Garcia also stated that he was in the trailer with Derrick Chavez when he heard Adrian Chavez and Nevin Garcia arguing. Myron Garcia stated that he saw Adrian Chavez punch Nevin Garcia in the face with his fists, knocking him unconscious and causing him to fall on his back to the ground. He then saw Adrian Chavez strike and cut Nevin Garcia in the face and neck, and noted that Nevin Garcia did not move after the machete attack. Myron Garcia admitted assisting Adrian Chavez and Derrick Chavez remove Nevin Garcia's clothes, wrap his body in a plastic tarp, and bury the body in a ravine about 400 feet from the murder scene.

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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