

Milwaukee County Medical Examiner
933 W. Highland Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53233
(414)-223-1200

Case Number: 24-04870
Investigator: Erica Gremminger, D-ABMDI
Date of Death: 07/21/2024
Date Today: 7/23/2024

INVESTIGATION REPORT - PRESS

Decedent: Margarito Velazquez-Garduno

24-04870

SYNOPSIS

This 22-year-old male was kayaking with friends on Lake Michigan when he capsized his boat while attempting to turn. The decedent was not wearing a life jacket and did not know how to swim. He was pronounced deceased on shore and conveyed to this office for an autopsy. -EAG

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

On 7/21/2024 at 1940 hours, Lieutenant Ricardo Guerrero with the Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD) - Med Unit 15, contacted this office to report the death of Margarito Velasquez-Garduno (*last name later corrected to Velazquez-Garduno) (Hispanic male, Age: 22, DOB: 10/06/2001), who was retrieved from Lake Michigan at South Shore Park located at 2900 South Shore Drive, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53207. I obtained the following information:

Med Unit 15 was dispatched to the above-stated address on today's date at 1752 hours for a "dive recovery". Margarito was reportedly seen splashing around in the lake and went underwater without resurfacing. They arrived at 1809 hours and stood by as a rescue boat combed the water looking for Margarito. He was retrieved at approximately 1930 hours after being found completely submerged roughly 30 to 40 feet from the shore. Manual cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) was performed while the boat returned to land. He was transferred to the care of Med 15, who placed four-lead EKGs, which showed he was asystole. No further resuscitation was performed and the time of death was pronounced at 1936 hours by Paramedic Based Physician, Dr. Rebecca Bixler (#0207). No external trauma was observed to the body. The decedent was currently in the back of the Med Unit.

Lieutenant Guerrero provided the phone to Detective (Det.) Brian Conte with the Milwaukee County Sherriff's Office (MCSO) on scene to provide more information.

Det. Conte stated that Margarito went kayaking with friends on today's date. He attempted to make a U-turn on the water but leaned his body too far to the side and capsized the boat. Most of the friends on scene only spoke Spanish, so more information was attempted to be gained.

Det. Conte stated that the MCSO took photographs of the decedent inside of the Med Unit. He confirmed that it was okay for the Med Unit to convey Margarito to this office. He informed me that there was no longer an active scene at the park and stated that photographs taken by their organization would be provided to this office. -EAG

On 7/21/2024 at 2100 hours, Logan Allen, with the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, called this office to get preliminary information regarding the decedent as he has to file a report regarding this incident. VJAnderson

On 7/21/2024 at 2153 hours, Det. Brian Conte and another detective presented to this office to obtain a ten-print fingerprint card of the decedent. More information was obtained by their agency from the friends on scene. The following information was provided:

Margarito went to South Shore Park with four other friends on today's date. One of his friends, Jose Ramirez-Aguilera, owned two sit-on-top kayaks. Jose transported the boats with his truck and launched them at South Shore Park. Margarito informed his friends that he could not swim, so they agreed to kayak close to shore. He was not wearing a life jacket and Jose, who provided the kayaks, did not own them. Jose and Margarito were the only individuals Kayaking. Three other friends were on the shore watching them and taking photographs. Margarito began to venture further from shore and attempted to turn around. He leaned his body too far to the side and capsized the boat. His friends stated that Margarito went completely underwater and did not resurface. One friend ran to contact 9-1-1. The time of the 9-1-1 call was 1946 hours. The MCSO is using this time as the incident time.

Detective Conte stated that Margarito capsized the kayak approximately 30 to 40 feet from shore. There were no waves or currents due to the break wall in the boat harbor. Detective Conte did not know how depth of the water where Margarito was found or the temperature of the water. Margarito was retrieved from the water at 1927 hours after being found completely submerged. When the decedent was transferred to the Med Unit, officers found a bag of marijuana in his pocket. This was taken as evidence by the MCSO. It is unknown if Margarito was under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of the incident.

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Margarito was an undocumented immigrant from Mexico, who came to Wisconsin approximately seven months ago. He previously resided on the north side of Milwaukee but was assaulted by another individual and sustained a stab wound to his left forearm. After the assault, he moved and rented a room from a woman who resided at 2970 South 40th Street in Milwaukee. He had been renting the room for approximately one month.

Margarito has a brother named Salvador Antelmo Velazquez-Garduno, who resides in Alabama. He was informed of the death by law enforcement and was contacting the rest of the family in Mexico. -EAG

SCENE VISIT

No scene visit was conducted due to the decedent being transported to this office by a Med Unit. Upon admission to this office, a brief external examination was performed. Margarito was clad in a cut t-shirt, a pair of shorts, underwear, socks, and one shoe. His clothes were still wet and weeds from the lake were around his right ankle. A large amount of red and white colored foam was seen coming from his nose and mouth. No obvious external trauma was noted to the body. An old healed irregular scar was seen to his left forearm. -EAG

PROPERTY

The following items were identified as being Property related to the decedent:

Clothes	pair of shorts
Clothes	pair of boxers
Clothes	pair of socks
Clothes	one shirt
Clothes	one sandel

FAMILY CONTACT

On Jul 21, 2024 at 2153 hours, Erica Gremminger, D-ABMDI of the Medical Examiner's Office spoke to Det. Brian Conte of the Milwaukee County Sheriffs Dept and obtained the following information:

Detective Brian Conte stated that Margarito's brother, Salvador, was notified of the death by law enforcement. Salvador was notifying his mother, father, and additional family members in Mexico. Detective Conte stated that Salvador was informed that Margarito was at this office. He advised that we reach out to the brother tomorrow (7/22) after he informs his family. -EAG

On Jul 22, 2024 at 0840 hours, Anita Loker, D-ABMDI of the Medical Examiner's Office spoke to the decedent's brother, Salvador Antelmo-Velazquez, and obtained the following information:

Salvador contacted this office during rounds and left a message with Management Assistant Zola who reported he was Spanish speaking only.

At 0840 hours I attempted to contact Salvador with CLI Interpreter Miguel, but the call went straight to voicemail and the voicemail was not set up. ARL

On Jul 22, 2024 at 1130 hours, Anita Loker, D-ABMDI of the Medical Examiner's Office spoke to the decedent's brother, Salvador Antelmo-Velazquez, and obtained the following information:

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Salvador contacted this office with a family friend, Javier, who translated the following conversation. Salvador reported he was notified of the death and the circumstances by law enforcement officers. He reported Margarito did not know how to swim to his knowledge. We discussed medical and social history along with the need for an autopsy. Salvador voiced no objections to the autopsy and the tentative timeline for autopsy, preliminary findings, release to a funeral home, and toxicology results were discussed. The family wished to have Margarito transported back to Mexico for burial and I explained that family could work with a funeral home here in Milwaukee, WI or in Mexico to make these arrangements. I also gave Salvador the contact information for the Mexican Consulate for further assistance. I again offered Salvador my condolences and encouraged him to call with any questions or concerns. ARL

SOCIAL HISTORY

On Jul 21, 2024 at 2153 hours, Erica Gremminger, D-ABMDI of the Medical Examiner's Office spoke to Det. Brian Conte of the Milwaukee County Sheriffs Dept and obtained the following information:

According to the woman that rented a bedroom to Margarito, he had a history of smoking cigarettes, smoking marijuana, and drinking alcohol. She stated that he returned to the residence last night intoxicated. -EAG

On Jul 22, 2024 at 1130 hours, Anita Loker, D-ABMDI of the Medical Examiner's Office spoke to the decedent's brother, Salvador Antelmo-Velazquez, and obtained the following information:

Margarito drank alcohol socially and smoked marijuana. He had no other history of illicit drug use. ARL