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Tibbetts' body found; man charged

Authorities say a man from Mexico living in the U.S. illegally has confessed to kidnapping and killing the 20-year-old college student.

BY RYAN FOLEY
The Associated Press

MONTEZUMA, Iowa — A man from Mexico living in the U.S. illegally has confessed to kidnapping college student Mollie Tibbetts while she was running in her small Iowa hometown, killing her and dumping her body in a

cornfield, authorities said Tuesday.

Cristhian Bahena Rivera, 24, was arrested and charged with first-degree murder in the death of Tibbetts, whose July 18 disappearance set off a massive search involving state and federal authorities.

Rivera led investigators early Tuesday to a body believed to be Tibbetts in a cornfield about 12 miles southeast of Brooklyn, Iowa, where Tibbetts was last seen running, said Division of Criminal Investigation special



Cristhian Bahena Rivera

agent Rick Rahn.

"I can't speak about the motive. I can just tell you that it seemed that he followed her, seemed to be drawn to her on that particular day, for whatever reason he chose to abduct her," Rahn said outside the sheriff's office in Montezuma, where Rivera was being jailed.

The news that the highly publicized and gruesome crime was allegedly committed by a person in the country illegally drew immediate outrage. Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds, a Republican, said: "As Iowans, we are heartbroken, and we are angry."

"We are angry that a broken immi-

gration system allowed a predator like this to live in our community, and we will do all we can to bring justice to Mollie's killer," she said in a statement.

The arrest is likely to spark calls for a further crackdown on illegal immigration, which President Donald Trump has made a core policy of his administration.

He often has claimed widespread crime by people living in the country illegally, citing among other things the indictments of 11 suspected MS-13 gang members from El Salvador charged in



MOLLIE TIBBETTS

See TIBBETTS, PAGE 2A

Man sentenced to 15 years in fatal frozen lake crash



Caitlin Salow, the sister of Alex Salow, reads a statement during the sentencing hearing for Joshua

Juengel on Tuesday at the Delaware County Courthouse in Manchester, Iowa.

DAVE KETTERING • Telegraph Herald

Judge overrides plea deal calling for a 10-year sentence, citing the fact the defendant did not seek help for his passenger

BY BEN JACOBSON
ben.jacobson@thmedia.com

MANCHESTER, Iowa — It has been eight months, but Caitlin Salow still can account for every minute of that cold January day.

She remembers when she heard that her brother, 23-year-old Alex Salow, hadn't come home the night before. She recalls learning that her father, an emergency responder, discovered a hole in the ice of Lake Delhi, under which a truck lay fully submerged in frigid water.

Caitlin remembers loved ones and friends stopping by the house as the hours dragged by, the family members desperately hoping that their worst fears weren't about to be confirmed.

"I wanted to believe there was hope," Caitlin said Tuesday during a sentencing hearing in Iowa District Court for Delaware County. "Even though deep inside I had already accepted that my brother wasn't coming home."



Juengel reads a statement directed at Alex Salow's family and friends.

Joshua C. Juengel's sentencing hearing Tuesday in Manchester was a bittersweet victory for Alex Salow's family. Juengel, 36, of Manchester, was sentenced to 15 years in prison for his role in Salow's death and his decisions to lie about what happened and not seek help for his friend.

The terms of a plea deal called for 10 years in prison for Juengel, who was behind the wheel Jan. 8 when his truck crashed through the ice with Salow in the

TH videos

Watch the victim's mother and the defendant as they read statements to the court, TelegraphHerald.com

passenger seat. A 10-year sentence for vehicular homicide and a five-year sentence for leaving the scene of a crash were to run concurrently.

But District Court Judge Michael Shubbatt, after listening to the family of Salow tearfully recount their loss, said Juengel's actions deserved to be considered individually.

Accordingly, the sentences should run back to back, the judge said.

"To me, the decision by Mr. Juengel to leave the scene, to not try to get help, to tell a false story to the police and to let his friend sit in the bottom of the lake for a day, to let the Salow family suffer for a day not knowing about their son is not part and parcel of the same event," Shubbatt said. "It's

See SENTENCE, PAGE 2A

Program promotes civility in conversation

'The goal is not to change their mind, the goal is to connect,' speaker tells group at Dubuque event.

BY JOHN KRUSE
john.kruse@thmedia.com

It was a lesson in civility at the Grand River Center on Tuesday.

About 60 people sat at tables to listen and discuss ways to avoid turning even the most volatile conversation topics into unproductive arguments.

Strangers shared stories of disagreements they had in their lives. One talked about a debate with a colleague over immigration, while another recounted approaching a neighbor over an overgrown lawn.

Participants also discussed ways in which they could have approached the situations differently. It was an evening dedicated to reclaiming civility in everyday discourse.

"In the age of the internet, we have the ability to only talk to people who only think exactly like us," said Jeff Kluever, assistant director of programs for the Robert D. and Billie Ray Center at Drake University. "The intentionality of reaching out to people with different viewpoints is really important."

Kluever hosted the event Tuesday in conjunction with the National Institute of Civil Discourse. Dubbed "Revive Civility Iowa," the gathering is part of a statewide series of workshops designed to promote conversation tactics that allow people to discuss controversial topics without devolving



Jeff Kluever

See CIVILITY, PAGE 2A

TH video interview

Jeff Kluever, assistant director of programs at the Robert D. and Billie Ray Center at Drake University, discusses his program to encourage civility, TelegraphHerald.com

today's TH

Advice.....	14A	Iowa.....	11A
Births.....	6B	Nation/world..	6-10A,
Business.....	5B	Record.....	7B
Calendar.....	13A	Obituaries.....	6B
Classifieds.....	1-11C	Puzzles.....	14-15A
Comics.....	14-15A	Television.....	15A
Current.....	12A	Weather.....	8B
Horoscope.....	10C	Wisconsin.....	11A
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Today is Wednesday, Aug. 22, the 234th day of 2018. There are 131 days left in the year.

ON THIS DATE

- In 1972, John Wojtowicz and Salvatore Naturile took seven employees hostage at a Chase Manhattan Bank branch in Brooklyn, N.Y., during a botched robbery; the siege, which ended with Wojtowicz's arrest and Naturile's killing by the FBI, inspired the 1975 movie "Dog Day Afternoon."
- In 1985, 55 people died when fire broke out aboard a British Airtours charter jet on a runway at Manchester Airport in England.
- In 1992, on the second day of the Ruby Ridge siege in Idaho, an FBI sharpshooter killed Vicki Weaver, the wife of white separatist Randy Weaver (the sharpshooter later said he was targeting the couple's friend Kevin Harris, and didn't see Vicki Weaver).

The Associated Press

lotteries

IOWA

TUESDAY EARLY

Pick 3-Midday: 4-2-8
Pick 4-Midday: 2-7-1-3

MONDAY EVENING

Pick 3-Evening: 8-4-0
Pick 4-Evening: 7-5-0-2
Lucky for Life: 4-16-36-44-48
Lucky ball: 11

ILLINOIS

TUESDAY EARLY

Pick 3-Midday: 1-5-5
Pick 4-Midday: 8-5-4-4
Lucky Day Lotto-Midday: 19-22-29-38-40

MONDAY EVENING

Pick 3-Evening: 0-8-5
Pick 4-Evening: 2-6-3-4
Lucky Day Lotto-Evening: 7-11-19-21-30
Lotto: 2-15-27-30-43-47
Extra shot: 17
Jackpot: \$11.5 million

WISCONSIN

TUESDAY EARLY

Daily Pick 3: 3-8-8
Daily Pick 4: 1-4-9-0

MONDAY EVENING

5 Card Cash
AC-AD-AS-2D-8S
Badger 5: 3-9-20-25-26
Supercash: 1-8-9-28-32-33
Multiplier: N

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people, etc

Jet carrying Post Malone blows 2 tires but lands safely

NEWBURGH, N.Y. — A private jet carrying rapper Post Malone blew two tires during takeoff at a small New Jersey airport on Tuesday but made a safe emergency landing hours later in upstate New York, prompting the rapper to thank fans who prayed for him and diss those who “wished death” on him while he was in the air.



“Oh, my God, I hate flying in general. I don’t even know what to say, man. I’m shook,”

he told the celebrity website TMZ. “There was one hell of a team on that aircraft, and we’re here, we’re here on Earth, and I need a beer, and I need some wine, at the same time, mixed together.”

The plane had 16 people on board when it left Teterboro Airport on Tuesday morning, the Federal Aviation Administration said.

Fans gathered at New York Stewart International Airport in Newburgh, about 70 miles north of New York City, after hearing the rapper was on board, and they cheered when the plane landed just before 4 p.m.

The Associated Press

SENTENCE: Deception ‘increased seriousness of what occurred here’

Continued from page 1A

a different decision.” It was the outcome the grieving Salows hoped for. But the memories — like Caitlin’s decision to call it an early night on Jan. 8, rather than join her brother out on the town — still haunt them. “I went to sleep while my brother drowned in the icy-cold lake,” she said. “All alone in the dark.”

THE INCIDENT

Authorities said Juengel and Salow were at Smokey’s Grill in the Lake Delhi area Jan. 7. The two left early that evening and then traveled north, according to witnesses.

Juengel would later tell authorities that he and Salow drove onto Lake Delhi, where a vehicle was observed driving doughnuts. The vehicle eventually rolled, causing it to crash through the ice, Juengel said.

Juengel escaped the sinking vehicle, but Salow could not. Juengel then began making his way back home to Manchester, eventually getting picked up by a passerby.

He did not report the crash to authorities nor seek help for Salow.

After the body was discovered, Juengel initially told investigators that Salow took Juengel’s vehicle and that he was not near the lake. But a search warrant was executed at Juengel’s home, revealing frozen shoes that “smelled of lake water” hidden in a doghouse, according to court documents.

Authorities said Juengel eventually confessed, and he was charged with homicide by vehicle, reckless driving, making a false report and leaving the scene of a fatal crash. The misdemeanor charges of reckless driving and making a false report later were dismissed per the terms of a plea deal.

Thomas Goodman, Juengel’s attorney, said his client is deeply remorseful.

When Juengel emerged from the lake, he likely was suffering from shock and hypothermia and still has a touch of amnesia regarding the incident, Goodman said.

Both Juengel’s escape from the sinking vehicle and his decision to lie about what happened can be attributed, in part, to “survival instinct,” Goodman said before Shubbatt handed down the sentence. “(Juengel) hopes to live an exemplary life (when released from prison),” Goodman said. “I believe he told me at one point that he wants to do that in honor of Alex and maybe he can carry on some of the things Alex was doing in his young life.”

VICTIM IMPACT

Sitting in the witness stand, occasionally wiping tears from her eyes as her voice shook with emotion, Sherri Salow opened up about her late son.

Alex was “selfless” and “generous with his time or possessions,” Sherri said. He believed life was too short to hold grudges and looked forward to starting a family and having his own home on the lake.

The two communicated every day — sometimes in person, sometimes via phone and sometimes through text messages.

“I have a hard time every day believing that he’s truly gone,” she said. “It feels like a

bad dream that I won’t wake up from.”

Caitlin Salow, previously the middle child, suddenly became the youngest. She described “the shift in family structure” as “unfamiliar and unfair.”

“The goodness in his heart should have earned him more days and months and years,” she said.

Alex Salow’s other sister, Kelsey Salow, recalled flying back to Iowa from her home in Mississippi. At that point, Alex still was thought to be missing.

Then, as she began her drive home from the airport in Cedar Rapids, she got a text message from an old high school acquaintance. The text expressed condolences for the loss of her brother.

“I stared at my phone in shock,” Kelsey said. “I just re-read it in disbelief.”

She recalled that her brother hadn’t responded to text messages sent the night before.

“Because he was in a vehicle at the bottom of a lake,” she said she later realized.

SENTENCING

Salow’s family members each asked Shubbatt to impose the maximum sentence, despite the recommendations in the plea deal.

“He carelessly handed Alex a death sentence and his friends and family a life sentence,” Caitlin Salow said.

Sherri Salow also lamented Juengel’s apparent callous indifference to her son’s fate.

“There isn’t a day that goes by that I (don’t) think about how my son was just left to die without a second thought,” she said.

County Attorney John Bernau said he thought the recommended 10-year sentence was appropriate for a tragic — yet predictable — outcome to a night spent “whooping it up.”

“There are certain spots that are very thick with ice,” he said. “But the farther up the lake you go, springs feed into the lake and there are very thin spots. ... It’s not surprising that you would fall through.”

Goodman said, “There aren’t any winners in this, and nobody’s going to feel any better about this.”

“I’ve seen (Juengel) crying about this,” he said. “I’ve seen him just confused. He knows how great a friend Alex was and how loved by his family.”

During a brief allocution, Juengel expressed sympathy for the loss felt by Salow’s family and the entire community. He recalled his friendship with the younger man fondly.

“I deeply apologize,” he said. “Alex was a great person.” Shubbatt agreed that Juengel didn’t mean to cause any harm.

“Obviously, nobody wanted this to happen or thought this was going to happen, even though if people had given it more thought, (they) would have realized this is a very possible outcome of this activity,” he said.

Still, “Alex Salow died alone at the bottom of that cold lake in January.” And Juengel failed to render aid in any way.

Additionally, Juengel’s deception wasn’t simply a harmless omission of truth.

“It caused the family more pain,” Shubbatt said. “It increased the seriousness of what occurred here.”

TIBBETTS: Suspect tells police he panicked and then blacked out

Continued from page 1A

connection with the slayings of two Virginia teens. Trump also has held events at the White House with members of “angel families,” whose relatives were killed by immigrants.

Although Trump claims legal U.S. residents are less likely to commit crime, several studies from social scientists and the libertarian think tank Cato Institute find that isn’t accurate and states with a higher share of people living in the country illegally have lower violent crime rates.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said that it lodged a federal immigration detainer for Rivera after he was arrested on the murder charge. That move means the agency has probable cause to believe he is subject to deportation.

Investigators said they believed Rivera had lived in the area from four to seven years. Rahn declined comment on his employment history, but described Rivera as someone who lived in a rural area and kept to himself. A search of Iowa court records revealed no prior criminal history, and it’s unclear whether he had ever been subject to prior deportation proceedings.

Investigators said they zeroed in on Rivera after obtaining footage from surveillance cameras in Brooklyn. The footage showed a Chevy Malibu connected to Rivera that was driving back and forth as Tibbetts was running in the area, Rahn said.

An affidavit attached to the criminal complaint against Rivera alleged that he admitted to investigators he got out of his car and started running alongside Tibbetts.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY actress Valerie Harper, 79 • actress Cindy Williams, 71 • actress Regina Taylor, 58 • actress Brooke Dillman, 52 • actor Ty Burrell, 51 • actress Melinda Page Hamilton, 47 • actor Rick Yune, 47 • singer Howie Dorough (Backstreet Boys), 45 • comedian-actress Kristen Wiig, 45 • actress Jenna Leigh Green, 44 • talk show host James Corden, 40 • actor Brandon Adams, 39 • actress Aya Sumika, 38 • actor Ari Stidham, 26

Tibbetts grabbed her phone and said she was going to call the police. The affidavit says Rivera panicked and then said he blacked out. Rivera next remembers seeing her earphones on his lap, and taking her bloody body out of the trunk of his car, it said.

“The defendant further described during the interview that he dragged Tibbetts on foot from his vehicle to a secluded location in a cornfield,” the affidavit said.

Investigators said they had earlier searched the area for Tibbetts but didn’t find her, noting the body was covered by corn stalks when recovered early Tuesday.

Rahn said that Rivera was cooperating with investigators and speaking with the help of a translator. He said an autopsy would be performed on the body today by the state medical examiner’s office, which would assist investigators in understanding whether Tibbetts had been assaulted or tried to fight him off.

A conviction on first-degree murder carries a mandatory sentence of life in prison without parole in Iowa, which doesn’t have the death penalty.

Tibbetts’ disappearance set off a massive search involving dozens of officers from the FBI, as well as state and local agencies. They focused much of their efforts in and around Brooklyn, searching farm fields, ponds and homes. Investigators asked anyone who was around five locations, including a car wash, a truck stop and a farm south of town, to report if they saw anything suspicious on July 18.

Last week, Vice President Mike Pence met privately with the Tibbetts family during a visit to Iowa and told them that “you’re on the hearts of every American.”

CIVILITY: ‘A lot of uncivility lately’

Continued from page 1A

into unproductive shouting matches.

Kluever pointed to a survey by Weber Shandwick and KRC Research that found that 93 percent of people surveyed believe a lack of civility is a problem in society, with 69 percent identifying it as a major problem.

He said the purpose of the event is not to come to a consensus on controversial issues that create incivility. Rather, he hoped to give the participants the tools to maintain cordial conversations.

“We are just trying to teach people how to approach these types of conversations better,” Kluever said. “We want people to disagree without being disagreeable.”

Participants listed conversation topics that tend to create more confrontational situations. They included politics, housing issues, changing demographics and

neighbors’ lawn-care habits.

Kluever stressed that it is important not to approach difficult conversations with the intent to win the debate, but instead to try to learn more about the subject.

“The goal is not to change their mind,” Kluever said. “The goal is to get to know them a little better.”

Jerelyn O’Connor, of Dubuque, said she attended the event because she feels incivility is becoming more rampant in society, particularly on social media, and she wants to know how to approach controversial topics.

“I’ve just been seeing a lot of uncivility lately,” O’Connor said. “I really want to know how to deal with these types of conversations and move them in the right direction.”

Kluever also stressed the importance of recognizing one’s own tendency to go on the defensive during a conversation with someone, in-

stead of trying to connect with the individual.

Paul Duster, of Dubuque, said the event gave him the chance to recognize some of his personal habits when engaging in a debate. For example, he tends to think of his response before the other person finishes his or her statement.

“That’s something that I’m really guilty of,” Duster said. “I’ve always got my next statement ready before the other person has even finished their answer.”

At the end of the event, Kluever encouraged participants to go out and start conversations with people with whom they know they will disagree. That won’t solve society’s problems, he said, but it will help move toward a civilization that can talk about issues.

“Seek first to understand, then you can tailor your information to be understood,” Kluever said.

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