

Woman seeks answers in husband's Mexico death

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MATT JOYCE Associated Press writer | Posted: Wednesday, January 7, 2009 12:00 am | No Comments Posted

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CHEYENNE - A northern Wyoming woman is trying to figure out how her husband suffered severe injuries that led to his death last month during the couple's vacation to Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula.

David Ray Getzfreid of Greybull died Dec. 14 at a hospital in Cancun. His injured body had been found five days earlier in the beach city of Playa del Carmen.

Patsy Getzfreid said her 38-year-old husband had two broken wrists, fractured ribs, a punctured lung, and swelling and bleeding in the brain when he was found by a restaurant owner.

She said she and her husband had gone to a bar near their hotel in Playa del Carmen the evening of Dec. 8, but she left to return to their hotel about 9:30 p.m. while her husband stayed at the bar. She said she thinks David Getzfreid was beaten later that night before being found and taken by ambulance to the hospital.

"All the private hospitals around Playa wouldn't take him because he didn't have ID on him or a credit card, and so they had to take him to the general hospital in Cancun, which was about an hour from where we were staying," Getzfreid said Wednesday. "He was pretty much found as a John Doe."

She said her husband wasn't carrying identification because she kept their passports in her purse. She said she thought he had some cash with him at the time.

Patsy Getzfreid was able to find her husband at the hospital and spend time with him before he died. She was able to ask him about what happened to him, but he couldn't remember.

Patsy Getzfreid said she has been unable to get any investigation reports from Mexican authorities and hasn't received any updates from local police. She is also attempting to get medical records, including X-rays and an autopsy report, from the Cancun hospital.

"The crime scene was actually washed right after the ambulance picked him up, so therefore there was no evidence of anything," she said. "Right now we're just trying to get his medical records from Mexico and I don't know if we're going to get that either."

Patsy Getzfreid was able to get her husband's body returned to Greybull, but she did not have an autopsy conducted in the United States. Dave Getzfreid's body has been cremated, and a memorial was held Dec. 27.

David Getzfreid, a former Marine and veteran of the first Gulf War, is survived by his wife, a 20-year-old daughter and an 11-year-old son.

Patsy Getzfreid said she is trying to seek help from both the U.S. Consular Agency in Mexico and the government in Panama, where her mother lives.

"I figure if the U.S. and Panamanian government can be involved in figuring out how this happened, why it happened, maybe I can get some sort of closure," she said.

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