



County of San Diego

GLENN N. WAGNER, D.O.
CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER
(858) 694-2895

MEDICAL EXAMINER'S DEPARTMENT
5570 OVERLAND AVE, STE 101, SAN DIEGO, CA 92123-1215
<http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/me>

STEVEN C. CAMPMAN, M.D.
CHIEF DEPUTY MEDICAL EXAMINER
(858) 694-2895

CALL INFO	NAME OF DECEASED LISOWSKI, Elena Marie		AKA	HIO <input type="checkbox"/>	CASE NUMBER 2021-00529	
	INVESTIGATOR Jessica Magana	REPORTED BY Officer Legrand, ID 6198	REPORTING AGENCY San Diego Police		PREVIOUS WAIVE #	
	CALL DATE AND TIME 2/7/2021 1351	ARRIVAL DATE AND TIME 2/7/2021 1436	RETURN DATE AND TIME			
DECEDENT	DATE AND TIME OF DEATH 2/7/2021 1350	DATE OF BIRTH 3/13/1976	AGE 44 Years	GENDER Female	RACE White	
	RESIDENCE (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP) [REDACTED] La Mesa, California, 91942			COUNTY San Diego	LAST SEEN ALIVE	
	COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE San Diego	OCCUPATION Waitress		PAID AUTOPSY <input type="checkbox"/>		
DEATH	LOCATION OF DEATH Found, Lake Murray		TYPE OF PLACE General Location (Manual Entry)			
	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP) 5540 Kiowa Drive , La Mesa, California, 91942					
	SUMMARY The decedent was a never married 44-year-old White female who resided in La Mesa. On 2/7/2021, an individual visited Lake Murray in La Mesa to go kayaking. While paddling in the water, the individual observed an object floating in the water. He approached the object and noted it was a human body. He called 911 for assistance and San Diego Police and San Diego Fire-Rescue Lifeguard personnel arrived on scene. Lifeguard personnel swam to the decedent's location and placed her onto an inflatable raft. She was pulled to the shore, where her death was pronounced without medical intervention due to postmortem changes. Medical Examiner's jurisdiction invoked according to the California Government Code 27491: Sudden and unexpected death.					
INCIDENT	LOCATION OF INCIDENT Unknown		INCIDENT PLACE TYPE General Location (Manual Entry)			
	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP) Unknown,		COUNTY			
	DATE AND TIME OF INCIDENT 2/--/2021 Unknown	INVESTIGATING AGENCY San Diego Police	OFFICER Ofc. Legrand	BADGE # 6198	REPORT # 21601872	
	DECEDENT WAS	BELTED No	HELMETED <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	POSITION	ON PRIVATE PROPERTY <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
	VEHICLE	LICENSE NUMBER			STATE	
NOTIFICATION	IDENTIFIED BY Ca-ID	METHOD Fingerprint Comparison	DATE AND TIME 02/09/2021 1030			
	FUNERAL HOME	PROPERTY <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR False <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		TYPE OF EXAM Autopsy	
	NAME OF NOK OR OTHER [REDACTED]	RELATIONSHIP Brother	DATE NOTIFIED 2/9/2021		NOTIFIED BY	

San Diego Medical Examiner
5570 Overland Avenue, Suite#101
San Diego, CA 92123-1206
(858) 694-2895

Case Number : 2021-00529
Investigator : Jessica Magana
Date of Death : 02/07/2021
Date Today : 05/05/2021

INVESTIGATIVE NARRATIVE

Decedent: LISOWSKI, Elena

Antemortem Events:

On 2/7/2021, the following information was learned through a personal interview on scene with San Diego Police Officer Legrand, ID 6198. On 2/7/2021, an individual visited Lake Murray in La Mesa to go kayaking. While paddling in the water, the individual observed an object floating in the water. He approached the object and noted it was a human body. He called 911 for assistance at 1257 hours and San Diego Police and San Diego Fire-Rescue Lifeguard personnel arrived on scene at 1306 hours. Lifeguard personnel swam to the decedent's location and placed her onto an inflatable raft. She was pulled to the shore, where her death was pronounced at 1350 hours without medical intervention due to postmortem changes. San Diego Police Homicide Detectives were notified of the death and they declined to respond to the scene. At 1351 hours, the San Diego County Medical Examiner's Office was notified of the death and jurisdiction was invoked.

Past Medical, Surgical, and Social History:

On 2/9/2021, the following information was learned by Forensic Pathology Fellow Dr. M. Estrella through a telephone interview with the decedent's sister, [REDACTED]. The decedent was not married and had no children. The decedent's medical history was significant for alcohol abuse with periods of sobriety. She had episodes of psychosis with paranoia secondary to alcohol withdrawal. She had a history of depression with no known suicide attempts. The decedent knew how to swim. She had a remote history of illicit drug abuse.

Scene Description:

The place of death was the Mission Trails Regional Park Lake Murray, located at 5540 Kiowa Drive, La Mesa, 91942. The area consisted of a public park with grassy and sandy areas surrounding Lake Murray. The decedent was originally found in the water with approximate GPS coordinates of N 32 47 12 W 117 02 21. The reported water depth at that location was approximately 50 feet. The water was noted to be cold. The decedent was located on the sand with approximate GPS coordinates of N 32 47 10 W 117 02 20. No personal effects or items of identifying nature were observed on or near the decedent. No evidence of alcohol or illicit drugs was observed. No letters of a suicidal nature were observed.

Body Description:

I further viewed the decedent in a yellow mesh body pouch on top of the inflatable raft. Upon opening the pouch, I noted the decedent was lying in a left lateral recumbent position. She was fully clad in a denim jacket, a black shirt, black pants, and boots. There was no evidence of medical intervention. Her upper extremities were flexed at the elbows with her hands balled into fists and resting just above her torso. A slight bend was noted at the waist. Her lower extremities were fully extended and in line with the torso. The decedent was noted to be cold and wet. Rigor, which was manipulated with moderate force, was noted to her jaw and extremities. Slight anterior lividity was noted to be consistent with the prone position she was originally found in.

The decedent was rolled to a supine position for a brief examination to be performed. No crepitation was noted upon palpation of the skull. Her sclerae were slightly congested with no petechial hemorrhages observed. Her ears and nares were clear. A full examination of the oral cavity was not performed due to rigor, but there appeared to be no obvious trauma to the mouth. Her neck appeared to be atraumatic. No crepitation was noted upon palpation of the ribcage and her abdomen was firm with no palpable masses. No obvious trauma was

noted to her upper or lower extremities. Upon rolling the decedent, no obvious trauma was noted to her posterior aspects.

92M Transport personnel, Partida and White, assisted me with the decedent's body. A yellow identification band, labeled with "Doe, Jane" was secured around her right ankle. She was placed into a new white vinyl pouch, which was sealed with blue tamper-evident seal 2137127 at 1507 hours. She was transported to the San Diego County Medical Examiner's Office for an examination to be performed.

Special Requests:

None/

Identification:

The decedent was positively identified on 2/9/2021 via fingerprint comparison via CAL-ID.

Antemortem Specimens:

Not applicable.

Public Administrator:

No referral necessary.

Other Important Factors:

None.

Signed:



4/28/2021

Jessica Magana
Medical Examiner Investigator

Approved by:





County of San Diego

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AUTOPSY REPORT

Name: ELENA MARIE LISOWSKI **ME#:** 2021-0529
Place of death: Lake Murray **Age:** 44 Years
5540 Kiowa Drive
La Mesa, CA 91942 **Sex:** Female
Date of death: Found,
February 7, 2021; 1350 Hours
Date of autopsy: February 8, 2021; 1250 Hours

CAUSE OF DEATH: DROWNING

MANNER OF DEATH: UNDETERMINED

AUTOPSY SUMMARY:

- I. Drowning.
 - A. Found submerged in Lake Murray.
 - B. Pulmonary edema, right lung: 550 grams, left lung: 500 grams.
 - C. Foam in the airways.
 - D. Immersion artifact on palms of hands and soles of feet.
- II. History of chronic alcohol abuse complicated by withdrawal related psychosis.
 - A. Hepatic steatosis.
- III. Minor contusions on the left forehead, right shoulder, and lower extremities.

OPINION: According to investigative information and review of medical records from San Diego Health Connect, this 44 year-old woman had a history of chronic alcohol abuse, remote polysubstance abuse, and depression. In the past 6 months prior to her death, she had three hospital admissions for acute psychosis and delirium tremens. From July 2019 to May 2020, she was brought to the emergency department multiple times by paramedics or police officers for alcohol intoxication where she was either found unresponsive, having auditory and visual hallucinations, or exhibiting bizarre behavior.

On February 7, 2021, a recreational kayaker found her body floating in Lake Murray within 0.1 miles from where she lived. 911 was called. Lifeguard personnel arrived at the scene and retrieved her body from the water. Death was pronounced without medical intervention due to obvious postmortem changes. She was fully clothed. At the scene, no alcohol, prescription bottles, illicit drugs, or notes of suicidal nature were found. The GPS coordinates of where her body was initially located was in a cove located near a boat launch. The lake is known to have shallow embankments. Swimming is not permitted in the lake.

Upon further interviews with family, it was learned the decedent knew how to swim. She had ongoing problems with alcohol abuse with periods of sobriety complicated by withdrawal related psychotic episodes, leading her to go back to drinking. During her psychotic episodes, she frequently become paranoid and thought people were chasing her.

The autopsy demonstrated a normally developed, well-nourished woman with pulmonary edema, foam in the airways, and immersion artifact of the hands and feet, consistent with being submerged in water. The liver showed fatty changes, consistent with a history of alcohol abuse. Other than very minor faint contusions on the left forehead, right shoulder, and lower extremities, no additional trauma was seen.

Toxicological testing detected low levels of bupropion (0.50 mg/L), chlordiazepoxide (0.07 mg/L), and minimally detectable levels of chlordiazepoxide metabolites, demoxepam and nordiazepam. Toxicology screening testing for alcohol was negative. Vitreous chemistry levels were noncontributory.

It is uncertain how the decedent drowned in the lake. There was no evidence of homicidal violence or that another person intentionally drowned her in the lake or dumped her body in the lake. Given her extensively documented history of delirium tremens and acute psychosis with audio and visual hallucinations and exhibiting bizarre behavior, it is possible she could have accidentally drowned during an acute psychotic episode. However, given her history of depression, struggles with alcohol abuse, a capable swimmer, and toxicology negative for mind-altering drugs, combined with being found fully clothed in a body of water with shallow edges on a cold day where swimming is not permitted and is

known for suicidal drownings, the possibility of a suicidal drowning cannot be ruled out. Based upon the above discussion and autopsy findings, as currently understood, the cause of death is listed as **drowning**, and the manner of death is classified as **undetermined**.

MELANIE F. ESTRELLA, D.O.
Forensic Pathology Fellow

Date signed:

SUPERVISING PATHOLOGIST:

BETHANN SCHABER, M.D.
Deputy Medical Examiner

Date signed:

IDENTIFICATION: The body is identified by two Medical Examiner's identification bands on the right ankle bearing the "Jane Doe" name and case number. The decedent is later positively identified via fingerprints.

WITNESSES: Assisting is Forensic Autopsy Specialist Jason Newman. There are no outside observers.

CLOTHING: The body is unclad when initially viewed. A separate bag of clothing accompanies the body and contains:

1. Dark blue denim jacket with areas of distressing.
2. Navy blue long-sleeved T-shirt.
3. Black leggings.
4. Black underwear, without bloody staining or discharge.
5. One pair of black fleece-lined boots.

All clothing items are soaked from being submerged in water.

EVIDENCE OF MEDICAL THERAPY: None.

EXTERNAL EXAMINATION

Injuries are described in a separate section below.

GENERAL: The body is that of a normally developed and well-nourished, light-complexioned female appearing consistent with the listed age of 44 years. The length is 64 inches, and the weight is 128 pounds as received. The body is well preserved, cold, and has not been embalmed. Rigidity is absent in the jaw and extremities. Lividity is pink-purple, non-blanching and is seen in a posterior distribution on the torso and extremities.

HEAD: Injuries of the head are described in a section below. The scalp is covered with wavy, dark brown hair measuring up to 16 inches on the top of the head. The hair is damp. The ears are normally formed and without drainage. The earlobes are pierced once in each lobe. The irides are blue, the corneas are clear, and the bulbar and palpebral conjunctivae are free of petechiae. The sclerae are white. The nose is intact, and the nares are clean and unobstructed. The lips are normally formed. The teeth are natural and in good condition. There is no foam in the nose or mouth.

NECK: The neck is symmetrical and without injury.

CHEST AND ABDOMEN: The chest is normally formed, symmetrical, and without palpable masses. The breasts are symmetrical, and without palpable masses.

The abdomen is flat and soft. No masses are palpable.

EXTERNAL GENITALIA: The atraumatic external genitalia are those of an adult female.

BACK: The back is straight and symmetrical. The anus is atraumatic.

ARMS: Injuries of the arms are described in a section below. The arms are normally formed. No needle punctures, track marks, or ventral wrist scars are noted. The fingernails are trim and clean. The skin of the hands is pale and wrinkled.

LEGS: Injuries of the legs are described in a section below. The legs are normally formed and have no edema, amputations, or deformity. The toenails are short, trim, and clean. The skin of the feet is pale and wrinkled.

BODY MARKINGS (SCARS AND TATTOOS):

Scars: None.

Tattoos: None.

EVIDENCE OF INJURY

A 3/4 x 3/4 inch faint pink-purple contusion is on the left forehead. A 1/2 x 1/2 inch faint pink-purple contusion is on the anterior right shoulder. A 1 x 1 inch faint pink-purple contusion is on the medial left knee. A 1 x 1 inch faint blue-purple contusion is on the proximal anteromedial right lower leg.

INTERNAL EXAMINATION

BODY CAVITIES: The abdominal fat layer measures up to 3 cm in thickness. The body cavities have no hemorrhage or abnormal fluid. The serosal surfaces are smooth, glistening, and without adhesions. The organs are normally located. The diaphragm is intact. The body cavities have no internal injuries.

CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM: The heart weighs 350 grams and is not enlarged. It has a normal shape with a smooth, glistening epicardium. The coronary arteries have a normal origin and distribution with left dominance. The coronary arteries have no atherosclerotic stenosis and are widely patent.

The myocardium is red-brown, firm, and uniform without focal fibrosis, softening, or hyperemia. The ventricles are not dilated or hypertrophied. The right ventricle, left ventricle, and interventricular septum measure 0.3 cm, 1.0 cm, and 1.0 cm, respectively.

The endocardium is intact, smooth, and glistening. The cardiac valve leaflets are of normal number, pliable, intact, and free of vegetations. The atrial and ventricular septa are free of defects.

The aorta follows its usual course and has minimal atherosclerotic changes. There are no vascular anomalies or aneurysms. The vena cavae and pulmonary arteries are without thrombus or embolus.

RESPIRATORY SYSTEM: The right and left lungs weigh 550 and 500 grams, respectively, and have the usual lobation. The pleura are smooth and glistening; the lungs have minimal anthracotic pigment. The lungs are edematous and congested. The parenchyma is dark red and exudes marked amounts of fluid. The lungs have no consolidation, hemorrhage, infarct, tumor, gross fibrosis, or enlargement of airspaces. The bronchi contain tan-white foam. The bronchi mucosa is tan-pink.

HEPATOBIILIARY SYSTEM: The liver weighs 1300 grams. The intact capsule is smooth and glistening. The parenchyma is red-brown to focally tan-yellow, without mass, hemorrhage, or palpable fibrosis.

The gallbladder contains an estimated 20 mL of bile and no stones. Its mucosa is uniform, and the wall is not thickened.

The pancreas has a normal size, shape, and lobulated structure. The parenchyma is pink-tan, firm, and uniform.

HEMOLYMPHATIC SYSTEM: The spleen weighs 90 grams. The capsule is smooth and intact. The parenchyma is maroon, firm, and uniform.

There is no enlargement of the lymph nodes in the neck, chest, or abdomen.

ENDOCRINE SYSTEM: The thyroid gland is not enlarged, and the lobes are symmetrical. The parenchyma is uniform, firm, and red-brown.

The adrenal glands have the usual size and shape. The cortices are thin, uniform, and yellow, and there is no hemorrhage or tumor. The pituitary gland is not enlarged.

GASTROINTESTINAL SYSTEM: The esophagus and gastroesophageal junction are unremarkable. The stomach contains approximately 10 mL of thin, tan-red translucent fluid without visible pills or pill residue. The gastric and duodenal mucosae are intact and unremarkable. The small and large intestines and appendix are unremarkable to inspection and palpation.

GENITOURINARY SYSTEM: The right and left kidneys weigh 140 and 150 grams, respectively, and have a normal shape and position. The cortical surfaces are mildly granular. The kidneys have the usual corticomedullary structure without tumors or cysts. The pelves and ureters are not dilated or thickened. The bladder contains no urine. The mucosa is intact, and the bladder wall is not hypertrophied.

The uterus, tubes, and ovaries are of expected size and have smooth serosal surfaces. The cervix is patent with a 0.2 cm os. The myometrium is uniform, and the endometrium is 0.1 cm in thickness. The sectioned ovaries show clear fluid-filled cysts measuring up to 2 cm in greatest dimension. The vagina is unremarkable.

NECK: The tongue, strap muscles, and other anterior neck soft tissues have no hemorrhage. The hyoid bone and the cartilaginous structures of the larynx and trachea are normally formed and without fracture. The airway is unobstructed, lined by smooth, pink-tan mucosa, and contains no foreign material. The cervical vertebrae have no displacement, hypermobility, or crepitus. No foam is in the trachea.

MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM: The musculoskeletal system is well developed and free of deformity. There are no fractures of the clavicles, sternum, ribs, vertebrae, or pelvis. The ribs are not brittle. The skeletal muscle is dark red and firm.

HEAD: The scalp is free of hemorrhage. The calvarium and base of the skull are normally configured and have no fractures. The dura is intact, and there is no epidural or subdural hemorrhage. No fluid was in the sphenoid sinuses.

CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM: The unfixed brain weighs 1330 grams. The leptomeninges are glistening and transparent without underlying hemorrhage, exudate, or cortical contusions. The hemispheres are symmetrical and have a normal gyral pattern. There is no flattening of the gyri, narrowing of the sulci, midline shift, or evidence of herniation. The arteries at the base of brain have minimal atherosclerotic changes, and there are no aneurysms.

Sections through the cerebral hemispheres have a uniform, intact cortical ribbon and uniform white matter. The basal ganglia, thalami, hippocampi, and other internal structures are symmetrical and without focal change. The ventricles are not enlarged, and the linings are smooth and glistening. Sections of the brainstem and cerebellum show an intact structure without focal lesions.

SPECIMENS RETAINED

TOXICOLOGY: Samples of central and peripheral blood, vitreous humor, gastric contents, and liver are retained for toxicology.

HISTOLOGY: Representative sections of organs and tissues are retained. Sections of the heart (2), lungs (4), liver (1), and kidney (1) are submitted for histology.

Cassette summary:

Cassette 1: Heart, left ventricle, and interventricular septum

Cassette 2: Right lung

Cassette 3: Left lung

Cassette 4: Kidney, liver

PHOTOGRAPHS: Facial identification photographs, external overall photographs, and photographs of selected findings are taken.

RADIOGRAPHS: None.

MICROSCOPIC EXAMINATION

HEART: Sections show orderly cardiomyocytes with some showing enlarged hyperchromatic nuclei. The myocardium is without areas of geographic fibrosis, inflammatory infiltrates, hemorrhage, or necrosis. Within the epicardial fat, there are focal collections of lymphocytes without associated necrosis. The intramyocardial vessels are unremarkable.

LUNGS: The alveoli show mild patchy expansion of the alveolar spaces with clubbing of the terminal alveolar walls. There are scattered pigmented and non-pigmented macrophages. No inflammatory infiltrates are seen. There is moderate perivascular anthracotic pigment deposition. The bronchioles show no basement membrane thickening, submucosal smooth muscle hyperplasia, or glandular hyperplasia. The vessels are markedly congested. There is no foreign material in the airways or airspaces.

LIVER: A section shows preserved hepatic architecture. There is moderate diffuse macro and microvesicular steatosis. No fibrosis, necrosis, or inflammatory infiltrates are seen. The portal areas have minimal chronic inflammation. The sinusoids are congested.

KIDNEY: A section shows preserved renal architecture. The tubules have minimally autolyzed epithelium. There are no polarizable crystals in the tubules. There are scattered globally sclerotic glomeruli. The interstitium is unremarkable. There is minimal myointimal hyperplasia of arteries and arterioles

MFE:BS:lcb

D: 2/8/21 T: 3/29/21

Rev. 4/6/21 lcb



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TOXICOLOGY REPORT

Name: **LISOWSKI, Elena**
Medical Examiner Number: **2021-00529**
Date of Death: **02/07/2021**
Time of Death: **13:50**
Pathologist: **Melanie Estrella, D.O. / Bethann Schaber, M.D.**
Specimens Received: **Central Blood, Gastric, Liver, Peripheral Blood 1, Peripheral Blood 2, Vitreous**
Date Specimens Received: **02/09/2021**

<u>Test Name (Method of Analysis)</u>	<u>Specimen Tested</u>	<u>Result</u>
<u>Alcohol Analysis (GC/FID-Headspace)</u>	Peripheral Blood 2	
Alcohol (Ethanol)		Not Detected
Acetone, Isopropanol, Methanol		Not Detected
<u>Drugs of Abuse Screen (ELISA)</u>	Central Blood	
Amphetamines		Not Detected
Benzodiazepines		Presumptive Positive
Buprenorphine		Not Detected
Cannabinoids		Not Detected
Carisoprodol		Not Detected
Cocaine metabolites		Not Detected
Fentanyl		Not Detected
Methadone		Not Detected
Opiates		Not Detected
Oxycodone		Not Detected
Phencyclidine (PCP)		Not Detected
Zolpidem		Not Detected
<u>Base Screen (GC/MS)</u>	Peripheral Blood 1	
Bupropion		Detected (<0.50 mg/L)
Bupropion metabolites		Detected
Chlordiazepoxide		Detected
<u>Acid/Neutral Screen (HPLC/DAD)</u>	Peripheral Blood 1	Not Detected
<u>Benzodiazepines (HPLC/DAD)</u>	Peripheral Blood 1	
Chlordiazepoxide		0.07 mg/L
Demoxepam		Detected
Nordiazepam		Detected (<0.05 mg/L)
<u>Vitreous Chem Panel (Cobas c111)</u>	Vitreous	
Chloride		125 mmol/L
Creatinine		0.5 mg/dL
Glucose		12 mg/dL
Potassium		9.6 mmol/L
Sodium		140 mmol/L
VUN		36 mg/dL

Unless otherwise requested, all specimens will be destroyed six (6) months after the closure of the case by the Medical Examiner
End Results



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Approved and Signed: _____
03/08/2021 Ray Gary
Toxicologist III