



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

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For Information Contact Public Affairs
SANDY RAYNOR
Telephone: (602) 514-7625
Cell: (602) 525-2681

DRUNK DRIVER PLEADS GUILTY TO KILLING MAN IN WHEELCHAIR

PHOENIX— Mary Anne Fernandez, 31, of Mohave Valley, Ariz. and a member of the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, pleaded guilty to Involuntary Manslaughter for killing a 53-year-old member of the Colorado River Indian Tribe.

On July 7, 2008, Fernandez was speeding erratically in a neighborhood on the Colorado River Indian Reservation, going 50mph in a 15mph zone. While trying to pass a stopped car, she went into the opposing lane of travel and struck a man in a wheelchair. The crash severed the victim's leg and he was killed instantly.

After striking the man, Fernandez kept driving. Her car bottomed out in a dip in the road and became disabled about a quarter-mile from the site of the crash. She then fled on foot. Officers caught up to her shortly thereafter, and tested her blood for alcohol concentration. The test registered .229, above the Arizona legal limit of .08.

The crime of involuntary manslaughter carries a maximum sentence of eight years in federal prison and three years of supervised release. Sentencing is set for May 4, 2009 in front of U.S. District Judge Mary H. Murguia.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Colorado River Indian Tribes Police Department. The prosecution was handled by Jennifer E. Green and Raynette M. Logan, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-08-1080-PHX-MHM
RELEASE NUMBER: 2009-073(Fernandez)

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