

D.J. Harrison expected to be extradited this month to face murder charges in Kemmerer

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Later this month, Dereck James Harrison, 23, will be extradited and moved from the Utah Department of Corrections in Draper, Utah, to the Lincoln County Detention Center in Kemmerer to face sentencing on his involvement in the death of Kay Porter Ricks, a 63-year-old American Fork, Utah resident whose body was found near Kemmerer on May 17.

Harrison will be heard by Hon. Frank J. Zebre at the Circuit Court of the Third Judicial District in Kemmerer. Ed Wall will be representing D.J. Harrison.

County attorney Spencer Allred said he is in no hurry to extradite Harrison because he is waiting on forensic lab reports to return from the FBI Laboratory located at the Marine Corps Base in Quantico, Va., and the Wyoming State Crime Laboratory in Cheyenne. He said that more than 300 pieces of evidence have been collected.

This high-profile case involves a pursuit by multiple policing agencies across two states, as they searched for Harrison and his father Flint Wayne Harrison, 52. Their suspicion that two separate incidents of kidnapping were related were found to be true and days later the pursuit ended with sad results.

An investigation has shown that Ricks was kidnapped by D.J. and Flint Harrison on May 12 at a Utah Transit Authority substation in Salt Lake City where he was last seen working around 5 p.m.

An intense manhunt was made that led Utah and Wyoming authorities to Sublette County, Wyo., near Half Moon Lake.

Ricks was found by Diamondville Police Chief Mike Thompson and Corey Stoof, Lincoln County Sheriff's deputy. Thompson had received a tip that a resident had seen a UTA truck at the Diamondville Artic Circle drive-in restaurant earlier that day, so they decided to take a drive on State Highway 189 and do a search for the truck and Ricks.

Later, FBI and Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation investigators would determine that Ricks had been killed the night of May 12, the same day he was kidnapped. Authorities agree he had been driven near the Cumberland Bridge, 16 miles south of Kemmerer.

Ricks' autopsy revealed that he died due to direct trauma to the head by a blunt object, though he was found with other injuries including a slit throat. A utility knife was found under Ricks' body.

The investigation reveals he was then dragged into the sagebrush and left to bleed to death. They then

tried to hide the UTA truck by spraying paint on it. That same paint was found on the clothes worn by D.J. and Clint Harrison, later in the investigation.

Flint Harrison turned himself into the authorities at the Sublette County Sheriff's Office on May 14. That night an unarmed D.J. Harrison surrendered also, after roads were blocked at the Fremont Lake overlook and an FBI helicopter flew overhead. Residents were warned and shown photographs of D.J. Harrison. It was thought there might have to be an evacuation of the Sylvan Bay and Half Moon Lake residents.

A major manhunt was made with around 50 officers from the Wyoming Highway Patrol; Sweetwater County Sheriff's Office; Sublette County Sheriff's Office and Fire Department; Green River, Rock Springs, Kemmerer and Diamondville police departments; Utah Division of Public Safety; the U.S. Marshal's Office; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; Utah Transit Authority; and the Bridger-Teton National Forest.

Three days later, an FBI search team helicopter spotted the UTA truck on May 17.

Harrison has already been sentenced for the kidnapping, with multiple assaults, of a mother and her four daughters at a Centerville, Utah, home owned by D.J. Harrison's grandmother, which occurred on May 10, 2016.

The women were tied up and assaulted until they escaped later that day. A 9-1-1 call was made by one of the daughters after their escape. They reported that both Flint and D.J. Harrison had invited them over for a barbecue and then taken them into the basement of the Centerville home and assaulted them. It is thought that both father and son were high on methamphetamines at the time.

Pinedale residents D.J. Harrison and his father Flint Harrison were charged with 30 years to life for these Utah crimes on June 28, 2016.

In the early morning of July 25, 2016, Flint Harrison hung himself and was declared dead, in spite of efforts by jail and medical employees to revive him when he was found in his cell.

His suicide came 26 days after the initial murder charges were filed in Wyoming on June 28. D.J. Harrison will serve his time in Utah for 30 years to life, after being sentenced in Kemmerer. Harrison could face the death penalty here, or at the very least serve another life sentence in prison if found guilty in the murder of Kay Porter Ricks.