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Slaying victim faced fraud sentence

By Dan Herbeck

Jun 6, 2008

A man killed earlier this week in a West Side apartment had been scheduled to be sentenced June 25 in U.S. District Court on tax-fraud charges.

But Buffalo police say the slaying of former Jamestown businessman Kevin M. Smith, 43, has no apparent connection to the federal case.

Smith, who had been beaten and stabbed, was found Tuesday afternoon in a Chenango Street apartment where he had been staying.

Buffalo homicide detectives quickly charged Dennis R. Washington, 46, of Fairfield Avenue in Niagara Falls, with second-degree murder and possession of a weapon.

Niagara Falls police arrested him Wednesday in that city. Police said the two men knew each other but declined to discuss the motive for the killing.

"There is no indication at this time that the slaying had anything to do with the victim's case at federal court," Dennis J. Richards, Buffalo chief of detectives, said Thursday.

Smith, whose record included a federal drug conviction, had been involved with auto sales, a limousine service and a tax service in the Jamestown area. He accepted a felony plea deal in February after a lengthy tax fraud investigation by the Internal Revenue Service criminal division.

Smith admitted that he signed his wife's name on a tax return, falsely stated his wife's income and put false information on eight other federal tax returns and seven state tax returns, the U.S. attorney's office said.

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According to court records, advisory guidelines called for Federal Judge Richard J.

Arcara to sentence Smith to a minimum of 15 months in prison. [Log in](#)

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In 1994, according to federal court records, Smith pleaded guilty and was sentenced to three years' probation for transporting a 50-pound shipment of marijuana in one of his limousines.

Police said Smith had been managing some properties in the city in recent months.

He had two children, according to his attorney, federal public defender Marianne Mariano, who described his death as a tragedy.

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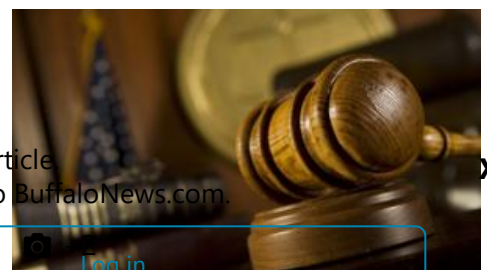
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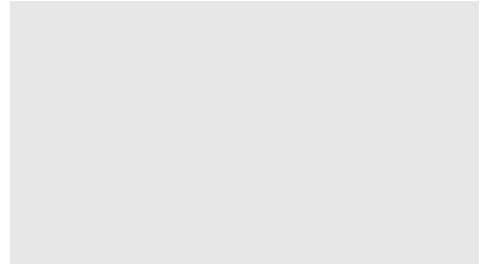
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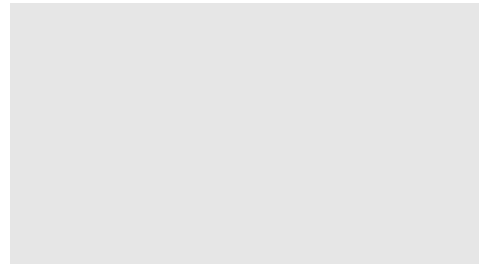
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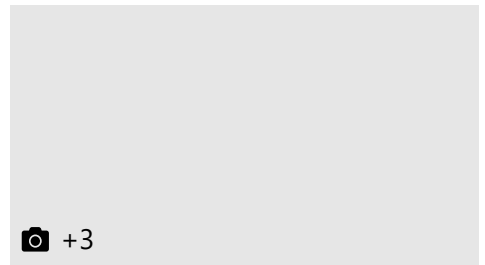
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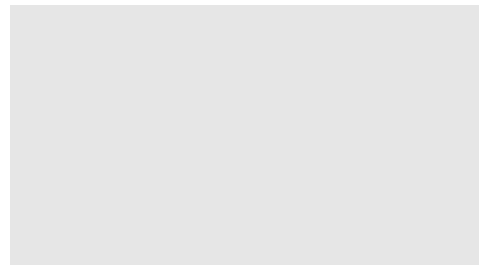
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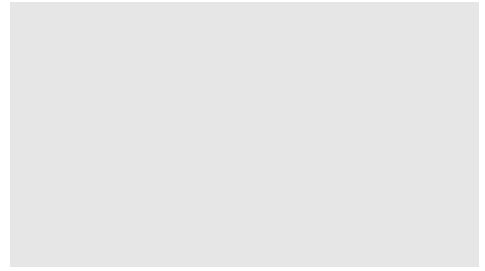
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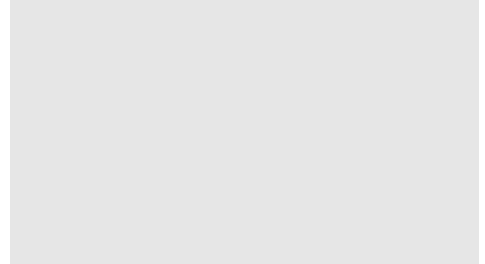
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