

SARASOTA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

VICTIM: Murray B. Cohen
W/M 9/14/30
4919 Commonwealth Dr.
Sarasota, Fl.
(941) 349-1212
Deceased

CASE #: 03-3611

OFFENSE: Death
STATUS: Supplement

DATE TYPED: 03/09/04

PERIOD COVERED UNDER INVESTIGATION: 07/08/03 to date

Det.: Captain J. Bell # 14 *MB*
Ear
Copy to:

SUPV: Major K. Gooding # 3

SUPPLEMENT

This is a supervisory supplement in summary of the SSO Case # 03-3611. The case at hand involves the reported unexpected natural death of 72-year-old Murray Cohen by his wife Maria Cohen. Murray's son, Steven Esdale, has questioned the manner of death and made accusations regarding Maria either contributing to his death or failing to aid him near the time of his death.

The cause of death was determined based on the reported statements of Maria Cohen, consistent with the appearance at the scene, information from responding emergency personnel, the medical information from Mr. Cohen's physician (Dr. McHugh), along with external examination of the body by investigators and the Medical Examiner's Office.

Mr. Esdale has raised suspicions contrary to the reported cause of death that led to additional investigative procedures and reassignment of the case to a highly trained and experienced investigator. As a result of the continued investigation, additional witnesses have been interviewed, body fluid and hair have been tested, and audiotapes have been enhanced and reviewed.

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Worthy of note is the fact that Mr. Esdale has continually demonstrated a pattern of abusive and offensive behavior towards investigators and supervisors from the Sheriff's Office. He has also been abusive to members of the Medical Examiner's Office. Investigators have been encouraged to make findings based on the facts as supported by evidence, despite Mr. Esdale's insults and attempts to intimidate them toward his conclusion.

The finding to date as presented by the investigators and reviewed by the Medical Examiner's Office and the State Attorney's Office is that there is insufficient evidence to support a manner of death other than as reported and determined (unexpected natural death). The finding remains supported by the facts contained in paragraph two of this report in addition to the following:

1. Negative toxicology reports from hair and vitreous fluids.
2. Examinations and review of phone calls and records do not contest reported facts.
3. No statements made by Maria Cohen are inconsistent with the report.
4. No medical findings inconsistent with the manner of death reported
5. Examination of enhanced audiotapes by the FBI, independent investigators and supervisors do not support the reported evidentiary findings alleged by GaideCom.

Based on the present facts of the investigation I concur with the finding and recommend that this case be closed with the manner of death being attributed to natural causes without evidence of criminal conduct by Maria Cohen.