

RAPED MAID WINS APPEAL IN SUIT VS. HOTEL COMPANY

Woman: Employer failed to protect her from assailant

BY KRISTINA DAVIS

SAN DIEGO
A state appeals court has revived a housekeeper's lawsuit that accuses hotel management of failing to protect her from a violent, prolonged rape by a drunken trespas-

passer. The opinion filed Thursday by a three-judge panel of the 4th District Court of Appeal sends the case against Pacific Pearl Hotel Management back to San Diego Superior Court.

On Dec. 21, 2015, several hotel employees at the Wyndham Garden San Diego on Sports Arena Boulevard saw or encountered the trespasser, who was not a guest, walking around with a beer

in his hand, according to the complaint. They didn't report it to management or ask him to leave the property, according to the complaint.

The man wandered around and propositioned at least two housekeepers for sex as they were cleaning rooms, according to the complaint. The second instance triggered a report to management, and the trespasser's information was broadcast on a walkie-talkie system.

The housekeeper at the center of the lawsuit was working in a different building at the time. Another manager checked the first floor of that building but not the second, where she was cleaning, according to the complaint.

The housekeeper's cleaning cart was parked in front of the door of a room she was working in when the man pushed his way inside.

He punched her in the face, knocking her unconscious. For the next two hours, he assaulted and raped her, while her cleaning cart remained outside the door.

Christopher Stevens was arrested a few days later, pleaded guilty to the rape and was sentenced to 65 years to life in prison.

The appeals judges ruled the superior court should not have dismissed the lawsuit in the hotel manage-

ment company's favor. "If an employer knows a particular person's abusive conduct places employees at unreasonable risk of sexual harassment, the employer cannot escape responsibility to protect a likely future employee victim merely because the person has not previously abused that particular employee," the ruling states.

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JENKINS City has to think bigger

FROM B1
tion and management of the Carrillo Adobe, San Diego's oldest residence, as a museum.

Modular buildings that fit into the Old Town aesthetic will house a San Diego golf museum, pro shop and three Pro Kids classrooms.

I can hear you asking. How much is this pie in the sky costing the city?

Not a penny. In fact, the city will collect \$2,000 a month rent, more than twice what it's receiving now.

So why has play been stopped?

The city's Real Estate Assets Department, which oversees Presidio, takes its time in analyzing proposals. It's unclear how many competitors, if any, are in the running, says John Vallas, the executive director of Friends of Presidio Hills Golf Course, Inc.

Vallas believes a decision will be rendered in January.

My fear is that the city will make the easy choice, a modest renter like the current one who cannot afford to irrigate (with the exception of greens and tee boxes) and evidently uses the parking lot, which is almost always empty due to the dismal condition of the course, as a revenue source.

For little Presidio, as with other civic sore spots (homelessness, stadium land, convention center), San Diego has to think bigger, smarter.

Here you have a team of golf romantics willing to move heaven and lots of earth to raise nearly \$6 million to both honor the past and color the future green.

After initial archaeological work, which will cost about \$1 million, Presidio would be closed for a year for course construction as fundraising, both individual and corporate, would go into overdrive.

The first Titleist would fly in early 2020, an inaugural round that I know will break the heartstrings of every San Diego golfer who remembers Presidio for what it was.

A gateway drug to one of life's most glorious highs.

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PIONEER AND PRINCE



EDUARDO CONTRERAS U-T

Legendary Scripps oceanographer Walter Munk (left), who turned 100 last week, shares a laugh Thursday with special guest, His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, during the Centennial Conversation program at Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla.

WATCHDOG

FROM B1
their time because they care deeply about San Diego and want to help make things better."

The Mayor's Office said Faulconer welcomed the consultants because they have decades of experience in health care and public policy.

Alexander "participated in a handful of meetings to provide insight about policy, as well as contacts in the health care industry who may be helpful in stopping the spread of hepatitis A," Block said in a statement. "We welcome anyone with expertise in public health to offer their assistance to the region's efforts to stop the hepatitis A outbreak."

Critics question whether the communications experts are the right ones to involve.

"We need to focus on resolving the health crisis, not resolving the political crisis that may or may be occurring for elected officials," said Michael McConnell, an advocate for homeless people. "That's not hepatitis A intervention. That's political crisis intervention."

McConnell said he would welcome the chance to attend city-county hepatitis A conferences, to which he has not been invited.

Mesa College political science professor Carl Luna said allowing public relations professionals to participate in certain government planning meetings is unusual.

"These are supposed to be public (sector) discussions," he said. "You bring in stakeholders who have an interest in the subject at hand, but you don't usually bring in PR people who can spin it afterwards."

The liver-infecting hepatitis A outbreak was first identified in March. Since then, county epidemiologists have confirmed more than 500 cases in San Diego County, including 19 fatalities. The epidemic has struck the homeless population most severely.

Critics have said San Diego was slow to respond to the hepatitis outbreak, but city officials have repeatedly said public health is a county function.

Joint city-county discussions over the local response to the hepatitis A epidemic have included some of the

top public health officials in the region and the elected officials they report to.

One meeting attendee told The San Diego Union-Tribune that inviting outside PR professionals to strategy sessions was unexpected in a meeting where confidential medical information would likely be shared.

The independent consultants suggested specific language for public statements as a way of mitigating the health crisis, the person said.

"Clearly their goal was to manage the message," the attendee said.

The Mayor's Office had

its own take on one meeting in early September.

"The group discussed ways to increase public outreach amid the outbreak," Block said. "In that meeting, Mayor Faulconer recommended a joint news conference on Sept. 19 to update the public and take questions from the media — the first such news conference since the outbreak was declared in March."

Alexander did not return a call seeking comment on his consulting work. Neither did Alan Ziegas, the Southwest Strategies chairman.

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OCTOBER'S AVERAGE TEMP RUNS 4.7 DEGREES ABOVE NORM

3 heat waves this month have pushed the readings higher

BY GARY ROBBINS

The average monthly temperature at San Diego International Airport is running almost five degrees above average due to three heat waves that have baked the region this month.

Through late Thursday, the airport's average monthly temperature was 71.8 degrees, or 4.7 degrees above average.

The city has hit at least 90 degrees four days this month. Besides this week, temperatures spiked Oct. 6 and 7 (86 and 88 degrees), and again on Oct. 15 and 16 (90 and 89). The normal high on Oct. 1 is 74, and it drops to 72 on Oct. 22.

The average monthly temperature represents the average of the lowest and highest temperatures recorded each day.

San Diego was running about two degrees above average this month before this week's heat wave, which brought readings of 92, 97 and 98 degrees.

"You can have a lot of change in that number when you have heat that is excessive as what we've just had," said Dan Gregoria, a weather service forecaster.

Temperatures will moderate through early next week. Monday and Tuesday, Halloween, are expected to be cooler than normal.

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