

State police agents make arrest in Rita Jaramillo case

Written by Staff Reports
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LOS LUNAS, N.M. – On Oct. 1, the New Mexico State Police Investigations Bureau was asked to assist the Valencia County Sheriff's Office with a missing persons case.

On Sept. 23, the Valencia County Sheriff's Office was called to a trailer house that had been burned belonging to Rita Jaramillo at 6 San Luis Rey Place in the El Cerro Mission District of Los Lunas. Deputies learned from family members that they haven't heard from Rita Jaramillo since Sept. 20.

Valencia County detectives had reason to believe there was foul play involved so Jaramillo was listed as missing and the New Mexico State Police Investigations Bureau was contacted to investigate the case.

On April 29, after an extensive months long investigation, New Mexico State Police Investigation Bureau agents have arrested and charged Arthur James Lovato, 59, of Albuquerque, with an open count of murder in the first degree and three counts of tampering with evidence. Lovato was served with the arrest warrant at the Western New Mexico Correctional Facility in Grants where he is currently incarcerated on an unrelated matter.

In order to protect information contained in the arrest warrant that could compromise the investigation, investigators have sealed the arrest warrant for Lovato, until the investigation is complete and has been provided to the district attorney for prosecution.

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Once the seal has been lifted, more information about the details of the case that led to the arrest of Lovato will be released. Currently, there is no additional information available.