

Career criminal, sidekick indicted for first-degree murder

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ALBUQUERQUE - Darrell Desiderio, 42, and Ervin Yazzie, 41, both of Tohlokai, N.M., have been indicted for first-degree murder and other crimes of violence in Indian Country.

A federal grand jury in Albuquerque indicted Desiderio and Yazzie July 26. The indictment charges Desiderio and Yazzie with first-degree murder, kidnapping resulting in death, and conspiracy to commit kidnapping.

The indictment alleges that Desiderio and Yazzie committed these offenses on June 7. The two defendants allegedly tricked the victim into driving them to a remote area where Desiderio allegedly said they could find women willing to party. When they reached the location, Desiderio allegedly held a knife to the victim's neck and told Yazzie to take the victim's keys. Desiderio then allegedly killed the victim by stabbing him with a knife and beating him with a golf club.

Desiderio made an initial appearance in federal court on July 26. Yazzie made his initial appearance on Oct. 18 after being held in state custody until earlier this month.

Desiderio and Yazzie are now in federal custody pending trial. Each faces life in prison if convicted of first-degree murder or kidnapping in death. They face up to life in prison if convicted of conspiracy to commit kidnapping.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation investigated this case with the Navajo Police Department, Gallup Police Department, and McKinley County Sheriff's Office. Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph Spindle is prosecuting the case.

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Desiderio has 15 records listed with New Mexico Courts that range from DUI to battery of a household member dating back as far as 1999.

Yazzie has 31 records listed with New Mexico Courts dating back as far as 1989 ranging from intoxication to debt and money due.

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