

**RIVERSIDE**

**Man screaming in road dies after arrest**

A man standing in a roadway screaming at motorists became combative and assaulted a Riverside police officer, and subsequently died at a hospital after police had taken him into custody Friday night, Riverside police said in a news release.

The 35-year-old man died in the emergency room at Parkview Community Hospital Medical Center in Riverside, the Riverside County coroner's office said in a news release.

The man's name was not released pending notification of next of kin.

The man had been standing in the 78000 block of Cypress Avenue creating a traffic hazard for motorists about 9:45 p.m. He died at 10:37 p.m., the coroner's office said.

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11/02/08

11/06/08

# Police version of death offered

**MAN IN CUSTODY:** The Riverside police review board is told he was out in traffic before they restrained him.

**BY SONJA BJELLAND**  
THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

A man who died in police custody last week had been beaten with batons and shocked.

Riverside police Capt. Mark Boyer addressed the Community Police Review Commission on Wednesday night, providing the first public details of the incident.

The commission cannot investigate the death until law enforcement investigations conclude, which could take several months.

Marlon Oliver Acevedo, 35, was screaming and standing in stopped traffic on Cypress Avenue in Riverside about 9:45 p.m. Friday, Boyer said.

Police do not know why Acevedo was screaming at traffic. An autopsy report will not be complete for about eight weeks.

When police approached, Acevedo raised his fists and walked toward the officers. Officers Koehler and Ratkovitch struck Acevedo in the knees and legs with retractable batons, Boyer said. The officers' first names were not provided.

Acevedo punched Koehler in the right eye and Ratkovitch shocked Acevedo with a Taser, Boyer said.

The officers then handcuffed Acevedo and called for medical aid, the captain stated.

While waiting for paramedics, Acevedo began kicking and the officers requested another officer, Boyer said.

Officer Heiting arrived and assisted in restraining Acevedo with a device called a "hobble" that controls the legs.

Boyer said Acevedo was on his side after he was restrained.

When paramedics arrived, the handcuffs and hobble were removed once they realized there was a medical emergency, he said.

Boyer said he would have to assume that Acevedo was collapsed or unconscious and no longer resisting.

Acevedo was taken by ambulance to Parkview Community Hospital Medical Center where he was pronounced dead at 10:37 p.m. Friday.

Acevedo's family has hired attorney Samer Habbas to begin investigating if excessive force was used.

# Riverside police to discuss death of man

BY SONJA BJELLAND  
THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

A Riverside Police Department captain will give a public briefing tonight about the circumstances surrounding the death of a man in police custody.

The Community Police Review Commission investigates officer-involved deaths. The briefing will take place at the commission meeting at 5:30 p.m.

at City Hall, 3900 Main St. in Riverside.

On Halloween at 9:45 p.m., Marlon Oliver Acevedo stood in Cypress Avenue, screaming at motorists and creating a traffic hazard, according to a Riverside police news release. He became agitated with officers and did not comply with their orders, the release stated.

Acevedo then assaulted one

of the officers, police said.

Acevedo was then taken into custody. The Riverside Fire Department and American Medical Response treated Acevedo for an undisclosed illness before he was taken to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead, police said.

Acevedo, 35, was pronounced dead at 10:37 p.m. at Parkview Community Hospital, according

## in custody with review commission

to the Riverside County coroner's office. Police have not released more details.

The commission previously requested more timely briefings from the Police Department after a man died after being handcuffed. The police did not provide the typical briefing, and City Attorney Greg Priamos told commissioners they would violate the City

Charter if they investigated because the case did not involve officer conduct but Priamos would not explain why.

The commission voted to begin a preliminary investigation to determine whether the death was related to officer conduct. The coroner's office ruled that Martin Gasbar Pablo died from natural causes. That created a rift between the city and the

commission that led to a directive to withhold money from the commission for investigations until law enforcement investigations are complete.

That directive has meant the commission has not begun investigations into two fatal officer-involved shootings that occurred last month.

Reach Sonja Bjelland at 951-368-9642 or sbjelland@PE.com

11/12/08

# Man's family skeptical of police account

**DIED IN CUSTODY:** They question details about his detention. The cause of death is being determined.

BY SONJA BJELLAND  
THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

The family of a man who died in Riverside police custody disputes the department's account of how he was handled during his detention and says their trust in law enforcement is shattered.

A photo of Marlon Oliver Acevedo, 35, with his two children sits in the living room next to lit devotional candles and flowers at his home in Riverside. He died Halloween night



**Marlon Oliver Acevedo**

after a struggle with police.

Now the family recalls the man who loved music, air guitar and making his children laugh. Every month he sent money to his three sisters in Nicaragua, said his mother, Martha Garay.

Elizabeth Lomeli, 23, Acevedo's girlfriend of five years, was back home on Cypress Avenue with their children, 2 and 4 years old, after trick or treating. She looked outside and saw police wrestling with Acevedo.

See **DEATH/C4**



MARK ZALESKI/THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

Elizabeth Lomeli, center, and Martha Garay, right, talk about Marlon Oliver Acevedo, who died in Riverside police custody after a struggle with officers on Halloween.

## DEATH

CONTINUED FROM C1

Riverside police Capt. Mark Boyer told the Community Police Review Commission that Acevedo was in the street yelling at cars when officers arrived. He raised his fists and walked toward the officers, who struck him with retractable batons.

Lomeli said she and Garay ran outside. One officer had a knee in the back of Acevedo's neck and another was putting on handcuffs.

They put on a leg restraint and then used a stun gun to shock him, Lomeli said.

"He was moving a little bit and they Tased him," she said.

Lomeli said Acevedo was kept on his stomach until he was rolled onto a gurney and put into an ambulance.

"When he wasn't moving no more we knew something had happened," Lomeli said.

Boyer said Acevedo was kept on his side after he was re-

strained.

Lomeli called local hospitals and figured out that he might be at Parkview Community Hospital Medical Clinic.

She wanted to leave the home but was told she could not because she was part of the investigation.

Lomeli said she wasn't allowed to go to the hospital for an hour and a half, and it was another two hours before anyone at the hospital was allowed to tell her anything.

The preliminary report from the coroner's office showed multiple abrasions to Acevedo's head and face, said the family's attorney, Samer Habbas.

The coroner has not yet determined the cause of death.

Habbas said the family would not comment on whether Acevedo was intoxicated or had a mental illness.

"They didn't need to do all that," Lomeli said. "They could have handled the situation in a different way."

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