

Record-Journal

145th year, No. 216

Meriden, Connecticut, Friday, August 3, 2012

Myrecordjournal.com

75¢

Records show Resto was target of 2006 revenge killing

Detective Robert Pekrul, left, and Detective Sgt. Michael Merrigan investigate a stabbing in front of the Meriden police station on June 10, 2006. It is now believed that murder suspect Frankie Resto was the intended stabbing victim.



By Mary Ellen Godin
Record-Journal staff

MERIDEN — Frankie Resto, the man charged in the June 27 killing of EZ Mart co-owner Ibrahim Ghazal, was the intended target of a 2006 homicide, police records show.

According to police reports, Resto drove Ramon “Ray” Cabassa to MidState Medical Center on June 10, 2006, after Cabassa was stabbed while at the wheel of a car Resto had been driving a short time before. Cabassa, 26, died from his wounds.

Travis Auala, then 23, was convicted of manslaughter in Cabassa’s death. But Cabassa’s family members and police said Cabassa, who had no prior police record, was not the intended target, according to Record-Journal reports at the time.

“From the information I am getting right now, and I think that the information

I am getting is correct, is that it was meant for another person in the car,” Detective Lt. William Staton said at the time. “It was retaliation for a prior event.”

In statements to police, witnesses said Auala was seeking revenge against Resto for injuries he received while being robbed the day before. By 2006, Resto already had a long history of criminal offenses, including robbery and assault.

About 24 hours before Cabassa was stabbed, Auala was in the downtown area when he was attacked and stabbed in the head. After fleeing across the Hub toward the Mills Memorial Apartments, he was picked up by a friend and driven to MidState Medical Center.

Because of the severity of the injuries,



More online

► Listen to audio of Resto’s questioning at a parole hearing: Myrecordjournal.com

MidState personnel called police.

Auala was less than cooperative. He told officers he was walking on West Main Street near Colony Street when two men wearing black hoods began running toward him. He said he was grabbed a couple of times. He did not tell police he was stabbed and provided no more information about his attackers.

About 24 hours later, according to the 2006 police report, Auala got into a green Lincoln with several other men. While in the area of Veteran and Willow streets, they saw a black SUV, with Razor —

Please see **Resto / 6**

A TIMELINE

2006

June 9: Travis Auala is stabbed in a robbery attempt near West Main and Pratt streets.

June 10: Auala fatally stabs

Ramon Cabassa in retaliation, but witnesses tell police he meant to stab Frankie Resto, who was riding in the same vehicle.

June 15: Under questioning, Resto admits that he and

Cabassa robbed Auala, but claims Cabassa stabbed him. After some reluctance, Resto picks Auala out in a lineup. Auala is charged with manslaughter in Cabassa’s death. Resto is not charged in

the robbery.

July: Resto robs two people at knife-point within one week, cutting one of his victims in the face. He is sentenced to 13 years in prison, suspended after 75 months.

2012

April: Resto is released from prison.

June 27: He allegedly robs the EZ Mart on East Main Street for money to buy heroin. Police say

he shot Ibrahim Ghazal in the chest after Ghazal handed over money from the register.

July 6: Resto is arrested in Brooklyn, N.Y. He’s being held in lieu of \$3.1 million bail and awaits trial.



Christopher G. Donovan’s latest TV ad is the first to mention the scandal surrounding his 5th District campaign.

Donovan responds to attacks

By Mark Pazniokas
© The Connecticut Mirror

Facing increasingly sharp attacks from his Democratic primary opponents, the congressional campaign of House Speaker Christopher G. Donovan addresses the arrests of two top campaign aides in a television commercial for the first time.

“You’ve seen the attacks,” Donovan says, staring into the camera. “I want you to hear directly from me.”

The commercial now airing is the campaign’s first use of paid media to address the arrests of Donovan’s former campaign manager and chief fundraiser, which are featured in a commercial and mailing by his two opponents.

“What my former campaign employees are accused of is everything wrong with politics,” Donovan says. “That’s why I immediately fired them and asked a former Republican U.S. attorney to conduct an independent investigation.”

As he speaks, the screen cuts to a Hartford Courant front-page with the headline: “Independent probe clears Donovan.” It refers to an investigation by former U.S. Attorney Stanley Twardy, which was commissioned by his campaign.

“The truth is no one in Connecticut has worked harder than me to clean up elections. I’m Chris Donovan. I’m proud to be endorsed by the Democratic Party,” he says. “In Congress, I’ll fight for seniors and working families, just like I have my whole life.”

The commercial comes less than two weeks before the three-way 5th Congress-

Please see **Donovan / 6**

Two shot during ‘large fight’ in Meriden; cause unknown



Meriden police have been investigating a brawl and double shooting that happened early Thursday morning in the area of Sherman Avenue and Britannia Street. Area residents said they believe one or both of the victims lived at 192 Sherman Ave., the large house on the right in this photo.

Christopher Zajac
Record-Journal

Police: Commotion was on Sherman Avenue, Britannia Street

By Andrew Ragali
Record-Journal staff

MERIDEN — Two men were shot several times Thursday morning during what police describe as a “large fight” in the area of 160 Sherman Ave. involving 60 to 70 people or more.

Sgt. Darrin McKay, police spokesman, said officers were notified of the fight at around 1:40 a.m., and the majority of calls came from homes between 160 and 170 Sherman Ave., where the two victims were found.

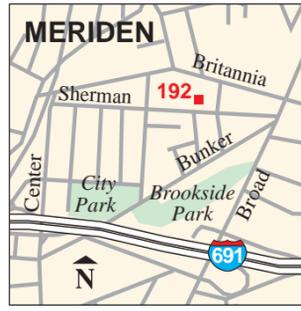
The men received multiple gunshot wounds and were taken to nearby hospitals. Police said both men were listed in serious but stable condition Thursday, but have not released their names and ages.

Witnesses reported to police that a man was seen in the area of the fight and that they believe he may have been involved in the shootings.

The SWAT team was deployed to a nearby house that the man was seen entering after the shootings. The house was cleared by the SWAT team, but no arrests were made.

According to two witnesses who live on the street, police raided a house at 136 Britannia St., not far from Sherman Avenue. Several families live in the red-and-white building near the intersection of Britannia and Warren streets.

One witness who lives on Britannia Street said police arrived at the house close to 2 a.m. He said all the lights in the house



More online

► See the video at Myrecordjournal.com/Video

were off when police arrived. Police kept calling for the resident in question to come down

with his hands up, said the witness, but he didn’t do so immediately. The witness said he heard a loud bang, and that he thought it was the police disabling a lock on the door. At about 3:30 a.m. the suspect came out of the house, the witness said.

The owner of Buck Phifty Barber Shop, 109 Sherman Ave., said much of the commotion Thursday morning was concentrated on Britannia Street. He said a woman had said earlier in the morning that her boyfriend and brother were shot. The shop owner said she lived at 192 Sherman Ave.

No one answered the door at the residence.

The barber shop owner said

Please see **Two shot / 6**

Partly sunny, hot and humid
High 90
Low 70
Forecasts, Page 15

Craving pizza? We've got you covered — at 50% off or more in our Pizza Night Deal Store!

Wallingford

► The two teachers and one principal embarking on a yearlong paid sabbatical to develop an innovative solution to a problem facing the school district have begun seeking input from the community. **Page 15.**

Southington

► The Family Resource Center finally has a home — at Hatton School. The center, which offers programs for young children and parents, is moving from Derynoski School and will no longer be mobile. **Page 13.**

SUBMIT EARLY – We strongly recommend that Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application to upload an application will vary depending on speed of your Internet connection, and the time it takes Grants.gov rejects your application (see step three below). Washington, DC time on the deadline date.

Meriden

► “We strongly recommend that applicants do not wait until the last day to submit the application,” reads the U.S. Department of Education website tips page. And yet, the Meriden Children First Initiative waited until the final hour and missed the deadline to compete for millions of dollars to help underprivileged children. **Page 11.**

Connecticut

► Attorney General George C. Jepsen says Hartford Hospital must explain how it protects and secures personal information following the apparent theft of a computer containing unencrypted data on 9,558 patients. **Page 11.**

► Members of a new state task force are analyzing the complexities of liquor rules and price controls that haven’t faced a real overhaul since the repeal of Prohibition in 1933. **Page 6.**

8 14084 00001 2

Myrecordjournal.com/Pizza

Follow us on Twitter
Record_Journal

Like us on Facebook
Record Journal