

**COUNTY OF SUFFOLK
DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**



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Jury selection starts for Flanders man charged in Hampton Bays DWI fatal

Jury selection for the aggravated vehicular homicide trial of a 31 year old Flanders man began in Central Islip today, Suffolk County District Attorney Thomas Spota said.

During the early morning of January 5, 2014, Joseph Perez was driving his F-150 pickup at a high rate of speed westbound on Montauk Highway entering Hampton Bays after leaving the Dream Nightclub where he had crashed into a parked car as he was leaving.

At approximately 4:15 am near the Ponquogue Avenue intersection, Perez drove onto the shoulder of the road, sideswiped a parked car and struck another vehicle and its driver who was outside of the car delivering newspapers. The victim, 56 year old Donna Sartori of Middle Island, was pronounced dead at the scene.

"This office secured a blood warrant and the analysis of the defendant's blood established he had a blood alcohol level of .20, nearly three times the legal threshold of intoxication approximately four hours after the crash," DA Spota said.

Charges in the nine count indictment include aggravated vehicular homicide, manslaughter, vehicular manslaughter, aggravated driving while intoxicated, reckless driving and leaving the scene. The top count, aggravated vehicular homicide as a class "B" felony, is punishable by a period of imprisonment of up to 25 years.

State Supreme Court Justice Fernando Camacho (third floor of the First District courthouse) will preside at trial.



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Defendants are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.