



ERIK NASARENKO

VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

NEWS RELEASE



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Camarillo Man Admits Killing Mother, Found Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity

VENTURA, Calif. – The Ventura County District Attorney's Office announced that David Hoetzlein (DOB 06/04/97), of Camarillo, admitted in court today that he strangled and killed his mother, Tomoko Hoetzlein, in their Camarillo home in 2022. However, because of a severe mental disorder that prevented him from having the mental capacity required to be held criminally responsible at the time of the killing, Hoetzlein was found not guilty by reason of insanity.

Hoetzlein admitted to second-degree murder of his mother. Two independent doctors evaluated Hoetzlein and each concluded he met the legal criteria for a finding of not guilty by reason of insanity. Prosecutors did not object to those opinions based on Hoetzlein's documented mental health history, the doctors' reports, and input from Hoetzlein's family.

"Tomoko Hoetzlein was a devoted mother who did everything in her power to get her son the mental health treatment he desperately needed," said Chief Deputy District Attorney Erin Meister. "Tragically, she lost her life while trying to help him."

On June 3, 2022, Ventura County Sheriff's deputies responded to the area of Townsite Promenade after a man searching a dumpster for recyclables discovered human remains. Detectives and the Medical Examiner responded and found the body parts of a woman. She was identified as Tomoko Hoetzlein. The investigation revealed Hoetzlein had strangled and killed her before dismembering her and putting her remains in the dumpster.

Hoetzlein had a lengthy, documented history of severe mental illness. In the days before the killing, he had been released from Vista del Mar, and his mother was trying to get him readmitted. She had written to the hospital, contacted his case worker and reported to law enforcement. Hoetzlein was determined to be incompetent to stand trial until May 2024.

Hoetzlein will return to court on August 27, 2026, to be placed in a maximum-security state mental hospital for treatment where he faces a maximum term of life in confinement.

Case: 2022013701

Defendant Information:

David Hoetzlein (DOB 06/04/97)

Camarillo

Charges:

- PC 187(a) - Murder

