

## **Alleged drunken driver pleads not guilty**

Paulino Najera, a 21-year-old Pescadero man charged with a felony DUI and vehicular manslaughter following a collision that occurred on Highway 1 in Pescadero in May, pleaded not guilty to the charges in court last week.

On May 5, Najera had reportedly been drinking tequila and beer with friends at Muzzi Ranch where he lived and worked. He and 63-year-old J. Guadalupe Hernandez Camacho got in Najera's 1998 Ford and headed north on Highway 1 in search of dinner.

Authorities say that Najera veered into oncoming traffic at around 8:40 that night and that the resulting crash killed Camacho and seriously injured the driver of a vehicle in the oncoming lane.

Fourteen cans of beer were reportedly found in Najera's Ford and the defendant was on probation for two separate misdemeanor drunk driving convictions that occurred in January 2018.

The case was continued to March 25, 2019, for a pretrial conference and to set a jury trial date. The defendant remains in custody on a \$10 million bail.

***--HMB Review***