



## Mesa County Coroner's Office

Dean M. Havlik, MD, Coroner

Kim Hollingshead, D-ABMDI, Chief Deputy Coroner

### MEDIA RELEASE

Date: April 21, 2011

Contact: 970-256-6462  
[coroner@mesacounty.us](mailto:coroner@mesacounty.us)

#### For Immediate Release

The Mesa County Coroner's Office has completed its examination regarding the death of James N. Rossett, a 31-year-old male resident of Grand Junction. According to the autopsy report, *"The decedent is a 31-year-old male who was involved in an altercation when he sustained a blow to the left side of the face/jaw which resulted in [a] fracture of the left jaw and motion of the head causing a tear of the left vertebral artery. The vertebral artery is a major blood vessel that supplies blood to the brain and it is susceptible to traumatic tears when the head is abruptly turned and neck extended backward. Tears of the vertebral artery produce massive subarachnoid hemorrhage (bleeding around the surface of the brain) and are rapidly incapacitating and fatal."* The **Cause of Death** was **Vertebral Artery Tear due to Blunt Force Head Injury** and the **Manner of Death** was **Homicide**. The Manner of Death as classified is done under the strict definition of homicide; the killing of one human being by another human being. That finding in no way implies any culpability to any person or persons involved in this incident.

The law enforcement agency overseeing this investigation is the Grand Junction Police Department. Please contact them for any further details.

Thank you