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Today's Inquirer

Today's Daily News

Pennsylvania

Posted on Sat, Aug. 20, 2005

Arrest warrant not issued in hit-run that killed teen

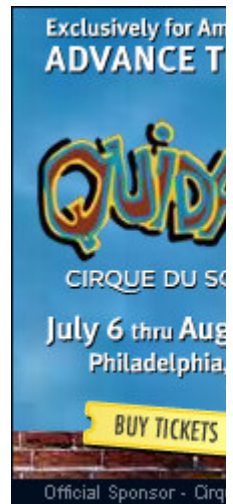
An official had said one was being put together for Susanna Goihman, whose Lexus struck the girl, 15.

By Jacqueline Soteropoulos and Thomas J. Gibbons Jr.
Inquirer Staff Writers

No warrant was issued yesterday for the arrest of the woman whose Lexus killed a teenager in June, but a spokeswoman for District Attorney Lynne M. Abraham called the case "a very aggressive investigation."

"The D.A.'s priority is to get justice for Kayla Peter," spokeswoman Cathie Abookire said yesterday. "Sometimes, people wonder why it takes so long: The point is the D.A. is committed to a very aggressive, thorough and solid investigation. We want to build a strong case, and it's very important that we have a strong case."

The Inquirer reported yesterday that a law enforcement official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Homicide Unit detectives were preparing a warrant to be approved by the District Attorney's Office.



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Abookire declined to comment yesterday on when a warrant might be approved.

Susanna Gohman, owner of the Queen Village restaurant Azafran, has been the focus of that investigation and a grand-jury inquiry after police determined that her white 2002 Lexus was responsible for the hit-and-run death of Peter.

Gohman, 40, of the 3600 block of Henry Avenue, has recently been staying near her parents in South Florida.

Court records from a January DUI arrest indicate that she is a native of Venezuela and that she has lived in Philadelphia for about eight years.

Abookire declined to comment on whether **Gohman** is considered a flight risk.

Gohman's attorney, Brian McMonagle, said yesterday that his client is a U.S. citizen. He declined to comment on a law enforcement suggestion that **Gohman** might flee the country, nor would he discuss any aspect of the case.

Neither **Gohman** nor her family could be reached for comment yesterday.

Gohman has declined to talk with police, triggering community protests outside her East Falls home and her restaurant.

Peter, 15, of the 4800 block of Ridge Avenue, would have been a junior at John W. Hallahan Catholic High School for Girls this fall. She was crossing Ridge Avenue toward her home when she was struck June 19.

The impact tossed her into the air and under the Lexus, which sped off. She died of head injuries.

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