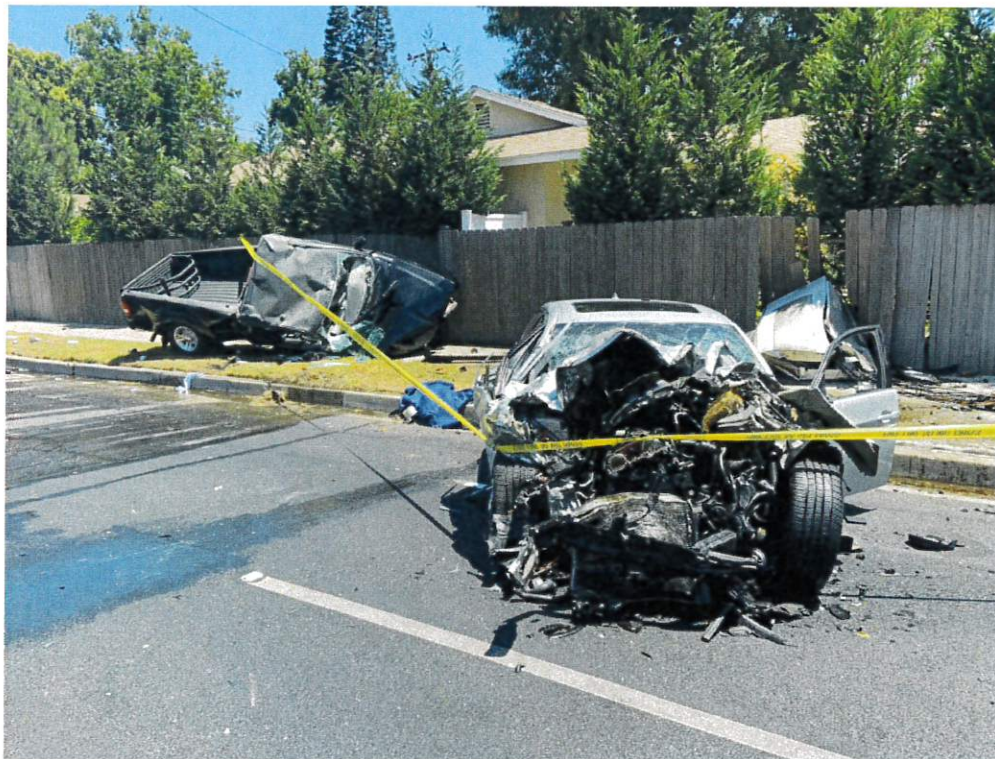


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## Orange County Register editor killed in Santa Ana crash

Eugene Harbrecht was making a turn in his truck when a racing car slammed into it, police said. Two men were arrested on suspicion of vehicular manslaughter, one while being intoxicated.



A man in his 60s died Thursday, July 30, after the truck he was driving was struck by a sedan racing another vehicle in Santa Ana. (Photo courtesy of the Santa Ana Police Department)

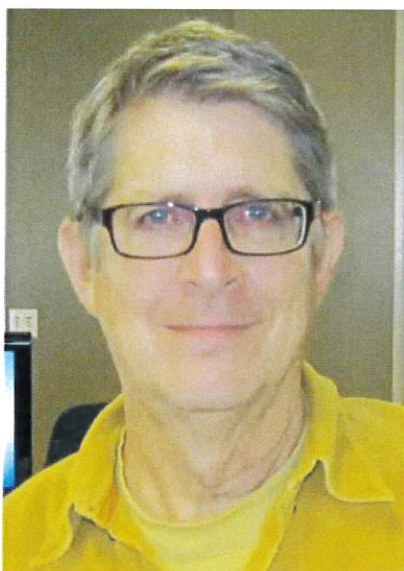
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A longtime Orange County Register editor died Thursday after his truck was hit by a BMW involved in a street race with another car, authorities said.

Eugene Harbrecht, a Santa Ana resident, was 67 years old. He worked for the Register since March 1984, most recently as the national and international [news editor](#) for the greater Southern California News Group.



Gene Harbrecht

The crash that resulted in his death happened at about 11:45 a.m. on Bristol Street and Santa Clara Avenue, said Santa Ana police Cpl. Anthony Bertagna.

**Related:** [Gene Harbrecht, a longtime Register editor, was a 'newsman to his core'](#)

Before the crash, witnesses reported that a silver BMW sedan and a dark colored Infiniti sedan were racing at high speeds northbound on Bristol Street. The BMW slammed into a Ford Ranger that was traveling southbound on Bristol and turning left on Santa Clara, Bertagna said.

The impact pushed the truck about 60 feet into a fence where it started to catch fire.

"There were two guys who live in the area that went and broke the window and pulled the victim out (of the truck)," Bertagna said. Officers arrived soon after and put out the fire with an extinguisher.

Harbrecht was taken to UC Irvine Medical Center hospital, where he died. The driver of the racing BMW was hospitalized in unknown condition. He was later







Orange County Register editor Eugene Harbrecht. (Photo by Nick Koon, Orange County Register/SCNG)

The Infiniti involved in the race fled the scene, Bertagna said. A witness reported the sedan's license plate number to police, who found the car a few hours later and stopped it at a post office off First Street near Pacific Avenue.

The driver was identified as Ricardo Tolento Navarro, 24, of Santa Ana, and taken into custody. He was booked into the Santa Ana Jail on suspicion of vehicular manslaughter.

The crash knocked down wires and Bristol was closed from 17th Street to Memory Lane.

Bertagna said police are seeing an uptick in street racing in recent months. This is the second fatality related to racing in the city this year.

"We've always had street racing," he said. "We're seeing it more. People aren't working, they're at home, less cars on the road and I guess they decide to street race. But people lose their lives."

