

# ✓ Spedding arraigned in King murder

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SANTA CRUZ — District Attorney Art Danner says nothing a mountain man has told authorities about the death of Ernie King has persuaded him to alter the murder charge filed in the case.

Robert Anderson Spedding, 29, surrendered to authorities Wednesday, saying he wanted to tell his side of the story.

Danner wouldn't reveal what the story was, except to characterize it as "self-serving."

"He said nothing to change our mind

KING, Ernie  
as to the charges. We are still basing our decision on statements made by witnesses," Danner said.

Spedding, who lives in the Summit area where King was killed last Friday night, is scheduled to be arraigned on murder and attempted robbery charges at 8:30 this morning in Municipal Court.

Spedding made a brief court appearance Thursday, when Judge Tom Kelly appointed attorney Mitchell Page to represent Spedding. Spedding told Kelly he thought that family members were attempting to engage an attorney.

Spedding waived his right to counsel when he talked to investigators Wednesday

day afternoon.

He surrendered at the urging of his employer, detectives said.

The employer, Bob Hickman, told the Sentinel that Spedding admitted to striking King, but only because he mistook King's intentions, unaware of King's hearing and vision problems. But he said Spedding denied shoving or forcing King out of the back of a moving pickup truck. The Coroner's Office has said that King, 38, died of head injuries suffered when he struck the pavement.

Hickman also said, and authorities confirmed, that Spedding called and apologized to King's widow, Nancy,

before turning himself in.

Detectives have said that King, who suffered from tunnel vision and could not drive, was killed after approaching Spedding and his friends for a ride down Old San Jose Road.

They said Spedding commuted to graduate-level classes at San Jose State University with a fellow student who lived at the Summit. Detectives said Spedding then would either get a ride down the Old San Jose Road with one of the many commuters who use the park-and-ride lot or call his wife to pick him up.

**Please see MURDER — A5**