

Hearings today for two in killing

much KING, Ernie

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SANTA CRUZ — Two men charged in connection with the killing of Live Oak resident Ernie King Friday night will be arraigned in Municipal Court this morning, while the manhunt continues for King's suspected murderer.

Gregory James Kern, 24, will be arraigned at 8:30 a.m. in Judge Tom Kelly's courtroom on charges of assault with intent to commit great bodily harm. Kern is charged with being one of the two men who attacked King while he was

hitching a ride home on Summit Road from a class at San Jose State University. Kern's bail is set at \$250,000.

Also scheduled to be arraigned is Brett Erickson, suspected of being the driver of a pickup truck from which King allegedly was pushed, on charges of failing to stop at the scene of an accident. His bail is set at \$5,000.

The man accused by authorities of actually causing King's death is Robert A. Spedding, 29. Spedding reportedly also participated in the beating of King, and then later

pushed King — who was legally blind and hearing impaired — out of the truck while it was moving.

District Attorney Art Danner announced Tuesday that Spedding, who is suspected of trying to rob King just before pushing him from the truck, will be charged with first degree murder if captured. A \$500,000 warrant has been issued for Spedding's arrest.

Two other men who were at the scene of the beating on Summit Road and then followed the pickup truck and witnessed King's being thrown from it have not been charged.