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California pastor charged with murder after man dies months after Las Vegas fight

Robert Cox, a pastor from Manteca, was with a group from his youth ministry at a sports bar when a fight occurred between them and Link Ellingson. There are conflicting reports of whether Cox threw a punch, but Ellingson fell to the ground and died from injuries after his head hit the pavement. Cox's side claims Ellingson started the fight.

BY [JOEL LANDAU](#) [Follow](#) / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS / Sunday, June 8, 2014, 3:27 PM

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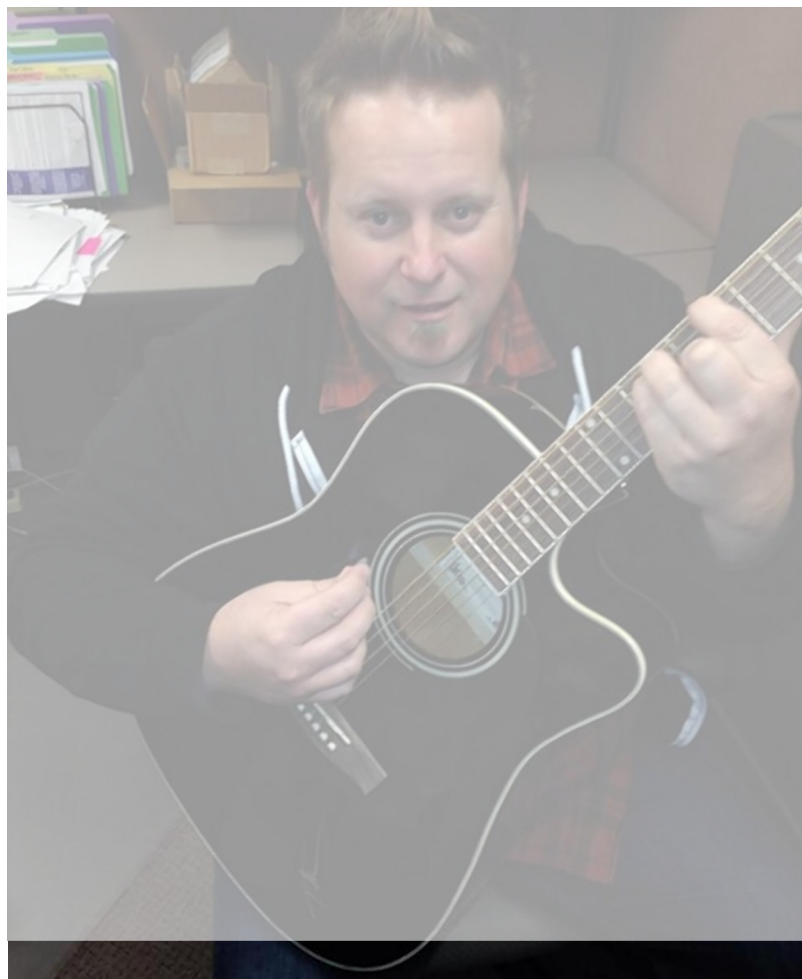
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A California pastor has been charged with murder after a man died following an altercation with the pastor and a group of his youth ministry interns a year ago in Las Vegas.

Robert Cox, a pastor from Manteca, was arrested Friday and charged with murder after Link Ellingson died from his injuries, which he sustained from hitting his head on a concrete sidewalk outside a sports bar, [reports TV station FOX40 in Sacramento](#). The victim died six months later.

Authorities allege Cox punched the 6-foot-8 Ellingson, which caused the fall but that the pastor has denied.



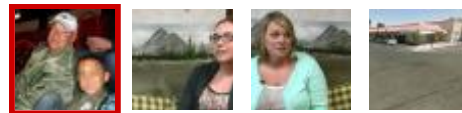
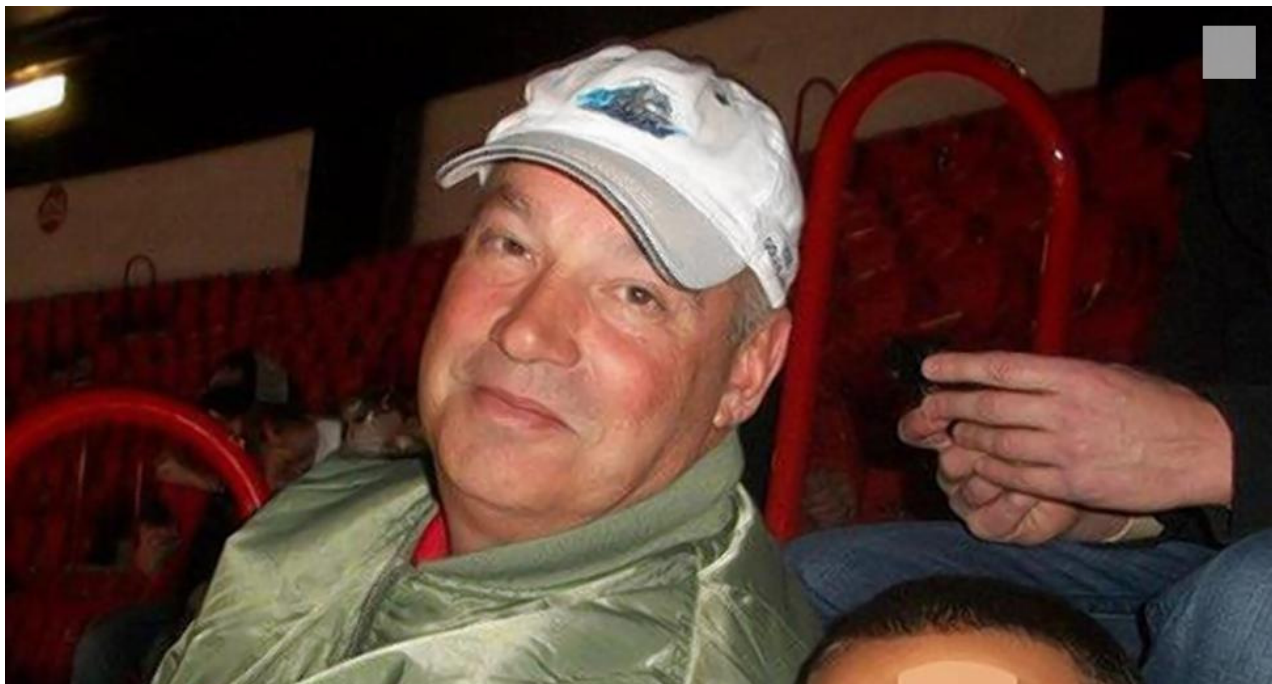
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Pastor Robert Cox is awaiting extradition to Nevada to face a murder charges in the death of Link Ellingson.

But Cox's family said he was acting in self-defense after Ellingson, the alleged aggressor, assaulted several members of the group, the station reported.

"He said, 'Hey girlfriend, you want to 'F' with me?' And Rob was immediately like, 'Oh my gosh, no,' backed up, 'I have kids here,' said no. And the man said, 'Well I'm coming to 'F' with you,'" [witness Kelli Lane told the station](#). "He assaulted five of us multiple times before Rob could get his arms around him to push him back and, unfortunately, when he was pushing him back they tripped and fell."

But Jayna Hardy, Ellingson's niece, [told TV station KTNV](#), her uncle was a gentle giant.



"I was so fortunate to have such an awesome guy in my life," [Hardy said](#).

Ellingson's wife Marie [posted on her Facebook page](#) that she thanks everyone for their support and asked people to be kind and thoughtful when discussing the case.

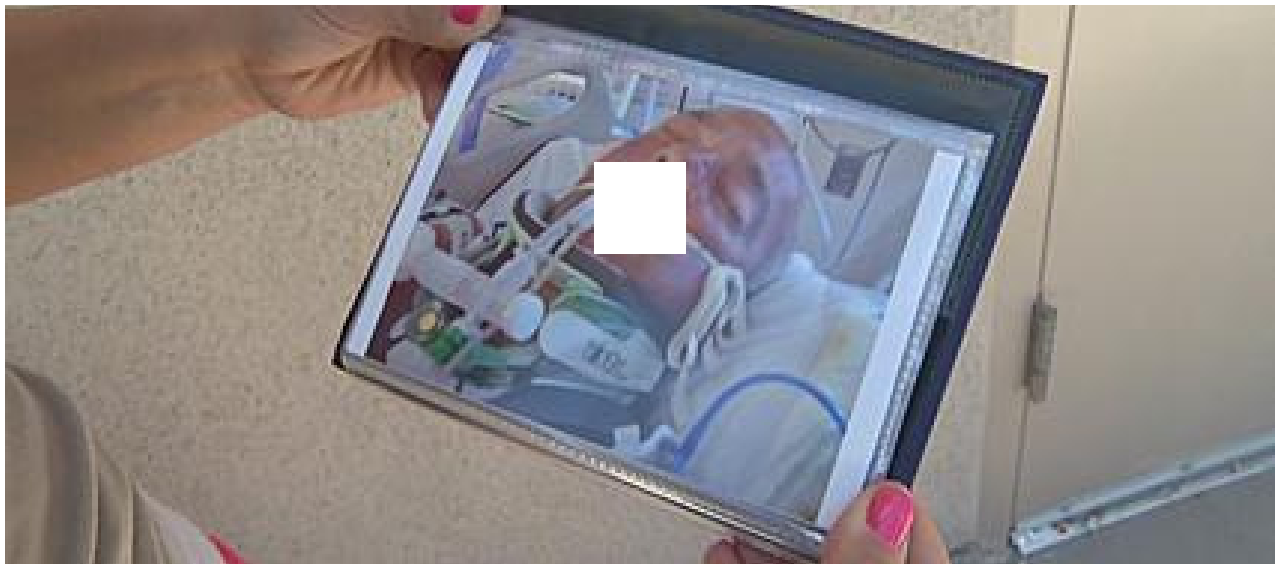
"Whatever the outcome. Please keep us in your prayers and thoughts," [she wrote](#). "God is good and his will, will prevail."

She added Sunday is the one year anniversary of the incident and the event is becoming “raw” again.

The Clark County District Attorney's Office has not commented publicly on the charges.

California youth pastor arrested in Las Vegas man's death

A youth pastor from California has been arrested in the death of a Las Vegas man from last year.



Cox was arrested at his home and is currently in county jail awaiting extradition to Nevada, FOX40 reported.

His wife Julie said the family was shocked to learn charges had been filed in the case.

She told FOX40 the pastor suffered a broken finger from the incident but he did not throw a punch.

“He needs a good morale booster, he’s struggling,” she told FOX40. “Obviously, he has no criminal past, no history of this.”

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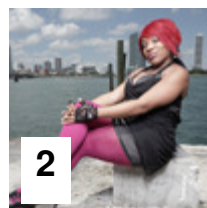
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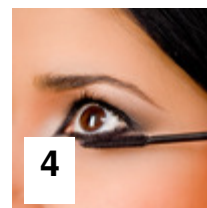
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