

Nevada's top court denies appeal of Incline wife killer

By Martha Bellisle, Reno Gazette-Journal

Peter Bergna, a former Incline Village art appraiser convicted of staging a 1998 crash on Slide Mountain that killed his wife, failed to prove a long list of claims against his lawyers, the Nevada Supreme Court said in denying his appeal.

A Washoe District Court jury found Bergna guilty in 2002 of orchestrating the murder of his wife, Rinette Riella-Bergna, by sending his Ford truck plunging 700 feet down the mountain with her trapped inside. He has insisted on his innocence, saying the brakes failed.

Bergna was sentenced to life in prison with parole possible after 20 years. He lost his first appeal to the high court in 2004 and filed a motion in Washoe District Court claiming his lawyers did not defend him adequately.

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