



OFFICE of the DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**David Hollister, District Attorney**

520 Main Street, Room 404

Quincy California 95971

(530) 283-6303 • Fax (530) 283-6340

## **Criminal Case Update #2 - 2017**

### **June 2017**

Thank you all for your support and efforts in making Plumas County a safe and just place to live, work and play. We have encountered a tremendously busy start to our summer season with the conclusion of a five week murder trial, a host of complicated incoming cases and a staff of prosecutors one-third of its traditional allotment. Nonetheless, our office continues to take great pride in serving Plumas County and assuring justice is served. In particular, I do want to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of a couple of our employees.

Kelly Styger is a relatively new prosecutor, with just over two years experience in the DA's office. During the last few months, as we operated short a prosecutor while prosecuting a murder trial, Kelly stepped up and took on a large volume of complicated work without hesitation or complaint. Her skill set has continued to grow as a trial litigator as has her leadership. Kelly is an outstanding asset and we hope she will continue her growth as a prosecutor here in Plumas County.

Gary McFarland is our newest investigator. Under the leadership of Jessica Beatley, Gary has hit the ground running and performed admirably in all aspects of his job. Gary brings a level of enthusiasm and tenacity benefitting Plumas County and our pursuit of justice. In particular, Gary has reinvigorated our bad check program with tremendous results. Our bad check program works with local merchants to recover losses when customers pay by a check with insufficient funds. This program allows merchants to continue to accept payment by check and our citizens the ability to pay by check. Gary has visited nearly every business in Plumas County to explain our program and, in less than three months, has recovered over \$1,000 in funds our local merchants would have otherwise lost.

Plumas County remains a remarkably safe and beautiful place in which to live or visit. While we do have crime it is not numerous or unpredictable as is found in other parts

*Our mission is to vigorously, fairly and compassionately seek justice every day.*

of our great state. Below is a sampling of some recent cases in Plumas County to demonstrate efforts by our criminal justice and law enforcement partners to assure your safety and justice in our court system are priorities in Plumas County.

**People v. Daniel Harrington, Jacob Harvie, Nicholas Degrego and Autumn Matherly (F16-00641, 643, 640)**

On January 13, 2017, Jacob Eugene Harvie, age 18 of Castro Valley, CA, Autumn Rose Escalante Matherly, age 21 of Los Angeles, CA, and Daniel John Harrington, age 19 of Oakland, CA, were convicted of residential burglary, a serious felony and a “strike.” Shortly thereafter, Nicholas Christian Degrego, age 20 of Castro Valley, and Taj Davis Madsen, age 21 also of Castro Valley were convicted of the same offense. All five defendants were sentenced on June 2, 2017 where they were placed on formal probation, ordered to serve 9 months in county jail, and be subject to other terms of probation such as paying restitution and staying away from Bucks Lake, etc. In aggravation, the five did a significant amount of damage to a series of seasonal homes. In mitigation all five were relatively young and lacked any significant criminal record. The convictions stemmed from a series of burglaries of seasonal homes in the Bucks Lake Highlands area in late July 2016. The group had been staying at a relative’s cabin when they engaged in a series of burglaries. In addition to taking numerous items, the group vandalized the residences to varying degrees. I want to thank the Plumas County Sheriff’s Office, in particular the Detectives division for their outstanding work on this case as well as the Alameda County Sheriff’s Office for their assistance in locating suspects and stolen property. “Cold” burglary cases such as these are not only incredibly difficult to investigate but require a great deal of time and resources to reach a successful conclusion.

**People v. Joshua Paul Cooper (F16-00324)**

On February 23, 2017, Joshua Paul Cooper, age 33 of Quincy, was convicted of felony Gross Vehicular Manslaughter while Intoxicated. Cooper was sentenced to 4 years in state prison on April 20, 2017. Cooper was arrested on April 22, 2016 when, during a snow storm with near whiteout conditions, he lost control of his vehicle and crossed into oncoming traffic – hitting another vehicle whose driver was killed. Cooper was found to have a blood alcohol content of .10%. I am very appreciative of the investigative work in this case by CHP Officer Bruno as well as the patience and understanding from the victim’s daughter.

**People v. Kenneth Davidson (F16-00659)**

On February 10, 2017, Kenneth Michael Davidson, age 47 of Quincy, was convicted of a felony violation of possessing methamphetamine for sale and admitted he had suffered a “strike” prior conviction as well as three “prison prior” convictions. Davidson was sentenced on March 17, 2017 to seven years in state prison. Davidson was arrested on September 20, 2016, when he was contacted by a deputy after being dropped off. During the contact Davidson ran and, while fleeing, discarded 20 grams of

methamphetamine. I want to thank Deputy Rob Gott, Detective Kris Frazier and Sgts. Carson Wingfield and Steve Peay for their efforts in this arrest and investigation. Methamphetamine continues to be a tremendous problem in our community – impacting friends, family, the jail, our court system, schools, hospitals and businesses. As we continue to offer rehabilitative services to the addicts we must also take meaningful steps in curbing the distribution of meth by appropriately addressing those who profit from the sale of this insidious drug.

#### **People v. Deseree Johnston (F16-00579)**

On February 17, 2017, Deseree Qunella Johnson, age 27 of Oroville, was convicted of felony first degree burglary. Johnson was sentenced on March 24, 2017 to four years in state prison. Johnson's conviction stems from an investigation concerning a series of burglaries in the Silvertip Springs area of LaPorte in late April / early May 2016. I appreciate the continued efforts of our Sheriff's Office, particularly the Detectives division, in solving this crime. Burglaries of seasonal residences in Plumas County are an attack on our sense of safety and security in addition to being difficult to solve and incredibly frustrating for property owners and law enforcement alike. Convictions such as this demonstrate law enforcements resolve in keeping our community safe.

#### **People v. Nicholas John Prinsen (F17-00259)**

On May 26, 2017, Nicholas John Prinsen, age 18 of Reno, Nevada, was convicted of first degree felony burglary as well as a count of felony second degree burglary. Prinsen is scheduled to be sentenced on July 21, 2017 where he will receive up to four years and eight months in state prison. Prinsen was arrested following an investigation concerning a series of break-ins at dormitory rooms at Feather River College over winter break. I want to thank the Plumas County Sheriff's Office Deputy Moffett as well as the Detectives Division and the staff at Feather River College for their quick and thorough investigation in this case. We are fortunate to have an extremely safe environment at our local college for students to learn and grow. While unfortunate incidents such as this do happen, they are the exception and are dealt with in a swift and just manner consistent with the safety of our citizens being a priority in Plumas County.

#### **People v. Richard Fleisher (F17-00258)**

On June 16, 2017, Richard Gerald Fleisher, age 58 of Portola, was convicted of felony child molestation and admitted he had suffered a prior "strike" conviction. Fleisher is scheduled to be sentenced on July 14, 2017 when it is expected he will receive a term of 17 years in state prison. Fleisher was arrested following an incident involving a 10 year old victim. Through the combined efforts of our Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office and a concerned citizen, Fleisher was located in Arizona where his surrender was arranged and he was transported back to Plumas County. This was a horrible and offensive crime impacting all who worked on the case. I want to extend my appreciation to the investigators from the Sheriff's Office, DA's Office, state of Arizona

as well as the concerned citizen and, especially, to the victim and her family for their help and patience.

### **Cases of Interest**

There are a number of upcoming cases of interest. Some include:

2015 LaPorte Burglary Case(s) – we are still pursuing outstanding fingerprint evidence;  
People v. Nazira Maria Cross (Homicide case) extradition pending from Peru.

**Thank you, again for your support and efforts. Should you have any questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact me at the DA's Office.**

**Respectfully yours,**

**David Hollister**

**District Attorney**

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