



# BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Three Sought in Pit Bull Attack on Local Woman

District Attorney Mike Ramsey and Public Health Director Phyllis Murdock today announced the conclusion of a criminal investigation and issuance of arrest warrants for three local residents involved in a vicious dog attack that put a 68-year-old Oroville woman in the hospital with life threatening injuries. Ramsey said the attack occurred on May 21, 2012 as the woman was doing yard work in her own yard in the Palermo area.

Ramsey said two dogs, a 70-pound pit bull named "Gus" and a 45-pound queensland heeler named "Shane", were involved in the attack upon the woman that left her with two broken legs and a severely shredded left calf muscle. The dogs attacked over and through a fence which separated the woman's yard from that of her neighbor's. The dogs belonged to the neighbor and her son. The woman had her eight-year-old great grandson with her at the time of the attack, but told him to retreat to her house and call for help. The woman remains in a local hospital as doctors attempt to save her left leg.

Murdock said her county Animal Control Division officers had previously received reports that the pit bull was roaming at large in the rural neighborhood and acting aggressively. Citations had been issued and further investigation was continuing when the attack occurred. The involved dogs are in the custody of Animal Control pending legal proceedings.

Ramsey said arrest warrants for felony violations of Allowing a Vicious Animal At Large Causing Serious Injury have been issued by a superior court judge for the dogs' owners **Chic Gordon**, 54, Palermo and her son, **Ruben Cambra**, 32, Oroville. A separate warrant was also issued for **Theodore Scherbenske**, 55, Oroville, for helping Conceal a Felony for his part in taking the pit bull away from the scene of the attack to conceal it from authorities.

Ramsey said the crime of Allowing a Vicious Animal at Large requires the dog's owners or those having custody or control of the dog to know of its vicious propensities and not keep it confined with ordinary care. Authorities claim the pit bull was known to be vicious and was in fact referred to as a "guard dog" by Gordon. Ramsey said the fence around Gordon's property was insufficient to hold the pit bull as evidenced by prior escapes and the involved attack.