



BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



MICHAEL L. RAMSEY
District Attorney

FRANCISCO R. ZARATE
Chief Deputy District Attorney

RICHARD WEST
Chief Investigator

PRESS RELEASE

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Halloween Sucker Puncher Admits Guilt

A Citrus Heights man who came to party in Chico over the Halloween weekend in 2012 pleaded no contest to felony battery charges in Superior Court this morning. His victim, a former Shasta College football player, remains in a rehabilitation facility as the result of brain damage inflicted in the battery incident.

Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey said Andres Rodriguez, 21, of Citrus Heights, was arrested by Chico Police on October 28, 2012 after an early morning scuffle between two passing groups of Halloween revelers on W. 8th Street near Cherry Street in Chico. Police found Tyler Burton, 22, of Redding, lying unconscious on the ground. An investigation revealed a verbal dispute arose between the two groups as they passed on the sidewalk and Rodriguez stepped up beside Burton and delivered what was described as a “sucker punch” to Burton’s head. Burton fell to the concrete sidewalk, suffering two fractures to his skull and brain damage. Burton remained in a coma for five weeks.

Ramsey said Burton was at the time a standout for the Shasta College football team, but his life has been unalterably changed since that night. He is paralyzed on his left side, uses a cane to walk and has severe short term memory loss. He remains in a rehabilitation facility out of the area. He will most likely need continuing care for the rest of his life.

Ramsey said Rodriguez faces up to four years in state prison when he is sentenced August 20, 2013. Ramsey said his office will seek the maximum term including restitution for Burton’s past and future medical expenses. Rodriguez has been in the Butte County Jail since his arrest.

“We need to send a message that such stupid, tragic violence will not be tolerated,” Ramsey said. “All too often we see late night fights on the streets of downtown Chico turn quickly and frighteningly into severe and permanent injury. From all reports, Burton was a bright, friendly young man who in no way contributed to his own injury, but had the misfortune of running across another young man spoiling for a fight.”