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PRESS RELEASE

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COMANCHE CREEK STABBER SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON

The 30-year-old homeless man, convicted earlier this month of the stabbing death of another homeless man in the Comanche Creek homeless encampment, was sentenced to life in prison today in Butte County Superior Court.

A jury had previously found Jedidiah James Wright, 30, guilty of murder stemming from the August 1, 2021 incident at Comanche Creek in Chico, where Wright fatally stabbed the victim, John Snoberger, 47.

Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey said that in the summer of 2021, both Wright and Snoberger were living at the homeless encampment in the Comanche Creek Greenway near the intersection of E. Park Avenue and the Midway. Snoberger had a camp near the front north entrance, while Wright had a camp near the south back of the camp.

Witnesses from the encampment testified during the trial that Snoberger had just returned from a convenience store down the street, and was at his camp when Wright approached and asked his name. Snoberger identified himself, and was almost immediately stabbed directly in the chest by Wright with a two-inch long knife he had concealed in his back pocket. A later autopsy showed the knife pierced Snoberger's heart leading to his rapid death. Evidence was also presented that the attack was unprovoked. Wright stabbed Snoberger without warning despite Wright's claim at trial that he acted in self-defense after Snoberger swung at him once with a closed fist prior to the stab. The jury rejected this defense.

Snoberger's three siblings addressed the Court, noting Snoberger left behind a son and other members of a loving family. They also noted the loss of their brother, uncle, and friend would be felt by all for the rest of their lives. Snoberger's brother, Robert Snoberger Jr., shared a poignant story that in 1992 he and his brother were in a park in Auburn, California when a stranger approached Robert. As the man approached Robert, the stranger's hand was in his back pocket. His brother John, sensing the danger, stepped in between Robert and the stranger and was stabbed in the stomach with a knife. In 1992, John's life was saved at the emergency room, which was not the case here. The tragedy of a similar event happening almost 30 years later resulting in his brother's death will forever resound with Robert and his family.

Ramsey noted that often the frustrations with homeless encampments often overshadows the real-life consequences the members of homeless community face. Where Snoberger resided at the time of his death has no bearing on the loss that will be felt by the family and friends that loved him and who will mourn him for the rest of their lives.

Wright will be transported to the California Department of Corrections to serve his life sentence with a minimum parole date of 16 years.

