



# BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



**MICHAEL L. RAMSEY**  
District Attorney

**MARK MURPHY**  
Chief Deputy District Attorney

**JASON WINES**  
Chief Investigator

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
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### CHICO MAN CHARGED WITH STEALING FROM DEAD ROOMMATE

A Chico man, who allegedly lived with the body of his deceased roommate for the past four years, was arraigned in court today for stealing the identity and monies of that dead roommate.

**Darren Wade PIRTLE, 57, of Chico**, was arraigned in Butte County Superior Court this afternoon on a charge of identity theft and multiple counts of forgery for writing checks from the account of **Kevin Olson, 64**. Olson's body was found last week as a result of a search warrant served at Olson's home in the 2600 block of Burnap Avenue in Chico.

Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey said the search warrant stemmed from a missing person investigation begun in August of 2022. A relative of Olson reported to police that he had not seen or heard from Olson in approximately four (4) years. According to Ramsey, the relative reported that he and another relative had made attempts over the years to contact Olson and had spoken to Olson's roommate, **PIRTLE**, during those contacts. The relative reported **PIRTLE** always gave various excuses as to Olson's absences.

A Chico Police officer also contacted **PIRTLE** at the Burnap Avenue residence and was told that Olson was "out of town."

Ramsey stated the police interviewed relatives and friends of Olson. Based upon those interviews the police determined the last confirmed sighting of Olson occurred in October 2018.

Ramsey said during the missing person investigation, Chico detectives learned Olson was retired from the United States Navy and had accounts at the Navy Federal Credit Union. With the assistance of the Butte County District Attorney's Office, the Chico detectives obtained a search warrant for Olson's accounts. The account records showed Olson's retirement checks were deposited directly into his credit union account each month. The records further showed the mortgage for Olson's Burnap Avenue home continued to be paid, initially by check, but starting in June 2019, by automatic payment.

Further records showed approximately 50 checks had been written to **PIRTLE** from the account since July of 2019. Ramsey said detectives compared the writing and signatures on the checks written to **PIRTLE** with known writing and signatures of Olson and concluded the checks were not written or signed by Olson.

**PIRTLE** was found to be still living at Olson's Burnap Avenue home during the service of the search warrant at the home last week. Inside the residence, officers located the body of Olson on the floor of what had been his back bedroom. Based upon the condition of the body, officers

requested the assistance of the Department of Justice Crime Lab in Chico and anthropologists from CSUC.

Based upon the financial records and the condition of the body, Ramsey said it is believed that Olson died in late 2018. An autopsy to determine the cause of death is pending.

During the arraignment today, a public defender was appointed to represent **PIRTLE** and bail was set at \$165,000 pursuant to the bail schedule. **PIRTLE** will be back in court for appearance with counsel and entry of plea on Thursday, September 29, 2022 at 8:30 a.m.