



BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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PRESS RELEASE

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Two out of Three Defendants in 2020 Double Homicide Plead Guilty

Guilty pleas were entered today in Butte County Superior Court by two defendants in an October 2020 double homicide involving a marijuana deal gone bad.

Michael Griff and **Austin Hogan**, both 24, were part of a trio of Oroville men who lured two brothers from Florida to buy marijuana here. Griff today pleaded guilty to two counts of first-degree murder and Hogan pleaded guilty to two counts of second-degree murder in the deaths of brothers **Jerry and Randy Bonds**, 39 and 33 respectively. The remaining defendant still pending trial is **Kyle Smith**, 27.

Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey said the case began when the Florida brothers' family called the Butte County Sheriff's Office on October 21, 2020 and reported the brothers missing. The family told sheriff's detectives the brothers had flown to the Los Angeles Airport two days before and rented a car. The family had tracked one of the brother's cell phone to the Forbestown area in Butte County but then lost contact.

Sheriff's detectives developed evidence linking the Oroville trio to a meeting with the Bonds at Ponderosa Way and Lower Forbestown Road in rural eastern Butte County. The alleged purpose of the meeting was for the Bonds to purchase marijuana from the defendants. The evidence showed the Bonds brothers were then fatally shot by Griff and Hogan using a handgun and a shotgun. All three defendants then concealed the brothers' bodies under vegetation in the area.

Smith then drove the victims' rental car away followed by Griff and Hogan in a separate car to a Reno, Nevada casino. Local and Nevada surveillance linked the defendants to the involved vehicles and eventually to the homicide scene where the brothers' bodies were recovered.

As a result of the pleas, Griff faces a prison sentence of 50 years to life when he is sentenced on August 8, 2023.

Hogan faces a prison sentence of 30 years to life when he is sentenced, but his sentencing will be delayed until Smith's case goes to trial. Hogan is expected to be a witness against Smith during that trial. Smith's trial proceedings were continued to June 21, 2023, to set a date for his jury trial.



Griff, Michael



Hogan, Austin



Smith, Skyle