



# BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
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### **DA Declines to File Homicide Charges in Homeowner Shooting Case**

The Butte County District Attorney has declined to file homicide charges against Darren Moran, 54, of Oroville.

On August 22, 2023, Moran was arrested by Butte County Sheriff's deputies investigating the shooting death of Bruce Pagenkopp, 29, of Oroville, on the morning of August 22, 2023.

According to Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey, after reviewing witness statements and the results of the forensic crime scene investigation, it was determined that Moran could reasonably believe he was in imminent danger of death or great bodily injury at the time he shot Pagenkopp. "Based upon the totality of the current evidence, and given our burden of proving beyond a reasonable doubt that Moran did not have a reasonable self-defense argument, we will not be filing homicide charges," Ramsey said.

However, Moran is being charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition, possession of methamphetamine with a firearm, and possession of metal knuckles. In addition, Moran has a prior "strike" conviction from 2015 involving a felony assault with a knife at a local Oroville bar. Moran remains in the custody of the Butte County Jail on \$170,000 bail.

Ramsey said the Sheriff's Office investigation determined that on the morning of August 22, 2023, Moran was inside his RV on Custer Lane, south of Oroville. Moran had been living in the RV on the property with the permission of the property owner. Around 8:00 a.m., Pagenkopp, and three others drove onto Moran's property and parked in front of Moran's RV. Pagenkopp claimed to the others that he had an ownership interest in a second RV parked on the property and stated he was going to the property to pick up the RV. According to Ramsey, Sheriff's detectives determined that there was a second RV parked on the property but determined that it was not operable.

According to Ramsey, the investigation determined that, after parking, Pagenkopp and the male driver exited their vehicle. Pagenkopp and the driver briefly walked around the property and found a generator, belonging to Moran, behind Moran's RV. Pagenkopp and the driver picked up the generator and began carrying the generator toward their vehicle. Moran saw what was happening and armed himself with a loaded handgun he kept in his residence. Pagenkopp approached the door to the RV.

Ramsey said the investigation determined Pagenkopp and Moran engaged in a brief verbal confrontation through a window of the RV and Pagenkopp said he was affiliated with a local street gang and claimed ownership of a second RV on the property. When Moran opened the door, Pagenkopp physically attacked Moran in the doorway, driving Moran to the ground. Sheriff's detectives later found abrasions on Moran's back, consistent with him being driven to the ground. While on his back, on the ground, with Pagenkopp on top of him, Moran fired at least two shots into Pagenkopp. Based upon the physical evidence, the third was fired a few

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seconds later as the wounded Pagenkopp was disengaging from Moran.

Ramsey said after Pagenkopp was shot, the driver and female passenger fled the area in their vehicle. A female passenger remained behind and called 911 and stayed with Pagenkopp while attempting CPR. Moran also remained at the scene. Sheriff's deputies arrived at the property within eight minutes of the 911 call. Deputies took over lifesaving aid and CPR. Pagenkopp was pronounced dead by paramedics who arrived shortly after the deputies. Moran was contacted by the deputies and admitted to shooting Pagenkopp. Moran was taken into custody without incident.

During a subsequent search of Moran's RV and property, deputies located the firearm, additional ammunition, several metal knuckles, and methamphetamine. The firearm was determined to have been reported missing by Moran's ex-wife in 2022.

Moran was arraigned in Butte County Superior Court this afternoon. He was remanded to the custody of the Butte County Jail and bail was set at \$170,000. Moran will be back in court on Thursday, August 31, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. for his initial appearance with his court-appointed public defender for entry of plea.



Darren Moran