



# BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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## **PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

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### **Father Held to Answer for Killing His Children in Car Crash**

A Sacramento man, who drove his truck into a local canal killing his children and a brother-in-law last Easter, was in Butte County Superior Court today where a judge found sufficient evidence to send his case to a jury trial.

Colby Allen Brookman, 28, was held to answer after a preliminary hearing before Judge Kristen Lucena. Brookman is charged with gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated and felony DUI. Brookman is facing life in prison.

Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey said on April 12, 2020, Brookman drove his truck into the canal at the end of Grand Avenue in Oroville. Brookman's wife, J'lynn Stothers, was a passenger in front seat and their two infants – Arianna, 17 months; Ava, 7 months; and J'lynn's brother, Matthew Stothers, age 32 – were passengers in the rear of the quad cab truck.

Ramsey said the evidence at the hearing showed Brookman was drinking numerous beers throughout the day and had been told not to drive. A blood test taken two hours after the crash showed his blood alcohol level to be 0.12 percent. California Highway Patrol's Multidisciplinary Accident Investigation Team (MAIT) investigated the incident and testified at the hearing. The MAIT team was able to determine through the truck's "black box" that Brookman was driving at over 80 mph just prior to the road ending at the canal. The truck launched over the levee into the canal's deep waters. The children were strapped into baby car seats in the rear seat with Matthew Stothers between them.

Ramsey said a witness testified he saw Brookman and J'lynn swim out of the water. He saw Matthew come to the surface of the water briefly, struggle and then sink below the surface. Butte County Search and Rescue later recovered the bodies of Matthew, Arianna, and Ava from the canal's water.

The judge scheduled Brookman's case for arraignment and jury trial setting on April 14, 2021. Brookman remains in custody at the Butte County Jail and is being held without bail.

