



Humboldt County Sheriff's Office

826 Fourth Street, Eureka, CA 95501

Date: 05-25-2015

From: Sgt. Jesse Taylor
(707) 923-2761

Subject: Transient Camp Assault

Case: 201502428

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On 05-25-2015, at approximately 10:55 a.m., Sheriff's Deputies with the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office were dispatched to a transient camp near the southbound Highway 101 off-ramp in Garberville. Local transients commonly refer to this camp as "Hippy Hill". The reporting party called 911 and stated that a male victim had been struck in the head with a frying pan.

Upon Deputies arrival, the victim (age 70) stated that he was approached by another transient, **Joseph Dewitt (age 37)**, who was being hostile and aggressive. The victim feared for his safety and armed himself with pepper spray. Dewitt became increasingly violent and the victim thought a physical confrontation was forthcoming. As a result, the victim sprayed Dewitt in the face with the pepper spray. Dewitt allegedly grabbed a frying pan and struck the victim several times in the back of the head.

Dewitt fled the scene prior to law enforcement arrival. The victim was transported via ambulance to a local hospital for medical treatment.

At approximately 11:05 a.m., Sheriff's Deputies were able to locate Dewitt at the intersection of Locust Street and Conger Street, Garberville. Dewitt was placed under arrest for battery causing serious bodily injury and was transported to the Humboldt County Correctional Facility for booking. Dewitt's bail was set at \$50,000.

Anyone with information for the Sheriffs Office regarding this case or related criminal activity is encouraged to call the Sheriffs Office at 707-445-7251 or the Sheriffs Office Crime Tip line at 707-268-2539

Mike Downey
Sheriff

