

# Local

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COURTS

## Cottonwood man pleads no contest

### Vehicular manslaughter results in work program

By Jim Schultz

*Record Searchlight*

A Cottonwood man has pleaded no contest to vehicular manslaughter without gross negligence, a misdemeanor, stemming from a 2004 crash that killed a Bella Vista man, according to electronic court records.

David Lee Neithercutt, 53, entered his plea on Friday in Shasta County Superior Court. He was handed a 30-day county jail sentence, which apparently will be served through a work program. Neithercutt also was placed on probation for three years, the electronic re-

ords show.

According to the California Highway Patrol, Neithercutt was eastbound on Highway 299 around 6:45 a.m. Aug. 9, 2004, when he tried to turn left onto Dry Creek Road.

The CHP said Neithercutt turned into a westbound vehicle driven by 47-year-old Curtis Mark Marsing, who died at the scene.

Both men were wearing seatbelts, and neither alcohol nor speed appeared to have been factors in the crash. The CHP has said that early morning sunlight might have been a factor.

In May 2004, Neithercutt's then

16-year-old son, Tru, pleaded guilty to felony vehicular manslaughter in connection with the Feb. 22, 2004, death of a 16-year-old West Valley High School student.

The teenager was sentenced to the Crystal Creek Regional Boys Camp, but the length of the sentence is not publicly available because of his age.

Officials have said the teenager had been driving with a blood-alcohol level of 0.08 between 75 and 80 mph on Panorama Road when he lost control of his vehicle and struck a utility pole.

The crash killed student Jason Johnson, who was a passenger in the vehicle.

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