



OFFICE OF THE
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COUNTY OF SHASTA

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PRESS RELEASE

**DESIGNATED DRIVER PLEADS
GUILTY TO DRUNK DRIVING**

May 5, 2009

“Drunks on Board” said the label on the side of Bert ‘n Ernie’s “Safe Ride Home” van, a vehicle driven by Christopher Lucero at approximately 2:05 a.m. on March 14, 2009. Mr. Lucero was the designated driver for Bert ‘N Ernie’s bar, and he was transporting two patrons home after closing time when he was pulled over by Officer Jacob Provencio of the Redding Police Department for speeding and passing on the right without a turn signal.

After initiating the traffic stop, Officer Provencio noted that Mr. Lucero appeared to be under the influence of alcohol. Mr. Lucero denied drinking any alcohol whatsoever prior to driving but stated he had drunk some Nyquil and a “Rock Star.” Mr. Lucero continued to deny having drunk any alcohol even after performing poorly on field sobriety tests and after his Preliminary Alcohol Screening (PAS) test showed that he was over the legal limit of .08 percent. An evidentiary breath test conducted shortly after Mr. Lucero was pulled over showed his breath-alcohol level to be .11/.10%.

On Monday, May 4, 2009, Mr. Lucero was arraigned on charges of driving while under the influence of alcohol (California Vehicle Code section 23152(a)) and driving with a blood-alcohol level of .08% or higher (California Vehicle Code section 23152(b)).

This was Mr. Lucero’s first DUI offense. Mr. Lucero immediately took responsibility for his actions, pleading guilty to having driven with a blood-alcohol level of .08% or higher, accepting the Shasta County District Attorney’s recommended sentence of three years informal probation, ninety days county jail, standard fine of nearly \$2000, the three-month driving-under-the-influence program, and the Victim Impact Panel sponsored by Mothers against Drunk Driving (MADD). Mr. Lucero was sentenced pursuant to the plea agreement by the Honorable Judge William D. Gallagher.

This case was investigated by Redding Police Department’s Officer Provencio and prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Stacy Larson whose position is funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.