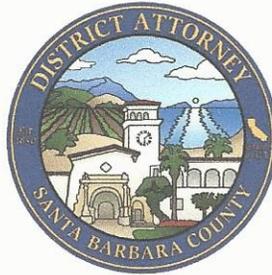


OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
JOYCE E. DUDLEY
District Attorney



DA 06-314

RELEASE NUMBER

June 30, 2015

RELEASE DATE

APPROVED BY *Joyce E. Dudley*, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Kevin Weichbrod, District Attorney

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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

June 30, 2015

Re: People v. Duanying Chen; Case No. 1445771

District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley announced today that Duanying Chen was sentenced, over the District Attorney's objection, to felony probation for a period of five years. Mr. Chen was remanded to custody in county jail, upon pronouncement of his sentence to serve 365 days in Santa Barbara County Jail. In addition, Mr. Chen will be ordered to complete a one year batterer's intervention program, pay restitution to the veterinary clinics for their treatment of "Puppy Doe," and ordered to not have contact with any animal. Further, pursuant to Penal Code section 597.9, Chen is not allowed to have in his possession or care any animal for a period of ten years. The prosecutor for the District Attorney's Office argued for the maximum sentence in this case of seven years six months state prison.

On May 19, 2015, Mr. Chen pled guilty, as charged, with no plea bargain offered by the District Attorney's Office, to four felony counts and one misdemeanor count including two felony counts of animal cruelty, felony assault by force likely to produce great bodily injury, witness dissuasion, and violating a court order. Chen also admitted a special allegation of personally using a deadly weapon, a utility lighter, during the commission of one animal cruelty charge by burning a Doberman Pinscher puppy renamed "Davey." During the sentencing hearing the prosecutor presented several photos and videos depicting heinous injuries inflicted on Davey by Mr. Chen. The prosecutor also outlined the "Link," documented by numerous studies, which correlates animal cruelty to other violent crimes such as elder abuse, child abuse, or, as in this case, domestic violence.

The charges stemmed from a report to law enforcement by a local veterinary clinic on May 14, 2014. The veterinarian diagnosed Davey with broken bones, significant infections, and burns over 80% of his body. Davey was humanely euthanized while surrounded by the veterinary staff who spent weeks attempting to rehabilitate him. Santa Barbara Police Department detectives were able to determine that Chen had battered and tortured the puppy by burning him with a utility lighter. Detectives also discovered that Chen's girlfriend had been assaulted several weeks earlier in a domestic violence incident. After his arrest, Chen attempted to have his girlfriend fabricate and destroy evidence in an effort to thwart the criminal prosecution.

District Attorney Dudley commended prosecuting attorney Kevin Weichbrod for his tenacious and thoughtful prosecution, adding, "This was an outrageous act of a coward who brutalized a vulnerable woman and a helpless animal. I can only hope his time in jail will help him understand just how despicable his criminal actions were."

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