



Carteret County Sheriffs Office

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NEWS RELEASE

Hubert man charged in cold case

Carteret County deputies have charged Zachary Colton Brown, 22, of 105 Quail Trail in Hubert in connection with a 2010 assault that occurred at the "Riptidez" bar in Cedar Point.

Detectives say the thirty year old victim, Wesley Osborne, was jumped by several men who started a fight in the parking lot of the bar around closing time on 12/29/2010. During the fight Brown allegedly bit off the lower portion of the victim's ear, spit it in his hand, and according to witnesses took it with him when he left.

The case which was originally closed in early 2011 because no one at the bar including employees, witnesses, or the victim knew the names of anyone involved.

It wasn't until the recent publicized arrest of 32 year old Ryan Baker, who was charged with biting off the ear of Mark Thomas at the Redneck Saloon on April 14, 2012, did investigators get a lead in the case.

"Just days after that story aired on the news someone called Carteret County Crime-Stoppers naming the person who bit off Mr. Osborne's ear 18 months earlier at the Riptidez bar" said Capt. Jason Wank. Although the two cases are unrelated investigators feel that the media report or a friend turned enemy may have triggered the crime-stoppers call.

When the victim was contacted shortly thereafter that the case was going to be reopened he told investigators that he never forgot the face of the man who bit off his ear and his image was embedded in his memory.

Brown was ultimately charged with "Maiming without Malice" for biting off the victim's ear causing him to be permanently disfigured. Brown who was living in Hubert was arrested by the Onslow County Sheriff's Office on the Carteret County warrant in addition to an "assault on a female" warrant for an unrelated case that occurred in Onslow County. Brown is currently being held in the Onslow County Jail under a \$25,000.00 bond and was scheduled for his first court appearance 05/10/2012.

This is a perfect example of how the public can made a difference by picking up the phone and providing information even if that information is about an old case. There is no statute of limitations in the State of North Carolina for a felony crime and Crime-Stoppers does not require you provide your name.

