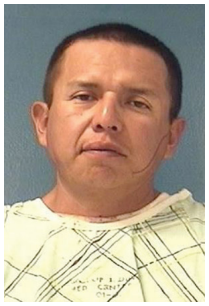
Local day laborer charged with beating, rape

Written by By Babette Herrmann Sun Editor
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Rick George, a former day laborer for Bonaguidi Construction, was arrested for allegedly raping a local woman and for also aggravated battery with the intent to commit a felony.

McKinley County Sheriff's Office Deputy Arnold Noriega was called to TravelCenters of America Motel on Aug. 29 and arrived to a frantic and violent scene. For starters, he was greeted by Lucita James, who had been drinking, and told him, "you guys are too late."

Noriega went up to Room 115, where he found George lying face down on the floor with a white shirt and no clothing on from the waist down. His face was bloody and he was being detained by motel guest Milton Wood and motel manager Leonard Tso. George was handcuffed and placed in Noriega's vehicle.

While Noriega dealt with George, Gallup first responders tended to the victim's injuries, a 37-year-old woman from Ft. Defiance, Ariz.

"I noticed her face to be bloody and swollen [and] both of her eyes were purple and swollen shut," Noriega stated in his report.

The victim refused to speak to any male officers, but later told a female officer that she had been raped.

Wood, who heard screams and cursing, reportedly told Noriega that when he first opened the door to Room 115 he witnessed Rick yelling at the victim: “I am going to kill you tonight is your night to die b-tch.”

Wood’s wife, a registered nurse, rendered aid to the victim until paramedics arrived.

George made his first appearance in Magistrate Court on Aug. 31 and entered no plea at this time. His next court date, a preliminary examination, is scheduled for 8:30 am on Sept. 9 in Judge April J. Silversmith’s chambers.

The Gallup Sun has a policy that prohibits the release of sexual assault victims names.