

## Suspect face-butts deputy

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 16 September 2016 08:15

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What was initially reported as a domestic violence situation in east Gallup turned into an aggravated battery on a peace officer charge for a Gallup man, according to a Sept. 8 police report.

Merlin Benally of the McKinley County Sheriff's Office said Christopher Sam, 25, face-butted him at least once while officers attempted get him to a police car.

"He leaned forward, looked back at me, threw his head back and rammed the left side of his face into my face," Benally recorded in the report. "[Sam] continued to be combative and refused to get into a [police vehicle]."

The initial call from dispatch was for assistance in a domestic situation between Sam and an unidentified individual at a mobile home park in east Gallup, but at the scene, nothing was going on. Dispatch later told Benally that Sam was being attended to by Med-Star personnel at a nearby Blake's Lotaburger, 2666 E. Hwy. 66.

GPD Lt. Francie Martinez attempted to escort Sam to a police car, but Sam was uncooperative and resistant, so Benally joined in. That's when Sam head-butted Benally, according to the report.

"I felt the area where Christopher hit me, below my nose and upper lip and found it to be sore, swollen, red and bleeding and a 5/8 laceration to the inside of my upper lip," Benally wrote in the report.

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Sam remained jailed Sept. 15 on a \$3,000 bail bond, according to records at the McKinley County Adult Detention Center.

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