



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

PRESS RELEASE

5/25/18

**PORTERVILLE MAN CONVICTED OF ATTEMPTING TO MURDER
POLICE OFFICER**

Late yesterday afternoon in Department 19 of the Tulare County Superior Court, South County Justice Center, Judge Antonio Reyes presiding, a jury convicted Ruben Carreles, age 31, of Porterville, of pre-meditated and deliberate attempted murder of a peace officer, assault with a firearm on a peace officer, felon in possession of a firearm, and felon in possession of ammunition. Special allegations of personal use of a firearm inflicting great bodily injury were also found true.

In the late evening of August 18, 2016, Porterville Police Department officers were on patrol when they initiated a traffic stop for an unlit license plate. As they were pulling over, the front passenger door opened and the defendant, Carreles, started running. A foot chase ensued. As the officer was gaining, Carreles turned and took an offensive stance, pointing a gun at the officer. As the officer turned to take cover, Carreles opened fire hitting the officer in the buttocks. The officer was able to get his gun out and return fire. Carreles went to shoot at the officer again, but was shot by the injured officer and his partner. Carreles and the driver of the car, Vickie Monethichack, age 33, were taken in to custody.

“I am extremely pleased that Mr. Carreles was held to answer for his attack. This verdict sends a strong message that our community will not tolerate acts of violence towards our public safety officers,” said Porterville Police Department chief Eric Kroutil. “I want to personally thank our law enforcement partners, the Tulare County Sheriff’s Office Investigations Team for their efforts and the Tulare County District Attorney’s Office, particularly Mikki Verissimo and Rick Haskill, who were integral parts in ensuring a guilty verdict.”

Carreles faces 44-years-to-life in prison at sentencing. Monethichack pleaded no contest to assault with a firearm on a peace officer, and being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition. She is currently awaiting sentencing.

“We created the Crimes against Police Officers Unit because being assaulted isn’t just ‘part of the job’ for the men and women who put on the uniform and wear the badge,” said District Attorney Tim Ward. “Law enforcement officers deserve the same justice as anyone else who suffers at the hand of someone who seeks to harm. Justice was served here, and I commend all who secured it.”

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