

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

23-YEAR-OLD SALINAS MAN CONVICTED OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES MURDER BY LYING IN WAIT AND TORTURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Daniel Lorenzo Petty, age 23, of Salinas was convicted after a 6-day jury trial before Judge Julie R. Culver, of first degree murder, two special circumstances for murder by means of lying in wait and by means of torture and two enhancements for personally discharging a firearm and discharging a firearm causing great bodily injury. The jury also found Petty guilty of the crime of torture with the two discharge enhancements and the crime of vehicle theft.

On December 12, 2015, the 52-year-old victim's body was found off a trail about a quarter-mile from the end of Dunes Drive by a hiker's dog at about 9:00 a.m. The victim had been shot, stabbed, severely beaten and burned. Marina Police Department, along with support by the Monterey County Sheriff's Office, responded to the scene and began investigating the circumstances of the victim's death. The victim's truck was found in Chualar the same day by the California Highway Patrol. An autopsy was conducted by Dr. Venus Azar of the Monterey County Coroner's Department revealing he had suffered all his injuries, with the exception of the burns, while alive.

Detective Oliver Minnig of Marina PD authored search warrants to gather information from the victim's phone and email records. Further search warrants were authored with the assistance of Peninsula Regional Violence and Narcotics Team (PRVNT) detective Bryan Kruse. Detective Minnig examined and compared voluminous data relating to cell towers, phone calls, Gmail accounts, Craigslist information. Detective Minnig also enlisted the help of the Western Regional Information Network (WSIN), a multi-state agency that facilitates electronic information sharing and data analysis.

Detective Minnig discovered that on December 10, 2015, the victim responded via email to a Craigslist ad for "man seeking man" posted by Petty. Email records show the victim, who had met Defendant on approximately three prior occasions, agreed to meet Petty at the Lucky's store in the city of Marina that day. Petty's last email indicates he is on his way from his girlfriend's residence which is just blocks away from the Lucky's.

Surveillance showed the victim's truck arriving at around 11:30 a.m. which matched cell tower records. Victim's phone is "silent" until 1:30 p.m. when victim's phone is used to call a friend of Petty's, in Salinas. The phone then is seen moving from Salinas, to Marina, back to Salinas and then to Chualar.

Petty was arrested on December 21, 2015 and interviewed by Detective Minnig and Lieutenant Mike Bruno. Initially, Petty claimed he had met the victim for sex on December 10, 2015 and then parted ways. During the course of the interview, he admitted to killing the victim because he wanted to see what it felt like to kill a person. He described how it took 30 minutes for the victim to die during the course of his assault where he shot, stabbed, clubbed with the firearm and taunted the victim.

The case was investigated and prepared for trial by now District Attorney Investigator Oliver Minnig. A setting of the sentencing hearing is scheduled before Judge Julie R. Culver on August 29, 2017. Petty faces life without the possibility of parole.