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DA, Chief Announce Indictment in New Year's Cold Case Homicide at Dr. J's Liquor

Parking Lot Shootout in 2003 Left Two Women Dead, Child Injured

San Diego County District Attorney [Bonnie M. Dumanis](#) and San Diego Police Chief William Lansdowne announced today that a cold case homicide investigation has led to the indictment of a gang member involved in a 2003 shootout in Southeast San Diego that killed two women and injured a seven-year old boy. Carol Waites, 45, and Sharen Burton, 32, were killed by gang crossfire when they stopped at Dr. J's Liquor store following New Year's Eve church services.

"These innocent victims were caught in a gang revenge shooting that shook the community and left law enforcement with very few leads," said DA Dumanis. "Over the years, investigators pursued this case with great determination. The shooter who fired the fatal shots will now be held accountable for his crimes."

District Attorney and SDPD investigators worked tirelessly over a six-year period to develop new leads and piece together new evidence in the case. During that process, law enforcement, with the help of the FBI's Violent Crimes Task Force, was able to solve two other gang-related murders, seize 15 guns and convict 30 gang members of unrelated crimes, sending them to state prison for cumulative sentences of more than 400 years. Investigators were also able to avert two other revenge shootings.

"This investigation and the resulting indictment is a great example of how a dedicated law enforcement team can have a very real affect on solving and preventing gang crime," said Chief Lansdowne.

In May of 2009, evidence against one of the suspects in the Dr. J's shooting was presented to a Grand Jury. After hearing from 25 witnesses during a month-long hearing, jurors returned a seven-count indictment against James Carter, 35. He is indicted on two counts of murder, conspiracy to commit murder and four counts of attempted murder. The Grand Jury also found true a special circumstance allegation of multiple murders, which makes the defendant eligible for the death penalty.

(More)

Carter, who is in custody on an unrelated robbery charge, will be arraigned on Monday, June 29 at 1:30 p.m. in Department 11, San Diego County Superior Court downtown.

Ms. Waites and Ms. Burton were friends from the True Faith Missionary Baptist Church. They attended midnight services on New Year's Eve and stopped at Dr. J's on Logan Ave. near Euclid Ave. to buy a fire log shortly before 1:00 a.m. Rival gang members opened fire. The victims were both shot in the back and died. Waites' seven-year old nephew was hit six times as he shielded Waites' two-year old granddaughter in the back seat. The toddler was not injured.

The shooting involved as many as eight to 12 gang members in two or three cars attacking up to eight members of a rival gang. There were at least four gunmen. It was the culmination of a 12-year turf rivalry between the two Southeast San Diego gangs. In just over two months prior to the Dr. J's shooting, the gangs had exchanged at least six murders and many more drive-by shootings.

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