



VISALIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Jason Salazar, Chief of Police

Sergeant Damon Maurice, Public Information Officer
(559) 713-4216 (office) / (559) 713-4807 (fax)
damon.maurice@visalia.city

*****NEWS RELEASE*****
October 25, 2017

VPD Report Number: 17-88343

Date/Time Occurred: 10/23/17 at 0244 Hours

Type of Incident: Attempted Homicide, Felon in Possession of a Gun, Possession of a High Capacity Magazine, Gang Enhancement

Location: Houston/Garden

Name of Business (if applicable):

Suspect:

Age:

Arrested:

1. Maldonado, Walter Aldeso

34

yes

2. Galaz, Elijah

18

yes

3.

Details: On 10/23/17 at 0244 hours, patrol officers were dispatched to the area of Houston/Garden in regards to a shots fired call. Upon arrival, officers located the victim who was suffering from a gunshot wound. He was transported to the hospital for medical treatment. Violent Crimes detectives responded and took over the investigation, which is still on-going. Anyone with information regarding the shooting is urged to contact the Anonymous Tip Line at (559) 713-4738.

*****UPDATE - 10/25/17*****

The Violent Crimes investigation revealed that Suspect Walter Maldonado was spray painting gang graffiti in the area of Houston/Garden. As the victim approached the suspect, a verbal argument ensued at which time Suspect Maldonado pulled out a handgun and shot the victim. The suspect fled the area prior to officer's arrival. Immediately, police began attempting to locate Suspect Maldonado but his whereabouts were unknown.

On 10/24/17 at 2330 Hours, a patrol officer observed a vehicle in the area of Encina and Myrtle. Prior to attempting a traffic stop, the vehicle fled from officers and was later found abandoned in an alley near Cypress/Encina. The CHP helicopter (H40) was already overhead and immediately began to assist the patrol units. With the assistance of the CHP helicopter, Suspect Elijah Galaz (driver of the vehicle) was arrested after a containment and short foot pursuit. Suspect



Walter Maldonado (passenger of the vehicle) was later located in the backyard of a residence in the 700 block of S. Watson. During a search of the area around Suspect Maldonado, a loaded firearm was located which matched the type of gun used in the shooting on 10/23/17.

After being interviewed, both suspects were booked into Tulare County Jail. Suspect Maldonado was booked for Attempted Homicide, Felon in Possession of a Handgun, Possession of a High Capacity Magazine, Gang Enhancement and several other related charges. Suspect Elijah Galaz was booked for Trespassing.

The motive for the shooting is still unknown but it is believed to be gang related. The victim is still listed in critical condition at an area hospital.

The investigation is ongoing. Anyone with additional information is asked to contact Detective Mona Whaley at (559)713-4211.

Arresting / Investigating Officer: Patrol, Violent Crimes, CHP
Helicopter (H40)

Supervisor: Sgt. Kroeze

