



# VISALIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

*Jason Salazar, Chief of Police*

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**\*\*\*NEWS RELEASE\*\*\***

**November 15, 2017**

**VPD Report Number:** 06-21318

**Date/Time Occurred:** 11/25/06 at 1145 hours

**Type of Incident:** Homicide

**Location:** Canal bank north of Hillsdale and east of Akers

**Name of Business (if applicable):**

Victim - Sonia Hughes

**Suspect:**

1. Hughes, Joseph

**Age:**

40

**Arrested:**

yes

**Details:** On November 25, 2006 at 1145 hours, the Visalia Police Department was contacted regarding a possible dead body along a canal bank east of Akers Rd and north of Hillsdale. Upon arrival, officers located the body of a deceased female in a shallow grave. Violent Crimes Detectives were called out and immediately began an investigation. An autopsy was performed and determined that the body was Victim Sonia Hughes and the cause of death was strangulation.

For the past 11 years, Violent Crimes Detectives continued to investigate the case. The investigation showed that in September 2006, Suspect Joseph Hughes and his wife, Victim Sonia Hughes, had a verbal argument at their residence in the 100 Block of N. Granite. The victim and suspect left the residence and the victim was not seen again until her body was discovered on November 25, 2006. From early on in the investigation until the conclusion, Joseph Hughes was the primary suspect. After interviewing several witnesses enough evidence was located to charge him for homicide.

On November 1, 2017, the Tulare County District Attorney's Office issued a warrant for Suspect Joseph Hughes' arrest for homicide.

On November 14, 2017, Joseph Hughes was transported to Tulare County from state prison where he was serving a prison sentence on unrelated charges. After being interviewed, Joseph Hughes was booked at the Tulare County Pre-Trial Facility for the homicide of Sonia Hughes.

If anyone has any information related to this case, they are asked to contact Det. Celeste Sanchez at (559)713-4739.

**Arresting / Investigating Officer:** Patrol, Violent Crimes

**Supervisor:** Sgt. C. Brown

