



VISALIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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*****NEWS RELEASE*****
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Arrest Made in 2002 Visalia Homicide

A 56-year-old man has been extradited from Mexico to California to face charges in a 2002 Visalia Police Department homicide.

Around 10:15 p.m. on February 27, 2002, Visalia PD officers were called to the 1900 block of Stevenson Street for a report of shots fired. While officers were en route, they were advised that there was a man with gunshot wounds in the 900 block of West Walnut Avenue.

When officers arrived at the Walnut Avenue address, they found 36-year-old Oscar Ramon Paniagua shot multiple times. He was transported to Kaweah Delta District Hospital for his injuries.

Officers found two men inside the home on Stevenson Street. Both victims had been assaulted and had significant injuries. The Visalia PD Violent Crimes Unit was called out and took over the investigation. Chief Jason Salazar was the lead detective of this case.

During the investigation, detectives found that three men armed with guns broke into the Stevenson home. The armed suspects assaulted the three victims and tied them up with duct tape and electrical cords.

Oscar Ramon Paniagua was shot by one of the suspects but managed to escape and run to the home on Walnut Avenue. Paniagua died eight days later on March 7, 2002.

Detectives positively identified Federico Castellanos Velasco as the suspect who shot and killed Paniagua. Velasco was 35 at the time of the murder. To evade capture, Velasco fled to Mexico.

On November 16, 2021, Velasco was found in Colima, Mexico and was arrested by FBI agents in conjunction with local Mexican authorities. Velasco remained in Mexican custody, where he went through the extradition process. Last week, his extradition was approved, and the FBI took custody of Velasco.

Yesterday, FBI agents transported Velasco to the Fresno Yosemite International Airport. After 21 years, he was taken into custody by Visalia PD Detectives for the 2002 murder of 36-year-old Oscar Ramon Paniagua.

56-year-old Federico Castellanos Velasco was booked at the Tulare County Adult Pre-Trial Facility for PC 187A-Murder, PC 211-Robbery x3, PC 245A2-Assault w/ Deadly Weapon, PC 245A1-Assault w/ Deadly Weapon x2, PC 459F1A-Burglary, PC 236-False Imprisonment.

