



Office of the District Attorney Stanislaus County

Birgit Fladager
District Attorney

Assistant District Attorney
Dave Harris

Chief Deputies
Doug Raynaud
Annette Rees
Marlisa Ferreira

Bureau of Investigation
Lt. David Hutchinson
Lt. Froilan Mariscal

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: September 1, 2017
Re: Devenae Damarea Price &
Kevin Jerome Barnes Jr
Murder Conviction

For More Information Contact:

John Goold, Public Information Officer
Phone: (209) 525-6909

Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Devenae Damarea Price, age 26, of Ceres, was convicted of murder with use of a firearm and being a felon in possession of a firearm, and Kevin Jerome Barnes, Jr. age 21, of Modesto, was convicted of being an accessory to murder after a jury trial on August 25, 2017. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Mangar prosecuted the case on behalf of the People.

On the evening of April 23, 2016, 37-year old Falane Jones was shot and killed in the parking lot of an apartment complex on West Hawkeye Avenue across from Donnelly Park in Turlock. Jones had driven there with his uncle to visit relatives. As Jones and his uncle were getting out of their car, Price drove up alongside them and shot Jones four times in the face, neck and chest, killing him. Two spent .40 caliber casings were found on the ground near the victim.

Two days later, on the evening of April 25, 2016, an Alameda County Sheriff's deputy pursued a black Lexus automobile that fled from a routine traffic stop in San Leandro. The driver of the black Lexus drove down a dead-end street and onto the front yard of a residence. Price and two girlfriends were arrested. Barnes escaped. In examining the car, deputies found two spent .40 caliber shell casings where the windshield meets the hood. They also located a loaded .40 caliber handgun along with several loaded and empty magazines. Those casings were sent to the Department of Justice crime lab for testing and were confirmed to be consistent with the two shell casings found at the murder scene in Turlock.

Further investigation revealed that cellphone records of Price and Barnes indicated they were together on West Hawkeye Avenue in Turlock at the time of the murder. Detectives uncovered information that Price obtained the exact same black Lexus from a dealership in Oakland just hours before the murder.

Days before the start of his jury trial, Price wrote a letter urging witnesses to lie and testify that someone else did the shooting. That letter was intercepted by jail staff and provided to the District Attorney.

After a seven-week jury trial in Stanislaus County Superior Court before Judge Marie Silveira, Price was convicted of second-degree murder with use of a firearm and being a felon in possession of a firearm. Barnes was convicted of being an accessory to murder.

Price is a parolee who had just been released from prison 35 days before he killed Falane Jones. He had been serving a seven-year prison sentence for armed robbery out of Contra Costa County. Jones was a single father with a 9-year-old daughter who worked in Tracy. Jones was not known to be involved with gangs or drugs. It is believed the murder was committed because Price had mistaken Jones for someone else.

At the time of the killing, Barnes was on felony probation for a 2015 residential burglary out of Sacramento County. Barnes was also out on bail pending trial for a 2016 attempted murder case where it is alleged that he shot someone on Yosemite Boulevard in Modesto after an argument inside the downtown Courthouse.

The parties return to court on September 18th for a court trial before Judge Silveira on the validity of both Price and Barnes prior convictions, which qualify them for increased punishment under California's "Three Strikes" law. Price faces a maximum potential sentence of 60 years to life in state prison. Barnes faces a maximum potential punishment of 6 years in state prison on this case.

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