



ERIK NASARENKO
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE



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Contact: Joey Buttitta
Title: Communications Manager/PIO
Phone: (805) 767-3400
Email: Joey.Buttitta@ventura.org

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Oxnard Gang Member Convicted of Murder

VENTURA, Calif. – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Michael Ortega (DOB 03/05/00), of Oxnard, was convicted by a jury on August 9, 2024, of murdering John Paul Carrillo. The jury also found Ortega guilty of multiple gun charges, including felony possession of a gun with methamphetamine, felony possession of a gun by a felon, and felony possession of a sawed-off shotgun. The jury found Ortega not guilty of assault with a deadly weapon and were unable to reach a verdict on two counts of assault with a firearm. A mistrial was declared on the two counts of assault with a firearm.

On December 4, 2022, Ortega, a known gang member, was driving through Oxnard with co-defendant Paul Ramos, and a third man. The three men arrived at the Porta Rossa Apartments on Gonzalez Road in Oxnard just after midnight on December 5, 2022. They confronted a man in the parking lot. Ortega was holding his sawed-off shotgun and challenged the man. The man convinced Ortega he was in good standing with their gang.

The three men then confronted Mr. Carrillo in a carport. Carrillo was not gang-involved. Carrillo was punched as Ortega shot him in the chest with the shotgun. All three men fled to their vehicle and Ramos drove them away. Carrillo was pronounced dead at the scene. The crime was captured on surveillance video.

Ortega was arrested on December 9, 2022, by the Oxnard Police Department. The shotgun fell out of his pants as they arrested him. Methamphetamine was also found in Ortega's pocket. A forensic examination confirmed the shotgun was used to kill Mr. Carrillo.

Co-defendant Ramos was arrested on March 10, 2023, during a traffic stop. He pled guilty to two felony counts of assault with a deadly weapon and was sentenced on June 28, 2024, to 10 years state prison.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Theresa Pollara, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Major Crimes Homicide Unit, prosecuted the cases.

"Hopefully, the verdict brings some form of solace to the family who lost their grandson to a group of men intent on enforcing territory claimed by a gang," Ms. Pollara said. "The jury very carefully deliberated before returning verdicts reflecting the culpability of the defendant."

Ortega had been convicted in 2019 for shooting a victim in the back with a shotgun. That prior conviction made it illegal for him to possess a firearm or ammunition.

A judge will decide on additional special allegations for those prior convictions, during a court trial set for August 14, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 27 of the Ventura County Superior Court. He faces the possibility of 65 years 4 months to life in state prison. Ortega remains in custody without bail.

Case: 2023005669

Defendant Information:

Michael Ortega (DOB 03/05/00)
Oxnard

Charges convicted of:

- PC 187 – Murder
- (3 counts) PC 29800(a)(1) – Own/Possess/Control firearm by felon
- (3 counts) PC 33215 – Commerce/Transfer/Possess sawed-off shotgun
- HS 11370.1(a) – Possession of a controlled substance with firearm
- PC 25850(a) – Carrying a loaded firearm on one's person

Special allegations found true:

- PC 12022.53(d) – Personal and intentional discharge of a firearm causing great bodily injury
- PC 186.22(b)(1) – Street terrorism

