



Fresno County Sheriff - Coroner's Office

Margaret Mims, Sheriff - Coroner

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News Release

Tony Botti – Public Information Officer

Office: (559) 600-8137

Cell: (559) 977-0379

E-Mail: tony.botti@fresnosheriff.org

Detectives Arrest Suspect for Random Shootings on Western Fresno County Roadways

Detectives with the Fresno County Sheriff's Special Investigations Division (SID) have arrested 42 year old **Jorge Javier Gracia** of Kerman. He has been booked into the Fresno County Jail and his bail is set at \$1.2 million. Gracia is facing the following felony charges:

- Assault with a deadly weapon
- Brandishing of a firearm
- Being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition
- Carrying a loaded firearm
- Drug possession

Around 11:00 pm on January 8th, a man driving in the area of Whitesbridge and Goldenrod Avenues in Kerman noticed a man in a gray 2015 Chevrolet Silverado 4-wheel drive crew cab pickup truck pull alongside of him and point a handgun at him through a window. The victim, an off-duty corrections officer with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), pulled away and began to drive to a more populated area of the city. During this time, the victim called the Kerman Police Department to report that a motorist had just pointed a gun at him. The suspect continued to follow the victim and pulled in behind him at the Fastrip gas station located at the intersection of S. Madera and W. Sunset Avenues in Kerman. The victim got out of his vehicle and took cover behind a gas pump, while instructing citizens to clear the area. The officer drew his handgun and directed the suspect (Jorge Gracia) to get

out of his truck and lie down on the ground. The suspect complied. During this time, Kerman Police officers arrived on scene. The victim identified himself to officers and they moved in to handcuff the suspect and take him into custody.

Due to the circumstances and a pickup truck being involved, Kerman Police requested Fresno County Sheriff's detectives respond to investigate the possibility of the suspect being involved in a recent series of shootings on roads in the Kerman area. Detectives impounded the pickup truck and authored a search warrant for it. Detectives later searched inside the truck and found methamphetamine and a .380 semi-automatic handgun. Gracia was booked into jail on these charges, along with an outstanding warrant for driving on a suspended license.

While in custody, detectives continued to investigate whether or not Gracia was involved in any of the random roadway shootings. Detectives learned that Gracia worked as an electrician who traveled the route during the time period of the shootings. Between **November 27th and December 17th, 2017**, there were **10** separate reports of vehicles being struck by gunfire. Eight occurred in Fresno County and two occurred in Madera County. Only one case resulted in a person suffering injuries. Deputies were able to collect bullet rounds from several of these shootings.

Members of the Sheriff's Forensics Laboratory team conducted ballistic tests, comparing rounds (bullets) recovered from some of the vehicles that were shot, to the .380 handgun seized from Gracia. The results revealed the gun was a positive match to the recovered rounds. Numerous victims had given deputies the same description of the last vehicle they saw go past them at the time they heard the noise resembling a gunshot. It was described as a dark colored pickup truck with an extended cab or crew cab. It had a lifted body with oversize tires. As a result of the evidence collected, Gracia was arrested for his involvement in the shootings and additional charges were placed on his record. Evidence also indicates that the suspect only fired one round at each moving vehicle. A motive for the shootings is unknown at this time.

Deputies with the Fresno County Sheriff's Office, Madera County Sheriff's Office, officers with the California Highway Patrol and Kerman Police Department dedicated a lot of time and resources into this investigation to try and identify possible suspects and put a stop to these shootings. Due

to increased public awareness and donations to Valley Crime Stoppers that created a reward of \$10,000, several tips were generated. This information helped detectives narrow their focus in the investigation and ultimately take the suspected gunman off the streets. Detectives are working with Crime Stoppers to determine if someone is eligible to collect the reward.

This remains an ongoing investigation. Anyone with additional information on Jorge Gracia or any of the shootings is asked to contact Sheriff's dispatchers at (559) 600-3111 or Crime Stoppers at (559) 498-7867. You will remain anonymous and may be eligible for a cash reward.