



Riverside County District Attorney

# NEWS RELEASE

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## COLD CASE UNIT FILES CHARGES IN 1989 RIVERSIDE MURDER

RIVERSIDE – More than 21 years after the shooting death of a man in Riverside, the Riverside County District Attorney’s Office has charged the person responsible with murder.

Anthony Varela Corrales, DOB: 12-11-58, has been charged with one count of murder for the Feb. 3, 1989, killing of Robert Hensley.

Hensley, 20, was shot to death while helping another man who repossessed vehicles look for a truck on Selkirk Avenue in the city of Riverside. Hensley and the other man found the truck but it was blocked in so it could not be repossessed. As the two men walked back to their vehicle parked around the corner, a man came out, yelled and cursed at them and fired a shotgun blast. Hensley was struck several times in the back and once in the head, according to a coroner’s autopsy.

Riverside police detectives arrested Corrales in April 1989 and he was charged with murder in May 1989. At a preliminary hearing, a judge held Corrales to answer for the murder but the murder charge was not filed by prosecutors after the prelim. The decision not to file was made primarily because all the witnesses were extremely uncooperative. They said they felt threatened by Corrales and were in fear for their lives. One witness was held in contempt by the judge at the prelim.

Even after two decades of waiting, the victim’s mother, Rosemary Utesch, never gave up hope. She called Deputy District Attorney Laura Ozols of the DA’s Cold Hit/Cold Case Unit and told her about the case. Witnesses in the case were interviewed again. Investigators found their statements to be consistent and that the fear and intimidation they felt in 1989 had diminished.

“As a parent, you can’t ever give up hope for justice -- no matter how long it may take,” Utesch said. “People change, technology changes and opportunities change.”

Ozols agrees. “While time can clearly have an adverse effect on a case, the passage of time in this case was an ally as once-reluctant witnesses have become forthright and cooperative, allowing this case to move forward to ensure justice for the murder of Robert Hensley,” Ozols said.

On July 14, 2010 – one day before Corrales was due to be released from state prison on an unrelated conviction – the District Attorney’s Office filed the murder charge. Corrales was booked into county jail on that charge after being released from prison. His arraignment in case RIF10003084 on July 19, 2010, was continued and is scheduled for Aug. 12, 2010, in Dept. 42 at the Hall of Justice in Riverside.

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