

Grand jury doesn't charge troopers - They shot man - Wichita Falls Times Record News (TX) - May 25, 2018 - page A3

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A Wilbarger County Grand Jury found no fault with two Texas Department of Public Safety troopers that shot and killed **Anthony Lamar Carter** as he was in the act of stabbing his girlfriend, Kaylea Butts, outside of Vernon, Texas, on April 26, 2018.

According to 46th Judicial District Attorney Staley Heatly, the troopers' actions saved the life of Kaylea Butts.

"Without a doubt these troopers saved Kaylea's life," Heatly said. "If they had arrived at the scene even a few seconds later, she wouldn't have made it out alive."

"This was a domestic violence case, plain and simple. Kaylea was trying to leave the relationship with Carter and he did not want to let her go. Statistics show that women in abusive relationships are in the most danger when they are trying to leave their abuser. That is exactly what happened in this case."

Around 7:25 a.m. on April 26, law enforcement in Norman, Oklahoma, received a report of a possible kidnapping involving Carter, 22, and his 20-year-old girlfriend, Butts.

The reporting person gave a description of Carter and the vehicle that he was driving.

Around 8:30 a.m., police in Burkburnett were notified that the victim and Carter were possibly traveling to Texas.

A short time later, a Burkburnett police officer spotted the suspect vehicle, a red Dodge Charger, being driven through the city. Carter refused to stop for police and eventually turned on to U.S. Highway 287 North.

Multiple law enforcement agencies were involved in the pursuit that reached speeds in excess of 150 miles per hour.

DPS Trooper Curtis West successfully deployed spikes east of Vernon on U.S. Highway 287, disabling Carter's vehicle and causing it to stop on the shoulder.

As the car came to a rest, Butts jumped out and started running towards police. Carter tackled her and began stabbing her repeatedly with a steak knife as the DPS troopers arrived on the scene.

The troopers got out of their cars and engaged Carter, shooting him several times while he was in the act of stabbing the victim.

"The troopers had to make a quick decision," Heatly said. "It was either his life or hers."

Heatly said the victim was stabbed a total of thirteen times all over her body. He credited the same DPS troopers that shot Carter with providing quick and effective first aid to Butts until Vernon EMS arrived at the scene to transport her to Wilbarger General Hospital.

"These officers transitioned within a matter of seconds from engaging Carter to providing critical first aid for Kaylea," Heatly said. "The troopers held Kaylea's hand, comforted her, and bandaged her wounds while awaiting for emergency medical services."

Intimate partner violence is a significant problem across the United States and in Texas.

Statistics show that more than one in three Texas women has been a victim of family violence.

Rates of family violence have increased significantly in the last few years, according to Texas Department of Public Safety statistics.

More than half the country's mass shootings between 2009 and 2016, in which at least four people were killed with a gun, were related to domestic or family violence, according to a study by Everytown for Gun Safety, a nonprofit that focuses on firearm regulation.

The case was investigated by Texas Ranger Jake Weaver.

As a policy matter, the case was reviewed by a grand jury to determine whether the troopers' actions were appropriate. The Wilbarger County grand jury cleared the troopers of any possible wrongdoing in the shooting.