

Local

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COURTS

Man will stand trial for attempted murder

By Jim Schultz

Record Searchlight

A 48-year-old Cottonwood man accused of shooting his wife after he became angry that she had not renewed his driver's license was ordered Tuesday to stand trial for attempted murder.

Gary Alan Hemsted, whose preliminary hearing was Tuesday, is due to return to Shasta County Superior Court on Nov. 7 for his arraignment and to receive a trial date.

Hemsted remains in custody in the Shasta County jail with his bail set at \$500,000.

Detective Steve Grashoff of the Shasta County Sheriff's Department testified during Hemsted's Tuesday hearing that the truck driver was angry with his wife, Lisa, 42, after the California Highway Patrol cited him on Aug. 2 at the Cottonwood truck scales for having an expired license.

"He was upset," Grashoff said.

When he arrived home that evening, an argument ensued and escalated to the point where he threatened to shoot his wife's horse, eventually firing a round from a .22-caliber rifle from about 25 yards away that missed his spouse by about five feet and hit their barn, Grashoff said.

She then ran down the driveway of their Locust Street home, Grashoff said, adding that Hemsted got into a pickup and chased her.

"Even if he had missed her, it would have been attempted murder."

Deputy District Attorney Curtis Woods

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"She thought she was going to be run over," he said, adding that she climbed over a fence to get away from him.

As a sheriff's deputy patrol car arrived, Grashoff said, Hemsted allegedly aimed the rifle at his wife, reportedly told her "You're dead," and fired another shot, this one striking her in the right thigh.

Redding defense attorney John Kucera said that his client had been drinking and had methamphetamine in his system following his arrest and also took medication for depression. Kucera argued that the case was, at best, assault with a firearm or a grossly negligent discharge of a firearm.

"It was not an attempted murder," he said, adding that his client did not intentionally shoot at his wife with the intent to kill her, and noting that the shot was fired from a long distance.

"He hit someone from a great distance without trying to," he said.

Grashoff estimated that the shot that hit Lisa Hemsted was fired from a distance of about 60 to 70 yards, while Kucera indicated that the distance was more than twice that.

Whether it was a lucky shot, or an unlucky one in this case, Deputy District Attorney Curtis Woods argued that he believed it was a clear case of attempted murder.

"Even if he had missed her, it would have been attempted murder," he said.

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