



PRESS RELEASE

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**FEDERAL JURY FINDS CORRALES, N.M., MAN GUILTY
OF UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF FIREARM**

Defendant, an Armed Career Criminal, Faces Minimum 15-Year Prison Sentence

ALBUQUERQUE – On August 2, 2012, a federal jury sitting in Santa Fe, N.M., found Walter Lee Dieter, 53, of Corrales, N.M., guilty of being a felon in possession of a firearm after a four-day trial.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Dieter was indicted on March 10, 2010, and charged with unlawfully possessing a firearm on Nov. 12, 2009, in Bernalillo County. At the time, Dieter was prohibited from possessing firearms because he previously had been convicted of numerous felony offenses, including burglary, grand theft, drug trafficking and bank robbery offenses in Florida; a drug trafficking offense in Oklahoma; and being a felon in possession of a firearm in New Mexico.

The evidence at trial established that, after midnight on Nov. 12, 2009, Dieter's wife placed a domestic violence call to 911. When Albuquerque Police Department officers responded to the area from which the call had been placed, they observed a man, later identified as Dieter, and a woman standing outside in the cold. When Dieter and the woman saw the officers approaching, they separated and began walking in opposite directions. Although the officers attempted to speak to Dieter, he continued to walk away from them. Moments later, an officer observed Dieter, who was standing on the second floor balcony of a nearby apartment complex, bend down and place something on the balcony floor. Dieter then complied with the officers' orders to come down from the balcony. When an officer started towards the apartment complex to check the balcony, Dieter became visibly nervous and bolted away from the officers. After Dieter was apprehended, an officer went up to the balcony and found a revolver in a holster on the balcony floor. Dieter's DNA subsequently was found on both the revolver and the holster.

The enhanced sentencing provisions of the federal felon in possession of firearms statute mandate a minimum 15-year prison sentence where a defendant is denominated an "armed career criminal" by virtue of having three prior qualifying felony convictions for "violent felonies" or "serious drug offenses." As an armed career criminal, Dieter will be sentenced under the

enhanced sentencing provisions of that statute. Dieter has been in federal custody since his arrest on June 21, 2010, and remains detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives and the Albuquerque Police Department, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Lynn W.Y. Wang and Kimberly A. Brawley.

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