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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: 4/10/08
Re: People v. John Dominguez
#1104921

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that JOHN CHARLES DOMINGUEZ, age 36, of Modesto, was convicted of second degree murder after a three week jury trial which ended on April 9. Additionally, the jury found that the defendant used a deadly weapon when he killed the victim. Deputy District Attorney Wendell Emerson prosecuted the case. Modesto Police Department Detective Craig Grogan was the lead investigator for this case. The defendant is facing a maximum sentence of 16 years to life as a result of the conviction.

The case arose out of events which occurred on February 16, 2006 in the city of Modesto. At around 11:30pm on that date, Modesto Police Department officers were dispatched to a disturbance in the 1200 block of Pine Tree Lane. Upon arrival, officers discovered the victim, 38 year old Richard Chavez, lying in the front yard of a residence with a fatal blunt force injury to his head. Richard Chavez was pronounced dead at a nearby hospital just minutes after being discovered. After an extensive investigation, the defendant was located and arrested 12 hours later by members of the Modesto Police Department.

Witnesses at the trial testified that the victim and defendant had an argument several minutes prior to the murder. After the argument, the victim fled and the defendant gave chase. During the chase, the victim fell down in a yard located in the 1200 block of Pine Tree Lane. At this point, the defendant approached the victim and fatally struck him in the head with a 3 to 4 foot piece of pipe.

A sentencing hearing is scheduled for May 19, 2008 before the Honorable Timothy Salter.

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