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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: 9/12/16
Re: Michelle Joe

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Michelle Joe, age 46, of Modesto was found unsuitable for parole following a September 7, 2016 hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings held at the state prison in Chowchilla. Deputy District Attorney Meghan Anderson appeared at the hearing and argued for Joe's continued confinement based on the nature of the homicide, the fact that Joe still refuses to take full responsibility for her part in the crime, and that she would continue to pose a danger to the community if released. The Board of Parole Hearings agreed and denied parole for three years.

On March 21, 1994, Joe recruited Daniel Whalen and Melissa Fader to rob 68-year-old Sherman Robbins who was housesitting for his brother. Joe came up with a plan to pretend their car had broken down in order to gain entry into the home. Once inside, they opened a window allowing Whalen to enter. They tied up Robbins, a disabled war veteran, and removed property from the house. Before leaving, Whalen killed Robbins by shooting him in the head with a shotgun as Robbins lay helpless on a couch. All three perpetrators used items taken from the robbery/murder to buy drugs.

Fader's palm print was found near a bedroom window on the back of the house. Sheriff's Detectives determined that Joe, Fader and Whalen were all involved. All three were arrested and charged.

On July 3, 1996, Joe entered a plea to second degree murder while armed with a firearm in exchange for her testimony against Whalen. She ultimately received 16 years to life in state prison. Fader pleaded guilty to robbery with a vicarious arming enhancement in exchange for a sentence of up to seven years. Both Joe and Fader testified against Whalen in his trial for Sherman's murder. Based largely upon their testimony, Whalen was convicted of the killing and given the death penalty in 1996. He has been on death row for the last twenty years, awaiting execution.

Joe will be scheduled for another parole hearing in 2019.

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