



COUNTY OF YOLO  
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
JEFF W. REISIG, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

301 SECOND STREET - WOODLAND, CALIFORNIA 95695 - 530.666.8180 - FAX 530.666.8185

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:** Jonathan Raven, Asst. Chief Deputy District Attorney

**Phone:** (530) 666-8092 jonathan.raven@yolocounty.org

**West Sacramento Man Convicted of Abusing Wife and Children**

(Woodland, CA) – May 24, 2010- District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that on Friday, May 21, 2010, a Yolo County jury convicted 30-year-old West Sacramento man Samol Om of ten felonies for multiple acts of physical abuse, and threats and intimidation he committed against his wife and stepchildren.

The jury heard evidence that Om repeatedly punched his wife in the face, choked her, threatened her with a knife and threatened to kill her if she reported him to the police. Om made similar threats to his stepchildren and shot his stepson with a paintball gun. He also kicked hot soup on his ten year old stepdaughter resulting in permanent scarring and punched her in the stomach when she attempted to protect her mother.

At trial, Deputy District Attorney Ryan Couzens introduced evidence that Om forced his family to lie on the floor at gunpoint, made his wife shave her head, and punched his elderly mother in the jaw when she attempted to intervene on another incident of abuse. Om's wife ultimately reported the abuse stating, "before he would use his fists, now he picks up the knife." At trial, Om's wife and mother recanted or retracted their earlier reports of abuse.

This behavior by a victim is very common according to Yolo County District Attorney Victim Advocate Julia Hernandez, who holds a Masters Degree in Social Services and is an expert on issues of domestic violence. "Victim recanting and minimizing earlier reports of domestic violence is common because of the preexisting relationship between the parties," said Hernandez.

"Fortunately, our justice system allows the jury to hear all sides of a story and decide what version of the events is true," said Couzens. "This jury heard all the evidence and came to a just decision."

District Attorney Jeff Reisig commended the efforts of the West Sacramento Police Department and his office's Victim Services Division in investigating the case and participating in the trial. "Domestic violence continues to be a problem that flies under the radar," commented Reisig. "We are fortunate to have specialized police officers and prosecutors in this county capable of combating this issue. And, our advocates do an excellent job in these sensitive cases."

Om faces life in prison. The Honorable Thomas Warriner will conduct further proceedings in this case on June 18, 2010.

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