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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Sacramento Gang Members Convicted of Attack in Lowe's Parking Lot**

**February 28, 2012 (Woodland, CA)** – District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that on February 27, 2012, a Yolo County jury convicted three members of the Norteno criminal street gang of Robbery, Battery, Assault, Witness Intimidation and Street Gang Activity for an attack on three people in a Lowe's parking lot in West Sacramento on April 19, 2010.

The three defendants, Jose Antonio Duran (20, of Sacramento), Salvador Benjamin Vasquez, Jr. (20, of Sacramento) and Joseph Vincent Sisneros (21, of Sacramento) saw the victim eating his Taco Bell dinner in his car in a nearly empty lot just after 10 pm. The three men took the victim's iPod, wallet and keys, but then continued by beating the victim, causing two facial fractures, while the victim pleaded for the men to stop. Four Lowe's employees who walked into the lot after their shift interrupted the attack. The four employees, all of whom testified at the trial, saw the three defendants taking turns punching the victim while shouting "Norte!" and laughing. Vasquez pretended to hold a gun under his shirt and repeatedly threatened to shoot the Lowe's employee who was calling 911. The employee escaped by running to nearby Lake Washington Boulevard, but the second employee was caught by Duran and Sisneros. The second employee held up his hands in surrender, but the two defendants brutally attacked him, kicking him in the eye and breaking his nose.

The trial took two weeks and included testimony from a Sacramento Police Gang Detective who explained to the jury how the Norteno street gang thrives on a reputation for violence and that the assault furthered those interests.

District Attorney Jeff Reisig thanked the Sacramento Police Department for offering their assistance, and thanked the citizens who were brave enough to intervene in the assault and to come forward to testify at the trial. "Our liberties and freedoms depend on some basic notions of personal security," commented Reisig. "The fact that a citizen can't eat in a public place after work without being attacked by gangs demonstrates the real threat gangs pose to the safety of the community at large."

The defendants will be sentenced by the Honorable Stephen Mock on April 13, 2012. Each defendant faces a life term in state prison.

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