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CRIMINAL CASE UPDATE

**RIVERSIDE GANG MEMBER SENTENCED TO DEATH
FOR 2004 EXECUTION MURDER**

RIVERSIDE –A Riverside man was sentenced to death today, Jan. 29, 2010, for the 2004 gang-execution murder of Jorge Ortiz.

George Anthony Hernandez Jr, DOB: 4-8-76, was convicted on Aug. 18, 2009, of first-degree murder with a special circumstance of lying in wait. He was also convicted of conspiracy to commit a crime and soliciting to commit murder – crimes which were separate from the Ortiz murder. The jury also found true the allegations that all the crimes were gang crimes.

The same jury later decided that Hernandez should be put to death for the murder of Ortiz. Today, Judge Paul Zellerbach formally sentenced Hernandez to death.

On July 26, 2004, Hernandez and the victim left a Riverside bar together and Hernandez invited Ortiz to “check out his new Impala.” Ortiz leaned into the car and Hernandez shot Ortiz through the top of his head. As the victim fell back, Hernandez shot him in the forehead, then three more times in the chest.

The investigation revealed the shooting was a gang hit at the direction of either the Mexican Mafia or the Arlanza 13 criminal street gang in Riverside, of which Hernandez is a documented member. Ortiz was executed because he was believed to have been a snitch.

After Hernandez’s arrest, investigators uncovered an illicit affair between Hernandez and a female sheriff’s deputy who was assigned to the Robert Presley Detention Center where Hernandez was housed. There is evidence that the now-former deputy, Angela Parks, assisted Hernandez in a conspiracy to murder the witnesses against him in the Ortiz murder trial, as well as for her to smuggle methamphetamine into the jail for Hernandez. Parks, 37, was arrested and is facing charges including conspiracy to solicit to commit murder. She was held to answer at a 2005 preliminary hearing and is still awaiting trial in case RIF122574.

The death penalty case, RIF119969, was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Michael Hestrin and Deputy District Attorney Nik Peterson.

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