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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAN SENTENCED TO 68 YEARS FOR MURDER

September 15, 2015

GALVESTON – Today German Perez-Vasquez, 34, was formally sentenced to 68 years in the Institutional Division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, for the felony offense of Murder. Perez-Vasquez was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys Matthew Shawhan and Joseph Frank in the 405th District Court, with Judge Michelle Slaughter presiding. Roberto Torres and Salvador Faus represented the defendant. The jury was selected on August 24, 2015 and trial commenced on August 25, 2015.

Co-defendant, Samantha Escobedo testified for the State, explaining to the jury the events surrounding the death of Erik Calvillo on January 20, 2013. Escobedo testified that she had been in a dating relationship with Calvillo at the time of the murder but was trying to end it. She explained that she met Perez-Vasquez, through Calvillo, a few weeks prior to the murder and had begun an intimate relationship with Perez-Vasquez. In the early morning hours of January 20, 2013, Escobedo, Perez-Vasquez, and Calvillo were all at a dance club in the Pasadena area. Escobedo testified that, Calvillo, having just found out about the relationship between herself and Perez-Vasquez, confronted Perez-Vasquez, punching him in the face. Calvillo was made to leave the dance club and subsequently left the area. Escobedo then left the bar with Perez-Vasquez, going to her home in the Bacliff area. Once at home, Escobedo testified, she contacted Calvillo to let him know she was at home. Escobedo explained that Calvillo called her numerous times after he left the dance club and she knew that he would come to her home if he knew she was there. The State presented evidence of telephone logs for both Calvillo and Escobedo, confirming the phone calls between the two shortly before the murder.

Escobedo went on to testify that once Calvillo arrived at her home, she had him sit on the couch with his back to area of the house where Perez-Vasquez was hiding. A short time after sitting down, Perez-Vasquez came up behind Calvillo and struck Calvillo in the head with a bottle. A short scuffle ensued and Perez-Vasquez attacked Calvillo, repeatedly striking him in the head with a bottle, a wireless networking box, and a butcher knife. After Calvillo died, Escobedo described to the jury how she and Perez-Vasquez wrapped Calvillo's head in plastic and moved the body to the back room of the residence.

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Hours after the murder, Escobedo testified, she and Perez-Vasquez decided to report Calvillo's death to the Kemah Police Department, describing the death as self-defense. However, Escobedo, four days after making her initial statement, gave a second statement to police, explaining what really happened to Calvillo.

Perez-Vasquez testified, telling the jury the death of Calvillo was the result of self-defense. Perez-Vasquez also gave an in-court demonstration to the jury, showing what he alleged happened the night of the murder.

Sergeant Mike Bell, with the Galveston County Sheriff's Office Identification Division, testified that he conducted blood spatter analysis at the scene, to determine the location of the victim when he was attacked. Bell testified that the evidence at the scene supported Escobedo's testimony and second statement, recounting where Calvillo was when he was attacked and murdered by Perez-Vasquez. Bell's testimony also highlighted how the evidence at the scene contradicted and was inconsistent with the testimony given by Perez-Vasquez.

The State argued in its closing to the jury that Perez-Vasquez' testimony was not supported by the evidence. Shawhan told the jury, "this is not self-defense but revenge." After three weeks of testimony, the jury deliberated for about two hours before returning a guilty verdict on Thursday, September 10, 2015. The Defendant faced sentencing up to 99 years, or life. The jury was given an instruction on sudden passion but declined to apply it. During the punishment phase, Perez-Vasquez testified again telling the jury that Calvillo's death was a result of self-defense and pleading for the jury to show him mercy in its sentence. Late on Friday, September 11, 2015, following jury deliberations, the jury sentenced German Perez-Vasquez to 68 years in prison.

Co-Defendant, Samantha Escobedo, after reaching an agreement with the State to testify truthfully in the Perez-Vasquez trial, entered pleas of guilty to murder and tampering with evidence charges on July 23, 2015, for her role in the murder of Erik Calvillo. Escobedo will receive a sentence of 15 years in the Institutional Division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, which will be formally pronounced and entered on a later date.

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