

Office of the Kane County State's Attorney



JOSEPH H. McMAHON

State's Attorney

Kane County Judicial Center
37W777 Route 38 Suite 300
St. Charles, Illinois 60175

General Offices: (630) 232-3500
Contact:
Christopher Nelson (630) 232-3500

4TH MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON IN 2005 GANG BEATING MURDER 5TH MAN AWAITS TRIAL IN THE CASE

August 23, 2012

An Aurora man is the fourth person to be sentenced to prison in a 2005 gang-motivated beating death, a case that was indicted as part of a multijurisdictional cold-case sting.

Juan Vargas, 23 (d.o.b. 6-24-1989), of the 200 block of High Street, Aurora, was sentenced today by Associate Judge Allen M. Anderson to 31 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Vargas was convicted May 15, 2012, by a Kane County jury of first-degree murder in the 2005 beating death of 21-year-old Jorge Caro.

Early Sept. 4, 2005, members of an Aurora street gang were present at a party in the 600 block of Lincoln Street when they encountered Caro, of the 900 block of Wennamacher Street, Aurora. After several of the gang members questioned whether Caro was a true member of the gang and whether he had cooperated with the police in another murder, they planned to discipline Caro by kicking and punching him. Vargas, along with co-defendants Max M. Aguilar, 21 (d.o.b. 5-21-1990), Ruben Hernandez, 28 (d.o.b. 6-18-1983), Quentin Moore, 30 (d.o.b. 8-1-1981), and Roman Lucio, 31 (d.o.b. 4-14-1981), participated in the beating. At one point, as Caro was lying on the ground badly injured, Vargas gave Moore a baseball bat, which Moore used to strike Caro several times in the head. The men then took Caro's shoes and shirt and left him to die.

At about 4:15 a.m. Caro's body was discovered in the yard where he had been beaten and police were alerted. The autopsy revealed 22 injuries to Caro's head and face and 16 injuries to his upper body and arms, and that Caro died from blunt force trauma.

Aguilar was convicted of murder in the case and is serving a 20-year prison sentence. Hernandez was convicted of murder in the case and is serving a 35-year prison sentence. (Hernandez faces a life sentence after his recent conviction for the 2005 murder of Michael Moore of Aurora.) Lucio pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy

to commit first-degree murder, a Class 1 felony, for his role in this murder in exchange for a 26-year prison sentence.

Moore's next appearance is set for 9 a.m. Aug. 29, 2012, in Courtroom 305 in front of Associate Judge David R. Akemann. Moore is charged with first-degree murder.

The charges against Moore are not proof of guilt. Moore is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial in which it is the state's burden to prove his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The case was charged in June 2007, when a special Kane County grand jury indicted more than 30 men in 22 cold case homicides investigated by the Kane County State's Attorney, the Aurora Police Department, the FBI and the Kane County Sheriff's Department in a sting dubbed "Operation First Degree Burn."

"Our office will continue to work with the police to identify and prosecute lawless street gang members no matter when and where we find them. For those who are convicted, we will seek lengthy prison sentences," Kane County State's Attorney Joe McMahon said.

"Thanks to the Aurora Police Department, and to Kane County Assistant State's Attorneys Mark D. Stajdohar and Jody Gleason, who prosecuted this case."

"I hope that Jorge Caro's family can find a sense of comfort and justice in this sentence."