

- U.S. Attorney's Office

WICHITA –Three members of a Dodge City street gang charged in a federal racketeering case have pleaded guilty, U.S. Attorney Barry Grissom said Wednesday.

Angel Cerda, 27, Dodge City, pleaded guilty to one count of aiding and abetting attempted murder, which was a violent crime in aid of racketeering. He admitted he was involved in an Oct. 4, 2008, incident in which two people were shot.

Jesus Torres, 29, Dodge City, Kan., pleaded guilty to one count of aiding and abetting assault with a dangerous weapon, which was a violent crime in aid of racketeering. He admitted he was involved in an Aug. 27, 2011, incident in which two people were stabbed with knives.

Fabian Neave, 26, Dodge City, pleaded guilty to one count of racketeering conspiracy. He admitted that from 2008 to 2012 he acted as a principal conspirator with the gang, and he was involved in acts of robbery, attempted murder and drug trafficking.

In his plea, Cerda admitted he was a Diablos Viejos (DV) gang member associated with the Norteno street gang when he accompanied two co-defendants in an attack at the home of a member of the rival Sureno gang. On Oct. 4, 2008, Cerda and two co-defendants gathered in a barn behind a house at 10770 Kettle Way near Dodge City, which was a hangout for the gang.

Later that day, Cerda and the two co-defendants drove to the home of Abel Hernandez, a known Sureno gang member, and Rimalda Hipolito. Outside the home, Hernandez's brother and others were drinking beer. One of the Nortenos began harassing them and shouting Norteno slogans. After someone threw a beer bottle at the Nortenos' car, Cerda and the two

co-defendants drove away.

Cerda and his associates obtained a firearm, an SKS or AK-47 style weapon, and returned to Hernandez's house, parking in an alley half a block away. They approached the house on foot where co-defendant Gonzalo Ramirez discharged multiple rounds from the firearm.

The gunshots hit the house, striking Abel Hernandez and Rumalda Hipolito. Hipolito suffered a gunshot wound to the arm. Hernandez suffered a gunshot wound to the leg.

Investigators found 19 bullet holes in the house and recovered 20 shell casings at the scene. After the shooting, Cerda and the two co-defendants returned to the house on Kettle Way, where they hid the car in the barn. Dodge City police arrested Cerda there.

In his plea, Torres admitted that he was a member of the Diablos Viejos on Aug. 27, 2011, when he urged Norteno associates to join him in an assault on a group of people he mistakenly believed were members of the Surenos, a rival gang.

The assault took place at 703 E. 9th Avenue in Dodge City. During the fight, two people were stabbed, Gabriel Rivera and Carlos Ramirez. Rivera's injuries were life-threatening, requiring a life-flight to a Wichita hospital.

In his plea, Neave admitted he was a member of the Diablos Viejos and associated with the Norteno street gang. He admitted being involved in three incidents including taking part in the Aug. 27, 2011, assault at 703 E. 9th Ave., and possessing methamphetamine with intent to distribute on Dec. 27, 2011. In the third incident, on July 2, 2008, he and other Nortenos robbed Bryant Licon. During the robbery, Neave held a knife to Licon. He and two other Nortenos split the money from the robbery.

All three defendants admitted that robberies, assaults and other crimes were part of the way Norteno gang members built their reputations and kept their rivals at bay.

Three gang members plead guilty in Dodge City

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Cerda is set for sentencing Sept. 3. He faces a maximum penalty of 10 years and a fine up to \$250,000.

Torres is set for sentencing Sept. 3. He faces a maximum penalty of 20 years and a fine up to \$250,000.

Neave is set for sentencing Sept. 9. He faces a maximum penalty of 20 years and a fine up to \$250,000.

Grissom commended the Dodge City Police Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Ford County Sheriff's Office, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, Assistant Aaron Smith and Assistant U.S. Attorney Lanny Welch for their work on the case.