



OFFICE OF THE
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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Carol Shipley

Date: December 7, 2009

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Re: Christopher John Balcom

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Thief Sentenced to 16 Months in Prison

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Christopher John Balcom, age 33, of Manteca, was convicted of possession of stolen property. Balcom had previously served time in prison stemming from an auto theft conviction in February 1998. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

On September 10, 2009 at around 7:00 a.m., officers from the Stanislaus County Auto Theft Task Force (StanCATT) were investigating the theft of a 2004 white Ford F-250 cargo van which had been parked at the Motel 6 parking lot on Orangeburg Avenue in Modesto. The van contained approximately \$10,000 worth of beef jerky. A couple of hours later, the officers discovered the abandoned van but its cargo had been taken. As the officers were investigating the scene, they observed another van parked in front of Mo's Cigarette and Gift Store on Carver Road. The rear doors to that van were open and the stolen boxes of beef jerky were in the back. Balcom was standing next to the van's open rear doors and had been trying to sell the \$10,000 worth of stolen beef jerky from the back of the van.

Upon entry of the plea, the Honorable Dawna Frenchie Reeves sentenced Balcom to sixteen months in state prison.

Ryan Gains had previously pled and admitted a "strike" prior for thirty two months in state prison.

Stanislaus County residents can report suspected vehicle theft activity to their local law enforcement agency or contact the Stanislaus County Auto-Theft Task Force (StanCATT) at: (209) 545-7316.

IF YOU OBSERVE A THEFT IN PROGRESS, DIAL 911

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