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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact:

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Date: June 1, 2009

Re: Billy Joe Dwayne McCoy

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Auto Thief Sentenced to Four Years Prison

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Billy Joe Dwayne McCoy, age 31, of Modesto, was convicted of auto theft and evading a peace officer. The defendant also admitted two prison priors stemming from a December 2003 conviction for auto theft and a June 2008 conviction for possession of methamphetamine for which he is currently on parole. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

The case arose out of events which occurred on April 15, 2009 at around 4:00 p.m. on Highway 99 near the Whitmore Avenue exit when a California Highway Patrol officer observed McCoy inside a 1988 white Toyota Camry and stopped on the side of the highway. The defendant stepped out of the car and started walking around it. When the officer pulled behind the vehicle to assist, a routine license plate check revealed that the vehicle had been reported stolen out of Ceres on April 13, 2009. McCoy then jumped inside the vehicle and accelerated away. The officer activated his lights and siren to perform a traffic stop, but McCoy began to weave erratically between lanes and forced other vehicles to take evasive action to avoid a collision. After taking the Hatch Road exit, McCoy abandoned the vehicle and fled. Inside a backpack in the trunk of the vehicle, officers located McCoy's identification with his Modesto address. When officers arrived at his house, they recognized McCoy due to the unique tattoos on his neck and body.

Upon entry of the plea, the Honorable John Whiteside sentenced McCoy to four years in the California Rehabilitation Center.

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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