



OFFICE OF THE
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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Carol Shipley

Date: February 16, 2011

Assistant District Attorney

Re: Samuel Martin Tamburo Jr

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Auto Thief Gets 4 Years, 8 Months Prison

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Samuel Martin Tamburo, Jr, age 26, of Modesto, was convicted on February 16, 2011 of auto theft and evading a peace officer. Tamburo also admitted a prior auto theft conviction from December 2006 for which he was still on parole. Deputy District Attorney Jeffrey W. Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

On January 27, 2011 at approximately 4:00 p.m. in the area of Tuolumne Boulevard and Rosemont Avenue in Modesto, an officer was approaching an intersection when he observed Tamburo driving a 1988 burgundy Chevy pick-up truck that was missing a front bumper and front license plate. When the officer tried to perform a routine traffic stop, Tamburo accelerated away at over 40 m.p.h. in a 25 m.p.h. zone running stop signs at Merced Street and 7th Street while traveling in the opposite lanes of traffic. Tamburo then stopped the vehicle and abandoned it near River Road, leaving his cell phone with his photo as a screen saver in the vehicle. During the end of the pursuit, the officer was notified by dispatch that the vehicle had just been reported stolen out of Ceres. Based on the officer's observations and the photo of Tamburo on his cell phone, a warrant of arrest was issued. On January 31, 2011, Tamburo's parole officer and members from the Stanislaus County Auto-Theft Task Force (StanCATT) went to Tamburo's house. When they contacted Tamburo, he claimed that he wasn't in the truck. The officers then explained to Tamburo that they saw him driving the vehicle and that they found his cell phone inside the truck. Tamburo then claimed he was a passenger in the vehicle and that he had left his phone in the truck after a friend dropped him off at his house. Tamburo had no name or contact information for his friend that he claimed was the driver. When the officers noticed that Tamburo was fidgety and could not sit still, Tamburo then admitted to using methamphetamine several hours before they arrived.

The Honorable Thomas Zeff sentenced Tamburo to four years and eight 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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