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CAREER CRIMINAL SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS TO LIFE IN PRISON

Armando Joseph Garcia, age 45, was sentenced today in Shasta County Superior Court to 25 years to life in prison after a third strike felony conviction for possession of stolen property. Garcia pled guilty to the new charge on May 12 and admitted having two prior serious and violent felony convictions for robberies in Santa Clara County in 1982 and 1993, making him eligible for sentencing under California's three strikes law.

Garcia was arrested December 30, 2007, after being contacted by Shasta County Sheriff's deputies investigating a nearby residential burglary. A search of Garcia's person revealed a camera concealed in his jacket sleeve that was later identified as stolen in the burglary. Deputies also located Garcia's wife, Barbara Moreno, hiding behind the victim's home. She was found in possession of numerous items of the victim's jewelry. A subsequent search of a nearby field revealed numerous other items of the victim's property, including a .22 rifle, radio, television and watch.

Garcia's criminal history dates back to the late 70's when he spent time in the California Youth Authority for auto theft. Later felony convictions include: receiving stolen property in 1980; commercial burglary in 1981; armed robbery in 1982; escape and auto theft in 1984; assault on a police officer and escape with force in 1988; robbery, auto theft and residential burglary in 1993. Upon the 1993 convictions, Garcia was sentenced to 18 years in prison and was paroled in 2003 after serving 10 years with credit for good behavior. Garcia had been discharged from parole supervision July 24, 2007.

Barbara Moreno failed to appear in court on May 12 and a bench warrant was issued for her arrest.

The case is being prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Brian Popkes.