



Fresno County Sheriff's Department
Margaret Mims, Sheriff
News Release

January 25, 2007

Sergeant Mark Bray Jr.
Fresno County Sheriff's Department
Agricultural Crimes Unit
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**BURGLARY SUSPECTS CAUGHT DURING ALARM
RESPONSE**

On 1/25/07, at about 1:57 AM, Fresno County Sheriff's Deputies Michael Montanez and Mike Jones were dispatched to a report of a silent alarm from a cotton gin located in the 4500 block of East Mt. Whitney in Laton. Upon Arrival, Deputies Montanez and Jones, with the assistance of FSD Sgt. Robert Salazar found a door on the north end of the cotton gin building that had been opened by force. Kingsburg PD Sgt. Brent Drum and his K-9 partner arrived to assist.

After a short search, Sgt. Drum's K-9 partner alerted on a second story office / room and at that time, Deputies Montanez and Jones located Lawrence Patrick Avila (age 30) and Joe Freitas (age 29) hiding face down on the office floor. Further investigation revealed that both suspects were in possession of burglary tools and wire cutting instruments. The location had been the victim of a prior burglary and wire theft nearly two weeks earlier. Detectives Kent Jones, Jared McCormick and Sgt. Mark Bray of the Fresno County Sheriff's Department's Agricultural Crimes unit responded to the location and assisted in the investigation.

Both Avila and Freitas were booked for commercial burglary and possession of burglary tools.

If anyone has more information regarding this case please contact Sgt. Mark Bray at the Fresno County Sheriff's Department Agricultural Crimes Unit at 898-0667 or at the Fresno County Sheriff's Department, 488-3939.