



Fresno County Sheriff – Coroner's Office

Margaret Mims, Sheriff-Coroner

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News Release

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Deputies Lock Up Well-Known ATV Thief

Fresno County Sheriff's Deputies have booked Nhia Vang, 34, of Fresno into the Fresno County Jail. He faces nine felony charges, including: Vehicle theft, receiving stolen property, assault with a deadly weapon, felon possessing a firearm, evading a peace officer and probation violation. Vang's bail is set at \$177,500.

At 6:15 on Sunday evening, a sheriff's deputy saw two men riding a quad (ATV) without helmets in the area of Academy and Ashlan. The driver was later identified as Nhia Vang and the passenger, Kou Lee. The deputy tried to stop the riders, but they avoided him and sped away. A pursuit took place, reaching speeds over 50 mph and traveling across dirt roads and canal banks. It lasted approximately 6 minutes, traveling about 2 ½ miles. The pursuit ended when the quad got stuck on the canal bank in the area of Del Rey and Shields. The deputy held Vang and Lee at gunpoint, but Vang accelerated toward the deputy and struck the front bumper of his patrol truck. Both suspects jumped off the quad and ran away in different directions.

Deputies responded and setup up a perimeter while the crew inside the EAGLE One helicopter scanned the area. A K-9 deputy conducted a search with his dog. Vang was spotted hiding in a pile of wood, near a large chicken coop. Vang refused commands to come out, so the dog (Mikey) was sent in and pulled Vang out by biting him. Vang was treated at the hospital for his injuries and then booked into jail.

A homeowner found Kou Lee, 28, of Fresno, hiding in his yard and detained him until deputies got there to take him into custody. Lee received a misdemeanor citation for resisting arrest. He is currently out on bond for charges of being a felon in possession of a firearm and receiving stolen property.

Detectives with the HEAT team (Help Eliminate Auto Theft) searched Vang's home on the 4200 block of E. McKenzie Ave. in Fresno and found 34 marijuana plants, five guns and a stolen quad, along with miscellaneous ATV parts. The guns were discovered to be stolen during a reported burglary at a home on the 3200 block of N. Academy Ave. on August 20th, 2016. The quad, stolen from a different location, is considered a racing quad and is valued at \$10,000. The quad Vang fled on Sunday evening is also a racing quad valued at \$10,000.

Additionally, Vang is the suspect in another ATV theft that deputies responded to on August 17th. Around 6:00 am, deputies received a report that a quad was taken from a home on the 1000 block of E. Malaga Ave. The two suspects used a pickup truck and rope to drag the quad, which was chained to a metal carport. As the suspects pulled away with the ATV, the victims chased after the suspects in their vehicle. One of the victims said that he believed the suspects fired shots at them during the pursuit, so he used his gun to fire at the suspects. It struck the suspect's vehicle, but no one was hurt. The suspect later lost control of his truck while trying to make a U-turn and submerged it in a canal near the area of Central and Cherry Avenues. Both men jumped out of the truck and ran from the scene. Deputies searched the area, but were unable to find them. The stolen ATV was recovered and returned to its owners. No charges are being filed at this time against the victim who fired at the suspects. Detectives with HEAT took over the investigation and later identified Nhia Vang as the driver of the truck. This remains an ongoing investigation.

If you have additional information about the suspects in these cases, call the Sheriff's Office Dispatch Center at (559) 600-3111 or Crime Stoppers at (559) 498-7867. You will remain anonymous and may be eligible for a \$1,000 cash reward.