



Fresno County Sheriff – Coroner's Office

Margaret Mims, Sheriff-Coroner

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News Release

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Deputies Arrest Probationer Following Hit and Run Pursuit

Fresno County Sheriff's deputies have arrested 36 year old Stephen Yates of Fresno. He will be booked into the Fresno County Jail on felony charges of hit and run and probation violation. Yates is currently under Post-Release Community Supervision, which is part of AB109.

Deputies issued an arrest citation to 35 year old Sonja Stogbauer of Selma for misdemeanor drug possession.

Around 10:00 am on Wednesday, a Sheriff's deputy who is assigned to patrol the Old Fig Garden Neighborhood noticed a gold colored 1994 Lexus driving recklessly in the area of Dakota and Maroa in Fresno. As the deputy approached the car to make a traffic stop, the driver (later identified as Stephen Yates) accelerated away from the patrol car. The deputy pursued Yates with his lights and siren activated, but Yates refused to stop. Yates made his way to Blackstone Avenue and began to head south. He drove at speeds of up to 80 mph and showed complete disregard for public safety. Yates drove through a red light at Blackstone and Clinton and struck the front end of a vehicle, causing that driver to spin out. The driver was not hurt. Yates stopped his car, got out and began to display erratic behavior. The deputy approached Yates and ordered him to give up, but Yates got back into his car and sped off southbound on Blackstone. The Sheriff's helicopter, EAGLE One, arrived on scene and took over the pursuit as deputies followed behind. Just Yates ran another red light at the intersection of Blackstone and

McKinley. He struck a pickup and caused it to flip on to its side. The pickup then hit a small car, which caused damage to its hood. Yates got out of his car and began to run away. Deputies on scene chased after him and took him into custody. Yates' passenger, Sonja Stogbauer, stayed in the car and was also taken into custody. The two people in the car were not injured. The woman driving the pickup complained of pain, so an ambulance took her to the hospital. Yates and Stogbauer were also taken to the hospital for medical treatments. The suspects also had a dog in the backseat of their car, which was not seriously injured. Deputies searched inside the Lexus and found a BB gun, syringes and heroin.

The pursuit lasted about five minutes and traveled a total of two miles. Fresno Police officers responded and handled the collision report. They also cleared the roadway and reopened it to traffic after having it closed off to the investigation for more than two hours.

Anyone with additional information about Stephen Yates or Sonja Stogbauer is asked to please contact the Sheriff's Office dispatch at (559) 600-3111 or Crime Stoppers at (559) 498-STOP (7867). All tips will remain anonymous and you may be eligible for a cash reward.

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