



DenverDA

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NEWS RELEASE

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PRISON TERM FOR LEADER OF COLLECTOR CAR THEFT RING

The ringleader of group of people who stole collector cars dating back to 2005 has been sentenced today, along with two other co-defendants.

Jeffery Earle Piper (dob: 08-17-64) was sentenced to 9 years in prison and was ordered to pay \$1,167,211.68 in restitution. He pleaded guilty earlier to violating the Colorado Organized Crime Control Act (COCCA), a class two felony, in connection with an ongoing illegal enterprise that included auto theft and insurance fraud.

- **William Stack** (dob: 03-12-57) pleaded guilty earlier to theft by receiving and was sentenced today to 4 years of mental health probation, to include 400 hours of community service and \$206,862.69 in restitution.
- **Michelle Winkler** (dob: 06-17-66) pleaded guilty earlier to theft by receiving and was sentenced today to 3 years of probation and \$16,204.89 in restitution.

Members of the group would rent an expensive car, report it stolen, change the VIN then sell it to another accomplice. The accomplice would insure the car and report it as stolen again to get the insurance money. (One of the stolen cars once belonged to Steve McQueen - a 1959 Cadillac convertible valued at \$133,320.00 - and was featured in the MacGyver TV series.) The estimated loss to individuals, insurance companies and car rental agencies was \$950,000.

The original Grand Jury indictment was the result of months of outstanding work by the Denver Police Department, the Lakewood Police Department, the Broomfield Police Department and the National Insurance Crime Bureau.

Four other co-defendants charged with similar crimes were sentenced earlier this year:

- **Stephanie Jimenez** (dob: 06-30-67) pleaded guilty earlier to violating the Colorado Organized Crime Control Act (COCCA) and was sentenced to 8 years of community corrections and \$347,497.34 in restitution.
- **Jeremy Lawhon** (dob: 03-10-74) pleaded guilty earlier to possession of a controlled substance and was sentenced to 18 months of probation.

- **Tracy Rudisel** (dob: 08-12-66) pleaded guilty earlier to theft and was sentenced to 4 years of probation and \$120,027.95 in restitution.
- **Michael Smajd** (dob: 03-11-65) pleaded guilty earlier to conspiracy to commit theft by receiving and is serving 5 years of intensive supervision probation.