

Colosimo Tom  
Form 4  
December 16, 2010

**FORM 4** UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549

OMB APPROVAL

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person \*  
Colosimo Tom

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol  
STERLING FINANCIAL CORP  
/WA/ [STSA]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer  
  
(Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)  
111 N. WALL STREET  
  
(Street)

3. Date of Earliest Transaction  
(Month/Day/Year)  
12/14/2010

\_\_\_\_ Director \_\_\_\_\_ 10% Owner  
 Officer (give title below) \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify below)  
Sec 16 Officer

SPOKANE, WA 99201  
  
(City) (State) (Zip)

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)  
 Form filed by One Reporting Person  
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)	5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4)
				(A) or (D) Code V Amount (D) Price			
Common Stock	12/14/2010		M	3,289 A	3,745	D	
Common Stock	12/14/2010		F	870 (3) D \$ 16.39	2,875	D	
Common Stock					109	I	401k Shares

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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number.

**Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**  
(e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3)	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5)	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4)		
				Code	V (A) (D)	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title	Amount or Number of Shares
Restricted Stock Unit	(1)	12/14/2010		A	13,155	(1) 12/14/2013	Common Stock	13,155	
Restricted Stock Unit	(1)	12/14/2010		M	3,289	(1) 12/14/2013	Common Stock	3,289	

## Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
Colosimo Tom 111 N. WALL STREET SPOKANE, WA 99201			Sec 16 Officer	

## Signatures

/s/ Robert G. Butterfield,  
attorney-in-fact  
12/16/2010

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Reporting Person

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Explanation of Responses:

- \* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).
  - \*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).
- (1) Each restricted stock unit represents a contingent right to receive one share of common stock. 25% of the restricted stock units vest immediately upon grant (December 14, 2010), 25% of the restricted stock units are scheduled to vest each year over the next 3 years on the grant's anniversary date (totaling 75% over the 3 year time period), subject to the reporting person's continued employment with the Company on such date.
  - (2) Represents the vesting and settlement of 3,289 shares of common stock pursuant to a restricted stock unit on December 14, 2010.
  - (3) Reflects the shares withheld by the Company for the payment of the employee's withholding taxes due upon the vesting described in Footnote 2.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.