

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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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
 Officer (give title below)
____ 10% Owner
____ Other (specify below)
Sec 16 Officer

SPOKANE, WA 99201

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

(City) (State) (Zip)

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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SEC 1474 (9-02)

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 |
| 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
Date

**Signature of Reporting Person

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.