



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Jan. 4, 2016
Contact [John Milgrim](#): 518-474-1010

CRIMINAL RING CHARGED WITH STEALING DOZENS OF NEW LAPTOP COMPUTERS MEANT FOR STATE OFFICES AND SELLING THEM THROUGH FACEBOOK

State Information Technology Employee and Three Others Charged with Stealing 51 Still-In-The-Box Laptops from New York State

ALBANY – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the arrest of a State employee and three other codefendants accused of taking part in a criminal ring that stole brand new laptops from State agencies and subsequently sold them through Facebook advertisements and a storefront owned by one of the defendants.

Brian Baker, 46, of Route 29, Schuylerville, an “Information Tech Support II” with the State Office of Information Technology Services, was charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a felony, and Official Misconduct, a misdemeanor. Baker was accused of stealing 51 new laptop computers, worth a total of about \$30,000, from State office storage facilities in Albany throughout 2015. The laptops were all new and still in their boxes.

William Shouse, 47, of Zenas Drive, Queensbury; Larry Bishop, 39, of Swan Way, Queensbury; and Terra Wedman, 36, of Swan Way, Queensbury, were each charged with Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the Third Degree, a felony. Shouse was accused of buying the stolen laptops from Baker and selling them to Bishop, owner of LGB Computers store in Queensbury, New York, who then sold them at retail with Wedman, a friend who also operated the store. Wedman was additionally charged with Criminal Possession of Marijuana in the Fifth Degree, a misdemeanor.

“For the better part of a year this criminal ring used a State employee’s position and access to systemically steal valuable laptop computers from taxpayers and brazenly advertise them on Facebook for sale at a Warren County computer store,” said Inspector General Leahy Scott. “I will continue to use the resources of my office to protect taxpayer property and hold accountable those who violate the public’s trust.”

Inspector General Leahy Scott’s investigation uncovered postings on the Facebook page of LGB Computers as well as the South Glens Falls Online Garage Sale group page. The postings, made at various times throughout 2015, noted brand new HP and Dell laptop computers for sale matching the specifications of the computers stolen from the State. The computers were advertised for sale at between \$399 and \$479 each, plus tax,

available through LGB and complete with manufacturer's warranty. Subsequent investigation found several laptops for sale at the LGB Computers store with the same serial numbers of those stolen from the State.

Baker was arraigned in Albany City Court and released under the supervision of probation officials pending further court action.

Shouse was arraigned today in Queensbury Town Court and is due to return to court Feb. 1. Bishop and Wedman are both due to appear on the charges in Queensbury Town Court next Monday, Jan. 11.

Inspector General Scott thanked the New York State Police for their assistance with the arrests, as well as Warren County District Attorney Kathleen B. Hogan and Albany County District Attorney P. David Soares and their offices for the prosecution of this matter.

The Defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

###