



BIG DEBUT SAVINGS ON POPULAR MODELS

GET **\$500** LA AUTO SHOW BONUS CASH*

ONLY WHILE THE LA AUTO SHOW'S IN TOWN

SEASON TO SAVE

CLICK FOR MORE >

NISSAN SHIFT_

Disclaimer

SFGate

54 ° F San Francisco, CA (change)

Mostly Cloudy
Today
57/63

Wed.
54/64

► 5 Day Forecast ► Traffic

Tuesday Dec 04, 2012 7:16 AM PT

Q sfgate.com Web Search by YAHOO! Businesses

Hello, normajeana | My Account | Sign Out

Home News Sports Business Entertainment Food Living Travel Columns Shopping

Cars Jobs Real Estate Index ▼

WEEKLY AD

Bay Area & State Nation World Politics Crime Tech Obituaries Opinion Green Science Health Education Weird

East Bay cop to plead guilty in drug case

Justin Berton

Updated 8:48 p.m., Monday, December 3, 2012



Norman Wielsch Photo: Lacy Atkins, The Chronicle / SF

0 10 2

Tweet Like Share

Comments (37) Email This

Larger | Smaller Font

Printable Version

The former commander of an elite Contra Costa County police squad will plead guilty this week to charges that he stole narcotics from evidence lockers and tried to sell them back on the street with the help of a private investigator, court records show.

Under a plea deal filed Monday in federal court, [Norman Wielsch](#), 51, will admit to five charges in a

2011 federal indictment in exchange for a lighter sentence.

The charges allege that he stole marijuana and methamphetamines, falsely arrested a suspected drug dealer, and stole cash and cell phones from prostitutes, his attorney said.

The terms of the deal require Wielsch to agree not to argue for fewer than 10 years in

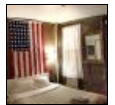
Photo Galleries Displaying 1-3 of 39



Hurricane Sandy benefit
12/3/2012



Bay Area Dungeness Crab Dishes - 2012



LaSalle

BIG DEBUT SAVINGS ON POPULAR MODELS

GET **\$500** LA AUTO SHOW BONUS CASH*

ONLY WHILE THE LA AUTO SHOW'S IN TOWN

SEASON TO SAVE

CLICK FOR MORE >

NISSAN SHIFT_

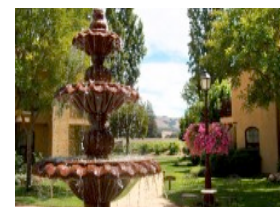
Disclaimer

Most Read | Most Commented | Most Emailed

1. Mike Tyson walked in on estranged wife making out with Brad Pitt
2. Flight attendant out of job after Facebook remark
3. S.F. Muni Metro shutdown snarls commute
4. Angel Pagan to re-sign with Giants
5. Jake's on Market closes, leaving behind a slightly passive aggressive note
6. Regional rainfall totals are impressive
7. Oprah Winfrey No Longer World's Richest Black Woman - Ventures Africa

Today's Deal

\$199 - Sonoma 'Best in World' Escape w/\$175 in Dining & Wine



SALE ENDS IN
1d:16h:50m

PRICE
\$199

prison when he is sentenced by a judge in February, his attorney, [Michael Cardoza](#), said. Wielsch was facing more than 25 years behind bars. Federal guidelines recommend that he serve 14 to 17 years, but the judge has wide discretion on the length.

"After a full evaluation of all the evidence," Cardoza said, "he decided that it would be in his and his family's best interest to plead guilty."

Before his arrest, Wielsch was an agent with the state [Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement](#) for 12 years, and most recently served as commander of the [Central Costa County Narcotics Enforcement Team](#), an elite multi-agency team that conducted drug raids and shut down prostitution rings.

The change of plea ends one story line in a saga that began in February 2011, when authorities arrested Wielsch and his friend, Concord private investigator [Christopher Butler](#), 51.

Those arrests came after one of Butler's most trusted employees wore a concealed wire and video-recorded the two men making a drug deal. The video appeared to show Wielsch counting money and voicing concerns about selling confiscated drugs.

Butler, who pleaded guilty in September and is serving an eight-year prison term, earlier told authorities about a raft of dirty deeds that allegedly involved four other local lawmen.

The ensuing investigation led to the imprisonment of Wielsch's second-in-command, San Ramon officer [Louis Lombardi](#), 40, for stealing cash and drugs from crime scenes and lifting two stolen guns. Two Richmond police officers with ties to Butler were sentenced in August on charges that they illegally purchased guns for minors and tried to obstruct a federal investigation.

And former Contra Costa County Deputy Sheriff [Stephen Tanabe](#), 48, has pleaded not guilty to charges that he participated in Butler's "dirty DUI" stings, where prosecutors say the officer arrested men who were targeted and set up for drunken driving arrests. His trial is pending.

In addition, Butler told authorities that Wielsch assisted him when he opened a Pleasant Hill massage parlor to front for a brothel. The private eye said Wielsch shared in the profits and used his law enforcement position to protect the operation, while ordering raids on competing brothels.

Cardoza said his client's alleged connection to the parlor was not among the charges he'll admit to Wednesday, when he is scheduled to appear in an Oakland courtroom before he is taken into custody.

"He spent the weekend with his church group," Cardoza said. "He understands from that day on he will be serving a lengthy amount of time for the crimes he committed."

In interviews after his arrest, Wielsch said he was deeply stressed from his job when he decided to steal the drugs and regretted the dishonor he brought to law enforcement.

"Norm certainly hopes other police officers are paying attention to what went on in this situation," Cardoza said, "and if they are ever tempted to do anything that they give it a second thought and not do it."

Justin Berton is a [San Francisco Chronicle](#) staff writer. E-mail: jberton@sfgchronicle.com. Twitter: [@justinberton](#)

DMX's Epic Christmas
Carol: Share This



AdChoices

FROM OUR HOMEPAGE



Stunning landscape saved

Truckee Donner Land Trust closes deal to buy Webber Lake and Lacey Meadows in Sierra.



Fort Mason ideas on display

Three teams come up with some head-turning ideas, such as a floating pool.

Printable Version
 Email This
 Like
 Tweet 0
2
 Share

From Around the Web [What's this?]

- 6 Markets that Will Rule the Next Decade (Business Without Borders)
- SURGE Accelerator Sets Out to Revolutionize the Energy... (The Atlantic)
- The Hidden Harms of Hookahs (The Responsibility Project)
- Best Fried Chicken in the U.S. (Food & Wine)
- No amount of Clorox will kill these viruses: An easy guide to... (DeVry University)
- Officers Fatally Shoot Man Holding Knife to Woman's Throat in Van Nuys (Patch - Sherman Oaks, CA)

We Recommend

- Rob Kardashian to ex: 'She cheated with 20 dudes'
- Sex tape used to bribe Chinese official goes viral
- Mike Tyson walked in on estranged wife making out with Brad Pitt
- Sex abuse charges for CA couple in girl's slavery
- Jake's on Market closes, leaving behind a slightly passive...
- Dutch youth soccer linesman dies after attack



Little bit country, little bit odd

Taylor Swift and LL Cool J will host Grammy nomination concert, but that's not the oddest pairing.



Subscribe to the San Francisco Chronicle and receive access to the Chronicle for iPad App and a gift:

- ☐ Sunday + a \$15 gift card
- ☐ Fri-Sun + a \$15 gift card
- ☐ Mon-Sun + a \$25 gift card

Select an offer

(37)



Add Your Comment

Signed in as

Most Popular Comments

4:26 PM on December 3, 2012

Name withheld

pinkie_lardo

This comment is hidden because you have chosen to ignore pinkie_lardo. [Show Details](#)

The penalties for corrupt public officials should be extreme. For what this guy did in abusing his power, ten years seems light.

REPLY (52) (2) Popularity: 50



[\[Report Abuse\]](#)

5 replies

4:31 PM on December 3, 2012



Name withheld

flipthescript

This comment is hidden because you have chosen to ignore flipthescript. [Show Details](#)

Once again we are reminded why cops always get the best drugs; they steal them. Either by force directly from citizens or from evidence.

I believe that in a democracy where we give the privilege of such unusual powers to law enforcement over our lives and persons that any crime committed under color of authority should be an automatic sentence that is double whatever the usual sentence would be.

REPLY (35) (4) Popularity: 31



[\[Report Abuse\]](#)

4:34 PM on December 3, 2012



Name withheld

sanmateoguy2*This comment is hidden because you have chosen to ignore sanmateoguy2.* [Show Details](#)

'He spent the weekend with hos church group.'" I don't understand what this has to do with anything. Am I supposed to feel some sympathy or what? He's a criminal. Worse, he's someone that awas sworn to uphold the law and chose to turn his back on that commitment.

 **REPLY**  (27)  (3) Popularity: 24[\[Report Abuse\]](#)

► 2 replies

[View Comments \(37\)](#)**Inside SFGate**Displaying 1-4 of 12  

Voyager at the solar system's edge



It's official: Will and Kate having a baby



Bay Area cleans up after big storm



Celebrity couples who dress alike

Ads by Yahoo![Home](#) [News](#) [Sports](#) [Business](#) [Entertainment](#) [Food](#) [Living](#) [Travel](#) [Shopping](#) [Find Bay Area Jobs](#) [Real Estate](#) [Cars](#) [Site Index](#)**Company Info:** [Contact Us](#) [Hearst](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Your California Privacy Rights](#) [Terms & Conditions](#) [Work for Us](#) [Chron in Education](#) [Events & Promotions](#) [Submissions](#)**Advertising Services:** [Advertise with us](#) [Place a Classified](#) [About Our Ads](#) [Public Notices](#) [Local Businesses: Business Directory](#)**Reader Services:** [Home Delivery](#) [Subscribers](#) [iPad](#) [E-Edition](#) [Mobile](#) [RSS Feeds](#) [Newsletters](#) [Feedback](#) [FAQ](#) [Corrections](#) [Get Us](#)**Local Services:** [Air Conditioning Contractors](#) [Car Dealerships](#) [Cleaning Services](#) [Family Doctors](#) [Furniture Stores](#) [Injury Attorneys](#) [Local Restaurants](#) [New Car Dealers](#)
[Real Estate Agents](#) [Real Estate Attorneys](#)

© 2012 Hearst Communications Inc.

HEARST newspapers

