

# Ex-Californian worker gets year in jail

*He pleaded guilty to stealing over \$50,000 from newspaper racks*

Staff report

A Monterey County judge Friday sentenced a former Salinas Californian employee to a year in jail and three years of felony probation for newspaper rack coin thefts valued at more than \$50,000.

Agustin "Auggie" Rodriguez,



Agustin 'Auggie' Rodriguez

32 began the jail term immediately after the sentencing by Superior Court Judge Stephen Sillman.

He also faces payment of restitution to The Californian, with the amount to be determined at a hearing set for April 25. The newspaper is seeking payment of \$52,135 for stolen coins, replacement of locks, staff time and investigative fees, said circulation director Dawn

Woodruff.

## BACKGROUND

Former Salinas Californian employee Agustin "Auggie" Rodriguez pleaded guilty Feb. 18 to stealing coins from newspaper racks with keys he obtained while working as a circulation employee.

Woodruff.

Rodriguez of King City was arrested Aug. 25 based on information developed by private investigator Gregory Yancey of GY Investigations in Salinas, in cooperation with newspaper officials and the Monterey County Sheriff's Office.

Rodriguez, who was first hired

in October 2001, made copies of keys he obtained while working in the newspaper's circulation department to steal coins from racks in south Monterey County, Castroville and elsewhere in the Salinas area.

Woodruff, who spoke at the sentencing hearing, said the case was not only about a financial loss, but also about Rodriguez's betrayal of trust to his employer and coworkers.

"This is about more than stealing \$52,000 from a big company," she told the judge. "It's about Auggie being held accountable for the decisions he makes in life."