

For Immediate Release – December 23, 2009

Contact: Linda Jensen
Public Information Officer
jensenlk@co.larimer.co.us
(970) 498-7206



Larry R. Abrahamson
District Attorney
Larimer & Jackson Counties

HEENES SENTENCED

On November 13, 2009, Richard Heene pled guilty to attempting to influence a public servant, a class 4 felony, resulting from the October 15, 2009 incident in which he and his wife reported their son had floated away from their Fort Collins home in a UFO-shaped helium balloon. The penalty range for a class 4 felony is 2-6 years in the Department of Corrections and a fine of \$2,000 to \$500,000. Mayumi Heene pled guilty to false reporting to authorities, a class 3 misdemeanor. The penalty range for a class 3 misdemeanor is up to six months in county jail and a fine of \$50 to \$750. Per a plea agreement, the Heenes stipulated to probation and agreed to pay restitution as ordered by the Court.

Chief Deputy District Attorney Andrew Lewis stated to the court that although the parties had stipulated to probation, the sentence should also be a deterrent to others and incorporate a level of punishment that addresses the impact of the community as well as the personal motivation of the Heenes.

During sentencing, Chief Judge Stephen Schapanski said that the Heenes had exploited their children, the media, and the emotions of people all over the country for money. Both Richard and Mayumi Heene were sentenced to four years supervised probation and barred from receiving any financial benefit from this incident. Richard Heene was ordered to comply with all terms and conditions of probation to include serving 90 days in jail and perform 400 hours of community service. Mayumi was ordered to serve 20 days jail on the Workender Program and perform 120 hours of community service.

In the stipulated agreement, the Heenes have agreed to pay restitution. A final restitution figure will be submitted by the District Attorney's Office no later than January 8, 2009. The defense will have an opportunity to object at which time a hearing would be scheduled by the court.

###