

LUKES DONALD J  
Form 3  
January 12, 2006

**FORM 3 UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**  
**Washington, D.C. 20549**

OMB APPROVAL

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**INITIAL STATEMENT OF 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 *		2. Date of Event Requiring Statement	3. Issuer Name <b>and</b> Ticker or Trading Symbol	
Â LUKES DONALD J		(Month/Day/Year)	STERLING FINANCIAL CORP /WA/ [STSA]	
(Last)	(First)	(Middle)	4. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer	5. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)
111 N. WALL STREET			(Check all applicable)	6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)
(Street)			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director	<input type="checkbox"/> 10% Owner
			<input type="checkbox"/> Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
SPOKANE,Â WAÂ 99201			(give title below)	(specify below)
(City)	(State)	(Zip)		

**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned**

1. Title of Security (Instr. 4)	2. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned (Instr. 4)	3. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5)	4. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5)
Common Stock	622	D	Â

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

SEC 1473 (7-02)

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**Table II - Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)**

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 4)	2. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	3. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 4)	4. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	5. Ownership Form of Derivative Security: Direct (D) or Indirect	6. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5)
	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title	Amount or Number of	

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				Shares		(I) (Instr. 5)	
Non-Statutory Stock Option	01/03/2006	01/02/2016	Common Stock	5,000	\$ 25.28	D	Â

## Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
LUKES DONALD J 111 N. WALL STREET SPOKANE, WA 99201	Â X	Â	Â	Â

## Signatures

E. Marie Hirsch                      01/12/2006  
 \_\_Signature of                      Date  
 Reporting Person

## Explanation of Responses:

\* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, *see* Instruction 5(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).

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.