

# Pleads guilty to 2 heists

BY JOHN MARZULLI  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

A FORMER Verizon worker with a flair for the dramatic pleaded guilty yesterday to robbing two banks — including a heist in which he threatened to detonate a “bomb” wrapped like a Christmas present.

Wayne Costigan, 48, was stressed out by family and financial problems when he turned to robbing banks. He is now facing 10 years in the slammer.

“I believe because of the stress he was under, he made some bad choices,” said defense lawyer Robert DiDio.

He said Costigan was struggling to pay the medical expenses for his autistic daughter and owed the IRS for back taxes.

Costigan also was haunted by a fatal accident he was involved in while employed as a bus driver, the lawyer said.

“He felt as though this was the only way out,” DiDio said.

“It doesn’t condone his actions, but it explains them,” he said, adding that Costigan has twice attempted suicide in the federal lockup.

Costigan was wearing a cowboy hat and a fake mustache and carrying a briefcase “bomb” when he scored \$103,118 from an HSBC bank in Westchester in May 2002.

Costigan also copped to last December’s stickup of a Fleet bank in Queens.

He strode in carrying a shopping bag with a Christmas gift box inside and ordered the manager to smile and fill the bag with cash.

But a teller triggered the alarm, and cops nabbed Costigan. He was carrying a loaded 9-mm. handgun, and an AK-47 rifle was recovered from his car.

Inside the box was a hoax device consisting of two batteries connected to a red light and an antenna.

jmarzall@edit.nydailynews.com