

CRUSE ERNEST
Form 4
March 21, 2006

FORM 4

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

OMB APPROVAL

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN 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 *
CRUSE ERNEST

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol
STAGE STORES INC [SSI]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)
10201 MAIN STREET

(Street)

3. Date of Earliest Transaction
(Month/Day/Year)
03/17/2006

____ Director _____ 10% Owner
 Officer (give title below) _____ Other (specify below)

EVP, Store Operations

HOUSTON, TX 77025

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)
 Form filed by One Reporting Person
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

(City) (State) (Zip)

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)	5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4)		
				(A) or (D)	Code	V	Amount	(D)	Price

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

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB control number.

SEC 1474
(9-02)

Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security	2. Conversion or Exercise	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any	4. Transaction Code	5. Number of Derivative Securities	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	7. Title and Underlying Security (Instr. 3 and 4)
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(Instr. 3)	Price of Derivative Security	(Month/Day/Year)	(Instr. 8)	Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5)	Code	V	(A)	(D)	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title
Stock Appreciation Rights (SARs)	\$ 28.77	03/17/2006	A	15,000					03/17/2007 ⁽¹⁾	03/17/2013 ⁽¹⁾	Common Stock

Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
CRUSE ERNEST 10201 MAIN STREET HOUSTON, TX 77025			EVP, Store Operations	

Signatures

s/ R. E. Stasyszen, Attorney in Fact for Ernest Cruse
 Date: 03/21/2006

__Signature of Reporting Person

Explanation of Responses:

- * If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(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).
- (1) On March 17, 2006, Mr. Cruse was granted Stock Appreciation Rights (SARs) with respect to a total of 15,000 shares of common stock. The grant price for the SARs is \$28.77 per share of common stock. The SARs will vest at the rate of 25% per year on the first four anniversary dates from the date of grant. They will expire on the earlier of (i) sixty days after Mr. Cruse is no longer an officer of Stage Stores Inc. or (ii) seven years from the date of grant.

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.