

The MobNews Digest is a collection of summarized recent news stories relating to organized crime. Material found in this digest has been published previously on the MobNews blog and other Internet news sources. To respect copyright, photographs within this digest are generally limited to law enforcement mugshots and widely disseminated headshots of public figures.

MOB DIGEST NEWS

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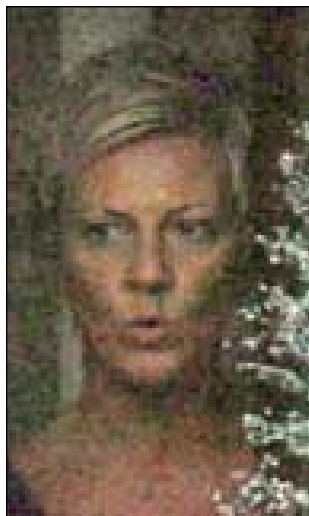
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UK housewife held as mob 'godmother'

At the request of the Italian government, United Kingdom authorities are holding a 44-year-old housewife for an extradition hearing.

Italy charges that Ann Hathaway of Boarshaw, England, is a Mafia "godmother," who took over much of the operation of her husband's Sicilian underworld empire when he was jailed five years ago.

Hathaway, in custody since January, was refused bail during a court appearance in February. Her husband's Sicilian underworld empire when he was jailed five years ago. Hathaway, in custody since January, was refused bail during a court appearance in February. Her husband's Sicilian underworld empire when he was jailed five years ago. Hathaway, in custody since January, was refused bail during a court appearance in February. Her husband's Sicilian underworld empire when he was jailed five years ago.



Ann Hathaway

Hathaway's extradition hearing is scheduled to begin March 23 in the City of Westminster Magistrates Court.

A native of England who had lived in Italy for years, Hathaway is the wife of imprisoned Sicilian Mafia boss Antonio Rinzivillo. Rinzivillo is in Italian custody, facing a number of murder charges. He was previously convicted of killing attorney Antonio Mirabelle.

Italian authorities say Hathaway used her husband as a tool for passing messages between him and his underworld colleagues.

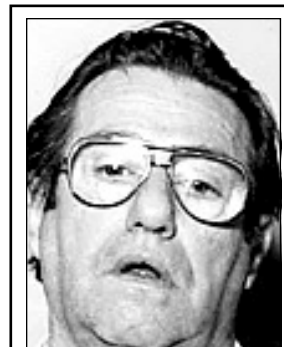
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Santora, 18 others, charged in Bonanno clan indictments

The federal assault on the Bonanno Crime Family continues. This week, the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York in early February unsealed an indictment against 19 alleged Bonanno members, including reputed acting underboss Nicholas Santora.

The superseding indictment alleged crimes including racketeering, conspiracy to commit murder in aid of racketeering, illegal gambling, extortion, loansharking, securities fraud and narcotics distribution against: acting underboss "Nicky Mouth" Santora, 64; reputed acting consigliere Anthony "Fat Anthony" Rabito, 73; reputed family captains and former captains Jerome "Jerry" Asaro, 48; Joseph "Joe C" Cammarano Jr., 47; and Louis "Louie Electric" DeCicco, 60; alleged Bonanno soldiers Giacomo "Jack" Bonventre; Michael Cassese; Paul "Fat Paulie" Spina; and Michael Virtuoso; and alleged Bonanno associates Tracey "T-Bone" Badgett; John Compono; Anthony DeFilippo; Anthony "Nino" DiGiovanna; Christopher Merz; Joseph Rossetti; Robert "Cash Deals" Schwichrath; Patrick "Patty Boy" Tarsio; and Anthony "the Bookmaker" Vivelo.

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Authorities say "Louie Cigars" Mele, a reputed soldier in the Bonanno Crime Family, died of a heart attack Jan. 16 during a Bonanno-sponsored Texas Hold 'Em poker game at a private club on Long Island. He was 71 years of age.

Feds go after Bonanno clan leadership again

Continued from Page 1

The indictment press release also mentioned an extortion charge against Agostino Accardo.

(*The New York Daily News* reported in November that Salvatore Montagna, 35, is the new family boss.)

According to prosecutors, Asaro, Cammarano, Cassese, DeCicco, DeFilippo, Merz, Rabito, Santora, Spina, Tarsio, Vituoso and Vivelo face maximum terms of 20 years in prison if convicted of racketeering or racketeering conspiracy. Rossetti and Schwichrath face up to 20 years if convicted of securities fraud. Accardo, Compono and DiGiovanna face up to 20 years if convicted of extortion. Badgett and Bonventre face up to five years if convicted of gambling.

Cassese and Vituoso were already in custody, charged with the extortion of Howard Beach housewife Yvonne Rossetti, according to *Newsday*. The latest charges are believed to be the result of cooperation by Rossetti's husband Vincent. Yvonne Rossetti is accused of conning racketeers through a phoney real estate deal.

FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Mark J. Mershon said, "The results of the FBI's assault on La Cosa Nostra have been nowhere more visible than with the Bonanno family. But the need for continued pressure and continued vigilance is also nowhere more evident. As each administration is swept up and sent away to long prison terms, a new hierarchy assumes the reigns of leadership in the family. Our efforts have the mob reeling, but our objective is to deliver the knockout punch."

Law enforcement has won convictions against 13 reputed Bonanno family administrators and against more than 70 accused members and associates of the family in recent years. Since March 2002, three reputed bosses of the family - Joseph Massino, Anthony Urso and Vincent Basciano - have been convicted on racketeering-related charges. A fourth alleged acting boss, Michael Mancuso, is awaiting trial.

During a mid-February bail hearing Santora, federal prosecutors referred to the Jan. 16 death of Louis "Louie Cigars" Mele, according to stories by John Marzulli of the *New York Daily News* and Stefanie Cohen of the *New York Post*.

Mele, believed to have been a soldier in the Bonanno family, reportedly died of a heart attack during a Texas Hold 'Em poker game at a private social club at Long Island's Alpha Plaza. He was 71. Supervising that poker game is one of the charges against Santora and Rabito.

Mele's death was mentioned in court after Santora's lawyer asked to have his client freed on bail because of recent heart surgery. Prosecutor Greg Andres noted that the heart surgery had not prevented Santora from attending Mele's wake. Andres tossed in the comment: "He actually died, I believe, at the Texas Hold 'Em game." Prior to that mention, Mele's claim to fame was serving as driver for the late Bonanno chieftain Carmine "Lilo" Galante, who was shot to death at Joe & Mary's Italian American Restaurant on July 12, 1979.

Reputed mobsters accuse housewife of con

Three reputed mobsters, charged in federal court with loansharking, have pointed an accusing finger at a Howard

"As each administration is swept up and sent away to long prison terms, a new hierarchy assumes the reigns of leadership in the family. Our efforts have the mob reeling, but our objective is to deliver the knockout punch."

Beach, Queens, housewife, according to a story by Stefanie Cohen of the *New York Post*.

Reputed Bonanno Crime Family members Michael "Mike the Butcher" Vituoso and Michael Cassese and reputed crime family associate Agostino Accardo insist that Yvonne Rossetti conned them to the tune of a half million dollars in a phony real estate deal back in 2005.

When the reputed wiseguys got wise to the scam, they made some threatening remarks. Those were overheard by Rossetti's husband Vincent, and also some federal investigators via an electronic eavesdropping device worn by Vincent.

Accardo was the first to be approached with the alleged scam. He reportedly brought in Vituoso.

When promised returns failed to materialize, Cassese was allegedly called in to persuade Yvonne Rossetti to make good. Vincent Rossetti reportedly taped Cassese and Vituoso making threats to his wife. Federal agents connected the threats to expected payments on a loan, and the loansharking case was the result, according to a story by John Marzulli of the *New York Daily News*.

The *Daily News* also reported that Rossetti has been accused of conning relatives and others out of money she said was needed to care for her handicapped teenage daughter. Some have questioned her use of money generated through fundraisers held for her daughter's benefit. Vincent Rossetti faces federal extortion charges in a separate case.

Basciano says poker buddies set him up

Vincent "Vinny Gorgeous" Basciano, reputed ex-boss of the Bonanno Crime Family, says two jail-house poker buddies attributed a murder plot to him in order to gain the favor of prosecutors.

Basciano was found to be in possession of what looked to be a list of people he would like killed. The list included the names of the federal judge presiding over his case and the prosecutor. Since the list was discovered, Basciano has been confined to his prison cell for 23 hours a day.

Basciano insisted that the list was compiled at the suggestion of a fellow inmate, who was acquainted with the Santeria religion. The list was supposed to magically aid the crime boss at trial. However, a couple of inmates, with whom Basciano regularly played cards, told authorities that the people named on the list were targeted for assassination.



Basciano

MOBNEWS: BOOKS, MOVIES & MORE

Brasco returns

Donnie Brasco: Unfinished Business. Philadelphia: Running Press, 2007, \$22.95.

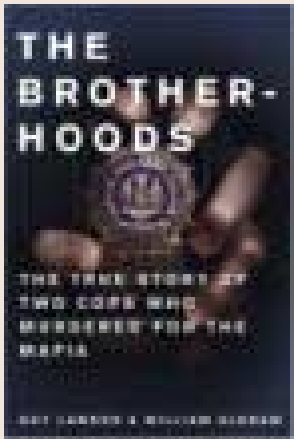
Two decades after wowing us with Donnie Brasco-related revelations, former undercover FBI agent Joe Pistone returns to tie up some loose ends.

I must admit I was skeptical that Pistone could find enough loose ends in the Donnie Brasco story to fill another book. However, while there is some repetition, the ex-agent provides enough new information to keep us very interested. And, frankly, the repetitive parts are quite entertaining - Donnie Brasco's thrilling adventures are worth recalling.

The first portion of the book is basically a summary of the Donnie Brasco deep-undercover experience with many of the gaps filled in. Some details apparently had to be kept secret until court cases had been processed. Pistone also takes the opportunity to correct some impressions created by the movie based on his bestseller. He takes issue with some of the sentimental and self-critical Johnny Depp moments in the film:

"I never experienced any doubt, uncertainty, or reservation. I did not make Lefty [Ruggiero] a Mafia gangster... Lefty and his Mafia underground nation is America's enemy. I was an American FBI agent... In the end, I was proud to bring Lefty to justice, and I'm even more proud of the devastating short- and long-term effects on the Mafia that people have credited, in part, to my work."

Pistone recalls for us the criminal activities ("unauthorized by the Bureau") he engaged in while undercover as "Donnie," an associate of the Colombo and Bonanno Crime Families. His admitted crimes include a murder conspiracy, hijacking and a number of



Lawson & Oldham tackle Mafia Cops

The Brotherhoods, by Guy Lawson and William Oldham, is an "important and well-told story," according to a review by Miles Corwin in the *Los Angeles Times*.

The review also noted that the book, which deals with the Mafia Cops story, was long and would have benefited from insight from other detectives.

The Mafia Cops, former detectives Stephen Caracappa and Louis Eppolito, were charged with conspiring with Luchese Crime Family bigshot Anthony "Gaspape" Casso through almost a decade. A jury found the two guilty, but that conviction was later overturned due to the statute of limitations.

While telling the story of Caracappa's and Eppolito's involvement with Casso, the book also reveals the foot-dragging and mishandling of law enforcement agencies in the case. It also discusses early warnings that the detective duo was in bed with the mob.

other offenses (he apparently beat two stick-up men to a pulp because they dared to rob money from connected guys). But Pistone admits he would have gone even further in order to protect himself.

Underworld associates like Brasco might be called upon by Mafia superiors to perform gang "hits." Pistone decided that, if confronted with a situation in which he had to kill an underworld character or face the certain wrath of the mob, "...the wiseguy would go. I knew the FBI would not stand behind me on something like that. Well, let me call it what it is - murder in the first degree."

The situation nearly came up in 1981, first in the murder of the Three Capos (when Bonanno bigshot Joseph Massino nixed Brasco's participation) and then as Brasco was assigned by Bonanno caporegime "Sonny Black" Napolitano to assassinate Bruno Indelicato. Indelicato went into hiding, and Pistone was pulled from his undercover assignment before the nightmare scenario had

a chance to develop.

The rest of the book is devoted to Pistone's post-Brasco experiences as a courtroom witness against the Mafia. Working with prosecutors, like then-U.S. Attorney Rudy Giuliani of New York, he participated in some blockbuster trials, including the Bonanno Family case, the Pizza Connection, the Mafia Commission case, the conviction of Bonanno boss "Big Joey" Massino, and the Mafia Cops trial of 2006.

Pistone's description of the trials is anything but bland. He provides compelling and often gory detail, while recounting the defeats of the mob through the past 25 years.

Pistone has a different co-author for "Unfinished Business," former Delaware prosecutor Charles Brandt who wrote *I Heard You Paint Houses*. However, the writing style - using casual phrasing and rhythms that would be at home in city street corner conversations - remains uniquely Pistone.

This is an informative and entertaining book.

MOBNEWS: BOOKS, MOVIES & MORE

Biography explores Mob's New Orleans birth

Deep Water: Joseph P. Macheca and the Birth of the American Mafia. Lincoln NE: iUniverse, Inc., 2007. Paperback \$25.95, Hardcover \$35.95.

The American Mafia was born in the Crescent City of the 19th Century and came of age with the 1891 betrayal and murder of gang organizer and financier Joseph P. Macheca, according to a just released Macheca biography.

Deep Water: Joseph P. Macheca and the Birth of the American Mafia, co-authored by an organized crime historian and a Macheca family descendant, challenges the legends of the mob's earliest days and establishes the facts of the 1890 Hennessy assassination, the 1891 Crescent City lynchings and the underworld's kinship with corrupt political machines of the period.

Building upon a decade of research, authors Thomas Hunt and Martha Macheca Sheldon stitch together the details of Macheca's life, interests, family and death. They tackle historical misrepresentations of Macheca as a foreign-born Mafioso, proving he was a native Louisianan, a Confederate patriot and a street warrior for the conservative Democratic cause, as well as a cunning and brutal gang leader.

"Joseph P. Macheca was a major force in the underworld of his day," Mr. Hunt explained. "But it is important to view his crimes in an appropriate context. GildedAge New Orleans was very much a wild, frontier town. During our research, we often encountered situations in which no substantial difference could be found between the actions of respected community leaders and the actions of outlaws. On some occasions, the motives and methods of professional law enforcers were indistinguishable from those of lawbreakers.

"We believe Macheca, longing for acceptance from the local establishment, allowed political bosses to push him deeper and deeper into underworld conspiracies. When the bosses decided he had become more of a liability than an asset, they simply disposed of him."

Ms. Sheldon discovered a link to Jo-



An 1891 lynch mob played into the hands of corrupt political bosses, according to a new biography of slain New Orleans gang leader Joseph P. Macheca.



Under cover of the mob, a small force of gunmen entered Orleans Parish Prison and murdered 11 men.

seph P. Macheca while tracing her family tree many years ago.

"I heard a lot about family history while growing up," she recalled. "When I learned there was a missing piece of the story, I was determined to find it. My father and other relatives wouldn't talk about it. Over the years, I was able to pick up bits of information from various sources, until the skeleton was finally out of the closet."

In 19th Century New Orleans, her Macheca ancestors were generally well-to-do, law-abiding entrepreneurs and pioneers of the produce trade. However, Martha's great-uncle Joseph P. Macheca happened to be the leading suspect in the 1890 Mafia assassination of New Orleans Police Chief David Hennessy and one of the victims in the worst lynching in American history.

Confronted with generations-old lies and denials, Ms. Sheldon decided to set the historical record straight.

Making use of archival records, published and unpublished histories, as well as Macheca family traditions, Deep Water exposes political corruption from antebellum Louisiana through the bloody Reconstruction Era, illustrates the squalor of 19th Century immigrant communities and details the various intrigues and underworld rackets of the period.

Deep Water has been positively received by experts in Louisiana history and criminal research. Peter Dale Scott, crime historian and author of numerous works including Deep Politics and the Death of JFK, said, "[Deep Water] will force a reassessment of a famous event in the history of American organized crime." Louisiana historian Julie Eshelman-Lee described Deep Water as a "brilliant work" and a "wonderful contribution to Louisiana... history." Crime researcher and author Rick Mattix said Deep Water "shows a marvelous objectivity."

Deep Water has been published by iUniverse, an affiliate of Barnes & Noble. It is available for sale through iUniverse.com and other major booksellers. For information visit the book's website:

www.jpmacheca.com

96-year-old mobster pleads guilty

Facchiano faces house arrest, Ruggiero admits to being capo

Ninety-six-year-old Albert "Chinky" Facchiano reached a plea deal with federal prosecutors Feb. 28 and admitted to racketeering conspiracy in Florida and to conspiracy to tamper with a witness in New York, according to an Associated Press report.

Facchiano was charged in late June 2006 in Florida, along with other reputed members of an aging Genovese Crime Family wing. Prosecutors accused him of participating in rackets involving robberies, money-laundering and bank fraud between 2000 and 2003. He was also indicted last year in New York on charges of trying to locate and intimidate a government witness in 2005.

In declining health, he is likely to receive a sentence of house arrest. Sentencing is scheduled for May 25, according to an AP story by Jessica Gresko.

Six other Florida co-defendants, including Genovese capo Renaldi "Ray" Ruggiero, 73, have pleaded guilty. The first member of the crew to plead guilty was Charles Steinberg, 31.

The guilty plea excludes Facchiano from an extensive New York case, involving more than 30 alleged members of the Genovese Family.

The first indication that a deal was in the works was when Facchiano's attorneys requested that the two federal cases against their client be consolidated. A story by Vanessa Blum of the South Florida Sun-Sentinel indicated that a plea deal, already approved by the Department of Justice, would call for Facchiano to serve any sentence under house arrest instead of in prison.

Facchiano's arrest record dates back to 1932. He was convicted of racketeering in 1979 and served eight years of a 25-year sentence.

Ruggiero admitted that he was a Genovese Crime Family capo in charge of operations in South Florida, according to a story by AP writer Curt Anderson published in the Miami Herald.

The admission came as part of a plea deal with federal prosecutors. Ruggiero had been charged with participating in racketeering offenses, including extor-

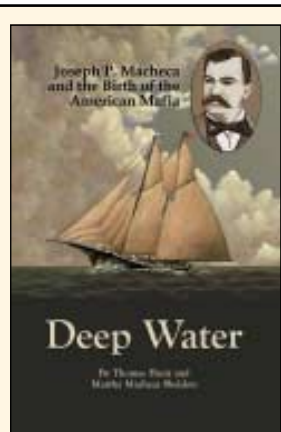
tion, robbery, money laundering and possession of stolen property. The aging and ill Ruggiero signed the deal after his attorneys failed to have FBI wiretaps and tape recordings ruled inadmissible in the case.

Prosecutors have indicated that the FBI listened in on more than 12,000 telephone calls. They say Palm Beach Gardens resident Ruggiero became the leading figure in local Genovese operations in 2003.

Ruggiero did not agree to cooperate with investigators. He faces a possible sentence of 20 years in prison and a \$25,000 fine when sentenced on April 27.

Newspaper stories around the country in early January speculated that Facchiano would become the oldest person to stand trial in criminal court. He is at least in a very small group of criminals charged with offenses committed after their 90th birthdays.

Deep Water: Joseph P. Macheca and the Birth of the American Mafia



ISBN: 0-595-67908-0 hcvr \$35.95
0-595-41416-8 scvr \$25.95

"Deep Water is a memorable reading experience. It is both a vivid down-to-earth description of ante- and post-bellum New Orleans and also significant history, with colorful documents and episodes from the lives of ordinary people. Once you start reading it, it is hard to put down. The denouement, the murder of Joseph Macheca in the midst of a mass lynching, has never before been told so closely from Macheca family and business records. This book will force a reassessment of a famous event in the history of American organized crime."

— Dr. Peter Dale Scott
author of *Deep Politics*
and *The Death of JFK*

Joseph P. Macheca served as street warrior for the corrupt New Orleans Democratic machine, as pioneer of the Crescent City's fruit trade, and, according to legend, as "godfather" of the first Mafia organization to germinate on American soil.

Macheca lives on in New Orleans legend as the criminal overlord whose 1891 lynching death atoned for the assassination of city Police Chief David Hennessy. However, Macheca's death was less a spontaneous lynching than a cold-blooded murder. Old political ad underworld allies sacrificed him so their own roles in local intrigues might now be discovered and so they could assume control of his assets. Built upon years of research into archival records and family traditions, *Deep Water: Joseph P. Macheca and the Birth of the American Mafia* is a historical biography, which establishes the factual details of Macheca's epic life story and sets them against the vivid backdrop of Gilded Age New Orleans.



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On sale now through the iUniverse bookstore
(<http://www.iuniverse.com/bookstore/>)
Barnes & Noble, Amazon and other booksellers.

Feds bust bus union bosses

Federal authorities are working to clean racketeers out of a New York school bus drivers union.

Ann Chiarovano, an employee of the union, was sentenced in early January to five months in prison for lying to federal agents about mob influence in the union, according to a story by Thomas Zambito of the *New York Daily News*.

Chiarovano, said to be the girlfriend of a Genovese Crime Family associate, pleaded guilty in August. When questioned by agents, she denied informing reputed Genovese capo Ciro Perrone about subpoenas received by Local 1181 of the Amalgamated Transit Union.

Chiarovano worked as the local's pension fund director and continued at her post after the guilty plea. She faced the possibility of a 20-year sentence when initially charged in the case.

The bus driver's local was taken over by the international in November after federal indictments forced two top officers to step down. Local President Salvatore "Hotdogs" Battaglia, 60, was charged with obstruction of justice and racketeering. Prosecutors say he is an associate of the Genovese Family. Local Secretary-Treasurer Julius "Spike" Bernstein pleaded guilty to racketeering charges and has been cooperating in the investigation.

The original indictment in the case also charged Genovese bigshot Matthew "Matty the Horse" Ianniello, Perrone, reputed Genovese soldiers Salvatore "Zookie" Esposito and Daniel Cilenti, and reputed Gambino Crime Family associate Maurice Napoli.

Ianniello, 86, reached a plea deal, admitting he concealed payments he arranged between bus companies and union officials. Esposito, Cilenti and Napoli also pleaded guilty. Perrone was acquitted on an obstruction of justice charge but still faces trial for racketeering.

"Hotdogs" Battaglia, already facing obstruction of justice charges, was charged Nov. 20 with racketeering, according to stories by Kati Cornell of the *New York Post* and William K. Rashbaum of the *New York Times*.

Battaglia, 60, arrested at Staten Island, served the 15,000-member union local.

Back in July 2005, Battaglia was charged, along with Ianniello and 18 others, with hiding crime family involvement in union business.

Ianniello's guilty plea aided prosecutors in their case against Battaglia.

Battaglia was specifically charged with extortion, unlawful labor payments, bribery and racketeering conspiracy, according to a press release from the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York.

Prosecutors say he made cash deals with non-union bus companies to not organize their workers and entered into illegal arrangements with a medical center that covers union employees. Battaglia allegedly took payments from the non-union bus companies between 2004 and 2006 and from the medical center in Jamaica, Queens. Prosecutors are looking to seize \$2,785,000 they say he gained in the deals.

If convicted on all charges, Battaglia faces a prison sentence up to 168 years.

According to a story by the *Staten Island Advance*, Battaglia was charged before U.S. Judge Theodore Katz and released on a \$1.5 million bond secured by equity in his home and the homes of his sons. As conditions of his release, Battaglia had to take a sabbatical from the union local and must not contact owners of city bus companies.

A press release from international Amalgamated Transit Union President Warren S. George subsequently announced that Local 1181 in New York has been trustee under international union Vice Presidents Tommy Mullins and Bob Baker.

"In light of the fact that the top two officers of the local have stepped down from office as a result of federal indictments, I have determined that the local union must be trustee in order to assure that the members of Local 1181 continue to be provided with the best possible representation," said George.

On Aug. 21, Esposito pleaded guilty to a single count of racketeering. On Aug. 31, Cilenti also pleaded guilty. Each faces a possible sentence of 20 years. Napoli could be sentenced to up to 40 years after pleading guilty to extortion on Aug. 11.

The U.S. Attorney's Office states that

its case against Battaglia is based upon a three-year investigation that included electronic surveillance at Don Peppe's restaurant in Ozone Park, Queens. The FBI says Perrone's crew met at the same table in the back of that restaurant every Tuesday and Thursday to discuss mob business. One taped conversation publicized in the *New York Post* was related to mob displeasure at the television show, "Growing Up Gotti."



Ianniello

'Horse' makes deal in garbage racket case

Matthew "Matty the Horse" Ianniello, 86, admitted in late December to participating in a waste hauling "property rights" racket within Connecticut, according to a story by John Christoffersen of the *Washington Post*.

Ianniello, until recently considered by law enforcement to be the top man of the Genovese Crime Family, was one of 29 people charged in connection with the Connecticut racket over the summer of 2006. Prosecutors say regional trash

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Ianniello pleads guilty to trash racket

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czar James Galante of New Fairfield CT oversaw monopolistic cooperation among hauling firms and made regular tribute payments to Ianniello. Competition was suppressed by crime family backing of Galante, they say.

Ianniello pleaded guilty in New Haven CT federal court. Under his agreement, Ianniello agreed to pay \$277,970.90 in taxes and penalties and to forfeit \$130,680 seized by the FBI and the IRS during a search of his Old Westbury NY home in July. He also faces a maximum penalty of 24 to 30 months in prison and a possible additional fine when sentenced March 9. The prison term might run concurrently with the up to two years he could be sentenced in connection with a labor racketeering conviction from September.

He faced a possible penalty of 20 years in prison if he went to trial and was convicted, according to a story by Kent Pierce of Connecticut's WTNH-TV.

Ianniello admitted to sending representatives to Connecticut quarterly to pick up cash payments, but he did not admit to being a member of the Mafia.

It has been a difficult year for the reputed crime boss. In September he pleaded guilty to racketeering offenses in connection with an allegedly corrupt school bus drivers union. He admitted to obstructing justice by concealing payoffs he arranged between bus companies and union officials. He could be sentenced up to two years in prison in that case.



James Galante

While Ianniello is technically "free" on \$1 million bail in the trash property rights case, he is actually legally confined to his home (when not making court appearances) as a result of other legal matters.

Law enforcement officials believe that Ianniello became an acting boss of the Genovese family after Vincent "the Chin" Gigante was sentenced to 12 years in prison in 1997. Gigante died in prison last year.

According to Galante's defense attorney, Hugh Keefe, the Ianniello plea will not push Galante toward a plea deal. Galante insists that he is innocent of wrongdoing.

On Nov. 1, the former head coach of the Galante-owned Danbury CT Trashers minor league hockey team pleaded guilty to evading league salary cap rules by concealing no-show jobs given to players in waste hauling firms. J. Todd Stirling, 34, acknowledged filing fraudulent reports with the UHL league offices during the 2004-05 season. Prosecutors say the Trashers' actual payroll, including no-show job income and other improper benefits, was about \$475,000 over the league salary cap of \$275,000. The Trashers team was dissolved over the summer.

According to a press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Connecticut, Danbury CT waste hauler Paul DiNardo, 48, pleaded guilty in December to participating in the property rights racket. DiNardo — employed by American Disposal Services of Connecticut and one of the 29 people indicted in June — admitted that he manipulated the bidding process to ensure that his employer would obtain contracts. DiNardo is to be sentenced March 5. He faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Another defendant in the case, former Waterbury CT mayor Joseph Santopietro is said to be working on a plea deal with federal prosecutors, according to a story in the *Boston Globe*. Santopietro's attorney Martin Minella said his client had no involvement with Ianniello and would not be affected by Ianniello's plea.

With two more defendants pleading guilty on Feb. 27, 13 of the indicted individuals have admitted guilt.



Daniel Leo

Authorities label NJ man the new Genovese boss

Though they seem less than certain, law enforcement agencies have indicated that the Genovese Crime Family is now led by Daniel Leo, 65, of Rockleigh, NJ, according to stories in the *New York Post*, in the *New York Sun* and on NorthJersey.com.

Sources for the stories cautioned reporters that the Genovese family is notorious for hiding its bosses behind front men.

Though he has reportedly served as a capo in the family for some time, Leo has not been arrested since 1980, according to a story by Jeane MacIntosh and Kato Cornell of the *Post*.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Eric Snyder recently identified Leo as the family boss during a federal court proceeding.

Columnist Jerry Capeci of the *Sun* noted that Leo was connected with the violent Purple Gang of Harlem in the 1970s.

One official reportedly told Capeci, "Leo is a heavyweight, a major player, and he may be the acting boss, but we don't know for sure, yet. This is the family that didn't tell the other four families for years that Chin [Vincent Gigante] was really the boss and that 'Fat Tony' Salerno was merely a figure-head."

Leo was arrested in 1980 for criminal contempt after he refused to testify before a grand jury investigating underworld activity in Harlem and the Bronx. He reportedly did not spend any time in prison.

Tino Fiumara, still under federal supervised release from prison, is also considered a serious contender for the Genovese top spot, according to the *Sun*.



Brothers Anthony and Chris Colombo

Colombo brothers beat racketeering charges

Anthony and Chris Colombo, sons of slain mob boss Joe Colombo, managed in late February to avoid conviction on racketeering charges.

A jury found Chris Colombo guilty of two counts of gambling, charges his attorney acknowledged were true during trial. But the jury did not convict on the more serious racketeering and extortion charges. Anthony Colombo was not convicted on any count.

Prosecutors argued that the two men used a public perception of underworld ties to advance illegal schemes. Joe Colombo commanded the criminal organization, formerly known as the Profaci Crime Family, until he was felled by an assassin's bullet in 1971. (He remained in a coma until his death in 1978.)

In his closing argument in Manhattan federal court on Feb. 7, Chris Colombo's attorney Jeremy Schneider acknowledged that his client has run a successful gambling business but insisted that there was no evidence of an extended criminal enterprise or of any attachment to the mob, according to a story by Oliver Mackson of the *Times Herald-Record*.

He scoffed at the prosecution's insistence that the brothers were engaged in gambling, loansharking, extortion and bribery, as part of a racketeering organization dubbed "the Colombo Brothers

Crew." The defense attorney stated that prosecutors invented the term "Colombo Brothers Crew."

"He has wire rooms," Schneider admitted. "He has customers dying to lose money. Does it make any sense that he would hurt his customers?"

A great deal of press excitement occurred when it was revealed that Chris Colombo bragged in 2001 about having "a hook in" former New York State Attorney General Dennis Vacco. He claimed that "hook" shielded him from prosecution, according to stories by Kati Cornell of the *New York Post* and Thomas Zambito of the *New York Daily News*. A surveillance audio tape of the boast was played during the trial in Manhattan federal court.

Chris Colombo was taped during a conversation with contractor John Sitterly. Sitterly, charged with robbing elderly clients of over a million dollars, reportedly wore a wire to a Jan. 19, 2001, meeting. Discussing then-Attorney General Eliot Spitzer's investigation of Sitterly, Colombo said, "Spitzer is the worst. Vacco was the best. He didn't care about anything. I had a hook in him."

Vacco, now with a lobbying firm, told the *Post* that he had never before heard of the surveillance tape or of Chris Colombo.

"The guy's full of baloney," Vacco said. "...If I ever met him, he never reg-

istered on my radar screen."

Spitzer was inaugurated New York State's 54th governor on Jan. 1.

012307 pic anthony colombo

Colombo judge rules against the 'M-word'

Judge Naomi Rice Buchwald decided at the outset of the trial in January that there could be no mention of the Colombo Crime Family or the Mafia during the proceedings, according to a story by Thomas Zambito of the *New York Daily News*.

In pretrial hearings, prosecutors argued that the brothers found themselves on the losing end of a civil war within the Colombo Crime Family and then struck out on their own as "The Colombo Brothers Crew."

Defense attorney Aaron Goldsmith asked that prosecutors be forbidden from mentioning the Mafia organization or Joseph Colombo's role in it. Goldsmith argued that such mentions would unfairly prejudice a jury.

Buchwald ruled that prosecutors had not sufficiently linked the defendants with the mob clan.

In his opening statement a day before Buchwald's ruling, defense attorney Louis Fasulo said Anthony Colombo was guilty only of being Joe Colombo's son. While his client was accused of extorting \$100,000 from the construction firm, the attorney argued that the firm hired Colombo to generate business - something he accomplished.

Prosecution witness Sitterly later testified that he gave Chris Colombo \$600,000 in interest payments through six years on a loan of just \$90,000.

"I could see that it was never, ever, going to be paid off," John Sitterly said. Sitterly, 52, is facing a five- to 15-year sentence for robbing customers of his upstate home improvement business. The *Post* indicated that Sitterly testified against Colombo "hoping to shave time" off his sentence.

Chris Colombo was featured in a short-lived 2005 HBO reality show entitled "House Arrest."

With the approval of boss of bosses Carlo Gambino, Joseph Colombo (left) took over the old Profaci family after the deaths of Joseph Profaci and successor Joseph Magliocco in the early 1960s. Colombo was a highly visible organizer of Italian unity causes.

City probes mob 'links'

New York City is looking into the alleged underworld connections of a man hired to manage a city-owned public golf course, according to early January reports by Stephanie Gaskell of the *New York Post* and Greg B. Smith of the *New York Daily News*.

Dominick Logozzo secured a 20-year deal to manage a course located near the Belt Parkway back in 2005. The contract took effect Jan. 1, 2006. City Controller William Thompson is now asking the Parks Department to consider backing out of the deal.

"The information we have obtained gives rise to numerous integrity concerns," Thompson wrote to the parks officials.

That information concerns Logozzo's alleged relationship to Craig Marino, a reputed soldier of the Colombo Crime Family who is wanted on federal racketeering charges.

Logozzo reportedly provided financial backing for Marino's investment in the Zone Chefs company, which produces the Zone Diet and has been targeted by prosecutors as a front for a stock swindling racket. A Lincoln Navigator automobile driven by Marino is reportedly registered in Logozzo's name.

While citing "integrity concerns," Thompson noted that Logozzo has not been charged with any crime and that the golf course manager was under no obligation to reveal connections to Marino at the time he bid for the job (Marino was indicted the following March).

Logozzo's brother told the *New York Post* that Dominick has no ties to the mob. "All he does is get up and go to work every day."

D.A.: DeVecchio error led to killing

Seventeen-year-old Patrick Porco, killed by a single gunshot to the mouth in May 1990, was the victim of misguided mob vengeance, according to a January story by Alex Ginsberg of the *New York Post*.

The Colombo Crime Family had Porco killed, believing he had cooperated with a police investigation into the 1990 drive-by shooting of Dominick Masseria, 17.

According to the Kings County NY (Brooklyn) District Attorney, former FBI Agent Lindley DeVecchio told Colombo family capo Gregory "the Grim Reaper" Scarpa that Porco was talking to police. That was reportedly an error.

Papers related to Porco's unwilling interviews with police indicate that the teen would not reveal any information about the Masseria killing, even after a police official warned Porco that his life was in jeopardy.

Craig Sobel, 39, is now charged with the Masseria killing.

The Kings County D.A. has linked DeVecchio's relationship with Scarpa to several underworld murders. Scarpa reportedly served as an informant for DeVecchio. DeVecchio insists he is innocent of wrongdoing. A number of current and former FBI agents are strongly supporting DeVecchio.

In early January, U.S. District Court Judge Frederic Block rejected a defense motion to transfer the murder case of ex-FBI agent Lindley DeVecchio to federal court.



George DeCicco

FBI immigration sting nabs 11

An FBI undercover operation involving an immigration officer who gave the appearance of being on the take has resulted in the arrests of 11 alleged members and associates of the Gambino and Lucchese Crime Families and two alleged associates of the Sicilian Mafia, according to a press release from the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York.

The operation reportedly began when Joseph Orlando, alleged Gambino soldier, approached a family associate, believing him to have connections to corrupt government officials. Orlando allegedly sought to pass a bribe through the associate to an immigration official in order to acquire legal residence status for his girlfriend. The associate was unable to deliver, was allegedly threatened and contacted the FBI. Through the associate's cooperation, the Bureau arranged for Orlando to meet with an undercover agent, posing as a corrupt official.

According to the U.S. Attorney's Office, "Orlando told other members and associates of the Gambino family of the cooperating witness's purported contact with corrupt government officials; this in turn led other defendants to contact the cooperating witness in attempts to further other criminal schemes."

Those schemes reportedly included the smuggling of gold bars into the U.S. from the Philippines and the release of a reputed Sicilian Mafia associate from U.S. federal detention.

FBI Assistant Director-in-charge Mark J. Mershon seemed especially pleased at the arrest of George DeCicco, 77, reputed captain in the Gambino Family. Mershon designated DeCicco the "Cal Ripken" of the American mob.

"George DeCicco has operated continuously for so long that his arrest today is like the end of Cal Ripken's consecutive-game streak," said Mershon. "The difference is that Ripken's streak ended when he voluntarily took himself out of the lineup."

DeCicco was the only member of Gotti's inner circle who had never been busted.

(Frank DeCicco, brother of George, allegedly lured

Continued on Page 10

Immigration sting

Continued from Page 9

Gambino boss Paul Castellano to his death in 1985 and served as Gotti's underboss until he was blown up by a remote controlled bomb outside of a Brooklyn social club in 1986. Joseph "Joe Butter" DeCicco, another brother, reputedly served the family as an associate for many years.)

Officials noted that the undercover operation revealed the close working relationship between American and Sicilian Mafiosi.

The 13 individuals arrested were:

Joseph "Joey Boy" Orlando, DOB March 19, 1949; George DeCicco, DOB March 20, 1929; Robert DeCicco (George's son), DOB July 27, 1950; James Avalone, DOB Aug. 3, 1943; Jerry DeGerolamo, DOB April 1, 1971; Steven "Rigatoni" Famiglietta, DOB Feb. 14, 1962; Michael Fichera, DOB Sept. 14, 1962; Richard Juliano, DOB March 26, 1940; Richard J. Juliano, DOB Jan. 15, 1975; Francesco Nania, DOB Jan. 19, 1967; Vito Rappa, DOB Oct. 15, 1967; Kurt Ricci, DOB Sept. 15, 1965; Joseph "Joey Zack" Zuccarello, DOB April 24, 1954.

Police: Mobster bombed competing business

New York police and federal investigators believe that Edward "the Irishman" Fisher orchestrated the post-9/11 bombing of a Staten Island deli.

Authorities previously believed the Dec. 22, 2001, bombing was an anti-Muslim hate crime. The deli owner, Hamim Syed, is said to be active in Staten Island's Pakistani community.

According to Lt. Dennis Briordi of the NYPD Arson and Explosions Squad, Fisher, 54, set up the bombing to eliminate a rival to his own bagel store. He obtained the bomb and had associates Anthony Maniscalco and Salvatore Palmieri toss it into the rival deli. The store cost \$400,000 to rebuild.

Fisher denies any involvement in the crime.

Authorities suspect Fisher of being an associate with the Gambino Crime Family. Palmieri and Maniscalco have already been imprisoned for their roles in the crime.



John Gammarano

Gammarano, dozen others are charged

Thirteen men, allegedly affiliated with New York's Gambino and Colombo crime families, were arrested by federal agents Dec. 12, according to a story by Stefanie Cohen of the *New York Post*.

The men were named in two separate indictments in Brooklyn's federal court.

According to a press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern Division of New York, one reputed Colombo Crime Family soldier, Michael Angelo Souza, 38, and ten alleged family associates were indicted for racketeering, robbery, assault, firearms possession, loansharking, gambling and narcotics distribution.

An indictment stemming from the same investigation charges an alleged Albanian organized crime associate, Lulzim Kupa, 30, with marijuana distribution conspiracy.

The indictments concluded eight months of investigation, including electronic surveillance. Prosecutors say the overheard Souza plans to assault and possibly to murder a Bonanno Crime Family associate in Staten Island.

The ten named as Colombo associates were Anthony Souza, 42; Michael Bolino, 46; Nicholas Bruno,

31; Shelton Willis, 35; Emanuel Ruta, 41; Charles Fusco, 32; Donato DiCamillo, 38; Charles McClean, 33; Stuart Dugan, 30; and Michael Arminante, 33.

Michael Souza, Bolino, Willis, McClean, Dugan and Kupa face possible life prison sentences if they are convicted of the charges against them. Maximum sentences against the other accused range from five years (Arminante) to 48 years (Anthony Souza).

Reputed Gambino Crime Family soldiers John "Johnny G" Gammarano, 65, and William "Billy" Scotto, 39, were charged with racketeering and securities fraud conspiracy, according to a separate U.S. Attorney's Office press release.

Federal prosecutors say Gammarano has been affiliated with the Gambino family since 1982 and at various times has held the rank of acting captain. The prosecutors charge that Scotto is also a "made" member of the crime family.

The two men are charged with stock-related frauds between 1995 and 2003, in addition to extortion conspiracy in connection with the frauds. Each faces a possible sentence of 45 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine if convicted.

Gammarano's name was in the news in late August, when the court testimony of Michael "Mikey Scars" DiLeonardo indicated that John A. "Junior" Gotti became enraged at a group of underworld partners who he believed cheated him out of construction industry extortion money in the early 1990s. According to DiLeonardo, Gotti planned to murder capo Daniel Marino, soldier Gammarano and associate Joseph Watts.

When the three men were unexpectedly accompanied by a number of friends to a Gotti-summoned sit-down, Gotti called off the hit, DiLeonardo testified.

DiLeonardo made the statements during Gotti's racketeering trial. Gotti was released after a jury could not reach a verdict on the charges against him.

Tampa Gambinos convicted

A federal jury in Tampa, FL, has convicted four men of operating a local branch of the New York-based Gambino Crime Family, according to a story by WTSP-TV.

Ronald J. "Ronnie One Arm" Trucchio and Steven Catalano were sentenced March 2. Trucchio will serve a life sentence in prison. Catalano was sentenced to 16 years. Kevin M. McMahon and Terry L. Scaglione could be jailed up to 20 years each.

Scaglione remained free on bail while awaiting sentencing. The others were held in the custody of federal marshals.

According to prosecutors, the four men participated in racketeering ventures on the behalf of the Gambino family through the last 20 years. They were initially indicted in the U.S. District Court of the Middle District of Florida back in August of 2004.

Trucchio, reputed leader of the crew, engaged in extortion, loansharking, interstate transportation of stolen property and dealing in controlled substances. Trucchio and his son Alphonse were convicted in 2003 of running an illegal sports gambling ring in Queens, generating \$30 million a year. The elder Trucchio was sentenced to three years in that case.

Scaglione, owner of the Prestige Valet company, was reportedly a key figure in the Gambino crew's attempt to monopolize valet services in the Tampa region. One alleged Trucchio accomplice, John Alite, did not stand trial in the latest case, because he fought extradition from Brazil.



Alite

One racketeer, Michael Malone, earlier pleaded guilty and agreed to testify against his former mob associates.

Trucchio investigators frighten jury

U.S. District Judge Susan Becklew has ordered private investigators employed by Ronald "Ronnie One Arm" Trucchio to stop contacting jurors from his recently decided case, according to a story by Brady Dennis of the *St. Petersburg Times*.

In December, Becklew issued the order. She followed it up by hauling Trucchio into a Tampa, FL, courtroom and promising him he and his associates would be charged with contempt of court and obstruction of justice if they violated the order. She noted that a local statute prohibits contact with jurors without prior court approval.

Trucchio told the judge that there had been a misunderstanding.

Investigators from New York had contacted a number of Tampa jurors after a letter from one juror to Becklew described pressure to vote Trucchio and his crew guilty of racketeering offenses. That juror, Diana Young-Stewart also noted some inappropriate behavior among other jurors, including bringing outside information into deliberations.

Trucchio faces possible life imprisonment when sentenced March 2. He is already serving a 20-year prison term for a conviction in Miami last year. Authorities believe he led a Tampa wing of the Gambino Crime Family.



David Cicilline

Rhode Island's Tale of two Cicillines

Providence, R.I., anti-corruption Mayor David Cicilline and his reputedly not-so-anti-corruption older brother John M. Cicilline were featured in a late January

story by Ray Henry run in the *Boston Globe*.

The story explained David Cicilline's uphill battle against public perception. His father Jack is a well-known defense lawyer, whose clients have included New England Mafia boss Raymond L.S. Patriarca, reputed boss Luigi Manocchio and a number of other accused mobsters.

Brother John, in addition to piling up thousands of dollars in parking tickets, has been indicted in connection with a scheme to win two accused drug traffickers a light sentence.

According to prosecutors, John Cicilline and a now-disbarred attorney asked a couple facing drug charges for \$100,000. For that amount, they offered to stage a drug deal that the couple could expose to federal authorities in exchange for a lighter sentence. John Cicilline and his alleged conspirator have pleaded not guilty to the charges.

David Cicilline, 46, became mayor of Providence in 2002. He is said to be the first openly gay mayor of a state capital. He took office after the brief administration of John J. Lombardi, which followed Mayor Vincent Albert "Buddy" Cianci's 2002 conviction for criminal conspiracy.

Statute saves Mafia Cops again

Manhattan Judge Eileen Rakower decided in December that a civil lawsuit against accused Mafia-Cops Louis Eppolito and Stephen Caracappa could not proceed because the statute of limitations had expired, according to a story by Dareh Gregorian of the *New York Post*.

The families of waste carting company owners Robert Kubecka and Donald Barstow accused Eppolito and Caracappa of causing the 1989 deaths of Kubecka and Barstow by supplying information to members of organized crime. Eppolito and Caracappa were never criminally charged in connection with the deaths, and the statute of limitations for a lawsuit expired, decided Judge Rakower.

A federal jury on April 6 found Eppolito and Caracappa, former detective partners in the New York Police Department, guilty of conspiring with leaders of the Lucchese Crime Family and of participating in eight homicides between 1986 and 1990 in support of mob bigshot Anthony "Gaspipe" Casso. On June 30, Judge Jack Weinstein overturned the conviction because the statute of limitations on the more serious racketeering offenses had expired. He ordered a retrial on money laundering and drug trafficking charges.

MOBNEWS: UNITED STATES

California

Drug suspects' bail set at \$16.25 million

The total bail amount set for seven people suspected of participating in a San Bernardino CA drug ring is \$16.25 million, according to a story by Joe Nelson of the *San Bernardino Sun*.

Superior Court Judge Michael M. Dest in late December set bail for alleged gang "shot caller" Salvador Hernandez, 42, of Fontana, at \$5 million. Bail for Salvador's brother Alfred, 38, of Fontana, was set at \$2.5 million. Bail for the other alleged gang members follows: Stacy Nunez-Barajas, 24, of San Manuel Indian Reservation, \$3 million; Jennifer Murphy, 26, \$2.25 million; Jesus Leyva, 32, \$2.25 million; Pedro Perez, 31, \$750,000; Anthony Richard Maestas, 31, \$500,000.

The group, arrested Dec. 12, has been charged as a methamphetamine trafficking ring connected with the Mexican Mafia prison gang. The Hernandezes, Barajas, Murphy and Leyva are also charged with conspiracy to commit a murder.

All pleaded not guilty. Nunez-Barajas, reportedly a mother of four children, was represented by separate counsel.

The group was nabbed along with 36 others believed associated with the West Side Verugo, a Latino street gang, and smaller affiliated gangs.

A federal undercover operation in the San Bernardino area has resulted in 119 arrests and the seizure of 35 pounds of methamphetamine. The operation is reportedly part of a U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency effort to halt Mexican Mafia-led drug trafficking networks.

Illinois

Feds: Deputy marshal aided Chicago Outfit

John Thomas Ambrose, 38, a federal deputy marshal, was charged in mid-January with providing Chicago's organized crime family information on a government informant, according to an AP story published by MSNBC.

Prosecutors say Ambrose offered to swap information about informant Nicholas Calabrese's travel plans in exchange for the location of reputed Outfit bigshot Joseph Lombardo. The deputy marshal allegedly provided information to an associate of reputed mobster John DiFronzo. At the time Lombardo was a fugitive from justice.

Ambrose's defense attorney said his client is "not connected to the mob at all." He said the federal case is based on a Sept. 6 interview with Ambrose that was mischaracterized by an FBI agent.

Ambrose has been on leave from his duties since September. He faces a possible penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine if convicted.

Calabrese and Lombardo are among 15 defendants charged in a sweeping racketeering indictment in Chicago known as "Operation Family Secrets."

In 2005, Calabrese provided federal investigators with details relating to the killing of brothers Anthony and Michael Spilotro. Anthony Spilotro was the Outfit's agent in Las Vegas before making too many enemies back home. The Spilotro murders, the historical basis for the movie *Casino*, are part of the Family Secrets case.

More than a century of mob history squeezed into one place

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Mafia power struggle heated
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MOBNEWS: UNITED STATES

Chicago panel's papers subpoenaed

Joseph "Joey the Clown" Lombardo, 77, reputed boss of the Chicago Outfit, is reportedly hoping that documents in the possession of the Chicago Crime Commission will help his defense in a racketeering trial, according to a story by Steve Warmbir of the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

Lombardo's attorney Rick Halprin had a subpoena served relating to records that caused the commission to place Lombardo atop an Outfit hierarchy chart created in the 1980s. Halprin noted that the late William Roemer served as both an FBI agent and as a consultant for the crime commission in the assembly of the hierarchy chart.

Halprin said he is particularly interested in research that might have been done by the FBI into the September 1974 murder of Daniel Seifert. Lombardo and two others were charged with that killing in 2005.

Lombardo and 13 other reputed leaders of Chicago's crime family have been charged with racketeering in "Operation Family Secrets," which includes 18 killings and spans four decades. Charges against the group were revealed in April 2005.

Lombardo remained at large for nine months, as police sought him.

He was finally apprehended in suburban Elmwood Park, Illinois, in mid-January 2006. When he was captured, Lombardo had long hair and a full gray beard.



Lombardo

29 Latin Kings charged in Chicago

A three-year undercover federal investigation of the Almighty Latin Kings Nation street gang resulted in indictments against 29 members in December, according to a press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois.

Among those charged were alleged Supreme Inca (overall leader) Fernando "Ace" King, alleged Inca (group leader) Jesse Guajardo and alleged gang lieutenants Anthony Compean, Oscar Diaz and Danny Aguilar.

At the time indictments were unsealed on Dec. 5, law enforcement agents seized 5.25 kilograms of cocaine, three vehicles and three firearms. Previously, more than 10 kilograms of cocaine and 87 firearms were seized or purchased from the gang during undercover operations.

According to the press release, a long-time active member of the Southside Latin Kings began cooperating with federal Alco-

hol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) agents, leading to an infiltration of the gang by law enforcement personnel.

New York

Gang's RICO guilty plea

Three members of the Syracuse NY-based Brighton Brigade gang have pleaded guilty to racketeering offenses in February and face up to life in prison when sentenced, according to a press release from the United States Attorney for the Northern District of New York.

Karriem "Calo" Williams, 28, Andre "Dre Dre" Robinson, 30, and Bobby "Pino" Everson, 20, were charged with racketeering involving multiple acts of drug trafficking, attempted murder, robbery, witness tampering, and monopolization of crack cocaine distribution within a specific territory within Syracuse.

Prosecutors say the gang used hand signs, tan and gray-colored bandanas and tattoos to identify members.

The three defendants each could be sentenced to life in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Cases against 11 co-defendants are pending.

Gangs reach into the suburbs

The growing influence of violent street gangs in suburban neighborhoods was described in a Feb. 19 report by WCBS-TV in New York.

According to the report, gangs are deliberately recruiting children in affluent areas because of their access to money and vehicles.

Parents were warned to be on the lookout for signs of gang involvement by their children: a change in friends, the wearing of extremely baggy clothes always with the same color combination, and secrecy about activities.

Yonkers police bust drug gang

Police rounded up members of the "Jackson Street Crew" drug gang in Yonkers, NY, according to a late January report by WCBS-TV. Additional arrests are expected.

The gang is believed to have trafficked in crack cocaine. The drug activity is said to have taken place on sidewalks, in apartment building vestibules and in a park near Jackson Street.

Gang violence in NY

Early January video reports from CBS-TV in New York looked at three regional incidents of gang-related violence:

- One teen was fatally shot and another

stabbed during a fight outside the Yonkers NY Portuguese-American Club. Police made one arrest but still sought the shooter.

- Two 18-year-old men were shot to death in Newark NJ in daylight hours. One of the men was said to be looking to end his affiliation with a local gang.

- A 17-year-old high school student was stabbed with a butcher's knife during a gang brawl on a subway car. He is expected to survive the injury. Though two police officers were nearby at the time of the fight, the suspects managed to get away on foot.

NYC police dig for gang victims

New York City Police dug up a Brooklyn back yard on Feb. 3, investigating a report that victims of gang murders were buried there, according to a story by Larry Celona and John Doyle of the *New York Post*.

The police were acting on a tip from a defendant in a drug case. The informant reportedly stated that his father buried three bodies in an old cesspool behind #724 Drew St. in Brooklyn. The site is just blocks away from the Ruby Street and Blake Avenue location where authorities discovered the remains of Alfonse "Sonny Red" Indelicato in 1981 and of Philip Giaccone and Dominick "Big Trin" Trinchera in 2004.

With bloodhounds standing by, police excavated a 3-foot-by-5-foot area of the backyard. No human remains were found. But police said they were considering returning to the site with a backhoe.

Bonanno Crime Family boss Joseph Massino was convicted of the murders of Indelicato, Giaccone and Trinchera - the "Three Capos" - in 2004.

Drug dealers charged with murder

New York State Police say two men arrested in late January were responsible for killing an entire Fishkill NY family and setting the family home on fire to eliminate evidence, according to broadcast reports by WCBS-TV in New York. The homicides might have resulted from a drug dispute, say the police.

The remains of Manuel Morey, his wife Tina and their three sons, ages 6, 10 and 13, were found within their burned out home last week.

Prosecutors believe Morey was a partner in drug trafficking with Mark S. Sorrano, 29, and Charles W. Gilleo Jr., 31. The three are believed to have dealt in marijuana and cocaine, according to Dutchess County NY officials.

Sorrano and Gilleo have been charged with a single count of second degree murder. More charges could be filed.

MOBNEWS: UNITED STATES

23 charged in mortgage scheme

The FBI, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency and the New York City Police Department busted a mortgage fraud ring in New York in early January, according to a press release from the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York.

A federal indictment charges 23 Russian brokers, appraisers and bank employees of cooperating on fraudulent mortgage applications. The accused pleaded not guilty and were released on bail. One of the accused, Oleg Anokhin, is reportedly at large.

Among those arrested were Aleksander "Shorty" Lipkin, Igor "Ryzkiy" Mishelevich and Alex "Lyosha" Gorvits, brokers with AGA Capital of Brooklyn, according to a story by Kati Cornell of the *New York Post*.

The U.S. Attorney's Office stated that employees of Northside Capital NY Inc. (later Lending Universe Corporation) of Brooklyn were also charged.

From 2004 through 2006, the mortgage agents brokered more than 1,000 home loans with a total face value of more than \$200 million. Lending institutions paid the agents a percentage - between 2% and 4% - of each loan as a fee. The indictment charges that property values were often inflated to increase the amounts of the loans (with the brokers keeping the difference), while the financial qualifications of phony purchasers were enhanced to guarantee loan approval. The loans defaulted, forcing lending institutions to foreclose.

Dad accused of being hitman

Melvin Green of the Bronx NY, father of seven children, has been accused of working as a professional hitman, according to a January video report by Lou Young of WCBS-TV in New York.

Police believe Green, who has an "extensive" criminal record, was paid to execute Fermina Nunez, owner of a Middletown NY hair salon on New Year's Eve. The killing was allegedly contracted by the woman's ex-boyfriend.

Betting ring busted

Seventeen people were arrested in early January as police dismantled a betting ring in Long Island, NY, according to a story by John Lauinger of the *New York Daily News*.

The arrests were the result of a one-year investigation and a wiretap of a computer in Suffolk County. Authorities traced betting activity through a wire room in Costa

Rica.

According to the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office, the betting operation was run by Salvatore Gerrato, 45, of Seaford, and Frank Lonigro, 33, of Hauppauge. The two men are also accused of running a side business that generated \$1 million a year in marijuana trafficking.

Mob hit takes life of Bronx man

Investigators believe Joseph Campione, 35, shot to death Dec. 2, might have been the victim of a mob hit, according to a story by Philip Messing and Erin Calabrese of the *New York Post*.

Campione, a resident of Paulding Avenue in the Bronx, NY, was struck by at least 13 bullets as he left the Parkway Lounge on Pelham Parkway.

Worldwide gambling ring busted

Monte Weiner, 56, was charged in a Queens courtroom in late November with enterprise corruption, promoting gambling, money laundering and other charges connected with the operation of a multi-billion-dollar gambling ring, according to a story by Ikimulisa Livingston of the *New York Post*.

Weiner was released on \$1 million bail. He was arrested in Las Vegas and extradited to New York. His son Eric, 27, faces the same charges and was also released on \$1 million bail.

Queens D.A. Richard Brown announced a 33-count indictment against 27 people and three businesses connected to the ring, which used a website (Playwithal.com) and toll-free phone numbers to gather \$3.3 billion in sports bets through a 28-month period.

Washington

Hells Angels on trial in Seattle

Jury selection began Feb. 26 for the racketeering trial of four current and former members of a Hells Angels chapter in the State of Washington, according to a story by David Bowermaster of the *Seattle Times*.

Defendants in the case are Richard "Smilin' Rick" Fabel, Joshua Binder, Rodney Rollness and Ricky Jenks.

Fabel served as president of the Washington Nomads chapter and as leader of the Hells Angels west coast region.

Binder and Rollness were reportedly members of the Nomads until 2003. Jenks reportedly is still a member.



Martin Angelina

Angelina gets 4 mos for parole violation

Martin A. Angelina, convicted racketeer, has admitted violating the terms of his parole and will return to prison for another four months, according to a story by George Anastasia of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Angelina, 44, was paroled 15 months ago and was not to have any contact with his former underworld associates. In Philadelphia U.S. District Court on Jan. 23, he admitted that he met with known felons and Mafiosi after his release.

The FBI and the Organized Crime Squad of the Philadelphia police had evidence of meetings and telephone calls. Those included a meeting with reputed mob boss Joseph Ligambi and reputed associates Steven Frangipanni, Damion Canalichio and Michael Lancelloti, as well as a series of telephone conversations with Canalichio, according to the *Inquirer*. Federal agents had been keeping an eye on Canalichio, recently indicted on drug trafficking charges (released on \$75,000 bond in November) and under investigation in a gambling probe, and Canalichio's phone had been tapped. Canalichio reportedly served 27 months in prison after a 1997 drug conviction.

A former enforcer for reputed ex-boss of Philadelphia Joseph "Skinny Joey" Merlino, Angelina was convicted in 2000 with Merlino and several others of racketeering. He served 66 months of his 78-month sentence and was paroled in November 2005.

Angelina was formerly associated with boss Joseph Salvatore "Skinny Joe" Merlino and capo George Borgesi.



Mercurio

NE Mob informant Mercurio dies at 70

His cooperation allowed FBI to listen in on Mafia induction

The death of Angelo "Sonny" Mercurio, a New England mobster who turned into an informant and helped the FBI listen in on a Patriarca Family induction ceremony, was revealed by a family member in mid-February. A story by David Abel and April Simpson of the *Boston Globe* said Mercurio died on Dec. 11 of a pulmonary embolism. He was 70.

Mercurio's cooperation with the FBI led to the first-ever bugging of a Mafia induction ceremony. In October 1989, electronic devices were placed in a Medford, MA, home, and agents listened in as the New England Crime Family initiated four new members. The family reportedly was led at that time by Raymond Patriarca Jr., who attended the ceremony. Sixteen other mobsters attended. Patriarca was jailed in the early 1990s, winning his release in December of 1998.

Working with both the Boston branch of the Mafia and the non-Italian Winter Hill Gang in the underworld, Mercurio also ran Vanessa's Italian Food Shop in the Prudential Center. In the late 1980s, the FBI bugged the shop, acquiring enough evidence against Mercurio to convince him to work for the now-notorious FBI handler John J. Connolly (also handler for James "Whitey" Bulger and Stephen "the Rifleman" Flemmi).

In addition to providing evidence against his fellow Mafiosi, Mercurio eventually helped convict Connolly of racketeering. Connolly is now serving a 10-year sentence on a 2002 conviction. Mercurio's work on that case caused a judge to reduce a 110-month prison sentence against him.

Mercurio went into the federal witness-protection program. He spent his last years in Little Rock, Arkansas. His mother-in-law, Judith Gopoian, brought news of his death to the press, according to the *Providence Journal*.

'Saint' gets 56 months behind bars

Anthony "the Saint" St. Laurent Sr. was sentenced by a Rhode Island federal judge on Jan. 11 to 56 months in prison, according to a story by WLNE-TV (ABC-6) in Providence.

The 65-year-old St. Laurent, reputedly a longtime member of the New England Crime Family, was convicted this past summer of conspiring to extort payments from two victims. He has been in custody since his arrest in April. He faced a possible maximum sentence of 20 years and a \$250,000 fine, according to WPRI-TV (FOX-12) in Providence. However, a plea deal caused prosecutors to recommend the minimum possible term - between three and five years.

At sentencing, U.S. District Judge William Smith said he doubted St. Laurent would ever reform. Judge Smith noted 17 convictions on a St. Laurent rap sheet that dated back to the 1960s.

Mass. father, son charged with running gambling ring

Elias Samia, 41, and his father Edward Samia, 68, were arrested Feb. 3 for running a gambling ring in Worcester, MA, according to a story by Milton J. Valencia of the *Worcester Telegram and Gazette*.

The two men, both residents of 1 Carleton St., Rochdale, were arrested at the English Social Club, 29 Camp Street, in Worcester. Edward Samia is listed in Massachusetts records as the president and clerk of the social club.

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New England

Limone sues for \$100 million

Six years from the day he was released from prison, Peter J. Limone Sr. told a district court judge on Jan. 5 about the 33 years he spent behind bars for a crime he did not commit, according to a story by John Richardson Ellement of the *Boston Globe*.

Limone, 72, described his fear and shock at being convicted in 1967 of the murder of gangster Edward "Teddy" Deegan and being placed on death row at Walpole State Prison.



Limone

Limone, Joseph Salvati, Louis Greco and Henry Tameleo were all convicted of the 1965 slaying, largely based on the perjured testimony of Mafia hitman Joseph "the Animal" Barboza. While death sentences were eventually commuted, Greco and Tameleo died during their long stays in prison.

Limone and Salvati were released in 2001, as evidence of Barboza's perjury and FBI complicity in the frameup was uncovered.

Limone, Salvati and the families of Greco and Tameleo are now suing the U.S. government for \$100 million.

Michael J. Albano, former Springfield MA mayor and state Parole Board member, testified in late December that the FBI repeatedly withheld evidence that several men convicted of murder were actually innocent, according to a story by Dan Ring of the *Springfield Republican*.

"The FBI knew all along they were not guilty," Albano, 56, said in U.S. District Court in Boston.

Albano's testimony echoed that of former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, who testified a week earlier.

While a new member of the Parole Board in the 1980s, the matter of commuting the sentences of Limone, Salvati and Greco came before the board. (Tameleo had died in prison in 1984.) Albano said he asked the FBI for information, but was not provided with an important report. He ultimately and unsuccessfully voted for commutation.

After leaving the witness stand, Albano told reporters that FBI agents attempted to persuade him against voting for the commutation of the sentences.

"They... said it probably would not bode well for me if I wanted to remain in public life, that this would not be a good vote for me."

Continued from Page 15

Elias Samia, according to police, has been linked with notorious figures in the local underworld. Detectives seized \$10,000 in cash at the club.

Edward was charged with five counts of registering bets; setting up, promoting, permitting a lottery; selling lottery tickets; and permitting public gaming. His son was charged with registering bets; setting up, promoting, permitting a lottery; and selling lottery tickets.

Elias Samia is a suspect in the 1994 disappearance and probable murder of Kevin Harkins. He has previous arrests for drug charges and motor vehicle violations. He has been linked with convicted drug trafficker John R. Fredette and with Matteo Trotto, now jailed on a 1999 conviction on drug and gun charges. Trotto was shot in an apparent gang-related attack in 2004. Police believe he was targeted by a group led by Eugene A. "Gino" Rida, Jr., which was attempting to take over Massachusetts factions of the New England Mafia Family.

Silva is laid to rest

A decade after her murder and mutilation at the hands of Massachusetts mobsters, Aislin Silva was finally laid to rest on Dec. 11, according to a story by Megan Tench of the *Boston Globe*.

Silva's dismembered remains were discovered Dec. 1 within a hillside near William A. Welch Elementary School in Peabody MA, according to a Dec. 2 story by Raja Mishra of the *Globe*. Authorities had been searching for Silva since the 19-year-old's disappearance on November 12, 1996.

Two days after her disappearance, police found blood, hair and some samples of flesh matching Silva's DNA inside a dumpster at a Danvers MA car wash. They also found several bags of lime at the site. A police excavation team began digging into a field near the Peabody school back on June 30.

A press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts indicated that Silva was killed on orders of New England Mafia crew leader Paul A. "Big Paul" DeCologero. On Sept. 28, DeCologero, 48, was sentenced to life imprisonment. He was convicted March 20 of racketeering crimes, including the murder.

DeCologero ordered the young woman murdered after police raided the Medford MA apartment of her boyfriend and crew member Stephen DiCenso. A number of high-powered handguns were discovered. DeCologero reportedly feared that Silva would tell authorities about the crew's drug trafficking activities.

Crew member Kevin Meuse, who is believed to have physically committed the murder by snapping Silva's neck, apparently hanged himself in prison in 1997.

Other members of DeCologero's crew have been imprisoned. Paul J. DeCologero, 32, nephew of the crew leader, was convicted of conspiring to kill Silva and sentenced to 25 years. Another nephew John P. DeCologero Jr. went to prison after a racketeering conviction. Joseph Pavone, 33, was convicted of witness tampering and sentenced to six years.

In spring 2005, Derek Capozzi, 33, was sent to prison for 23 years after a conviction for being an accessory to the murder of Silva. He reportedly assisted in dismembering her body after the murder.

DiCenso pleaded guilty to racketeering and cooperated in the investigation of the murder. He overdosed on heroin in 1996 and lost his ability to speak. In Capozzi's trial, DiCenso testified by typing responses to questions into a computer.

According to DiCenso's testimony, the crew initially tried to kill Silva by giving her a lethal overdose of heroin at DiCenso's apartment. She resisted taking the drug. The following morning Meuse showed up at the apartment and killed the teen after sending DiCenso out to get hacksaws and a metal cutter.



DiNunzio

Reputed underboss of NE family faces extortion charges

Carmen "Big Cheese" DiNunzio pleaded not guilty to extortion and gambling charges in Salem MA Superior Court Dec. 4 and was released after posting cash bail of \$20,000, according to a news story by reporter Laurel J. Sweet of the *Boston Herald*.

Prosecutors say DiNunzio has served as underboss of the New England Mafia since being appointed to the number-2 slot by boss Louis "Baby Shanks" Manocchio of Providence around 2003. He is believed to personally command Mafia ventures in the Boston area.

He was arrested Dec. 1 as he left the Gemini social club at Lynn and Cooper Streets on Boston's North End.

DiNunzio's attorney, Anthony Cardinale, insisted that DiNunzio is not a Mafia leader. "He runs a cheese shop in the North End and a restaurant in East Boston," Cardinale said. The attorney told Shelley Murphy of the *Boston Globe*, "It's not the strongest of cases, but anything in Superior Court is always serious."

Cardinale also defended reputed New England mob boss Francis "Cadillac Frank" Salemme and underboss Gennaro Angiulo.

DiNunzio was previously jailed for extortion. In 1993, while residing in Nevada and California (the *Herald* reported he fled to the west after taking \$80,000 from the Angiulo organization in Boston), he pleaded guilty to extorting \$27,000 from a Las Vegas gambler and was sentenced to four years in federal prison. He subsequently returned to Boston.

Authorities believe the New England Mafia split apart during the reign of boss "Cadillac Frank" Salemme and has only recently been sewn back together.

Rhode Island

Gambling ring connected to Mafia

Edward Lato, 59, of North Providence RI, has been charged with running a sports betting ring that produced \$675,000 in wagers in less than two months, according to a story by Ray Henry of the *Boston Globe*.

Rhode Island State Police say Lato is a longtime member of the Patriarca Crime Family of New England. "He's as high as you can go before you get to the bosses," said police Major Stephen O'Donnell.

Lato was arrested along with 11 others on Sunday, Dec. 10. He was charged with racketeering, bookmaking and other crimes and released on bail Monday. At the time of the arrest, Lato was reportedly on federally supervised release from a 1999 conviction (Lato made extortionate loans to gamblers) that earned him 10 months in prison.

A state police investigation into the gambling business used wiretaps on cell phones. Also arrested with Lato were Rocco Falco Jr., 59, of Smithfield RI, and Gary Cedroni, 38, of North Providence.

One arrest related to the case occurred in Texas: Kevin Lisi, 39, of Houston, according to a story by KVIA in El Paso, Texas.

Florida

Four Florida police face life in prison

Four police officers from Hollywood, FL, face life prison sentences as the result of a federal sting operation, according to a story by Brian Haas and Vanessa Blum of the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*.

Federal authorities revealed the details of "Operation Tarnished Badge" in late February. They say the four officers protected and transported diamonds, artwork, bonds and heroin for what they believed was a New York-based crime family. The crime family was actually an undercover operation by federal agents.

Detective Kevin Companion, 41, is charged with being the ringleader of the group. After meeting with the under-

cover agents in December 2004, he allegedly recruited Sgt. Jeffrey Courtney, 51, Officer Stephen Harrison, 46, and Detective Thomas Simcox, 50, to aid him in a criminal enterprise. All the officers have been charged with extortion through the misuse of their public positions and conspiracy and attempted possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute.

Simcox remained at large of Friday (he is expected to turn himself in to authorities tomorrow), as the other three officers were brought before U.S. Magistrate Lurana Snow. The magistrate set bond for Companion at \$350,000, for Courtney at \$375,000, and for Harrison at \$300,000.

Three of the four officers were previously investigated by the police department, according to the *Sun-Sentinel*.

MOBNEWS: INTERNATIONAL

Afghanistan

Corruption thwarts war on drugs

Afghan opium poppy farmers need not fear the police if they pay off the right government officials, according to a story by Jean MacKenzie, Wahidullah Amani and Sayed Taqub published by Spero News.

Afghanistan President Hamed Karzai called for a "jihad" against drugs in December 2004, but two years later, he has little to show for it. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reported that opium production has increased 50 percent over last year. Afghanistan is the world's biggest opium producer.

According to a story by Rachel Morarjee of the *Financial Times*, the war on drugs has actually increased the influence of Afghan organized crime, as smaller, poorer farmers without the resources to bribe officials have been targeted by law enforcement and the large criminal networks have managed to avoid police action.

Albania

Baby factories in operation

Organized crime groups from Albania and Russia are believed to be managing at least one "baby factory" in Athens, Greece, according to a story by Natalie Clark in the UK *Daily Mail*.

Families in Europe and America wanting a child simply place an order and hand over considerable cash. Women associated with the factory, mostly Bulgarians and Romanian "gypsies," are impregnated and paid to turn over the resulting babies.

According to the report, women are coerced into the arrangement through a number of methods. In some cases, women are granted false travel papers in order to enter Greece and are then presented with huge bills for the service. They are told that the debt will be erased if they get pregnant and give up their babies.

Rio's 'Carnival of Death'

A news story by Jens Glusing of Spiegel Online International explored the violence of this year's Carnival season in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

According to the story, dozens of mutilated corpses were discovered within stolen cars. The victims had been tortured, possibly due to a violent rivalry between competing drug gangs. Those gangs also engaged in firefights in city streets.

The violence reportedly did not disturb Rio's enormous pre-Ash Wednesday parades and other celebrations.

Governor Sergio Cabral said he would consult with Colombia, which has had success battling gang violence in Bogota and Medellin, on methods for resolving the problem.

Brazil's Finance Minister, Guido Mantega, was briefly taken hostage when hooded gunmen broke into the home of businessman Victor Garcia Sandri during a Carnival barbecue, according to an Associated Press story. About 10 guests were with Sandri at the time. The gunmen threatened a "bloodbath" if the guests did not give them money. Authorities say the assailants did not recognize Mantega.

Sao Paulo is also experiencing violence. FoxNews reported that two teenage couples were killed by unidentified gunmen at a plaza in the city's eastern section yesterday. Three of the teens were killed immediately. The fourth died at a local hospital. They were sitting at the plaza having a conversation when gunmen opened fire from an automobile.

Armenia

Uranium smuggling

Authorities of the Republic of Georgia last year arrested a Russian man attempting to smuggle 100 grams of highly enriched - weapons grade - uranium into the country, according to a story by Lawrence Scott Sheets and William J. Broad of the *New York Times*.

The incident was discussed by Georgian Interior Minister Ivane Merabishvili in a recent interview. Russian officials would not comment on the story.

Another man was apprehended in 2003 at the Georgia-Armenia border with 170 grams of uranium. In neither case was the amount of radioactive material sufficient to build a nuclear weapon, but international authorities are concerned about the apparent trade in nuclear material from the former Soviet Union.

Georgian authorities also intercepted a

shipment of 2.2 pounds of raw uranium last August.

Brazil

Brazil sends Alite home to U.S.

The Brazilian government turned reputed Gambino Crime Family bigshot John Edward Alite, 44, over to U.S. law enforcement agents on Dec. 22, according to a story on CNN.

The agents immediately brought Alite back to the United States. He faces a list of racket-related charges in connection with a Gambino family branch that operated in the Tampa, Florida, region.

Four men believed to be Alite's underworld accomplices — Ronald "Ronnie One Arm" Trucchio, Steven Catalano, Kevin M. McMahon and Terry L. Scaglione — were convicted in November in Tampa (See Page 11). Alite was fighting extradition from Brazil at the time of that trial.

MOBNEWS: INTERNATIONAL

Bulgaria

EU: Bulgaria must act against mobsters

Franco Frattini, justice commissioner of the European Union, said Feb. 20 that new union member state Bulgaria must act quickly against organized criminals in order to avoid sanctions, according to a Bulgarian news agency story.

Frattini noted Bulgaria's progress in passing laws related to organized crime and governmental corruption. "Now the courts have to speed up trials," he said. "Arrests aren't enough. We are waiting for sentences."

And it seems the European Union won't wait much longer. The organization could impose sanctions - including withholding financial help and preventing Bulgarian court rulings from being recognized in other European states - as soon as June.

Bulgarian authorities are criticized for securing no convictions to date of organized criminals connected with a wave of gangland murders. More than 150 killings have been attributed to organized crime since 2001.

After some hesitation related to Bulgaria's handling of its rampant organized crime problem, the European Union officially welcomed Bulgaria into its ranks last month.

Canada

Triad societies thrive in Canada

Ethnic Chinese organized crime, known as Triad Societies, are firmly entrenched in Canada, according to a story by Joan Delaney of *Epoch Times International*.

With secret rites and rules, the Triads thrive in Chinese communities around the globe. Triads are thought to be the world's largest criminal organization. The presence of Triads in Canada is traced to the 1850s, when Chinese laborers arrived in North America to work on railroad building projects. Triads established brothels and drug rings.

In more recent times, Canadian Triads have been connected with human trafficking, arms dealing, counterfeiting, money laundering and sponsorship of Asian street gangs engaged in extortion, contract killings, loansharking and gambling.

Triad human trafficking brings thousands of people each year illegally into Canada and the United States. Many women and children are trafficked for sexual exploitation.

China

Authorities nab Hong Kong DVD pirates

Customs officers in Hong Kong arrested 14 people and seized 120,000 pirated DVD movies in mid-February, according to a report by the Bangkok Post.

Two days of raids at 20 locations concluded a year-long investigation into the piracy ring. The individuals arrested included 11 men and three women. Albert Chan, the officer in charge of the raids, linked the piracy ring to traditional Chinese criminal organizations known as Triads.

The DVDs were reportedly made in mainland China and smuggled into Hong Kong. Officials in Hong Kong have made cracking down on illegal disk copying a priority.

Colombia

Los Niches Cartel leader gets 30 years

A Colombian drug lord was sentenced in February to 30 years in prison plus five years of supervised release for shipping 50,000 kilograms of cocaine into the United States, according to a news release from the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New

York.

Jorge Eliecer Asprilla-Perea was sentenced in Manhattan by U.S. District Judge Thomas P. Griesa. Asprilla-Perea, 51, was the reputed head of a cocaine distribution organization known as the "Los Niches Cartel." He pleaded guilty to cocaine importation and distribution charges in May 2002. In a post-plea stipulation, he admitted to trafficking cocaine valued at more than \$1 billion.

Authorities say he operated his organization from inside a jail cell in Cali, Colombia, before being extradited to the U.S. late in 2000, with full diplomatic assurances that neither the death penalty nor life in prison would be sought by prosecutors.

U.S.: Colombian police officers trafficked cocaine

Two Colombian police officers were brought to the United States in January to be charged with helping to smuggle more than \$50 million worth of cocaine between 2005 and 2006, according to a press release from the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York.

Leonidas Molina-Triana (also known as "Sofoco" and "Don Oscar"), a former major in the Colombian National Police, and Humberto Avila, an active CNP patrolman, were indicted for aiding in the transport of cocaine through El Dorado International Airport in Bogota, Colombia, to Mexico, en route to the U.S.

The officers allegedly worked with employees of Avianca Airlines to pass the drug shipments through security. Mexican law enforcement seized 409 kilograms of cocaine aboard an Avianca plane landed at Mexico City on Oct. 17, 2005. Additional shipments allegedly arranged with the officers by the Norte Valle Cartel were seized in 2006. On April 3, a cargo of 552 kg of cocaine was discovered. Another 1,200 kg was found the following day.

The cocaine smuggling was discovered through Operation Caso Dorado, a joint program of the U.S. and Mexican governments.

England

Caldarelli gets extradition hearing

Raffaele Caldarelli, 35, is battling extradition from the United Kingdom to his native Italy, according to a story published by *Life Style Extra*. An extradition hearing was conducted in November.

Caldarelli, reportedly in hiding in London for more than a decade, was convicted of Camorra-related crimes in an Italian court in 1995. He initially was sentenced to 20 years, but that term was later reduced to 8 years. The conviction remains under appeal. He was arrested at his East Hackney, London, shoe store in September.

The U.K. government charges that Caldarelli organized and participated in a Camorra criminal association, using intimidation to control extortion rackets, drug trafficking and weapons trafficking. The Italian government believes Caldarelli continued to influence underworld matters in Naples while in self-imposed exile in England.

Adams faces up to 14 years in prison

Terry Adams, 52, reputed leader of a North London, England, gang known as the "A-Team" is now behind bars after a 10-year investigation that could have cost law enforcement as much as \$95 million (US), according to a report by Ian Hepburn of the U.K. *Sun*.

Adams reportedly admitted to conspiring to hide the proceeds of illicit enterprises. He faces up to 14 years in prison.

His underworld organization is believed responsible for the deaths of 23 people, while it engaged in drug-trafficking, gambling and money-laundering.

MOBNEWS: INTERNATIONAL

Germany

Triads suspected in seven murders

Police investigating the shooting deaths of six people in a Chinese restaurant in northern Germany lost their only witness in early February, when a seventh victim succumbed to his injuries, according to a story published by Spiegel Online International.

The male victim had been taken to a local hospital in critical condition after the Feb. 4 shootings. He died the next day.

The six other victims - three men and three women - were killed in a apparent gang execution in the "Lin Yue" restaurant in Sittensen, near Hamburg. Some of the victims had their hands tied. All of them were shot in the head. Among the victims were the husband-and-wife owners of the establishment.

A two-year-old girl was found alive in the restaurant as the bodies were discovered shortly after midnight.

Authorities are considering whether the murders might be the work of a Triad Society, an ethnic Chinese organized crime entity. Triads are active in Hong Kong and mainland China but have also worked their way into Chinese communities around the globe.

According to the online report: "Rumor has it that the presence and size of a fish tank in a Chinese restaurant is an indication of whether it pays protection money, and how much. The more fish in the tank, the more money the restaurant has to pay. In the US, Triads are believed to have extorted restaurant owners by charging \$500 per fish for fish food. A dead fish found floating in the tank is a warning to the owners."

The "Lin Yue" restaurant has an indoor pond with fish in it.

Guatemala

Head prosecutor resigns

Sandra Aldana, head of the Guatemala department against organized crime, resigned from her post in early December, according to a story published by Prensa Latina.

Aldana held the position for a year and a half. She denied that she was forced out of office. Aldana reportedly resigned over differences with Attorney General Juan Luis Florido. Her responsibilities were taken over by Jorge Luis Donado.

Italy

Kidnapping shows Mafia disorder

Italian officials said in January that they believe the kidnapping of a rich Sicilian landowner is a signal that the prestige of



Canada breaks up Rizzuto clan

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police in mid-November rounded up dozens of people believed to be either members or cooperating associates of Montreal's Rizzuto Crime Family. Suspects in the case, including Nicolo Rizzuto (above), 82, were apprehended through a series of raids, mostly centered in the Montreal area, according to a report by the Reuters news agency.

The arrests were described as the most significant strike against organized crime in Canada's history. A four-year, \$10-million investigation led to the raids.

Rizzuto has long been considered a leading figure in the Mafia of Canada's Quebec Province, according to a story by Sean Gordon and Betsy Powell of the *Toronto Star*. He is the father of Mafia chieftain Vito Rizzuto, deported earlier this year for trial in New York. The elder Rizzuto was arrested along with his neighbor Paolo Renda, 67, considered Rizzuto's right-hand man.

Police also nabbed Vito Rizzuto's reputed successor as Canadian crime boss, Francesco Arcadi, 53, and reputed crime family lieutenants Francesco del Balso and Lorenzo Giardino.

Outside of Quebec, police arrested Franco Pellegrino, 38, in the Greater Toronto area, charging him with conspiracy to import cocaine. Some arrests were made in Nova Scotia.

Police also arrested a number of airport employees and two customs agents, suspected of aiding the Rizzuto crime organization in the import of cocaine, according to story by the AFP news agency.

The Rizzuto family has been linked with the Bonanno Crime Family of the United States. Vito Rizzuto is believed to have been "made" a member of the Bonanno family in 1981. He is charged in the U.S. with participating in the May 5, 1981, murders of three Bonanno capos, Alphonse Indelicato, Dominick Trinchera and Philip Giaccone. The Bonanno family has ties to the Montreal area dating back to the Prohibition Era.

Canadian authorities believe Toronto mobsters, many of whom are not connected with Montreal's Rizzuto Family, might try to move in to traditional Rizzuto territory in the wake of the arrests, according to a story by Peter Edwards of the *Star*.

Police say cocaine distribution through Canada has long been dominated by the Rizzutos. That lucrative racket and others are now up for grabs.

Bail hearings for alleged Rizzuto Family mobsters placed significant strain on the region's justice system. Just those hearings alone were expected to take up to four solid days of court time, according to a story by Sue Montgomery of the *Montreal Gazette*.

A total of 91 people were charged in connection with a crackdown on underworld activities in Montreal. Some of those were not arrested in the initial raids. More than 1,000 charges have been filed in the case, stemming from cocaine trafficking through Montreal's airport.

As the processing of the accused began in late November, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police still were looking for eleven people formally charged in connection with Montreal's Mafia case, according to a story by Jeff Heinrich of the *Montreal Gazette*.

Gabriele Sardo, Italy's ambassador to Canada, complained in late November about the Royal Canadian Mounted Police use of Italian terms in connection with recent arrests of 73 ethnic Italian organized criminals in the Montreal area, according to a story by Betsy Powell of the *Toronto Star*.

Sardo insisted that there was no relationship between the mammoth Canadian case and either the Italian nation or the traditional Sicilian Mafia. A group called "Italians Living Abroad" also objected to the reinforcement of ethnic stereotypes.

The RCMP repeatedly characterized the break-up of the Rizzuto Crime Family as an attack on "Italian organized crime."

MOBNEWS: INTERNATIONAL

old line Mafia bosses is in decline, according to a story by Malcolm Moore of the UK Telegraph.

Pietro Licari, 68, was abducted in the middle of the month near his home outside Palermo, in a blatant violation of a Mafia ban on kidnappings that dates back to the 1960s. The relatively small amount of money demanded for Licari's release and other factors have caused investigators to blame the crime on a non-Mafia gang.

According to the story, Cinisi crime boss Gaetano Badalamenti outlawed kidnappings in the late 60s. Badalamenti was later jailed in the United States for heroin trafficking. The ban was violated just once, in 1976, when a youth gang outside of the Mafia abducted a woman. The Sicilian underworld was able to persuade the gang to release the woman.

Sicilian godfather's Bible verse puzzle

Authorities are studying a memorial message in a Sicilian newspaper placed by reputed Mafia boss Matteo Messina Denaro, according to a story by Richard Owen of the UK Times.

Denaro's memorial notice to his father, who died in 1998, contains a Biblical verse in Latin, to which some words have been attached. Police suspect that Denaro might be using the message to communicate with underworld colleagues. Sicilian mob bosses, including Bernardo Provenzano who was captured last year, are known for sending coded messages based on Bible passages.

The first portion of the memorial, translated into English reads from the Old Testament Book of Ecclesiastes: "To every thing there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven, a time to be born and a time to die"

But, after that, it includes words not used in the Bible: "but only he who wants to will fly, and your flight has forever been sublime."

Italy arrests Litvinenko confidant

Italian police arrested Mario Scaramella on arms trafficking charges just before Christmas, according to a Reuters report published in the New York Post. Scaramella was one of the last people known to be with recently murdered ex-Russian spy Alexander Litvinenko.

Scaramella was arrested as he arrived at the Naples airport from London, where he had undergone treatment for suspected exposure to the same radioactive substance - Polonium-210 - that killed Litvinenko last month.

British and Russian law enforcement agencies are conducting murder investigations into Litvinenko's death.

Anti-Mafia cardinal dies at 88

Cardinal Salvatore Pappalardo, a former archbishop of Palermo Sicily who publicly campaigned against the Mafia criminal society for a generation, died Dec. 10 at the age of 88, according to web sources.

Cardinal Pappalardo in the early 1980s challenged the Italian government to take on the Mafia, and over the years he encouraged his fellow priests to do so as well.

In April, when reputed Mafia leader Bernardo Provenzano was captured outside Corleone after four decades in hiding, Pappalardo noted that the event was both a positive and a negative sign. That Provenzano would finally face justice provided hope for the future, he said, but his ability to remain at large for so long was evidence that many remained willing to protect him.

Vatican spokesman Father Federico Lombardi told Italy's ANSA news agency, "[Pappalardo's] efforts against the Mafia, made amid risks and hostility..., were of deep value to the church and to all civil society."

Italian police arrest more than 100

Italian police in mid-December arrested at least 115 people across the country in a national crackdown on arms-and drug-smuggling networks, according to an Associated Press report published in the U.K. Guardian.

More than 30 suspects have been linked with the 'Ndrangheta criminal society based in the southern Italian region of Calabria. Many of the arrests occurred in northern cities. Eight more people are still sought in the case, according to a report by Canadian news radio 1130.

Another 81 people were arrested by Naples police. Italian law enforcement continues to tangle with the local Camorra underworld there.

Related arrests are reportedly occurring in Ecuador, Spain, Colombia, Bulgaria, Germany and the Netherlands.

Hathaway held without bail

Continued from Page 1

leagues. She is also charged with helping to launder cash from Mafia operations.

Speaking with the press in England, Hathaway denied any wrongdoing and said she was "bewildered" by the charges.

Hathaway was arrested Jan. 18. She was initially detained at the home near Manchester she shares with her two daughters, ages 18 and 4. An Italian warrant for her extradition was issued in December. While the police took a while to find her, the press was immediately on her trail.

The U.K. Sunday Mirror caught up with Hathaway at her home and decided that she "hardly lives up to the image of a Mafia Godmother."

Italian authorities believe Rinzivillo of Gela, Sicily, was once the second most powerful boss - under Bernardo Provenzano - in the Sicilian Mafia.

The Italian government seized Rinzivillo assets worth the equivalent of \$25 million. The assets included a supermarket, a pizzeria and two construction companies. More than 80 members of the Rinzivillo organization have been arrested. Hathaway is one of 10 women charged with involvement in the crime family.

Rocco Ligouri, Italian prosecutor, told the U.K. Mirror, "We believe [Hathaway] was acting as the messenger between her husband in prison and other jailed members of the gang and people on the outside. We believe that she was involved in money laundering through pizzerias and building contractors."

An article in the Evening Standard said Hathaway first met her husband after moving to Italy as a teenager to begin a dancing career. Other sources indicate that she worked as a teacher of English. Hathaway and Rinzivillo married almost 20 years ago. About a year and a half ago, Hathaway returned to England.

The extradition of Hathaway back to Italy could be complicated because the British government does not recognize Mafia association - the offense with which she has been charged in Italy - as a crime.

Italy arrests suspected Camorristas

Italian police swept through the Mercato area of Naples on Nov. 27 and arrested 15 suspected members of the Camorra criminal society, according to a report by the Agenzia Giornalistica Italia.

The police action focused on what is known as the Mazzara clan. Authorities say Franco Mazzarella, reputed boss of the clan, was among those arrested.

Italy probes money-laundering

An Italian court is looking into a planned \$147 million business deal that would have provided a clean source of revenue to the Sicilian Mafia, according to a late November story by Bloomberg reporter Steve Scherer.

During the arrest of longtime fugitive Mafia boss Bernardo Provenzano last April, police discovered documents relating to the construction and sale of a Sicilian gas pipeline (purchased by a Spanish company in 2004) and to a planned pipeline deal in Kazakhstan. The sale of pipeline gas to a British oil and gas company could have earned investors up to \$876 million a year.

Investigators say Provenzano controlled the Gasdotti Azienda Siciliana (GAS) company in Palermo through a reputed close ally, fellow Corleone native Vito Ciancimino. Ciancimino is believed to have served as Provenzano's consigliere until his death four years ago. GAS was sold in 2004 for \$147 million. The proceeds were intended for the Kazakh pipeline, but Italian authorities halted the deal.

Group urges anti-mafia crusade

An anti-crime organization of 2,500 members called upon the Italian government in November to make the fight against organized criminal entities a national priority, according to a report from the AFP news agency.

At a three-day conference in Rome, the group Libera noted that 2,500 people have been killed through mob violence over the past 10 years. It called upon the parliament to establish an independent authority to study the application of existing laws and the sources of funding for Italy's Mafia, Camorra and 'Ndrangheta.

Among the topics discussed at the Rome conference was the Mafia's subtle move from traditional narcotics trafficking into new rackets, such as treatment of toxic waste and trade in athlete-doping substances.

Macedonia

Italy tutors Macedonia

Macedonia is learning how best to fight organized crime from Italian Mafia experts, according to a story published by

Serbianna.com.

The Republic of Macedonia is looking forward to possible entry into the European Union. Official action against organized crime is seen as a prerequisite.

Through a two-year project funded by the EU's Agency for Reconstruction, Italian experts will make suggestions for anti-crime legislation, recruit and train a small core of crimefighters and help to upgrade Macedonian crime data systems.

Mexico

President targets organized crime

In his first weeks on the job, Mexican President Felipe Calderon tackled the issue of organized crime by sending thousands of federal police and military troops into the country's drug-dominated states of Michoacan and Baja California, according to a report by James C. McKinley Jr. of the New York Times.

The forces attempted to combat rampant corruption in local police forces. They have disarmed police suspected of underworld involvement, burned marijuana crops and arrested those believed part of drug gangs. Four alleged top members of the Valencia drug gang were taken into custody in December.

Critics point out that the move of federal forces into the region has done little to slow the gang-related violence there. An estimated 21 people were killed during the last three weeks of December, and a mass grave was found containing what appeared to be seven victims of gang hits.

A special target of Calderon's efforts is Tijuana. In that city, the entire police force was ordered to turn over its weapons, and more than 2,700 soldiers and federal police were called in. Three hundred people, including 25 police officers, were killed in Tijuana last year. Most of those deaths have been linked to drug gangs.

The family of Arellano Felix is still believed to control much of the drug traffic through Tijuana.

Namibia

Gang leader killed in Namibia

The reputed leader of an ethnic Chinese gang was shot to death in the capital of Namibia in early December, according to a story by Werner Menges of the Free Press of Namibia.

Yu Jin, 32, a resident of Namibia for 10 years and the reputed leader of a gang of arms and drug traffickers, was shot five times at a store he was opening up in Katutura. An unidentified gunman entered the store and opened fire at the wheelchair-bound Yu. (Yu lost the use of his legs in an accident).

While convictions were rare, Yu was ar-

rested in recent years for drug trafficking, counterfeit cigarette smuggling, and violent crimes.

Netherlands

Netherlands mulls Angels ban

A Netherlands court in Leeuwarden is considering a ban on the Hells Angels Motorcycle Club, according to stories on DutchNews.nl and Playfuls.com.

Prosecutors have asked for the ban because of the organization's persistent involvement in crime. The club's Northeast Chapter, based in the town of Harlingen, is named as a defendant in the case.

Officials labeled the Hells Angels the second-largest crime organization in the world, behind only the Mafia.

A dozen members of the disbanded Nomads wing of the Hells Angels are currently facing murder charges. They are accused of killing and mutilating three members of their group. The victims bodies were discovered in 2004.

Russia

Litvinenko linked to Mafiya and US

One American columnist has linked the radiation poisoning death of Alexander V. Litvinenko with criminal societies in Europe and with a secret military intelligence unit in the United States.

In an article published by Online Journal, columnist Wayne Madsen reveals that Litvinenko's contact from Italy, Mario Scaramella, is among those opposed to Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi. Litvinenko and Scaramella reportedly engaged in a campaign of dirty tricks against the Prodi Administration.

In his opposition to Prodi, Scaramella is also allied with the Naples Camorra and the Russian-Jewish-Mafiya, according to Madsen's report.

Madsen explored what seem to be largely speculative connections between Scaramella and American intelligence agencies, including the CIA and "the parallel Pentagon operation established by Donald Rumsfeld, Stephen Cambone, and Douglas Feith."

Litvinenko, a former agent of the Russian KGB and an outspoken critic of Russian President Vladimir Putin, unknowingly ingested a fatal dose of radioactive Polonium-210 just before becoming very ill on Nov. 1. He told authorities that he earlier met with two Russians - Andrei Lugovoi and Yegor Gaidar earlier in the day and then met with Scaramella at a sushi restaurant for lunch.

The radiation poisoning gradually ate away at Litvinenko's internal organs. He died on Nov. 23. His death is viewed by many as a political assassination orchestrated by agents supportive of Putin.