



U.S. Department of Justice

**Terrence Berg
United States Attorney
Eastern District of Michigan**

***Suite 2001
211 West Fort Street
Detroit, Michigan 48226-3277***

For Immediate Release:

**Contact: Gina Balaya (313) 226-9758
Stephen Moore - IRS (313) 234-2410
Richard Isaacson - DEA (313) 234-4310**

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Event: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Gary Yee

SOUTHFIELD JEWELER PLEADS GUILTY TO MONEY LAUNDERING

Gary Yee, 33, of West Bloomfield, Michigan pleaded guilty today to one count of money laundering and agreed to forfeiture \$1 million dollars, announced United States Attorney Terrence Berg.

Berg was joined in the announcement by Maurice M. Aouate, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation and Robert Corso, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration.

According to court records, for more than eight years Gary Yee has operated Golden Sun Jewelry, a business located in the Advance Building in Southfield, Michigan which sells luxury watches and expensive customized jewelry. Those records reveal that Gary Yee laundered more than \$1.5 million in cash for narcotics traffickers, including a list of the most

notorious dealers in the Detroit area, as well as criminals from as far away as Arizona. Yee's criminal clients sought out Golden Sun Jewelers to buy items such as diamond encrusted watches for as much as \$80,000 in cash based on Yee's reputation for dealing 'under the table' and his agreement not to file required reports, including IRS Form 8300, Cash Received in a Trade or Business, required for any transactions involving more than \$10,000.

In the early months of 2008, the Detroit offices of IRS CI and DEA ran a successful undercover operation during which two federal agents, posing as marijuana dealers, made separate purchases of a \$32,000 watch and a \$40,000 watch in cash from Gary Yee in the back offices of Golden Sun Jewelers. In both instances, Gary Yee accepted cash payments of over \$10,000 while assuring the undercover agents that 'no paperwork' would be filed. A search of records showed that Golden Sun Jewelers failed to file the required IRS Form 8300s for the cash purchases of the watches.

United States Attorney Berg said, "Defendants who deal in high-end goods like expensive jewelry , luxury cars, or real estate are prohibited by federal money laundering laws from shrouding the ill-gotten gains of narcotics dealers. Through aggressive prosecution, my office will continue to try to disrupt narcotics dealing profits by following dirty money wherever it leads and prosecuting those who traffic in it."

IRS CI Special Agent in Charge Aouate stated that, "Narcotic traffickers, having a thing for the 'bling,' will seek out jewelers with the reputation to break the law and help conceal their illegal drug profits."

DEA Special Agent in Charge Corso stated that, "Unfortunately, illegal drug profits are very enticing for some business owners, and the chance to get their hands on that dirty money is hard to pass up. It comes as no surprise that drug traffickers were drawn to a person like Mr. Yee, who was more than willing to assist drug traffickers in hiding their illegal profits."

A sentencing date for Mr. Yee is set for October 29, 2009 at 2:00 pm.

U.S. Attorney Berg thanks IRS CI and DEA for their assistance in this investigation. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bruce C. Judge and Philip Ross.