



Department of Justice

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FORMER “MOST WANTED FUGITIVE” PLEADS GUILTY TO FOUR-STATE BANK ROBBERY SPREE

***“Career Criminal” With History of Escapes and Armed Robberies Will Face a
Mandatory Sentence of Life in Prison***

ROME, GA - ANTHONY RAY ARTRIP, 38, of Ashland, Kentucky, pleaded guilty today in federal district court to the armed robbery of banks in Calhoun, Georgia; Mt. Airy, North Carolina; Princeton, West Virginia; Marmet, West Virginia; and Frenchtown Township, Michigan.

“Today’s guilty plea puts an end to the career of a man who unabashedly made his way across half of the United States robbing banks, victimizing citizens, and escaping justice,” said United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates.

“In the final 72 hours of his flight, Artrip drove more than 1000 miles. His apprehension in Pittsburgh was a tribute to the dedication, cooperation and ‘never quit’ mentality of investigators from the United States Marshals Service and the state and local agencies across Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, West Virginia and Pennsylvania that supported them,” said United States Marshals Service Supervisory Inspector James Ergas.

According to United States Attorney Yates, the charges and other information presented in court: ARTRIP robbed the Regions Bank in Calhoun, Georgia, on the morning of September 27, 2007, when he walked into the bank, brandished a handgun, and jumped the teller counter to get the money. While pointing the handgun at the tellers, ARTRIP told them not to worry and referred to them as “ladies” and “sweetie,” and even told them to “have a good day” when he left the bank with nearly \$20,000.

The robbery of the Regions Bank in Calhoun, Georgia, was part of a multi-state robbery crime spree in the summer and fall of 2007, that began when ARTRIP escaped from the Grant County Detention Center in Williamstown, Kentucky, on June 24, 2007. Over the next three months, ARTRIP robbed banks in West Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, and Michigan, slipping away from near-capture by authorities many times. Shortly after his robbery of the Regions Bank in Calhoun, Georgia, ARTRIP narrowly escaped capture by

police in Chattanooga, Tennessee. However, on October 8, 2007, ARTRIP's luck ran out and he was captured by United States Marshals in a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, hotel. According to police reports, ARTRIP had crawled into an air vent to try and evade his pursuers, but the U.S. Marshals evacuated the hotel and used tear gas to flush ARTRIP out. During this criminal odyssey, ARTRIP was placed on the U.S. Marshal's Most Wanted List, and was featured on the national television show "America's Most Wanted."

ARTRIP was indicted in the Northern District of Georgia on January 9, 2008, on one count of armed bank robbery and one count of using a firearm during a crime of violence. He was also indicted for the armed robbery of four other banks - two in West Virginia, one in Michigan, and one in North Carolina. ARTRIP agreed to have all of his federal cases transferred to Georgia for disposition. He pleaded guilty to all of the federal charges pending against him. Because of his lengthy and serious prior criminal history and the serious and violent nature of these offenses, ARTRIP will likely receive a mandatory sentence of life in prison without parole, under the federal "three strikes" law.

Sentencing is scheduled for August 27, 2010, at 1:30 p.m. before United States District Judge Harold L. Murphy.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Assistant United States Attorney Todd C. Alley is prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact Sally Q. Yates, United States Attorney, or Charlyse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.justice.gov/usao/gan.