

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Ocean County Man Sentenced to 70 Months in Prison for Committing Series of Bank Robberies

(More)

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TRENTON – A Brick man was sentenced to 70 months in federal prison today to for committing a series of six bank robberies on consecutive Thursdays in Ocean, Middlesex and Monmouth counties, Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr. announced.

U.S. District Judge Joel A. Pisano also ordered Peter A. Bielecke, 40, to pay \$11,875 in restitution and to serve 3 years of supervised release upon the completion of his prison term. Bielecke has been held in either state or federal custody since his arrest on March 5, 2009.

On June 3, 2009, Bielecke specifically pleaded guilty to one count of bank robbery associated with the Jan. 29, 2009, robbery of a Provident Bank branch located in Brick of approximately \$1,851. Bielecke, however, also admitted committing seven other robberies, all of the conduct was taken into consideration at sentencing.

At his plea hearing, Bielecke admitted that he used force and intimidation in committing the following robberies:

- Jan. 29, 2009, Provident Bank in Brick, of approximately \$1,851;
- Feb. 5, 2009, Investors Savings Bank in Brick, of approximately \$1,385;
- Feb. 12, 2009, Sovereign Bank in Toms River, of approximately \$1,435;
- Feb. 19, 2009, Investors Savings Bank in Lakewood, of approximately \$1,323;
- Feb. 27, 2009, Garden State Community Bank in Howell, of approximately \$2,881;
- March 5, 2009, Synergy Bank in Old Bridge, of approximately \$3,000.

Bielecke's arrest was the result of a multi-jurisdictional investigation into bank robberies that were committed on consecutive Thursdays in January and February.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Pisano consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Marra credited Special Agents of the FBI's Red Bank Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun in Newark; Investigators with the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office, under the direction Prosecutor Marlene Lynch Ford; Investigators with the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office, under the direction Prosecutor Luis A. Valentin; and Police Officers with the police departments of Brick,

Toms River, Lakewood, Howell, Old Bridge, Wall, Berkeley Township, Jackson, Manchester, Point Pleasant and the Ocean County Sheriff's Office, for the investigation leading to the guilty plea.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Harvey Bartle of the U.S. Attorney's Office Criminal Division in Trenton.

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Defense Attorney: Lisa Van Hoeck, Esq. Assistant Federal Public Defender