

# NEWS RELEASE



*Office of the United States Attorney  
Western District of Louisiana*

**DONALD W. WASHINGTON**  
United States Attorney

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**FEDERAL AUTHORITIES SEEK ASSISTANCE FROM  
DONALDSONVILLE LOUISIANA LANDOWNERS  
TO HELP LOCATE VICTIM'S REMAINS**

*Remains of Israeli Citizen May Be Located  
In a Ditch Along A Pipeline or Utility Right-of-Way Near Donaldsonville*

*\$50,000 Award Offered*

LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA...United States Attorney Donald W. Washington of the Western District of Louisiana and James Bernazzani, Special Agent in Charge of the New Orleans Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation are requesting residents and landowners in the Donaldsonville, Louisiana area south of the old Wal-Mart on Highway 1 to physically inspect their land in an effort to locate the remains of a person believed to have been killed in May 2003. Federal authorities also request that businesses and others who maintain remote right-of-ways to conduct physical inspections of those right-of-ways in an effort to find the remains of young Ran Mesika.

In early May, 2003, an Israeli citizen named Ran Mesika was traveling in a Ford Econoline van from

San Diego, California to Key West, Florida. During Mesika's journey, he sold jewelry to stores along the interstate highways that he traveled. A federal indictment alleges that as he traveled in Louisiana, Mesika was the victim of a carjacking that resulted in his death. However, his physical remains have never been found.

US Attorney Washington stated, "We are checking out investigative leads that suggest the victim's body may be located near Donaldsonville, Louisiana. Investigators also have reason to believe that Mesika's body was discarded in a ditch located on or near a pipeline or utility right-of-way."

Mesika's family has offered a \$50,000 reward to those who find Ran Mesika's remains. Mesika is described as a 22 year-old Caucasian male; 6'2" tall, and 172 pounds with brown hair and brown eyes.

In seeking assistance from Donaldsonville landowners and residents, US Attorney Washington said, "It is important to the Mesika family to find even a small fragment of their son's remains to help get through this tragedy. The family has also informed us that under Jewish law, there is a duty to provide an appropriate burial. We hope that the residents of Donaldsonville would generously and diligently help conduct the search for Mesika's remains."

FBI Special Agent in Charge James Bernazzani stated: "In order to exhaust every option of locating the body of 22 year old Ran Mesika, the FBI is asking the public for assistance. Information developed in the course of this investigation suggests Mesika's remains may be located in an area southwest of Donaldsonville. Mesika's death may have occurred near an underground pipeline shortly thereafter. If anyone recalls seeing or discovering something since May 2003 that may be of assistance, please call our FBI office in Lake Charles, Louisiana."

US Attorney Washington stated that anyone finding items of clothing, human hair, or bone on their property immediately call Sheriff Jeff Wiley's office (225-473-8672 or 225-621-9675), the FBI (337-433-6353), or the US Attorney's office located in Lafayette, Louisiana (337-262-6618). Washington requests

that anyone finding any of these items to not disturb the area where the items are found, and to immediately call any of these law enforcement agencies.

Although not a part of the federal investigation, additional information on Ran Mesika's disappearance may be viewed:

- by searching the name "Ran Mesika" at [www.amw.com](http://www.amw.com) (America's Most Wanted)
- by visiting [www.ranmesika.com](http://www.ranmesika.com)
- by visiting [www.charleyproject.org/cases/m/mesika\\_ran.html](http://www.charleyproject.org/cases/m/mesika_ran.html)
- by visiting [www.maccabiherzeliya.com/ran\\_mesika/home.html](http://www.maccabiherzeliya.com/ran_mesika/home.html)

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