



RHODE ISLAND FED

DEPARTMENTS

<i>Federal Drug and Gun Cases</i>	2
<i>Criminal Docket</i>	4
<i>Civil Docket</i>	7
<i>Training</i>	7

POINTS OF INTEREST

<i>Armed bank robberies totaled \$270,000</i>	5
<i>770 pounds of marijuana in a truck bed</i>	2
<i>Officer guilty in assault</i>	5
<i>Corruption conviction affirmed</i>	6
<i>Traffic stop leads to heroin seizure</i>	2

MOVING ACROSS TOWN

Veteran state prosecutor, former cop, joins U.S. Attorney's Office

William J. Ferland, a veteran Rhode Island state prosecutor and former East Greenwich police officer, has joined the U.S. Attorney's Office as an Assistant U.S. Attorney.



AUSA Bill Ferland, with U.S. Attorney
Peter Neronha

Ferland began his law enforcement career as an East Greenwich police officer, rising through the ranks as detective and sergeant. In 1990, he became a prosecutor in the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office, eventually becoming Chief of the Criminal Division and Supervisor of the A.G.'s three county offices.

"Bill is well known to Rhode Island law enforcement and brings an impeccable reputation with him to this office," U.S. Attorney Neronha said. "He has years of experience in an entire range of criminal prosecution, and is a most welcome addition to the staff."

THERE'S THE MONEY!

Traffic stop yields \$119,000 in vehicle "hide"

The Drug Enforcement Administration conducted a training for about 45 police officers from several Rhode Island departments on how to detect secret compartments in vehicles — known as "hides" — in which drugs, guns, cash, and other contraband can be hidden. A few days after the training, Cranston



Cash seized from a vehicle "hide."

Officer Ron Fuoroli put it to use. Using tips provided by the trainer, Officer Fuoroli detected signs of a hide in a vehicle he had stopped. The result: quantities of illegal drugs and \$119,000 in cash stashed in the hide. The government has moved to forfeit the money as the proceeds of drug trafficking. "This is the kind of practical result that makes

our training worthwhile," said the trainer, retired DEA Agent Angel Calderone, who presents the training throughout the country on behalf of DEA.



FEDERAL DRUG AND GUN CASES

Felon in possession of a gun for the second time — sentenced to 8 years in federal prison

Alpha Williams was sitting in a car on a winter evening, rolling a “blunt” on the dashboard, with a .380 caliber pistol under his belt. When he saw two Providence Police officers on bicycle patrol approaching, Williams stashed the pistol under the passenger seat. Police arrested him and seized the pistol. After he pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm, a federal judge sentenced Williams to eight years in prison. Williams had been sentenced back in 2000 to 51 months in federal prison for being a felon in possession of a firearm. *Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard W. Rose.*



30-month sentence for 770 pounds of marijuana smuggled from Canada

Mario Sorgiacomo and **Jason Bremner** arranged to ship 770 pounds of marijuana by truck from Canada to Rhode Island. ICE agents intercepted the shipment at the Canadian border and then allowed the truck, which also contained legitimate cargo, to continue on to Rhode Island. Agents monitored Sorgiacomo's activities as he took a bus from Canada to Rhode Island and drove to Westerly. After the truck arrived in Westerly, it was directed to a warehouse in Central Falls.

Agents arrested Sorgiacomo in Providence and Bremner in Central Falls. A federal judge sentenced Sorgiacomo to 30 months in prison. Bremer has pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute 100 kilograms or more of marijuana. *Assistant U.S. Attorney Milind M. Shah.*



Marijuana packages concealed in a truck bound for Rhode Island

Traffic stop results in half-kilogram heroin seizure, guilty pleas

A Cranston patrol officer on a traffic enforcement detail saw a car run a stop sign. The officer followed in his cruiser as the suspect vehicle abruptly turned into a driveway. The officer observed **Dimitrit Vellejo Lara** acting panicky in the front passenger seat and ordered him out of the vehicle. After a backup officer ordered the driver, **Simon Suazo**, out of the car, the officer observed two softball-sized packages on the floor of the vehicle. Each contained about 250 grams of heroin. Suazo, of Boston, and Lara, of Miami, pleaded guilty to possessing with intent to distribute more than 100 grams of heroin. *Assistant U.S. Attorney Adi Goldstein.*



FEDERAL DRUG AND GUN CASES

Four kilos of cocaine, \$96,000 in cash



Providence Police detectives observed **Brayanth Fernandez** count cash in his apartment and then handle a chunk of what appeared to be cocaine powder. When he drove away from the apartment, detectives stopped him in his car and seized 300 grams of cocaine from a blue bag and \$2,486 from his pockets. In the apartment, detectives found about 4 kilograms of cocaine and an additional \$94,000 in cash. Fernandez pleaded guilty to possessing with intent to distribute 500 grams or more of cocaine.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Adi Goldstein.

Guilty plea in marijuana rip-off

Julio Candelario and two other Woonsocket men went to Providence, where a man had a large quantity of marijuana for sale. When they met the man in a house that he was refurbishing for its owner,



they robbed him at gunpoint of a half-kilo of marijuana plus \$2,800 that was to be used to buy construction supplies. Candelario pleaded guilty to conspiracy, robbery, using a firearm in a crime of violence, and being a felon in possession of a firearm. **Pedro Cuadrado** and **Robert Beauparlant, Jr.** have also pleaded guilty to their roles in the robbery. Woonsocket Police Chief Thomas S. Carey



praised the multi-agency investigation and prosecution, saying it "demonstrates a continued partnership with local, state, and federal agencies to make our community safe." *Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard W. Rose.*

Heroin deal leads to marijuana grow

Police officers observed **Mark McNaught** make what appeared to be a drug deal in a car in Providence. When police questioned him, he admitted having given heroin to the driver of the car and said there was more heroin in his apartment. In the apartment, detectives found additional heroin plus, spread out over two rooms, about 125 marijuana plants in various stages of growth fostered by "grow lights." A jury found McNaught guilty of trafficking in heroin and possessing with intent to distribute 100 plants or more of marijuana.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Milind M. Shah and Sandra R. Hebert.



Marijuana plants growing in heroin dealer's apartment

CRIMINAL DOCKET SHEET

175-month prison sentence for career criminal in bank robberies

Dennis Tasker was out of prison about a month when he committed robberies at banks in



Providence and Newport on consecutive days. On each occasion he used a threatening note to obtain money from a teller. Two days after the Newport robbery, MBTA Police arrested Tasker trying to break into parked cars, wearing only a jacket and a towel around his waist. He pleaded guilty to bank robbery charges.



His criminal record, which included about two dozen

arrests in three states on more than 50 charges, qualified him as a career criminal under federal sentencing law, and a judge sentenced him to 175 months in prison. *Assistant U.S. Attorney Gerard B. Sullivan.*

Check casher disguised transactions totaling \$1.9 million

Vincent Aiello owned and operated North Pro Services, a check cashing business in North



Providence. An undercover investigation by IRS criminal investigation agents determined that, on several occasions, Aiello advised a check casher to split transactions exceeding \$10,000 into smaller amounts to evade federal reporting requirements. The Bank Secrecy Act requires that all transactions exceeding \$10,000 be reported. Subsequent analysis by IRS-CI agents determined that, over the course of five years, Aiello facilitated the concealment of at least \$1.9 million in transactions at North Pro Services by having them split into amounts under the reporting requirement. Aiello pleaded guilty to violating the Bank Secrecy Act. *Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrew J. Reich.*

Guilty plea in a scheme to defraud immigrants

Audeliz Villegas defrauded immigrants by posing as a New York immigration attorney. He forged documents purportedly filed in federal court on behalf of immigrants, and charged his victims thousands of dollars in fees for services that he had not performed. When victims confronted him, he claimed to be an immigration agent and threatened them with arrest. Villegas, who had several aliases, pleaded guilty to wire fraud and impersonating a federal agent. *Assistant U.S. Attorney Mary E. Rogers.*



CRIMINAL DOCKET SHEET

Woonsocket Police officer pleads guilty in assault on juvenile

Woonsocket Police Officer **John Douglas** was angry at a juvenile, believing that he had earlier injured another Woonsocket officer. Douglas and two other officers brought the juvenile into a small hallway at the Woonsocket Police station, where Douglas repeatedly punched him. The juvenile suffered blunt force trauma and facial bone fractures. Douglas pleaded guilty to abusing the juvenile's civil rights under "color of law."



U.S. Attorney Peter F. Neronha noted, "Police officers serve the people of Rhode Island with dedication and distinction every day, often putting their lives on the line to protect others. This case serves as a reminder, however, that when a police officer abuses his authority, such conduct will not be tolerated." *Assistant U.S. Attorneys John P. McAdams and Terrence P. Donnelly; Trial Attorney Avner Shapiro of Civil Rights Division.*

Ten-year sentence for armed bank robberies totaling \$270,000

Dwayne Lewis committed armed bank robberies in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New York, taking a total of nearly \$270,000. Lewis and two other men, all brandishing weapons, robbed tellers at a Sovereign



Bank branch in Cranston in June 2007, and committed similar robberies in Chicopee, Massachusetts and Deer Park, New York, where they took more than \$215,000. Lewis was the getaway car driver at an attempted robbery in Holyoke, and eluded police as his two partners were arrested fleeing the bank. They were prosecuted in Massachusetts. Agents later arrested Lewis in Bridgeport, Connecticut and he pleaded guilty in Rhode island to all three robberies.



A federal judge sentence him to 120 months in prison. *Assistant U.S. Attorney Gerard B. Sullivan.*

30-month sentence for child pornography

Jacob Cross was a civilian contractor living and working at the Newport Naval Station. A Marine officer



staying at the Bachelors' Quarters detected someone broadcasting files that linked to pornographic images of children. Forensic review of Cross' computer equipment by the Armed Forces Center for Child Protection and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children confirmed the existence of pornographic still pictures and videos. A federal judge sentenced Cross to 30 months in prison and imposed court supervision for life, with restrictions on his access to computers and children. *Assistant U.S. Attorney Terrence P. Donnelly.*



APPELLATE BRIEF

Hospital executive's corruption conviction affirmed

The Court of Appeals for the First Circuit affirmed the conviction of former hospital CEO Robert Urciuoli, upholding a jury's verdict that Urciuoli corruptly employed a state senator to advance Roger Williams Medical Center's legislative agenda.

Urciuoli was convicted twice of illegally depriving citizens of their right to the "honest services" of Senator John Celona. The Circuit reversed the first conviction, finding that some of Senator Celona's activities included in the case fell outside the purview of the honest services statute. After Urciuoli was convicted again,



his appeal evolved in the shadow of cases before the U.S. Supreme Court challenging the honest services statute, notably the conviction of Enron executive Jeffrey Skilling.

While Urciuoli's appeal was pending before the First Circuit, the Supreme Court rendered its decision in Skilling. The Court limited the scope of the honest services statute to bribery and kickback schemes.

At the second Urciuoli trial the government had presented evidence that Urciuoli's hiring of Celona had indeed constituted a bribe — he gave Celona a job and paid him money to do the hospital's bidding at the State House.

About a month after the Supreme Court's decision in Skilling, the First Circuit held that Urciuoli's conduct fell squarely within the Skilling parameters: "In short, this case is the core bribery offense preserved by Skilling."

"In short, this case is the core bribery offense preserved by Skilling."

The Circuit also rejected Urciuoli's argument that only the public official — in this case Senator Celona — was bound by the honest services bribery construction, finding that anyone who participated in a bribery scheme, as Urciuoli had, was culpable.

A federal judge sentenced Urciuoli to 36 months in prison but the Circuit allowed him to remain free on bail while the appeal was pending. *At trial: Assistant U.S. Attorneys Luis M. Matos and Dulce Donovan; on appeal: Assistant U.S. Attorney Donald C. Lockhart.*

CIVIL DOCKET SHEET

Medicare payments reclaimed from dermatologist

Hines Dermatology Associates, based in Massachusetts, maintained a practice and a laboratory in Providence. An investigation by the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General determined that, between February 2004 and October 2007, Hines Dermatology falsely represented that some patient test results required additional, more expensive testing. In the process, Hines Dermatology billed Medicare for unnecessary procedures.



The practice reimbursed the Medicare Program \$275,000 and entered into an Integrity Agreement with HHS to ensure future compliance with Medicare, Medicaid, and other government health care programs.

"Improper billing for health care services victimizes nearly every American, whether covered by Medicare, Medicaid or a private insurer," U.S. Attorney Peter F. Neronha said. *Assistant U.S. Attorney Dulce Donovan, John W. O'Brien, Senior Counsel, Office of the Inspector General, Health and Human Services.*

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY



RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY Municipal Police Training Academy



Exemplary Police Officer Series

The Municipal Police Training Academy presents the Josephson Institute Center for Policing Ethics Course: Exemplary Peace Officer Series, a training in three four-hour blocks of dynamic, enlightening and engaging presentations.

President's Conference Room, CCRI Flanagan Campus, Lincoln

Day 1: The Ethical Core of Policing
September 1

Day 2: Becoming an Exemplary Peace Officer
September 15

Day 3: Getting the Best Possible Result in Everyday Decisions
September 16

For information, contact: Captain David Ricciarelli, 722-7096

To register: Donna Lavalley, dlavalley@rimpa.dps.ri.gov or fax. 401-722-3151

Enrollment is limited to 40 and attendees must commit to all three sessions.

**U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
RHODE ISLAND**



50 Kennedy Plaza, 8th floor
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Phone: 401-709-5000

Fax 401-709-5001

United States Attorney
First Assistant U.S. Attorney
Civil Chief & Asset Forfeiture
Criminal Chief
Deputy Criminal Chief / Narcotics
Anti-Terrorism
Law Enforcement Coordinator
Public Information

Peter F. Neronha
Kenneth P. Madden
Michael P. Iannotti
Stephen G. Dambruch
Adi K. Goldstein
Brian J. Pires
Thomas Connell
Jim Martin

On the Web at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/ri/>

