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Jury Convicts Gypsy Joker Outlaw Motorcycle Club Members on Racketeering Charges

PORTLAND, Ore.—On November 30, 2021, a federal jury in Portland found two members of the Gypsy Joker Outlaw Motorcycle Club (GJOMC) guilty of kidnapping and murder in aid of racketeering for the 2015 kidnapping and murder of Robert Huggins, a Portland resident and former club member.

GJOMC Portland clubhouse president Mark Leroy Dencklau, 61, of Woodburn, Oregon and Portland clubhouse member Chad Leroy Erickson, 51, of Rainier, Oregon, were found guilty of murder in aid of racketeering; kidnapping in aid of racketeering, resulting in death; kidnapping resulting in death; and conspiracy to commit kidnapping, resulting in death. Additionally, Dencklau was found guilty of racketeering conspiracy.

The jury acquitted Erickson and GJOMC national president Kenneth Earl Hause, 64, of Aumsville, Oregon, of racketeering conspiracy.

“Organized crime will not be tolerated in the District of Oregon. Dencklau, Erickson and other members of the Gypsy Joker Outlaw Motorcycle Club prided themselves in using violence to intimidate others and bolster their sense of power and influence. The kidnapping, torture, and murder of Robert Huggins was a gruesome example of the lengths these men were willing to go to exert their authority over rivals and perceived enemies,” said Scott Erik Asphaug, Acting U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon. “A robust, coordinated law enforcement operation led to their arrest and prosecution. Our community is safer thanks to the dedication of all involved law enforcement agencies.”

“The heinous actions of this criminal organization clearly warranted this guilty verdict,” said Jonathan T. McPherson, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) Seattle Field Division. “ATF remains committed to combatting organizations like the Gypsy Jokers Outlaw Motorcycle Club that endanger our communities.”

According to court documents and trial testimony, the GJOMC is a hierarchical criminal organization wherein members and associates maintain their position and status in the organization by participating in, directly or indirectly, various acts of violent racketeering activity including murder, kidnapping, robbery, extortion, narcotics trafficking, and witness tampering. Since the 1980s, the club has been active in several states including Oregon and Washington and, until recently, operated six clubhouses in the Pacific Northwest. The club also has international chapters in Germany, Australia, and Norway.

From 2003 until his arrest, Dencklau served as the president of the club's Portland chapter. The GJOMC also oversaw several support clubs in Oregon and Washington including the Road Brothers Northwest Motorcycle Club, Solutions Motorcycle Club, Northwest Veterans Motorcycle Club, High-Side Riders, and the Freedom Fellowship Motorcycle Club. Support club members conducted criminal activities in support of the GJOMC and served as a source of new members and revenue for the club.

On July 1, 2015, the body of Robert Huggins, an estranged member of the GJOMC Portland chapter, was found lying in a field in Clark County, Washington. Huggins' body was badly beaten, and he appeared to have been tortured prior to his death. Huggins was previously stripped of his club membership for allegedly stealing from the club and, after breaking into Dencklau's Woodburn residence, tying up Dencklau's girlfriend and stealing multiple firearms. In the days and weeks following this robbery, Dencklau directed GJOMC members to find Huggins.

Several government witnesses testified at trial to Dencklau, Erickson, and their co-defendants' roles in the revenge kidnapping, torture, and murder of Huggins. On the evening of June 30, 2015, Dencklau and others kidnapped Huggins from a residence in Portland and transported him to a rural property in Southwest Washington. Over the course of several hours, Huggins was severely beaten and tortured. He sustained numerous injuries to his head and face, including a fractured skull; lacerations to his chest and torso; and removed nipples. A local medical examiner ruled that Huggins' death was caused by multiple blunt and sharp force injuries.

On June 28, 2018, a federal grand jury in Portland returned a four-count [indictment](#) charging Dencklau; Earl Deverle Fisher, 48, of Gresham, Oregon; and Tiler Evan Pribbernow, 40, of Portland, with murder in aid of racketeering; kidnapping in aid of racketeering, resulting in death; kidnapping resulting in death and conspiracy to commit kidnapping, resulting in death.

Later, on November 29, 2018, Dencklau; Fisher; Erickson; Hause; Ryan Anthony Negrinelli, 36, of Gresham, Oregon; and Joseph Duane Folkerts, 61, of Battleground, Washington, were charged by [superseding indictment](#) with racketeering conspiracy.

Fisher, Negrinelli, Folkerts, and Pribbernow have all previously pleaded guilty to the conspiracy charge and are awaiting sentencing.

All defendants convicted face a maximum sentence of life in federal prison. Dencklau and Erickson also face mandatory minimum sentences of life in prison.

Acting U.S. Attorney Asphaug and Special Agent in Charge McPherson made the announcement.

This case was investigated by the Portland Police Bureau and ATF, with assistance from the U.S. Marshals Service, IRS-Criminal Investigation, the Clark County Sheriff's Office, Oregon State Police, and the Oregon and Washington State Crime Labs. Leah K. Bolstad and Steven T. Mygrant, Assistant U.S. Attorneys for the District of Oregon, prosecuted the case with Damaré Theriot, Trial Attorney for the Criminal Division's Organized Crime and Gang Section.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN). In keeping with the Attorney General's mission to reduce violent crime, the District of Oregon's PSN program focuses on prosecuting those individuals who most significantly drive violence in our

communities, and supports and fosters partnerships between law enforcement, community organizations, and local community leaders to prevent and deter future criminal conduct.

This prosecution is the result of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) investigation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level drug traffickers, money launderers, gangs, and transnational criminal organizations that threaten the U.S. by using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach that leverages the strengths of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies against criminal networks.

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