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PEARCE FLEISIG, L.L.C.
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Attorneys for Maria Cohen

IN THE MATTER OF
MURRAY COHEN, DECEASED

:
:
: SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY
: MIDDLESEX COUNTY: CHANCERY
: DIVISION
:
:
: CIVIL ACTION
:
: DOCKET NUMBER: C-150-05
:
: AFFIDAVIT OF RUSSELL S. VEGA, M.D.

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF SARASOTA

PERSONALLY APPEARED before me the undersigned office duly authorized to administer oaths and take acknowledgments, RUSSELL S. VEGA, M.D., who after being first cautioned and sworn upon his oath, and upon his personal knowledge, says:

1. My name is Russell S. Vega and I make this affidavit based on my personal knowledge.
2. I am a Florida resident and over the age of 18 years.
3. I am a medical doctor duly licensed to practice medicine in the State of Florida.
4. I am currently the Chief Medical Examiner for the Twelfth District of the State of Florida.

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5. As the Chief Medical Examiner, it is my duty under Florida law to investigate deaths that have occurred within my jurisdiction.
6. It is also my duty and within my authority in the State of Florida to order a body to be exhumed, if required to do so.
7. Based upon my investigation, I am familiar with the facts and circumstances concerning the cause of death for Murray B. Cohen.
8. The results of my investigation into the cause of death of Murray B. Cohen suggest that Murray B. Cohen's death was natural and was ultimately the result of his long-standing heart disease.
9. Since the time of my investigation, I am unaware of any new evidence that has affected my opinion as to Murray B. Cohen's cause of death or that would otherwise alter the results my investigation.
10. Accordingly, I do not believe the exhumation of the body of Murray B. Cohen is warranted.
11. Additionally, I do not believe that I have the authority to order the exhumation of the body of Murray B. Cohen, as his body is no longer located within the State of Florida.
12. However, if required by law to do so and should such exhumation be necessary to further my investigation into the death of Murray B. Cohen, I will work with the Sarasota Sheriff's Office and the appropriate law enforcement officials in the State of New Jersey to exhume the body of Murray B. Cohen.
13. If an exhumation and autopsy are ordered by the court, I will, in order to meet my statutory responsibilities, need to be present to directly supervise the exhumation and supervise or perform the autopsy.

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FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

Russell S. Vega
RUSSELL S. VEGA, M.D.

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF SARASOTA

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 30th day of JUNE,
2005, by Russell S. Vega, M.D.



Sandra K Wurzer
My Commission DD157852
Expires October 13, 2006

Sandra K Wurzer
Notary Public, State of Florida

SANDRA K. WURZER
Printed Name of Notary Public

Personally Known OR Produced Identification _____
Type of Identification Produced _____

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case four times, and closed it.

THE QUESTIONS

Missing blood, an odd drug, a disputed tape... cause for doubt?

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... review GaideCom's findings. Ginsberg, the president of Pro Audio Laboratories in New York, has more than 30 years of forensic audio experience and has worked on high profile projects ranging from the Waco standoff to terrorism trials.

Ginsberg said Murray can't be heard on the tape and questioned GaideCom's analysis. The words they attribute to Murray aren't on the tape, he said.

"I'm puzzled that with my experience and my equipment, they could hear so much more than I did," Ginsberg said.

Ginsberg said he did hear a male voice, the one that GaideCom claims states, "I should beat you up." But Ginsberg said it was impossible to determine exactly what was said and that the voice might be another operator at the 911 center.

Ginsberg also said the background statements made by Maria can't be as clearly understood as GaideCom claims.

Susan Gaide said she stands by her analysis.

"Everybody has a different set of ears. Everybody has different equipment," she said. "I have the ultimate respect for Paul, but I don't know how he could not hear it."

When told of Ginsberg's results, Esdale said it was obvious that "somebody got to him."

"That's all it could be," Esdale said. "The FBI has definitely spoken to him and said, 'Shut it down.'"

The Bulgarian drug

Just when it seemed like the momentum behind Esdale's conspiracy campaign had dried up, he found something to revive the case once more.

This spring, he picked through a stack of evidence and reviewed the list of drugs that investigators had inventoried the day his father died.

He had never heard of Corazol, one of about a dozen drugs found at the Cohens' Siesta Key residence. And he had no idea why his father would need the drug, which is made in Bulgaria.

The information he uncovered gave him yet another reason to reject the idea that a natural heart attack killed Cohen.

Unlike the other medications, Corazol couldn't remedy Cohen's heart condition, kill his pain or improve his sex life.

Sarasota Medical Examiner Vega said the drug itself seems to have no medical purpose and could cause a heart attack at a high enough dose.



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From what he could determine, it's a cardiovascular stimulant used in eastern European labs to cause seizures in rats to test anti-epileptic drugs.

Corazol is so obscure that representatives of the Food and Drug Administration and Drug Enforcement Administration told the Herald-Tribune they didn't even have a record of its existence.

Though he considers it unlikely, Vega has never ruled out the possibility that an exotic poison could have killed Cohen. So when the rare drug was brought to his attention, Vega had Cohen's eye fluid re-tested in May to see if Corazol was present.

The results were negative, but Vega said there is no way to know how the methanol in the embalming fluid affected the test.

"This is not as definitive a result as anybody would like to see," Vega said. "We're sort of where we were before."

Not Esdale, who says the Corazol is the final detail that proves what really happened to his father. He doesn't care that law enforcement officials don't support his theory, or that his scenario relies on imagination more than fact.

Esdale thinks his father was working out in the yard that afternoon. With his hands still dirty, Murray went to check the mail shortly before 5 p.m. He opened up an account statement and found out that Maria had added herself to one of his bank accounts.

Murray went inside and confronted Maria. They got into a heated argument, and Maria realized their relationship was over.

"She had to kill him," Esdale said. "So she poured him a cup of coffee with a mega-dose of the Corazol."

Esdale said Maria and his father continued to argue before the Corazol kicked in, and Beninati called during the fracas. When Murray finally succumbed to the drug, and Maria thought he was dead, she called 911.

But Maria underestimated how much Corazol was needed to kill a man as large as his father, Esdale said. Murray, groggy from the drug, came to during the call and spoke loud enough for the operator to hear him. Maria finished him off by suffocating him during the time she left the phone before getting CPR instructions, Esdale said.

Investigators don't buy it.

"Esdale's allegations have not been supported," Hallisey wrote in his investigative report. "After a thorough review of this case by the Sheriff's Office and the Medical Examiner's Office, Murray Cohen's death is regarded as natural."

Case closed?

Monday might be Esdale's last chance to convince a Sarasota judge that he deserves more time to prove his father was murdered and that Maria shouldn't get Cohen's estate.

If he fails, Maria may get the estate and Esdale could be on the hook for more than \$100,000 of her attorney's fees.

It's questionable whether Esdale will attend the hearing with his lawyer because he fears investigators may try to silence him for good if he steps foot in Sarasota County.

"I am afraid of being pulled over, set up and tasered so I have a heart attack," Esdale said. "I'm not a chicken, but I am afraid."

He has hidden three copies of a videotape that will be released in the event he dies, he says. One copy is in California, one is in the Northeast