

# **Report: Suspect Admits Midwest Bank Thefts**

**The Capital Times**

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Richard Lee Guthrie was the first suspect to be arrested for a string of Midwest bank robberies in which the robbers made fun of federal agents.

He also is the first to plead guilty, the Columbus Dispatch reported Thursday.

The newspaper said Guthrie, 38, has agreed to plead guilty to robbing 14 banks in seven states. He the first member of the alleged gang involved in the robberies to be arrested when he was caught on Jan. 15 by Cincinnati police after a brief car chase.

The newspaper reported that Guthrie told FBI agents in March he was responsible for or aware of 22 robberies committed by the group. Authorities believe Guthrie and others were involved in 18 bank robberies in Ohio, Iowa, Wisconsin, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska and Kentucky.

The Dispatch said Guthrie's guilty pleas were filed in U.S. District Court in Cincinnati, but the assistant federal public defender in Cincinnati representing Guthrie, W. Kelly Johnson, would neither confirm nor deny the agreement.

U.S. Attorney Edmund A. Sargus Jr. said he could not comment, and a clerk in the federal court could not find any record of guilty pleas.

Guthrie's group wore shirts with FBI logos during at least two of the robberies and bought getaway cars in the names of retired FBI agents. They also sent messages to reporters at several Midwestern newspapers.

Most of the robberies occurred between January 1994 and December 1995.

The second arrest came three days after Guthrie was captured when Peter K. Langan, 37, was caught following a shootout with authorities in Columbus. Langan, a friend of Guthrie's, is scheduled to go on trial Aug. 5 in U.S. District Court in Columbus on 12 federal charges, including the robbery of a Columbus bank.

The agreement requires Guthrie to provide information about his accomplices.

That information led to arrests last month of two people in the Philadelphia area, Scott Anthony Stedeford, 27, and Kevin McCarthy, 18, the newspaper said.

Stedeford has been taken to Des Moines, Iowa, where he is to stand trial for robbing a Des Moines bank March 29, 1995, and McCarthy is in St. Louis

awaiting trial for participating in a bank robbery in Bridgeton, Mo., in August 1995.

Guthrie said he was introduced to Stedeford by someone involved in a white supremacist organization called the Aryan Nations.

Literature and videotapes for an organization called the Aryan Republican Army were found in a Columbus house Guthrie shared with Langan.

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