

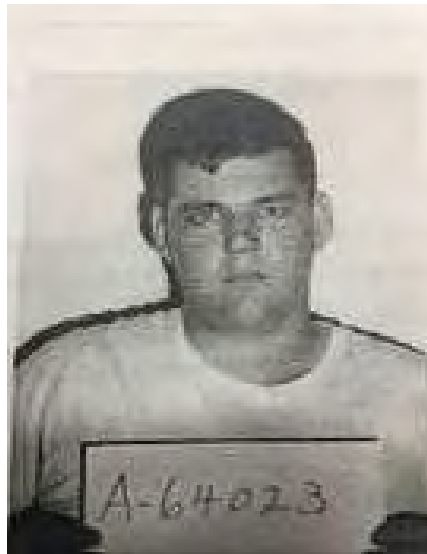
Georgia escapee captured after 48 years asks to be set free

By Craig Schneider

“I’m hopeful that the Georgia authorities will release their hold on him,” said attorney Norm Pattis. “He’s 71-year-old and in extremely bad health. Hasn’t justice been served?”

Having been captured after 48 years on the run, escaped Georgia convict Robert Stackowitz on Friday asked to be set free.

Through his attorney, the 71-year-old who escaped from a Carroll County prison in 1968 asserted that he is in ill health and has demonstrated over the years that he is a rehabilitated, law-abiding citizen.



Robert Stackowitz in a 1968 photo, left, and in a current photo. (Credit: Georgia Department of Corrections)

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Stackowitz was captured Monday in the little town of Sherman, Conn. He was originally convicted of robbery by force and escaped in 1968, two years into his 17-year

sentence. Georgia authorities working cold case files discovered in recent months that he had been using both an alias and his real name, and tracked him to the small town.

Pattis said that his client has been a productive, taxpaying citizen with no criminal activity since his escape, and that a prolonged incarceration could equal a death sentence due to

his ill health. He said Stackowitz suffers from congestive heart disease, bladder cancer, diabetes and history of kidney failure.

said Stackowitz will not waive the extradition hearing. ■

Essentially, Pattis is asking that Georgia officials forgive Stackowitz the balance of his 17-year sentence and add no additional charges for his escape.

Even before Pattis announced this request, law enforcement officials scoffed at the notion of simply leaving the escaped felon alone.

Robert Jones, warden of the Carroll County Correctional Institution, said Stackowitz had helped himself by staying out of trouble all these years, in that he avoided any attention from law enforcement.

“He was still an escaped prisoner,” Jones said. “His mere existence (in Connecticut) was a crime.”

Moreover, he said forcing Stackowitz to pay his debt to society sends a message to other people on the lam.

“You can’t escape the long arm of the law,” he said.

Pattis said he has yet to make any request directly to Georgia officials. He said he is still trying to get his client out on bond. The next legal step is a June 6 hearing in Connecticut that will address Stackowitz’ extradition to Georgia. Pattis