

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**P. DAVID SOARES**

6 LODGE STREET

**ALBANY, NEW YORK 12207**

(518) 487-5460

(518) 487-5093 FAX

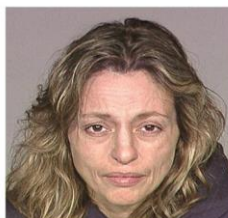
**CONTACT:** CECILIA WALSH (518) 275-4710

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** MARCH 18, 2016

## Multiple Defendants Sentenced in Hate Crime Ring that Targeted Elderly Victims



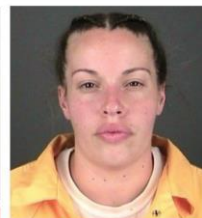
JOHN RISTO



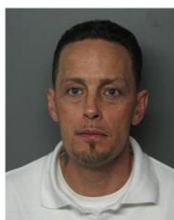
SUSAN BARR



BRIAN BARR



JESSICA PARADISO



JOHN WATERSON



HENRY HICKS

**ALBANY, NY** – District Attorney P. David Soares announced today that five (5) defendants were sentenced for their respective roles in a ring of hate crimes that targeted elderly victims.

On separate dates between February 2014 and November 2014, several co-defendants performed work under false pretenses for victims at their respective homes, including driveway sealing, foundation work, and roof repair. The ring of co-defendants targeted elderly victims in various residences in the City of Albany, Town of Bethlehem, and Town of Colonie. The victims were targeted based on perceptions of their age, and the co-defendants did overcharge the victims, or fail to do work for which payment was collected, based on those perceptions. The theft from all victims was in excess of \$40,000.00.

SUSAN BARR, 58, of Altamont, was sentenced to 2 to 4 years in State Prison before the Honorable Judge Roger McDonough in Albany County Supreme Court this morning. On February 11, 2016, BARR pleaded guilty to (1) Count of Conspiracy in the Fifth Degree as a Hate Crime, a Class E Felony.

SUSAN BARR's son and co-defendant, BRIAN BARR, 37, of Schenectady, was sentenced to 7 ½ to 15 years in State Prison before Honorable Judge Roger McDonough in Albany County Supreme Court this morning. On February 3, 2016, BRIAN BARR pleaded guilty to (2) Counts of Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree as a Hate Crime, both Class D Felonies, and (1) Count of Conspiracy in the Fifth Degree as a Hate Crime, a Class E Felony.

JESSICA PARADISO, 28, of Schenectady, was sentenced to 6 to 12 years in State Prison before the Honorable Judge Roger McDonough in Albany County Supreme Court this morning. On January 14, 2016, PARADISO pleaded guilty to (2) Counts of Attempted Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, and (1) Count of Conspiracy in the Fifth Degree as a Hate Crime, all Class E Felonies.

JOHN RISTO, 61, was sentenced to 1 to 3 years in State Prison before Honorable Judge Roger McDonough in Albany County Supreme Court this morning. On August 5, 2015, RISTO pleaded guilty to (1) Count of Conspiracy in the Fifth Degree as a Hate Crime, a Class E Felony.

HENRY HICKS, 59, of Albany, was sentenced to 8-16 years in State Prison before Honorable Judge Roger McDonough in Albany County Supreme Court this morning. On May 14, 2015, HICKS pleaded guilty to (1) Count of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree as a Hate Crime, a Class C Felony and (1) Count of Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree as a Hate Crime, a Class D Felony.

Additionally, JOHN WATERSON, 38, of Albany, faces up to 3 ½ to 7 years in State Prison before the Honorable Judge Stephen Herrick in Albany County Court when sentenced on April 5, 2016. On April 1, 2015, WATERSON pleaded guilty to (1) Count of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a Class D Felony, and (1) Count of Conspiracy in the Fifth Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor.

The defendants were ordered to collectively pay back \$40,000 in restitution.

Assistant District Attorney Jessica Blain-Lewis of the Financial Crimes Bureau prosecuted these cases.

For more information please contact Cecilia Walsh at (518) 275-4710

###