

Bay State embraces abused Maine brothers

BY TERRY DATE
THE EAGLE-TRIBUNE

In mid-December, Andover mom and trust fund lawyer Sara Wells drove to Lisbon, Maine, to meet Strider, 6, and Gallagher, 4, two brothers familiar with chaos but gaining stability with help from afar.

Four years earlier, almost to the day, Strider Wolf, then 2, was beaten so severely by his mother's boyfriend at their mobile home in Albany, New Hampshire, that it left a hole in the child's stomach. Three surgeries were needed to repair his torn intestines.

The Nov. 8 narrative in a Boston daily newspaper about Strider's injuries and the poverty and uncertainty that he and his brother Gallagher have endured resonated so profoundly with readers and generated so many offers to help them that the paper sought Wells' help setting up a fund for the boys.

For the past four years, the boys' paternal grandparents, Lanette and Larry Grant, have cared for the brothers, struggling to keep the boys housed, fed and clothed.

Wells, herself the mother of five young children, thinks the boys' plight and Strider's injuries strike an especially vibrant chord with parents in Andover.

"I look at my two-and-a-half-year-old, and it is heartbreaking to imagine a child going through that at that age," she said.

GoFundMe account

Many other local parents feel the same, and have come to the brothers' aid — joining a growing flood of cash and gifts that are making the lives of the boys, and their caretakers, a little easier.

Wells, of the firm Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, has been drafting trusts since 2002. She has written, pro bono, a trust that ensures cash donations benefit the two boys, The Strider Wolf and Gallagher Irrevocable Trust.

A GoFundMe account was set up, which places the donations into the trust fund.

By Christmas, the GoFundMe account had raised more than \$12,000, and the trust had received cash donations from more than 100 different people.

Wells, connected to local parents through her children's activities and her work with the Bancroft PTO, said more than 10 percent of the cash donations and many of the material donations have come from Andover people.

Also, numerous care packages including toys, clothes, blankets and gift cards have arrived to Wells' house for delivery to the family home in Lisbon.

In addition, Lanette Grant said the family has received two to five packages a day through the mail, lots of them coming from Andover.

Andover Mums on Facebook

The grandparents, the boys'

guardians, have been caring for Strider and Gallagher since January 2012, including a spell during which the four of them were homeless.

"For Larry and I, to see the generosity, love and caring down there ..." she said in a phone interview. "Larry and I can't comprehend."

For the first time, the boys have new stuff, and the brothers are as proud as peacocks.

"They actually have clothes that were not worn by somebody else," their grandmother said.

Liz Mills of Andover has visited the boys twice since seeing a post about Strider and Gallagher on the Andover Mums Facebook page.

"It really touched me because I have a 3-year-old," she said.

She brought the children blankets, pillows and toys, and gave the family a gift certificate to IHOP.

Children helping

Mills said Strider is very smart and perceptive, and listens closely to everything, so much so that it is impossible to have an adult conversation if the child is within earshot.

Gallagher is having a hard time, emotionally, and may have some sensory problems, Mills said.

After the Andover mom got home, and put her daughter to bed, she watched a video about the brothers and started sobbing.

Patty Pirone-Rice of Andover,

who posted the boys' story on Andover Mums, couldn't stop crying after reading their story. She has sent them footed pajamas and winter hats and gloves and furry socks.

"Just reading about them it takes you back to your own kids," said Rice.

Andover children have joined the help brigade, as well.

Wells said Andover mom Ellen Alden and her daughter have been shopping for the boys.

And Wells' daughter Amelia wrote a letter and drew a picture and sent them along with books, including a few by Dr. Seuss, to Strider and Gallagher.

Requests for help

The way the trust works is the grandparents request items to help with the children's care, and Wells then decides whether to approve the request.

So far, the Grants have requested very little.

The one big request was \$1,500 to buy and repair a blue minivan. The family had no transportation after their vehicle was deemed beyond repair.

The trust has paid the \$9 per day fee for Strider to join after-school activities, recreation and arts and crafts. He has long wished to be part of the extracurricular fun but the family had been unable to afford the fee.

The only other trust funded

items have been a home desk for the kids and the family's heating costs in December, Wells said.

Now, three years to the month after internal injuries to Strider, he and his little brother are learning that security — a warm place to live, nice clothing, food — can arrive unexpectedly and from afar.

Lanette Grant said she and her husband have begun adoption proceedings.

'I live here'

In 2013, the former stepfather, Justin Roy, was found guilty of 10 counts related to the case and sentenced to 55 years in prison.

In the aftermath of the nearly fatal beating, Strider spent 23 days in the hospital.

Lanette Grant says the boys do not want to have anything to do with their mother and want to stay with the Grants.

Last month when Wells drove the two-plus hours to visit Strider and his little brother at their apartment in Lisbon, she wondered what she would find.

The first thing she found was a perky Strider, arriving home from school and not wondering about the stranger in the driveway.

"He said, 'Hi, I'm Strider. I live here,'" Wells said.

For updates on the family, visit the Strider Wolf and Gallagher Supporters Facebook page.



Actor Sean Penn (left) shakes hands with Mexican drug lord Joaquin "Chapo" Guzman in Mexico, in this undated Rolling Stone handout photo obtained by Reuters on Jan. 10.

US to probe Penn-Guzman case

Some experts believe it's possible actor will have to testify

BY MICA ROSENBERG
AND MARK HOSENBALL
REUTERS

WASHINGTON — U.S. investigators will examine actor Sean Penn's interactions with Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, two U.S. government sources said on Monday, but it is unclear if prosecutors would try to force the actor to turn over information about his interview with the recaptured drug kingpin.

Mexico is pressing the U.S. government, which has requested Guzman's extradition, to find out more about Penn's dealings with the infamous head of the Sinaloa drug cartel, according to one U.S. government source who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly about the case.

Rolling Stone Magazine rushed Penn's 10,000-word article to publication on Saturday after Mexican officials captured Guzman in a dramatic raid, ending a months-long manhunt following his July escape from a maximum security prison. The only interview the drug lord is believed to have given in decades was brokered with the help of the Mexican television star Kate del Castillo.

Mexico's Attorney General on Monday said her office has an open line of investigation into Penn's meeting with Guzman, saying their rendezvous — captured by Mexican surveillance — was an "essential" element in the drug lord's arrest.

If U.S. authorities ultimately subpoena Penn or want him to testify against Guzman, it would be difficult to force the actor to reveal facts beyond the published interview, since he

could invoke "journalistic privilege," which in some cases protects reporters from divulging information about their work, said lawyers with expertise in U.S. media law.

The U.S. government sources could not confirm whether or not authorities will subpoena Penn. The request to extradite Guzman to the United States to face federal charges is still at a very early stage and Mexico said the process could take years.

The question of journalistic privilege has been a hotly debated topic in the United States, with federal courts disagreeing on how much reporters are protected.

Representatives for Penn did not respond to a request for comment. The actor told The Associated Press in a brief email conversation that he has "nothin' to hide."

Mike Vigil, former DEA chief of international operations who has been briefed on the Guzman investigation by U.S. and Mexican law enforcement, said there is a "very strong possibility that Penn and Del Castillo are going to have to testify."

Beyond requiring Penn to testify or hand over information, it would be extremely unlikely that U.S. authorities would have grounds to bring criminal charges against Penn himself, the sources said.

Unless Penn aided and abetted Guzman in some way, the Oscar-winning actor would not have a duty to disclose to authorities that he was talking to a fugitive, legal experts said.

Penn as journalist

Even though Penn is a well known actor and was traveling to Mexico on his own dime, there is little

doubt he was engaged in a journalistic endeavor when he met with one of the world's most wanted men, said George Freeman, director of the Media Law Resource Center, a nonprofit group in New York.

"Being a movie star wouldn't disqualify him from the journalistic privilege," said Freeman.

Of particular interest to investigators could be Penn's revelations that the drug lord discussed "a host of corrupt major corporations" that helped Guzman launder money from his vast criminal enterprise. The actor said he agreed not to publish the company names.

A disclaimer on the article says it was submitted to Guzman for approval before publication, a practice that several renowned journalists and professional organizations have criticized. The government could try to argue Penn's article is not journalism and therefore not protected, but that argument would be difficult to win, said Freeman.

Prosecutors might also try to say the actors were not working as a journalists because Guzman's original interest in connecting with Del Castillo was for a movie deal, according to Penn's account.

"You would have to know all the facts, but making a movie is creative activity and even if it is part of a business deal it would be protected by the first amendment," said Theodore Bortous, an attorney in California who represented Time Inc in a case that also involved the New York Times journalist Judith Miller. Miller went to jail for refusing to testify in a case.

Depending on where Guzman

is tried, it could make a difference in how the courts would treat potential testimony from Penn.

Guzman has been charged in seven separate U.S. indictments stretching back to 1995 and but Chicago and New York are the leading contenders to host the high profile trial, according to former U.S. law enforcement officials.

The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which has jurisdiction over Chicago has questioned whether any privilege exists for journalists in any context. Meanwhile, the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which handles cases out of New York, has ruled that the party requesting a subpoena must prove the confidential information sought from a journalist is both highly relevant to the case and not attainable through any other source, raising the bar for prosecutors.

David Schultz, an attorney who defends journalists and news organizations at Levine, Sullivan, Koch & Schulz in New York, said the split in the courts raises more questions than answers.

"Whether or not he would have any privilege at all is pretty much in the air," said Schultz.

Republican presidential candidate Marco Rubio, on ABC's "This Week," had harsh words for Penn.

"If one of these American actors who have benefited from the greatness of this country, who have made money from our free enterprise system, want to go fawn all over a criminal and a drug trafficker in their interviews, they have a constitutional right to do it," Rubio said. "I find it grotesque."

With 'Chapo' behind bars, Zambada the last capo standing

BY MICHAEL O'BOYLE
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REUTERS

MEXICO CITY — Mexico's public enemy No. 1, Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, was nabbed last week after a gunfight and high speed getaway bid. But his more discreet partner is flourishing, moving tons of drugs to the United States and laundering the profits at home.

Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada jointly heads the powerful Sinaloa cartel and, with Guzman behind bars again and facing possible extradition to the United States, it falls to Zambada to maintain the gang's ranking as the world's largest.

In the past few years, Mexican security forces have captured or killed almost all the leading kingpins who had dominated drug trafficking over the last two decades. Guzman, the most prominent of all, was recaptured on Friday, six months after his second escape from maximum security prison.

That leaves Zambada, 68, as the most senior capo still standing.

"He is the patriarch," said Antonio Mazzitelli, the U.N. representative on drugs and crime in Mexico.

Zambada was listed as a defendant in a U.S. case as long ago as 1978, when Colombia's Pablo Escobar was just starting his trafficking career. Unlike Escobar, who was shot dead in 1993, Zambada has never been arrested and is still selling cocaine.

Eight years ago, the U.S. Treasury Department declared a business network owned by his ex-wife and children was a money-laundering front. But most of the companies are still open.

There are two secrets to his success, experts say. He keeps a low profile and spends heavily on alliances with politicians and police.

"Zambada is very careful," said Javier Valdez, a founder of Sinaloa weekly newspaper Riodoce, describing him as a man who rarely travels and avoids big cities. "He controls the Sinaloa police, he has businesses in many sectors."

Rarely photographed, Zambada keeps away from the limelight. In Culiacan, the beating heart of Mexican drug trafficking and the center of his power, his presence is felt everywhere, although he is rarely seen.

Children grew up drinking Santa Monica milk produced at a dairy the United States said was a front organization. Others pass through the kindergarten, aquatic park, and shopping center owned by relatives and associates.

In the small town of Salado, rumored to be Mayo's home turf, locals warned Reuters reporters not to pry into Zambada's life. "Don't even mention his name," an old woman

selling tortillas hissed.

Zambada was born in a village nestled among low mountains called El Alamo, on the outskirts of Culiacan. Until recently he was known to arrive there to hand out money and children's gifts at Christmas, in the style of old drug lords.

In a rare interview to Mexican news magazine Proceso in 2010, Zambada said he had come close to arrest on four occasions, crawling through ditches to flee soldiers.

On the whole, he said, he was more careful than his friend Guzman. He is also more afraid of serving time, saying that he'd rather die.

Zambada's faction of the Sinaloa cartel is a family business with sons occupying top trafficking positions and his daughters owning businesses.

In 2013, Mexican authorities froze two of the dairy's bank accounts. Two people currently working there said the Santa Monica brand had now been sold to another Culiacan based company called Nutthree. Neither Nutthree or the dairy could be reached for official comment.

Several of Zambada's relatives are in prison, including three of his sons. Others have died violently.

One son, Vicente Zambada, gave dramatic testimony in a plea deal with the U.S. government in 2013 that showed how central his father was to bringing drug money back from the United States, as well as to shipping cocaine and heroin.

Vicente Zambada earlier said he was a DEA informant and critics allege that by snitching on rivals he helped cement the Sinaloa cartel's dominance.

Born into poverty, Ismael Zambada once said it was "stupidity" to suggest he might have enough wealth to feature in the Forbes billionaires list, like Guzman.

Still, part of Vicente's plea deal was an agreement to hand over \$1.3 billion in assets. The U.S. government is seeking to confiscate another \$2 billion of assets shared by Zambada, Guzman and other associates, according to an indictment unsealed in 2015.

In multiple indictments and statements, the U.S. government has created a picture of the older Zambada as an astute businessman, managing many of the cartel's financial operations.

While Guzman led the cartel into battle with rivals to expand its control of trafficking routes, Zambada is more closely associated with maintaining its core strength in Sinaloa state.

It is too early to say what impact Guzman's arrest will have on the Sinaloa cartel, and there are rumors that his eldest son Ivan could take over. But it was Zambada who kept things running when Guzman did his two previous stints in prison.