

MAN STOLE CUFF LINKS, POLICE SAY

Albany Former Troy resident pleads not guilty to criminal possession of jewelry valued at \$1,500

MELISSA GRACE Staff writer

A former Troy man was arraigned in County Court Tuesday on charges of possessing stolen antique jewelry.

Gary Evans, 43, pleaded not guilty to a one-count indictment alleging fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property. The property in question: two sets of 14-karat gold cuff links valued at \$1,500, the prosecutor said.

Evans was indicted in Albany Friday. Last Wednesday, he was arrested in Vermont by federal authorities and brought here in connection with the charge.

The State Police had been looking for Evans since November when a warrant was issued linking him to the stolen jewelry, taken from a Massachusetts antique store and sold to an Albany antique shop, said Assistant District Attorney Paul A. Clyne, who is prosecuting the case.

Evans also is wanted in Ulster County in connection with stolen property. He has a string of burglary and stolen property convictions and has served a number of years in prison. After his arrest in St. Johnsbury, near the New Hampshire border, by New York investigators and Vermont State Police, Evans was held on a federal probation violation warrant stemming from the 1995 theft of a rare book of John Audubon lithographs from a Vermont museum.

In an unrelated investigation, Evans is being questioned about three former associates of his, all of whom police believe met with foul play. Authorities have not identified Evans as a suspect. The men, Timothy W. Rysedorph, Damien Cuomo and Michael Falco, were all from Troy, investigators said.

Evans was sent back to the County jail by County Court Judge Thomas A. Breslin. If found guilty on the stolen property charge and because he has previous convictions, he could face up to 15 years in prison.

FRIEND QUERIED IN MAN'S SLAYING

Brunswick Shortly after authorities discover the dismembered remains of Timothy Rysedorph, they question an associate they say was the last person to see him before he disappeared in October

CAROL DeMARE Staff writer

Nearly nine months after Timothy W. Rysedorph disappeared, his grisly remains were discovered in a Rensselaer County field over the weekend, and authorities are questioning a close friend of his in the slaying.

The friend also is a suspect in the deaths of two other men, a top police official said.

The badly decomposed remains of Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs, were uncovered Friday in a remote spot in the town of Brunswick, State Police officials said.

Rysedorph was shot several times in the head and his body was dismembered with a chain saw, State Police Senior Investigator James Horton said. The remains were discovered in a shallow grave, he said. Authorities declined to say what led them to the remains.

Gary Evans, a longtime friend and associate of Rysedorph, is being questioned in the slaying. The Troy native was the last person seen with Rysedorph in Latham on the evening of Oct. 3 before Rysedorph disappeared, according to Horton.

Evans, 43, is being held without bail at the Albany County jail on an unrelated matter. He has not been charged with Rysedorph's murder, State Police Capt. John Byrne said.

``It's an open and active investigation," he said.

The mystery surrounding Evans deepened with the discovery of Rysedorph's remains. Evans also is a suspect in the disappearance of two Troy acquaintances who also were criminal associates, Horton said.

``We are attempting to locate other bodies of missing people that (Evans) had contacts with," Horton said. State Police plan a news conference today to release more details.

Damien Cuomo and Michael Falco disappeared in the 1980s, leaving families behind, Horton said. Cuomo, 36, disappeared in December 1989. Falco, also in his 30s, vanished in the fall of 1984.

``They were burglars, all of them, at one point or another," Horton has said. ``They crisscrossed paths along the way. They all knew each other." State Police had an arrest warrant out for Falco at the time he disappeared.

``Over the years, we have come to believe that he has met with foul play," Horton said. ``Really, there was no reason to drop out of sight. He's had no contact with family or children. And the same with Cuomo."

Authorities also were baffled by the circumstances of Rysedorph's disappearance. Rysedorph worked at BFI Waste Systems in Latham and telephoned his wife at 1 a.m. on Oct. 4 from a Dunkin' Donuts shop at routes 9 and 155 to say he would be home soon, investigators said. He was never seen or heard from again. Three days later, his 1989 Pontiac was found at the Amtrak station in Rensselaer.

His wife, Dana Rysedorph, appeared frequently on television, refusing to believe her husband might

have been the victim of foul play and pleading for information as to his whereabouts.

She said her hopes were dashed Saturday when she went to a restaurant at which she was to start a job as a cook and her boss told her some people wanted to see her.

“He walked me out the back door and as soon as I saw the two men in suits, I knew,” Dana said. “I said, ‘I don’t want to hear it.’ They said, ‘We’ve got bad news.’”

Dana Rysedorph said authorities told her they found the body in woods off Route 2 headed toward Vermont.

She said she wasn’t told the details of the case and is trying to figure out some way to protect the couple’s 9-year-old son, Timothy Ian Rysedorph, from finding out.

“I kept on telling myself that he was coming back,” Dana Rysedorph said in a faltering voice.

Authorities were pessimistic all along.

“Circumstances surrounding his disappearance were more suspicious than him just dropping out of sight,” Horton has said. “We felt he met with foul play as well.”

Police were investigating Rysedorph’s activities with Evans regarding stolen property at the time Rysedorph disappeared, the investigator said. The two were childhood friends in Troy.

But Dana Rysedorph describes her husband as “low-key, sweet as hell,” adding, “Everybody got a kick out of him. He was comical, a joker, and a most powerful drummer. He played heavy metal, he played rock, and he loved to listen to jazz.”

Investigators believe Rysedorph was killed in Rensselaer County. Evans, whom Horton identified as a career criminal, was always a suspect in the case, he said.

State Police had been looking for Evans since November, when a warrant was issued linking him to antique jewelry -- two sets of 14-karat gold cuff links valued at \$1,500 -- stolen from a Massachusetts antique store and sold to an Albany antique shop. He has since been indicted on a charge.

He was arrested last month in St. Johnsbury, Vt.

“Right now as it stands, the only charge in Albany County (against Evans) is criminal possession of stolen property, and I don’t anticipate there being anything other than possession of stolen property,” Albany County Assistant District Attorney Paul A. Clyne said.

Evans has a string of burglary and stolen-property convictions and has spent a number of years behind bars. Since November he had traveled around the country and outside it, returning to the Northeast at the end of May, authorities said.

In addition to the state charges, he is being held on a federal probation violation warrant stemming from the 1995 theft of a rare book of John Audubon lithographs from a Vermont museum.

After that theft, Horton tracked down Evans and the book and turned over both to the FBI in Rutland, Vt. Evans was sentenced in a federal court to 2 years in prison and placed on federal probation.

TROOPERS DIG UP A 2ND BODY

Troy Authorities say antiques thief Gary Evans, a city native, may face charges in the slayings of three acquaintances

CAROL DeMARE Staff writer

State Police unearthed the remains Tuesday of a second associate of antiques thief Gary Evans and a search was under way in Florida for a third victim, police said.

Evans, 43, a Troy native, may face murder charges in the slayings of three acquaintances who pulled off burglaries with Evans and then mysteriously vanished over a 13-year period, according to authorities.

At about 11 a.m. Tuesday, Evans led authorities to the remains of Damien Cuomo, 28, in a wooded area in Troy, authorities said. Cuomo was last seen Dec. 27, 1989, by a family member and was the subject of an intense missing person investigation by Troy police, State Police Maj. Bart R. Johnson said.

The Troy man's remains had been buried 4 feet deep, Johnson said. He declined to reveal the location of the remains, but police sources said it was on a hill behind the Campbell Avenue firehouse.

The location is behind an apartment complex on Industrial Park Road, where Cuomo was living when he disappeared. At the time, his mother, Kay Cuomo, lived nearby on Campbell Avenue. She has since moved to South Carolina.

Autopsy results are pending. There was no indication that the corpse had been dismembered, Johnson said.

Meanwhile, a team of investigators was searching in Florida for the remains of Michael Falco, 30, of Troy. He disappeared in July 1985.

On Monday, police confirmed they had recovered the remains of Timothy W. Rysedorph of Saratoga Springs, who disappeared in October. Rysedorph, 39, had been shot several times in the back of the head and his body was dismembered with a chain saw, police said.

Rysedorph's body parts were found last Friday in a shallow grave on a wooded hill on Shyne Road off Route 2 in the hamlet of Eagle Mills in Brunswick, police said.

Evans also led investigators to Rysedorph's grave, according to authorities. Evans is being held without bail at the Albany County jail on unrelated charges.

State Police divers were in the Hudson River near Troy on Tuesday and will continue today looking for evidence, including a gun, Johnson said. He wouldn't comment on whether a chain saw is also being sought.

All three men ``were involved in criminal acts with Gary Evans," Johnson said at a news conference Tuesday at Troop G headquarters in Loudonville. The three participated in a number of burglaries in the Capital Region, police said.

Evans has an extensive criminal record and was a police informant. Rensselaer County District Attorney Ken Bruno said no deal was made with Evans to get him to cooperate with authorities on locating the remains of his victims.

Bruno gave no timetable as to when Evans might be charged with the murders. He said he would research whether Evans can face a capital murder charge for Rysedorph's slaying if the Saratoga Springs man was silenced because he was a witness to a crime.

Cuomo had been killed before capital punishment was reinstated in 1995. Evans was the last person seen with Rysedorph in Colonie on the evening of Oct. 3. Rysedorph worked at BFI Waste Systems in Colonie and telephoned his wife at 12:40 a.m. on Oct. 4 from a Dunkin' Donuts shop at Routes 9 and 155 to say he'd be home soon, investigators said. He was never seen or heard from again. Three days later, his 1989 Pontiac was found at the Amtrak station in Rensselaer.

Evans began cooperating with State Police Senior Investigator James Horton after appearing before Albany County Judge Thomas A. Breslin on Friday and waiving his right to counsel, Albany County Assistant District Attorney Paul A. Clyne said.

At the hearing, Assistant Public Defender Joseph M. McCoy strongly advised Evans not to give up his rights.

"I got a message from him that he wanted to talk to the State Police, that he wanted to talk to them, not that they wanted to talk to him," McCoy said Tuesday. He told Evans that he would be surrendering certain rights and anything he said could be used against him.

"I didn't know if he wanted to help himself out or give them information," McCoy said. "He wouldn't discuss with me what he wanted to talk to them about."

Instead, Evans stood firm on his desire to talk to Horton, and on Tuesday he renewed again before Breslin his wish to cooperate with authorities.

McCoy said he visited Evans at the jail Sunday. When McCoy asked Evans if he could contact a family member or loved one, Evans replied, "No," McCoy said.

Evans is a convicted antiques thief with a record that dates to 1977. He has at least four felony convictions for which he served time in both state and federal prisons. In June 1980, Evans was awaiting trial in Rensselaer County Jail on stolen property charges when he scaled a 20-foot wall and escaped. He was recaptured several hours later on a ledge of the Troy Public Library.

Evans has long been a suspect in the disappearance of Rysedorph and recently was wanted for questioning in the disappearance of the two other former associates. After Rysedorph's disappearance, Evans left the area, traveling to Alaska, California and Oregon, Johnson said. Evans returned to the Northeast last month and was arrested May 27 in St. Johnsbury, Vt., on state and federal warrants.

Evans is currently charged with criminal possession of stolen property in connection with two sets of 14-karat gold antique cuff links valued at \$1,500. The cuff links were stolen from a Massachusetts antique shop and sold by Evans last July to an antique dealer in Albany, police said.

Albany County District Attorney Sol Greenberg said that Evans, as a persistent felon, faces 25 years to life on the charge.

In addition to the state charges, he is being held on a federal probation violation warrant stemming from the 1995 theft of a rare book of John James Audubon lithographs from a Vermont museum.

After that theft, Horton tracked down Evans and the book and turned over both to the FBI in Rutland, Vt. Evans was sentenced in a federal court to 2 years in prison and placed on federal probation.

EVANS GOT BAD REPUTATION EARLY IN TROY

Suspect in killings was known as trouble in old neighborhood

MIKE HUREWITZ Staff writer

Gary Evans, suspected of killing three people from the Capital Region over the last 13 years, was no stranger to police or the South Troy community where he grew up.

Police knew him as a career criminal and an informant. Residents knew him as a strange young man, with a quick temper and a reputation for violence.

And one of his alleged victims, Timothy Rysedorph, knew him as a childhood friend with whom he played baseball.

Evans, now 43, was one of four informants whose testimony in May 1995 helped lead to the conviction of Jeffrey D. Williams in the abduction and killing of 18-year-old Karolyn Lonczak.

Evans, jailed at the time, was given a tape recorder by authorities and recorded portions of his conversation with Williams.

Defense attorney Terence L. Kindlon tried to show that Evans was rewarded with reduced jail time for working with police in the case.

Evans admitted that he had spent a bit less than 10 of the past 19 years in prison, acknowledging, "I've been a thief for a long time."

"Evans' testimony was very important," Albany District Attorney Sol Greenberg said Tuesday.

He said the practice of making deals with criminals to convict criminals is a common law enforcement technique.

But Rysedorph's widow, Dana, said authorities were over-eager for Evans' cooperation and too quick to release him from jail.

"Red flags should have gone up. He shouldn't have gotten out," she said. "Gary Evans was used as an informant. That's why he kept getting out."

But Evans had a history above all of betraying those who trusted him. Rysedorph, Michael Falco and Damien Cuomo, the men whom he is suspected of slaying, allegedly participated with him at least sporadically in an informal, loose-knit burglary ring.

A woman who grew up in South Troy recalled that Rysedorph and Falco lived near her on Second Street and that Evans was a troublesome youth four years older than the rest of the group who occasionally frequented the neighborhood.

"Gary was the one who your mother always said, 'I don't want to see you with him,'" recalled the woman, who asked not to be identified.

The woman said Rysedorph was well-liked, a good student and someone who enjoyed playing stickball on the street. Occasionally, she said, Evans would join in the games.

"I remember he was a sore loser," the woman said.

Another South Troy resident said he was in the Troy Public Library June 12, 1980, when Evans -- who had bolted that morning from the Rensselaer County Jail -- was recaptured by police on the library ledge.

``I said, `Who is this guy?' And people said, `That's Gary Evans.' It was a name people in the neighborhood knew."

It continues to be a name known by antiques dealers who have put up warnings in some stores that he and Rysedorph are professional thieves.

A block from Rysedorph's Saratoga Springs home, at the Regent Street Antique Center, mug shots of the pair have been posted on the wall. An accompanying article described Evans as a career criminal with a long record of stealing antiques.

``He knows the business, he talks the talk, he knows what pieces are worth," warned the February issue of the Maine Antiques Digest.

``People who dealt with Evans were afraid that if they blew the whistle on him, he would burn their place down," a Regent employee said.

Evans' convictions include stealing \$83,000 in items from a Quechee, Vt., antiques store and a rare book of John James Audubon lithographs from a Vermont museum, police said.

He was sent to state prison Jan. 13, 1977, for third-degree burglary in Essex County and was released on parole March 31, 1980.

He entered state prison Sept. 11, 1980, on convictions in Rensselaer County for criminal possession of stolen property and first-degree escape. He was paroled Dec. 29, 1982.

He began his third term in state prison July 3, 1985, on convictions in Rensselaer County for third-degree robbery and attempted third-degree burglary. He was paroled March 1, 1988.

Until the moment he was captured, Evans continued to spark fear in a man who said Evans had a grudge against him and showed a capacity for violence.

John, who asked that his last name not be used, said he met Evans through Damien Cuomo.

``He worked out all the time; he was in good shape," John said of Evans. ``We always told Damien to stay away from him." The Associated Press contributed to this report.

EVANS PROBE SHIFTS TO 3RD BODY

After the remains of 2 childhood friends of the antiques thief are found buried in the Capital Region, State Police are arranging to have him accompany them to Florida to recover another corpse

CAROL DeMARE and MIKE HUREWITZ Staff writers

With two of three missing associates of suspected killer Gary Evans accounted for, authorities are focusing on finding the remains of a third victim.

Michael Falco, 30, of Troy vanished in July 1985. Sources have said Falco's remains were buried in Florida. Investigators are attempting to arrange to have Evans accompany them to the site, State Police Captain John Byrne said. But Byrne refused to discuss the location.

At the time Falco disappeared there was a warrant out for his arrest on charges that he and Evans burglarized a jewelry store in East Greenbush, Senior Investigator James Horton said Wednesday.

Police said Evans led them in the past week to the burial sites in Rensselaer County of Damien Cuomo, 28, of Troy, and Timothy Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs. Rysedorph, who vanished in October, had been shot several times in the back of the head and his body was dismembered with a chain saw, police said.

Both were childhood pals who participated in a number of burglaries with Evans, police said.

Autopsy results released Wednesday show Cuomo was shot three times in the head while handcuffed. Police said he died on a hill near his Troy apartment complex two days after Christmas 1989. The body was not dismembered.

There is "no doubt" Evans killed them, Byrne said, "and he did lead us to the bodies."

Rensselaer County District Attorney Ken Bruno said this week that he is preparing to bring murder charges against Evans. He is being held without bail at the Albany County jail on a federal charge of violation of probation and an Albany County indictment charging him with possession of stolen property.

Initially, people who knew Falco thought he had gone to California, Horton said. Falco knew he was wanted, so it wouldn't have been unusual for him to skip town, Horton said. Yet when Falco missed his mother's funeral in 1988, friends and family became concerned, the investigator said.

Evans, 43, is an antiques thief with a record that dates to 1977. He is the prime suspect in the murders of the three former associates, officials said.

A man who asked to be identified only as John feared that he would be next on Evans' alleged list of victims and obtained orders of protection against him early in 1997 in Colonie Town Court.

The documents, served on Evans on Feb. 26 and again March 19 of that year, ordered that he "not communicate by any means" with John.

John said he unwittingly became a witness to an armed robbery allegedly carried out "13 or 14 years ago" in Massachusetts by Evans, Falco and a third man. Evans had stalked him since that time, John said. The harassment included phone calls and death threats. John said he once spotted Evans watching him

from a neighbor's rooftop.

John said he obtained the first order of protection after Evans allegedly tried to run him down with a truck in Colonie. He obtained the second order after informing authorities that Evans reacted to the first court order by threatening him over the phone with death.

At the time the court orders were signed, Evans was being supervised by the federal probation office in Albany after his release from federal prison June 6, 1996, in Burlington, Vt., where he served time for the theft of a rare book from a Vermont museum.

Alan Cunningham, deputy chief of operations for the Albany office, said he could not comment on whether the federal government knew about the orders of protection in early 1997 and whether that would have allowed them to move to end Evans' freedom.

Evans left the Capital Region area last November and traveled extensively throughout the United States and abroad, investigators said. He returned to the Northeast in May and was living in St. Johnsbury, Vt., when arrested on May 27.

Evans is currently charged with criminal possession of stolen property in connection with two sets of 14-karat gold cuff links valued at \$1,500. The cuff links were stolen from a Massachusetts antiques shop and sold by Evans last July to an antiques dealer in Albany, police said.

He waived his constitutional rights before a judge twice in the last week and then cooperated with investigators in locating the bodies of Rysedorph and Cuomo.

Rysedorph's body parts were found Friday in a shallow grave on a wooded hill on Shyne Road off Route 2 in the hamlet of Eagle Mills in Brunswick, police said. He had been shot several times in the back of the head.

Rysedorph disappeared Oct. 4 after phoning his wife, Dana, from Colonie to say he'd be home shortly. He was last seen with Evans in Colonie the night before, police said.

``Tim is not a career criminal; he's a good father," Dana Rysedorph said Wednesday. ``There needs to be proof. And the best proof is he has a clean record. There's nothing there."

She said her husband lived for his music, starting as a helper with ``The Emerald City Band" and then becoming a drummer in his own group, The Realm. Rysedorph worked at BFI Waste Systems in Colonie.

She said that Falco was the sound and light man in Rysedorph's band. Falco introduced her to Rysedorph as a possible lead female singer, a position she never took, she said. But she and Rysedorph fell in love almost immediately, Dana Rysedorph said. She knew Falco because he was dating her stepsister Elaine.

Cuomo's remains were also found in his hometown of Troy. He was buried 4 feet deep in a wooded area on a hill behind the Campbell Avenue firehouse not far from the apartment complex on Industrial Park Road where he was living at the time. He was killed on the top of the hill not far from where he was buried, police said.

As part of the investigation, State Police divers will continue searching the Hudson River near Troy today for a gun and chain saw used by Evans in the crimes, officials said.

FAMILY, FRIENDS MOURN RYSEDORPH

EDWARD FITZPATRICK Staff writer

Saratoga Springs Timothy W. Rysedorph's marriage began at Skidmore College's Wilson Chapel five years ago, on a perfect day.

He wore a gray top hat and his bride, Dana, spun a parasol as they sipped champagne and rode through the streets of Saratoga Springs in a horse-drawn carriage. "It was like a fairy tale," Dana Rysedorph recalled.

But it was a horror story that brought her back to Wilson Chapel on Thursday. Nearly 100 people turned out for a memorial service for her husband, whose dismembered body was found in a shallow grave last week.

Police allege a childhood friend, Gary Evans, shot Rysedorph in the head and cut up his body with a chain saw. Police say Evans, a career criminal, also killed two other buddies from South Troy, and that all three men were at some point involved in crimes with Evans.

But friends and family members say Rysedorph was no criminal. At Thursday's service, they remembered Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs, as a loving husband, a good father, a hard worker and a talented drummer.

Kevin Buess, who played with Rysedorph in five bands, said his friend often worked two jobs in addition to his commitments to his family and his music and so was too busy to get involved in any of Evans' alleged burglary schemes.

Buess spoke during the service, describing Rysedorph as a precise, professional musician and a mild-mannered, good-natured guy. "He had a Mel Gibson quality to him -- a suave swagger with a smart-aleck flair," he said. "He would generally greet you with a cockney accent -- 'Hello, governor' -- and it wouldn't be out of the ordinary to see him break out into an Irish jig."

Buess, a singer, used to joke about growing old and watching his son pick up the microphone, and Rysedorph would talk about watching his son, 9-year-old Timothy I. Rysedorph, "take his drum and continue making more noise for the next generation."

Buess recalled being best man in Rysedorph's wedding. "Then, I was proud to stand up for him," he said. "I regret having to stand here now in the face of this tragedy to say goodbye to someone I loved like a brother."

When they were preparing for the wedding, Rysedorph told his fiancée to surprise him, so she planned all the details -- from the carriage to the top hat. She also did the planning for Thursday's service. "I tried to make this really special," she said a few hours before the ceremony.

Dana Rysedorph arranged for the singer from her husband's band to do a rendition of a song played at the wedding: Rod Stewart's "Have I Told You Lately?" Then came Eric Clapton's "Tears in Heaven."

"That's from me to him," Dana said.

CUFF LINKS LED TO EVANS

Albany Stolen goods charge helps authorities hold the man they say is suspected of slaying 3 associates

CAROL DeMARE Staff writer

Last July, a man walked into a downtown antiques shop and sold two stolen sets of pricey cuff links and other jewelry for \$625. The man was a frequent visitor to the store. The store manager said he knew him as "sophisticated in antiques."

Police have identified the man selling the jewelry as Gary Charles Evans, 43, a Troy native who is suspected of killing three former criminal associates.

That seemingly innocuous transaction at the New Scotland Antiques shop on July 18 -- one similar to hundreds Evans had conducted at shops throughout the Northeast as an antiques thief -- set in motion a nationwide manhunt.

Investigators say Evans' decision to unload the cuff links in Albany helped them hold him once they suspected him of homicide, and for the past week, he has riveted them with details of his alleged murder spree.

The three men police say he confessed to killing were childhood pals who joined him in a loosely structured burglary ring that hit antiques shops and jewelry stores across the Northeast. Rensselaer County District Attorney Ken Bruno this week said he is preparing murder charges against Evans.

"Even though it was a minor charge, (the stolen goods charge) served as a mechanism to secure Gary Evans," Assistant Albany County District Attorney Paul A. Clyne said.

The cuff links found their way to Albany via an antiques shop called the Emporium, located 60 miles east of Albany in Great Barrington, Mass. Six months earlier, in January 1997, the the Emporium was burglarized, and \$70,000 to \$80,000 worth of jewelry stolen, police said.

Among the items missing were the cuff links sold at the Albany store. Great Barrington police Officer Steven Smith said Thursday he believes Evans burglarized the Emporium, because Evans already told New York investigators he burglarized and torched two other Great Barrington shops.

David Ornstein, co-manager of New Scotland Antiques, said Evans spent about 45 minutes at the Washington Avenue store that day.

Ornstein said he carefully screens for stolen merchandise, but because Evans talked casually about antiques, he didn't arouse suspicion.

"I wouldn't call him an expert, but he was sophisticated in antiques," Ornstein said.

Evans told him the cuff links had come from his father, Ornstein said.

Their market value was \$1,500, according to Clyne, prosecuting Evans on the stolen goods charge.

Four months after the transaction at New Scotland Antiques, Evans fled the area. He was on the run, only to be captured last month in St. Johnsbury, Vt. He is being held at the Albany County jail on a charge of possession of stolen property and on a federal parole violation.

In the past week, State Police investigators have unearthed the remains of Timothy Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs, and Damien Cuomo, 28, of Troy, in graves in Rensselaer County. Authorities said Evans led them to the two burial sites. Rysedorph disappeared early on Oct. 4. He was last seen with Evans, police said. Cuomo disappeared on Dec. 27, 1989.

The remains of a third man, Michael Falco, 30, who disappeared in July 1985, are believed to be buried in Florida. State Police said they are talking to Evans in an attempt to learn the exact location.

Police say Evans signed a form at the antiques store linking him to the sale of the cuff links.

The form is distributed by the Albany Police Department in a practice unique to Albany, Albany County District Attorney Sol Greenberg said. An individual selling merchandise to a secondhand dealer must fill out the form.

“It's been a source over the years of finding stolen property,” Greenberg said.

To complete the sale, police said, Evans had to show his driver's license and list his name and address. The form asks the seller's race, sex, height, weight, hair color and birth date and a description of the merchandise. A signature is required.

“That signature is what got him,” Ornstein said. “He signed the thing -- there's no backing out of that: He sold it.”

Periodically, Albany police Detective George McNally collects the forms from shops around the city. He then compares the items listed on the forms with items stolen in burglaries from the Capital Region and outside of the area.

McNally “looks for certain patterns -- like a known burglar hocking this stuff or a crackhead who is doing burglaries,” Clyne said.

Shortly after Rysedorph disappeared, McNally visited one of the stores. Rysedorph had already been described as missing in newspaper and TV accounts.

“It was brought to my attention by a merchant who had some dealings with Evans and Rysedorph together . . . that they were occasional customers of an antiques store,” McNally said. He wouldn't name the store.

McNally checked his files and “established that there were several business transactions between these parties,” and their dates, he said.

He then reviewed the items sold by Evans and Rysedorph still in the stores, and the cuff links turned up.

McNally called Investigator Chuck Sullivan in the State Police Major Crimes Unit, who was looking into Rysedorph's disappearance. Sullivan traced the cuff links back to the burglary at the Emporium in Great Barrington.

At that point, Senior Investigator James Horton, who heads the Major Crimes Unit, wanted to talk to Evans about the disappearance of Rysedorph. Horton had a long association with Evans, who has a criminal record dating back to 1977.

In November, an arrest warrant was obtained for Evans for possession of the stolen cuff links. But he

remained a fugitive until May, when investigators got a tip he was living in a tent in St. Johnsbury, Vt. But when investigators arrested him May 27, they didn't use the state warrant issued for the stolen cuff links because it could have resulted in a long extradition process.

Instead, they used a federal warrant charging Evans with violating probation. It allows easier movement of prisoners from state to state, enabling them to bring Evans back to Albany County right away.

Evans was eventually indicted on the possession of stolen property charge. Last week, he went before a county judge and waived his constitutional rights. He said he wanted to talk to Horton without his lawyer present. He then started revealing details of the murders, Horton said, adding that he's been talking nearly every day since. Staff writer Edward Fitzpatrick contributed to this article.

A LIFE OF CRIME, A TALE OF MURDER

Antiques thief Gary Evans gives up deadly secrets, police say

CAROL DeMARE and EDWARD FITZPATRICK Staff writers

Gary Charles Evans was no stranger to the police. They knew him as a thief from South Troy who talked tough and preyed on antiques shops. He cut deals as a police informant and -- when he wasn't behind bars -- moved around a lot.

Now, a different picture of the 43-year-old career criminal has emerged -- that of a cold-blooded killer who in recent days has led cops through the woods of Rensselaer County to dig up two of his victims.

The dead men, Timothy Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs, and Damien Cuomo, 28, of Troy, were Evans' friends. Police said they were also his criminal associates. Both were shot in the head.

Rysedorph's body was dismembered with a chain saw.

State Police Senior Investigator James Horton, the cop closest to the case, won't speculate on why Evans decided to talk. Since his arrest May 27 near St. Johnsbury, Vt., police say, Evans has detailed when and how he killed his two friends and has led authorities to their makeshift graves in Troy and Brunswick.

Police also expect Evans to tell them where in Florida he disposed of another friend, Michael Falco, 30, of Troy, who has been missing since July, 1985.

Evans is being held at the Albany County jail without bail for violating his federal probation and on a state charge of possessing stolen property. He has not been charged with murder, but Rensselaer County District Attorney Ken Bruno said he will be.

Evans, Rysedorph, Cuomo and Falco all grew up in South Troy, a working-class neighborhood of three-story brick buildings and corner bars. Longtime residents remember the motto: "South Troy against the world."

Last week, Deputy Sheriff Jack Welcome remembered Evans as kid of 16 or 17 who went to jail for 90 days on a petit larceny charge. Evans never talked about his family, Welcome said, and left home when he was 13.

"He seemed like a kid on his own," Welcome said. "He had no education. I took an interest."

He helped Evans land a job at a cemetery; the kid slept in a van near the graveyard.

John Majer, who runs an auto body business in South Troy, remembered he never wanted Evans hanging around his shop. "I never trusted the kid from Day One," he said. "He was always getting in trouble."

In the 1970s, Majer dated one of Tim Rysedorph's sisters. He warned Tim, then a teenager, to stay away from Evans. "Tim was pretty decent. He played the drums," Majer said. "Tim was never in trouble." But he didn't heed the advice.

It wasn't long before Evans came to the attention of authorities.

"Every police officer in the Capital District has had dealings with Gary Evans at some time or other," said Rensselaer County Sheriff Daniel V. Keating.

Michael Falco's sister, Mary Deeb, met Evans in South Troy in the 1970s. She said she never liked him, but Michael ``was a champion of the underdog, and that's why he befriended Evans." He also began doing burglaries with Evans, she said.

``Let's not sugarcoat it," said Salvatore Falco, Michael's brother. `` `Business associates' means you run a 7-Eleven together. They were partners in crime."

By 1985, his sister said, Michael Falco decided he wanted to marry his girlfriend and raise their two children. He asked Deeb to help him find a job. But first, he and Evans planned a jewelry theft in East Greenbush.

``He said this was going to be his last job," Deeb said. Evans fenced the loot in Massachusetts, and Falco went to meet Evans to get his share of the take, Deeb said. Michael called her from Massachusetts.

``Where in Massachusetts?" she asked him. ``Never mind," he said. ``I'll call when I get home tomorrow." Deeb never heard from him again.

Evans is ``very intelligent," Horton said. ``He takes steps and measures in order for him to get by, whether it be through the criminal route or legitimate means."

In June 1980, Evans displayed his resourcefulness while he was locked up in the old Rensselaer County Jail. Guards busy breaking up a staged fight didn't notice as Evans -- bearded and bare-chested -- went over the wall. He was captured a few hours later four blocks away, on a ledge atop the Troy Public Library.

Years later, Evans cut a deal to reduce his time behind bars. He provided prosecutors with information about a murderer he had spoken with in the Albany County jail. His testimony helped convict Jeffrey Williams in 1995 for killing 18-year-old Karolyn Lonczak.

Evans stole when he needed cash; he picked up odd jobs when he couldn't steal, Horton said. He could take off on a moment's notice, never putting down roots, never marrying. He was strong, had an athlete's body and was ``well-adapted to the outdoors," Horton said. ``He was known to spend weeks if not months outside, both in inclement and in nice weather."

Horton first arrested Evans in the early 1980s for stealing jewelry in East Greenbush. At the time, there was a warrant out for Falco.

``I was looking for Falco to arrest him on burglary," Horton said, adding, ``a lot of people thought he just left because he knew he was wanted."

``I looked for years," Horton said. ``People thought he went to California, and he missed his mother's funeral. People thought that was strange."

There was talk that Evans was connected to Falco's disappearance, and Horton questioned him. Evans denied any knowledge of it.

Horton dispelled any theory Evans and his associates were a sophisticated crew. At best, they was a loosely knit band, thrown together as need arose.

The four ``worked alone and together," Horton said. ``Cuomo could have been working with Rysedorph, Falco with Evans, Rysedorph with all three. . . . Sometimes they would just team up for certain jobs

where more than one person was needed, like taking out a big safe."

Rysedorph vanished last Oct. 4 after phoning his wife at 12:40 a.m. from a Dunkin' Donuts in Latham to say he'd be home shortly. After that, police said, Evans left the area.

Horton became obsessed with finding him, and put the Major Crimes Unit he heads -- investigators Bud York, Chuck Sullivan, Chuck DeLuca and Dennis Mossner -- on the case.

There was a warrant out for Evans for possession of stolen property, specifically two pairs of cuff links that he sold to an antiques shop on Washington Avenue in Albany last July. The cuff links had been stolen in January 1997 from the the Emporium, a Great Barrington, Mass., antiques shop., along with \$70,000 to \$80,000 worth of secondhand jewelry.

David Ornstein, manager of New Scotland Antiques on Washington Avenue, bought the cuff links, valued at \$1,500, on July 18. Ornstein, who has been in the business for 25 years, said Evans was personable and knew antiques.

"This is not a street thug," he said. "He's sophisticated."

Great Barrington Police Officer Steven Smith is convinced that Evans set fires at two landmark antiques barns in his Berkshires community to cover up his heists there.

Smith also gave this description of Evans' method of operation:

He would go during the day and ask a dealer to show him pieces, claiming he's looking for something for his fiancée. Then "he goes back and does his shopping at night without benefit of walking through the front door."

Ornstein said Evans told him the cuff links came from his father. Ornstein paid him \$625 for them and some other jewelry. But first, police said, Evans signed a form that is required when selling merchandise to a secondhand shop in Albany.

That proved to be his undoing.

Sal Falco expressed a view of Evans shared by others. "He was brilliant enough to recognize junk from antiques, and in another life, he would have made a great curator," Falco said. "This yo-yo kills three people so he doesn't get caught, and then he goes and hocks a pair of cuff links and says, 'Hi, I'm Gary Evans.' There's a difference between intelligence and common sense."

The Falco family will find some closure if police find the body in Florida, Deeb said. "We can stop wondering," she said. "But, unfortunately, we also stop hoping."

Evans was living in a tent in the Vermont woods when he was captured last month. He was sought by federal marshals for violating probation stemming from a federal prison term he did for stealing a huge book of John Audubon lithographs from a Vermont museum; Horton wanted to question him about Rysedorph's disappearance.

Evans' decision to implicate himself played out in a court hearing June 19 when he waived his constitutional right against self-incrimination and told County Judge Thomas A. Breslin that he wanted to talk to Horton. His lawyer, Assistant Albany County Public Defender Joseph M. McCoy, urged his client not to do it, but Evans dug in and the meetings between Horton and Evans began.

The cop and his quarry talked -- at the jail, at Troop G headquarters, in an unmarked car, in the courthouse. Evans told Horton that during the seven months after he killed Rysedorph, he traveled to California, Oregon and then up to Alaska, where he worked on a fishing boat that traveled to South America and plied the Bering Sea near Russia.

Horton said he listened as Evans talked of murder going back 13 years -- how he eliminated the men with whom he grew up and shared the proceeds of their break-ins.

"I can't speculate as to why he's talking, other than he's a persistent felon," Horton said. That is, because of his prior convictions, Evans could be sentenced on the stolen jewelry charge to 25 years to life anyway -- the maximum sentence for second-degree murder.

GARY EVANS AND HIS ASSOCIATES

Jan. 13, 1977: Sentenced to state prison Jan. 13, 1977, for Essex County burglary. March 31, 1980: Paroled from Great Meadow Correctional Facility in Washington County. Sept. 11, 1980: Entered state prison on 2- to 4-year sentence for second-degree possession of stolen property and first-degree escape in Rensselaer County. Dec. 29, 1982: Paroled from Attica prison.

July 1985: Michael Falco, 30, of Troy disappears. July 3, 1985: Entered begins a 2- to 4-year sentence for third-degree robbery and attempted third-degree burglary in Rensselaer County. Served time in Sing Sing and Clinton prisons. March 1, 1988: Paroled. Dec. 1989: Damien Cuomo, 28, of Troy disappears. June 9, 1995: Sentenced to federal prison in Vermont for 27 months for theft of a rare book of Audubon lithographs. June 6, 1996: Released with credit for time served in local jail prior to sentencing. Placed on three years' federal probation. Oct. 1997: Timothy W. Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs disappears. June 19, 1998: Rysedorph's remains found in a wooded area off Route 2 in Brunswick. June 23, 1998: Cuomo's remains found in a wooded area off Campbell Avenue in Troy.

SHERIFF GETS EVANS TRANSFERRED TO TROY JAIL

Colonie Campbell says the murder suspect was "scoping out" Albany County jail for possible escape routes, so federal authorities were asked to move him

CAROL DeMARE Staff writer

Suspected killer Gary Evans was moved out of the Albany County jail after authorities feared he was plotting an escape, officials said Tuesday.

Evans, 43, is now lodged at the Rensselaer County Jail in Troy. He was transferred Monday night.

The Troy native has led police to the remains of two former friends and is being questioned about a third murder. He is considered an escape risk because he went over the wall of the old Rensselaer County Jail in June 1980 while guards were busy breaking up a staged fight. He was captured a few hours later four blocks away on a ledge atop the Troy Public Library.

Aware of Evans' resourcefulness, officials at the Albany County jail on Albany Shaker Road in Colonie had kept a watchful eye on him. Evans was held there without bail since June 8.

Officers first became concerned Thursday when Evans went out to the recreation yard with other inmates at 12:30 p.m. and began observing things such as the sewer drains and the construction of the jail, Albany County Sheriff James L. Campbell said.

``He was scoping it out, as we call it," Campbell said. ``He is a federal boarder, and he is a serious escape risk, and I would say Albany County doesn't need the \$83 a day (the federal government pays) and the problems that Gary Evans brings."

He ``walked the entire yard, checked the windows area, checked the sewer drains in the yard, the vehicle access door and tried to pull up on the wall, (while) constantly looking at the roof area," Campbell said, reading from a report prepared at the jail.

Evans, a four-time convicted felon, was apparently ``trying to see if he could get a grip" on the wall, the sheriff said.

The county jail has no one stationed on the roof, but periodic checks are made, the sheriff said.

Campbell instructed Tom Wigger, assistant superintendent at the jail, to ask federal marshals to move Evans elsewhere. The marshals are responsible for moving Evans, who is being held as a federal probation violator. Evans also faces an Albany County indictment charging possession of stolen property. He was lodged in the jail as a federal prisoner after his arrest in Vermont on May 27.

Ingrid Gundrum, assistant to Rensselaer County Sheriff Daniel V. Keating, confirmed that Evans had been transferred to the Troy facility.

``He's here, and here he'll stay," Gundrum said. She refused to discuss security measures. The new jail opened in the fall of 1992, replacing the old jail from which Evans escaped.

Evans has been described by police as athletic and adept at survivalist and outdoor activities.

At 1:20 p.m. Thursday, a visitor signed in to see Evans. Eight minutes later, he left the yard to be brought to a room for the visit, Campbell said.

“As he approached the visiting area, he checked the gate behind him,” the sheriff said. “It was just unusual, his behavior. It was obvious what he was trying to do, check everything out.”

Evans was also observed tampering with shackles around his ankles, Campbell said.

On June 19, Evans had led State Police Senior Investigator James Horton and other authorities to a shallow grave in Brunswick, where the remains of Timothy Rysedorph of Saratoga Springs were found. Rysedorph, 39, had been shot several times in the head and dismembered with a chain saw, police said. Rysedorph disappeared on Oct. 4.

Four days later, Evans led police to the remains of Damien Cuomo of Troy, who disappeared December 27, 1989. Cuomo, 28, had been handcuffed and shot in the head. His remains were buried in woods off Campbell Avenue in Troy.

Police said they now are working with Evans in hopes of finding the remains of Michael Falco in Florida. Falco, 30, of Troy had disappeared in July 1985. All three men who disappeared were former associates of Evans and committed crimes with him, police have said.

The Albany County jail, which on Tuesday had a total of 695 inmates, is secure, Campbell said.

“But I don't need the problems, not from a boarder,” he said. “We have people who we feel are escape risks who are Albany County inmates, and we deal with them.”

MAN SAYS HE WAS STALKED BY EVANS

Colonie Judge issued order of protection against suspect months before Rysedorph murder

MIKE HUREWITZ Staff writer

Gary Evans, suspected killer of three former associates, allegedly stalked a newspaper mailroom worker for years, at one point brazenly chasing him to the parking lot at his place of employment and threatening his life.

On Jan. 16 and 17, 1997, Evans allegedly told his target, John Livolsi of Troy, that "he would be sleeping with his friend Damien," according to papers filed in Colonie Town Court.

The remains of Damien Cuomo, 28, were found by State Police June 23 in Troy. Evans, arrested May 27 in Vermont, led police to the body. Police said Cuomo had been an associate of Evans in a loosely knit burglary ring. Cuomo vanished on Dec. 27, 1989.

On June 19, Evans, a Troy native, led police to a shallow grave in Brunswick in which they discovered the dismembered remains of Timothy Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs, another alleged member of the gang. Rysedorph disappeared Oct. 4, 1997. He was last seen with Evans in Latham.

Authorities have also linked Evans, 43, to the July 1985 disappearance of Michael Falco, 30, of Troy, whose body has yet to be found. Police said they believe it is in Florida.

Livolsi was a friend of Cuomo's and grew up with him in a close-knit South Troy neighborhood. "I grew up with (Damien)," Livolsi said in a recent interview, in which he revealed new details of the unfolding case surrounding Evans. "We went to Sacred Heart School in Troy."

Livolsi said there was suspicion in the neighborhood that Evans was responsible for Falco's disappearance. He tried to warn Cuomo against hanging out with Evans.

"We always told Damien to stay away; he was going to do him in," Livolsi said.

Livolsi said Evans had stalked him for about 15 years, since he unwittingly witnessed a robbery that was allegedly carried out by Evans, Falco and a third person.

Livolsi said that Evans' threats against him included a chilling reference to Falco.

"He always bragged about killing the Falco guy, but they'd never find his body," Livolsi said. "He was always telling me that I'm next. I never got in a car with him, and he could never get me."

But according to Colonie Court records, Evans spotted him at a Dunkin' Donuts on New Loudon Road on Jan. 17, 1997, and followed him in a truck to the Times Union, where Livolsi works. Livolsi has a blurry photograph of a man and a truck. He said the photo was taken the day Evans pursued him.

On Jan. 30, 1997, Evans was arrested on a misdemeanor charge of first-degree harassment in connection with a complaint from Livolsi.

Almost a month later, on Feb. 26, 1997, Colonie Town Judge Nicholas Greisler granted Livolsi a temporary order of protection from Evans. The order required Evans to stay away from Livolsi and not communicate with him.

``He wouldn't let up," said Livolsi. ``He came right back after me. He called me right from the courthouse," Livolsi said, adding that he repeated his threats.

Evans pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of disorderly conduct and was fined \$45. The following day the court signed a permanent order of protection and sent copies to local law enforcement authorities.

At the time, Evans was on federal probation, supervised by the government's Albany office, arising from his conviction for stealing a rare Audubon book from the Norman Williams Library in Woodstock, Vt.

``If they had arrested him for a violation of parole, he would be in jail and Timmy Rysedorph would be alive right now. They gave him a slap on the wrist," Livolsi said.

Evans fled the state after Rysedorph's death, according to police. He is being held in the Rensselaer County Jail on a federal warrant for violation of probation and on a state charge of possession of stolen property.

Rensselaer County District Attorney Ken Bruno has said he plans to pursue a murder case against Evans.

EVANS DEATH COUNT AT 5, POLICE SAY

Colonie Officials say antiques thief linked to 3 slayings now admits killing 2 shopkeepers

CAROL DeMARE Staff writer

Gary Charles Evans, the suspected killer of three former associates, has admitted to killing two more men, officials said Wednesday.

Police said Evans acknowledged killing jewelry store owners in Jefferson and Herkimer counties who got in the way of planned thefts at their stores.

Evans earlier had admitted to killing childhood friends who participated with him in burglaries and other crimes, officials have said. Police believe the associates were killed so they wouldn't testify about crimes linked to Evans.

Police say they know of no other killings linked to Evans, although they are continuing to investigate.

The murders are ``part of the job," State Police Senior Investigator James Horton said. ``His job is burglary."

Evans has given State Police written statements admitting to the killings of the store owners, officials said.

For nine years the Watertown and Little Falls cases had remained unsolved homicides. On Tuesday, Evans provided information that only the killer would know, State Police Capt. John A. Byrne said at a Wednesday news conference.

``Investigators handling the cases are convinced he's the perpetrator," Byrne said.

Evans has yet to be charged in any of the murders. District Attorney Ken Bruno of Rensselaer County, where three former Evans associates were murdered, has said he is reviewing the cases and plans to bring charges. Prosecutors in Jefferson and Herkimer counties will also contemplate murder charges based on the new information, police officials said.

``Right now we don't have anything to lead us to believe there are more out there," Horton said.

``Although we are not closing the door on additional murders. Right now all we have is five."

Horton said he will continue to talk to Evans, who will speak only to Horton.

Evans was a frequent traveler throughout the country, and information on how he operated and his likely targets will be transmitted to police agencies nationwide, Horton said.

For instance, Evans, 43, a Troy native and antiques thief by trade who dealt mostly in stolen jewelry, frequented second-hand shops where he attempted to sell the proceeds of his burglaries, officials said.

Horton said he doesn't know why Evans decided to talk. He's been doing so almost daily since June 19 when he first appeared before Albany County Judge Thomas A. Breslin and waived his constitutional rights against self-incrimination. He has gone to court two more times to tell a judge he wished to talk to State Police.

``I can't really speculate as to why, other than when arrested for possession of stolen property he faced

25 years to life" in prison, Horton said. If convicted, Evans would be deemed a persistent felony offender because of his lengthy criminal record and the four stretches he served in state and federal prisons, beginning in 1977.

"There was no light at the end of the tunnel," Horton said. "He had nothing to gain or lose." In nearly 20 hours of conversations, Evans has acted like "a great weight has been lifted off his shoulders," the investigator said.

Currently, Evans is facing only a charge of criminal possession of stolen property in Albany County in connection with two stolen gold cuff links he sold at a second-hand shop last summer. He also is charged with violating his federal probation.

He is being held without bail at the Rensselaer County Jail. He was arrested May 27 in St. Johnsbury, Vt. For nearly eight months before that, he had traveled around the West Coast and worked on a fishing vessel in Alaska and South America.

Meanwhile, State Police were taking steps to avoid traveling to Florida with Evans to locate the remains of Michael Falco, believed to be buried in Palm Beach County outside the city of Lake Worth.

Evans is considered a flight risk, having escaped in June 1980 from the old Rensselaer County Jail. It would be a "logistical nightmare" to get court orders to remove him from this state and this federal jurisdiction and arrange for a non-commercial plane to fly him to Florida, officials said.

A detailed map drawn by Evans was faxed Tuesday night to the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department, Horton said.

"He didn't know street names, but he was well aware of landmarks," Horton said. Evans visited Florida frequently and was familiar with the Lake Worth area, the investigator said.

Authorities in Florida commissioned a helicopter Wednesday to take aerial photos of the location depicted on Evans' map. The photos will be shown to Evans so he can better pinpoint the grave, Byrne said.

Horton said Evans told him he killed the 30-year-old Falco in Troy in July 1985 and drove the body, secured in Evans' car trunk, to Florida where Evans buried it. It was unclear Wednesday whether prosecutors in Rensselaer County or Palm Beach County, Fla., would handle the case.

In the last month, Evans has led investigators to the remains of two of his victims -- the dismembered remains in Brunswick of Timothy Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs, and the grave in Troy of Damien Cuomo, 28, of Troy. Rysedorph disappeared Oct. 4. He and Evans were seen together in Colonie the night before Rysedorph disappeared. Both victims were shot several times in the head.

Cuomo disappeared Dec. 27, 1989. Three months earlier, on Sept. 8, 1989, Cuomo had accompanied Evans to the city of Watertown where in the middle of the night they broke into the Square Lion Coins & Jewelry to burglarize it, Horton said.

The owner, Douglas J. Berry, 63, who was sleeping in the shop, awoke, officials said. Evans shot him to death with a 22-caliber handgun as Cuomo watched, Horton said. Evans said he knew the owner frequently slept in the store, the investigator said.

On Oct. 17, 1991, Evans, acting alone, shot and killed Gregory Jouben, 36, owner of Greg's Coin Shop on Main Street in Little Falls, police said.

State Police Investigator Stanley Weidman of Troop D, Oneida County, worked on the case. He said Jouben was last seen about 5 p.m. on the street outside his business. His body was found in the store at 8 p.m.

Evans was waiting for Jouben, with whom he had done business previously, to return from the bank and reopen the store, Horton said. Jouben was shot in the head while sitting at his desk examining a piece of jewelry Evans had given him, Horton said. Evans then robbed the store, police said.

Evans had details and a layout of the stores -- both dealt with precious metals, jewelry and coins -- that only the person responsible for the murders would know, Byrne said.

Watertown detectives and State Police investigators from Troop D, the two agencies that investigated the separate cases, traveled to Loudonville on Tuesday to be on hand as Evans was interviewed for hours, Byrne said.

Evans wanted to eliminate any witnesses to those two crimes, Horton said. He killed his friends because ``they may be called upon to testify against him," the investigator said.

In detailing his slayings, Evans has ``been cooperative throughout," Horton said. ``He was not bragging. I would call him remorseful."

State Police are searching for two .22-caliber handguns allegedly used by Evans -- one that he apparently dropped in the Hudson River near Troy and the other he buried on land.

Byrne displayed at the news conference a \$6,000 antique gold and sapphire bracelet that was found on Evans when he was arrested.

The bracelet was traced to a burglary at the Jennifer House Commons at Great Barrington, Mass., in 1977. Evans admitted burglarizing two barns at Jennifer House which housed crafts, art and antiques stores and then torching them to cover the burglaries, police said.

TROOPER SAYS EVANS FEARS BEING LABELED AS A MONSTER

Suspect wants to be regarded as a career criminal, investigator says

MIKE HUREWITZ Staff writer

Gary Evans, suspected of killing at least five people, is worried about his image.

``He basically said to me, `I don't want to come across as a monster,' " said State Police Senior Investigator James Horton. ``He's familiar with the (mass murderer) Ted Bundys of the world. He's well-read. He wants to come across as a career criminal and this is part of his job."

Crime experts say the killings Evans describes don't fit the profile of the typical serial killer. By contrast, they seem to be acts of a ruthless criminal who feels little remorse.

``This is part of his burglary business," Horton said. ``And to facilitate his burglaries and in order not to get arrested, he felt he needed to kill this or that person."

Evans has not been charged with murder. He is in jail on a probation violation and other charges. But in lengthy conversations with Horton, Evans has led police to two bodies and admitted to three other killings, police said. Evans is described by police as an antiques thief who killed during robberies or when he needed to eliminate an associate.

On Thursday, police said they unearthed two handguns in Albany Rural Cemetery that were used in connection with killings by Evans.

Evans is described as intelligent and as having kept the book ``Madness & the Macabre" along with a videotape collection including ``The Mafia's Greatest Hits" -- suggesting a fascination with the criminal mind.

Evans talks about killing as something occasionally necessary to maintain his chosen life as a career criminal, Horton said.

``I don't think he really finds it distasteful," Horton said. ``He finds it a necessary evil. He's somewhat remorseful, but not overly, because he continued killing."

Such a pattern, said Horton, is consistent with the label of ``multiple killer" not ``serial killer."

``I think a serial killer does it more for the thrill of killing, and they have deep-rooted problems that are other than crime-related," said Horton.

Forensic psychologist Professor N.G. Berrill said, ``With the real serial killers, if you will, there really is a type they are going after, and the killing is fulfilling a certain need.

``The serial killers have a lust for the kill, a desire for a certain kind of victim," continued Berrill, who is on the faculty of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City. ``It often fulfills their sexual need. That seems to be very different from this guy, who is just a bad guy."

He added that serial killing is rare.

Meanwhile, authorities are continuing their effort to link Evans' travels elsewhere to unsolved cases matching his criminal pattern, most notably killings associated with the theft of antiques and rare coins, a

specialty of his. Police said Evans has traveled extensively, and the search might eventually take them to all 50 states.

POLICE SEEK LINKS TO UNSOLVED CRIMES

Investigators turn to suspect's travels for new leads in old cases

MIKE HUREWITZ Staff writer

The labyrinth of Gary Evans' criminal career is forcing police down multiple paths as they sift through leads that might link his nationwide wanderings to even more unsolved killings.

So far, police say, Evans has led investigators to bodies of two former associates killed in the Capital Region, mentioned a third killed here and transported to Florida, and admitted killing a jeweler and coin dealer in Watertown and Little Falls. All the cases were linked to his career as a burglar specializing in antiques and coins.

Police say they now will examine unsolved cases from around the country -- as well as a death ruled a suicide in Troy in the late 1980s -- after notifying authorities nationwide of Evans' criminal pattern.

Most of the time, though, such efforts prove fruitless, cautioned State Police Maj. Bart Johnson, commander of Troop G in Loudonville.

One of the more byzantine cases police are looking at is a local one.

John Livolsi of Troy, who had a feud with Evans and once secured an order of protection to keep him away, said in a recent interview that Evans talked about a killing in Troy.

``They also found a guy taped to the tree," Livolsi said. ``Gary was laughing and saying he taped him to a tree and let him freeze to death."

Livolsi, a newspaper production worker, said Evans said the killing occurred around 1986 and that the victim was wrapped with duct tape and handcuffed.

That resembles a case dating to Dec. 19, 1988, when surveyors in woods behind Vanderhyden Estates off Spring Avenue in Troy found the frozen body of Royal J. Niles III, 23, of Waterford.

Duct tape had been wound around Niles' face from at least the bridge of his nose to his mouth. His arms were handcuffed around a tree in front of him, according to news reports at the time. Authorities said no weapons were found at the scene.

Troy police listed the case as a suicide.

State Police Investigator Chuck Sullivan said Friday that authorities are taking another look at the Niles case in light of recent revelations by Evans in five other slayings. Sullivan emphasized there is nothing currently linking Evans to Niles' death.

At the time his body was found, Troy police said they were investigating reports of prior suicide attempts by Niles.

Troy Sgt. Patrick Rosney, who was at Niles' autopsy, on Friday easily recalled highlights of the case -- not only the duct tape but a box that had contained the handcuffs lying near the body.

``It was a little strange, but it was ruled a suicide," Rosney said.

Troy Sgt. John Waters, one of the police detectives who investigated the case, said Friday: ``I believe we

had a note and everything. The guy reached around a tree and handcuffed himself."

But Janet Platt of Stillwater, Niles' mother, said, ``They never told me about a note being found. They said they found a receipt for the duct tape in his coat pocket. They never told me about a note."

Platt said her only son had a drug habit and had been in a motorcycle accident in California in which he suffered severe head injuries.

After his body was found, his cousins in Cohoes told her, as she recalled it, that, ``Roy all the time was talking about suicide and how to do it. A quick way to do it without second thoughts, because he was having head problems."

Niles grew up in South Troy where Evans and his associates lived.

Evans, according to his girlfriend Joanne Donovan, is masterful at deception. She said he went to great lengths to make it appear that one of his victims, Damien Cuomo, was alive and had simply fled the area. But Evans recently led police to Cuomo's body.

Platt said she never heard of Evans or anyone linked to his loosely knit burglary ring. She long ago came to accept that her son took his own life. She said it almost doesn't matter to her what happened now.

``I can't bring him back," she said.

Sgt. Rosney said he was not surprised to hear questions were being raised about whether Evans was involved in Niles' death. ``Every somewhat strange-looking death is probably going to be looked at." Tim O'Brien contributed to this story.

OFFICIALS IN NO RUSH TO FILE MURDER CHARGES

Legal experts say DA is wise to wait as long as suspect is talking

CAROL DeMARE Staff writer

Prosecutors have not charged Gary Evans with murder even though he has admitted to five slayings because police want him to keep talking to them and they are still waiting on crucial pieces of evidence, attorneys and legal officials said Friday.

It's good practice for a district attorney to hold off as long as a suspect is talking, several prosecutors said. And, Evans is not about to be freed from custody, they added.

Police can question a suspect after murder charges are leveled, but it becomes more complicated, particularly if there are multiple jurisdictions, as in this case.

Authorities say Evans, 43, a Troy native and antiques thief with a lengthy record, has confessed to the murders of three local men who were childhood friends and criminal associates and to the slayings of two secondhand jewelry store owners in Jefferson and Herkimer counties.

"If someone is incarcerated, and he's not going anywhere, it is prudent to complete your investigation first," said Assistant Albany County District Attorney Paul DerOhannesian, who has prosecuted many homicide cases. "It's important to know the full nature and extent of a defendant's criminal activities, and that's not always easily done overnight, particularly in complex cases."

Since June 19, State Police investigators say Evans has led them to graves in Rensselaer County containing the remains of two victims, Timothy Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs, who was killed last Oct. 4, and Damien Cuomo, 28, of Troy who was killed Dec. 27, 1989.

Evans also confessed to killing Michael Falco, 30, in Troy in July 1985 and driving his corpse to the Lake Worth, Fla., area where he buried the body, police said. Those remains have yet to be located.

This week, police say, Evans signed statements detailing the slayings of store owners Douglas J. Berry, 63, in Watertown in 1989, and Gregory Jouben, 36, in Little Falls in 1991.

An ex-convict who has done four stretches in state and federal prisons, Evans is being held at the Rensselaer County Jail on a federal violation of probation charge and an Albany County indictment charging possession of stolen property.

"Once the investigation is completed, then he will be charged," Rensselaer County District Attorney Ken Bruno said Friday.

"He's doing the right thing," Albany County District Attorney Sol Greenberg agreed.

On Thursday, State Police recovered two 22-caliber handguns buried in the Albany Rural Cemetery in Menands that may have been used in the slayings. They are undergoing ballistics tests and could be additional evidence.

Three times Evans has appeared before a judge and waived his rights against self-incrimination, saying he wanted to talk to State Police Senior Investigator James Horton.

Each time, Assistant Albany County Public Defender Joseph M. McCoy, who represents Evans, advised

him not to talk. On Friday, McCoy said he wasn't surprised Evans hasn't been indicted.

“He's not going anywhere; he's not getting out ever,” McCoy said. “What would be the hurry to rush into an indictment without them dotting their i's and crossing their t's, which is what they probably are attempting to do.”

Rensselaer County prosecutors “may have some insight in that if he's indicted on a capital case, he may stop talking,” McCoy added. If charged with capital murder, the Capital Defenders Office steps in, and those defense attorneys could “gag him,” McCoy said.

Legal experts said it's impossible to stop a suspect who wants to talk, but judges are more sensitive about a defendant's rights in a death penalty case.

It's particularly difficult to convince a judge to prevent Evans from talking to investigators because he has no history of mental disease and is “one of the more intelligent defendants that I've represented,” McCoy said.

Schenectady County District Attorney Robert M. Carney agreed. “It makes sense to me” not to charge him yet.

In addition to the death penalty issue, a murder charge would raise jurisdictional issues that would make questioning difficult.

If a defendant is charged, say, in “five jurisdictions and he wants to talk, you might have to bring him before judges in five jurisdictions or risk a (defense) lawyer in some other jurisdiction saying you impaired his client's rights in this jurisdiction,” Carney said.

Schenectady County has a case where a murder suspect was arrested in New York City on weapons charges. Schenectady authorities sent a bullet down and it was linked to the gun taken from him, Carney said.

In Schenectady, after he waived his right to counsel, the suspect acknowledged being with the killer at the time of the murder, thus incriminating himself, Carney said. He was subsequently convicted of murder. The conviction was upheld by the Appellate Division of state Supreme Court, but the Court of Appeals, the state's highest court, sent it back to County Court for a judge to review.

The Court of Appeals raised the issue as to whether the Schenectady detective impermissibly intertwined the New York City gun charges and the Schenectady murder case while talking to the suspect, Carney said. The suspect had a New York City lawyer on the gun charge and he couldn't waive that right to counsel without the lawyer present, the DA said.

“This is the kind of thing prosecutors have to worry about, and it is relevant in the Evans inquiry,” Carney said.

EVANS DUE IN COURT TO ANSWER PROBATION CHARGES

Meanwhile, authorities search in Florida for the remains of another of his 5 alleged victims and say they'll ask him about 3 other deaths

SYLVIA WOOD Staff writer

Gary Evans, suspected of killing at least five people during a spree of antiques and jewelry thefts, is scheduled to appear today in U.S. District Court in Albany on charges he violated his federal probation when he skipped town last year.

Meanwhile, on Monday, a team of State Police investigators was in the Lake Worth area of Florida in hopes of locating the remains of Michael Falco of Troy, one of Evans' five alleged victims, who disappeared in July 1985.

``As we speak, they're looking," said Senior Investigator James Horton. ``We hope to find Falco shortly."

Evans, 43, has not yet been charged with any of the slayings. Today's court appearance stems from a 1995 guilty plea to charges of stealing a rare book of Audubon lithographs from a library in Woodstock, Vt.

Following his June 1996 release from prison, he allegedly violated the terms of his probation by leaving the area late last year without permission. He was apprehended some six months later, on May 27, in St. Johnsbury, Vt.

Since then, Evans has been the focus of an ongoing police investigation into his alleged connection to the murders of at least five people over the last 15 years.

While Evans is expected to answer to the charges of violating his probation in today's court appearance, State Police are gathering evidence to link him to those murder cases.

``We're moving slowly and trying to be as thorough as we can," Horton said.

Despite Evans' willingness to divulge details of his criminal career, police have faced logistical hurdles in trying to find forensic evidence dating back more than a decade.

Last month, Evans led police to the makeshift graves of two former associates and childhood friends: Timothy Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs, who disappeared Oct. 4, 1997, and Damien Cuomo, 28, of Troy, who disappeared Dec. 27, 1989.

On Sunday, a team of state police headed to Florida after spending the past week trying to figure out the specific location of Falco's remains. Evans allegedly was able to aid the police with the help of maps, and aerial and ground photographs. Police wanted to avoid having to transport Evans to Florida for logistical reasons, Horton said.

``We would hope the information he gave us was legitimate," Horton said. ``He picked out locations on the photographs."

Last week, Evans led State Police to Albany Rural Cemetery, where investigators dug up two handguns and a bag of ammunition they believe could be linked to the killings.

The guns are still at the State Police laboratory, where Horton said they are undergoing ballistic

comparisons to all open homicides in the state.

The weapons also will be compared with shell casings recovered from Little Falls and Watertown, where Evans allegedly implicated himself in the murders of a jeweler and a coin dealer.

The number of homicides linked to Evans could increase. On Monday, Horton declined specific comment but said he planned to talk with Evans about the slaying of an elderly couple near Fayetteville, N.C., and the death of Royal J. Niles III of Waterford.

Niles' frozen body was found by surveyors behind Vanderheyden Estates of Spring Avenue in Troy on Dec. 19, 1988. Troy police listed the case as a suicide.

``It's a very long, tedious process," Horton said about gathering evidence. ``He's not blurting out everything at once."

Police also are busy trying to sort through numerous leads from across the country in response to a national bulletin detailing Evans' criminal pattern. ``Some are very legitimate calls," Horton said.

Meanwhile, at today's court appearance, Evans could face a maximum of two years in jail, if he's found guilty of violating his probation, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office. Evans is being held in the Rensselaer County jail.

EVANS PINPOINTS 3RD BODY FOR COPS

Authorities recover remains believed to be those of Michael Falco in Florida after showing the murder suspect aerial photos of the area

MIKE HUREWITZ and EDWARD FITZPATRICK Staff writers

Police Tuesday dug up a skeleton in a sleeping bag outside of Lake Worth, Fla., that is believed to be the remains of Michael Falco, one of five men allegedly slain by Troy native Gary Evans.

Evans pinpointed the shallow grave from his high-security isolation cell in the Rensselaer County Jail, picking out a heavily wooded area bordering a ravine from aerial photographs taken by police, then drawing police a map.

He was able to give police specific directions, including landmarks such as roadways, a nearby shopping plaza and a power station.

Police say they found clothes and personal effects in the sleeping bag, State Police Lt. William S. Sprague said.

Evans has said he shot Falco in the head in July 1985 in Troy, putting the body in his friend's car and driving to Florida, which he visited frequently to pawn stolen antiques and jewelry.

Police say Falco, 30, was an associate in the loosely knit gang of thieves Evans recruited from among his boyhood friends in South Troy.

Evans has previously led police to the bodies of Timothy Rysedorph and Damien Cuomo. He has also admitted killing a coin specialist and jewelry dealer during robberies in Little Falls and Watertown.

Falco's older brother, Salvatore Falco, said he is saddened by the discovery of his brother's body, but it comes as no surprise.

``It's a confirmation of what we feared," he said. ``It just takes away that slight hope that he was living in Cancun drinking pina coladas -- you always have that glimmer."

Michael Falco's sister, Mary Deeb, said the discovery provides a bit of closure for the family. ``After 13 years, it hurts -- I miss him," she said, fighting back tears. ``I never stopped looking for him, I never stopped loving him and I'm not going to stop."

Deeb said the news should provide some peace for Michael Falco's former girlfriend, Elaine Wagner, and the two children they had together -- Keli, now 18, and Justin, 16, who all now live in Sunrise, Fla., in the center of the state.

Deeb worries that Keli, who was 5 when her father disappeared, may have thought she did something wrong and caused him to leave. ``Now Keli will know she didn't do anything," Deeb said. ``Daddy didn't come back because he couldn't come back."

In Albany Tuesday, Evans appeared in U.S. District Court to face charges that he had violated the terms of his release from federal prison on charges of stealing a rare book from a Vermont museum.

He has not been charged with murder, though police say he has confessed to the five killings.

In a quiet voice that was all but inaudible in the courtroom, Evans admitted to violating five provisions of his supervision, including failing to report to his probation officer on Oct. 15, 20 and 29 of last year, leaving the Capital Region and being charged with possession of stolen property in Albany and Putnam counties. He wore an enigmatic smile, but glowered at the same time.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Storch told the court that Evans could be returned to federal custody for up to two years for the violations.

Chief Judge Thomas J. McAvoy adjourned sentencing until Aug. 14, ordering a probation report and saying he needed to understand more about Evans' activities before issuing his ruling.

Legal experts say authorities are reluctant to transfer Evans to a federal facility, where he would be less accessible to State Police Senior Investigator James Horton, to whom he has made the bulk of his admissions. Horton has known Evans for years, both as a defendant and an informant for State Police.

Attorney Mike Desautels, representing Evans on the probation charges, said after the proceedings that his client has been cooperative with him but suggested that Evans admitted violating the terms of probation against his lawyer's advice.

Assistant Albany County Public Defender Joseph A. McCoy has also said that Evans has been speaking to police against his counsel.

Asked how Evans appeared to be holding up, Desautels said, ``as well as anybody could be doing in what's called the hole -- in protective custody 24 hours a day."

Desautels said Evans only gets to leave the cell for one hour a day.

Evans was transported to and from court Tuesday under heavy guard, with U.S. marshals carrying semi-automatic assault rifles.

Inside the court, his legs were chained but his hands were temporarily unshackled as he appeared before the judge.

Evans once escaped from the old Rensselaer County Jail and was recently transferred from the Albany County jail when the sheriff deemed him a security risk.

GARY EVANS: IN HIS OWN WORDS

Troy Man linked to 5 killings recounts his ties to the victims and to the officer who pursued him

CAROL DeMARE and MIKE HUREWITZ Staff writers

RENSSELAER COUNTY JAIL -- Gary Charles Evans said Monday he decided to reject his lawyer's advice and confess to killing five men out of concern for the children of some of his victims.

After State Police Senior Investigator James Horton told Evans that the 9-year-old son of one of his alleged victims may never know what happened to his father, it triggered something in Evans.

"I'm a hard-core criminal and here he made me feel the empathy for an innocent kid who needed to know the truth," Evans said in a quavering voice.

"It was the only button he could push on me. You have to protect kids . . . at all costs," said Evans, speaking from behind a glass partition in a high-security visitation room at the jail in Troy.

Evans had started talking to Horton, and what eventually emerged was a picture of one of the Capital Region's most notorious criminals: a man suspected of five killings over a period of 13 years when he led a loose group of jewelry and antiques thieves. During an exclusive two-hour jailhouse interview, Evans came across as a complex personality. He admits being a career thief and killer but leads an ascetic life, forsaking meat, staying physically fit and taking his profession of stealing antiques seriously.

During the interview, Evans, 43, wore handcuffs and his feet were shackled.

Evans has not been charged with murder. But if he faces the possibility of capital punishment, it is something he said he is prepared for. "If I'm in line for the death penalty, I'll just handle it," he said. "There's nothing else to do. I'll do it one day at a time. I can do time." Evans said he decided to give the Times Union an interview to set the record straight after widespread media coverage since his arrest May 27.

"I wanted to make sure that the truth in these things comes out," he said. "Some stuff was far-fetched."

In fact, a condition of the interview is getting out a message to someone he would identify only as a longtime girlfriend whom he has cared about for 20 years and had lived with at one time on Saratoga Lake. Evans wanted to emphasize that this woman has not been identified in any news accounts.

"I want her to know I was right with her," he said. He said he knows he has ruined the relationship and that she is horrified by what has happened.

He also wanted to rebut stories that he has left bodies throughout the United States, as reported in some news accounts. He specifically denied involvement in any slayings aside from those he already has admitted.

Evans has developed a close relationship with Horton, who has pursued him over the years. Evans decided to tell all two months ago after his capture in Vermont, when Horton "told me to look into myself."

Evans recalled Horton's words: "He knew I was a thief my whole life -- which I have been," Evans said. "When he (Horton) was playing Little League, I was stealing food as a kid just to survive."

Horton told Evans he had become more than a thief.

“He was talking about Rysedorph,” Evans said in a reference to Timothy Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs, who was killed last Oct. 4.

Horton had said he could not prove Evans killed Rysedorph, but “there's a little boy out there that is wondering where his father is, if he was abandoned or not,” Evans recalled as he struggled for composure, his eyes filling with tears.

Evans did not show the same compassion for his victims.

“All these people -- they were all criminals,” Evans said. “They were people I worked with. That seems kind of cold, but it's the truth. It was money for all of us.”

Police said three of his victims were involved in burglaries. But police say two shopkeepers who were killed were not involved in any criminal activity. Evans' alleged murder spree began 13 years ago. In the last month, Evans has led police to the remains of three victims and has provided written confessions about two others. Michael Falco, 30, was shot to death in Troy in July 1985 and his body buried in Palm Beach County, Fla. Damien Cuomo, 28, was killed in December 1989 in Troy, where he was buried. Rysedorph's body was dismembered and buried in a makeshift grave in Brunswick.

The other two victims were businessmen whose murders went unsolved until this month, when Evans detailed the slayings in written statements. Douglas J. Berry, 63, the owner of a secondhand shop in Watertown, was shot to death as he slept in his store on Sept. 8, 1989. Evans and Cuomo entered the store to burglarize it, police said.

Gregory Jouben, 36, owner of a shop in Little Falls, was killed in his store on Oct. 17, 1991, as he studied a piece of jewelry Evans wanted to sell.

“None of these people were innocent,” Evans said. “They all bought stolen property from me knowingly.” Police say they have no evidence that the shop owners were involved in any criminal activity.

State Police Captain John Wood of Oneida County, who investigated the Little Falls homicide from the beginning, said that when someone who deals in secondhand jewelry is murdered the police look into his background.

“At the time of Mr. Jouben's murder, we had no documented evidence that (he) was involved in stolen property,” Wood said. He added that to the best of his knowledge, Jouben had no criminal record. It's always possible that those in the secondhand business could unknowingly buy stolen goods, Wood said.

In Watertown, Detective Sgt. Frank Derrigo said it is common for those in the antiques business to sometimes find themselves with stolen property. However, he never knew Berry to knowingly traffic in such items.

“There were a lot of times when questionable items were brought in there that the Berrys would contact us to see if anything fitting that description had been reported stolen to our department,” Derrigo said.

Evans said he, Rysedorph, Cuomo and Falco grew up together in South Troy but were not childhood friends.

“We were just various thieves that got together over different years,” he said.

“These people, they had a lot of enemies, and I was counting on that,” so the trail from the killings would not lead to him, Evans said. “They were not altar boys by any means.”

He said he did not kill his associates to avoid splitting the loot.

“It wasn't a greedy thing,” he said. He declined to give the reasons, but said mysteriously, “I know why everything happened.”

Is he remorseful? “For the things that happened, yeah,” Evans responded, adding quickly: “I feel worse for the kids.”

“I never wanted to . . . ,” his voice faltered. “I wish I had stayed just a thief. I never wanted all this.”

Asked what could have transformed him from a thief to a killer, he answered bluntly, “I think it was all the time I spent in jail, that was most of it.”

A career criminal with a rap sheet dating to the mid-1970s, Evans did his first stretch in the maximum security Clinton Correctional Facility, known as Dannemora.

He spoke of the pride he took in his work as an antiques thief.

He said he bought alarm systems and “learned how to defeat them.” He studied criminal investigation techniques from police textbooks.

He said he left false clues and did things to confuse authorities and “anybody trailing me. I'd bring stolen property all the way to Denver or Canada.”

He took a college course in art appreciation while at Clinton Correctional Facility. He liked antiques but rarely kept them. He did, however, carry on his belt a gold, porcelain and sapphire bracelet valued at \$6,000. He smiled and said it would be traveling money should he need it.

The police found the bracelet on him when he was arrested in St. Johnsbury, Vt., and displayed it at a recent news conference.

His profits varied from year to year. In 1997 he and a partner grossed about \$20,000 in half a year, he said, calling it a bad year. He fled the area shortly after the murder of Rysedorph last October. He was captured May 27 in Vermont. Evans said the thrill “was part of it.” He burglarized residences only three or four times in his younger years, but breaking into people's homes did not appeal to him. He described himself as a commercial burglar.

Evans left home when he was about 14 and lived on the street.

“As hard as that was, sleeping in abandoned buildings and junk yards, as hard as it was, even in the winter, it was better than the home life that I left.”

Of his late parents, Leroy and Flora, he said, “they weren't nice people; they were unfit people.” He declined to elaborate. His only sibling is a sister who lives in Florida.

“I was busy stealing, figuring out where I was going to be that day or night . . . to play games,” Evans said. At times, South Troy neighbors took him in and fed him, he said.

His childhood petty thefts progressed into major crimes. By the mid-1980s he had come to Horton's attention. Horton arrested Evans for ripping off an antiques jewelry business in East Greenbush. The two began a cop-and-robber relationship that continues. Horton heads the Major Crimes Unit at Troop G in Loudonville.

"I think if they had put anyone else on my case, I would be free now," Evans said. "He's been bloodhounding me for years, trying to get any scrap of evidence to nail me on -- anything. I've been like this, looking over my shoulder for years."

In an attempt to elude Horton and others, he moved to three or four apartments a year and lived in motels.

"He got me paranoid," Evans said. He suspected Horton planted listening devices in his car and described one occasion when he felt Horton was driving by a house he was staying in with his girlfriend at Saratoga Lake. He ended up spending five hours in the rain on the roof with his night-vision goggles, he said.

Yet, at various times he cooperated with authorities and worked as an informant for federal drug agents and for Horton.

But when he was finally captured in Vermont, he knew "they got me."

He was in the center of the city of St. Johnsbury when suddenly cops jumped out of cars, guns drawn and surrounded him.

"It was a good ambush," he said.

He faced two charges at that time: possession of stolen property in Albany County and a violation of his federal probation. "I knew what I'm looking at," Evans said. "I'm looking at 25 to life in Albany County for stealing." He knew he faced more trouble for alleged crimes in Putnam County and Massachusetts, where he allegedly burglarized and torched antiques barns at the Jennifer House Commons in Great Barrington.

"I knew I wasn't going to be seeing the street again."

Evans, who works out in prison, has a weightlifter's build: 180 pounds of muscle on a 5-foot-6-inch frame.

He doesn't eat meat, poultry or fish and hasn't in nearly 30 years. His diet consists of cereals, bread, fruit and juices.

He said he's opposed to the killing of animals. "They're innocent."

He has never smoked, drunk alcohol or taken drugs, he said. "They're all weaknesses."

Evans said he is not suicidal and not worried about other inmates who might attack him as a snitch.

"I don't have any worries anyplace I go," he said calmly.

Evans said he is resigned to a bleak future.

"It's even hard for me to understand, I'm all right," he said. "I'm at peace with myself. . . . I'll accept

whatever happens."

FROM ANGRY BOY TO MURDER SUSPECT

Gary Evans started with bike thefts, and cops say he grew up to be a multiple killer

MIKE HUREWITZ and CAROL DeMARE Staff writers

He was a product of the hardscrabble neighborhood of South Troy, a blue-collar lunch-pail world where the sky glowed red when the ironworks along the river poured their molten metal.

For many it forged tight-knit family bonds and an enduring sense of community with the motto "South Troy Against the World."

"In the summertime it was dirty," said George W. Goodwin, 79, who in the 1960s was general manager of the Ludlow Valve Corp. located at the foot of Adams Street. "It was smoky. But in those days when they saw the smoke, they knew they had a job."

But young Gary Charles Evans, now one of the Capital Region's most notorious criminals, grew up as the glow dimmed, factories closed and the once-tight communities started to unravel.

Today Evans sits in an isolation cell, having admitted to police that he killed five men -- three alleged partners in crime and two antiques shop owners -- over a period of 12 years.

Evans was a thief who specialized in antiques and allegedly kept his murderous side secret despite frequent contact with police, both as an informant and as a convict. He was finally nabbed in late May after a nationwide manhunt launched because police suspected him of at least one murder. In custody, Evans started talking. He led police to three bodies, told authorities of two other killings and said he committed the murders for "business" reasons.

From the beginning, Evans was identified as a troublemaker -- and a loner. In school he was always getting into trouble. At home his father was recalled as a tyrant, who on occasion would lock his son in the house while his mother retreated further into drink.

Evans was born on Oct. 7, 1954, to Leroy William Evans, a World War II veteran who returned to Troy and got a factory job, and Flora M. Evans, a divorcee who worked at nearby Tiny Togs, a now-defunct clothing manufacturer.

Leroy Evans often would arrive home exhausted and blistered from his life near the furnaces, which turned out fire hydrants that were distributed throughout the globe. He worked at the former Ludlow Valve.

In a recent jailhouse interview with the Times Union, Gary Evans, 43, appeared uncomfortable when asked about his childhood, saying only that his parents were "unfit" and "not nice people."

Neighbors could never quite figure the marriage. Flora was an attractive woman with long blond hair and an artistic streak. A family member said she once had a display at the Greenwich Village outdoor art show. LeRoy was short, stocky and dour.

At some point they both started drinking -- heavily, according to neighbors and people who knew Evans.

His mother early on sought an escape beyond her husband's reach -- suicide. She tried several times, according to sources who asked not to be identified.

Someone close to the family recalled the father being in a car accident and suffering a head injury that left him disabled and eligible to receive government financial assistance.

The family was often strapped for money and would take advantage of surplus food distributed from a nearby warehouse.

Gema Franco, who lived on the second floor in the three-family house above the Evans' at 160 First St., said she would see LeRoy on the rear balcony drinking beer and listening to the radio.

Helen Conroy, who lived next door, recalled, "He drank -- the father was very, very abusive to all of them I guess."

"However, he managed them or whatever he did," she added, "you never heard them -- the kids . . . They seemed terrified of him."

Flora loved classical music and had old Caruso records. A source close to the family said the father got drunk once and smashed the phonograph to pieces.

LeRoy Evans kept his children on a tight leash, often locking them in their rooms. When they were allowed to play after school they were restricted to the one block on First Street between Washington and Adams streets.

When two neighbors realized Gary had stolen bikes from their families, they went to his father to complain -- and within hours got the bikes back.

An acquaintance recalls going to his house one day and being ushered by Gary directly into his room, past his silent father.

"He had posters up there, a black light. We listened to Black Sabbath. There was like a picture of the devil on one side of the room," the acquaintance said, adding that it was the decor of youthful rebellion, not of devil worship.

Not too many people visited his room, because Evans was almost universally described as a loner.

When the young Gary, a slight child, felt angry or frustrated he would strike back with rocks or fists, said Marvin Yowe, a principal and teacher at the former School 10 on Adams Street where Evans was a student.

"Very bad, quick temper," Yowe said.

When Evans was scolded at school, and it was often, he would return "at nighttime or on the weekend and throw stones and break windows in retaliation," said Yowe, who started as a teacher at the school in 1959 and retired in 1994 as principal of Troy's School 18.

Yowe described Evans as a "poor candidate for learning. Whatever problems he had, he was never serious about school. He had other things on his mind."

"It was not because he didn't have the ability," Yowe said. "It was because he didn't have the concentration. He was always distracted."

He recalled Evans as a clean-cut, neatly dressed, nice-looking little boy. "He was never ragged, never looked unkempt," said.

But he had a bad temper and when confronted about something ``he'd either fabricate or he'd get angry."

The boy was a quick talker, who ``could think fast on his feet," which was unusual for a child. `He had a ready answer for everything," Yowe said.

Evans got even with classmates who squealed on him by beating them up, Yowe said. He retaliated against the school by breaking the windows, Yowe said.

The former principal remembered several occasions in which Evans' fifth-grade teacher would remark, ``What a day I had with Gary Evans."

As a child he sought attention as an oddball and daredevil in a way that became part of neighborhood folklore.

One man who knew him as a youngster recalled he gained a reputation for jumping off bridges into the canal that channels the Poesten Kill into the Hudson River. As a schoolboy he would show off by climbing up the side of his school. But once up there he would throw rocks at classmates who were playing games like baseball in the schoolyard below.

Evans' parents divorced around 1968. She died in 1983 in Pottersville, Warren County, at the age of 51. Several sources close to the family said she was drunk and was found frozen to death in a snowbank. His father died at age 55 in June 1977 at the VA Hospital in Albany. Franco said no one attended his funeral.

In his adult years Gary Evans started leading an ascetic life and was proud of his ability to live off the land. When captured in St. Johnsbury, Vt., on May 27, his home was a tent.

One acquaintance talked about Evans' obsession with fitness and strength. ``He always kept his legs in excellent condition and his arms," the man said. ``He'd kick a ball back and forth -- one side to the other to keep himself agile and gain strength."

He said they stole things like eight-track stereos and car cassettes, mostly for the money. Once, he said, Evans needed parts for a van he owned. He stole a similar van, took the parts he needed, and buried the vehicle for future use, the man recalled.

He said Evans always knew where to fence stolen goods. People would come to him with ``hot" items and he would get rid of them.

And he had a reputation for always being able to outsmart pursuing police.

``His nickname was Owl," the man said. ``The cops would be looking for him and he'd be sitting in a tree watching them."

The one person it appeared he let into his life was Timothy Rysedorph, who lived above a nearby bar at the corner of Adams and Second streets. Neighborhood kids said that was largely because of Rysedorph's good nature. Rysedorph, one of nine children, was described as the guy everybody liked and who liked everybody.

Shortly after Rysedorph's family moved out and left Tim in the apartment, Gary moved in. Michael Falco, who lived on Second Street, hung out with them and the nucleus for Evans' life of crime was already in place. Falco and Rysedorph became associates in his casual gang of antiques thieves. They are among the people Evans allegedly killed.

Evans' half-sister Roberta led a markedly different life from her brother. She got a college education and raised a family. Conroy recalled her as a beautiful, outgoing child. But Gary seemed beaten down.

“Little Gary, I don't think knew how to project to people,” Conroy said. “He didn't have a personality that was joyful or anything like that.” It struck her as odd that she doesn't remember seeing him cry.

FACTS:THE LIFE OF GARY C. EVANS 1949: Half-sister, Roberta, born to Flora in her first marriage. 1951: Now divorced, Flora marries LeRoy Evans. Oct. 7, 1954: Gary Charles Evans born. He grows up at 160 First St., Troy 1968: Flora divorces LeRoy and moves to Cohoes with Gary. Gary already getting into trouble: stealing roadblock signs; bicycles Jan. 13, 1977: Gary Evans sentenced to four years in state prison after conviction in Essex County for burglary. Sent to Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora. June 14, 1977: Father LeRoy W. Evans, 55, dies at the VA Medical Center in Albany. June 12, 1980: Gary Evans escapes briefly from the old Rensselaer County Jail, where he was held on charges of possession of stolen property and parole violation. Sept. 11, 1980: Enters state prison on a sentence of 2 to 4 years for possession of stolen property and escape. 12-29-82: Paroled from Attica Correctional Facility. 2-5-83: Mother Flora M. Flanders, 51, dies in Pottersville, Warren County. February 1985: Evans allegedly kills Michael Falco in Troy and drives body to Lake Worth, Fla. July 1985: Falco reported missing. July 3, 1985: Evans begins a sentence of 2 to 4 years for robbery and attempted burglary in Rensselaer County. Served time at Clinton and Sing Sing prisons. March 1, 1988: Evans paroled from Clinton Correctional Facility. Sept. 8, 1989: Evans and Damien Cuomo allegedly enter secondhand shop of Douglas J. Berry, 63, of Watertown. Berry shot to death. Dec. 27, 1989: Evans allegedly kills Cuomo with three bullets to the head while he has handcuffed. He died on a hill near his Troy apartment complex. Oct. 17, 1991: Gregory Jouben, 36, owner of shop in Little Falls, shot to death as he studies a piece of jewelry Evans wanted to sell. September 1993: Evans steals \$85,000 in jewelry, coins and antique toys from the Timber Rail Village Antiques mall in Quechee, Vt. March 20, 1994: Removes hinge bolts holding iron bars to window of Norman Williams Library in Woodstock, Vt., and steals leather-bound book of John James Audubon lithographs titled “The Birds of America.” June 9, 1995: Sentenced to 27 months in federal prison for interstate transportation of stolen property related to the Audubon book theft. June 6, 1996: Released from federal prison in Burlington, Vt., with credit for time served in local jail prior to his federal sentencing. Begins three years of probation. January 1997: Steals cuff links from a Great Barrington, Mass., antiques shop Oct. 4, 1997: Timothy W. Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs last seen alive with Evans. Evans allegedly shot him several times in the back of the head. November 1997: State Police get warrant linking Evans to two sets of 14-karat gold cuff links valued at \$1,500 that were stolen from Massachusetts antiques store and sold to Albany antiques shop. Fall 1997 through spring 1998: Evans on lam; travels to Alaska, California and Oregon, according to State Police. May 27, 1998: Evans picked up around noon in St. Johnsbury, Vt., on federal warrant. June 8, 1998: Enters Albany County jail as federal prisoner and begins conversations with police that lead to confessions. June 9, 1998: Gary Evans leads police to badly decomposed and dismembered body of Rysedorph uncovered in town of Brunswick. June 23, 1998: State Police unearth remains of Damien Cuomo, 28, in a wooded area in Troy, behind the Campbell Avenue firehouse, near an apartment complex where Cuomo was living. June 29, 1998: Federal authorities transfer Evans from Albany County jail to Rensselaer County Jail because authorities fear he is plotting an escape. July 8, 1998: State Police announce Evans has signed written confession admitting to the long-unsolved homicides of the two secondhand jewelry store owners. July 14, 1998: Police find remains of Michael Falco in Lake Worth, Fla.

EVANS CASE GOES TO PANEL TODAY

-- Staff report

Troy A Rensselaer County grand jury is expected to begin hearing testimony today in the case of multiple-murder suspect Gary C. Evans, sources said.

Over the last two months, Evans, 43, told police he had killed five men over the last 12 years. He has led police to the remains of three victims and admitted two other homicides.

The first three slayings that Evans, a convicted burglar and antiques thief, told State Police Senior Investigator James Horton about were of criminal associates in Rensselaer County.

Consequently, District Attorney Ken Bruno is taking the lead in the prosecution of Evans, who is being held without bail at the Rensselaer County Jail in Troy.

It could not be determined if Bruno is contemplating a capital murder charge. The only homicide that could qualify for capital punishment is the last one that occurred on Oct. 4 involving Timothy Rysedorph, 39.

GRAND JURY GETS EVANS CASE

Troy DA is believed to have set the stage for making it a capital case

CAROL DeMARE and MIKE HUREWITZ Staff writers

Confessed murderer Gary C. Evans killed Timothy W. Rysedorph last year because Rysedorph knew that Evans had gunned down a mutual friend, sources said.

It is believed that theory of Rysedorph's slaying was presented Wednesday to a Rensselaer County grand jury, making it a capital murder case for which Evans could face the death penalty.

The Oct. 4 murder of Rysedorph was the only one of five killings to which Evans confessed that could be considered for capital punishment. The others had occurred before the death penalty was reinstated in 1995.

One of the elements that could lead to a first-degree murder charge, a precursor to a death penalty prosecution, is evidence that a homicide was committed to silence a witness to a crime.

A witness does not necessarily mean an eyewitness to a crime, but it can be simply a person in a position to testify about the crime, according to legal experts.

Sources said Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs knew that Evans had killed Michael Falco, 30, in Troy in February 1985. Evans allegedly rolled Falco's body into a sleeping bag and transported it to Palm Beach County, Florida, where he buried it in a ravine, police said. Falco's family reported him missing to Troy police in July of that year.

Rysedorph and Evans were involved in stealing and then peddling their loot, mostly antique jewelry, police have said. Evans, 43, a Troy native and antiques thief with a lengthy criminal record, is being held without bail at the Rensselaer County Jail.

All three men grew up in South Troy. As young men, Evans and Rysedorph shared an apartment at the

corner of Adams and Second street. Falco lived nearby on Second Street. Rysedorph was a musician and played drums in several bands.

Falco was connected to one of the bands as a manager and introduced Rysedorph to Dana DeRusso as a possible lead singer. DeRusso later married Rysedorph.

A grand jury met Wednesday morning to hear evidence about three Rensselaer County murders linked to Evans -- those of Rysedorph, Falco and the slaying of associate Damien Cuomo, 28, on Dec. 27, 1989. Evans also signed written statements admitting to the shooting deaths of two secondhand-shop owners -- Douglas Berry, 63, of Watertown, Jefferson County, in September 1989, and Gregory Jouben, 36, of Little Falls, Herkimer County, in October 1991, police said.

Rensselaer County District Attorney Ken Bruno declined to confirm that the grand jury was hearing the Evans case. However, sources said it was the Evans case, and State Police Senior Investigator James Horton was seen entering the district attorney's office, which leads into the grand jury room.

Bruno also would not discuss a possible capital murder case against Evans. There could be developments as early as next week, he said.

On June 23 at a State Police news conference, the district attorney had said he intended to research a capital murder charge based on the theory that Evans killed Rysedorph to silence him.

If, as expected, the indictment includes a first-degree murder count involving the Rysedorph homicide, Bruno has 120 days to decide whether to seek the death penalty and notify the court and Evans, according to the statute.

Even without the death penalty, a charge of first-degree murder has stiffer penalties than second-degree murder. The maximum for first-degree murder is life in prison without parole, as opposed to 25 years to life for second-degree murder.

Evans, arrested May 27 in Vermont, began cooperating with Horton in June. Evans confessed to the murders of the three associates and led authorities to their remains.

Those homicides are expected to be presented to grand juries in the counties in which they occurred, authorities have said.

Evans and Rysedorph were last seen together in Colonie on the evening of Oct. 3, hours before Evans allegedly shot Rysedorph to death. Rysedorph worked at BFI Waste Systems in Colonie and telephoned his wife at 12:40 a.m. on Oct. 4 from a Dunkin' Donuts shop at routes 9 and 155 to say he'd be home soon, investigators said. He was never seen or heard from again. Three days later, his car was found at the Amtrak station in Rensselaer.

Evans said he began confessing after Horton ``hit a chord in me, and he was right. I couldn't have it on me any more." He said Horton told him that Rysedorph's 9-year-old son thought his father abandoned him and that only Evans could make it right by telling the truth.

EVANS FACES MURDER COUNTS

Troy Sealed indictment expected to be opened today against antiques thief who admitted to five killings

CAROL DeMARE Staff writer

Gary C. Evans, an antiques thief who has confessed to five murders, will be arraigned today on murder charges in connection with killing three associates, sources said.

A sealed indictment returned by a Rensselaer County grand jury is scheduled to be opened this morning by Rensselaer County Court Judge Patrick J. McGrath. The grand jury heard evidence last week against the 43-year-old Evans, sources have said.

The indictment could contain a first-degree murder charge for the slaying of Timothy W. Rysedorph last Oct. 4, meaning Evans could face the death penalty.

Sources have told the Times Union that Evans killed Rysedorph because Rysedorph knew that Evans had gunned down a mutual friend, Michael Falco, in 1985.

A suspect can face a capital murder charge if it can be proved he killed to silence or eliminate a witness to a crime. A witness doesn't necessarily mean an eyewitness to a crime but simply a person in a position to testify about the crime, according to legal experts.

Sources said Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs, was aware that Evans killed Falco, 30, in Troy in February 1985. Evans allegedly rolled the corpse into a sleeping bag and transported it to Palm Beach County, Florida, where he buried the body in a ravine, police said. Falco's family reported him missing to Troy police in July of that year.

The Rysedorph murder was the killing over 12 years to which Evans confessed that could be considered for capital punishment. The other four occurred before the death penalty was reinstated in 1995. The first three victims were criminal associates of Evans who allegedly were killed in Rensselaer County. The others were owners of secondhand shops in Jefferson and Herkimer counties.

EVANS PLEADS NOT GUILTY TO 3 MURDERS

Troy Prosecutor weighs whether to seek death penalty against career criminal who led police to bodies of former associates

CAROL DeMARE and MIKE HUREWITZ Staff writers

Gary Charles Evans was charged Wednesday with eight counts of murder in connection with the killing of three associates, including charges that could lead to his execution.

Evans, 43, of South Troy stood expressionless before Rensselaer County Judge Patrick J. McGrath. Randolph F. Treece, who heads the state Capital Defender's Office, entered a not guilty plea on Evans' behalf.

Two months after leading police to the remains of three people he has admitted killing, Evans was finally brought before a judge to face murder charges.

Considered an escape risk who has also had death threats made against him by family members of victims, Evans entered the courthouse amid tight security. A police dog and a shotgun-toting officer were among the cordon of officers who led him up a back staircase to the courtroom.

Sheriff Daniel V. Keating and Undersheriff John Dwyer headed the security detail and flanked the chained and shackled Evans as he entered the courthouse. Col. Robert R. Loveridge, jail superintendent, set up elaborate courthouse security before Evans arrived.

Treece was called into the potential capital punishment case after a grand jury charged Evans last week with two counts of first-degree murder in the shooting death and dismemberment of Timothy W. Rysedorph last Oct. 4.

Rensselaer County District Attorney Kenneth Bruno has 120 days to decide whether to seek the death penalty.

Bruno said he will evaluate the case against Evans, talk with victims' families and consider Evans' lengthy criminal background in determining whether to seek the death penalty.

The judge ordered Evans returned to the Rensselaer County Jail, where he is being held without bail in solitary confinement.

"I just think he should have the chair, you know what I mean?" Marjorie Rysedorph of Troy, Rysedorph's mother, said outside the courtroom.

New York's capital punishment law actually specifies that a death sentence would be carried out by lethal injection.

More than a dozen friends and relatives of Evans' alleged victims attended the arraignment, including Rysedorph's widow, Dana.

Evans, a convicted burglar and antiques thief, is accused of shooting Rysedorph, 39, of Saratoga Springs, in the head in the town of Brunswick, not far from Troy, where they grew up together.

Rysedorph was killed because he was a witness to a crime and could testify against Evans, the indictment stated. Bruno said in one instance Rysedorph witnessed Evans commit a crime and in the

other, he was aware of a crime by Evans. Bruno declined to elaborate.

Sources have told the Times Union that Evans killed Rysedorph because Rysedorph knew that Evans had gunned down a mutual friend, Michael P. Falco, in February 1985.

Evans allegedly confessed to killing Falco, 30, in Troy. He allegedly rolled the corpse into a sleeping bag and transported it to Palm Beach County, Florida, where he buried the body in a ravine, police said. Falco's family reported him missing to Troy police in July of that year. Last month Evans drew a map for State Police detailing the burial spot.

In addition to information he had on the Falco murder, Rysedorph also was a criminal associate of Evans', police have said.

Dana Rysedorph, who has repeatedly defended her husband against such charges, said she left the courtroom feeling frustrated and angry.

"I never got to see (Evans) face to face," she said. "His head was down. I wanted him to look right into my eyes." Evans was led into the courtroom from a front door, away from spectators in the back rows.

Dana Rysedorph said she wants Evans sentenced to death.

"I just wish that he would get worse than he gave Tim, and there is nothing worse," she said. "Life without parole is not good enough."

Evans also is charged with six counts of second-degree murder -- two counts each alleging intentional murder and depraved indifference murder in the shooting deaths of Rysedorph, Falco and Damien J. Cuomo.

Cuomo, 28, of Troy, was killed Dec. 27, 1989.

Police have said all three joined Evans in burglaries and peddling stolen goods.

Joanne Donovan, the girlfriend of Cuomo and mother of his 12-year-old daughter, was also in the courtroom.

The Rysedorph murder was the only one of the five killings over 12 years that can be considered for capital punishment. The others occurred before the death penalty was reinstated in 1995.

If prosecutors do not seek the death penalty, a first-degree murder charge carries a maximum sentence of life in prison without parole. Second-degree murder can bring a sentence of 25 years to life in prison.

Sal Falco, a brother of Michael Falco, said he and his sister, Mary, talked Tuesday night and decided not to attend the court proceeding.

"All this bull about being remorseful -- you look at this creep's face, he's smug, he's almost confident," Falco said, explaining that seeing Evans on the noon television news made him irate.

"It would be very hard not to jump over that rail," in the courtroom, he said, explaining why he stayed away.

Evans also signed written statements admitting to the shooting deaths of two secondhand shop owners -- Douglas Berry, 63, of Watertown, Jefferson County, in September 1989, and Gregory Jouben, 36, of

Little Falls, Herkimer County, in October 1991, police said. Those crimes had been unsolved.

Evans is expected to be arraigned today in the Herkimer County case.

As part of the security in Troy, the German shepherd and its armed handler were stationed in the courtroom, to the dismay of defense counsel Treece.

Treece asked the judge to ``remove the dog and armed guard," calling it ``a little excessive."

Bruno said Evans is an escape risk, a reference to June 1980, when Evans went over the wall of the old Rensselaer County Jail while an inmate there. He was captured hours later on the ledge of the Troy Public Library.

``Security is going to stay as is," McGrath said. As Evans was led into the courtroom, the dog barked.

At a news conference following the arraignment, Bruno said he has talked with victims' family members.

``There's a lot of frustration involved," he said. ``They want justice and they want it now, and unfortunately, I'm not able to do that."

Evans smiled and said ``no" when the judge asked if he could afford an attorney. He had supported himself by stealing and selling the loot but went on the lam last fall after Rysedorph's disappearance. Evans was captured in St. Johnsbury, Vt., on May 27.

EVANS IS CHARGED IN A FOURTH MURDER

He pleads not guilty in 1991 robbery, slaying of Little Falls jeweler

MIKE HUREWITZ Staff writer

LITTLE FALLS -- In this quiet city by the Mohawk River where residents often leave doors open at night, they barricaded East Main Street Thursday and evacuated City Hall to arraign accused multiple murderer Gary Charles Evans.

Evans showed no emotion during a 10-minute court appearance in which he pleaded not guilty to a criminal complaint charging him with robbing and murdering local jeweler Gregory Jouben with a .22-caliber handgun on Oct. 17, 1991.

He was ordered held without bail and returned to the custody of the Rensselaer County Jail.

Little Falls Police Chief Gregg DeLuca said authorities cleared the area near the courtroom for two hours because of past threats against Evans' life and the lack of security in the city court, a 10-foot-square room in City Hall.

But Evans' attorney Randall Treece of the Capital Defender's office called the security ``theater of the absurd."

``You would believe they were bringing in Houdini and he was going to just vanish in front of them," Treece said outside the courtroom.

Since his arrest in Vermont in May, Evans a self-proclaimed antiques burglar -- has confessed to five killings, including Jouben's. He has also led authorities to the bodies of his three missing Troy associates and provided details in the slaying of a Watertown jeweler. He also has a history of escaping from the old Rensselaer County Jail.

Despite his admissions, not guilty pleas are routinely entered at arraignments as part of legal due process.

Treece said Thursday's security contingent -- which included a dog and some 15 officers -- was an attempt to portray Evans as a monster.

``Make him less human. Then nobody will have any qualms, no second-guessing about whether is going to live or die," said Treece, whose office was brought in to defend Evans in his potential capital case in Rensselaer County.

In that case, Evans faces first-degree murder charges for allegedly slaying Timothy Rysedorph on Oct. 3, 1997, in the town of Brunswick because Rysedorph was a witness to some of Evans' crimes.

Herkimer County District Attorney Michael Daley said that the Rensselaer County cases would take priority over the Jouben slaying and Evans' alleged 1989 slaying of a jewelry store owner in Watertown for which Evans has yet to be charged.

But Daley said his office moved quickly to bring Evans before the court in Little Falls to speed the judicial process. He said negotiations such as plea-bargaining or the order of trials can't begin until Evans is represented by counsel in all jurisdictions. Attorneys are assigned as part of arraignment

proceedings.

Neither Jouben's ailing mother Constance nor his brother Harry were on hand for Evans' arraignment.

Daley said that when Constance Jouben was notified her son's alleged killer was to be arraigned, "she was physically ill from being upset."

Harry Jouben later explained in a telephone interview that they stayed away because of "health problems," and his feeling, from reading accounts of Evans' arraignment in Troy, that it would be too stressful for them.

"I saw on the Internet your stories and I could sense the frustration and lack of any comfort that the other families got from attending the proceedings in Rensselaer County," he said.

Evans was arraigned in Troy Wednesday on first- and second-degree murder charges in connection with his alleged slaying of Rysedorph, Damien Cuomo, and Michael Falco -- who police have described as associates in his loosely knit gang of antiques burglars. Afterward, victims' relatives described how seeing him sparked anger and bitterness.

Jouben said he and his mother are Jehovah's Witnesses and find solace only through the Bible. He said he wished to offer that comfort not only to the other grieving families, but even to Evans, explaining, "I think that's his only hope."

But seeing Evans in court brought a sense of closure for many in the picturesque old mill town with its rolling hills, church spires and population of 6,000, down from 13,000 when most of its factories still were open.

Mary Lee Herringshaw, 50, owns Creative Cuts, the haircutting salon on East Main Street across from Jouben's store, which has remained vacant since his slaying.

"This is Smalltown USA where people walk out at nighttime and the doors are open like this," she said, gesturing past her screen door and down an East Main Street festooned with hanging flowerpots and American flags flying every 20 yards or so from a portico in front of the shops.

"This is a place where everybody knows everybody. That's what was so freaky about the whole thing," Herringshaw said.

Little Falls Police Officer Gary L. Moshier, lead investigator in the Jouben case, said, "It's an end to a heinous crime that committed here during my tenure at the police department, and I'm glad that it's over." Moshier said he had worked with Gregory and Constance Jouben in the mid-1970s at the Indian Castle restaurant near Little Falls interchange 29A on the Thruway.

"I'm sure the people in the community are glad that it's over because at first onset, they thought maybe it was community-related," Moshier said. "And I think it puts the community to rest knowing that that it is still the small and safe community it was in the past."

A KILLER SENTENCES HIMSELF GARY EVANS WRITES 'I WIN' AND LEAPS TO DEATH ON BANK OF HUDSON RIVER

CAROL DeMARE, JAY JOCHNOWITZ and MIKE HUREWITZ Staff writers

Troy In one of the most dramatic local escapes in recent memory, multiple killer Gary Charles Evans kicked the window out of a prison van Friday and briefly eluded four armed deputy U.S. marshals before flinging himself off the Troy-Menands Bridge and plunging to his death.

Evans, 43, who confessed to killing five people and was considered an escape risk, jumped from the U.S. marshal's van just before 11 a.m. and, with his hands and feet still manacled, plummeted 62 feet from the bridge spanning the Hudson River.

Less than 30 minutes earlier, Evans had slipped what appeared to be a concealed suicide note to one of his attorneys at an appearance in federal court.

It appeared he planned his escape and suicide like clockwork, waiting until the van was crossing the bridge before busting out of the moving vehicle.

He rolled on the ground and then got up and jumped, landing along the shoreline, his battered body half in the water and half on the bank, dying upon impact, officials said. Evans' death was ruled a suicide Friday evening by Albany County Coroner Philip Furie.

Evans was considered an escape risk because of his violent past and an earlier jail escape. During recent court appearances, he was accompanied by heavier-than-usual security.

On Friday, he was traveling in a van driven by a deputy marshal while another sat in the passenger seat. Evans was alone in the back.

Another vehicle with two armed deputy marshals followed close behind. Deputy Marshal David Demmit, who supervises the Albany office, said officials would investigate the escape but declined to answer specific questions or release the names of the four agents who were transporting Evans. The guards never fired a shot.

Kevin Kot of Latham was driving on the Menands Bridge when Evans escaped. He said he saw the side window glass suddenly break, showering his car with glass. Then a man in handcuffs and leg shackles squirmed out of the window. He momentarily got hung up with his leg irons but freed himself, hit the roadway and rolled about three times. The van skidded to a stop as the deputies saw what happened.

Kot hit his brakes to avoid hitting the prisoner, who picked himself up and lunged over the inside rail of the bridge to a narrow sidewalk and then made the same move headfirst over the outside rail.

"They did not even have time to draw their guns, it all happened so fast," Kot said of the four deputies at the scene. "He just looked like he was bent on getting away."

"I got out and looked over the rail, and his head was in water and his body on the rocks and he was still," Kot said.

Emergency workers did not even try to revive Evans, said Troy Fire Capt. Robert Essegia, who was among the first to arrive at Evans' body.

“He was flat-lined when we got there,” Essegia said. He said there was a gash in Evans' throat. “He was shackled and all. He kicked the window out and dove in. He was still shackled when we found him.”

Evans left a suicide note to his attorney, Capital Defender Randolph F. Treece, and asked that it be made available to the media.

“My lessons here are learned -- onto a better place now. My friends are happy, and I'm already there,” Evans said.

“I win,” the note concluded.

On the other side of the suicide note was a private note to Treece and the staff of the Capital Defender's Office. Treece would not reveal the contents of that note.

Treece began representing Evans this week after Evans was charged with first-degree murder counts that could have led to a death penalty case in the killing of his last victim, Timothy W. Rysedorph, Oct. 4.

Evans made the escape while he was being returned to jail from an appearance in federal court in Albany, where he was sentenced to 24 months in prison for his guilty plea last month to violating his federal probation.

He had confessed to killing five people, and authorities were in the process of charging him in connection with the killings.

Senior U.S. District Court Judge Thomas J. McAvoy noticed Evans seemed to behave strangely in court Friday morning. McAvoy said Evans, “declined to speak on his own behalf. His eyes were shifting around the wall behind me. He wasn't connected with the proceeding. He wasn't focused.”

At the hearing Evans gave one of his attorneys, Michael L. Desautels, a packet of legal papers and told Desautels there was a letter in the package for Treece. Treece said that by the time he received the letter, Evans was dead.

Earlier this week, Treece objected to the heavy security that accompanied Evans to his court appearances.

“You would believe they were bringing in Houdini and he was going to vanish in front of them,” Treece said after an appearance Thursday, one day before Evans' fatal plunge.

Security was always tight when Evans was moved. A police dog and shotgun-toting officers were on hand for his two court appearances earlier this week.

In June 1980, Evans went over the wall of the old Rensselaer County Jail, only to be captured hours later on the ledge of the Troy Public Library.

Word of Evans' escape and death swept through Troy and even among motorists in the slow-moving traffic on the bridge. Drivers rolled down their windows to ask police and reporters for updates. The most common questions: “Did he get away?” and “Is he dead?”

Underneath the bridge, down Water Street, onlookers joined reporters along the fence at King Fuels. And while no one seemed to be mourning Evans' death, some spectators said they would have preferred to see justice done.

Among those who drove to the scene was John Livolsi of Troy, who once secured a court order barring Evans from stalking him because of an old feud. "I can rest now," Livolsi said, adding that he had spent some terrified moments when he had heard Evans had gotten free but didn't know the outcome.

"He got off too easy," said a man who identified himself only as Don. He said he knew two of Evans' victims, Damien Cuomo and Michael Falco. The Troy native sat atop his car, waiting for Evans' body to be carried out.

An autopsy by pathologist Dr. Barbara Wolf was conducted Friday evening at the morgue at Albany Medical Center Hospital. He suffered major trauma to his face and head, including a gash on his neck probably caused by the jagged rocks.

Evans, an antiques thief with a lengthy criminal record who, if he escaped execution, was destined to spend the rest of his life behind bars, was pronounced dead where he landed. Officials removed Evans' body by boat to Green Island before transporting it to Albany Medical Center.

Since mid-June, Evans -- in what he said was an attempt to clear his conscience -- confessed to State Police Senior Investigator James Horton about five murders going back 12 years.

Three of his victims were associates in crime and two were owners of coin and jewelry shops. He led police to the remains of three of his victims, one of whom he buried in Palm Beach County, Fla.

At the bridge, a woman who knew Evans' fondness for sweets, especially cookies, tied a bag of six chocolate-drop cookies with a blue ribbon to a rusted rail with a note.

Written on the white paper bag were these words: "I love Gary, rest now my man. Always in my heart," followed by a heart sign. It was signed "Cathy and girls."

Cathy Sagendorf, who knew Evans from South Troy, went to the scene a few hours after he jumped. She said Evans loved cookies, and bought a half-dozen at his favorite bakery, Perrotta's in Troy.

Horton, the cop closest to Evans, looked grim as he left the scene.

"I was going to go see him this afternoon," Horton said. "I never got to see him last night."

At the Rensselaer County Jail, where Evans had been since June 29, the facility's superintendent noticed a change in Evans.

"I knew that his relationship with the people that he had been in contact with was changing in nature, so that he was being distanced further from them," Col. Robert R. Loveridge said. "And I believed that based upon his circumstances and the acts of his case that he did not want society to have its way."

"We actually stepped up our security the day before he went for his arraignment (in Rensselaer County Court) because of the change. . . . We were watching him closely."

As a gut feeling, Loveridge said, "I saw him coming to peace with himself." Melissa Grace, Edward Fitzpatrick and Bob Gardinier contributed to this report.

IN SUICIDE EVANS FOUND FINAL EVASION OF AUTHORITY, EXPERTS SAY

Psychologists see clues to a violent life's end in killer's note

SYLVIA WOOD Staff writer

Gary Evans' death and the note he left behind offer clues to a disturbed mind, criminal psychologists said Friday.

"In his case, he made (the suicide) part of the contest as if it's a chess move on his part," said Charles Bahn, a professor of psychology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City. "Were he to die in the electric chair, that would be a defeat."

The last line of the note, "I win," could almost be considered a taunt, said Cathy Spatz Widom, a professor of criminal justice and psychology at the University at Albany.

"He's sort of waxing eloquent, but who knows what he's feeling?" she said. "I think he's playing with people."

What pushed Gary Evans to throw himself over the Troy-Menands Bridge will always remain a mystery. But Bahn said Evans' note showed someone "who can't see another solution."

"He's somebody who is determined he's not going to be incarcerated again because that represents a kind of personal hell for him," Bahn said.

His note, including his reference to "stars surround me," shows an attempt to get beyond society's perception of him as a monster. "He wants to go to a place where he's glorified instead of reviled," Bahn said. Widom said suicide often is part of a "thrill-seeking pattern" among people who engage in extreme anti-social acts.

"It's part of a lifestyle that involves a lot of behavior that entails risk-taking," she said.

Evans told the Times Union in an exclusive interview July 20 about his methods to elude police for more than two decades. He said he bought alarm systems and "learned how to defeat them." He studied criminal investigation techniques from police textbooks to outwit his pursuers.

Bahn said it's not unusual for criminals to perceive themselves as "smarter than anyone around." His note -- particularly the last line, "I win" -- underscores that, Bahn said.

Evans, who apparently studied astrology, may have also been looking for a way to explain his violent behavior with his note's reference to Canis Minor.

That constellation, known as the little dog, includes a star that tends toward violence and weakness, according to Arlene DeAngelus, a Clifton Park astrologer.

"It's a rise followed by a fall," DeAngelus said. She said his reference to that constellation probably was not casual since that star also appears at a critical point in Evans' birth chart. Evans, a Libra, was born on Oct. 7, 1954.

"This is probably what he felt was an excuse for his violent behavior," she said. "Instead of overcoming it, he gave into it."