

Written by Administrator
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By OSKAR GARCIA

The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — A masked robber with a gun ordered players and dealers to get away from an early morning craps game before shoveling handfuls of chips into a pouch during the \$1.5 million heist of the Bellagio, a casino supervisor testified Wednesday.

FILE - In this photo provided by Matthew Brooks, Friday, Feb. 4, 2011, gambling chips are seen attached to a note written by the motorcycle bandit who stole \$1.5 million in casino chips from the Bellagio Hotel and Casino in December. The note was photographed and emailed to Brooks by a man who called himself the Biker Bandit. A tipster told police, Anthony M. Carleo, the suspect in the \$1.5 million heist of a Bellagio craps table, had mused about pulling off the dramatic stickup and said he would get away with it by selling some chips and slowly gambling away the others, according to a police report. Carleo was arrested after an undercover police officer bought stolen chips and invited Carleo to be part of a crew that would rob Las Vegas casinos, the arrest report said. (AP Photo/Handout, Matthew Brooks)

"I could just see the barrel" of the gun, Don Crosby, 72, recalled. "I was thinking that I didn't want him to get excited and shoot anybody."

With dealers and players on the floor, Crosby said he tried to keep the motorcycle helmet-wearing bandit calm until he took his fill of chips and fled.

"The chips were such a mess and (in) disarray," Crosby said. "They were everywhere — on the floor, on the table, in the hallway."

Crosby's testimony came as a prosecutor tried to persuade Las Vegas Justice of the Peace Ann Zimmerman to order suspect Anthony Carleo, 29, to stand trial on charges stemming from the December holdup.

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Nobody was physically hurt in the incident.

Earlier in the hearing, Zimmerman accepted an amended criminal complaint Wednesday that added two counts of robbery with a deadly weapon to the case against Carleo, who was already facing charges of armed robbery, assault, burglary and carrying a concealed weapon.

The preliminary hearing was halted as Chris Owens, a Clark County prosecutor, and Carleo's lawyer William Terry argued over whether the defense could contact a confidential informant who told police he was present at several meetings between Carleo and an undercover officer, according to the officer.

Zimmerman set a March 9 date for a status check on the issue.

Bail was set at \$1 million, with Zimmerman ruling that Carleo must be placed under house arrest if he posts the amount.

Owens called four witnesses during the three-hour hearing, including Las Vegas police officer Michael Gennaro, who said he bought 14 chips — worth \$350,000 — at discounted prices from Carleo.

The defendant acknowledged the robbery after Gennaro tried to recruit him for a crew that would rob casinos, according to the testimony.

Crosby was one of three Bellagio employees to recount events during the high-profile robbery. A valet supervisor and security officer also testified.

Owens played surveillance video from the heist that showed a motorcycle helmet-wearing robber repeatedly grabbing chips from the middle of a rack at the craps table.

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Arrest records show Carleo gambled lavishly after the heist.

Gennaro said Carleo indicated he had fought with his dad, Las Vegas Municipal Court Judge George Assad, over gambling, drugs and college, and that his dad had reduced an allowance of \$1,000 a month to \$150 a week.

Bellagio records show Carleo had little restraint, losing about \$105,000 during 18 gambling sessions in just over a month, including \$72,000 on New Year's Eve.

He also tried to sell chips to strangers he contacted through a popular Web forum for poker players, the arrest report said.

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Associated Press Writer Cristina Silva contributed to this report.

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