

JACK RUBY'S

By LAURA IRWIN

To say that Palm Beach County developer Anthony Pugliese III is obsessed with privacy is an understatement. When he bought the gun Jack Ruby used to kill Lee Harvey Oswald, he made such a quick escape from the auction in New York that even *The New York Times* couldn't catch up with him. Even the gun's original owner, Jack Ruby's brother Earl, and the auctioneer did not know who he was.

Two-hundred-thousand dollars once, 200-thousand twice, the auctioneer barked, and the gun was sold—to the mystery man from Boca. "Everyone converged on me," recalls Pugliese in a rare interview. "There was wall-to-wall people. I got pushed around, and then finally I was able to make it to the fire door. Reporters were sticking their hands through the door... but I ran for it."

THE GUN THAT SILENCED THE KILLER OF JOHN F. KENNEDY and left 30 years of unanswered questions about the president's assassination had changed hands. No one really knew who owned the gun until three months later.

That was March 29 when a Pugliese associate took the gun to Washington, D.C., to appear on "Larry King Live." King's show featured two Boca Raton men: Earl Ruby, who had auctioned off the gun, and Robert Luongo, Pugliese's representative. The gun sold for \$220,000 (including auction fees.)

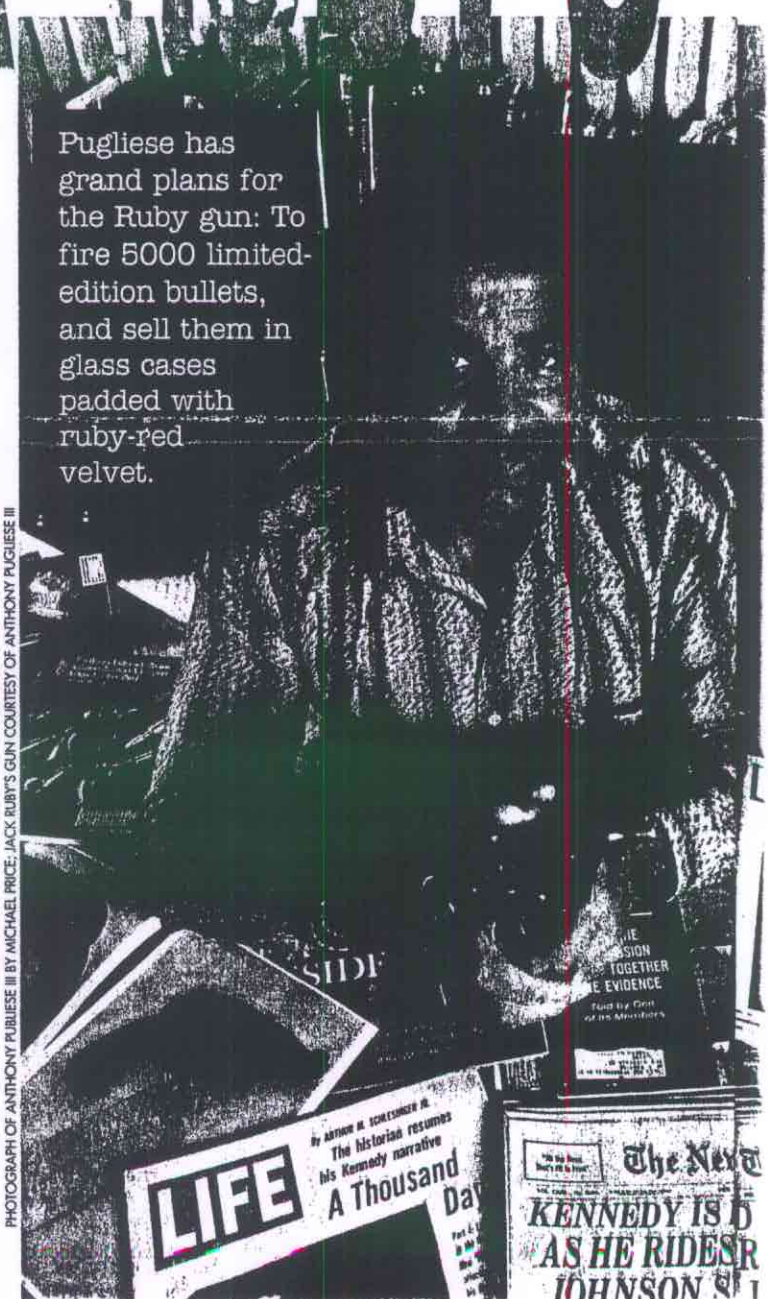
After the show, Luongo, still toting the .38-caliber Colt Cobra, went to Capitol Hill to kill some time before his flight back to Florida. What happened next depends on whom you ask. Luongo told *South Florida* he walked over to have a friendly conversation with U.S. Representative Mark Foley, who had just driven up with his wife.

But according to Dan Nichols, a Capitol spokesman, "When a police officer pointed out Foley as House speaker, Luongo said, 'I bet he'd like to see the gun I have in my case,' and that concerned the officer greatly."

LUONGO WAS ARRESTED FOR CARRYING A GUN WITH- out a license. Under District of Columbia law, the historic gun was to be destroyed. But the prosecutor dismissed the charge, and the gun was returned to its owner. The incident, which made national headlines, flushed out Anthony Pugliese III, who purchased the gun with the help of four friends.

Who is he? It's not easy to find out: Pugliese doesn't

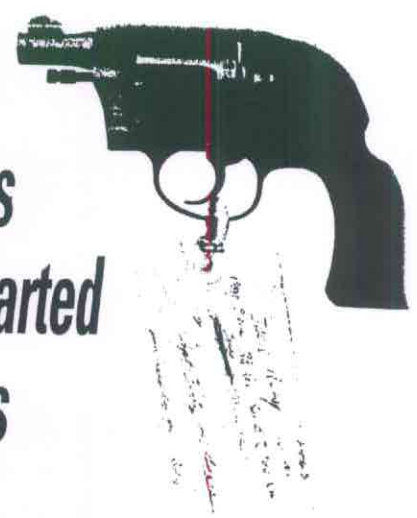
Pugliese has grand plans for the Ruby gun: To fire 5000 limited-edition bullets, and sell them in glass cases padded with ruby-red velvet.



PHOTOGRAPH OF ANTHONY PUGLIESE III BY MICHAEL PRICE; JACK RUBY'S GUN COURTESY OF ANTHONY PUGLIESE III

GUN

A Boca Man Owns The Gun That Thwarted History's Questions



like attention, especially from media, and what is known about him comes from a limited interview with *South Florida*, public records and interviews with friends.

PUGLIESE, A 43-YEAR-OLD ITALIAN-AMERICAN FROM New Jersey, is a self-made real estate mogul who likes to collect things. Exotic things. He owns the Aston Martin with built-in machine guns that Sean Connery drove in "Goldfinger." He also owns Jack Ruby's hat and shoes. (Some reports say he owns a toe tag from Ruby's corpse, but Pugliese says, "You can't believe everything you read.")

Earl Ruby, who lives part-time in Boca's Century Village, met Pugliese after selling some of his brother's items to pay bills. "He's a very nice person," says Ruby of Pugliese.

A licensed weapons dealer, Pugliese has about 400 guns, some from the Civil War, but none as valuable as the Ruby gun. "When I was a kid," Pugliese explains, "I collected baseball cards, bottle tops, anything that had value or interest."

WHEN HE'S NOT ATTENDING AUCTIONS OR PORING over collector's encyclopedias looking for a good deal, Pugliese can be found at The Pugliese Company in Boca Raton, housed in the massive Crystal Corporate Center, which he says he developed and designed. Other ventures include the Albertson's shopping plaza in Delray Beach. He also donated 15 acres to a friend, Gregory Perillo, to build a museum of Western art on Hutchinson Island. On the drawing board is his most ambitious project—a \$200-million, 104-acre shopping complex near the Boca Raton Airport. He envisions Gucci, Armani and Tiffany's as anchors, a family entertainment complex, with batting cages, basketball, video games, party rooms, bumper cars and a restaurant pavilion with jugglers, mimes and musicians. "People in their 40s are looking for something to do. They need something more than to

go to a dinner and then go home."

These are grand plans coming from a man who grew up poor in Newark. "I started from scratch," he says. "I wanted a better life." After graduating from Arts High School in Newark, he and his father, Anthony Jr., started Pugliese Pools, a major swimming pool builder in New Jersey. They made millions, and claim credit for inventing the "natural look" pool.

Until the pool company, Pugliese says he didn't realize how well others lived. "I went out to work in the suburban neighborhoods of Livingston, South Orange, and the houses weren't attached—they had a place to park a car. I realized then what I'd like to have."

He began to dabble in real estate. Today, he owns more than \$4 million in real estate in Palm Beach County, where he moved eight years ago.

SOME HAVE BEEN SUSPICIOUS OF HIS QUICK SUCCESS. "First of all, I'm Italian," he says. "Second of all, you get out of the slum, rise up a little and even your own kind say, 'How'd he do that?' I don't know about Jack Ruby, but I've had no association with the Mafia. I wouldn't be sitting here 12 hours a day, six days a week if I did."

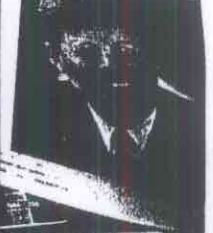
Visitors to his office are overwhelmed by what he calls "junk." Three massive Chinese statues, symbolizing longevity, prosperity and happiness, stand guard at his desk. The walls are covered with Western paintings, masks, animal heads, tusks and a feather headdress. Even the floor is covered with artifacts, including a stuffed alligator head. "Some people just collect one thing," he says. "I like a lot of different things."

His favorite item is a portrait of his three children, near his desk in a fancy frame. The oldest son, a 19-year-old college student, works with his dad. The other children are high school age.

When asked if his house looks like his office, Pugliese laughs, and shakes his head. Maybe it has something to

Continued on page 74

LIFE
A THOUSAND
FIRST PERIODIC OF \$5
TO A MEMBER OF \$1



The New Times
ODY IS SHOT BY SNIPER
RIDES IN DALLAS

THE PALM BEACH COUNTY CONNECTION

These players have ties to Palm Beach County: **Anthony Pugliese III**, developer of Boca Raton commercial properties, owns Jack Ruby's gun. **Earl Ruby**, Jack Ruby's brother, has a home in Century Village, Boca Raton. **Robert Luongo**, arrested after trying to show House Speaker Mark Foley the gun on Capitol Hill, lives in Boca. **Mark Foley**, third most powerful man in the United States, speaker of the House of Representatives, owns a home in Lake Worth.



JACK RUBY'S GUN

Continued from page 23

do with his wife, Patricia. Most of his artifacts are stashed away in rented storage.

His lifestyle? Friend Steven Perillo, who is Gregory Perillo's son, puts it this way: "He could be featured on 'Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous.'" Pugliese says that's an "exaggeration." Adds Pugliese, laughing: "Doesn't he know there's a recession going on?"

Indeed, Pugliese owes Garfield, N.J., \$645,000 in delinquent property taxes on an industrial complex, according to the *New Jersey Herald and News*. In Palm Beach County, he owes \$233,000 on six properties. Pugliese said no one would have noticed if it weren't for the Ruby gun. "They were just looking for dirt. I'm not the only one not paying taxes. It's a normal, standard thing for developers to do. It's a way of financing property." Pugliese, who hasn't paid taxes since 1989 in Palm Beach County, says he plans to pay off his delinquent taxes in the next year. Cynthia Ollis, tax service director for Palm Beach County, wouldn't comment on whether it is standard for developers not to pay taxes.

"The gun didn't just kill a man. Jack Ruby's one moment has caused disturbance and pain for the last 30 years."

The Puglieses live in a \$2-million mansion on Ocean Boulevard in Gulf Stream. The Mediterranean-style home with five bathrooms is fronted with palm trees and a pink stone wall fence. An iron gate keeps out the curious. "I am a very private person," he says.

But the Ruby gun has him talking. "I remained anonymous as long as I could," he says. "Now that I have the attention, I still don't particularly care for it. But I want to get a message across to people and the children."

The message? "The gun didn't just kill a man. Jack Ruby's one moment has caused disturbance and pain to go on for the last 30 years. When someone does something to someone else, it can have a rippling effect on thousands, maybe millions of people."

Pugliese has grand plans for the gun: He's firing 5,000 limited-edition bullets, and selling them in glass cases padded with ruby-red velvet, each with a brass plate of authenticity and a photo of the gun with the evidence tag. He auctioned off the first bullet June 11 in New York for \$522.50.

The gun is not for sale. ♦

Preventive medicine

Continued from page 34

FIVE WAYS TO AVOID STRESS

- 1) Watch what you eat.
- 2) Exercise.
- 3) Learn time management.
- 4) Take a hot bath daily.
- 5) Avoid caffeine and alcohol.

Source: Dr. Don Powell, president of American Institute for Preventive Medicine.

10 WAYS TO STOP SMOKING

- 1) Nic Patch (prescription only).
- 2) Hypnosis.
- 3) Self-help groups.
- 4) Behavior modification program.
- 5) Over-the-counter drugs (fake cigarettes, lozenges).
- 6) Make a list of why you want to quit.
- 7) Set a quit date.
- 8) Get rid of all cigarettes, ashes, lighters.
- 9) When you get an urge, take a deep breath, and hold air in your mouth for three seconds.
- 10) Scramble your day, so you can break routine smoking habits.

Source: Dr. Don Powell, President, American Institute for Preventive Medicine.

10 HINTS TO LOSE WEIGHT

- 1) Take light bulb out of refrigerator to prevent nighttime raids.
- 2) Eat from a smaller plate, so small portions don't seem so small.
- 3) Use utensils for all food, even potato chips.
- 4) Take at least 20 minutes to eat a meal.
- 5) Exercise regularly.
- 6) Use relaxation techniques so you are less likely to eat under stress.
- 7) Place problem foods out of reach or in aluminum foil, so you won't be tempted.
- 8) Remove cookies from jar, and replace with slips of paper listing activities (i.e. call Aunt Marge).
- 9) Avoid crash diets.
- 10) Drink water.

Source: American Institute for Preventive Medicine.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE SIGNS OF ADDICTION

- 1) Irresponsible on job.
- 2) Unable to meet financial obligations.
- 3) Not able to function because of hangover.
- 4) Having trouble in social/marital relations.

Source: Susan Fiester, M.D., Director of Psychiatric Institute, Washington, D.C.

10 PLACES TO GO TO

- 1) Aaron Medical W. Lauderdale, (305)
- 2) Doctor's Quick W. (305) 653-50
- 3) Herbalife Distribu Beach, (407) 833
- 4) Jimmy Craig Weigh Miami (305) 232-
- 5) Lite Weight Inc., MI 7546.
- 6) Memorial Hospit (305) 985-5800.
- 7) Nutri-System Wei ters, 1-800-344-8
- 8) The Optifast Progr (305) 985-3400.
- 9) Raider Institute, Be 488-8223.
- 10) Weight Watchers. cal directory for ne

FIVE SIGNS THAT YOU'RE NEEDING MEDICAL ATTENTION FOR

- 1) Shakes.
- 2) Headaches.
- 3) Diarrhea/vomiting
- 4) Blackouts.
- 5) Serious hangovers

Source: Susan Fiester, M.D., Washington, D.C.

10 WAYS TO PREVENT

- 1) Stay out of the sun.
- 2) Don't smoke.
- 3) Avoid foods with n. and bacon.
- 4) Eat lots of fruit an
- 5) Eat foods high in
- 6) Keep your fat into
- 7) See your doctor a vels. (for women examinations.)
- 8) Avoid alcohol.
- 9) Keep weight unde
- 10) Avoid exposure to and other harmful

Source: National Foundation for Ca

FOUR STEPS IN TREATING

- 1) Consult physician.
- 2) Make a commitm
- 3) Follow 12-step p holics Anonymous. ymous.
- 4) Restructure life to drug environment

Source: Jan Weiss, M.D., Washing