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Western Slope DA accused of misconduct, unlawful sexual contact

By **Kirk Mitchell**
The Denver Post

Posted: 10/01/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

Updated: 10/01/2010 11:05:03 AM MDT

The top prosecutor for a large swath of western Colorado was arrested Thursday on suspicion of using his position to engage in unlawful sexual contact and official misconduct.

Myrl Serra, 49, district attorney for the 7th Judicial District, was released from Montrose County Jail at 8:30 a.m. on a \$5,000 bond after his arrest earlier in the morning. Serra's next court appearance is scheduled for Nov. 3 in Mesa County Court.

All judges in Montrose have recused themselves from hearing the case, according a letter from

Gerald Marroney, state court administrator.

The Colorado attorney general's office was appointed special prosecutor to handle the case against Serra. Details of the arrest affidavit were sealed while the investigation continues.

Several attempts to reach Serra by phone Thursday were unsuccessful.

The Montrose County Sheriff's Office received allegations about Serra on Sept. 17 and referred the case to the Colorado Bureau of Investigation because of the close working relationship between Serra and the Sheriff's Office.

A 39-year-old woman filed for a restraining order in Montrose County Court against Serra in 2008 and on Sept. 20. It is unclear whether the latest restraining order is connected to the criminal allegations. The woman declined to comment about her complaint. She did say that she spoke with a prosecutor Thursday.

Because of Serra's arrest, Lt. Gov. Barbara O'Brien, who is serving as acting governor while Bill Ritter is on an economic-development trip overseas, also appointed state Attorney General John Suthers as the special prosecutor for the 7th Judicial District. Suthers will oversee prosecutions in the district, which covers Montrose, Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, San Miguel and Ouray counties.

O'Brien said the allegations against Serra stem at least, in part, from actions taken while he was performing his official duties.

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"Mr. Serra's arrest has compromised his ability to effectively carry on the functions of his office," O'Brien said in a statement.

Mike Saccone, a spokesman for the Colorado AG's office, said First Assistant Attorney General Robert Shapiro will head the prosecution. The Colorado Bureau of Investigation is doing the criminal investigation.

Suthers appointed First Assistant Attorney General Jean Woodford to oversee the administrative duties of the district attorney's office.

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Affair kicked off troubles for Montrose County DA

By **Nancy Lofholm**
The Denver Post

Posted: 10/05/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

MONTROSE — Whether 7th Judicial District Attorney Myrl Serra is guilty of official-misconduct and felony sex charges is not yet determined.

But Montrose County Court documents show Serra has been embroiled in ugly legal skirmishes relating to a volatile on-again, off-again relationship he began with a married woman nine years ago.

Two women on three occasions have tried unsuccessfully to secure restraining orders against Serra, 48. Three judges and magistrates in Montrose denied those protection orders, ruling there was not enough evidence of danger to the women or to the young child of one of them.

The Montrose County Sheriff's Office was also contacted three times in 2008 by Serra's former girlfriend, Doris McCauley. She asked for two of the restraining orders, complaining Serra wouldn't stop calling or sending unwanted cards and gifts. No action was taken by the Sheriff's Office, which did not return phone calls seeking information about the complaints.

Ongoing investigation

Authorities haven't revealed whether any of Serra's problems with McCauley are related to his arrest Thursday on suspicion of unlawful sexual contact, indecent exposure and official misconduct. The documents detailing those alleged crimes have been sealed because of an ongoing investigation by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation undertaken at the request of Gov. Bill Ritter.

McCauley has refused to comment on the criminal investigation except to say that she has spoken to the Colorado Attorney General's Office. Neither Serra nor Andrew Peters, the attorney representing him in his dispute with McCauley, could be reached for comment Monday.

In a 2006 letter to Serra's attorney included in court documents, McCauley claims she has "facts" that could hurt Serra professionally. She wrote that letter in response to a letter from Serra's attorney accusing her of making slanderous statements about Serra being involved with a married woman.



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McCauley alleged in the letter that Serra confessed to her that he committed crimes while he was a college student in Arizona. There is no record of charges ever being brought against Serra in Arizona. She also wrote that Serra often shared confidential information with her about cases being prosecuted in his office, including a DUI case against her ex-husband. She alleged he used county and state property for personal use and that the couple engaged in sex in his office. She said Serra twice forced her into sex acts.

Not her "Go to Guy"

Serra wrote to McCauley in 2006, a month after McCauley made her allegations against him in the letter to his attorney.

In that letter, he gives McCauley some legal advice then writes that he is not her "Go to Guy" anymore.

"Until you resolve your mental issues, you need to stop," he wrote. "Even if that does happen, you need to stop."

The restraining-order request file also includes a letter from 2006 when Serra was a deputy district attorney. In it, he advised McCauley how to get a plea agreement in a case brought against her by the county attorney. McCauley's record in Montrose courts show only a 2003 harassment complaint and a 2005 vicious-dog complaint against her. Both were dismissed.

While he was a deputy district attorney, Serra also assisted McCauley in court appearances

regarding her divorce.

The Colorado Bureau of Investigation is conducting the investigation into Serra's alleged wrongdoing. Spokesman Lance Clem would not comment on whether McCauley's allegations are part of the investigation.

"It's probably a little too early to say where it's going to go," Clem said. "This is a significant case for the CBI. A significant number of the investigators in our Grand Junction office are working on this."

Serra was appointed district attorney in December 2006, after serving as a deputy and an assistant district attorney in the office since 1999. He retained the office after running unopposed in 2008.

Serra was initially the target of a request for a restraining order in 2003 when Carrie Jewtraw, a woman who was engaged to McCauley's ex-husband, alleged Serra shoved her fiance and pulled her hair so hard that a bunch of hair came out of her head. Jewtraw wrote the incident took place after McCauley had pinned her to a weight bench. McCauley had a restraining order against Jewtraw at the time.

Nothing "sufficient"

In denying the restraining order, the judge, whose name is not clear on the form, said there wasn't "sufficient allegation of any assault or threat of bodily injury."

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In 2008, after seven years of breakups and reconciliations, McCauley asked for a restraining order against Serra. She said it was because he refused to stop contacting her and sending presents to her and her daughter.

Magistrate Jane Westbrook denied that request because there was no threat or act of physical harm to McCauley or her daughter and the contacts did not "satisfy the statutory requirement."

Two weeks ago, McCauley again requested a restraining order against Serra after she said he called her cellphone in the middle of the night and left a message saying, "If you want good sex come to Breckenridge 'cause I'm good at sex."

Magistrate William McNulty denied an order because the message did not amount to unlawful sexual contact or constitute threats or harm to McCauley's child.

Serra's office has been taken over by the Colorado attorney general while charges against him are investigated. Serra is under a restraining order not to go near any of the district attorney's offices in Montrose, Delta, Telluride and Gunnison.

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Montrose DA charged with sex crimes, extortion

By [Paul Shockley](#)

Wednesday, November 3, 2010

The Colorado Attorney General's Office this morning filed seven charges, including felony counts of unlawful sexual contact and criminal extortion, against Seventh Judicial District Attorney Myrl Serra as authorities revealed that the case includes three alleged victims, all of them women.

Serra, 48, will be forced under Colorado law to register as a sex offender if he's convicted of felony unlawful sexual contact.

Appearing before Mesa County Chief Judge David Bottger, First Assistant Attorney General Robert Shapiro today also filed a felony charge of criminal extortion, a misdemeanor version of unlawful sexual contact, three counts of indecent exposure, and one count of first-degree official misconduct.

Shapiro told the judge there are three alleged victims in Serra's case, all of whom Serra held positions of authority over. At the time of Serra's arrest Sept. 30, the Colorado Bureau of Investigation had evidence of one victim, while follow-up work on the case revealed allegations by two more women, Shapiro told the judge.

Shapiro argued revelations from the two new victims justified an increase in Serra's bond to \$50,000—a request denied by Bottger. In denying the request, the judge said Serra is no longer in a position of authority over the women and is already restrained from the offices of the Seventh Judicial District Attorney.

“No one has given me fear he won't come to court proceedings,” Bottger said.

Serra, who appeared with Denver attorneys Colin Bresee and Peter Albani, said little during the hearing and arrived in Bottger's courtroom roughly a half hour before his scheduled 8:30 a.m. appearance.

“I understand that language, sir,” Serra told the judge, when asked if he understood the terms of protection orders for the new women alleged as victims in the case.

Bottger also ordered arrest warrant affidavits in Serra's case be unsealed in Montrose on Thursday. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for Feb. 11 in Montrose.

The Attorney General's office assumed prosecution authority over Serra's office—which covers Montrose, Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Ouray and San Miguel counties—on Sept. 30 when Serra was arrested before posting a \$5,000 bond.

Read the full story in Thursday's Daily Sentinel.

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Colo. DA accused of demanding sexual favors

By P. SOLOMON BANDA Associated Press

Posted: 11/04/2010 02:40:13 PM MDT

Updated: 11/05/2010 08:56:30 AM MDT

DENVER—A western Colorado district attorney has been accused of demanding sexual favors from women in his office in exchange for perks such as being allowed to leave work early.

Court documents say one woman told investigators that she feared losing her job if she didn't comply with 48-year-old Myrl Serra's sexual demands. The woman told investigators that Serra knew she was married but demanded that she provide him sexual favors in his office at least 25 times since November 2007.

She was "embarrassed that she was 'weak enough' to allow him to do that to her," but that she feared he would destroy her career and felt that she was being held hostage by Serra, according to an affidavit unsealed Thursday.

"She 'submitted' each time because she is 'terrified' he is going to find a reason to fire her," according to the affidavit. Other women in Serra's office described a similar atmosphere.

Serra faces seven charges, including extortion, indecent exposure, felony unlawful sexual contact sometime in April and official misconduct. A prosecutor with the Attorney General's office, which is pursuing the case, said in court the charges involve three women. Names on court documents have been blacked out.

Colin Bresee, one of Serra's attorneys, says it's a "he-said, she-said" case with no physical evidence.

"It's disappointing. I guess anyone can say anything these days and get people charged," Bresee said, declining to elaborate because he had not been given any evidence in the case.

Attorney general spokesman Mike Saccone said they would not comment on the allegations.

The attorney general has also taken over prosecutions in Serra's sprawling 8,300-square mile state judicial district that covers the counties of Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose and Ouray. All judges in Serra's district have recused themselves and the case has been assigned to District Judge Daniel Bottger in Grand Junction, 50 miles north of Montrose.

Investigators interviewed at least five people who either were employed or previously employed by Serra's office, including a male investigator who said he witnessed Serra send an inappropriate and sexual based text message to his ex-girlfriend, according to the documents.

The woman who told investigators about the

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sexual favors initially said there were six or seven incidents, but that she didn't reveal the entire story because her husband did not know. The incidents, up to 37, allegedly involved manual masturbation with Serra suggesting oral sex.

She said Serra sometimes went "hunting" for her by text or e-mail and when she was unavailable, Serra would punish her by giving her extra work. When she asked for time off or to leave work early, Serra would grant the request but then e-mail her saying, "you owe me," she said.

Another woman told investigators that Serra made unwanted sexual advances after a gathering at a bar, but she didn't come forward because she said Serra was "vindictive" and would fire her.

"There was nothing anyone could do to stop Serra from saying that her being fired was due to poor work performance," she told an investigator according to an affidavit.

A former female employee told an investigator that Serra called her into his office in March when she asked to be allowed to leave work early.

"He asked me what I was willing to do to get off early, what would I give him," she said.

The woman said she offered to bring doughnuts but when Serra said he was on a diet, she offered to bring fruit. She offered coffee and other things before Serra allegedly exposed

himself, grabbed her hand and placed it on his penis, according to her account in the affidavit.

She left his office and told a co-worker. That co-worker told investigators that the woman had scratches on her wrist from the incident.

Serra is free on \$5,000 bail.

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DA Myrl Serra of the 7th Judicial District faces more charges involving female victims

By **Nancy Lofholm**
The Denver Post

Posted: 11/04/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

Updated: 11/05/2010 10:48:46 AM MDT

GRAND JUNCTION — Authorities now believe 7th Judicial District Attorney Myrl Serra had three female victims — not one — and have expanded his charges to include a felony count of unlawful sexual contact.

Serra was formally charged Wednesday with a seven-count list of alleged crimes carried out in his official duties as prosecutor.

In addition to the felony unlawful sexual contact charge, which indicates use of physical force or violence, Serra is also charged with felony criminal extortion, three misdemeanor counts of

indecent exposure, one misdemeanor count of official misconduct and a misdemeanor count of unlawful sexual contact.

At least one of the victims worked under Serra. He "had authority over" all three, according to First Assistant Attorney General Robert Shapiro, who is prosecuting the case.

Serra, 48, initially was arrested by Colorado Bureau of Investigation agents Sept. 30 on suspicion of unlawful sexual contact, indecent exposure and official misconduct. Those charges were connected to one victim. Shapiro said in court that a continuing investigation by the CBI uncovered two more alleged victims.

The affidavit supporting the charges was sealed following Serra's arrest, so details have not been made public. Mesa County District Judge David Bottger ordered the affidavit unsealed Wednesday, but specified it won't be available to the public for another day so court clerks have time to remove the victims' names from the files.

The alleged victims do not include a woman who had a tumultuous relationship with Serra and who twice sought restraining orders against him, alleging he was stalking and harassing her. Magistrates had turned down those requests.

Serra said little during Wednesday's court hearing, which placed him at the defense table after 21 years as a prosecutor. He was appointed district attorney in 2006 and had served as a deputy and assistant district attorney since 1999. He ran unopposed in 2008.

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Shapiro asked that Serra's bail be increased from \$5,000 to \$50,000, given the seriousness of the charges and the addition of charges.

Bottger turned down that request, noting that the purpose of a bond is to ensure a defendant appears in court and that Serra had given no indication he would not do so.

Bottger granted a new protection order that orders Serra to stay away from the alleged victims and from witnesses in the case and also to steer clear of the offices of the 7th Judicial District. District offices are located in Montrose, Delta, Gunnison and Telluride. Serra has also been ordered to refrain from drinking and not have access to firearms.

Serra will not be allowed to enter the Montrose County Justice Center until Feb. 11, when his case is set for a preliminary hearing.

Serra's office has been taken over by the Colorado attorney general while his case is prosecuted.

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DA faces felony counts

Charges include unlawful sexual contact, extortion

EXTRAS

- **Document:** [Myrl Serra charging documents](#)



Seventh Judicial District Attorney Myrl Serra arrives in court Wednesday morning for his case before Mesa County Chief District Judge David Bottger.

By [Paul Shockley](#)

Thursday, November 4, 2010

Seventh Judicial District Attorney Myrl Serra allegedly exposed himself to three women in his office on

three separate occasions and subjected some of them to sexual contact in a three-year pattern of misconduct, according to charging documents filed by the Colorado Attorney General's Office.

Appearing on Wednesday before Mesa County Chief District Judge David Bottger, First Assistant Attorney General Robert Shapiro filed a seven-count complaint against Serra, including felony counts of unlawful sexual contact and criminal extortion.

Serra, 48, also was charged with three counts of indecent exposure, unlawful sexual contact as a misdemeanor and first-degree official misconduct.

Shapiro told the judge the alleged victims in the case are women Serra once held "positions of authority" over. Mike Saccone, spokesman with the attorney general's office, confirmed the women worked in Serra's office but didn't specify their positions.

Arrest affidavits in the case are expected to be unsealed today in Montrose.

Shapiro told the judge that, at the time of Serra's arrest on Sept. 30, the Colorado Bureau of Investigation had evidence of one woman's allegations, but follow-up work revealed allegations by two more women. Shapiro argued the new revelations justified an increase in Serra's bond to \$50,000. Bottger denied the request.

Serra already is restrained from contacting or visiting the offices of the Seventh Judicial District Attorney.

"No one has given me fear he won't come to court proceedings," Bottger said.

Colin Bresee, a Denver attorney who spoke on Serra's behalf, said his client has complied with existing protection orders, and adding increased bond would be punitive.

"He is still trying to get his personal checkbook out of his (office desk) drawer to balance his checkbook," Bresee told Bottger, referring to the protection order banning Serra from the office.

Serra, flanked by two attorneys, sat in the front row of Bottger's courtroom roughly a half hour before his scheduled 8:30 a.m. appearance.

"I understand that language, sir," Serra told the judge, when asked if he was familiar with protection orders in the case.

A preliminary hearing is scheduled for Feb. 11 in Montrose, and Bottger suggested he will continue to preside over the case.

Wednesday's hearing was scheduled in Grand Junction after Montrose judges disqualified themselves from Serra's case.

The attorney general's office assumed prosecution authority Sept. 30 over Serra's office, which covers Montrose, Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Ouray and San Miguel counties, after Serra was arrested that same day and posted a \$5,000 bond.

Serra was appointed to the office in January 2007 following the resignation of Thomas Raynes. Serra won re-election unopposed in 2008.

Years of misconduct alleged

The attorney general's office alleges Serra's crimes can be proven as far back as October 2007, according to charging documents filed Wednesday.

On the misdemeanor charge of unlawful sexual contact, authorities allege Serra victimized the same woman "on or about Oct. 1, 2007 through Sept. 30" this year, when he was arrested. Serra is accused of being engaged in extortion from Nov. 3, 2007, through Sept. 30 this year.

On or about March 3, 2009, up until his arrest, authorities alleged he committed first-degree official misconduct.

The most serious charge in the case, felony lawful sexual contact without consent, is alleged to have happened on or about April 1 through May 1, according to the charging documents.

If convicted on the charge, Serra would be forced to register as a sex offender and be subject to possible lifetime supervision by state parole authorities.

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Court records detail sexual allegations against Western Slope district attorney

By Nancy Lofholm
The Denver Post

Posted: 11/05/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

Updated: 11/05/2010 10:51:28 AM MDT

MONTROSE — Newly released court records show the 7th Judicial District's top prosecutor allegedly made a habit of exposing himself to, and requesting sexual favors from, some of the women who worked in his office.

District Attorney Myrl Serra also allegedly used the threat of job loss or damage to reputations when trying to coerce employees into sexual favors, according to search warrant affidavits and an affidavit in support of Serra's arrest on Sept. 30.

Serra, 48, is charged with felony unlawful sexual contact, felony criminal extortion and five

misdemeanor counts of indecent exposure and unlawful sexual contact. He has denied the allegations.

The three alleged female victims in the case, all employees of the prosecutor's office, described for investigators with the Colorado Bureau of Investigation how Serra would ask, "What will you give me?" when they requested time off or to leave work early.

One employee claimed that Serra asked her to come into his office, exposed himself and grabbed her hand to force her to touch his penis. That victim told agents she left the room and immediately told a co-worker what happened. She also took a photo of the scratches on her hand and turned that over to agents.

Another employee said Serra brought her into his office, closed the blinds and told her, "You need to help a guy out," before exposing himself and putting her hand on his penis. She said out of fear of losing her job and other possible punishment from Serra, she masturbated him 25 to 35 times at the office from late 2007 until several weeks before Serra was arrested.

On one occasion, she said, he walked toward her, unzipping his pants and asking, "How well do you like your job?"

She told agents she felt as if she was being "held hostage" by Serra.

The evidence agents gathered included overtly sexual text messages that Serra allegedly sent

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to at least one of the women and semen from two desks and carpet areas in Serra's office at the Montrose Justice Center. Agents obtained a warrant to collect a DNA swab from Serra. They are awaiting the results of DNA testing to see whether there is a match.

The investigation of Serra began when a male investigator working for Serra reported to a CBI agent that he had witnessed Serra sending an inappropriate sexual text message.

While the CBI agent was in the district attorney's satellite office in Delta looking into that matter, a female employee approached him and told him Serra had acted inappropriately toward her at a social gathering. She said her experience wasn't as bad as what some other employees had been subjected to, and she gave the agent three employees' names.

In separate interviews, the women gave agents similar stories. Other employees corroborated at least one victim's account or described lesser types of alleged sexual harassment from Serra.

Serra's attorney, Colin Bresee, said the allegations are a "he said/she said case." Bresee said he has not seen any physical evidence and that there are inconsistencies between the affidavits and the charging document when it comes to dates and some details.

Serra began working in the 7th Judicial District attorney's office in 1999 as a deputy. He was appointed district attorney in 2006 and ran unopposed in 2008. He still holds the title of

district attorney but his office has been taken over by the Colorado attorney general's office until his case is resolved.

Serra's case is scheduled for a preliminary hearing Feb. 11.

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Affidavit: Woman felt 'hostage' to DA



Seventh Judicial District Attorney Myrl Serra waits for his case to be called before Mesa County Chief District Judge David Bottger. Serra, 48, was formally charged Nov. 3 in a seven-count complaint, including felony counts of unlawful sexual contact and criminal extortion.

QUICKREAD

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WARNING: EXPLICIT LANGUAGE

[Myrl Serra documents 1](#)[Myrl Serra documents 2](#)[Myrl Serra documents 3](#)

By [Paul Shockley](#)

Friday, November 5, 2010

One of three women allegedly victimized by Seventh Judicial District Attorney Myrl Serra told investigators the prosecutor exposed himself to her 25 to 35 times while demanding and receiving sexual favors in his office for more than two years, according to records made public Thursday.

She said she felt scared for her job and “held hostage.”

“(Woman) told me of one incident in early 2008 in his office when Serra stated, ‘how well do you like your job’ as he was walking toward her unzipping his pants,” an agent with the Colorado Bureau of Investigation wrote in an arrest warrant affidavit.

The woman said she’s repeatedly told Serra she’s “going to hell” for the acts, saying she’s married, ‘but he only replies with the phrase, ‘just do it,’ ” an affidavit said.

The names of Serra’s alleged victims, all women who worked for the prosecutor, are redacted in arrest warrant affidavits unsealed and released Thursday by Montrose court officials.

Serra, 48, was formally charged Wednesday in a seven-count complaint, including felony counts of unlawful sexual contact and criminal extortion. He’s scheduled to return to court Feb. 11 in Montrose, where Mesa County Chief David Bottger continues to preside over the case.

According to the unsealed documents, an investigation was opened Sept. 23 when a CBI agent interviewed an investigator in Serra’s office, Jason Galvin, regarding an alleged inappropriate text message Serra sent to an ex-girlfriend.

While in the Delta office of the Seventh Judicial District Attorney, the agent was approached by a woman who worked there concerning possible criminal conduct by Serra, but she refused to talk in the office. She met the agent at a public park in Delta.

The woman eventually told the agent Serra made a sexual advance on her, following a recent gathering of office colleagues at a local bar. Serra allegedly told her she “had a nice ass” and placed his hand on her thigh. She told him, “this isn’t going to happen.”

When asked by the CBI if there were other women in the office who had similar experiences, she told the agent “she didn’t feel safe” disclosing what she knew.

“She told me that Serra is vindictive and if he found out that she had spoken to me about his actions that she would be fired from her job and there was nothing anyone could do to stop Serra from saying that her firing was due to poor work performance,” the agent wrote.

The woman, despite reservations, eventually provided names of women to CBI.

One woman, who cried and was “very emotional” when approached by the CBI agent, had to be assured she was in a “safe zone” to tell her story, the affidavit said.

In March 2010, she said she was called into Serra’s office and told to shut the door, after she put in for a time-off request. She thought she was in trouble for the request.

“Once she was in his office, Serra allegedly asked what she would be “willing to do” to get off early, the affidavit said.

She suggested doughnuts, to which Serra replied he was on a diet.

When she suggested fruit, he allegedly responded, “I don’t like fruit.”

When she asked what he wanted, Serra allegedly walked over, unzipped his pants and exposed himself to her. Serra allegedly grabbed the woman’s hand and placed it on his body, asking, “if she liked the way it felt.” Serra grabbed her hand with enough force to leave scratches on her wrist, the affidavit said.

“(Serra) told her she could do him a favor and he would do her a favor,” the affidavit said, further alleging Serra touched her breast.

She said she walked out of the office, calling a friend to tell what had just happened.

Based on the woman’s account, CBI agents arrested Serra Sept. 30 at his home after securing a warrant.

Multiple women, who no longer work in the Montrose prosecutor’s office, soon told agents Serra had sent numerous e-mails to them in the past which were sexual in nature and inappropriate.

Hours after Serra’s arrest, agents executed a search warrant and removed files and computers from Serra’s office. CBI lab technicians later removed spots of suspected semen from four areas on the carpet of Serra’s office. Serra was ordered to submit DNA samples shortly after his arrest.

‘Fear’

Another woman working under Serra told agents he had exposed himself and forced her to engage in sex acts, some 25 to 35 times, alone in his office, affidavits said. She said she submitted out of fear of losing her job.

The incidents began in early 2008, ending a few weeks before Serra’s arrest, she told an agent.

“I think he knows he had enough fear instilled in me that I wouldn’t say a word,” the woman told an agent. “He (Serra) also told her she liked it, that it was what she did, how she was and ‘how women are.’ “

She described Serra as sometimes “hunting” for her in the courthouse via e-mail or text message, asking “where are you?”

That, she said, meant he wanted a private meeting in his office.

When she didn’t answer, or found reasons to be away from the office, she alleged she was punished with extra work assigned to her. Time-off requests would be granted, but Serra would remind her, “you owe me,” affidavits said.

Yet another alleged victim told agents she'd received numerous "flirty" e-mails and text messages from Serra, while Serra allegedly responded to a time-off request from the woman by telling her she could "pay him back" with oral sex or brownies.

Serra's been free on bond since his arrest Sept. 30.

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Embattled DA had no discipline on license

By [Paul Shockley](#)

Monday, November 8, 2010

Although accused of repeated sexual misconduct with women in his own office over a three-year period, 7th Judicial District Attorney Myrl Serra has had no complaints against his license to practice law in Colorado, according to state judicial records.

There's also no history of discipline on Serra's license, according to the Office of Attorney Regulation Counsel, which operates under the Colorado Supreme Court.

"Everything becomes public upon the filing of a complaint," said John Gleason, a prosecutor with the Office of Attorney Regulation Counsel, which regularly brings law license complaints before a judge.

Gleason said rules of professional conduct prohibit him from confirming or denying whether his office has opened its own investigation against Serra's law license.

Aside from complaints from the public, investigations can be initiated internally by Gleason's office, which is staffed with a team of investigators. Complaints are generated automatically when an attorney is convicted of a felony.

A presiding judge hears complaints against an attorney in a proceeding similar to a court trial, and the accused attorney can present defenses against the allegations.

In 2009, eight Colorado attorneys were disbarred or stripped of law licenses, 29 were placed on probation and 52 were suspended, and public censures were issued in nine cases, according to an annual report.

Serra, 48, was charged last week in a seven-count complaint including felony charges of unlawful sexual contact with force and criminal extortion. The Colorado Attorney General's Office was appointed to assume temporary authority in Serra's office after his arrest on Sept. 30. Serra is restrained from the offices of the 7th Judicial District Attorney, where his three accusers work.

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Acting DA named after SW Colo. prosecutor's arrest

Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel counties.

Information from: The Montrose Daily Press,
<http://www.montrosepress.com>

The Associated Press

Posted: 12/17/2010 02:10:05 PM MST

Updated: 12/17/2010 02:10:06 PM MST

MONTROSE, Colo.—A Montrose lawyer has been appointed acting district attorney for six southwestern Colorado counties after the elected DA was indicted on charges of demanding sexual favors from women in his office.

The Montrose Daily Press reports that Dan Hotsenpiller, a former prosecutor, will serve as chief prosecutor for the 7th Judicial District.

The elected DA, Myrl Serra, was arrested in September on suspicion of extortion, indecent exposure, felony unlawful sexual contact and official misconduct.

One of Serra's attorneys has said there is no physical evidence in the case.

The attorney general's office had been in charge of 7th District prosecutors.

The district includes Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale,

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Montrose DA arrested for 2nd time

The Associated Press

Posted: 12/23/2010 09:42:51 AM MST

Updated: 12/23/2010 04:45:58 PM MST

MONTROSE, Colo.—A western Colorado district attorney facing criminal charges for allegedly demanding sexual favors from women in his office has been arrested again, this time on allegations of harassment and violating his bond.

The Montrose Daily Press reported Thursday that Montrose County District Attorney Myrl Serra was arrested Wednesday and later released on bond.

One of Serra's three accusers in the sexual assault case says he approached her at a store, according to an arrest affidavit from a Colorado Bureau of Investigation agent. The woman said she hid behind a clothing rack when she saw Serra and "began shaking from fear."

"She stated that she 'hunched over' behind a clothes rack, hoping Serra wouldn't see her. When she looked over the top of the rack, Serra was standing at the same rack staring at her," the affidavit said.

Serra's bond agreement prohibits him from contacting his accusers.

Surveillance video confirmed that Serra was in the store at the same time as the woman but it does not show whether the encounter by the clothes rack happened.

Serra was arrested in September on suspicion of extortion, indecent exposure, felony unlawful sexual contact and official misconduct. Serra denies the charges.

Serra's attorney told the Montrose Daily Press he's shocked that his client was arrested and called the latest incident a case of "selective prosecution."

Former prosecutor Dan Hotsenpiller was appointed acting district attorney of the 7th Judicial District last week, following Serra's indictment. The district includes Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel counties.

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Western Slope DA accused of harassing woman who accused him of sexual assault

By The Associated Press

Posted: 12/24/2010 01:00:00 AM MST

MONTROSE — A Western Slope district attorney facing criminal charges for allegedly demanding sexual favors from women in his office has been arrested again, this time on allegations of harassment and violating his bond.

The Montrose Daily Press reported Thursday that Montrose County District Attorney Myrl Serra was arrested Wednesday and later released on bond.

One of Serra's three accusers in the sexual assault case says he approached her at a store, according to an arrest affidavit from a Colorado Bureau of Investigation agent. The woman said she hid behind a clothing rack when she saw Serra and "began shaking from fear."

"She stated that she 'hunched over' behind a

clothes rack, hoping Serra wouldn't see her. When she looked over the top of the rack, Serra was standing at the same rack staring at her," the affidavit said.

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Judge sets trial on sexual-misconduct charges for former Montrose DA

By **Nancy Lofholm**
The Denver Post

Posted: 02/12/2011 01:00:00 AM MST

Updated: 02/12/2011 01:15:28 AM MST

MONTROSE — Former Montrose District Attorney Myrl Serra will stand trial in July on allegations of sexual misconduct involving three women who worked for him.

After a Friday morning hearing, Chief Mesa District Judge David Bottger ruled that there was "certainly reasonable evidence" to bind Serra over for trial in spite of defense attorneys' attempts to show that one of his alleged victims had tried to initiate an affair with Serra and that she had changed her story over a six-month period.

That witness denied those allegations and testified during the preliminary hearing Friday that in April, Serra called her into his office, unzipped his pants, then grabbed her hand and forced her to touch his genitals. She testified that she backed out of the office with her eyes closed and immediately told a female co-worker what had happened. She also took pictures of her reddened wrist with her cellphone.

The witness nervously rocked back and forth during her testimony as defense attorney Colin Bresee asked her detailed questions about the encounter. He hammered on the discrepancy

between what she initially told her co-workers — that Serra had tried to get her to touch his genitals, versus a later account she gave to the Colorado Bureau of Investigation in which she said he actually forced her.

Bresee also asked whether she had tried to initiate a sexual encounter with her boss and noted that she had texted him 63 times about letting the office staff leave early on that day. She denied wanting to have an affair with Serra.

Serra faces seven counts, including felony and misdemeanor unlawful sexual conduct, indecent exposure, criminal extortion and official misconduct related to allegations from the three female employees in the DA's office.

Only the one count of unlawful sexual misconduct involving physical force was addressed in the preliminary hearing Friday because that was the only one of the charges eligible under Colorado law for such a hearing.

Serra's two other alleged victims had similar complaints. They allege Serra held out the threat of losing their jobs if they did not comply with his wishes for sexual favors.

Serra, who appeared relaxed and smiled and laughed with his attorneys during parts of the

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hearing Friday, was arrested Sept. 30 He was ordered to stay away from his alleged victims and his former offices in the 7th Judicial District, which includes Montrose, Delta, Gunnison and San Miguel counties. Serra resigned in January after a state representative from Montrose threatened to have him impeached.

A new felony complaint was filed against Serra this week. That complaint alleges he violated bail restrictions and a restraining order and harassed one of his alleged victims in early December.

That incident took place in a Montrose department store when Serra allegedly stood across a clothing rack from his former employee and stared and grinned at her.

The charge of violation of bond is the only one of the latest charges eligible for a preliminary hearing. That hearing has been set for April 1.

Serra's trial on the other charges is scheduled for two weeks beginning July 18.

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Montrose DA bound over for trial on sex charges

By **Nancy Lofholm**
Denver Post Staff Writer

Posted: 02/28/2011 08:45:34 AM MST

Updated: 02/28/2011 08:52:05 AM MST

MONTROSE — Former Montrose District Attorney Myrl Serra will stand trial in July on allegations of sexual misconduct involving three women who worked for him.

After a morning hearing, Chief Mesa District Judge David Bottger ruled that there was "certainly reasonable evidence" to bind Serra over for trial in spite of defense attorneys' attempts to show that one of his alleged victims had tried to initiate an affair with Serra and that she had changed her story over a six-month period.

That witness denied those allegations and testified during the preliminary hearing Friday that in April Serra called her into his office, unzipped his pants then grabbed her hand and forced her to touch his genitals. She testified that she backed out of the office with her eyes closed and immediately told a female coworker what had happened. She also took pictures of her reddened wrist with her cell phone.

The witness nervously rocked back and forth during her testimony as defense attorney Colin Bresee asked her detailed questions about the encounter. He hammered on the discrepancy between what she initially told her coworkers - that Serra had tried to get her to touch his genitals, versus a later account she gave to the Colorado Bureau of Investigation in which she

said he actually forced her.

Bresee also asked if she had tried to initiate a sexual encounter with her boss and noted that she had texted him 63 times about letting the office staff leave early on that day. She denied wanting to have an affair with Serra.

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Serra's other two alleged victims had similar complaints. They allege Serra held out the threat of losing their jobs if they did not comply with his wishes for sexual favors.

Serra, who appeared relaxed, and smiled and laughed with his attorneys during parts of the hearing Friday, was arrested Sep. 30 He was ordered to stay away from his alleged victims and his former offices in the 7th Judicial District that includes Montrose, Delta, Gunnison and San



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Miguel counties. Serra resigned in January after a state representative from Montrose threatened to have him impeached.

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Ex-Montrose County DA Convicted Of Harassing Victim

Myrl Serra Faces Trial On Charges Of Sexually Harassing Employees

Alan Gathright, 7NEWS Content Producer

POSTED: 9:25 am MDT September 1, 2011

UPDATED: 9:58 am MDT September 1, 2011



MONTROSE, Colo. -- The former Montrose County district attorney, who faces trial on criminal charges of sexually harassing employees, was convicted Wednesday in a related case.

A jury found Myrl Serra guilty of violating a protection order, harassing an alleged female victim whom the order barred him from contacting and violating his bail bond conditions, [KJCT-TV](#) reported.

The protection order stems from an earlier arrest in which Serra is charged with having felony unlawful sexual contact with one of his employees.



Serra took the stand Wednesday and denied the allegations, saying he walked away quickly without any interaction after realizing who the woman was.

The former prosecutor resigned his post last fall after he was arrested on several charges, including official misconduct for allegedly coercing sexual favors from female employees. That trial is scheduled to begin Oct. 31.

Serra will be sentenced on the Wednesday conviction after the October trial is concluded.

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- December 23, 2010: [Montrose DA Arrested For 2nd Time](#)
- November 4, 2010: [Montrose DA Accused Of Demanding Sexual Favors](#)
- October 8, 2010: [Arrested DA 1st In Montrose County To Submit DNA Under New Law](#)
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Serra was convicted after he confronted the victim in his upcoming harassment case at a department store, the station said.

Both Serra and the woman involved agreed they were in the Bealls department store in Montrose at the same time.

But the woman testified that Serra "made a beeline" toward her, looked her in the eye and smirked at her, KJCT reported.

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Former Montrose County DA Myrl Serra sentenced to one year in prison and four years of sex offender probation

PRINT EMAIL 10 COMMENTS

By Nancy Lofholm
The Denver Post

POSTED: 01/19/2012 02:06:54 PM MST
UPDATED: 01/19/2012 04:36:44 PM MST



Former district attorney Myrl Serra, right, and one of his attorneys, Peter Albani, listen during his sentencing hearing Thursday, Jan. 19, 2012, in Montrose. (Nate Wick, Montrose Daily Press)

Disbarred former Montrose County District Attorney Myrl Serra today was sentenced to a year in prison and four years of sex-offender probation related to charges that he demanded sex from three women who worked in his office.

The women told authorities that he threatened their jobs, frequently exposed himself, grabbed them and forced them to provide sexual favors — crossing a line from harassment to assault — during a three-year period.

He pleaded guilty to a felony extortion count and a misdemeanor count of unlawful sexual contact, along with charges related to bond violations.

Today Montrose County District Court judge David Bottger



Myrl Serra (Colorado Attorney General's Office)

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ordered Serra to spend a year in prison for the bond violation but gave him credit for the 130 days he spent in the Montrose County jail.

For the extortion and sexual contact charges, Serra will serve 60 days in county jail and four years of sex-offender probation. He also must register as a sex offender.

In all, he faced up to 15 years in prison.

Serra's victims all testified during the sentencing hearing, calling their former boss a tyrant, dictator, sexual deviant and predator.

In his statement to the court, Serra addressed each woman, calling his interactions with them either consensual or flirting on both parts. "I regret engaging in those activities and regret my lack of judgement," he said.

As one of the victims sobbed at the back of the courtroom, Serra said his physical relationship with her had been "inappropriate" though consensual. "But I didn't take into account the disparity of power."

But Bottger wasn't swayed.

"I don't believe his version of events," he said. "I do believe victims' version of events. Either that, or they are the most astonishing actresses I have ever met."

A presentence report showed Serra has a previously undiagnosed narcissism disorder, and so as part of his probation, he must complete both mental health and sex offender treatment, Bottger said.

The report also said Serra is a low risk for reoffending.

Special prosecutor Robert Shapiro said he doubts Serra will see any prison time, however he will serve the 60 days in Montrose County jail.

Shapiro also said he expects to see Serra back in court within a year for violating the terms of his probation.

Nancy Lofholm: 970-256-1957 or nlofholm@denverpost.com

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ALLEN E H

26 days ago

The term in prison is too short. It should be 3/5

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MG O

26 days ago

He refused to take responsibility for his acts. I do not believe the punishment fit the crime. Faced up to 15 years in jail and essentially received a slap on the wrist. Pays to be a former public official connected in the legal community.

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Chris Heller

26 days ago

I went to school with him. He was quiet and nice enough person back then; Montrose in the 70s. I guess his power, as it was, changed him.

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 **Cot T** 26 days ago

Finally a real sex offender charged with a sex offense! This guy abused his power, and deserves punishment.
We are charging young kids with sex offenses for mooning or public urination, and ruining their lives, and it's nice to see an actual offender getting charged.

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 **jeff j** 26 days ago

Not so funny now huh!

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 **Rex** 27 days ago

Yet another sum-bag lawyer sent to prison. Beautiful.

Wow, a former DA is going to be a popular guy in the slammer with some of the dudes he helped put there.

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COPS AND COURTS

Former Colorado DA Myrl Serra's sentence disappoints victims

By Nancy Lofholm
The Denver Post

POSTED: 01/20/2012 01:00:00 AM MST
 UPDATED: 01/20/2012 05:13:31 AM MST

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MONTROSE — One victim sat in the back of the Montrose courtroom and sobbed when a judge handed former 7th Judicial District Attorney Myrl Serra a sentence of four years' probation for what she had just testified was a three-year run of sexual abuse that caused her "pain and sickness that I have no words to express."

The probation, along with two months in the county jail, hewed to the wishes of defense attorneys and of Serra's family and friends in the packed courtroom. It left others frustrated that Serra, who used his top prosecutor's office as his sexual playground, received far less than the 15 years in prison he faced.

Special prosecutor Robert Shapiro, who had asked for eight years in prison, put the best face on it following the sentencing. Serra's sex-offender probation will be "rigorous, invasive and in-your-face," he said. "He will be watched like a hawk."

Defense attorney Colin Bresee said the sentence was appropriate because Serra was treated like any other defendant in a misdemeanor sex-offense case.

"Myrl didn't ask for and he didn't receive any special treatment," Bresee said.

District Judge David Bottger said Serra is more likely to get treatment for his sexual and mental-health problems outside the prison system. He noted that both the probation department's pre-sentence report and the psychosexual evaluation done on all sex offenders found Serra is unlikely to re-offend because he will never again be in a position of power.

Bottger told the victims that the community owed them a debt of gratitude for coming forward.

"I don't believe his version of events," he said of Serra's denial of sexual abuse. "And I believe the victims' version of events — either that or they are the most astonishing actresses I have ever seen."

Serra's victims told the judge that Serra was a predator, a sexual



Myrl Serra, center, reacts to a judge's ruling during his sentencing hearing in his sexual-abuse case Thursday in Montrose, while his attorneys, Peter Albani, left, and M. Colin Bresee, listen. (Pool photo by Nate Wick, Montrose Daily Press)

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deviant, a dictator and a tyrant. "I was subject to torture and abuse," one victim said.

Serra, who was brought into the courtroom in shackles and a striped jail uniform, looked unmoved.

When he spoke to the judge before sentencing, he apologized for the long hair he had grown while in the county jail for the past four months. But he did not apologize to the victims.

"I've always owned my mistakes," he told the judge. But those mistakes, he said, involved having inappropriate consensual sex with women in his office, not forcing them into sexual acts. "I didn't take into account the disparity of power."

In a jail interview after the sentencing, Serra shifted into prosecutor mode and gave detailed rebuttals to points in the victims' stories of forced sexual encounters.

"Am I a pig? Yes," he said, explaining that he had sex with many women in his office, including employees, members of the public and other courthouse colleagues.

He said he is guilty of official misconduct but not of sexual abuse and not of later harassing one of the victims while he was under a no-contact order as part of his bond conditions.

Serra was found guilty of that bond violation by a jury and later pleaded guilty to the official misconduct and unlawful sexual contact charges under an "Alford" provision, in which a defendant does not admit guilt.

Serra's world began spiraling into a lurid legal affair that placed him at the defense table in September 2010, when a former girlfriend showed investigators a sexual text message Serra sent her from a DA's conference meeting. Later, three employees of the DA's office came forward with stories about Serra demanding sex, exposing himself and trying to trade sexual favors for time off or for leaving the office early.

Serra will be transported to the Denver diagnostic center for the Colorado Department of Corrections within the next week. But Shapiro said he doubts Serra will see any prison time. He will get credit for the 132 days he has already served in the Montrose County Jail.

Shapiro said he won't be surprised if Serra is sent back from the diagnostic center to serve the 60 days in Montrose.

Following that, he will be on parole for a year and will begin the four years of probation at the same time. He will also have to pay around \$14,000 in court costs and restitution.

Shapiro said that "given his level of denial and victim blaming," he expects to see Serra back in court on a probation revocation within a year for violating the terms of his probation.

Serra said he "got what I wanted" out of the sentencing.

He said he gets to have contact with his 10-year-old adopted son through a special sentencing provision. Sex-offender stipulations normally call for no contact with minors.

"I got my kid," he said. "I win."

Nancy Lofholm: 970-256-1957 or nlofholm@denverpost.com

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jaj m

6:23 PM on Thursday Jan 26

this is ridiculous...none of these women were raped...in fact if they were boning him for days off and stuff...they are whores...all you have to do is....say it together ladies...tell him NO...I will say it again...tell him NO...the chicks are just mad cuz now the public knows they WILLINGLY slept with this ugly dork!!!

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Jim A

1:18 PM on Friday Jan 20

JAWS wrote:

cv62topcat wrote: I just had to make a similar comment about the Ex-Sheriff Sullivan case being handled by the State. So let me get this straight:

In the 18nd Judicial District in Arapahoe County, the DA kicks the case to the state AG because of Sullivan's close relationship with the justice system there. In the 7th JD, nothing similar happens. In the 7th JD, the same office that Serra previously ran prosecutes him and the same JD judge that Serra's people prosecuted cases before, gives him a light sentence. In the Serra

case, the matter wasn't kicked to the state AG or even handled by a different judicial district?

Perhaps it was a case of... "In these parts, we don't need no outsiders decidin' how to handle our home-town perverts."

Very clearly stated that Robert Shapiro, special prosecutor to the case, handled the prosecution. The DP is not doing anyone a favor by failing to report that this misdemeanor plea was arranged through the special prosecutor and the judge simply rubber-stamped it AFTER the prosecutor affirmed the deal. Later during press statements is when Shapiro went on his rant about wanting 8 years, again for misdemeanor's, acting is acting is acting.....

Does this mean that there wasn't an option for the 7th JD to request a change in venue? If not, why do you think it wasn't requested?

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PETER C

12:48 PM on Friday Jan 20

JAWS wrote:

mesaguy wrote:

PETERCOULTER wrote:

ALLEN E wrote:

mesaguy wrote: I really hope he has a very bad time in prison. Anyone other than a lawyer would be doing at least 5 years hard time. His defense lawyers are laughing all the way to the bank.

I wanted to see at least three years incarceration, with five year probation.

I can see him trying to practice law somewhere.

I respectfully disagree. Luckily, Serra didn't have any "friends" in the Office of Attorney Regulation and they disbarred him. Below, find a link to that proceeding.

<http://www.lawweekonline.com/2011/12/ex-montrose-da-myrl-serra-disbarred/>

I believe Serra is disbarred in Colorado only. I am sure he will be relocating once he gets out of prison. (if he survives)

One of the first questions on the bar exam is: Have you ever been barred or disbarred in another state? - Obviously they already know the answer because the part of trier to join any state bar is applying, with fingerprints, and the state does a background check & public records check for each state that you've resided in as well as federally. Serra' name is already on that same ABA database because of his disbarment in CO - as of right now, all 50 states share the reciprocity for actions due to disbarment. He won't be practicing law - ever.

Correct, but just like other suspended or disbarred attorneys; they become paralegals to some other attorney and carry on their actions.

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Mike H

11:54 AM on Friday Jan 20

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District Judge David Bottger

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Jim A

11:04 AM on Friday Jan 20

I just had to make a similar comment about the Ex-Sheriff Sullivan case being handled by the State. So let me get this straight:

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Alfred R

10:44 AM on Friday Jan 20

*Womanofconcern wrote:*Mr. Alreud interesting...

so if the VICTIM in Mr. Serra's office would have shot him, killing him, Society would allow it?

I am glad that you and I disagree Mr. Alreud... Your way of thinking is well...archaic.

...

Only to the point of defending themselves from physical force being used against them. In the instance of Mr. Serra, he used authority, intimidation, and economic blackmail (loss of job), the normal modus operandi of oppressors, rather than physical force.

If they would have sent him to the hereafter, well, they may have been doing society a favor

and sending a message, but they would also have to pay the price for their crime. Two wrongs don't make a right. In the sense of crime and punishment, though I accept your determination. Some of my beliefs in that respect are, well, old school...

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Donduk K

10:22 AM on Friday Jan 20

mesaguy wrote:

PETERCOULTER wrote:

ALLEN E wrote:

mesaguy wrote: I really hope he has a very bad time in prison. Anyone other than a lawyer would be doing at least 5 years hard time. His defense lawyers are laughing all the way to the bank.

I wanted to see at least three years incarceration, with five year probation.

I can see him trying to practice law somewhere.

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I believe Serra is disbarred in Colorado only. I am sure he will be relocating once he gets out of prison. (if he survives)

That, and he can always be reinstated to the Colorado bar. Why, the reinstatement application form is even available online: [http://forms.justia.com/colorado/federa ... 37237.html](http://forms.justia.com/colorado/federa...37237.html). Maybe Serra is already filling one out.

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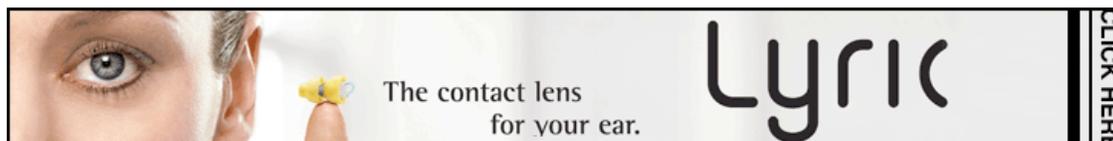
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Former District Attorney Myrl Serra's fall from grace baffles town of Montrose

PRINT EMAIL

By Nancy Lofholm
The Denver Post

POSTED: 01/22/2012 01:00:00 AM MST
UPDATED: 01/22/2012 01:12:42 PM MST

MONTROSE — The man working the counter at the Rose Bowl bowling alley is philosophical about one of the most shocking public falls from grace ever to occur in this town.

"Power does different things to different people," Mike King says, as the crack of balls on pins and the thump of rock music threatens to drown out his words.

King, like many in this town of 19,000, will never understand what happened to longtime 7th Judicial District Attorney Myrl Serra.

For years, Serra hung out here every Wednesday night, bowling and drinking with his teammates. As a former pro bowler, he was known as one of the best to roll a ball down these lanes.

In his spare time, the sixth of seven children in a well-respected Italian Catholic family also kept a high profile as a local radio sports broadcaster, a youth coach, a baseball player and an active community volunteer.

It was hard to live in Montrose and not know who Myrl Serra was.

Today, it is even harder to not know who Myrl Serra has become: the prison-bound convicted felon, the registered sex offender, the man his victims call a sexual deviant, a predator and a tyrant. He is the shackled man escorted by two guards into the same courtroom where he used to reign as the top prosecutor.

All of that has caused collective head-scratching in Montrose, where he was a prosecutor for 12 years until he was arrested in September 2010 and later pleaded guilty — under a legal classification that doesn't admit guilt — to criminal extortion and unlawful sexual contact. A jury also found him guilty of a



Myrl Serra says from jail that he had many sexual encounters at work but that they were all consensual.

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bond violation.

"You can't mess with me"

His court file, which has grown so thick it can no longer fit through the court clerk's window slot, details a three-year period when Serra turned the area's top law enforcement office into a crime scene. It became a place where, behind locked doors and closed blinds, his victims say he preyed on the vulnerable, exposed himself, bargained for sex and threatened some female employees with losing their jobs, their families and their reputations if they didn't do what he wanted. This from an e-mail to one of his victims: "I am the master. You can't mess with me."

When he was sentenced Thursday to four years of intensive sex-offender probation and 60 days in jail for the sex-related convictions and a year in prison for a bond violation, Serra remained defiant.

He told Judge David Bottger and a courtroom packed with his family and friends, as well as his victims and their supporters, that, yes, his moral compass had gotten off track but that he never forced anyone to do anything.

Following that sentencing, his victims declined to comment.

But Serra gave his version of the events that brought him down: "Do you remember what Henry Kissinger said about power being the ultimate aphrodisiac?"

Serra asked this a half-hour after his sentencing as he sat behind a glass visiting screen in the Montrose County jail.

"I can't tell you how many people had sex with me in my office — employees, women from the probation office, clerks, members of the public," he said. "Yes, I had sex in my office. But it was always consensual.

"This whole thing about forcing anybody to do anything or threatening people with loss of jobs or whatever — that's not true."

Over the next 2 1/2 hours, Serra returned to that point again and again, much of the time slipping into prosecutor mode as he detailed what he saw as holes in the case against him.

Where did the memory card go from one victim's phone?

How did evidence that he said would prove another victim was a consensual sex partner get deleted from his Black Berry?

Why did a victim unsuccessfully apply for a promotion to be his personal secretary two weeks before she told investigators he had been sexually harassing her for a lengthy time?

"God bless Judge Bottger, but they are good actresses," he said about his victims.

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God bless Judge Douget, but they are good addresses," he said about his victims.

Serra also made light of some of the things that were said of him in the courtroom. He joked about a psychiatric evaluation that determined he had a previously undiagnosed mental illness known as narcissistic disorder.

"Now, I find out I'm crazy," he said, making quote marks in the air when he mentioned the word "crazy."

"I have issues. Everybody has issues," he said. "Was I a pig? Yeah. Do I chase women, smoke cigars and drink whiskey? Yeah."

List of supporters impressive

In spite of his self-professed penchant for frequent office sex, Serra has a list of supporters that reads like a Montrose who's who. More than three dozen of them wrote letters to let the judge know about another Myrl Serra — the pro bowler, the admirable single father of a son, the friend who was always ready to help out and the role model for young people.

Adjectives such as "responsible," "trustworthy," "intelligent" and "hard-working" are repeated again and again.

Serra's 80-year-old mother, Gwen, insists there aren't two Myrls. Even after sitting in the front row of the courtroom this week and listening to shaky-voiced victims tell how Serra's actions terrified and tormented them, she doesn't believe "what is supposed to have happened."

"I just can't picture any of my kids, least of all Myrl, to do anything to hurt anyone," she said.

The son she describes was a high achiever along with siblings that include a physician, a banker and a Duke University professor — all bearing names that begin with "M."

Serra first made his own mark as an all-around high school athlete, award-winning cornet player, Honor Society member and national championship bowler. He went to Arizona State University on bowling and academic scholarships and won national bowling championships at that level.

He turned pro the year after he graduated from college and might have gone on to a much different career if it hadn't been for shoulder injuries that made it hard for him to compete.

He turned to his backup plan: law school.

Serra, now 50, never married, but he adopted a baby boy who is now 10. His son is living with one of Serra's sisters while his father is incarcerated.

As a registered sex offender, Serra could have been ordered to have no contact with his son. But the judge gave him special permission to be with his son, although he can't have contact with any other children younger than 18 or with any of his victims. He must report any personal relationships he has. He has to abide by a curfew. His home and his computer can be searched at any time.

Serra said he also must "re-invent" himself.

He has been permanently disbarred as a lawyer, is broke, and has his house headed to foreclosure.

"I can still swing a hammer," he said, referring to the carpentry work he used to do with his late father.

He said he had drafted a resignation letter before he was arrested. He had had enough of

Post Poll - Colorado TABOR

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being district attorney.

Did his out-of-control office sexual appetites play any part?

He shifted uncomfortably before answering.

"Maybe."

In spite of losing everything but his son and taking so much from victims, Serra said he still views himself as a winner. He jokes that could be a result of his — quote marks in the air again — narcissistic disorder.

"I was hoping to have more of a chance to redeem myself in the community," he added. "But, oh well."

Nancy Lofholm: 970-256-1957 or nlofholm@denverpost.com

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PREVIEW COMMENT

TOGGLE: OLDEST FIRST NEWEST FIRST



mike m

6:41 PM on Sunday Jan 22

This guy deserves alot more time! What if he was a minority and unemployed, it would be a much different sentence, Time to make an example!

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gianna d

6:38 PM on Sunday Jan 22

Too bad for Serra that he isn't a talk show host like Letterman, instead of a DA; then, he could go his show and be applauded and draw laughter for admitting his sexual activity with employees. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-pP8C-BPC5E> :roll:

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ALLEN E H

11:23 AM on Sunday Jan 22

*cv62topcat wrote:**PETERCOULTER wrote:*

ALLEN E wrote: When the issue is he said-she said the issue is brushed aside. When it is he said-2 she said, attention is paid to the allegations. Multiply that by three or four allegations, people pay attention. Why didn't people in the office pay attention, or even say something? Fear?

It is unfortunate that this low-life is getting a small sentence. The atmosphere created in his office must have been hell for the women. He bragging to friends of his conquests. **What baffles me is that the judge gave him special consideration.**

I would like to take a stab at answering that question:

- 1.) No one likes getting a black eye, including the Colorado Judicial Branch, and Myrl Serra gave it two shiners. Instead of facing and fixing the issue, they went into damage control.
- 2.) The Court, (Attorney General) brought in Shapiro as a special prosecutor. He never asked for a change of venue. Why?
- 3.) The Judge, David Bottger, has/had a duty to recuse himself (without Motion) if there is the slightest chance or appearance of impropriety or bias. He never did. Why?
- 4.) Serra was represent by Peter Albani, who practiced out of Greenwood Village, Colorado.



Mr. Albani never made a Motion for a change of venue even though he knew there would be bias against his client. Why? Here is another interesting question about Mr. Albani. He had been suspended and then probation by the Colorado Supreme Court on 7/08/2011.

<http://www.coloradosupremecourt.com/Search/SCInfo.asp?Regnum=13982>

5. Shapiro was beating his chest after the decision saying he wanted at least 8 years. Then why did he agree to settle?

6. Judge Bottger didn't have to accept the plea bargain. Why didn't he reject it and take it to trial if he didn't believe Serra?

The entire case was completely orchestrated beforehand to the detriment, embarrassment and expense of the victims by the shameless Judicial Branch to cover its own ***. Like I have said, they put on the "**Greatest Show on Earth**".

Not only a thumbs up but a spirited Here Here!

Followed by a standing ovation. Damn good post.

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Jim A

11:19 AM on Sunday Jan 22

PETERCOULTER wrote:

ALLEN E wrote: When the issue is he said-she said the issue is brushed aside. When it is he said-2 she said, attention is paid to the allegations. Multiply that by three or four allegations, people pay attention. Why didn't people in the office pay attention, or even say something? Fear?

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P

PETER C

11:07 AM on Sunday Jan 22

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Jim A

11:00 AM on Sunday Jan 22

"Do you remember what Henry Kissinger said about power being the ultimate aphrodisiac?"

That's a true statement and it is certainly manifested in **Washington D.C.**

But we're talking about Montrose Colorado, where the DA "hung out every Wednesday night, bowling and drinking with his teammates." What a Man of the People, a man who was revered by the community. Every little kid wanted to grow up and be just like him.

But then. Maybe poor poor Meryl is just a victim of that dreaded disease known as "sex addiction." If he caught that disease (perhaps it should be known as Kissinger Syndrome), shouldn't he be treated for it instead of being pilloried?

/sarc

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Steve C

10:44 AM on Sunday Jan 22

I imagine his attitude will change a bit after he gets hammered during SO counseling. I bet he gets extended for lack of progress.

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Reduced sentence for former Montrose DA Myrl Serra rejected

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The Associated Press

POSTED: 03/16/2012 07:44:59 AM MDT
UPDATED: 03/16/2012 08:40:07 AM MDT

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo.—A former district attorney accused of harassing women in his office will serve his full one-year prison sentence. The state parole board rejected a plea from Myrl Serra to be set free. Serra is being given credit for time served and is scheduled to be released in July.



Myrl Serra (file / Colorado Attorney General's office)

According to the Grand Junction Daily Sentinel (<http://bit.ly/zsf7v1>), three women who had worked for Serra while he was the top prosecutor in Montrose told investigators of a three-year pattern of sexual misconduct while working under threats of losing their jobs.

He was convicted in August of violating a restraining order after he was accused of harassing one of his accusers.

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- [Ousted DA Serra's crimes show sex harassment endures, though claims are falling](#)
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Information from: The Daily Sentinel, <http://www.gjsentinel.com>

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Post Poll - Ramsey Case

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