

## **Jackson Stephens active in Venice, FL**

**By Daniel Hopsicker**

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Jackson Stephens, a name often linked with America's super-secret National Security Agency, has been an influential presence for several decades in the tiny town that served as port of entry into U.S. flight and even military training for the terrorist cadre implicated in the Sept 11 attacks.

A block away from the Venice, Florida, airport stands an opulent three-story red brick building that is a monument to the rivers of money flowing through the Stephens financial empire.

Looking eerily-reminiscent of the plush digs of the law firm in the Tom Cruise movie "The Firm" or a particularly-ostentatious Southern governor's mansion, the building seems out of place alongside the weed-strewn airport perimeter.

This was the national headquarters of Jackson Stephen's Beverly Enterprises. It is a stone's throw from the Venice airport.

Gleaming like a movie set and basking in Florida's Indian summer, the building still houses Stephens' former law firm, local political powerhouse Boone, Boone, Boone, Hines & Koda, a firm that worked so closely with client Stephens that at least one of his executives was permanently housed there.

"I don't think you could safely say that they (Boone & Boone) run everything in town," said one local observer. "But you could safely say they run almost everything. They exert a strong influence here, including out at the airport."

Why did Mohammed Atta and his terrorist cadre pick tiny Venice, Florida, to be their terrorist beachhead?

Did puritanical Islamic fundamentalists have a previously unknown fascination or fetish for kindly Caucasian widows with blue hair, so abundant here?

Or were they instead drawn by a covert operation of the U.S. intelligence agency to which Stephens is persistently linked, the National Security Agency?

Curiously, furious government intelligence officials recently accused the NSA of destroying data pertinent to the Sept 11 probe, reported the Boston Globe, stating possible leads stemming from the Sept. 11 attack weren't being followed because of the NSA.

Jackson Stephens name, so often linked to the NSA, has made a brief appearance in almost every whispered about scandal or cover-up in America in the past two decades.

He was named in the BCCI (Bank of Commerce and Credit International) criminal bank scandal, in the death of Vince Foster and the stolen Promis software scandal of the Justice Department, and in the 1996 campaign finance scandal involving allegations of Red Chinese money.

Most notably, Jackson Stephens has already been named in one intelligence-related aviation scandal: the gun-running and cocaine smuggling at Mena, Arkansas, during the 1980s that was behind Iran-Contra and Whitewater.

Were Stephens to be implicated in yet another intelligence-related aviation scandal, it would be, for him, something very much like two in a row.

### **More about Stephens**

He was the chief domestic campaign contributor to both George Bush Senior and Bill Clinton.

“At first glance it might seem curious that former President George Bush would attend an event honoring Jackson T. Stephens, the biggest Democratic power broker in Bill Clinton’s home state,” read one news report. “But Mr. Stephens, a self-made billionaire investment banker and philanthropist, is financing a cause that transcends politics: golf.”

While Stephens is often busy with his many philanthropic activities, he did manage to find enough time to later be fingered as the “Old Man” behind the Mena, Arkansas, cocaine smuggling scandal dogging Bill Clinton throughout his time in office.

Interestingly enough, the Venice airport also surfaced briefly in the questioning of Oliver North during the Iran-Contra hearings, when a man with a local aviation business named Joe Duncan was alleged to have run guns to the Contras from the airport.

Stephens’ colorful curriculum vitae also includes the fact that he was roommates with President Jimmy Carter at the US Naval Academy.

The founder of Stephens’ law firm in Venice, E.G. Dan Boone, is also no slouch in the roommate department. His college roommate, back when both were University of Florida Gators, was former Florida Governor Lawton Chiles.

Jackson Stephen’s connections to Venice are raising anew questions about the shadowy “international networks” reputed to have aided and harbored the Arab men who carried out the most heinous terrorist crime in history.

Did 19 Arab men from desert kingdoms roam the Florida Gulf Coast as freely as if they’d been listening to Tom Petty albums all their lives. . . . without U.S. government knowledge and approval?

In a series of articles touching on Stephens five years ago called “Allegations Regarding Vince Foster, the NSA, and Banking Transactions Spying,” Prof. J. Orlin Grabbe wrote, “In 1983 the Stephens brothers acquired controlling interest in Arkansas’ largest bank holding company, Worthen Banking Corp. Another major shareholder in Worthen was Mochtar Riady, an Indonesian banker closely connected to President Suharto. Jackson Stephens met Riady in 1976, when Riady wanted to buy into an American bank. Two years later Riady and Stephens Inc. set up a joint venture, Stephens Finance Ltd., in Hong Kong.”

“Later in 1983 Stephens and Riady bought Seng Heng Bank in Macao, and in 1984 they bought the Hong Kong Chinese Bank,” Grabbe wrote. “Hong Kong was then the banking center for the heroin trade, just as Panama was the banking center for the cocaine trade.”

## **Whoops**

Osama Bin Laden has been cited by numerous sources as being involved in the heroin trade, dominated by his adopted country of Afghanistan.

The typical deal, according to knowledgeable sources, is oil and heroin for weapons and training.

Besides knowledge of how to steer a Boeing airliner into a 110-story skyscraper, were there other commodities, too, being traded on the Gulf Coast of Florida, while the terrorist pilots practiced touch and go’s at the Venice airport?

Presumably the FBI has already looked into all of this.

In another development, Rudi Dekkers, owner of the flight school of choice for the terrorists, has reportedly been recently indicted Holland, his native country, on financial charges that may include fraud and money laundering, according to law enforcement officials.

Dutch authorities first recognized Dekkers on CNN, where he was ubiquitous in the days after the disaster, said a second source, who credited Larry King Live for having performed, in this case, a function normally reserved for shows like America’s Most Wanted.

Dekkers professed to be unaware of any pending indictment . . .

“My lawyer in the Netherlands has said nothing to me about any indictment,” he said.

Dekkers told us, “I can’t imagine that I could have done anything wrong.”

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