

## Friends Stunned by Allegations Ron Wilson Ran Ponzi Scheme

### Hearing in Columbia This Week

Hits: 12353

Most people who know, or thought they knew former State Education Board Member and Anderson County Councilman Ron Wilson fit into one of two categories: friends and enemies. Currently the latter are dominant.

Many friends who invested their life savings with Wilson are stunned by news reports that he was running a ponzi scheme and some were his victims. They now have nothing but a computer printout to show for their money. They have hopes that all is not lost, but Wilson does not return their phone calls and has now lost control of company assets.

Wilson is very intelligent with a powerful personality and unusual ability to persuade individuals and groups to do his bidding. He could probably sell snowballs to Eskimos and convince them an ice shortage due to global warming was imminent.

Ron Wilson was elected to Anderson County Council as an outsider and in one term virtually took over the council and county operations. He became close-friends with County Administrator Joey Preston, the man he was elected to fire. Preston left the top county office with a million-dollar retirement package allegedly engineered by Wilson. Friends of Preston now say he invested the million dollars in Wilson's silver shares.

Wilson is accused of selling securities without a license. Attorney General Charlie Condon ordered Wilson to stop selling securities in 1996, but neither the Attorney General nor Wilson announced the order to the public and Wilson allegedly continued violating the order until recently when Attorney General Wilson filed a complaint and made it public. That was the first time many customers of Wilson's Atlantic Bullion and Coin business realized they were in trouble and may never see their investment returned in full.

Court records allege that Ron Wilson's company collected approximately \$71 million in sales from 2009 to the present in 26 states.

Several Atlantic Bullion and Coin customers have recently discussed their experiences with The Times Examiner. Some small investors exchanged dollars for silver coins on the spot and have no complaints. Others invested large amounts of dollars and received a periodic report showing how their investment was growing. They were told their silver was stored elsewhere.

It was only when one investor asked for a substantial portion of his investment back in cash that he sensed something was seriously wrong and engaged Wilson in conversation. A week before the Attorney General's report surfaced, Ron Wilson was assuring the customer that all was well. He has been unable to contact Wilson since that conversation.

Since that time, federal agents have raided the business offices and a judge has frozen Wilson's assets and bank accounts.

## Friends Stunned by Allegations Ron Wilson Ran Ponzi Scheme

One of Wilson's closest long time friends is devastated. He never would have believed Wilson would lie to and cheat anyone, especially a very close friend.  
Published: Wednesday, 28 March 2012 10:00  
Hits: 12353

Wilson was so convincing that this friend invested all that he had, his retirement account and an elderly family member's life savings with Wilson. Now he is selling collectible items he treasures in order to survive financially.

At least one lawyer is trying to organize investors and file a class action suit against Wilson. Should that happen, lawyers would acquire much of what may be recovered from the business if Wilson is guilty as accused.

It is predictable that a large gathering of Atlantic Bullion and Coin investors will gather in Columbia if they can determine the time and location of Wilson's hearing this week. Many of them are seniors. They are frightened and they are very angry.

Local, state and federal officials held a meeting with almost 300 investors in Easley, Monday night. The investors were given assurances that Ron Wilson would not leave the country and that remaining assets are being safeguarded. Investors wanted to know how the government could allow an illegal operation to continue after ordering it shut down in 1996. A bill is circulating in the legislature to require public notification of similar problems in the future.

A hearing with Wilson present is set for Thursday morning at 10:30 in Columbia. Many investors are expected to attend.