

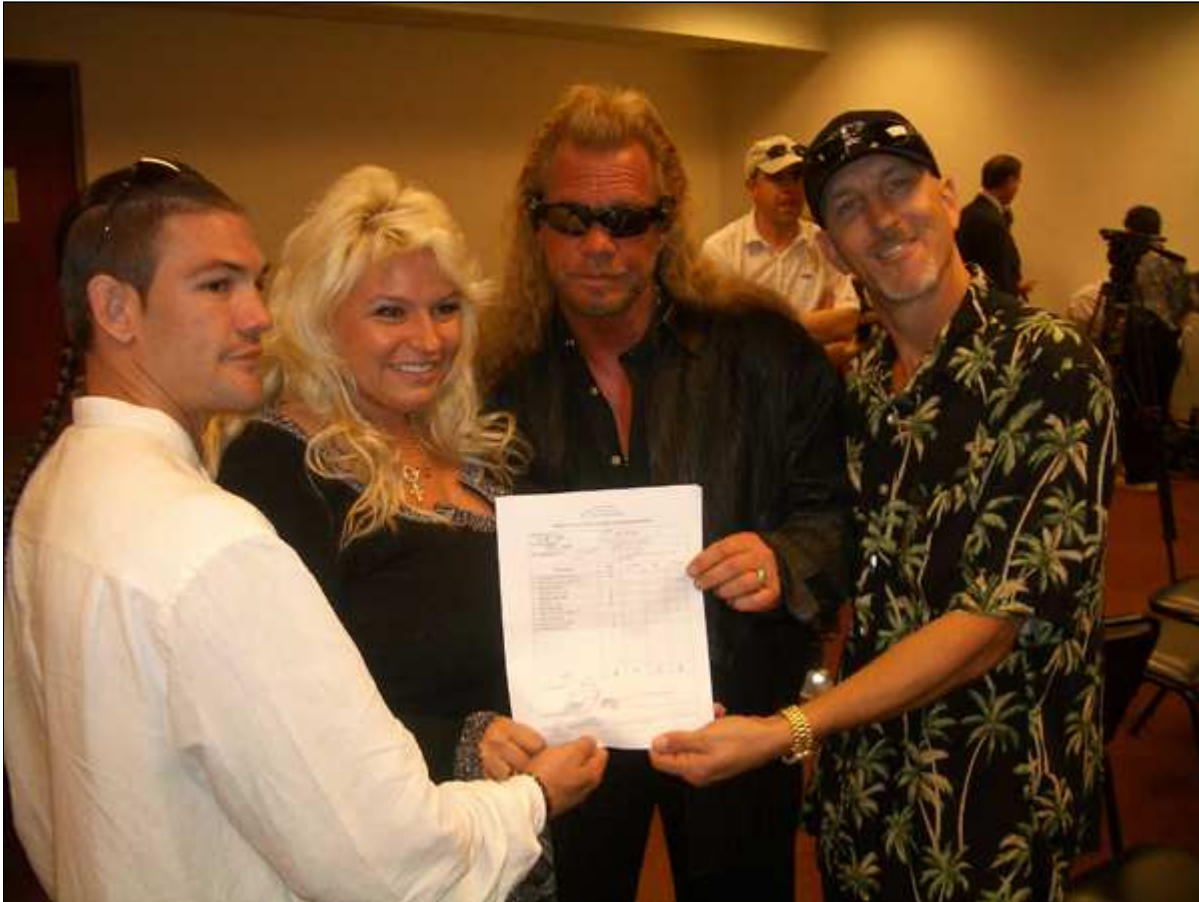
Hawaii Reporter

Freedom to Report Real News

Dog Chapman 'Unleashed' from Mexican Extradition, Charges

News for the A&E Star Comes Just as He Launches His Book, "You Can Run but You Can't Hide: The Life and Times of Dog the Bounty Hunter"

By Malia Zimmerman, 8/1/2007 3:23:17 PM



Charges against *A & E* bounty hunting television stars Duane "Dog" Chapman, 53, Leland Chapman, 29, and Timothy Chapman, 41, have been dropped by the Mexican Court in Puerto Vallarta, says Chapman spokesperson Mona Wood.

The Chapman attorney received word of a favorable ruling, but he is still in the process of sorting out the details.

Though Wood says the Chapmans are thrilled, (Dog Chapman shouted "Hallelujah" and "Viva La Mexico!" when he heard the news) they are still awaiting actual translation of the court documents from Spanish to English before celebrating.

The Chapman trio is well known for their reality show on *A&E*, now in its 5th season. The show, "Dog the Bounty Hunter" is based on their work in Hawaii and the mainland as bounty hunters, where they chase down and apprehend criminals who've violated the terms of their bail. They've rounded up more than 6,000 bail jumpers and criminals in the last quarter of a century.

The Chapmans went to Mexico in 2003 in hot pursuit of a serial rapist, who fled the United States after being

convicted in a California court for three rapes. The target was the Max Factor heir Andrew Luster, who is now serving 124 years in prison in the United States as a result of their work. They apprehended Luster on June 18, 2003, and he was jailed the next day.

But rather than cheering the Chapmans for removing a convicted serial rapist from their country before he struck again, the Mexican government charged the Chapmans with illegal detention and conspiracy, throwing them in a cold, dark and dangerous Mexican prison for refusing to turn over Luster to them. Bounty hunting is illegal in Mexico.

The case -- and their treatment by the Mexican government -- launched them into the international spotlight, and eventually landed them the A&E gig, now the most popular series on the network for the past two years.

The Chapmans were supposed to appear at a court hearing there on July 15, 2003, but never showed on their lawyer's advice. At Mexico's urging, the U.S. Office of International Affairs in Washington D.C. gave an order in October 2006 to arrest the Chapmans with the intent of extraditing them to Mexico.

Hawaii's head U.S. Marshall, Mark "Dutch" Hanohano, said at the time that the order for their arrest came from Washington D.C. -- and their arrest was executed by seven deputies without incident at the Chapmans' Hawaii Portlock home.

Congressman Tom Tancredo, R-CO, was one of the 29 Congressmen who tried to intervene. He said in 2006 that he was outraged at the U.S. government's treatment of the Chapmans and took a shot at Mexican authorities: "Thanks to Mr. Chapman, Luster is now serving a 124-year sentence. It seems that Mexican authorities are pressing this case only because they are so stung by the embarrassment of failing where Mr. Chapman succeeded."

Hawaii's Congressional delegation refused to get involved or advocate for the Chapmans, with the exception of then Congressman Ed Case, who did write to the U.S. Department of Justice for an explanation of the Chapmans' arrest.

In March 2007, Hawaii State Rep. Gene Ward, R-Hawaii Kai, and Sen. Sam Slom, R-Hawaii Kai, both representing the district where the Chapmans live, authored resolutions in support of the Chapmans and called on Mexico to drop all extradition efforts. The resolution had a hearing in the House. In the end of the more than hour-long hearing, all of the lawmakers on the committee -- Republican and Democrat -- offered their resounding support to the Chapman family. The Chapmans were thrilled by the bi-partisan support.

The good news for the Chapmans comes just as Dog Chapman launches his new book, "You Can Run but You Can't Hide: The Life and Times of Dog the Bounty Hunter" (Hyperion, \$25.95), tonight, Aug. 1, at 7 p.m. at Kahala Mall's Center Court. Fans are advised to purchase their books at Barnes & Noble and pick-up an autograph ticket at the store. DVDs of Chapman's A&E series, "Dog the Bounty Hunter," will also be sold at Barnes & Noble for signing, but no other items will be signed.

This has been a busy month for the Chapmans, Wood says. "Dog Chapman recently returned from a very busy three weeks in Colorado, where he added another 16 fugitives to his 6,000-plus captures in that brief period. Their Colorado arrests included a professional knife-thrower, a man who had been convicted of murder and disposed of bodies for a career, a prison escapee, and a fugitive armed with an AK47 with 37 live rounds." They also plan a series of upcoming national media appearances, Wood says, including *Larry King Live*.

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