

‘Soccer-mom madam’ wants Bethany lawyer Norm Pattis to represent her

By William Kaempffer, Register Staff

The so-called “soccer-mom madam” from New York wants Bethany lawyer Norman Pattis to help her get out of jail and serve as her lead defense counsel on a charge she operated a prostitution ring for the New York elite.

But on Wednesday, a judge delayed making a decision.

Pattis, a go-to criminal defense and civil rights attorney in Greater New Haven, may enter the international stage with a new client — Anna Gristina, a mother of four who allegedly operated a prostitution service known for its discretion and wealthy, famous clients.

A New York judge Wednesday took the request under advisement. Pattis, who is licensed to practice federal law in New York isn't authorized to practice law there under state jurisdiction. Pattis requested special permission.

The judge wasn't yet willing to grant the request and indicated he would revisit the question Tuesday.

Tapping Pattis was the latest twist in the salacious case that has become television and tabloid fodder in New York and beyond.

Indeed, a news lead in the New York Post Wednesday noted that “accused hockey-mom madam Anna Gristina seems to change

“Pattis wrote “George Zimmerman shoots a kid, killing him, and then gets a \$150,000 bond. Ivan Ramos, a fellow accused of raping, sodomizing and robbing a young woman in Greenwich Village, is released on a \$300,000 bond. Gristina, who killed no one, engaged in no act of violence, and was, if the allegations are true, guilty only of discretion is treated as though she were public enemy number one. What gives?”

“I say it is all about her black book.”

lawyers more often than a brothel changes the sheets.”

She had requested Pattis be appointed her latest lawyer, and he filed a “pro hoc vice” motion seeking permission to represent her even though he is not licensed to practice law in New York.

“Notwithstanding the fact that she has fired her attorney, he has asked that he stay on until this is resolved,” Pattis said in a statement Wednesday. “This is an extremely unusual turn of events that raises difficult Sixth Amendment issues. I look forward to addressing them in court next week.”

Even before he appeared before a New York judge Wednesday, Pattis already began poking a legal stick at the high bail set for the alleged madam. Though she has no criminal record, she has been held since her arrest earlier this year in lieu of \$2 million bail. Her family started a website seeking to raise money to help post bail.

“Anna Gristina is, perhaps, the most powerful woman in the United States just now,” Pattis wrote in his blog last month. “And that explains why she is sitting in Rikers Island on a \$2 million bond. It is almost as if the monied class, the folks who

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know how to manipulate the secret levers of power, are afraid of what she will do if she is set free.”

It was unclear whether the post was written before or after he was initially contacted to represent Gristina.

Gristina is charged with one count of promoting prostitution, a class D felony in New York.

In his blog, Pattis said most first-time offenders might resolve a case of this sort with a plea and probation.

But Pattis opined that most people aren't Anna Gristina.

“You see, she is rumored to be madam to the power elite. Her black book, the list of who's been naughty, reportedly contained such names as former presidential candidate John Edwards. If you listen to the gossip, Gristina's been brokering lust to tycoons for many years, amassing a fortune believed to be in the millions of dollars.” He pointed to other high-profile cases, juxtaposing the bails set by judges.

“Let me see if I get this straight,” Pattis wrote. “George Zimmerman shoots a kid ..., killing him, and then gets a \$150,000 bond. Ivan Ramos, a fellow accused of raping, sodomizing and robbing a young woman in Greenwich Village, is released on a \$300,000 bond. Gristina, who killed no one, engaged in no act of violence, and was, if the allegations are true, guilty only of discretion is treated as though she were public enemy number one. What gives?”

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Gristina, a native of Scotland, is accused of moonlighting for 15 years

as a multimillion-dollar Manhattan madam. ■