Jeffery Epstein

 By Kris Lemon

 It seems Epstein’s case took a little “detour” around local and state rules regarding the sealing of court documents. When at Epstein’s plea conference on his state charges, apparently the judge, defense attorney, and prosecutor had, what they call a “side bar”, a huddle session at the bench, decided that the deal Epstein had struck with the Federal Prosecutors to avoid charges should be sealed, this was according to the transcript of the hearing. So that is what took place.

 According to Florida Rules of Judicial Administration, as well as the rules of the Palm Beach County Court System, it required public notification that a court document would be or had been sealed, basically meaning it would be kept from public view. It also required the judge to find a significant reason to seal such as protecting a trade secret or a compelling government interest. It seem there was no notification or reasoning in Epstein’s case. His own attorneys, in federal filings, had referred to his confidentiality deferred prosecution agreement with the U.S. Attorney’s Office in Sept. ’07 as “unprecedented” and “highly unusual.” It was also a “significant inducement” for Epstein to accept the state’s deal, observe the state judge who accepted his plea. Inducement means to persuade or influence someone to do something. This was done in front of County Judge Deborah Dale Pucillo. Apparently Epstein’s attorney, Jack Goldberger and then Asst. State Attorney Lanna Belohlavek approached Pucillo in a sidebar conference. It appears Purcillo returned to the bench after being away for 9 yrs and was filling in temporarily.

 It appears Goldberger informed Pucillo that Epstein had entered a confidential agreement with the U.S. Attorney’s Office in which Federal Prosecutors brokered not pursuing charges against him if he pleaded guilty in state court. Pucillo wanted a sealed copy of the agreement filed in his case. Goldberger concurred that he wanted it sealed. Belohlavek later on signed off on it. Apparently the Florida Supreme Court expressed “serious concern” and launched an all-out inquiry into sealing procedures across the state after the 2006 report of entire cases being sealed and disappearing from court records. They felt the “Public’s Constitutional Right of Access to Court Records must remain unviolated and the State Supreme Court was fully committed to safeguarding those rights,” the Justices wrote in their final report. It seems when the paper asked for comment on the Justices’ Final Report, neither Mr. Goldberger or Judge Pucillo declined to comment on it.

 Apparently a former employee of Epstein attempted to sell information to an undercover FBI agent, that was originally and allegedly withheld from them. Alfredo Rodriguez, who was Epstein’s butler, chauffeur, chef, and picked and cleaned the sex toys Epstein used after his encounters. It appeared Rodriguez called the information the “Holy Grail” or “Golden Nugget”. It was a small bound book and several sheets of legal paper, which he told the agent he had taken from Epstein’s home while employed there in 2004 and 2005. He informed the agents what he witnessed including nude girls, which he believed to be underage at Epstein’s pool area, knowing that he was having sex with underage girls and of viewing underage pornography on computers in his home. One of the agents, who reviewed the material, stated that what Rodriguez handed over revealed information “that would have been extremely useful in investigating and prosecuting the case, including names and contact information of material witnesses and additional victims.”