

Hills man implicated in art museum heist

While a Farmington Hills resident awaits a June 19 date in Detroit Recorder's Court for alleged trafficking in silver work stolen from the Detroit Institute of Arts, museum officials are cataloging another 153 recently recovered art objects which were apparently part of the same haul.

The easily portable objects, valued at \$400,000, were reportedly handed over to police by a man who purchased them over a period of time from a 49-year-old museum handyman who was charged and arraigned Tuesday in the theft.

Art Institute Director Frederick Cummings said the museum had no idea that most of the objects, which were assumed to be in storage, were missing.

The suspected thief, Enoch Gaffney, of Detroit, has worked at the museum for 14 years. He is free on personal bond and faces a preliminary hearing May 25.

Gaffney's arrest follows by a week the arrest of Norman Goodman, 40, a Farmington Hills furniture salesman, by Grosse Pointe police. Goodman is accused of selling 13 pieces of Ameri-

can antique silverware, reported missing from the museum last year, to W. Michael Williams, a Grosse Pointe jeweler in December 1976. Williams discovered that his purchases were owned by the museum when he found them listed in an art book.

At his arraignment, Goodman pleaded not guilty of receiving and possessing stolen property and was freed on \$5,000 bond.

DESCRIBING GAFFNEY as "a trusted staff member," Cummings said the handyman regularly moved

works from place to place in the storage area.

The stolen objects were passed through a middle man, Detroit police surmise.

Master drawings by Picasso and Correggio, a group of American coins, American silverware, small pieces of French and American art, a watch and an Indonesian wooden spoon are among the recovered objects, according to Cummings.

The Picasso drawing is valued at \$30,000 while the Indonesian spoon is worth \$150, according to museum officials.

"They chose small and precious objects," said Cummings. "We've been looking for this material for years. It's been on the wanted list."

Officials are looking for other missing pieces which include a group of American silver coins and silverware. Cummings believes that if another museum were offered the objects it would report their whereabouts to the Detroit institute and the police.

ALTHOUGH THE SILVERWARE set that Goodman is charged with selling was missing from the museum, officials didn't formally report the incident to police until two months after

half of the collection was returned.

Museum Security Director Richard Rubens said that he was not on staff when the items were discovered to be missing but that he understood the incident was played down because an investigation was underway.

Some of the objects have been missing since 1972, according to Cummings.

"The first indication that they were missing was many months ago, but we had to ascertain that they were stolen. When you have 3,000 items in storage, you have to take an inventory to learn what you have," he explained.

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How carving decoys leads to national fame

By LYNN ORR

If you pecked through the picture windows of Larry and Marge Hayden's home, you might think the Farmington Hills couple were raising ducks in their living room.

Why you would be mistaken in that assumption is that the many ducks resting on the tables and shelves are decorative decoys, created by Hayden, recognized as one of the nation's finest decoy craftsmen.

Adding a new twist to his interest in waterfowl, Hayden recently captured the top prize in the Michigan Waterfowl Hunting Stamp design for 1977. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will be using Hayden's rendition of canvasback ducks on the stamp issued on small game duckhunting licenses.

"This was the first contest for the stamp," says Hayden, who's proud his design won out over 55 other entries but especially is pleased with the stamp's purpose.

"The proceeds from selling the licenses will be used to purchase wet or marsh lands throughout the state," he says.

"And the government will be able to control the number of birds shot," HAYDEN'S INTEREST in waterfowl started out as a hobby.

"I never learned to draw ducks from commercial art, but from carving decoys," says the commercial artist who designs anything from travel brochures to automobile pamphlets to earn a living.

He started carving decoys 12-13 years ago to use for hunting and then became interested in more perfectly rendered decoys when he began attending shows.

Since he's won 14 consecutive decoy shows, he's sat on judges' panels in wildfowl carving competitions held throughout the year in five states and Canada.

In his basement workshop, he carves the decoys from planks of bass wood, using penciled patterns. The body and head are carved separately and tails are often added.

"I have to do a lot of research," says Hayden who keeps an extensive file on duck species and refers to stuffed and a few live ducks he keeps at his house. He also makes frequent trips to the zoo and works from photographs to make the decoys as lifelike as possible.

To achieve the feather effect, Hayden uses "a kid's woodburning tool"

"It's like bringing a piece of nature into the house. Art freezes nature so you can look at it." —Larry Hayden

and burns the feathers into the wood. He then applies acrylics paints and taxidermist glass eyes.

One of his decoys was painted with iridescent paint so the wood decoy reflects light much the way a real duck's oily feathers glisten in the sunshine.

He usually sells the decorative decoys to collectors but lately has found little time to devote to his hobby.

"With four boys around the house, you don't have much time for hobbies," he says. He's presently coaching the Little League Pinto Dragons for 7-8 year olds and he watches his other sons play on alternate nights.

"We just love baseball," says Marge Hayden. Bow-and-arrow hunting is another hobby of father Hayden and his sons.

Son Sean, age 7, seems to be following in his father's footsteps. At age 6, he created a clay duck at nursery

school and enjoys drawing almost as much as his father. "Sean can identify all the species," says Hayden.

"All I ever did was draw," says Hayden who entered an apprenticeship at an art studio after high school and has been involved in artwork ever since.

"One of things I like about drawing and painting is that after retirement, I can do it to make a living," he says. Out of 500 limited edition prints of an acrylic painting "Wood Ducks," Hayden has less than 100 to sell and plans to do other paintings in the future.

"It's like bringing a piece of nature into the house," he says of the paintings and decoys. "Art freezes nature so you can look at it."

Decoys are one of the few forms of true American folk art, Hayden contends. "The Indians started it by making decoys out of straw"

Subs pave way to politics

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Future Farmington Hills' council members, beautification commission workers or school board trustees can be found in residents' own backyards if they look hard enough.

Subdivision presidents who nag their neighbors for dues, organize block-wide garage sales and try to spruce up the neighborhood can develop into community activists concerned about taxes, housing developments and beautification projects.

That's the word from some residents who have had a taste of subdivision politics and believe that it can lead to participation on a city-wide level.

School Board Trustee Mervyn Ross, Housing Commissioner Ben Marks and Planning Commissioner Paul Griglio came up through the subdivision ranks to city politics. County Commissioner Bob McConnell, worked his way from the subs to township supervisor, Farmington Hills' first mayor and a stint as councilmember before going to the county commission.

"It did work that way," said Farmington Hills Beautification Commission chairwoman Jody Soronen. "Somehow, they get your name and you go from one thing to another." Mrs. Soronen, who was active in

Woodbrook Subdivision, went from being active in her immediate neighborhood to a participant in the Council of Homeowners when she became concerned about cluster housing in her area.

FROM THERE she joined a coalition against the Pernick Drain and became involved in the Northwestern Highway dispute.

Through her widening interests, she noticed a ripple effect, as she touched issues further and further away from her home base.

"When you're a subdivision president, you deal with one area. When the cluster housing thing came on, I got involved in Muir Cove and Rolling Oaks. You begin to enlarge your area of interest."

I live across the road from West Bloomfield Township and I go to their meetings. There's an apartment complex planned for an area in the township, but it's close to my home, so I go to meetings there too.

"Your backyard shouldn't be your total area of interest," she said.

After becoming involved in issues that affect Farmington Hills, Southfield, West Bloomfield, Commerce Township and Livonia, she admits that she's seriously considered running for office.

Although Mrs. Soronen has man-

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Recognized as one of the finest decorative decoy craftsmen in the country, Larry Hayden (top) puts the finishing touches on one of his decoys in his basement workshop. The Farmington Hills resident achieved further artistic recognition this year when his sketch of canvasback ducks (left) won the 1977 Michigan Waterfowl Stamp Design contest. The sketch will be the stamp design for small game duckhunting license this year. (Staff photos by Harry Mauthe)

GOP outlines senior rights plan

State Republicans are currently grinding for action in the fight for senior citizen rights by pulling together a series of legislation designed to help the elderly.

Although most of the package has yet to reach its final form, it deals with ways to provide relief from increasing taxes, utility and health costs. Housing, transportation and education provisions are also included in the package.

Seniors would be given an equal opportunity to obtain affordable housing under the package, according to State Representative Wilbur "Sandy" Brotherton (R-Farmington).

"The requirements for senior housing would be put into a law that would force the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) to build senior citizens residences," he said.

While he wants MSHDA to place its top priority on low-income housing for seniors, Brotherton sties away from building clusters of houses that would serve only low-income families of all ages.

"YOU JUST create a new ghetto under that plan," he said.

Brotherton viewed the housing portion of his party's package as providing some direction and incentive for

MSHDA, which presently sets its own priorities.

Minorities are expected to oppose the measure, on the grounds that it would take away much needed housing from them, according to Kathy DeGrow, of the Republican staff of the Senior Citizen's Program.

"A lot of areas don't need the housing but in some areas the need is bad," she said.

"In rural constituencies, low income people on welfare or Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) are not in housing projects like in the urban areas. Those groups would be traumatically affected by MSHDA changes," she said.

A struggle with minorities over low-income housing also is foreseen by Brotherton. Groups such as the NAACP would fight to have integrated housing built in predominantly white neighborhoods, he said.

In other areas of concern for seniors, the package would eliminate social security payments from the state's definition of household income.

"IT WOULD COST the state more money," Brotherton said.

The suggestion comes at the insistence of the American Association for Retired Persons, which has made the

provision one of its projects for the year, according to Mrs. DeGrow.

"It's an idea that has been around for a long time but the legislature is adverse to it. It's not a popular idea but it is a problem for seniors," she said.

In the face of mounting concern and study about the lifestyle of senior residents, the proposal could overcome its opposition, she said.

Another tax benefit that could be opened to seniors would be the elimination of that portion of property taxes that are used to pay for education.

While that would take away some money from the schools, it could be accompanied by an attempt to change educational institutions' dependency on property tax, according to Brotherton.

In addition, Brotherton has suggested that the property tax of persons over 65 be frozen for them at the level it was when they were 64. Through this method, state and local governments would share in giving tax relief to the elderly, he said.

UTILITY COSTS for seniors would be lessened by a program that would set a price limit on the amount that could be charged to elderly customers. Called the Lifeline Program, it

would set a limit on the amount of utility bills that can be charged to seniors who can be reasonably used by the elderly.

"You should be able to run a household adequately on the lifeline amount," Mrs. DeGrow said. "The rest of the payments for the utilities wouldn't be paid for by other customers. They would be paid for through tax revenues."

Another method of limiting fuel costs would be implemented through the existing tax structure. Seniors would receive tax credits for their fuel bills and would be issued a rebate much like an income tax refund, according to Mrs. DeGrow.

"A high percentage of the seniors would use the tax credit. It would be easy to do. There would be a few more administrative problems but it could be handled in one system along with the tax forms," she said.

On the drawing boards for seniors are programs which would offer an alternative to institutional living for semi-disabled seniors. The program would include at-home help and chore services.

Dial-A-Ride for seniors, a senior advisory council for each community and automatic mailing of absentee ballots to seniors are also included in the package.

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