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Jail woes compounded by community placement measures — Spreen

Oakland County Sheriff Johannes Spreen says community placement of mentally disturbed people is adding new importance to his long-standing battle with county commissioners over beefed-up staff levels at the Oakland County Jail.

"The (state) Department of Health is putting a lot of people in community homes. We get them in the jails because they go out on the street and exhibit bizarre behavior, and sometimes it's just bizarre behavior, and sometimes it touches on the criminal, right?" said Spreen.

Spreen said a new state law which makes it difficult to admit a person to a mental institution unless that person consents has resulted in greater numbers of apparently mentally ill people — "mentals," in police jargon — being locked up instead of hospitalized.

DEPUTIES confronted on the street by a person exhibiting what appears to be a mental disorder tend to "take the line of least resistance" and book the person on disorderly conduct charges, said Spreen. That's a minor offense, but Spreen said people who appear unbalanced

are more frequently involved in more serious crimes.

"Ten percent of all our felons might be considered to have a mental problem, or to look at it from the other side, 70 percent of the people exhibiting signs of mental illness in the jail are felons," Spreen said.

"We are not really equipped to deal with that. We have one psychologist working two days a week and one working a half-day. They're doing a tremendous job, but we need extra hours from them."

MOST COMMUNITY placements are of people diagnosed as retarded not of people thought to be mentally disturbed, but Spreen said the definitions are sometimes hazy.

"I had to go to a home where there was the body of a young man" who had committed suicide, Spreen said. "Somebody who has to be restrained from clawing his own face, somebody who has to wear a football helmet to keep him from battering his head against the wall, I think, is more disturbed than retarded."

Compounding the problem of jail supervision is the length of stay.

OU businesslike in continuing classes

Registration is under way for down-to-business noncredit courses to be offered beginning Sept. 21 by the Division of Continuing Education at Oakland University.

The courses will focus on developing new job skills and expertly managing finances on the job and at home. The will be offered one evening per week, primarily Monday through Thursday, and range in tuition from \$15 to \$95. For details about the programs and courses, call the Continuing Education office at 377-3120.

FOR ADULT professionals, catch-up computer courses are scheduled beginning Sept. 10, with the introductory course "An Easy Introduction to Computers." A brief introduction to BASIC language, including ways to program for business and home financial record-keeping, begins Sept. 26.

Free for individuals interested in small business operations, introductory sessions will be conducted 7-10 p.m. Sept. 17, and again from 10 a.m. to noon Sept. 19, on campus near Rochester. The free sessions will preview a series of "design-to-profit" workshops in small business, scheduled to begin Oct. 6. Space may be reserved for either of the free workshops by calling the Continuing Education office at 377-3120.

Money-conscious courses "Taking Advantage of Inflation," a "hedge" at only \$15 tuition, and "Don't Over-tax Yourself," which deals with personal income tax savings, begin Sept. 22 and 23, respectively, on campus.

MOST RECENT developments in the investment aspects of diamond and gemstones and antique furniture will be discussed in two evenings courses, both to be instructed by Birmingham residents, and both beginning Sept. 24.

Arthur J. Lake, president of Lake Jewelers, will discuss the importance of terms of purchase for diamond investment in a four-week evening course that covers the four C's of diamonds, beginning Sept. 24.

Architect William Lyman will conduct a tour of Meadow Brook Hall, identifying furniture by periods, and devote a session to antique reproductions and fakes. His seven-week evening course will be illustrated from a personal slide record of antique furniture in private collections and museums across the United States. Lyman's course also begins Sept. 24.

Southfield attorney Robert M. Meisner, co-draftor of the 1978 Michigan condominium statute, will instruct a four-session advanced course in condominium operation, a sequel to his "Intro to Condos" course, beginning Sept. 23, at Seaholm High School, Lincoln at Cranbrook in Birmingham.

EMPLOYABLE skills, as a paralegal and in the area of plastics technology, and new management techniques, including "Management Update for the '80s" and a course on office automation for productivity, will be offered as well.

The legal assistant — a noncredit Continuing Education program which prepares enrollees to assist attorneys in private law firms and legal departments of corporations, utilities and governmental agencies — will be available for credit as well under the political science curriculum. A personal assessment inventory, prerequisite for entry into the program, will be conducted 7:30-9:30 p.m. Sept. 14. Prepaid registration of \$10 is required.

The plastics technology program, co-sponsored with the Society of Plastics Engineers, is designed to update technicians and to provide basic knowledge for newcomers to the industry.

A new course offering is "Hazardous Waste Regulation," which will explain legal regulations, their significance to industry, and how to meet the regulations. Details may be obtained by calling the Continuing Education office.

FOR INDIVIDUALS interest in preparing for the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), personalized instruction at low cost will be conducted from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for five consecutive Saturdays, beginning Sept. 19. Tuition of \$95 includes materials. The next GMAT exam will be conducted Oct. 24.

Similar low-cost preparations for the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Tests) and the ACT (American College Test) each will be conducted from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Saturdays, beginning Oct. 10 and Oct. 17, respectively. Tuition of \$65 includes materials.

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