



SHARON LEMIEUX/staff photographer

This Grand River property has been dug up for going back to the days when a gas station was several months as building owner Tom on the site. DeWard said last week he had DeWard attempts to remove underground stor- found three more tanks and there may be still age tanks which have been there for years — more under his building.

Owner gets more grief from underground tanks

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which city officials said will be his responsibility to clean up. "I've got six tanks, and maybe more," DeWard said at a Jan. 7 city council meeting. "I've got a problem, and it's a big one." Under state and federal laws, the tanks must be removed or permanently closed using a stringent set of guidelines and any contaminated soil around the tanks removed and replaced. DeWard said he will now take soil borings under the sidewalk and in the middle of the Zimm's Vacuum Cleaner Co. showroom, which is in his building. If he cannot clear up the problem and sell the building, he may tear it down, he said. THIS WAS DeWard's second visit to the city council, following one in October when he told the city they could be liable for the problem because of city records which he said show some of the tanks were re-

moved. City officials have said they cannot locate all the records relating to the property, because of a schedule which is set up to systematically destroy old building records. City attorney John Donohue cautioned the council Monday not to respond to DeWard's comments, since he had put the city on notice in October that he may sue. "We believe we do not have any responsibility," Donohue told DeWard. "It is the state's responsibility to regulate these matters." As of last fall, DeWard reportedly spent \$33,000 on the problem. He said last week that number had nearly tripled. "I've spent \$105,000 to date, most of which I've recovered from the state fund and Uni-Cal," the parent company of Pure Oil, DeWard said. DeWard is not alone with this problem, recently faced by Metrobank in its downtown demolition and reconstruction project, and

other businesses in the area. DONOHUE SAID the problem has become a big one, with most investors and developers are now requiring environmental assessments on property before purchasing it, because of the liability involved in the cleanup. "People will not purchase commercial property without an environmental audit . . . (that) clears that property," he said. "I'm not unsympathetic," he added. "I'm just saying it's not the city's responsibility." DeWard told the city council it should look into other possible problem sites in the city, where old gas stations were once located. City manager Robert Deadman said the city had, some time ago, sent letters to anyone who potentially could have used gas or oil on their property. "They were told of the requirement to register the tanks with the state, he said.

Minister started heists near church, police say

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Yanke and found it parked outside the church after the robbery. He is charged with two counts of armed robbery: stealing \$1,050 from a Warren bank Wednesday morning, and \$1,350 from the Bloomfield Township bank that afternoon. "No additional charges are planned at this time," said FBI spokesman John Anthony. Yanke, who lives in Berkley, is free on \$50,000 personal bond. His preliminary examination in federal court is scheduled for Jan. 30.

"HE AND HIS family are very much in shock about the whole thing, but I think he'll do all right," said his attorney, Jonathan Mairo. "He has some (spiritual) resources that will help him."

Among the damaging allegations that have come to light is that Yanke spent the stolen cash paying for sex with prostitutes. Yanke was carrying the number of the Star Lite escort service when he was arrested, sources said. A man who answered the Star Lite phone service said he knew Yanke, and that the pastor was on the service's "do not send" list, meaning the service would not send women to meet him if he called.

Yanke created problems at another service two years ago when he would set up meetings then canceled them when an escort arrived, said the man, who would give only the name Rick.

"I think he was trying to see girls around the service," Rick said. Star Lite charges \$150 an hour for escorts, he said.

ACCORDING TO POLICE, Yanke used disguises such as hair dyes, fake scars, and glasses when robbing banks and usually passed notes to tellers announcing the holdups.

The FBI had dubbed the robber "the bearded bandit." Yanke has red hair and a red beard. The man who robbed the Bloomfield Township bank had a black beard and wore a hat and glasses.

Investigators reportedly found makeup in the church after Yanke's arrest. A pellet gun, and the money from the Wednesday robberies also were

FBI lists robberies

Other banks the FBI says Yanke admitted to robbing are: • Sept. 13, 1989, Comerica Bank, Beverly Hills. • Nov. 13, 1989, Comerica Bank, Southfield. • Jan. 16, 1990, Credit Union One, Royal Oak. • March 20, Midwest Guaranty Bank, Troy. • April 17, United Savings Bank, Farmington Hills. • June 29, Bank of Commerce, Rochester; Sterling Savings Bank,

Clawson; and Warren Bank, Warren. • Aug. 1, First of America Livonia. • Sept. 15, Standard Federal, Farmington Hills. • Oct. 10, Comerica, Troy. • Nov. 5, Comerica, Ann Arbor. • Jan. 9, 1991 Manufacturers National Bank, Bloomfield Township and Huntington Bank, Warren.

recovered, said FBI spokesman Anthony.

Church members were saying little, though they were shocked by Yanke's arrest, as were his neighbors. Yanke graduated from William Tyndale College in Farmington Hills. Covenant Alliance has about 100 members.

"It's really flourished the last few years under this pastor," said Scott Creclitus, a worship leader there.

"The only thing I can tell you is he's a very wonderful person," said Mary Tassi, who lives across the street. She said Yanke helped her husband recently when he had car trouble.

At Royal Oak Ford's rental agency on Woodward, workers described Yanke as a regular. He rented about eight cars last year and even bought a used car for his wife from the agency, said Mike Browning.

"He'd call here and say and he wanted to rent a car and we'd have the paperwork all set for him when he got here. We don't do that for everybody," said Rod Niemisto.



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