

# Garage price-fixing charges dismissed

By TOM LONERGAN

Price fixing charges against 185 auto repair shops, new car dealerships and individual owners, all primarily from the Detroit metropolitan area, were dismissed last week by District Judge James E. Mies.

"The statute was never intended to cover services," Mies said Friday in 16th District Court, Livonia. He was referring to an 1899 state anti-trust law under which the Michigan Attorney General's office charged the small auto body shops, new car dealers and more than 100 individuals in February.

The defendants, the state alleged, fixed prices by agreeing to add a fixed percentage increase to the cost of body repair work.

The main defendant in the case was the Automobile Service Councils (ASC) of Michigan, a Livonia-based trade group. The state alleged the ASC, 27590 Plymouth Road, promoted the price fixing scheme through its magazine, "The Garage Key."

ASC Executive Director Dennis Liphart declined comment Friday shortly after Mies dismissed the charges.

**MIES GRANTED** the dismissal sought by defense attorneys in May.

"We're delighted that the judge has agreed that this archaic state statute doesn't apply," said Eugene Driker, the service council's attorney.

"The problem in this industry is not the small body shops. The problem is the oppressive hand of the insurance companies who really control the prices of auto repairs."

The defendants were indicted in February by a Wayne County citizens grand jury, following a year-long investigation by the attorney general's economic crime division. The attorney general's office had called 33 witnesses before the grand jury, the majority of them insurance company representatives.

**EDWIN M. BLADEN**, assistant attorney general in charge of the economic crime division, declined to say if the case will be appealed to Wayne County Circuit Court.

"We're surprised," he said. "It's a matter we have to carefully review. Attorney General (Frank) Kelley has long believed the state's anti-trust law does include services."

Mies said the auto body repair case was the first criminal price fixing case citing the 81-year-old state law. The attorney general's office said it was Michigan's first criminal price-fixing case in 50 years. The businesses and individuals cited had been charged with misdemeanors.

Shortly after the criminal case was brought in Livonia district court, the state also filed a civil suit in county circuit court citing similar charges. But Driker said the state has "done absolutely nothing" to pursue the civil suit.

**BUSINESSES AND** individuals cleared by Mies' decision Friday, pending a possible state appeal, included:

Birmingham Chrysler Plymouth Co., 2100 W. Maple, Troy, Richard A. Mealey, president; Bob Borst, Lincoln Mercury Inc., 1950 W. Maple, Troy; Dealer Collision Inc., 1705 Blaney, Troy; Terrace Lederman, president; Grand Eight Collision Inc., 30870 W. Eight Mile, Farmington, Kenneth E. Muha, vice president.

Oliver Street Collision, Ltd., 392 Oliver Troy, James Fleischer, president; Rochester Hills Chrysler-Plymouth Inc., 1301 Rochester Road, Rochester, George A. Fetco, president; Harold Turner Inc., 2600 W. Maple, Troy, Richard Turner, president; Vaughn's Auto Body Inc., 101 Main St., Rochester, Robert Vaughn, president.

Stephen G. Prusky, owner, Parmlay's Collision, 880 Bowers, Birmingham; Harry Fowler, owner, Troy Collision, 931 Rankin, Troy and Edward Slinger, owner, Pro Collision, 12300 Inkster, Redford.

## OCC's registration up 17%

Oakland Community College's fall enrollment, which may reach 23,000 full- and part-time students, is up 17 percent from a year ago.

"It's the same phenomena we saw in 1974-75 (the last severe economic recession)," OCC President Robert Roelofs told the board of trustees last week.

"If you're not working, you come to school."

Last fall's full- and part-time enrollment at OCC's five campuses was 20,693.

# OCC fills trustee board vacancy

Gordon Henderson, of Birmingham, an Oakland Community College Trustee for 14 years, was appointed last week to fill a vacancy on the college's board.

Henderson, who didn't seek re-election in June, was a 4-2 choice of the six current trustees, over Nancy Van Gilder, of West Bloomfield. He will be officially seated Sept. 18 to fill two years of former Trustee Lila Johnson's term.

Mrs. Johnson, of Huntington Woods, a former board chairman, resigned July 11 due to a lingering dispute with college President Robert Roelofs over the board's authority.

HENDERSON, 60, an accounting department manager with the Ford Motor Co., was OCC board chairman for eight years. He was first elected to the board in 1966.

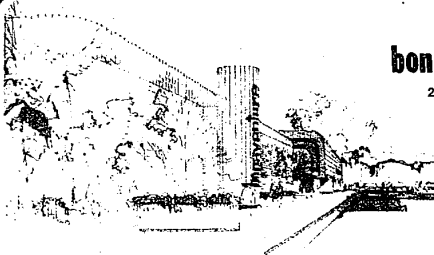
Henderson was on the board that hired Roelofs as president two years ago. Regarding the administrator's disputes with trustees over authority and policy making, Henderson said, "It was more severe with respect to Mrs. Johnson and him (Roelofs) because she was the chairman."

MRS. VAN GILDER, 42, a self-employed tax consultant, and former Orchard Ridge campus student government president, ran fifth in the

June trustee election.

Henderson was supported by Trustees Sandra Ritter, Margaret MacTavish, Suzanne Reynolds and Board Chairman Earl Anderson. Trustees Richard Pappas and David Hackett supported Mrs. VanGilder.

Candidates who applied but weren't nominated at last week's board meeting included Robert Filiatrault, of Bloomfield Hills, a Detroit College of Law professor; Esther Pastor, of Birmingham, a Wayne State University student; Dr. Earl J. Watch, a Royal oak dentist; and Robert Taylor, of West Bloomfield, a juvenile program director for the Pontiac public schools.



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1-3:30 P.M. \$2.25 **STAYOVER \$1.50	CLOSED-PRIVATE PARTIES	ADULT "COFFEE-SKATE" PROGRAM 18 & over 10-12 NOON \$2.00 6-8:30 P.M. \$3.00	ADULT SESSION 18 & over 9-11:30 P.M. \$3.00	CLOSED-PRIVATE PARTIES	TINY TOT 6 & under 10-11:30 A.M. \$1.50 (INCLUDES SKATES) 6-8:30 P.M. \$2.25 **STAYOVER \$3.00	12-2:30 P.M. \$2.25 **STAYOVER \$1.50 3-5:30 P.M. \$2.25 6-8:30 P.M. \$3.00 **STAYOVER \$2.00 9-11:30 P.M. \$3.00
ADULT SESSION 18 & over 10-12:00 A.M. \$3.00		LADIES NIGHT LADIES 1/4 PRICE 9-11:00 P.M. \$3.00			LATE SESSION 18 & over 12-2:00 A.M. \$3.00	LATE SESSION 18 & over 12-2:00 A.M. \$3.00 **STAYOVER PERSON WISHING TO STAY OVER FOR 2ND SESSION.

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