

Felony suspects bound over for trial

Continued from Page 1

according to court testimony.

Business owner James Schotten, and James Dillon, the shop's manager, were bound over for trial in Oakland County Circuit Court on two counts each of obtaining money under false pretenses, felonies that

could bring maximum penalties of \$5,000 fines or 10 years in prison upon conviction.

DISTRICT JUDGE Margaret Schaeffer of Farmington rendered her decision following nearly a full day of testimony and heated debate

between defense counsel. Assistant Attorney General John Walter and the judge.

The four cases involving Schotten and Dillon were combined for preliminary examination purposes.

The Hills transmission shop was one of 13 shops statewide that were closed Aug. 12, by administrative order from the Michigan Attorney General and Michigan Secretary of State offices, following a three-month undercover investigation called Operation Shift. The shops face civil actions under the state's Consumer Protection Act for allegedly making fraudulent repairs on state-inspected transmissions.

Schotten and Dillon are two of three men across the state charged with criminal wrongdoing following the investigation. Warrants were presented by the state and signed by Schaeffer, who arraigned the two on the charges shortly after the shop was closed. Both stood mute and no guilty pleas were entered on their behalf. Friday, Schaeffer did not change the already-posted bond for the defendants, which she originally set at \$1,000 each.

The decision was because it would only cost \$400 and it had a year's warranty, we decided to get it done," Laura Jirasek testified. The couple later discovered they had been given only a six-month or 6,000-mile limited warranty on the transmission work. Dillon also offered to buy the car from the Jiraseks for \$100, she added.

Gary Taylor was quoted a price of \$200 to tear down the Omni transmission, after he arrived at the shop with the car "trumbling like a freight train," Palda testified. Palda needed only a wheel bearing.

Palda approached state officials with his concern that he may be held accountable for the work performed at the shop. State officials later contacted him and questioned him further about activities there.

The state Attorney General's office approached both the Jiraseks and the Taylors about one month after they had their work done at Independent Transmissions in Farmington Hills, they testified. Both of the cars had problems — one which had already been diagnosed at another shop as a transmission problem before they sought help at Independent, according to testimony.

Dillon, who has no mechanics apti-

She helps others lose weight

Continued from Page 1

an overdose of diet pills, before she learned of Weight Watchers.

Her desire to lose weight was so great she flew from Michigan to New York City once a month to attend a Weight Watchers meeting. It paid off. She lost 50 pounds after four once-a-month meetings.

At the time, she had little thought about bringing the Weight Watchers message back to Michigan, much less making it a career. The first group she called together were made up of members of her family. One group she led specifically to help her sister.

My sister was confined to a wheelchair and was so overweight she couldn't be fitted with braces or crutches. There just were no crutches that could support her. She had to lose weight so she could support herself and make herself more mobile," Mark said.

Again, the Weight Watcher diet paid off. It ultimately gave Mark's sister a profession.

Sandra Berlin lost the necessary weight to make herself more independent and was an early-on staff member of Weight Watchers Group, Mark's franchise here.

IT IS not uncommon these days to see Mark's picture or name connected with a March of Dimes fund-raiser.

"Sandy got polio when our family had no medical insurance and March of Dimes came to our rescue. We've been marching for dimes ever since and we will be eternally grateful for the help Sandy got when she needed it," Mark said.

Weight Watchers Group Inc., now located in Southfield, is the largest franchise of Weight Watchers International.

Mark has set the opening of a new corporate headquarters in Farmington Hills for Oct. 21, to coincide with

Weight Watchers Group's 20th anniversary.

The 60,000-square-foot, three-floor building, at 28555 Orchard Lake, north of 12 Mile, was designed by Victor Sanki & Associates and is being built by Janna Construction Co.

"We're going to have larger everything," Mark said. "There will be larger rest kitchens, a must. More classrooms. More meeting space. A larger printing shop (for flyers, recipes, information to Weight Watcher leaders). Just more places to put more people and things."

Besides "larger everything," the building will include a two-story atrium and an exercise room for its 60 employees.

As Mark practices what she preaches, so do her employees.

"Every one of my employees go through the training. Some, of course, come without a weight problem, but they know the program backwards and forwards. Every person here who answers a phone whether answering the phone is their job or not, has got to have the answer to every question we get," she said.

"Our program includes exercise, and a very sophisticated behavioral motivation. We keep up on all the research and incorporate everything we can to get the weight off and keep it off."

OVERALL, MARK says, she is selling self-respect.

"The diet plan, the exercise, the motivation, it all adds up to liking yourself better. I'm in the wellness business. If you're overweight and wondering why you are tired and why your back hurts, think of that extra 10 pounds you are carrying around as a 10-pound sack of potatoes that you can never lay down, and you will figure out why you are tired or why your back hurts," she said.

"Do you know that fat people catch more colds than thin people? Do you know that fat people have more diseases than thin people? If you are fat you made it and you can change it," she said. "Nothing, nothing, tastes as good as being thin feels, and feeling good about yourself is what it is all about."

Fairly recent innovations Mark has introduced to take the weight off and keep it off are "Quick Start Plus" and "Pepstep."

Her son, Jeffrey, directs the "At

Work" program, which brings the Weight Watcher message to companies concerned with the health and productivity of the employees.

Her daughter and son-in-law, Lisa Mark Lis and Hannan Lis, head up "Weight Watchers Resorts and Spas," part of the Weight Watchers Group.

There are 11,000 Weight Watchers classes given every week in the United States; 1,000 of those classes are part of the Weight Watchers Group.

Bloodmobile on tap

The American Red Cross bloodmobile will make four stops in the Farmington area during October.

Dates follow:
• Thursday, Oct. 2 — St. Coleman Church, 32500 Middlebelt, 2-8 p.m. Call Bernard LaBoe, 855-9838.

• Wednesday, Oct. 8 — Oakland Community College, 27055 Orchard Lake, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call Sylvia Berggren, 967-5757.

• Monday, Oct. 13 — St. Alexander Catholic Church, 27835 Shilawsee, 2-8 p.m. Call Earl Gilbert, 477-9110.

• Saturday, Oct. 18 — Mulrwood

Apartments, 24689 Mulrwood, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call Beth Barr, 855-5400.

Blood can be donated every eight weeks, up to five times a year. One blood donation can help as many as four people.

Blood can be donated by anyone who is between 17 and 70, in good general health and weighs a minimum of 110 pounds.

Donating blood is relatively painless and takes less than 45 minutes from registration to a post-donation snack of juice and cookies. The actual donation takes less than 10 minutes.

Industrial tour set

Thirteen Southeastern Michigan Society of Manufacturing Engineers and associated chapters will host a technical integrated super tour of Farmington Hills industrial facilities Wednesday, Oct. 22.

Bus tours only will run 4-7 p.m. A wine and cheese party and dinner will follow at the Novi Hilton, 21111 Haggerty (north of Eight Mile and west of I-275). Guest speaker will be Dennis Pawley, vice president for manufacturing, Mazda Corp.

Cost for a bus tour and dinner is \$25.

The tours are:

• Tour K — Ingersoll Automated Production Systems, Perceptron and Harco Design.

• Tour M — Medar, Westinghouse-Union and Lator Lab.

• Tour P — Cincinnati-Milacron, Automatix and Digital Equipment Corp.

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