

Awaits exam

County commission candidate facing sexual assault charge

By Jackie Klein
and Sandra Armbruster
Staff writers

A 25-year-old candidate for Oakland County Commissioner was arraigned Monday on a charge of sexually assaulting a fellow employee in Southfield City Hall.

Douglas Sokolowski, a computer programming analyst for the city, stood mute to a charge of first degree criminal sexual conduct. A plea of not guilty was entered on his behalf by 46th District Magistrate Eugene Friedman.

Sokolowski is out on \$25,000 personal bond pending a Nov. 19 examination in district court.

The charge stems from an allegation by a city hall employee that Sokolowski came into the building at 10 p.m. Oct. 28 and raped her.

SOKOLOWSKI DENIES the charge. He claims to have eye witnesses and documents that prove his innocence and vindicate him.

"We are very confident this will be cleared up before it goes to trial," said Sokolowski, a Southfield resident.



Douglas Sokolowski
candidate charged

Meanwhile, Sokolowski said he has been asked by city officials not to report for work. To stay on the payroll, Sokolowski said he is using days from his sick and compensatory banks, which he claimed was a "bad bit of an injustice."

His lawyer, however, has advised him to resolve criminal charges before meeting with the city's labor relations director, Sokolowski said.

The four-year city employee said he just received a high rating on his annual review and a "healthy bonus."

SOKOLOWSKI IS the lone Republican challenger in the Dec. 8 election for a 21st District seat.

"There isn't much of a campaign going on," Sokolowski said, adding that the Republican party as of Tuesday was unaware of the charges. "It's unfortunate that it came up at this time. I had the best chance of winning this election."

"I hoped this could be kept out of the papers. Something like this could damage the whole rest of my entire life."



ART EMANUELE/staff photographer

More than 40 years after World War II, Frank Kenny (center) receives six medals honoring his efforts and bravery. The ceremony, Wednesday at Veterans' Park, Livonia, included

Sgt. Francis Bremmer (from left), Irene and Tim Kenny, along with Livonia Mayor-elect Robert Bennett and Farmington Hills Mayor Ben Marks.

Honors

Medals come 42 years later

By Marie Chesney
Staff writer

Forty-four years separate Veterans Day 1987 from the gray November days in 1943 when Francis J. Kenny of Farmington Hills was shot down in a B-17 aircraft over Germany. He was thrust, seriously injured, into a prisoner-of-war camp in Barth, Germany.

Forty-two years separate Veterans Day 1987 from the thunderous day in May 1945 when some Russians drove a truck into Stalag Luft and liberated all the prisoners, including Kenny.

And those same 42 years stand between the day in 1945 a disabled Kenny left the Army Air Corps and the sunny November day in 1987 when he stood before an honor guard in Livonia's Veterans' Park and received six medals.

The medals were for Kenny's injuries and heroism in World War II. He never got them, and Kenny really doesn't know why.

Maybe it was because the Army Air Corps became the Air Force. Or maybe it was because an Army records center burned in 1948 in St. Louis. Kenny said he never really tried to get them.

Displayed on a plaque given to Kenny in Veterans Day memorial services in the park were the Purple Heart, Air Medal, American Campaign Medal, Eastern Campaign Medal with one silver star and one bronze service star, World War II Victory Medal and the Presidential Unit Citation with one oak leaf cluster.

THE SIX medals were a long time coming, but they finally did come, thanks to the efforts of retired Air

Force Sgt. Frank Bremmer, an ROTC sergeant at Livonia's Churchill High School, and Air Force MSGT. Carol J. Bourque.

Both waded through bureaucratic red tape to get the medals Kenny earned in World War II.

At 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, Kenny stood before the honor guard in Veterans' park and accepted the plaque and the ribbons and the medals. The year is 1987. But, as Kenny took the medals, he surely thought of a young navigator on a B-17 Flying Fortress. And the nine other members of the crew. And the flight from England to Germany. The raid over Bremen. The gunfire ripping the plane apart. Parachuting down to the ground. Immediate capture by the Germans.

And on this Veterans Day 1987 he surely thought about the six crewmen, his friends, who didn't make it.

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