

Ex-con is guilty of murdering 4

An ex-convict was convicted of four counts of first-degree murder in the stabbing deaths of a Farmington Hills computer company vice president, his pregnant wife, their child and a family friend.

Relatives and friends of Bette, William and 2½-year-old Stephanie were grim and silent Tuesday as the jury's verdict was announced in Detroit Recorder's Court.

William Darrell Jr., 34, a vice president of American Business Computer Information Systems in Farmington Hills, was stabbed 11 times. His wife Bette, 40, a contract programmer at Genlinger Associates in Troy, was stabbed eight times. Smith, 24, an unemployed mother taken in by the couple, had 17 wounds. All were found in the basement.

Stephanie was found in an upper bedroom with six wounds. Jurors found that Helston Martin III had murdered the Darrells and Smith, a woman they had befriended during her pregnancy. Martin also was convicted of four counts of felony murder in the Jan. 11 slayings in the Darrells' Old Redford home on Cooley, near Grand River and Lahser, in northwest Detroit.

MARTIN, WHO has spent 13 of

his 31 years in Michigan prisons and who was an acquaintance of Smith's, faces a mandatory life term without parole. Sentencing was set for April 14 before Recorder Judge Michael Talbot.

"I'm happy with the verdict," said William Darrell III, the 15-year-old son of William Darrell by a previous marriage. "I'm happy that it's over and we can go ahead with everything we have to do now — just regular, everyday living."

Martin testified that he went to the Darrell home to demand money from Smith for repairing her car. Smith's 16-month-old daughter was with her father in his car at the time of the slayings.

"The situation got out of control," said assistant Wayne County prosecutor Robert Agacinski. After an argument, Martin tied up the adults, killed them and Stephanie, then stole a personal computer, boom electronic equipment, a minivan and a station wagon, Agacinski said.

MARTIN HAD visited Smith at the Darrell home and knew they were deeply religious, the prosecutor said. Although they kept guns in their home, they apparently made no attempt to use them, according to court testimony.

Courtroom may be closed if serial rape victims testify

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

If the man accused of being the Oakland County serial rapist goes to trial, the courtroom proceedings may be closed when victims testify.

"We will consider closing the court," Oakland County assistant prosecutor John Slevin said Thursday. "It will be addressed to them (victims) by myself and the court. If it's not closed, the question will be what media coverage will be allowed."

The suspect, Steven A. Szeman Jr., 25, of Rocky River, Ohio, stood mute at arraignments Wednesday in three district courts on 49 charges of sexual assault and robberies involving 10 women, ages 12-61, in Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield, Birmingham, Bloomfield Township and Independence Township.

Late Friday, Bingham Farms attorney Lawrence Kaluzny was named defense attorney for at least the six Birmingham-Bloomfield cases. The Farmington Hills resident could be named defense attorney for the three Farmington Hills cases today. Circuit Judge Robert Templin will handle the cases at trial.

IN FARMINGTON HILLS, Szeman is charged in connection with the sexual assault and robbery of two sisters Thanksgiving night 1987 and a woman March 31, 1988. The women were attacked in their homes. Other victims include two women raped in the same Bloomfield Township house two weeks apart in April 1987 and a 12-year-old Birmingham baby sitter in September 1987.

Though not guilty pleas were entered on Szeman's behalf, the former West Bloomfield resident could change his plea in circuit court if he is bound over for trial after preliminary exams in the district courts.

Szeman faces a pre-exam conference Wednesday in 47th District Court, Farmington. He faces preliminary exams Thursday in 52nd District Court-Second Division in Independence Township and Friday, in 48th District Court, Bloomfield Township.

He is being held in the Oakland County Jail in lieu of \$7.9 million cash bond.

BUT SLEVIN said more than likely, the preliminary exams will be postponed to give the defense time to prepare. "I'll be ready to do exams as soon as possible," he said.

Among the 49 charges against Szeman are first-degree criminal sexual conduct, second-degree criminal sexual conduct, armed robbery and breaking and entering. If convicted, Szeman could face maximum life sentences on the first-degree criminal sexual conduct and armed robbery charges.

Slevin said he's uncertain which of the nine cases (involving 10 victims) will be tried first. He also confirmed that former Oakland County prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson, now in private practice in Birmingham, is interested in trying the first case. Kaluzny was an assistant prosecutor under Patterson from 1972-77. "He's the one who hired me," Kaluzny said. When he left for private practice, Kaluzny was senior trial attorney.

UNDER HEAVY guard, Szeman was transferred last week to Michigan from Ohio, where he pleaded guilty in February for the November rape of a suburban Cleveland woman. Six police officers — from Farmington Hills, Birmingham, Bloom-

field Township and the Oakland County Sheriff's Department — accompanied him in two patrol cars.

Szeman is expected to begin serving his maximum 140-year sentence in the Chillicothe Correctional Institution, a maximum security prison near Columbus, Ohio, when the Michigan court proceedings are complete.

Slevin would not comment on the strength or type of evidence that would be used if Szeman is bound over for trial here. But the assistant prosecutor said that results of new sophisticated DNA tests will play a role.

"How important, I don't know. I can't comment on the strength of evidence," Slevin said.

DNA — deoxyribonucleic acid — is an organic substance found in the nucleus of living cells. DNA provides the genetic code that makes each person individual and special.

THE DNA test is one of the newest procedures available to law enforcement and forensic science. Considered as reliable as fingerprints in identifying criminal suspects, the DNA test allows an analyst to identify an individual based on blood, hair, semen or just about any body tissue or fluid with cells containing a nucleus.

In the Oakland County serial ra-

pist case, body tissues — such as semen — recovered at the assault scenes, were flown to Colmark Diagnostics, Germantown, Md., one of three labs conducting DNA tests, for analysis.

Szeman's rare blood type made it easier to identify him as the prime suspect in the Oakland County assaults, Farmington Hills police Chief William Dwyer said. Only 0.07 percent of the population has the rare blood type, he said.

OAKLAND COUNTY investigators linked Szeman — an Ohio trash hauling company salesman who formerly held jobs in Troy and Southfield — to several local attacks through fingerprints found on a Farmington Hills victim's wallet, blood-semen samples and personal property found in his possession that belongs to some of the victims.

The wallet, purse, credit cards and undergarments belonging to the last Farmington Hills victim were found April 2, 1988, in a dumpster in Westlake, Ohio, 3½ miles from Szeman's Rocky River townhouse.

Szeman had just moved to Rocky River from a rented room on Heather Heath, near 14 Mile, in West Bloomfield, where he lived for approximately two years. The last victim was attacked March 31, 1988, in her Farmington Hills home.

2 suspects awaiting charges

Continued from Page 1

and knocked down.

As the gunman got into the van and looked for the keys, the dealer retreated a few car spaces, then ran back to the building.

He told people leaving the building to go back inside, then fired one shot from his handgun into the front of the van in hopes of disabling it.

The gunman, unable to find the keys, got out, went behind the van and, from about 75 feet away, fired three shots; one whistled through the pool window.

The gunman and an accomplice then left in their car — a sedan the dealer had seen pull into the lot and park, with the motor running, as he loaded his van.

Farmington Hills officer Craig Summers arrested the suspected gunman, with a loaded Uzi, in brass in front of Williams & Co. CPAs, Grand River and Albion. Farmington officer Vincent Ziegler arrested the other suspect behind McFarland's Florist, Grand River and Middlebelt.

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SHOULDER PAIN — WHERE YOU HURT AND WHAT IT MEANS

If you have shoulder pain, you may think treatment is a simple matter. You point to the pain and tell the doctor, "put a shot here." Just the opposite is true: the shoulder joint, the cause of the problem, hurts hardly at all, and muscles that point the most are basically sound.

What is the explanation for this contradiction? Because the shoulder joint is inflamed it will not move. To compensate, the muscles above and below the joint take on the added work of splinting the shoulder joint and moving the arm. The joint does not hurt because it is at rest; the muscles ache because they are working in ways not appropriate for their size and location.

Pain that radiates up the neck and down the arm means that the trapezius (neck) and the deltoid (arm) muscles are trying to take over the movements the body reserves for the shoulder joint.

Such pain is not likely to resolve until therapy ignores the neck and arm discomfort and vigorously treats the impaired shoulder joint.



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