'Reach out' Mixup lets inmates dial direct

staff writer

Heaching out to touch someone was easier for prisoners at the Oakland County jail recently, thanks to a mixup when the facility switched long distance carriers.

The mixup was quickly corrected, "but someone's likely to have a helist telephone biff," according to Undersheriff Billy J. Nolin.

Inmates — who normally can call only if someone accepts charges — where able to call anywhere in the world for about 48 hours providing they knew a working credit card number, according to a spokerman for Michigan Bell Telephone Co.

"But we won't know how many calls were made or how much it will cost unit we've completed a billing cycle," said Pallip A. Jones, media relations manager for the company.

WHILE TRAT may be some time.

WHILE THAT may be some time, jail officials speculated the bill could

TIME

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be substantial. "Everyone knew be substantial. "Everyone knew babut it (calling with a credit card)" said Lt. Henry C. Wallane; commander of the jail that can bold more than 1,200 people. "And they made a lot of calls."

The mixup occurred about April 10, Jones said, as the jail was writching from ITT to another long distance carrier. As workmen were changing over, the normal control mechanism was apparently circumvented and immates were free to call whom ever, wherever, he said, providing they knew a working credit card number.

Jail officials learned something was wrong when one of the immates called one of his jailers and told him what he thought of him, Wallace said. Normally an immate could not make such a call without going through the operator and without the creciver agreeing to pay for the call.

WALLACE SAID it wasn't likely

WALLACE SAID it wasn't likely that every inmate knew a working

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credit card number. But conceivably someone who knew one could have given the number to others, be said. But a number got around and calls—lots of them—were made, Wallace said.

As officials sort out who called where—and who pays—there's likely to be some less than friendly discussions. Nolin predicted.

One thing is certain, however, he said, "The county isn't paying for them."

Faxon talks to Dem group

State Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, will speak to the OakLand County Young Democratic Club
at 7:30 p.m. Thursday at the Bloomfield Township Public Library, Lone
Pine and Telegraph.
The club's general business meeting will follow. The young Democrats meet the second Thursday of
each month.

aco monus. For more details, call 661-2576.





Carving for grades

Chef apprentice students from Oakland Community College spent Tuesday testing and preparing a meal for their families and employers at OCC's Orchard Ridge in Fermington Hills. Dane Marahall, left, of Rochester prepares a fake trout under the watchful eye of Mario Etemd, head chef at St. Joseph

Mercy Hospital in Pontisc. Marshall, currently employed at Machus Red Fox restaurant in Bloomfield Township, was one of 17 graduates this year, the largest class in the eight-year-old program that produces certified cooks.

MEA re-elects Chunovich



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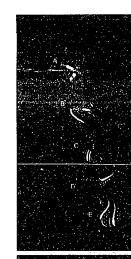
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