

Suspects face assault, other felony charges

Three Detroit men and a Southfield woman face felony charges in the drive-by shooting incident on Inkster Road in Farmington Hills Sunday.

The four were arraigned Monday in the Farmington Hills Jail before Magistrate James Brady of the 47th District Court in Farmington.

Arraigned were:

- Robert Larry Jaber, 19, of Detroit, who faces six counts — assault with intent to

murder, conspiracy to commit assault with intent to do great bodily harm, carrying a concealed weapon (a pistol in a vehicle) and three counts of carrying a dangerous weapon with unlawful intent (a straight blade, a curved blade and a map flashlight).

- Gary Robert Meldrum, 23, of Detroit, who faces four counts — assault with intent to murder, conspiracy to commit assault with intent to do great bodily harm, carrying a concealed weapon (a pistol in a vehicle)

and carrying a dangerous weapon with unlawful intent (a baseball bat).

- James Scott Meldrum, 21, of Detroit, who faces two counts — conspiracy to commit assault with intent to do great bodily harm and carrying a dangerous weapon with unlawful intent (a baseball bat).

- Maria Victoria Knes, 19, of Southfield, who faces two counts — conspiracy to commit assault with intent to do great bodily harm and felonious assault.

BRADY ENTERED not-guilty pleas in their behalf. He set cash or surety bond at \$70,000 for Jaber, \$60,000 for Gary Meldrum and \$30,000 for both James Meldrum and Knes.

The defendants are seeking court-appointed attorneys. A preliminary examination of the charges is set for Monday in 47th District Court.

Maximum penalties upon conviction are:

- Assault with intent to murder — life in prison.
- Conspiracy to commit assault with intent to do great bodily harm — 10 years and \$15,000.
- Carrying a concealed weapon — 5 years and \$2,500.
- Felonious assault — four years and \$2,000.
- Carrying a dangerous weapon with unlawful intent — 5 years and \$2,500.

Hills man escapes unhurt in drive-by shooting

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Brian DeGrande said.

"From there, he saw a car going southbound and a police car following. He told there until two officers came to the front door to check on his welfare."

Just before the shooting, officer Ronald Shankin, who responded to the earlier incident at 2:40 a.m. Sunday, had the house under surveillance.

Within an hour, he saw a southbound car slow as it neared the house. When it was in front of the house, Shankin heard five or six shots. After the last shot, the car continued southbound. At Eight Mile, it headed west.

Shankin radioed for help and followed the car onto westbound Grand River. The car entered the first eastbound turnaround and stopped at the stop sign. The driver didn't protest after apparently spotting Shankin's

patrol car.

WHEN BACKUP officers arrived from Farmington Hills, Farmington, Livonia and Redford Township, the five occupants were arrested without incident. Four young adults face assault charges (see related story). A 15-year-old Southfield girl was released pending further investigation.

Two knives, a baseball bat, a BB-coated club and two flashlights were found inside the car, Nebus said.

When no gun was found, Farmington Hills officer C.J. Rozum retraced the path of the getaway car. He found a 22-caliber gun on Eight Mile, just west of Inkster, near a business driveway.

Police believe the six-shot gun, stolen in a 1987 Farmington Hills break-in, was used in the shooting spree.

POLICE GAVE this account of the earlier felonious assault:

At 2:40 a.m., the 25-year-old man was awakened by an engine roar. Outside, he saw a car, occupied by two women, facing his house, near the front porch.

An argument broke out between the man and the female driver, apparently involving the man's brother, who was still inside the house. When the passenger opened her car door, the man closed it and spotted what he thought was a gun.

As he walked up the porch steps, the driver drove toward him, hitting the steps but not him. He soon heard something hit his picture window and saw the passenger walking toward the house, trying to retrieve a beer bottle.

He and the driver then resumed arguing on the front lawn. As the women left, the driver threatened to come back with friends, he told police.

Basketball games marred by fights

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that a visitor from Farmington High used an air horn during the game, according to spectators and school officials. They began verbally assaulting the visitors, which culminated in a physical fight. North won the game 64-61.

Two Farmington students told police they were attacked by half a dozen North students after the game. One 18-year-old was hit and kicked in the face, requiring stitches, and a 17-year-old received bruises.

A Farmington High student, who asked not to be identified, said the incident started after about half the spectators had left the gym. There were no adults in the area at the

time, he said.

In the hallway outside the gym, "a person from North was pushing through the crowd asking who had the air horn" and words were exchanged between students from the two schools, he said. "You could tell then there was going to be a fight. The North guys were talking real tough."

After going outside, the student saw his friend "walking around with a torn shirt and bruises all over his face and the other kid (who received the stitches) with blood all over his face. They had him on the ground and were kicking him in the face."

Neighboring Farmington police were alerted to the situation, and monitored the Farmington High

team as they arrived back at school and got off the bus shortly after 10 p.m. No further incidents were reported.

AT HARRISON, five students fought with several alumni of the school over what Graham was told were incidents relating back to a football game last fall, a New Year's Eve party and some alleged telephone calls. "I think everybody regrets that it happened," he added.

None of the visiting students from Northville were involved in the fighting, he said. The Harrison post-game dance was cut short, with students being sent home at 10:45 p.m.

Graham attributed Friday's incidents to disputes between individuals,

as opposed to disputes between schools. "If kids are looking for a problem, they're going to find it," he said.

"It's just a problem people have in relationships. I don't think many of the kids go out of their way to say 'I go to this school, and I'm better than you.'"

COWAN SAID he is determined not to let Friday's incidents have an impact on future activities. "We can't overreact, but you can't underreact either," he said.

"I can't help but wonder whether this is an outgrowth of what you see happening around the world, with all the hostility."

Cities take part in honoring King

The city councils of Farmington and Farmington Hills are committed to keeping the dreams of Martin Luther King Jr. alive.

"I feel we must never take our freedom and rights for granted. We must keep the spirit of this movement alive. It's an important day," Farmington councilwoman JoAnne McShane said.

Joining cities around the country, the two local city councils proclaimed Monday Martin Luther King Jr. Day, marking the 60th birthday of the slain civil rights leader.

"The city of Farmington Hills appreciates and recognizes the

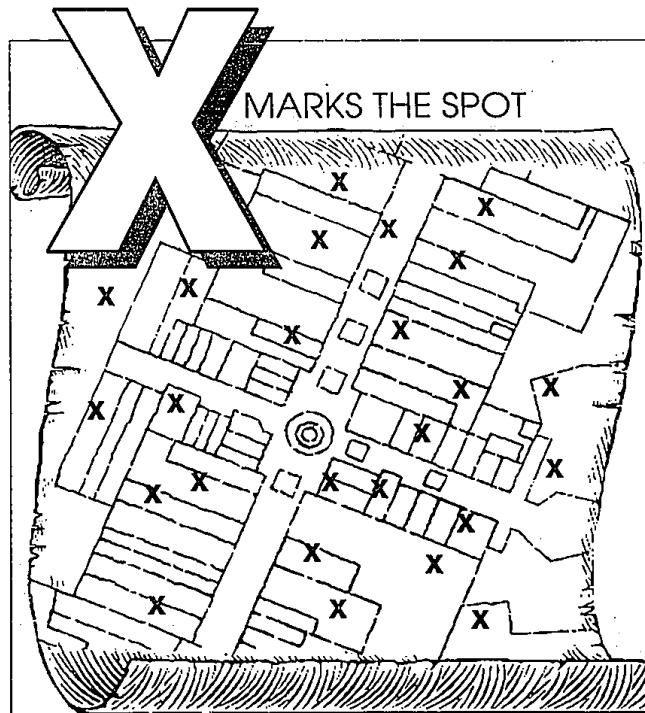
dreams, the struggles and the progress made by Dr. Martin Luther King in his fight for peace and equality," according to the Farmington Hills proclamation.

In Farmington, city officials "called upon the citizens of the community to pause and reflect on the important accomplishments that resulted in the leadership of Dr. King."

Farmington Hills Mayor Jean Fox proclaimed the special day "as a day to remember the struggles, the goals, and the visions that Martin Luther King had two decades ago, and to keep his dream alive."

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