

# Father, son imprisoned for assault, burglary

By Darroll Clem  
Staff writer

A West Bloomfield father and son convicted of charges stemming from a burglary and the beating of two Ohio police officers were sentenced Tuesday to up to 25 years in prison.

Bruce Hunter Ferguson, 42, and Bruce Ferguson Jr., 17, were sentenced in Butler County, Ohio, Common Pleas Court by Judge Matthew Crehan.

The father, meanwhile, faces a concealed weapons charge in Farmington Hills. That felony charge stems from a traffic incident

last April 18 in which an unregistered, .25-caliber revolver, believed tossed from a fleeing car, was found at Grand River and Halsted, with Bruce Hunter Ferguson's fingerprints on it, said Farmington Hills police detective Daniel Krause.

The Ohio sentence followed the pair's conviction for burglary last July at a K mart in Middletown, Ohio, where two investigating police officers were knocked unconscious, authorities said.

The Fergusons temporarily escaped and fled south to Kentucky but were apprehended and returned to Ohio, where the jury convicted them on Dec. 22, Crehan said Jan. 30.

The senior Ferguson admitted stealing about \$50,000 in merchandise in a spree along I-75 and told authorities he sold the goods at flea markets, Crehan said.

THE PAIR continued the spree in late-night hours last July 24 at the Middletown K mart when they were discovered by police officers, Crehan said. The Fergusons were removing merchandise from the store and carrying it through a garden area to a vehicle, the judge said.

"They had quite a lot of merchandise," he said. When police officers arrived at the scene,

they became involved in a scuffle with the Fergusons and were knocked unconscious, after which the tires of the police car were slashed and the Fergusons fled south into Kentucky, Crehan said.

Authorities launched a search, and the father and son were apprehended and returned to Ohio, where they faced multiple charges.

The senior Ferguson was convicted of felonious assault, aggravated robbery, burglary, possession of criminal tools and disrupting public service (slashing the police car's tires). He was sentenced to 11 years to 25 years in prison and will be considered for

parole in seven years and eight months, Crehan said.

THE YOUNGER Ferguson, who will turn 18 this month, was convicted on similar charges, except for disrupting public service. He was sentenced to five years to 25 years in prison, though he will be considered for probation in six months, Crehan said.

The Fergusons were in the Middletown jail awaiting transfer to a state prison, according to Butler County bailiff Dan Murray.

Staff writer Bob Sklar contributed to this report.

# Hospitals rerouting more emergency patients

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SEVERE INJURIES and trauma cases are also not rerouted, but less-injuries are taken to hospitals that can provide medical attention.

"The idea behind rerouting is to put patients where the available services are," Wilson said.

Though the procedure is a much used, the amount of time the emergency rooms are closed varies among hospitals.

In 1989 among Eccentric-area hospitals, Farmington Hills Botsford led the way in rerouting patients

from its emergency room, doing so 224 times. William Beaumont in Royal Oak was next with 204 reroutings, followed by Southfield's Providence with 197. William Beaumont in Troy rerouted patients 96 times and Crittenton in Rochester rerouted 46 times.

The combined total of 11 community hospitals was 1,320 reroutings, according to the Oakland County Community Network.

However, when considering the number of hours the hospital emergency rooms close, the ranking

among those cited above changes.

William Beaumont Royal Oak led the group with its emergency room closing for a total of 2,329.5 hours. Providence was next with 2,259 hours closed, and William Beaumont Troy with 1,496 hours. They were followed by Botsford with 1,239 hours closed and Crittenton with 1,232.5 hours closed.

The 11 hospitals in the study were closed for a total of 16,925 hours.

"WE'RE REROUTING this year more than the year before," Wilson said.

"The rerouting system is a problem which we are trying to minimize," said William Scheuber, an administrator who is responsible for the emergency department at Botsford.

Scheuber considers the rerouting system a good process, but does feel it is an inconvenience to patients.

"We don't want to have our patients to have to go to another hospital," the administrator said. "In that sense, it is a problem."

Wilson said there is a lack of nurses, intensive care beds and access to special machines, such as CAT (computerized axial tomography) scanners.

There are a certain number of beds for people in a certain region. When those beds are filled, rerouting comes into play, Wilson said.

"When we reroute, we're losing patients, which is the reason we're open, and the good will of the community," he said.

"WE'VE HEARD a lot of complaints by people," said Steve Simmons, vice president of public relations for Southeast Michigan Hospital Council.

"It is important that people know there are procedures to be followed," the vice president said.

"You're not really putting into question the safety of the patient. I don't think that public safety is at threat," Simmons said.

"There is no compromise in patient care," Scheuber said.

"We are very fortunate in this county to have a well-functioning system," said Dr. John Karazim, director of emergency services at Crittenton Hospital in Rochester.

Wilson said he feels the rerouting system will be around for quite a while. "I don't see it changing any time soon."

"It comes down to a societal issue of how much we want to pay for our health care," said Steve Walters,

manager of planning and information services with Southeast Michigan Hospital Council.

Thomas Gahan, president of Paramed Inc., said the system of rerouting has improved.

"Right now things are going fine. The system and the hospitals can tolerate rerouting," he said.

THE MEDICAL professionals agreed that more funds are needed to improve the health care industry and help those who serve the public. "In one word, money," Wilson said.

With drugs, the homeless and other problems, society has to decide what problems to tackle first, said Karazim.

"You have to pick and choose on what you spend money on," he said. "People and their legislators will have to decide what kind of medical care they want," Karazim said.

"No one is going to say, 'give me the \$2.95 care and not the best care'."

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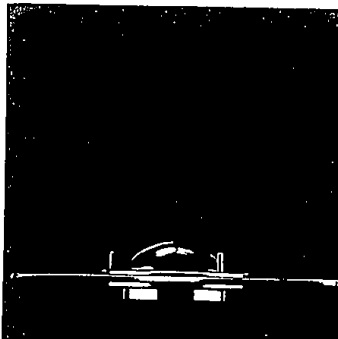
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
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