

Mum's the word

Officials quiet on reported gambling probe

By Ryan Tulek
staff writer

Federal officials wouldn't comment this week on newspaper reports that a grand jury is investigating West Bloomfield Township resident Henry Alan Hill for gambling.

Hill was named in the Detroit Free Press and News last weekend as the subject of probes by the FBI, IRS and a grand jury for laundering money through stores owned by former Bloomfield Hills resident Emmet Denha.

The reported investigations were

mentioned in lengthy stories about checks Denha had cashed for Detroit Pistons guard Isiah Thomas, a Bloomfield Hills resident, when they were neighbors.

The stories, showing the variety of ties Thomas had with Denha and Denha with Hill, based accounts of the probes on sources identified as "familiar to the investigation."

"That information did not come from our office," said Dawn Moritz, assistant media coordinator for the FBI in Detroit. "We're not allowed to make any comment on it. To be

honest, I don't know where this came from."

BEN MCMAKIN, chief of the IRS criminal investigations in Detroit, wouldn't comment on the reported probes.

"We don't talk about any of our investigations unless it comes to light in a public trial or indictment or conviction," he said.

Christopher Andreoff, Hill's lawyer, said he didn't know whether the reports were true.

"I can't tell you whether he is the subject or target of a grand jury investigation because I haven't been advised . . . There would be a

strong probability that, if he was, I would have been advised."

But he added he "would assume" there is an ongoing grand jury investigation that involves Hill because he was asked to provide handwriting examples of Hill. U.S. Attorney Steve Markman said he could not confirm or deny that a grand jury was investigating Hill.

The news stories reported that Hill was the state's largest bookmaker and that authorities believed they could link him to a multimillion-dollar sports betting ring operating in several states.

Andreoff had said Hill is not involved in any illegal gambling.

Patterson gets appointment

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