

Trial ordered over lost investments

By James Radebaugh
Staff writer

A three-week recess in the preliminary examination of Harvey Aldem didn't help the West Bloomfield man, who is charged with defrauding area ophthalmologists of more than \$12,000.

Forty-seventh District Court Judge Margaret Schaeffer on Monday ordered Aldem, president and sole officer of Utah Mortgage of Farmington Hills, to stand trial in circuit court on one count of larceny by conversion.

Allegedly, Aldem could be sentenced to five years in prison and fined \$2,500. Defense attorney Randy Davidson said after the ruling that Aldem maintains his innocence and insisted the matter should be settled in civil court.

The examination was interrupted May 13 to give Davidson time to study documents needed to prepare his defense.

LAST MONTH, Dr. Robert Netzel, a Bloomfield Hills ophthalmologist and a trustee of the Orchard Lake Ophthalmologist Profit Sharing Plan, testified that in 1987 he invested \$14,000 of the plan's money with

Utah Mortgage and that the firm failed to pay any interest and all but \$2,000 of the principal.

According to Netzel's testimony, Aldem promised the ophthalmologists that they would be repaid as soon as Utah foreclosed on a business to which it had loaned \$250,000 in 1986.

However, the recipient of the loan, Michael Weger, president of Weger Petroleum, testified that his company was never subject to foreclosure and that he repaid the loan in 1986.

PROSECUTOR MARGARET Davis argued that by misleading the ophthalmologists, Aldem crossed the line separating criminal behavior from sloppy business practices. While Aldem may be open to a civil suit, he is still subject to criminal prosecution, Davis told the court.

Davidson, however, likened Utah Mortgage's circumstances with those of any failed business. Former Eastern Airlines chairman Frank Borman wouldn't be prosecuted because travelers were left holding useless tickets when the airlines went bankrupt, he told the judge.

Aldem will be arraigned at 1:30 p.m. June 25 before Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Richard Kuhn.

police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

● GARAGE FIRE

The cause of a fire that gutted a garage early Friday on Halsted, south of 12 Mile, is listed as suspicious, according to a Farmington Hills fire report.

Firefighters were called to an unknown fire on Haggerty, south of 12 Mile. Emergency dispatch later reported that the caller who informed dispatch was unsure of the street and that the fire may be on Halsted.

When firefighters arrived at the garage on Halsted they found an abandoned garage collapsed and in flames.

Firefighters extinguished the flames and set down the surrounding area. The garage was a total loss. It was near an earlier fire department training burn and is considered to have no value, according to the report.

● HOUSE PARTY

A 52-year-old Farmington Hills woman was ticketed for allowing a loud house party where police found partygoers younger than 21 drinking at and around a house on Heritage Hills Sunday, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

Police received several calls about the loud party that included a large bonfire behind the house. Par-

tygoers were on lawns and in the street. Many of the guests refused to leave, according to police.

The homeowner was ticketed under a city ordinance for allowing an open house party where minors were drinking and in possession of alcohol. Conviction carries a maximum penalty of 30 days in jail and a \$500 fine. An 18-year-old was ticketed for prowling. Two other men, ages 20 and 21, were ticketed for open alcohol in a motor vehicle.

● BREAK-IN

A break-in at the Big Boy restaurant, 20788 Farmington Road, netted thieves some \$5,400 in cash and gift certificates, according to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report.

The incident occurred on June 10 sometime between midnight and 5 a.m., reports said. The thief, or thieves, broke into the office safe, which contained the valuables. Damage estimated at \$1,365 was also done to a file cabinet, sofa and door during the incident, and telephone lines to the building were cut.

● INDECENT EXPOSURE

A shopper at Pier One Imports in downtown Farmington reported seeing a nude man in a store dressing room June 7.

According to Farmington Department of Public Safety reports, the woman was walking by a dressing room and observed the man standing in an open fitting room with no clothing on. The store is in the Downtown Farmington Center.

● MAILBOX DESTROYED

Fireworks blew apart a residential mailbox on Howard Road Friday. The homeowner arrived home to find the destroyed mailbox. Damage is estimated at \$25, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

● THEFTS REPORTED

Four wheels and four tires valued at \$720 were reported stolen from vans parked at Town & Country Dodge, 31015 Grand River, June 6-7.

A bicycle valued at \$350 was reported stolen from Echo Valley Condominiums, 27599 Echo Valley, June 6-7.

A dirt bike valued at \$400 was reported stolen from a house on Rensselaer, June 6-7.

Speakers, sunglasses and 25 cassette tapes valued at \$300 were reported stolen from a 1984 Volkswagen on Fox Club, June 7.

A torch set, leather tool pouch and drill valued at \$700 were reported stolen from a 1991 Ford van on Commerce Drive, June 7.

A car phone and snakeskin purse valued at \$300 were reported stolen from a 1991 Plymouth parked at Buddy's Pizza, 31646 Northwestern Highway, June 7.

A 1981 Datsun, leather coat and TV valued at \$550 were reported stolen from a trailer at Flamingo Trailer Park on Middlebelt, north of Nine Mile, June 8.

A cellular phone, sunglasses and wallet valued at \$275 were reported stolen from a 1989 Ford van in a garage on Meadow Hill Drive, June 8.

A radar detector valued at \$350 was reported stolen from a 1989 Mercury on 12 Mile, June 7-8.

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