

Man accused in parking lot killing goes to trial

BY STACY JENKINS
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A jury is expected to hear closing statements today in Oakland County Circuit Court in the case of a Warren man accused of fatally striking a man with his vehicle last May in the parking lot at Orchard Mall.

The jury was seated Monday in Judge Gene Schnell's courtroom and heard opening statements from Oakland County Assistant Prosecutor Gregory Townsend and Lawrence Kaluzny, the attorney defending Jason Shepherd on a second-degree murder charge.

The jury is expected to start deliberating after the closing arguments, set to begin at 1 p.m. today.

If jurors return a guilty verdict, Schnell could sentence Shepherd to any number of years up to life in prison. Sentencing guidelines for second-degree murder range from 19 to 31 years, but the judge could go outside those guidelines, according to Townsend.

Shepherd was charged last May 18 in 48th District Court and entered a plea of not guilty. He is accused of deliberately driving into Ayad Salmo, 28, of Farmington Hills, during a confrontation in the mall parking on Orchard Lake Road at Maple.

Before he was struck from behind by the vehicle, Salmo was reportedly watching a group of men playing roller hockey in the parking lot around midnight on May 7, 2000.

Witnesses said Shepherd, who was 19 at the time of the incident, was circling the group with his car when he hit Salmo.

Shepherd was reporting for work at the mall when he noticed about a dozen men playing hockey in the parking lot. The Warren man got out of his car to talk to the hockey players and words and pushes were soon exchanged.

Local women join Israeli Seder

BY DAN WEST
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This weekend's Passover holiday will bring many Jewish families together to celebrate their ancestors' freedom from captivity in Egypt.

While men regularly take the leadership roles at these family celebrations, a group is working to make sure the efforts of Jewish women aren't forgotten.

Two West Bloomfield women traveled to Israel last month to drive home that point.

Carol Weintraub Fogel and Sharon Lipton visited the Middle East for five days last month to participate in an international women's Seder in Israel. They returned home to lead a metro Detroit women's Seder, a ritual meal and storytelling session recounting Jewish freedom from captivity in Egypt centuries ago.

"If you look at traditional Haggadah (story books read out loud at Seders), the roles of women aren't highlighted," Fogel said.

Fogel and Lipton, both longtime West Bloomfield residents and volunteers, joined 350 women from 65 ethnic backgrounds for the Israeli Seder. They represented a women's group from the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit.

Fogel and Lipton said they were particularly touched by the stories women from Ethiopia, Yemen and Romania shared about their personal experiences dealing with Exodus-like ordeals in their homelands.

The goal of the local Seder March 21, involving some 400 women from Adat Shalom Synagogue in Farmington Hills, was to emphasize the importance of women in Jewish customs.

"Jewish traditions are passed on through the mothers," Lipton said. "We try to encourage women to reach out for their identity so they'll want to pass on their culture."

Some 6,500 Jewish women throughout metro Detroit contribute to programs designed to heighten awareness of women's roles in Jewish culture.

The local Seder, Fogel said, also gives women ideas on how to make each year's Passover Seder more unique, special and touching for their families as they prepare to celebrate the holiday at sunset Saturday.



Trial begins: Jason Shepherd, right, confers with an attorney during Shepherd's trial.

Correction

In the April 1 story regarding a new scholarship fund honoring Edward N. Hodges, III, J.D., the headline incor-

rectly stated that Mr. Hodges was a physician. He is an attorney. The Observer regrets the error.

OBITUARY

FREDERICK W. WELKENBACH

Frederick W. Welkenbach, 77, of Farmington Hills, died March 30, 2001 at Botsford General Hospital in Farmington Hills. He was born Aug. 28, 1923 in Royal Oak and was a World War II Army veteran. He worked as a heating and cooling contractor.

Mr. Welkenbach is survived by his brother, Dr. Corville "Coty" (Shirley Reneau) Marrow; good friend, Randy (Amy) Emert and family; two nieces; and one nephew.

Arrangements made by Heene-Sundquist Funeral Home.

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