

Weiner faces trial on car theft, larceny charges

By Brian Lyasight
staff writer

The size of Kenneth Weiner's cell at the Oakland County Jail shouldn't matter any longer, because Weiner was to be returned to federal prison in Milan this week.

He will return to Oakland County though, next month, for proceedings in circuit court. Forty-eighth District Court Judge Thomas Brookover ordered Weiner to stand trial on felony car theft and larceny charges.

Brookover's decision followed a 90-minute hearing Monday during which several witnesses testified about Weiner's May 10 escape from a Bloomfield Township police building, and his eventual capture in Southfield.

Weiner's trial in Southfield's 46th District Court on two misdemeanor charges, reckless

driving and leaving the scene of a personal injury accident, is scheduled for July 17.

Authorities said they expected Weiner, who also faces a federal escape charge, would be moved Wednesday or Thursday of this week to the federal prison. He had spent the week in Oakland County Jail, pending district court hearings in Bloomfield Township and Southfield.

FOLLOWING MONDAY'S hearing, Weiner's court-appointed attorney, Ronald Pentz, complained that Weiner had been denied access to reading and writing material, television and showers.

"He's not being treated very well by the government relative to what he is charged with," said Pentz, referring to the auto theft and larceny charges.

Pentz also said he would file a motion to

quash the larceny count.

"This charge doesn't fit under these facts," he said.

Oakland County Sheriff officials dismissed Pentz's claims about Weiner's treatment at the jail. Undersecretary Billie J. Nolin said Tuesday Weiner had a television outside his cell, and access to showers and magazines, he said.

"When I went back there to see him, he was doing fine," said Nolin of the 44-year-old prisoner.

The county jail is not "an Embassy Suites," he said. The conditions of the facility and treatment of prisoners are regulated by the federal, not the county, government, he said.

"ANY TIME YOU have an escalated risk or suicidal prisoner, we put them in a single

cell and put a 15-minute watch on him," said Nolin.

At the hearing, two federal marshals, James Cinnamon and James Fulger, testified that they brought Weiner to his attorneys' offices at 6735 Telegraph about 8:35 a.m. May 10. They removed his handcuffs and escorted him into a conference room for a meeting with his attorneys and federal prosecutors. About three hours later, they learned Weiner had just escaped.

Attorney Michael Rex said he arrived in his office's basement garage at the same time the marshals and federal did.

Authorities allege that Weiner took the keys to Rex's 1988 van from Rex's office then slipped down a back stairwell and fled in the van.

Rex identified a set of keys found in Weiner's pocket as his own.

Next on the witness stand came Jerome C. Halston, a Farmington Hills man who identified Weiner as behind the wheel of a gray van that knocked him over in the parking lot of a Big Boy Restaurant near Northland Mall.

"I got a good enough look at (the driver) to know who he was," Halston said.

WEINER APPEARED relaxed during the hearing. He smiled occasionally as he discussed witnesses' testimony with attorney Pentz.

Oakland County Sheriff's Deputy Wayne McClure triggered some laughter as he testified about his arrest of Weiner near Providence Hospital.

McClure said he asked Weiner for identification, and that Weiner said he had none. "I asked him if he knew who he was," McClure recalled. "He said, 'No, he did not.'"

Cop, firefighter hailed by Optimists

Farmington/Farmington Hills Optimist Club has named John Markey as Farmington Hills Police Officer of the Year and Anthony Gubacz as Farmington Public Safety Officer of the Year for 1989.

The veteran officers each received a plaque at the Optimist breakfast May 9.

Markey, a six-year veteran, "has proven himself to be one of our truly outstanding officers," Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer said.

"He is a persistent officer who, on a day-to-day basis, can be counted on to locate and apprehend individuals responsible for criminal activity."

Markey has received one lifesaving award, nine department citations, one commendation certificate and three appreciation letters.

He also has received a Mothers Against Drunk Driving Award for his law enforcement work against intoxicated drivers. Dwyer lauded Markey's "diligence to duty and professional attitude."

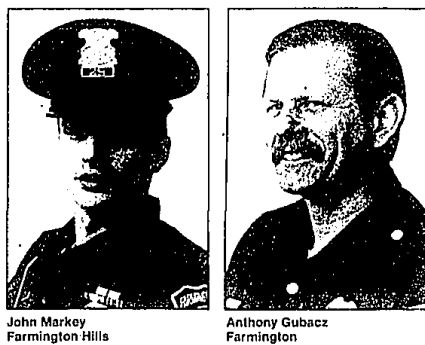
GUBACZ, A 25-year veteran, spent 1989 as a member of the Southwest Auto Theft Prevention Team, earning Oakland County Sheriff's Department honors as the "most valuable team member."

He took part in many investigations of auto theft and insurance fraud. He also took part in a stolen car sting where he bought stolen cars directly from the thieves. That sting resulted in \$1 million in recovered cars and 49 arrests.

"Officer Gubacz has represented the Farmington public safety department in a professional and diligent manner, which reflects positively on his reputation and that of the department," Public Safety Director Frank Lauhoff said.

During his career, Gubacz has been honored for both police and firefighting services, including two departmental commendations for meritorious service. He has received four merit citations, two unit citations and safe driving awards.

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Optimist Club annually presents awards to local law enforcement officers.



John Markey
Farmington Hills

Anthony Gubacz
Farmington

ment officers during May to express appreciation to them men and women dedicated to serving others as well as to draw attention to the role of law enforcement plays in our society.

May is National Law Enforcement Month.

Comerica Bank opens banking 'supermarket'

Comerica Bank-Detroit has opened a new "financial service supermarket" that provides a wider variety of banking services to the Farmington community than a traditional bank branch.

The new regional banking center is at 35405 Grand River at Drake. It offers financial services for everyone from individuals and families to small business operators and managers of mid-size businesses.

The branch office at the center provides traditional banking services like checking and saving accounts, certificates of deposit and safe deposit boxes.

The center operates offices for small business banking, investment management and trust services, personal banking and middle market banking for mid-size companies. (Middle market banking relocated from 12 Mile near Drake.)

These services appeal to retail business customers and individual clients who find it convenient to meet locally with the personal bankers who oversee their accounts.

"Employees at the regional banking center work with Comerica's branches in the western suburbs to make it easier for customers in that area to do their business close to home," said vice president John Krieman, trust officer for the center.

The branch office at the regional banking center is open Monday through Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Drive-through service is available 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. The other offices at the center are open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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MYTHS ABOUT CHRISTIANITY

THE MYTH OF THE MONTH

Jesus Christ was only a great moral teacher

What are we to make of the myth? The first and foremost of all the thousand years of western history have been proved on many. Controversy has constantly surrounded his claims. Religious life in the West has been dominated by legends to his teachings. No self-aware, intelligent person can deny the impact of this towering individual and his impact on society.

No one doubts any more that Jesus actually existed. Most people also believe that he was a great moral teacher. Religious and political leaders throughout the world, including many of the great opponents of Christianity, call the moral superiority of his life. Mohammed Gandhi aspired to the ideas of the Sermon on the Mount. The philosopher John Stuart Mill thought Jesus a genius and probably the greatest moral teacher who ever existed. Even Napoleon Bonaparte considered him a superior leader of men.

The New Testament documents record the radical servant-like attitude which lent power and credibility to Jesus' teachings. He has truly led humanity in the expression of compassion and humility, as well as in anger against evil and hypocrisy. Jesus combined a realistic understanding of human nature with an idealism for what human beings could become. His words have tested and challenged the minds and hearts of millions for centuries.

Of course, this is not the whole story. When we begin to consider Jesus' claims about his identity, the controversy begins. This is where people (including the world's religious leaders) have problems. This is where the label "moral teacher" is put to the test. It begins to seem inadequate, if not naive.

A thirty year old peasant carpenter turned itinerant teacher, Jesus laid claim both by word and action to be more than a mere man. He operated on the assumption that he was God himself. How do we know that? From his explicit statements and the very way he lived. His self-disclosures are interwoven in the very fabric of the New Testament. He claimed equality with God. He said he had lived before Abraham. He assumed the right to forgive sins. He accepted worship. There seems to be no escaping it.

Jesus of Nazareth could not be simply a harmless moral teacher. He cuts too deep and steps too far from the crowd of moral teachers and philosophers. We can call him a liar. We might even discuss his mental imbalance. But the tag of "only a great moral teacher" doesn't stick. It was never an option in his own day. Some of his contemporaries thought him mad, others loved him. He was regarded with disdain and sometimes even hatred, or alternately with amazement and adoration. But he never received mild approval.

Jesus is an option for today. We can shut him up or hear him out. What are we to make of this man? What of his moral integrity? His faithfulness of centuries of aspirations? His prediction of death and resurrection? What are we to make of his claims to be the one and only God-man of history? What are we to do with this great moral teacher who makes such impossible claims?

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