

Bridal salons sold 'doctored' wedding gowns

BY HELEN NIEMIEC
STAFF WRITER

The former general manager of the Boulevard Group testified Friday that not only did she know that sample wedding gowns were sold as new, she had a \$3,000 per month quota to keep.

Monica Zambler, who resigned in October, answered questions from prosecutors for more than three hours in the preliminary hearing for Gary and Donna Gottschling, who are facing charges of criminal fraud on allegations of selling sample wedding dresses as new at their bridal salons.

Seven customers of Today's Bride, Boulevard Bridal and Birmingham's Sue Gordon's, all part of the Boulevard Group, also answered questions Friday, the second day of last week's two-day hearing.

The matter is adjourned until Friday Jan. 8, 40th District Court Judge Gus Cifelli also ruled that the Gottschlings could leave Michigan in the interim to conduct business in New York and visit relatives in Florida. The Gottschlings have paid a \$150,000, 10 percent cash surety bond to stay out of jail.

Zambler looked at 16 bridal gowns that were worn by women who had previously testified and

commented on how she knew each was a floor sample, "doctored" to look new.

The "alterations" included using a mixture of tea, coffee and yellow dye to turn two white gowns into ivory-colored gowns, additions of lace to replace frayed lace and sewing on new skirts to replace skirts that had holes or rips in them.

Zambler identified three different ledgers used to keep track of substitution gowns, which she said was identified by the prefix 999 for computer purposes.

The practice of fixing up floor model gowns and selling them as new began in 1988, Zambler testified. In the case of the sample gowns that were altered were of good quality. But as the company's financial problems grew, the rehabilitated gowns were of poorer quality, she told the court.

"I was told by Donna Gottschling that Gary's other business was having financial problems. Basically, they were defaulting on a loan that was the same bank that had issued a loan to Boulevard Bridal. She feared that the loan would be called in. She needed to stockpile the money to pay off the loan," Zambler said.

The seven women who testified Friday were asked about the dresses they had ordered and the

condition in which they were received, if they were received at all.

The Gottschlings also owned Kilty Kelly stores in Troy and Dearborn, plus another shop in Royal Oak.

The seven women took the stand Friday, recounted ordering gowns, their gowns' alteration schedules and in what conditions their dresses arrived in. Each bride, or mother of the bride, tes-

tifying Friday had been called by the Oakland County prosecutor's office last month to notify them of a suspicion that the dresses sold as new actually were floor samples.

Thomas Cranmer, the Gottschlings' attorney, objected to questions asked of the women concerning receiving dresses that weren't new, since the prosecution had not proven that to be the case.

"The first time you raised a concern was when someone called you and told you it might not be new," Cranmer had told one testifying if she was satisfied with the dresses left with shop.

Mary Stidwell, who was married Aug. 22 wearing a \$1,600 gown from Sue Gordon, said that being satisfied with a dress is the least that a customer should expect.

"For paying that kind of money, I expected a dress in great shape," she said.

The third alteration was to correct a new problem that had arisen. Fitzgerald ordered an off the shoulder gown and in the final fitting found that it was too wide.

"It was falling off my body," she said. "Now that I look back on it, it must have been two different dresses."

The dress, she testified, was not picked up until the night before her Aug. 22 wedding.

Oakland County prosecutor Richard Thompson in late October indicted the Gottschlings and their company, the Boulevard Group, charging them with 18 counts of conspiracy to obtain money under false pretenses and 12 counts each of conspiracy to commit larceny by conversion and larceny by conversion. If convicted, the couple could spend up to 16 years in prison.

Kristen Fitzgerald testified that she had problems with the size of the dress ordered. She tried on a size 10 floor sample before ordering a size 6. She required two alterations once the gown came in because it was much too big.

**CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 7, 1992**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jon Grant at 7:30 p.m. Members Present: Bates, Grant, Lichtman, Sever, Smith and Vagorzi. Members Absent: Marks, Oliver. Present: City Manager Conick, Deputy City Clerk Rose, Assistant to the City Manager Brock, Directors Whimery and Rosch, and Attorney Donohue.

COUNCIL:

- Received presentation of 1846 Historical Map.
- Considered creation of payback district for Bldgstone Watermain Installation.
- Appointed members of City Council for "Name the Park Contest" committee.

APPROVED:

- Adoption of Resolution for sale of \$1,150,000 Public Improvement Special Assessment Bonds.
- Collective Bargaining Agreement for International Association of Fire Fighters.
- Executive Session to discuss pending litigation: Paulus vs. City of Farmington Hills, and Donovan vs. City of Farmington Hills.
- City Council Meeting minutes of October 19, and 26, 1992.
- Adoption of Resolution regarding Children's Bill of Rights.

MAYOR GRANT:

- Proclaimed dedication for St. Alexander's Church Remodeling/Expansion.

JON GRANT, Mayor
KATHRYN A. DORNAN, City Clerk

Published December 10, 1992

Let It Snow!!!
...a celebration of winter music
**OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
COMMUNITY CHORUS**
Renaissance Voices Orchard Ridge Singers
The OCC Brass and Percussion Ensemble,
and Harp
conducted by G. Kevin Dewey
works by Mozart, John Rutter, John Williams, Jule Styne, Leonardski
Smith Theatre
OCC Orchard Ridge Campus
1-696 and Orchard Lake Road
in Farmington Hills
Tuesday, December 15, 1992 •
8:00 P.M. ADMISSION \$3.00

**Christmas Sale at
K.I.T. KITTS INDUSTRIAL TOOLS**

YOUR CHOICE 59.99 EACH

9514B 4" GRINDER 6404 3/4" VARIABLE SPEED DRILL
B05000 RANDOM ORBIT SANDER

FREE

CASE WITH 5007 NBK 7 1/4" CIRCULAR SAW ONLY FREE EXTRA BATTERY WITH 6005 DWE 3/8" CORDLESS DRILL KIT

\$129.00 \$159.00

EXTRA BATTERIES AT EXTRA SPECIAL PRICES

7.2 BATTERY #632002-7 LIST \$46.00 SPECIAL **\$23.95**
9.6 BATTERY #632007-4 LIST \$48.00 SPECIAL **\$24.95**

WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

K.I.T. KITTS INDUSTRIAL TOOLS

11817 47th St. Livonia, MI 48150 (313) 476-2123
11817 47th St. Livonia, MI 48150 (313) 476-2123

BERGSTROM'S
plumbing • heating • cooling
30633 Schoolcraft, Livonia
(Between Merriman & Middlebelt)
HOURS: MON-FRI 7:30-6; SAT 9-4
522-1350

DECEMBER SAVINGS

Early Bird FURNACE INSTALLATION SPECIAL
from **\$1095.00** SAVE **\$200.00**
Reg. \$1295.00
INSTALLED & RUNNING
Model GFA050 For Homes Up to 1000 sq. ft.

SUPER COUPON INSTALLATION SPECIAL
POWER HUMIDIFIER
Save **\$80.00**
\$199.00 Regular \$279.00

SUPER COUPON INSTALLATION SPECIAL
ELECTRONIC AIR CLEANER
Save **\$200.00**
\$476.00 Regular \$676.00

SUPER COUPON INSTALLATION SPECIAL
MECHANICAL SETBACK THERMOSTAT
Save **\$35.00**
\$109.95 Regular \$144.95

SUPER COUPON INSTALLATION SPECIAL
40 GALLON WATER HEATER
Save **\$10.95**
\$319.00 Regular \$329.95

Coupons cannot be combined with any other offer. Expires 12/31/92.

INNOCENT BYSTANDER.

ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT FOREST FIRES.
A Fire Service of the Forest Service, USDA, and your State Forestry.

**SALEM LUMBER
KITCHEN & BATH SHOPPE**
30650 Plymouth Rd. • Livonia
422-1000

"USG" ceiling tile special!

2x4 "Plateau" NO 725 R.P.C. Carton	2x4 "Tabaret" No 1209 12 P.C. Carton
\$17.52	\$41.88
Each P.C. \$2.19	Each P.C. \$3.49
Mineral Base	Fiberglass Base

Bring your room sizes, we can figure tile and "USG" grid needs. washable surface

Melamine Paneling
Moisture Resistant 4'x8'

Honey Birch 1/4" Looks Like Real Birch Paneling	\$13.99
Sherbrook oak 3/16" (in medium or light shade)	\$13.99
Cranberry Spray 1/4" 4'x6" square	\$18.99
Desert Sand/Grey 1/4" 4'x4" square	\$18.99

All "A" grade all suitable for high humidity areas

standard white pine 3/4" boards

Width	6 ft.	8 ft.
4"	\$1.50	\$2.40
6"	\$2.40	\$4.00
8"	\$3.00	\$4.80
10"	\$4.20	\$5.60
12"	\$4.80	\$6.00

select your own from our in store stock

sheet stock sale

1/4" lauan	\$8.99
1/4" birch G1S	\$17.99
1/4" oak G1S	\$21.99

easy tailgate loading

1/4" std. hardboard	\$3.99
1/4" std. hardboard	\$7.99
1/4" std. pegboard	\$8.99

store and shed hours
monday thru saturday 8 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.
sunday 10 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

prices effective thru dec. 22, 1992

HUSQVARNA
A TRUE PROFESSIONAL SAW AT AN AFFORDABLE PRICE.

Additional 10% Off
New Saw purchase with ad.

MODEL 36
16" CUT 36 C.C.
The 36 features air injection and a large muffler to help reduce heat and noise for easier cutting. Perfect for firewood or working out back.

MODEL 51
18" CUT 51 C.C.
Ideal for farmers, homeowners, utility workers. Built for felling average-sized timber and for limbing. Electronic ignition, chain catcher, and inertia activated chain brake standard.

MODEL 66-67CC
20" CUT 67CC
Ideal for pulpwood and heavy-duty home use. A powerful advancement in this popular category. Extremely good power-to-weight ratio and torque, broad power curve, reliable electronic ignition, inertia activated chain brake standard.

NOW ONLY \$379.95 SAVE \$40

NOW ONLY \$229.95

FREE CARRYING CASE \$30 VALUE

FREE CARRYING CASE \$30 VALUE

UNITED MOWER
28619 Grand River Farmington Hills
474-4325

HOURS: M-F 9-6 SAT. 9-3