

IMC fund-raiser set for Bosnia, Somalia

A Fund-raising Event for Bosnia and Somalia Sponsored by The International Medical Corps and The Detroit Committee for Bosnia and Somalia will take place 7-9 p.m. Friday, Feb. 12, at The Fairlane Club Ballroom, 19000 Hubbard Drive, Dearborn.

Money raised will be used to support an IMC hospital in Bosnia and to train medical personnel. IMC currently operates three hospitals in Somalia

and funds will be used to sustain the current medical relief operations.

Everyone is invited to attend. If you can not or do not wish to attend yet want to show your support for the Bosnian and Somali people, you can send your tax deductible donations to: International Medical Corps 5933 W. Century Blvd. Suite 310 Los Angeles, CA 90045.

For more information call 313-563-2222.

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If you have a reason for concern, you have a reason to call. Call 258-3705 today for more information.

Team members:
Seymour Gordon, M.D. Melisa Knudson, R.D.
Bary Franklin, Ph.D. Ken Bonzhain, D.A.A.
Paul Feenell, Ph.D. Julie Upp, M.S.

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Sheriff's office worker arraigned

By PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

A civilian employee in the Oakland County Sheriff's Department pleaded not guilty Saturday when arraigned on an embezzlement charge stemming from the disappearance of as much as \$80,000.

Terry A. Malers, who has worked at the department since the mid 1980s, is accused of taking the money over a period of years.

Malers, 32, of Vassar was re-manded to the Oakland County jail after failing to post \$75,000 bond.

The shortage was discovered last week when an attorney, attempting to execute a court order, attempted to force the return of \$35,000 seized by law enforcement agencies from a client. That money, and more, was missing from a safe to which only a few people had access.

Once the shortage was discovered, Sheriff John F. Nichols called in state police investigators who reportedly focused on Malers, one of the few people who had access to the safe.

Disclosure of the missing money is the latest of a series of embarrassments within the department that have prompted investigations as well as speculations about the management policies of the sheriff.

One ongoing investigation is

focusing on allegations that jail inmates improperly did work for personnel overseeing the work release program. Another is probing allegations of the misuse of sources — including deputies drawing their salaries while working on political campaigns — at the sheriff's unit in Rochester Hills.

Added to that are suggestions that Nichols improperly gave out deputy badges to political contributors.

Nichols was unavailable for comment Friday and Saturday and did not return phone calls.

Other people contacted by the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, however, said they are shocked and surprised by recent developments in the sheriff's department. They said they have confidence in Nichols... as a lawman and as an administrator. But the recent revelations raise doubts.

Management lapses?

"I don't know what's going on over there in the sheriff's department," said one former county commissioner.

Freshman Commissioner John P. Garfield, R-Rochester Hills, said he is concerned, but willing to wait for full disclosure. "I'm concerned about the sheriff's department," he said. "John Nichols should have known what



Sheriff John Nichols

was going on within his department.

"But I'm not going to say anything until the investigations are complete and all the facts are in," Garfield said.

Another commissioner, a Democrat, said he is personally relieved Nichols is calling on state police investigators. "I'm glad he did it," the commissioner said.

Part of that sentiment is apparently based on the assumption that the Oakland County Prosecutors Office — headed by a fel-

low Republican and which works closely with the sheriff's department — would not be vigorous enough in its investigation.

Others, including Republicans who respect Nichols, suggest outside investigators might be a good idea if only to remove any appearance of impropriety or, worse yet, a coverup.

No quails

Commissioner Larry Crake, the Republican chairman of the county board, said he dismisses any such concerns. "I take Sheriff Nichols at his word. I think there really is a shortage of investigators."

"I also believe (prosecutor) Dick Thompson will conduct a thorough investigation of the sheriff's department and will go after anybody who's done anything wrong. He (Thompson) didn't hesitate to go after commissioners (Republicans and Democrats alike) for violations of the open meetings act. And he won't hesitate now."

Crake was referring to the prosecutor's going after — and obtaining court sanctions — against county commissioners for violating the Michigan Open Meetings Act by meeting in closed session to briefly discuss the proposed solid waste program.

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