Teen held in contract murder case

By TEDD SCHNEIDER
STAFF WRITER

A Livonia teen with a Farmington background is in the Wayne County Jail awaiting possible extradition to Kentucky in connection with the contract murder of his uncle last month.

Four others — including the victim's estranged wife and a 17-year-old Elizabethtown, Ky., youth believed to be the shooter — have been charged with complicity to murder, which carries the death penalty as an option under Kentucky law.

They are charged in the Feb. 17 slaying of Frederick Gabow, 29, of Radcliff, Ky.

Gabow, a native of Brooklyn, Mich., was shot in the neck and leg from outside his mobile home with a .22-caliber handgun as he dressed for work and his girlfriend stood nearby, police said. He died two days later.

Police said Gabow's estranged wife and other acquaintances conspired in the killing, and news reports said a life insurance policy may have had a role in the incident. The victim's divorce was to be finalized the week following.

Gabow's nephew, also 17, was arrested Monday after turning himself in to Livonia Police. He was characterized as cooperative by Livonia Police detective Lt. Pete Kunst.

An extradition hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, March 22, in Detroit Recorder's Court.

The suspect's father said Thursday his son will contest extradition. Defense attorney James Gizicki, through a secretary, declined comment Friday.

Dennis Malden, who admitted knowing little of the circumstances surrounding the shooting, said his son is being "railroaded" by authorities and family members.

Malden said his son, who will be 18 in May, has had a difficult time since his parents divorced in 1989.

The teen has shuttled back and forth between homes in Westland, Livonia, Farmington, Elizabethtown and even lived on his own for a while in St. Louis.

"You take a 14-year-old and turn him loose, and yeah, he's going to get in trouble," Malden said.

But Malden said the most serious legal problem to date has been driving on a suspended license.

A published report last July, though, said the suspect received a five-month jail term in Frankfort, Ky., for chronic truancy. The sentence, permissible under Kentucky law, was criticized by youth advocates.

The suspect earned his GED while in prison.

On the move

The suspect attended Farmington High until two years ago, when he moved back with his mother and aunt in Elizabethtown, Malden said. Before that he lived in Livonia and attended Temple Baptist School in Redford Township.

The family lived in Westland for 12 years.

Just before the shooting he moved back to his father's house on the 15500 block of Oporto in Livonia. "He got tired of the mess down there and wanted to get his life back together," Malden said.

Malden said the suspect's mother is a transient with drug and alcohol problems.

He couldn't provide a current telephone number and there is no listing for her in Elizabethtown, which is just outside Fort Knox and about 45 miles south of Louisville.

Police provided few details on the Livonia youth's possible involvement in the incident, although Livonia officials indicated he was being sought as "a possible accomplice."

The suspect is considered a juvenile in Kentucky but a new state law says any juvenile older than 14 charged with a capital offense is tried as an adult.

Radcliff Police detective Lt. Bob Hornback declined to comment on charges sought against the Livonia suspect.

Charged as adult

But Hornback did say Sam McMillen, the other 17-year-old, was listed as an adult in a juvenile complaint before his arraignment.

Charged in the killing in addition to McMillen are: Cheryl Gabow, 29, the Livonia suspect's aunt; David Wayne Brangers, 24; and James Cecil, 24.

All have pleaded not guilty and all are jailed without bond in Hardin County, Ky.

A preliminary hearing has been adjourned until March 20.

Published reports listed Brangers as Cheryl Gabow's boyfriend.

Cheryl and Frederick Gabow filed for divorce in 1990 and police said the final decree was scheduled for Feb. 21.

Once the divorce was final, Frederick Gabow's two sons were to become beneficiaries of his $200,000 life insurance policy, according to reports.

Frederick Gabow worked for a local printing company and was a veteran serving in the Army and National Guard.

YMCA HIGHLIGHTS

These YMCA Highlights appear courtesy of the Farmington YMCA, 28100 Farmington Road, Farmington Hills. For information, call 553-4020.

T-BALL SIGN-UP
This season is for children ages 5-8 years. Child must be 5 by April 15. Registration for the spring t-ball session will be for members beginning on Tuesday, March 28 and for program members on Wednesday, March 29. Registration takes place according to what school your child attends. Contact Carol McMillan at 553-1935 for further details.

EASTER BREAK CAMP
Need something for your kindergartner or elementary schooler to do during their vacation from school? The YMCA will be having a vacation camp during the week of April 17-21. The time is 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Before camp and after camp care available. Register early. Camp activities include swimming, crafts, games and field trips. Contact the Y at 553-4010 for more information.

EASTER BREAK MIDDLE SCHOOL EVENTS
The dates are Wednesday, April 19, and Friday, April 21 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. This camp will take field trips on both days that are designed around middle school interests and ideas. Sack lunch and swim suit with towel are needed. The cost is $18 for members and $24 for non-members. Contact the Y at 553-4020 for more information.

MIDDLE SCHOOL BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT
Five person teams will play games between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Playoffs will begin at 1:30 p.m. and continue until the tournament winner is declared. Games will be officiated and prizes awarded to the winning teams. 11-12 year olds will play on Tuesday, April 18 and 13-14 year olds will play on Thursday, April 20. Tournament will be held at the Farmington YMCA. Cost is $20/team or $4/person for members and $40/team or $8/person for program members. Contact Alana Hill at 810-553-4020, ext. 222 for more information.

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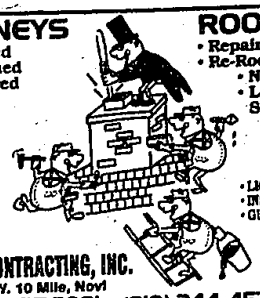

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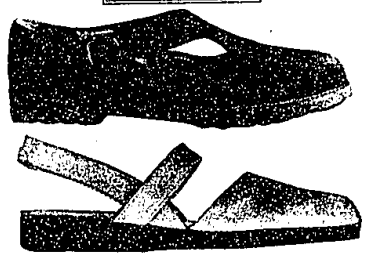

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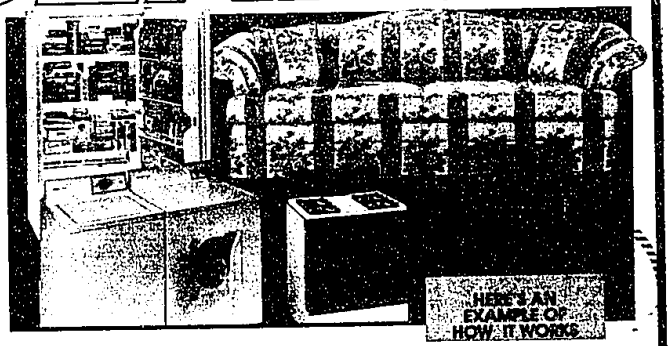

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