Motorcycle gang member describes ordeal

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — A man who says he was tied from a ceiling beam for wanting to quit a motorcycle gang was the first witness for Dane County authorities in their presentation of evidence concerning the murder of a young woman in a tavern fire.

Daniel Walker testified Monday about the punishment he says he received shortly before the fire in which Catherine Christian died, allegedly at the order of cycle club leaders.

Walker, 25, whose address prosecutors would not reveal, was the initial witness in what authorities said could be a week-long preliminary hearing in Circuit Court.

He said members of the West Coast-based Ghost Riders suspended him from a ceiling beam by a rope tied to his wrists, threatened him with a sword heated in a fireplace, and forced him to sign over the title to his motorcycle.

Authorities said another club member, Ralph Lee Jack, 26, agreed Monday to plead guilty to arson and fraud stemming from the March 7, 1983 fire at Rosa's Cantina, a Lake Kegonsa former hangout for motorcyclists.

Jack, of Billings, Mont., dropped out of the hearing that began amid tight security.

Prosecutor opened their presentation with evidence against three of 10 defendants in the case: Scott Howard, 29, Mark W. "Arbo" Allen, 26, of Grand Rapids, Mich., and Geraldine Contreraz, 49, who was the proprietor of Rosa's Cantina.

Besides arson and fraud, Howard and Alvin L. "Big Al" Hegge, 45, who is described as the Ghost Riders' national president, are charged with first-degree murder of Ms. Christian, 22.

Stephen Robeson, a prisoner in Dane County Jail, told Judge William Eich that, after smoking some marijuana in the jail a few weeks ago, Howard told him he "hit a girl on top of the head" before the fire was set.

"She was supposed to have known something," Robeson, 22, testified.

Robeson said Howard told him seven or eight times that the Ghost Riders started the fire and planned to share in more than $100,000 that Ms. Contreraz would claim from an insurance policy.

Ms. Contreraz, Hegge's sister, was living in Las Vegas, Nev., in December when authorities throughout the nation began arresting defendants on Dane County warrants.

Howard, Will Highfill, 40, and Keith Klingenberg, who is fighting extradition from the state of Washington, are charged with threatening to injure Walker.

Klingenberg, 25, arrested in January in Wenatchee, Wash., is described as the club's "national sergeant-at-arms."

Besides Howard, Hegge, Allen, Highfill and Ms. Contreraz, four others are charged with arson and fraud concerning the tavern fire.

Hegge is a native of Madison. His home in Ehprata, Wash., was raided in December under a search warrant. The U.S. Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms said investigators found jewelry taken in a June, 1983, house burglary in Wenatchee.

The bureau said guns taken in the burglary were involved July 18, 1983, in the slaying of a policeman in Spokane, Wash., during a stakeout for two men who were captured.

In return for Jack's guilty pleas to arson, fraud and threatening to injure another, and his promise to testify in the case, prosecutors said they would recommend a 14-year prison term for him and would try to imprison him where he would be safe from retaliation.

Ex-Defense aide admits lying about stock scheme

WASHINGTON (AP) — A former deputy defense secretary is facing a possible prison term after admitting he lied to the Securities and Exchange Commission about his participation in an insider stock trading scheme.

Paul Thayer, the Pentagon's No. 2 official until he resigned early last year, admitted Monday he lied to the SEC when he denied profiting from the stock manipulation scheme, which took place before he joined the Reagan administration in 1983.

Thayer, 65, and a friend, Dallas stockbroker Billy Bob Harris, 45, pleaded guilty Monday to federal charges of obstruction of justice by giving false information to the SEC.

U.S. District Judge Charles R. Richey set sentencing for April 18. Thayer and Harris could each be sentenced to up to five years in prison and fined $5,000.

But prosecutor Charles H. Roistacher told the court the government would not seek substantial sentences.

In its courtroom presentation, the government said that Thayer, while he was chairman and chief executive officer of LTV Corp., and a board member of two other companies, gave confidential corporate takeover information to Harris.

The government said Harris purchased stock for himself, Thayer and some other friends and passed the information on to associates who also bought shares.

The government said illegal profits totaling $2.5 million were made from three of the transactions.

In addition to being chairman of LTV, Thayer was a director of Anheuser-Busch Cos. Inc. and Allied Corp. when he participated in the stock scheme, the government said.

The stock purchases came shortly before Anheuser-Busch announced its $560 million takeover of Campbell-Taggard Inc., a Dallas baking company; LTV's attempted merger with Grumman Corp. and Allied Corp.'s $1.9 billion acquisition of Bendix Corp.

Thayer resigned from the Pentagon Jan. 4, 1984.

U.S. Attorney Joseph diGenova said expected that Anheuser-Busch would take legal action against Thayer and Harris.

Walworth County area proposed as Saturn site

ELKHORN, Wis. (AP) — The Walworth County farm is being proposed for consideration as the location of General Motors Corp.'s Saturn auto plant.

Frank Dobbs, director of planning, zoning and sanitation, and state Rep. Charles Coleman, R-Whitewater, told reporters Monday that Wisconsin Electric Power Co. personnel have reviewed the proposal, and it is to be presented to Forward Wisconsin Inc.

Forward Wisconsin, the state's quasi-public economic development firm, could then present the proposal to General Motors for consideration as the site of a planned $3.5 billion plant to build the new Saturn car models.

The County Board of Supervisors scheduled a special meeting March 11 to consider the matter.

County Clerk Carol Krauklis said she expected that meeting to be an informational session, where any questions about the proposal could be raised.

The 609 acres of land, in Geneva Township one mile east of Elkhorn, currently is the location of Lakeland Hospital, Lakeland Nursing Home, a county counseling center, the county highway department and a self-supporting farm operation.

Dobbs said there was "substantial acreage" surrounding the site that could conceivably be purchased by GM.

He said Walworth County became the No. 1 possibility for the plant in southeastern Wisconsin when air pollution limits eliminated much of the region from consideration.

"That changed the picture," Dobbs said.

He added that the site "meets or exceeds" all the criteria set out by GM in evaluating a possible Saturn site, and its proximity to existing supply companies in southeastern Wisconsin and northeastern Illinois is considered an important asset.

The site is now zoned for agricultural use. But Dobbs said it could be annexed by Elkhorn and serviced by the Walworth County Metropolitan Sanitary District.

"We understand 3 to 4 million gallons of effluent requiring municipal treatment" will be generated by the proposed Saturn plant, Dobbs said.

The Elkhorn treatment plant is capable of handling that amount, he said.

He said the city of Elkhorn or on-site water towers could handle water needs of the plant.

He described highway access to the Geneva Town site as "very good."

The plant is expected to employ 6,000 people and generate as many as 20,000 additional jobs from suppliers that would locate near the plant.

Touching Leaves

DEWEY, Okla. (AP)—The Delaware Indians once inhabited New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware.

Recently, one of the last full-blooded Delaware Indians, Nora Thompson Dean, died. Mrs. Dean was 77 when she died at the Jane Phillips Medical Center in nearby Bartlesville. A Unami Delaware, Mrs. Dean was one of only a few surviving Delawares who could speak the language. Her Indian name was Touching Leaves.

The Delaware language is all but forgotten today, except for a number of place names such as Manhattan, Passaic, Ossining and Hoboken.

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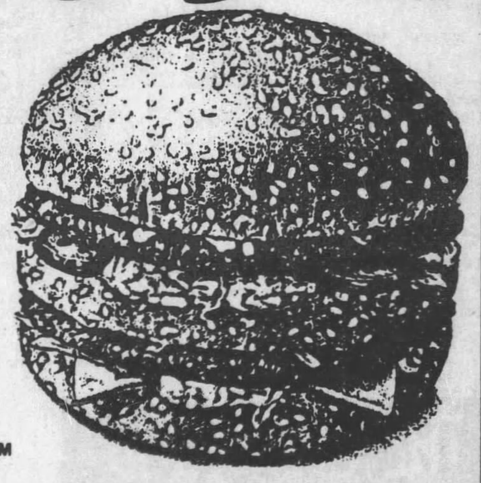

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