

Oregon Tracks Immigration Fraud

Attorney General Hardy Myers today alerted recent immigrants to the United States of possible immigration services fraud and warned providers of services that the Oregon Department of Justice would not tolerate any illegal activities. Myers and U.S. Representative Earl Blumenauer, Third District, Portland, joined members of the Attorney General's Immigration Services Fraud Task Force at a Portland news conference on immigration services fraud.

"Immigration law is extremely complex and constantly changing," Myers said. "People should only seek assistance from attorneys or individuals and organizations accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals."

In an effort to provide Oregon immigrants with the best tools to recognize bad immigration advice, the Department of Justice formed a task force of community organizations and political leaders in 1998.

During the past 12 months, the group supplied Myers' consumer protection section with information concerning businesses and individuals as well as top providing representative of the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). The joint efforts resulted in the filing of four settlement agreements.

Named in an Assurance of Voluntary Compliance filed today in the Marion County Court House are Diana and James Shanks of Salem, owners of Diana's Translation, a business which primarily engaged in translation and interoperation services but also services but also assisted clients with the completion of immigration forms. The Shanks, who admit no law violations, agreed to comply with the Unlawful Trade Practices Act and state and federal immigration-related laws and to provide \$1,124 in restitution to six consumers. Under the terms of the assurance, the Shanks also

agreed to give written notification to all clients stating that Diana's Translations is not qualified to give immigrants advice and identifying proper sources of immigration advice and identifying proper sources of immigration advice. The Salon Company will pay \$2,000 to the Department of Justice consumer protection and education account.

Two Clackamas County businesses providing immigration services, Puertas Abiertas Para America (Open Doors to America) and its successor, Amistad, have been voluntarily dissolved as part of agreements signed with the Department of Justice.

Before closing its doors, Puertas Abiertas provided immigration services for several months without being accredited by the BIA and without assistance of an attorney. Owners Paul Dean Nicholas and Gerardo Gutierrez, both of Oregon City, agreed to provide more than \$7,000 in restitution to 21 customers and will pay \$1,500 to the Department of Justice.

Former employees of Puertas Abiertas, attorney Dale Stache of Beaverton and Cynthia Hofer of Canby, a notary public, established Amistad, which closed its doors after operating for only three months. The company advertised as a full service immigration assistance organization when, in fact, the business simply provided administrative services to Stache, a sole practitioner of immigration law. Both Hofer agreed to not violate the law in the future and Hofer paid \$1,000 to the Department of Justice. Stache paid \$300 and agreed to end all business connections with Amistad.

Other task force accomplishments include the Department of Justice adoption of an administrative rule, which prohibits the misrepresentation of power and authority by notary publics; the establishment of the Attorney General's Spanish language

consumer; the establishment of the Attorney General's Spanish language consumer hotline; and the publication of immigration services fraud brochures printed in six languages, including English, Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Mandarin Chinese and Serbo Croatian.

The brochure urges immigrants to think twice before paying for immigration advice and remind those seeking information to do the following:

Determine if the advice giver is an attorney or an accredited representative of the board of Immigration Appeals. Always ask to see the credentials.

Request an official notice of representation or a written retainer agreement.

Be sure to discuss any possible risks involved before submitting papers to the immigration and Naturalization Services (INS).

Members of the Attorney General's task force include: The Mexican Consulate of Oregon, Oregon housing and Associated Services, Community Action Agency of Yamhill county, Catholic Charities, Oregon Law Center, Inc., Immigration Counseling Services, SOAR, Centro de Servicios Para Campesinos (PCUN), Lutheran Family Services, ICS (St. Luke Catholic Church of Woodburn), Commission of Hispanic Affairs, and attorneys-at-law Robert Donaldson, Alan Gallagher, Dick Ginsburg, and Dennis McCaffrey.

State and federal officials represented on the task force include governor John Kitzhaber, U.S. Senator Gordon Smith, U.S. Representative Earl Blumenauer and State Senator Susan Castillo.

For more information on immigration services fraud, consumers may call the Attorney General's consumer hotline at (503) 378-4320 or write Financial Fraud/Consumer Protection, 1162 Court Street, N.E., Salem, Oregon 97310.

Michigan Teens Charged in Shooting Plot

By GERALDA MILLER
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PORT HURON, Mich. (AP) — Four boys have been charged with plotting a shooting at their middle school similar to the April rampage at Colorado's Columbine High School.

Justin Schnepf and Jediaiah Zinzo, both 14, were charged as adults Thursday with conspiracy to commit murder for allegedly planning to kill classmates at their 560-student Holland Woods Middle School. The two remained in custody Saturday on \$100,000 bail each.

The two others, ages 12 and 13, have been charged as juveniles with the same crime. They also remained in custody on Saturday.

"They planned to commit ... a slaughter and massacre of Holland Woods students," said Mary Kelly,

a St. Clair County assistant prosecutor. She said the plot "had been in the planning and in the making for over a week."

The four were arrested on Wednesday and Thursday at their homes.

Prosecutors allege the teens planned to top the death toll of the April 20 massacre at Columbine, where Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold killed 12 students and a teacher before committing suicide.

The district's 12,000 students were told to stay home from its 21 campuses after a bomb was discovered near the Holland Woods campus on Thursday night. A janitor found the device shortly after parents and school officials met there to discuss the boys' alleged plot.

The bomb, which police say is not connected to the alleged plan, was disarmed by state police before be-

ing shipped to a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms lab for analysis, said Vera Fedorak, an agency spokeswoman.

The boys' alleged plans were discovered after a 14-year-old girl told police she overheard them talking about an elaborate killing spree. She told police she overheard some of the boys saying they wanted to kill all the school's "preps," the popular clique of students.

The girl told police the Michigan boys said their plan was to go on a shooting spree in a gym assembly and detonate a bomb afterward. Authorities have declined to specify other evidence that led to the charges.

School officials canceled weekend sports events and were conducting school-by-school inspections before planning to announce Sunday whether classes will be held this week.

Medical Examiner Describes Gunshots

ASTORIA, OREGON — The state's former medical examiner has taken the stand in the double murder trial of Bradley Price. Price was with convicted "thrill kill" trigger-man Jesse McAllister when

he murdered a Portland couple on the beach for no apparent reason. Yesterday, Doctor Larry Lewman described the effects of the close-range gunshots that killed the two victims. He says one victim,

Brooke Goza, had her head "down in the sand," when the bullet went through her head. Price is accused of holding Goza while McAllister shot her. Price is expected to testify in his defense Monday.

Oregon To Take Kosovar Refugees

PORTLAND, OREGON — Charitable groups are preparing to welcome Kosovar refugees that are on their way to Portland. A spokeswoman for Catholic Charities says they're hoping Portland area residents with relatives that might have

fled Kosovo will make themselves known so they can be matched with incoming refugees. Cecelia Buresovich (bur-REE-so-vich) says as many as 60 refugees could be here by summer. She says families will be housed together.

In-Home Child-Care Faces Inspections

SALEM, OREGON — State officials may start checking up on people who provide child-care in their homes. Oregon is one of six states without authorized unannounced inspections. A bill to require such inspections made it through the state's House of Representatives easily. But Canby Representative Kurt Schrader says parents are still responsible for knowing the kind of place they're sending their children for day-care

Silo Fire Threatens Town

THE DALLES, OREGON — A north-central Oregon grain silo is now about a third of its height after going up in flames. The silo fire forced people out of The Dalles downtown area, even threatening to spread to nearby Interstate-84. The Dalles City Manager

Nolan Young says officials feared embers from the burning silo would land on buildings in the downtown area, and ordered the evacuation. But Young says the silo collapsed without tipping over, preventing the fire from igniting more buildings.

Group Wants City To Control Utilities

A Portland environmental group says that recent power-company mergers and deregulation are moving decisions about utility services further away from customers. The Center for Environmental Equity wants the city of Portland to take over power lines and transformers within

city-limits and is drafting a ballot measure on the issue. Center spokesman Larry Tuttle says people in the Northwest are "going to lose out" on controlling their electric utility future unless they "assert all possible opportunities" to take local control now.

Portland Officer Added To Memorial

Portland Police Officer Colleen Waibel will be among 312 names added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D-C tomorrow. She was killed on January 27th, 1998 as she took part in a marijuana drug bust. Two other

officers were wounded. Memorial officials say of the 312 being added to the growing list, 156 died in 1998 and 156 earlier. Sixty-three were shot to death... including Waibel... 48 died in car wrecks and the rest in an assortment of accidents.

Bus Driver Had History of Pot Use

By ALAN SAYRE
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NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The driver of charter bus that crashed on Mother's Day, killing 22 people, had been fired twice in the last decade for marijuana use and tested positive for the drug shortly after the deadly wreck, federal investigators said.

Custom Bus Charters driver Frank Bedell, 46, lost bus driving jobs in 1989 and 1996 after tests showed he had used marijuana, the National Transportation Safety Board said Thursday.

A federal investigator also confirmed that Bedell, who has congestive heart disease, kidney problems and diabetes, tested positive for marijuana when he was hospitalized Sunday after the bus veered off a highway and plunged down an embankment.

It was not clear how long before the crash Bedell might have smoked marijuana or whether the drug contributed to the accident, said NTSB investigator Ken Suydam.

"It's another piece of the puzzle we have to put together," Suydam said.

Bedell tested positive for marijuana while employed as a city bus driver in New Orleans and in suburban Jefferson Parish.

Sometime after being hired in New Orleans in 1976, Bedell was given a drug test because he had been absent for work for eight days, Suydam said. After testing positive for marijuana, Bedell spent several months attending classes in an employee assistance program.

But he later tested positive again for the drug and was fired in March 1989, Suydam said.

In 1992, Bedell was hired as a driver for suburban buses. He failed a marijuana drug test the next year, Suydam said. Bedell spent two months in a drug rehabilitation program, but tested positive again for the drug in 1996 and was terminated a week later.

Authorities previously said he tested positive for cocaine in 1997 after ap-

plying for a job with Greyhound.

But Bedell passed at least three drug tests while working for Custom Bus Charters, the company that provided the bus for the Mother's Day gambling excursion to a Mississippi casino.

Custom president Donna Begovich said in a statement Thursday that she was shocked to learn Bedell tested positive for marijuana after the crash.

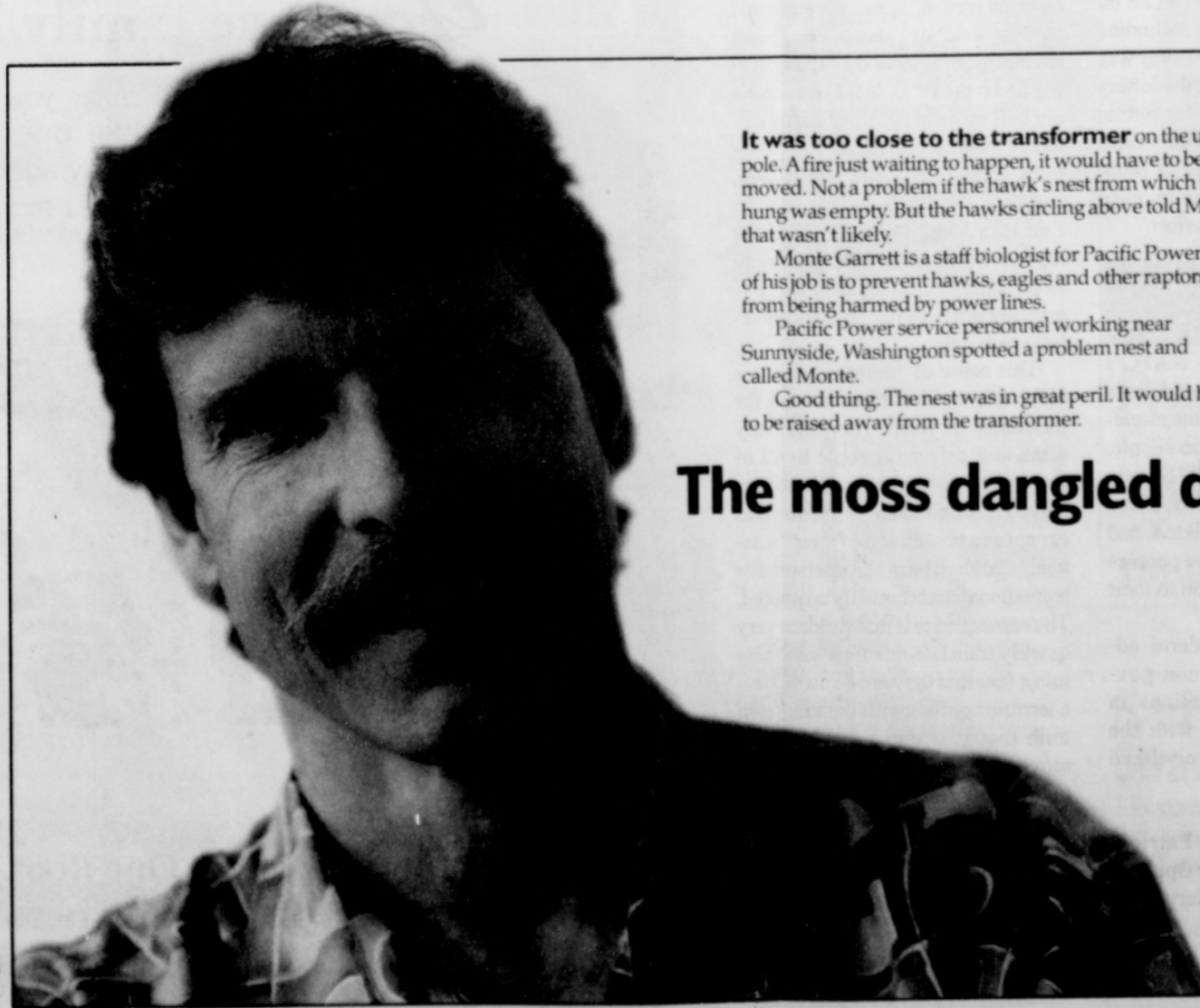
"Of course, Custom had no way of knowing Frank's drug usage at any time," Begovich said. "Frank Bedell passed his pre-employment drug test, the city's drug test, a police background check and three subsequent random drug tests

within an 18-month period. What else could we have done?"

Suydam said investigators also focused Thursday on a report that Bedell checked into a hospital emergency room 12 hours before Sunday's crash for treatment of dehydration and extremely low blood pressure.

The cause of the crash has yet to be determined. Bedell remains in a hospital and is unavailable for comment.

Bedell's medical history has not been linked to the accident by the NTSB investigators. However, investigators say the case shows gaps in the system to make sure bus drivers are medically sound.



It was too close to the transformer on the utility pole. A fire just waiting to happen, it would have to be moved. Not a problem if the hawk's nest from which it hung was empty. But the hawks circling above told Monte that wasn't likely.

Monte Garrett is a staff biologist for Pacific Power. Part of his job is to prevent hawks, eagles and other raptors from being harmed by power lines.

Pacific Power service personnel working near Sunnyside, Washington spotted a problem nest and called Monte.

Good thing. The nest was in great peril. It would have to be raised away from the transformer.

Monte rode the bucket up to take a closer look. As he neared the nest, the hawks dropped out of their circling formation and dived right toward him. He felt the brush of their wings as they buzzed past. "This is going to be more complicated than it looks," thought Monte.

Twice as complicated, actually. The nest held two fuzzy white young hawks, their helpless, tiny bodies dwarfed by oversized feet and beaks. Great care would need to be taken to avoid stressing the fledglings and to keep the adult hawks from abandoning them.

As the wind furiously whipped the crane-mounted bucket against the pole, the hawks stepped up their dive-bomb attacks.

The adults had left some food in the nest for the babies, so to ease their distress, Monte fed them. Then, he gently lifted the

fledglings from the nest and covered them with his jacket. Now the service people worked quickly, moving the nest to a nesting platform and fastening the platform to the pole. They, too, had to contend with the forceful wind and angry hawks.

Moments later, with the nest raised to a safe height, Monte returned the young birds to the care of their parents. Danger averted. Hawk family, safe.

The moss dangled dangerously.

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