

Audit: Pa. agency missing artifacts

By Mark Scoloro
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARRISBURG, Pa. — The state agency that collects and conserves Pennsylvania's history can't locate more than 1,800 artifacts, including sculptures and Civil War items, according to a study released Thursday.

The state auditor general's office said it found lax oversight and an antiquated inventory system within the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and the state Railroad Museum that the commission administrators.

"These missing artifacts are pieces of Pennsylvania history that are likely lost forever, either through mishandling or theft," said Wagner, who recommended a development director be hired to seek funding for a modern bar-code inventory tracking system.

Wagner said the missing items include a Turkish gold ring that is nearly 800 years old, a Civil War rifle and a pair of plaster sculptures by Robert Tait McKenzie. He said audi-

"These missing artifacts are pieces of Pennsylvania history that are likely lost forever, either through mishandling or theft."

Jack Wagner
Pennsylvania general auditor

tors found an Internet reference that the sculptures were auctioned in New York for \$42,000.

Commission spokesman Kirk Wilson said that after the agency received the list of missing artifacts on Thursday, employees were able to locate at least 300 items. He said auditors may have been using an outdated inventory list, and noted that just because the pieces are missing does not necessarily mean they were stolen.

"More than likely, a greater majority of them would be in our possession," Wilson said.

Wilson said the Historical and Museum Commission has been hard-hit by budget cuts, losing more than one-third of its staff and nearly half its budget the past four years.

"The recommendations are worthy of consideration, but there again, it comes down to the resources available to us," Wilson said.

Wagner's auditors found 1,588 artifacts missing from the commission, and another 295 from the Railroad Museum.

He said hundreds of other pieces may be unaccounted for within a collection estimated to contain about 4.5 million items.

An electronic database system bought a decade ago is not complete, and the agency does not know precisely how many items it has.

The survey also found inadequate preservation and security, including some artifacts hanging from overhead pipes and others stored in basements with no climate control.



Steve Pope/Associated Press

Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell praised the state's rank of 26th in overall tax burden.

Pa. ranked 26th in tax burden

The Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Gov. Ed Rendell defended Pennsylvania's business tax climate on Thursday, citing a new report that ranks the state 26th in overall tax burden.

Rendell said the state would have scored even better on the Tax Foundation's rankings if the organization had factored in the number of businesses using the so-called Delaware loophole. The term refers to the practice of companies incorporating in another jurisdiction, often Delaware, to escape their state's tax on profits.

"This is proof of what I've been saying all along, that we do not have an unfriendly business climate. In fact, we have a very friendly business climate, particularly for an older, northeastern state," Rendell said, noting Pennsylvania has been among the leading states this year in creating jobs.

Rendell, a Democrat, said the state's businesses have saved \$7.2 billion in taxes thanks to reductions made during his eight years in office.

Pennsylvania scored much better than five neighboring states, but worse than Delaware.

Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry spokesman Gene Barr said there was an important distinction between the relatively modest tax rate that small businesses pay and the 10 percent corporate net income tax rate.

He said many of the companies that do not pay the corporate net income tax are defunct or were never set up to make money, using a real-estate holding company as an example.

"If you can be a large corporation coming into Pennsylvania and not pay any taxes, why are we not seeing the large moving vans coming into this state?" Barr said.

Judge upholds manslaughter charge

After the death of a disabled client, counselor faces manslaughter charges.

By Maryclaire Dale
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PENNDDEL, Pa. — A worker charged with leaving a disabled client to die in a blazing hot van should not become the scapegoat for a "systemwide failure" at the victim's residential facility, a defense lawyer argued Thursday.

A judge nonetheless upheld involuntary manslaughter charges against counselor Stacey Strauss, 40, of Philadelphia in the death of a severely autistic man after a group outing on a 97-degree day.

"She left him in the van with his Happy Meal, and that's where he stayed until he died," Assistant District Attorney Robert James said of 20-year-old.

Bryan Nevins, who went unnoticed behind the parked van's tinted windows for five hours on July 24.

Defense lawyer Robert Lynch believes several co-workers at Woods Services share in the blame, and said the Langhorne facility did not do enough to keep tabs on their clients or ensure their safety.

Nevins, given his severe condition, was supposed to be within arm's length of a counselor at all times, yet was put in the van's third row, beyond the reach of Strauss in the driver's seat and a second counselor seated next to her, the other counselor testified.

The counselor assigned to Nevins at his residence building left for the day without seeing the client or asking if the group had made it back, according to that counselor's testi-

mony. The group had returned to campus at about 12:45 p.m.

And Strauss' supervisor, who had organized the trip, acknowledged that other problems that surfaced that day kept her from finishing her rounds to residence buildings. Supervisor Michelle Bova added that the checks are not required.

Strauss, who is free on bail, must now stand trial on charges of felony neglect of a care-dependent person and two misdemeanors, involuntary manslaughter and reckless endangerment.

Strauss called the case a tragic accident and said he does not think anyone should be criminally charged.

"Unfortunately, there's a public outcry ... and you need a scapegoat," defense lawyer Robert Lynch argued.

"The entire facility as a whole failed Brian Nevins that day. It's a systemwide failure."

The autopsy report also lists the manner of death as accidental, while concluding that Nevins died of hyperthermia and autism, the latter because he was unable to get himself out of the van.

"At best, there was a freak tragic accident, that she forgot this child that she cared for," Lynch said.

Strauss had worked at the facility for nine years.

According to testimony, Bova that morning assigned Strauss and a second counselor, Gerald Douglas, to take four students to the park. Nevins was a late substitution because another client did not have a bathing suit, Douglas said.

He was also the most disabled of the four, diagnosed as both autistic and profoundly mentally retarded, according to the testimony.

While Bova and another witness

said Bova specifically assigned Strauss to supervise Nevins and another client, Lynch suggested in cross-examination his intent to challenge that claim.

But his efforts were mostly thwarted Thursday by successful objections.

"It goes to the heart of it, to the clarity of who's really supervising someone at this point," Lynch argued.

Not long after the group got to Sesame Place, Nevins began acting out, trying to bite and scratch himself and others in the group, Douglas testified. Strauss called Bova and was told to return home.

After a quick stop at McDonald's, Strauss dropped off Douglas and his two charges. She later made it back to Building 13B with one of the two remaining passengers from the van's third row.

Nevins, who lived in adjacent Building 13A, never did.

His body was found about 5:30 p.m. Strauss returned voluntarily to campus after learning the news.

According to police, she made conflicting statements that night about whether she was responsible for Nevins.

Nevins and a triplet brother had lived at Woods Services for five years.

William Nevins of Oceanside, N.Y., a retired New York City homicide detective, has said he was previously satisfied with his sons' care at the facility.

The nonprofit Woods Services serves about 1,400 clients from several states at facilities in suburban Philadelphia.

The center had no immediate comment on Lynch's accusations, spokeswoman Cheryl Kauffman said.

George's
Floral
Boutique

www.Georgesfloral.com

THE PAPER PLATE

ORDER FOOD ONLINE AT
PSUCOLLEGIAN.COM

The Daily
Collegian

Top
Account
Executive
of the week:

A Treat from
Woodrings

Woodrings
floral gardens

145 S. Allen St.
714-238-0566
1-800-62-ROSES (76737)
www.woodringsfloral.com

Love
the Greater Philly Area?

Check out The Daily Collegian's
Classified section in the paper
or online for today's listing
of employment opportunities,
real estate, and cars in
the Greater Philly Area!

The Daily
Collegian

Stay up to date
on deadlines and promotions!

Follow @mycollegianad

www.twitter.com/mycollegianad 814-865-2531

WE WANT...
PATERNO
FIELD!

CHANT it out loud at the PSU-Michigan game right after you chant "WE ARE...PENN STATE". Use the same chanting cadence. And do it again whenever WE ARE...PENN STATE concludes.

NOW is the time for you, the student body, to lend your vocal support for this grassroots effort to honor Coach Paterno by renaming the stadium **Joe Paterno Field at Beaver Stadium**.
Thanks To "Students for Paterno Field Committee", Meg Hill, Chair

Saturday night, let's hear the stadium echo with
WE WANT.....PATERNO FIELD
Thank you!

Committee for Joe Paterno Field at Beaver Stadium

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Warren Armstrong '60, Chair (Warren60@ptd.net) • Greg Radio '69 • Dan Kozar '62 • Don Butler '75 • Mike Basta '70 • Terry DeGroot '85

AD SPONSORS
Earl Altmore • Warren Armstrong • Mike Basta • Don Butler • Dr. Bernard Carr • Jim Chadwick, Jr. • Chet Diromualdo • Terry DeGroot • Dan Kozar • Robert Long • William Long • Henry Narrow • Greg Radio • Michael Rosenfeld • Tony Salvaggio

G-MAN

BIG GAME WEEKEND = EPIC NIGHTS @ GMAN

Are YOU ready?

FRIDAY
Flyers @ Pens 7 pm
DJ Boner: The ORIGINAL Video DJ
10 pm - close

SATURDAY
PSU-Michigan 8 pm
DJ CUPCAKE 10 pm - close

SUNDAY
NFL Sunday Ticket
Steelers @ Saints Sunday Night Football
Coors Light Halloween Party
Costume Contest 10:30 pm
Great prizes

130 HIESTER ST. 237-1367