

Theft

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ruary of this year to take a position in Pittsburgh, returned to the district to testify in Rogowski's behalf. Machuga was co-advisor of the art club with Rogowski last year and she told the court that the safe is open and anyone can go into it. She said if you asked someone in the office you could go in to the safe and that there was a change box in the safe where you could get change for a dollar.

Mrs. Clara Ferguson, who testified that teachers did not go into the safe unattended, is employed weekday mornings by the district to supervise the 50 school club activities account. In the afternoon, Ferguson works in another part of the district building. Atty. Posatko pointed out that there were significant differences in Clara Ferguson's stories, such as testifying that teachers did not go into the safe unattended nor seldom left money in the safe.

Posatko pointed out that if the accounting system was sound, the security system left the potential for abuse. He argued that if the defend-

ant was going to be accused of theft, it should be considered that anybody could have taken part in taking or disposing of the money. Posatko also pointed out that CPA Paul Sidorek, retained by the district, audited only the art club account and none of the other activities accounts. He also reminded the jurors that Sidorek testified when he analyzed the art club account, he was not aware that other teachers had access to the safe.

It was Rogowski's testimony that revealed that at least 30 students were delinquent in paying for the candy they sold. He testified that 132 students took part in the candy sale and he explained how he kept track of the candy sales by using a color-coded record. He explained that in October, 1984, he became concerned that there were a large number of students, who had not turned in their money from the sale which had started the month before. He said he met with Mazzeo three different times to ask for help in resolving the delinquent accounts.

After the first two meetings, in which Rogowski said he had not

success in attempts to collect the outstanding money, he met a third time with Mazzeo to request support from the administration in collecting the delinquencies. He said he was upset that there was still more than \$1,000 outstanding.

Rogowski said that on the day he was suspended, he turned over a color-coded record of candy sale money to Mazzeo and Ellsworth, showing the unpaid accounts.

Mazzeo and Ellsworth denied they ever received records of any kind from Rogowski.

Atty. Posatko stated he believed Rogowski was a victim of becoming involved in a system that was lax in security and that he was susceptible to becoming a scapegoat.

The former president of the student art club, a graduate in June, 1985, came from West Chester College to testify on behalf of Rogowski. Additional witnesses, who testified as character witnesses for Rogowski were from the local area, among them Anthony Marchakitis, assistant to the Lake-Lehman Superintendent, Dr. M. David Preston.



Dallas Post/Ed Campbell

Guest home remains

Shown here is what remains of the Thomas Guest Home, a Sweet Valley boarding home that caught fire and killed 10 people in July. Seven of the victims died in the fire while three others passed away at area hospitals in the days following the tragedy. Ronald Thomas, proprietor of the guest home, was recently cited for negligence following an investigation which shows doors in the house were locked and the fire alarm system had been shut off.

Police

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will monitor traffic flow and clock speeding motorists from the air utilizing stop watches to time vehicles through marked zones on the highways.

Task Force 55 will also provide additional troopers on non-interstate highways over the weekend. Four teams, comprised of three troopers each, will work the non-interstate highways, to provide strict enforcement of the 55 mph speed limit.

Commissioner Cochran also reminded motorists that the week of November 24 to November 30 is "All American Buckle Up Week." The State Police urge everyone traveling this week, whether it's a short trip to shop or a long drive to visit friends or relatives, to wear their seat belt. Please help us make this

holiday weekend one for which we can all be thankful.

The 102 hour Thanksgiving holiday traffic count begins 6 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 27 and ends Midnight, Sunday, Dec. 1. Last year the Pennsylvania State Police investigated 851 accidents in which 12 persons were killed and 472 were injured.

The Pennsylvania State Police offer these safe driving tips as you prepare for the holiday weekend and winter season ahead.

The best running car in town can't move you and your family if your wheels are spinning on snow or ice because the tread has disappeared from your old tires. There is no time like NOW to put a set of tire chains and other emergency equipment in your vehicle.

Emergency equipment, including booster cables, a shovel, tow chain, warning flares, traction mats, sand or rock salt and the type of tire chains recommended for your vehicle, should be stowed in your trunk.

Check all your lights, front and back, and replace them if they are burned out.

When planning your holiday trip, no matter how long or short, plan your route in advance. Keep your timetable flexible in case of inclement weather or slow traffic. Be rested and alert when you start and plan rest stops along the way.

If highway conditions are slippery, increase your following distance, and adjust your speed down.

Please wear your seat belts. It can save lives and reduce injuries.

Neighbors

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"I realize there are no specific laws stipulating staff members on duty 24 hours round the clock," said Mrs. Cross. "However, we have had staff members on duty 24 hours a day since our home opened. A staff member is available at all times.

"We keep our doors unlocked all of the time because we solved the "run-away" problem by installing panic bars and an alarm system on each door. Every time the door opens, the alarm goes off alerting a staff member that someone is coming in or going out the door so they check immediately."

Mrs. Cross said she believes common sense, concern for the welfare of the patient and love of the patient are three key factors in the operation of a personal care guest home. In addition, she has her home plugged in to Home-Health Service.

Each individual operates a home differently, according to Mrs. Cross, and although she has concern for Thomas she believes it necessary to

have a staff member on duty round the clock despite the fact that owners live on the premises.

Mrs. Ralph Naugle, a former LPN who worked in a nursing home, said she desd know the Thomas family very well, but she feels sorry for them. She said she believes that everything in the guest home would have been fine if it had not been for the patient with the tendency to set fires. Mrs. Naugle also said that she never paid too much attention to the home.

She stated that the morning of the fire nobody wakened her, but she did get up and, from her bathroom window, she saw all the people below around the Thomas home.

Mrs. Naugle said she got dressed, went downstairs and outside to see what was going on.

"I don't know exactly how long it was, but the fire company didn't come for quite a while," she said.

She also said that Thomas went back into the house to attempt to get some of the people out.


Problems of a homeowner

Leaking faucets, broken window panes and cracked walls are just a few of the common problems that try the patience and pocketbook of the homeowners and those who rent. Most of these problems are too small for a contractor.

Small Home Repairs Made Easy is available from the Consumer Education Research Center, a non-profit consumer group. To obtain a copy send \$4 (this includes postage) to CCE, 439 Clark Street, South Orange, N.J. 07079.

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Fire

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when he confronted her, Miss Raedler became very upset. Gillespie said paper matches, prohibited in the guest home, were found in a waste can in the bathroom adjacent to Miss Raedler's room. Two wooden matches, similar to the matches found by Thomas in Miss Raedler's room the day before the fire, were found in the livingroom under the cushions on a couch.

Gillespie said a substantial chain of circumstantial evidence led investigators to conclude that Raedler intentionally set the fire and that after careful inspection of all circumstantial facts, officials were forced to conclude that Raedler was the person most likely to have started the fire. He said that if she had lived, there was enough circumstantial evidence to charge her with

a crime.

The district attorney gave credit for solving the crime to Nicholas Gushka, State Fire Marshal. Sweet Valley Volunteer Fire Co. and Robert Walsh, Fire Co. Chief.

In answer to questions as to why a person with a history of emotional disturbance such as Miss Raedler's was not placed where she would be under 24-hour surveillance, the district attorney explained that a mental health agency merely contracts to arrange for an outpatient to stay where the patient desires. A mental health agency can only recommend places to the patient.

"There is no law that specifies patients such as Miss Raedler be under 24-hour surveillance as they should be in my opinion," said Gillespie. "That is why I urge the Pennsylvania lawmakers to re-think the manner in which mentally ill

persons are housed and cared for."

There were 14 residents and five members of the Thomas family in the Thomas Guest Home at the time of the July 23 fire, seven of whom were killed and the 12 others narrowly escaping-death at the time. Three others died in the weeks following the fire.

The seven who died in the fire were Lucy Delregno, Freeland; Agnes Scanlon, Wilkes-Barre; Nicholas Demko, Wilkes-Barre; Stephen Haversley, native of Austria; Emmett Dempsey, West Side; Grace Sorber, Salem Township; and Rhonda Raedler, Jeansville. Later, an eighth guest, Elizabeth Stania, died in Geisinger Medical Center from burns incurred in the fire and a few weeks later Miss Ruth C. Loescher died in Leader West Nursing Home, Kingston, one day after she was transferred to the Leader Home from General Hospital. A 10th victim died the following week.

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