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Detroit Free Press

Section A, Page 3 SECOND FRONT PAGE Sunday, May 31, 1981

today's chuckle

It's inflation when a man has to pay \$5 for a \$2 haircut that he used to get for \$1 — when he had hair.

A death in the city: Shots end a secret agony

By BETH ROSENBERG
 Free Press Staff Writer

Robert Mendoza, his friends say, tried to end his tortured life four times in the last two years. He tried hanging himself, slashing his wrists, gassing himself and taking an overdose of sleeping pills.

After the second or third try, a friend suggested he seek professional counseling. But Mendoza refused. He said he didn't need it.

Mendoza will be buried Monday.

HE WAS SHOT and killed Wednesday night by Detroit police. Friends and relatives said Mendoza put himself into a situation to be shot by police because he wanted to die. And if police hadn't killed him, he would have killed himself, they said.

According to friends, the 22-year-old Mendoza had been despondent about his relationship with his parents and his girlfriend.



Mendoza

He had trouble talking to his parents. His teenage girlfriend was angry at him.

On Wednesday morning he bought a 20-gauge sawed-off shotgun — to kill himself or be killed.

About 6 p.m., he took the shotgun and climbed to the roof of Mills Services, 3631 Parkinson, a red brick building down the street from his parents' near west side home. He began firing.

POLICE ARRIVED. He fired five more times, police said. Mendoza was shot once in the forehead by police. He died the next morning at Detroit Receiving Hospital.

Friends claimed police acted too quickly in shooting Mendoza. They said they tried to tell officers Mendoza was upset and they could talk him into coming down. But police told them to stay out of the way because it was a police job.

A police investigation turned up no wrongdoing by the officers involved. They said the three officers who fired shots were in a dangerous situation and Mendoza's friends were asked to step aside because the police didn't know who they were. The friends, a police spokesman said, were obstructing the officers from doing their jobs.

Sgt. Bernard Brantley, of the Special Assignment Squad in the Homicide Section of the Detroit Police Department, said he is aware of complaints that police acted too quickly. Brantley's unit investigates police shootings.

"I HAVE NOT seen any wrongdoing on the part of the officers who responded to the situation. One witness gave us a statement that she saw the man (Mendoza) on the roof and saw him firing down at police," Brantley said. "The witness also said one of the Mendoza friends told her not to say he was shooting down at officers."

The three officers who fired at Mendoza — Daniel Budz, Larry Kuwalek and Sgt. Thomas Hultkonen — have been transferred to duty off the street, a routine procedure, Brantley said.

Because the bullet didn't lodge in Mendoza
 See SHOOTING, Page 15A



Free Press Photo by JOHN COLLIER

Jon Gandelot and the house he wants to turn into an office for his firm.

Attorney asks for help in restoring 1826 home

By DONNA URSCHEL
 Free Press Staff Writer

When Charles C. Trowbridge built his home on E. Jefferson in 1826, Detroit was a riverbank community of 2,000 people with no railroads or streetscars, no electricity or outdoor gas lighting, no water system and no police department.

Michigan was not yet a state. Trowbridge, a banker who would become Detroit's mayor in 1834 but would lose his bid to become the state's first governor in 1835, wanted his home to be the finest wood-frame house in the territory. From all historical accounts, it was.

Today, Detroit's oldest dwelling sits ravaged by time, its tiny lot overgrown with weeds, at 1380 E. Jefferson — just down the street from Detroit's oldest brick house, the Moross House, built in the 1840s.

DETROIT attorney Jon Gandelot is trying to get the Detroit Economic Development Corp. to issue \$465,000 in industrial revenue bonds so he can buy and restore the structure as an office for his three-person firm.

Gandelot, 37, has an option to buy the house for \$175,000. But he says he needs another \$290,000 to restore the building, which is listed on the National Historic Record and the State Register of Historic Sites.

"It's something that's a bit of Detroit that darn well ought to be preserved. It's not something to just make money on, believe me," he said.

Gandelot said the three-story house, which has five fireplaces, is in relatively good shape but needs plumbing, wiring and plaster work. The woodwork and floors also need to be redone.

ACTUALLY, what Gandelot

Advertisement

Hawk Eyed

Potential customers quickly spotted Brian Scaggs' Honda 400 Hawk when it was advertised in the Free Press Classified Gold Ads. Scaggs, of Royal Oak, sold the motorcycle for his asking price of \$1,250 the very first day the ad appeared. "Free Press ads are great and get excellent results," said Scaggs. "I've sold my car, boat and motorcycle through the Free Press ads." Golf Ads can shine for you, too!

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will get if his plan to buy the home succeeds, is half a home. Legend has it that Trowbridge's heirs did a strange thing when he died in 1883: Unable to decide who would get possession of the home, they sawed it in half.

Half was moved to the north side of Jefferson, on the current site of the University Club parking lot, and was demolished later. The other half stayed where it was. The original house had five windows across the front instead of its current three, and the supposed cutting lines along one

side, bricked up when the wooden halves were split, can be seen.

THE HOME'S owner is Frances Rodgers, owner of Pinkey's Boulevard Club, which holds the city's oldest liquor license. Rodgers planned to move the popular piano bar and restaurant from its location at E. Grand Blvd. and E. Jefferson to the Trowbridge home but changed her mind because of the high renovation costs.

Rodgers bought the home
 See HOUSE, Page 15A

NATURAL GAS FROM ALGERIA

Consumers Power Bills to Rise 50%

By PATRICIA CHARGOT
 Free Press Staff Writer

The cost of heating an average home with natural gas will rise by 50 percent this year for 1.1 million Consumers Power Co. customers, according to a company spokesman.

The main reason for the increase is a contract to buy about 20 percent of the company's gas supply over the next eight years from Algeria. The cost of the Algerian gas is already as high as what industry officials estimate domestic gas will cost by 1985, when price controls end.

"Guaranteed availability is really what it's all about," said Consumers Power spokesman Tom Holliday. "All the other sources that are talked about are fine in the short term. But within a few years, those sources will either cost just as much or not be as plentiful."

Consumers Power serves 40 communities in southeastern Michigan, including parts of Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties.

Holliday said it will be the first time Consumers Power has bought foreign gas since the company was founded in 1918. Algerian gas will be available to the utility for the next 20 years, he said.

THE WHOLESALE COST of the Algerian gas is \$7.60 per 1,000 cubic feet, compared with \$2.85 for "old" (regulated) domestic gas and \$6.90 for "new" (deregulated) domestic gas.

About seven to eight percent of the gas Consumers Power sold this year was "new" gas — that is, gas not subject to regulated prices. New gas comes from wells drilled after the Natural Gas Policy Act was passed in 1978. The act was designed to encourage exploration and development of domestic drilling and to close the gap between the cost of imported and domestic fuel.

Next year, an estimated 10 to 12 percent of Consumers Power's gas supply will be "new" gas, Holliday said, and the percentage will increase as old sources of gas are used up and as decontrol continues to be phased in. By 1985, he said, all gas, both imported and domestic, will be "about the same price." Under regulatory guidelines, utilities can pass along increases stemming from the rising cost of fuel to their customers.

The Algerian gas, which is being imported by the Panhandle Eastern Corp. and its subsidiary, Trunkline LNG Co., will begin arriving here in September.

However, some 230,000 Consumers Power customers will see an increase in their gas bills this June, when the new equal monthly payment plan begins. The 12-month plan allows customers to have gas bills estimated for a year, then averaged out to ease the burden of heavy bills during the winter months.

"The reason for the increase now is that the figure computed for the equal monthly payment plan is for all year (through June 1982)," Holliday said. "Others (not on the plan) won't feel the impact until this fall."

BASED ON THE AMOUNT of gas an average Consumers Power customer uses in a year — 160,000 cubic feet — the cost will rise this year from \$543 to \$817, Holliday said. Last year, the

average customer's gas bill jumped from \$479 to \$543, an increase of 14 percent.

Holliday said there is no way to calculate how much next year's gas bills could rise if Congress accepted President Reagan's call to accelerate decontrol this fall. If the decontrol plan proceeds according to existing legislation, the average customer's yearly bill will jump to about \$1,300 by 1985, he said.

By comparison, Michigan Consolidated Gas, which supplies fuel to about 1.1 million customers in the Detroit area, Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Grand Rapids, Muskegon, most of the northern part of the Lower Peninsula and parts of the Upper Peninsula, had a 25 percent increase last year and is projecting a 20 percent increase this year. Company officials cited the gradual phasing in of decontrol, and with it higher-priced domestic gas, as the main reason for the increase.



Free Press Photo by JOHN COLLIER

Watch your step!

We all know boys enjoy monkeying around, but few get the chance to cross a "monkey" bridge over a pond like Gary Hibby of Wyandotte. Gary, 11, is a Boy Scout. He and several hundred other area scouts attended the annual Scouts Youth Expo at the state fairgrounds in Detroit Saturday.

Rough . . . and almost ready

Raymond Bridges (left, below) tries to figure out how to get inside the wide-open defense of Kenneth Baker in the Toughman Contest at Cobo Arena. He never did; Baker won. Enthusiastic observers were actor Warren Oates (left in side photo), who will play a promoter in a film about the Toughman events, and film stunt co-ordinator Jim Nickerson.



Fighters, fans perform at Cobo

By W. KIM HERON
 Free Press Staff Writer

The clanging of bells Saturday at Cobo Arena signaled more than just another round of Toughman competitions Saturday night. They also rang in a new record for the largest call for extras for a film in Michigan.

The occasion was the filming of crowd shots for the upcoming movie "Tough Enough" (former-

ly "Tough Dreams"), the story of an unsuccessful country western singer who takes to the ring in a last resort to win fame.

Only a few minutes of the feature-length film will come from the Cobo footage. But those few minutes are crucial, according to Jim Nickerson, the stunt co-ordinator, who also worked on the movies "Rocky" and "Rocky II" and the recent "Raging Bull."

See TOUGH, Page 7A



Free Press Photos by JOHN COLLIER

Water system is flushed

ESCANABA — (AP) — City workers finished flushing some 700,000 gallons of water through Escanaba's water system Saturday to remove about 200 pounds of ammonia that leaked into water supplies, officials said.

The ammonia leak came from Joe's Cheese House, formerly the Pauly Cheese Co., where a rupture in a refrigeration system caused the ammonia to back into the water system, said Don Morreau of the city's water division.

The leak was discovered around 9:30 p.m. Friday when patrons at a local bar complained of an ammonia smell to the water, he said.

Police and city officials said no illness resulting from the contamination had been reported.

Warehouse water lines were shut off and the leak halted, according to Mel Bertrand, a worker at the cheese warehouse.

getting it straight

To insure accuracy, the Free Press will correct in this space any factual error which may occur in our news columns.

In Sunday's Detroit magazine, photos of four Teamsters officials on page 13 were transposed. Pictured, from left, are Roy Williams, Jackie Presser, Joseph Bane Jr. and Richard Fitzsimmons. Joseph Bane Jr. is the son of former Pontiac Teamsters local President Joseph Bane.

sound off

Support baseball players?

Do you side with major league baseball players in their current dispute with team owners over compensation for teams that lose free agents?

How you voted

NO, 83 percent. COMMENTS: "Nobody deserves to earn the kind of money they make" . . . "The fans can't continue to pay their outrageous salaries" . . . "They should have the same free agent system as the NFL" . . . "They're just going to ruin the whole game of baseball."

YES, 17 percent. COMMENTS: "The owners have enough money to pay their outstanding players what they are worth" . . . "A ball player's career is short. He's entitled to make as much money as he can, while he can."

Sound off is a non-scientific, reader opinion feature. Today's percentages are based on approximately 300 calls.

Tomorrow's question

TV's Mr. Rogers, host of a children's program on public stations, says preschoolers should not watch "scary television" at all and should not watch TV news alone (See "Q" on Page 1A). Do you agree?

To vote YES
 Call 961-3211

To vote NO
 Call 961-4422