



May 12, 2009

Wayne County news briefs: Waterstone's error isn't a crime, ex-judge argues

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DETROIT: Error isn't a crime, ex-judge argues

Felony charges against former Wayne County Circuit Judge Mary Waterstone should be dismissed because it is unfair to criminalize rulings, even erroneous ones, made during a trial, her attorneys argued in a written pleading filed Monday.

Waterstone's attorneys also want to disqualify Michigan Attorney General Mike Cox from handling the case that grew out of a troubled Inkster cocaine bust and trial that was marked by false testimony. Cox has a conflict of interest because his office defended Waterstone in a federal civil lawsuit connected to the 2005 cocaine case, according to the pleading.

In the pending criminal case, Cox wrongly charged Waterstone for "erroneous ruling made by a trial judge in the midst of a highly charged criminal case," the judge's lawyers, Juan Mateo and Gerald Evelyn, wrote in their pleadings.

Waterstone is charged with four counts of official misconduct for allowing false testimony in the trial of Alexander Aceval and Ricardo Pena, who were charged with possession of 47 kilos of cocaine. The trial prosecutor Karen Plants and Inkster police officers Robert McArthur and Sgt. Scott Rechtzigel are charged with conspiracy to commit perjury for covering up the identity of the police informant in the case.

Waterstone was told privately of the false statements and allowed them to go uncorrected. According to a record of those secret meetings, she said she was protecting the informant from possible retaliation.

Cox's spokesman John Sellek said: "When a judge knowingly allows perjury to occur it is criminal misconduct." Sellek also said there is no conflict because the civil case and the pending criminal charges were handled by two separate divisions.

Hindu Temple to celebrate expansion

The Hindu Temple of Canton, on Cherry Hill Road, is to have three days of ground-breaking ceremonies starting Friday to kick off a \$7.8-million expansion.

Known as Bhoomi Puja, the special ceremonies will be performed by priests in accordance with Vedic traditions. There will be prayers, meals, and guest talks by Hindu leaders.

The Canton Hindu temple is one of several temples in metro Detroit that have expanded or started in recent years, reflecting the growth of the Hindu community.

Man who was suing over police beating dies

A 59-year-old diabetic motorist, whose lawyer claimed he was beaten into a coma by Dearborn and Allen Park police last year, died during the weekend.

Ernest Griglen Jr. of Detroit died at John D. Dingell VA Medical Center in Detroit with his wife, Pamela Griglen, at his side, said Southfield attorney Arnold Reed.

A lawsuit that was filed in September in U.S. District Court in Detroit will be amended this week to a wrongful death lawsuit, Reed said Monday.

Griglen was mistaken for a drunken driver by police last June and beaten to the point that he had to have part of his brain surgically removed, Reed has alleged in a federal lawsuit.

But Allen Park and Dearborn police reports previously obtained by the Free Press indicate police said they had to take a combative Griglen to the ground after he resisted being handcuffed following a 5-mile car chase on Southfield Road.
