



Woman sentenced to 3 years

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By Richard SalitJournal Staff Writer

NEWPORT — She was spared jail five years ago when she admitted to stealing \$125,000 from a North Providence church's collection plates. But yesterday, a Superior Court sheriff handcuffed Mindy Andreozzi Schwegmann and hauled her off to prison for three years.

Judge Edwin J. Gale determined that Schwegmann violated her probation when she was charged with new counts of embezzlement from an auto dealership, and he ordered that she immediately be taken to the Adult Correctional Institutions.

Her lawyer, Ralph Chiodo, sought to blame the new embezzlement case against her on psychological problems.

"Ms. Andreozzi does have issues," said Chiodo. "I am not making any excuses. Her grief/depression has acted out in a strange way."

When she admitted to stealing \$125,000 as a volunteer counter of Mass donations at St. Anthony Church, Andreozzi tearfully told a judge she was suffering from depression from the death of her husband. The late Judge William Dimtiri spared her any prison time, suspending all of the six years of the sentence he imposed. He gave her six years of probation and ordered her to make immediate restitution of \$100,000 and to pay back the remaining \$25,000 while on probation.

But in September, while still on probation, Newport police charged the remarried Schwegmann, 48, of 225 Bell Schoolhouse Rd., Exeter, with nine counts of embezzlement. She was accused of stealing \$5,000 from her employer, Barry's Newport Nissan-Volvo. Owner Peter Barry sat in the courtroom yesterday and Gale, without giving any details, indicated that Barry had apparently given Schwegmann some sort of a "second chance" before finally going to the police to report the thefts.

While discussing the St. Anthony Church case, Gale did not talk about Schwegmann's previous criminal record. In 1998, she was convicted of embezzling from another auto dealership, one in Massachusetts, where she worked. A month ago, when Schwegmann appeared in court, the judge said he wanted to know more about that case and indicated that a jail sentence was likely. Schwegmann wept loudly then.

Yesterday, Chiodo placed a chair behind her in case, while standing before the judge, she needed to sit.

"I know this is a very awkward, difficult, painful day for you," said Gale.

Referring to the St. Anthony embezzlement, he said, "I look back toward the original case and I find there has not been rehabilitation, for reasons I don't quite understand."

He said he could sentence her to serve the six years from that case, but that he wouldn't because of the

emotional issues for which Chiodo said she has received counseling and medication.

“This defendant must suffer from some type of disorder which compels her to do this,” said the judge, who ordered that she continue to receive proper psychological care.

Nevertheless, he said, he found her to be “mentally competent,” adding, “It’s her responsibility to obey the law and she has not done that.”

Schwegmann has not yet been indicted on the Barry’s charges, which include eight felony counts of embezzlement and one misdemeanor count. The judge indicated that any sentence he imposes in that case would most likely be concurrent with the one he handed down yesterday.

Chiodo asked that Schwegmann be allowed to postpone the remainder of restitution payments to St. Anthony Church. Gale, while commending her for making regular payments, would not grant the reprieve. He said he would leave that matter to the probation department.

Special Assistant Attorney General Feidlim Gill said that Barry, the auto dealership owner, was satisfied with the three-year sentence for the probation violation. He noted that Barry, however, is the alleged victim in the new charges and is not involved with the St. Anthony case.

After the judge left the chambers, Schwegmann, wearing a black blazer, black stockings and a skirt, was handcuffed and led away, leaving her husband sitting alone on a courtroom bench.

Online at: http://www.projo.com/ri/northprovidence/content/EB_NPTMINDY28_11-28-06_C432IV9.3385532.html