

SCOREBOARD

Table with sports scores: Nanuet 45, Pelham 0, Clarkstown North 14, Spring Valley 7, North Rockland 10, Clarkstown South 6, Ramapo 15, Nyack 14, Port Jervis 31, Pearl River 14, Seton Hall 33, Suffern 0, Penn State 30, Nebraska 24, Iowa 20, UCLA 7, Purdue 15, Notre Dame 14, Southern Cal 28, Oklahoma 24.

Nolan Ryan hurls his 5th no-hitter Sports peach, D1

Mets bow to Expos, 4-2 Sports peach, D1

Yankees clip Orioles, 6-4 Sports peach, D1

Chicago wins Soccer Bowl '81 Sports peach, D1

Sunday Journal-News

Sunday, Sept. 27, 1981 With TODAY'S Sports Peach and Business Peach 75 cents

Queens D.A.: Berkowitz had help

By MAURY TERRY Copyright 1981 Gannett Westchester Rockland Newspapers Queens District Attorney John Santucci, breaking his silence on his reopened investigation of the Son of Sam murders, says he believes David Berkowitz did not act alone.

In an exclusive interview, Queens' top law enforcement official said that after two years of evaluating the evidence of a conspiracy, "I believe that David Berko-

witz did not act alone — that in fact others did cooperate, aid and abet him in the commission of these crimes. In fact, it has crossed my mind that this .44-caliber pistol, which was the weapon used in the shootings that we witnessed, was passed around among a number of people."

Santucci said that four members of his staff are involved in the investigation. The probe began in late 1979, after Gannett Westchester Rockland Newspapers published articles demonstrating the likelihood that Berkowitz acted with others in the year-long killing spree, which left six dead and seven wounded in 1976-1977. Five

of the eight separate .44 caliber attacks occurred in Santucci's jurisdiction.

Addressing some specifics of the case, Santucci said that sharply differing police composite sketches of the killer, reports of two vehicles at some of the crime scenes, and other evidence concerning "the time frame in (the killer) getting from one place to another," as described by witnesses, are among the reasons he believes Berkowitz was assisted by accomplices.

Berkowitz, arrested outside his Yonkers apartment in August, 1977, pleaded guilty to being the lone gunman in the shootings.

But since then, in letters to this reporter, Berkowitz

wrote that the killings were actually the work of a Yonkers-based satanic cult to which he belonged. He named the late John Carr, son of his neighbor, Sam Carr, as one accomplice, adding that "many others" also were part of the conspiracy.

Referring to those other alleged conspirators, Santucci said, "I have ideas as to who would be most valuable to me to talk to. I have independent suspicions. Whether I'll be successful in talking to them, or accumulating any further evidence, I don't know at this point."

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Who's who in the Sohn trial

The accused



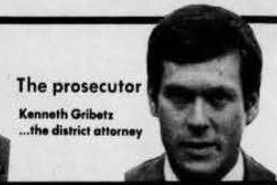
Belton Brims ...suspected killer



Sheryl Sohn ...daughter of victims



The judge Howard Miller ...County Judge



The prosecutor Kenneth Gribetz ...the district attorney



The defense Stanley Cohen and Bennett Gershman ...handling Brims' case



Patrick Burke ...Sohn's attorney

Curtain about to rise on Sohn murder trial

By GEORGE M. WALSH Staff Writer

The stage has been set and reset for the Sohn murder trial as delay has followed delay, but the cast of characters has remained essentially the same since August.

Sheryl E. Sohn, accused of arranging the murder of her parents, and one of the two alleged killers, Belton Lee Brims, sat quietly through nine days of jury selection which ended Thursday, and let their attorneys vie with Rockland District Attorney Kenneth Gribetz for the spotlight.

All this has been the direction of Rockland County

Court Judge Howard Miller, whose calm demeanor gave way to a stern hand when he felt any of the attorneys on the case got out of line during jury selection.

Beginning Monday and for the next month or two — estimates of how long the murder trial will take are uncertain — six key people will take center stage in the charged atmosphere of a New City courtroom and play out the aftermath of one of the most vicious and sensational crimes in Rockland County history.

Arnold Sohn, a 51-year-old furniture salesman for Bloomington, and his wife Elaine, who was 47 and worked as an accounting clerk with a Westchester printing company, died in their home on Jill Lane in

(Please turn to back page)

Tax cut to show up as bigger paycheck

By JIM LUTHER Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans will start collecting slightly larger paychecks as the first installment of the largest tax cut in U.S. history goes into effect this week.

Income tax withholdings under the first stage of the three-part reduction will decrease an average of 6 percent, boosting the take-home pay of most workers by about 1 percent to 2 percent.

A married worker earning \$300 a week and claiming four withholding allowances — for self, spouse and two children — will take home an extra \$5, with \$74.40 withheld. A single person with one allowance and a \$400 weekly wage will see his tax withholding reduced by \$4.60, to \$83.70.

Another part of the tax bill will allow investors to shield from taxation up to \$1,000 of interest (\$2,000 for a couple) earned on a new type of one-year savings certificate.

But there will be a lot more than taxes cut when the government begins a new bookkeeping year — fiscal 1982 — Thursday. Hundreds of federal programs will begin feeling the effect of Reagan's effort to reduce the government's role in American life.

Congress has given preliminary assent to Reagan's drive to cut \$55 billion from already-planned spending in 1982. Many of the details are not final yet because the lawmakers have not completed action on any of the 13 appropriation bills that provide the money for the programs.

Even so, less money will be available for food stamps, welfare, Medicare for the elderly, pay for federal workers, public-service jobs, student loans and a variety of programs ranging from agriculture subsidies to urban aid.

Once Congress wraps up the first series of reductions, it will take up Reagan's request last week for a second round of spending cuts totaling \$15 billion and tax increases of about \$3 billion.

The cuts in taxes and government spending represent half of Reagan's four-pronged approach for reducing inflation and nurturing sustained, job-creating economic growth.

He launched another element — reduction of federal regulations — immediately after his inauguration. The fourth prong, a slow but steady growth of the money supply, was begun by the Federal Reserve

Local businessmen react

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To spend or to save?

Page AA1

Board long before Reagan took office.

In passing the massive tax cut, Congress gave the president what he wanted — an across-the-board cut in personal tax rates in each of three successive years and a sweeping cut in business taxes — plus much more.

The business tax cut, involving faster write-offs and thus larger deductions for purchases of buildings and equipment, is retroactive to last Jan. 1.

Except for the smaller withholdings and the all-savers certificates, most of the changes for individuals will not become effective until next Jan. 1.

Beginning then, working married couples, millions of whom pay more taxes than if they were single, will get a special deduction.

Other changes effective next January include liberalized tax treatment of money set aside for retirement; a bigger tax credit for child-care expenses paid by working parents; sharp reductions in estate and gift taxes and a new deduction

for charitable contributions for the 71 percent of taxpayers who don't itemize deductions.

The most-radical part of the tax package — automatic yearly reductions in personal taxes to offset inflation — will not take effect until 1983.

Here are some of the major spending reductions that begin Thursday:

• Education: Eligibility for government-guaranteed student loans will be tightened and interest rates raised. Federal aid to school districts with large numbers of federal workers will be cut by 35 percent.

• Housing: The number of new subsidized apartments for low-income families will be cut to about 150,000, compared with 210,000 this year. Rents will be raised to 30 percent of income, up from 25 percent.

• Jobs: The CETA program of public-service jobs for 300,000 workers will be ended. Most aid for workers whose jobs are lost be-

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Queens D.A. says Berkowitz had help

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At the time he announced his new investigation, Santucci credited the newspaper accounts for prompting the probe. He also said he would not comment on the inquiry until an appropriate time.

In agreeing to the interview, Santucci said, "I didn't want to speak out on the investigation, and I did so reluctantly today at your request. But I know you've spent a great deal of time on this investigation. Some of the things you've written I've agreed with, others I've had some reservations on. But very frankly, it's mainly because of your efforts in the case that I've agreed to speak to you."

Following are some of the highlights of the interview.

Q. Except for you, the rest of New York City's law enforcement establishment looked the other way when evidence of a conspiracy began appearing. Why did you decide to pursue this case?

A. When David Berkowitz was arrested I was at Police Plaza (New York City police headquarters) and I was involved in the taking of his statements and thereafter in the court negotiations. Throughout, I indicated I had some reservations in the matter. Not in regard to the guilt or innocence of David Berkowitz. I was absolutely convinced that he was guilty of the crimes charged. My question was from the outset and remains today whether or not Berkowitz acted alone.

Q. The other district attorneys and the police were hoping that Berkowitz would plead guilty, so that a trial could be avoided. But again, you alone wanted to see a trial. Why?

A. There was a question as to Berkowitz' sanity at the outset, and the very early reports from the psychiatrists were that he was not capable of standing trial. I opposed those. I went into court personally and said the findings were totally out of focus. I insisted on new reports and thereafter the examinations provided a different result.

I did want to see a trial because I wanted to determine whether some of these (conspiracy) questions in my mind—and certainly I think in the minds of others—could not be resolved. And I think they should be resolved.

Q. What is the current status of your investigation?

A. I have an assistant district attorney assigned to the case. I have a research man looking into the background of the case and all the facts that surrounded these occurrences, and I have two detectives who are at their disposal to see what they can compile for us.

Q. After nearly two years now of your new investigation, do you personally be-

lieve David Berkowitz was not alone in the Son of Sam murders?

A. I believe that David Berkowitz did not act alone—that in fact others did cooperate, aid, and abet him in the commission of these crimes. In fact, it has crossed my mind that this .44-caliber pistol, which was the weapon used in the shootings we witnessed, was passed around among a number of people.

Q. Regarding some specific crime scene evidence, there are composite sketches that look nothing like Berkowitz, and there are strong reports of two people and two cars at some of the scenes. Are these among the reasons you believe he was alone?

A. What you're pointing out is exactly what caused the concern in my mind. We've had a number of murders in recent years of some very prominent people and following the killings there were theories advanced that the individual who committed the crime was not acting alone. I'm talking about John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, and others. The questions were left unanswered.

In this case, the sketches of the individuals—the composites—were at wide divergence from (Berkowitz). That was one problem. Allegations that there was more than one vehicle involved (and the time frame in the killer) getting from one place to another gave us serious questions.

I think that no matter how these issues are resolved—they should be resolved. I think it's in the public interest that we know. If there are people out there who were involved with Berkowitz, they may be doing the same thing today—and I think part of my function is to prevent things from happening—and this is the way I have to do it. And so I've been involved in looking into this case and having people spend time on it.

Q. Not to compromise any progress you may have made, but there have been some possible suspects identified. Do you have any particular people in mind?

A. I have ideas as to who would be most valuable to me to talk to. I have independent suspicions. Whether I'll be successful in talking to them or accumulating any further evidence, I don't know at this point. There are also people I would like to talk to who are no longer available to me. Where each of them is at the present time, I don't know. I also have some people in mind whose whereabouts I know—but who wouldn't be helpful to me.

Q. Has the unusual number of deaths involving people now known to have been connected to Berkowitz in some way hindered your probe?

A. We've looked into some of these incidents you've talked about and yes, there are an unusual number of people who are no longer living. The probe certainly would have been easier if all the principals, or all the people involved peripherally or directly, were still alive. But unfortunately, many are not.

Q. Berkowitz has named the late John Carr as one of his accomplices. Would you care to comment on Carr's role in the case?

A. I don't think it would be appropriate to comment because John Carr is dead, and I think any comment by me would serve no purpose.

Q. I know the Stacy Moskowitz murder in Brooklyn is not in your jurisdiction. But as an observer, do you think that in light of all the evidence that's been uncovered since Berkowitz' arrest, he actually pulled the trigger that night?

A. I would not even speculate on something that happened outside my jurisdiction.

Q. Well, put another way, based on the evidence, does there appear to be one scene in particular where it is apparent Berkowitz was not alone?

A. In the context of the preceding ques-

tion, I don't dare answer this question.

Q. In our investigation, we've found that contrary to some myths circulating after Berkowitz' arrest, he was not the lunatic and the loner he was made out to be by others. Have you arrived at the same conclusion?

A. It is my understanding, and the evidence I have available to me indicates that he was perfectly sane, knew exactly what he was doing, and that he did have a circle of friends he was involved with.

Q. At this point in time, do you feel you have a reasonable chance of solving this case?

A. I think an answer may be found as to whether or not other people did act in concert with Berkowitz. Whether or not it would lead to indictments, whether or not it would be hard evidence is very debatable. But my principal goal is to find out—to settle the issue. To know whether or not others were involved. Whether or not in fact the gun passed around. Whether or not (Berkowitz) was aided and abetted by others. Should I be able to certify any one of those incidents—any one of those probabilities—then of course I would try to get enough evidence to prosecute. But that's a little more difficult than just settling the question.



David Berkowitz was convicted as the Lone Son of Sam killer.



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