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Former PI claims CNET commander ran brothel

By ABC30

Friday, May 13, 2011

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, Calif.

ABC7 has reviewed a 34-page written statement private investigator Christopher Butler has given investigators. In it, Butler claims he and former Contra Costa Narcotics Enforcement (CNET) Commander Norman Wielsch hired four prostitutes to work at My Divine Skin, a Pleasant Hill retail space rented by Butler. Butler details spending \$2,200 at Ikea on furniture for the business. Butler claims the "Madame" in charge of the operation was a 36-year-old Oakland woman Wielsch recruited, after he arrested her for prostitution in Walnut Creek.

"We thought it was prostitution for sure," said Christine Atkinson who works at the chiropractic office across from My Divine Skin, the business Butler now claims was a front for prostitution. "The girls looked really, very, kind of trashy I thought, to be honest. Dressed very provocatively and they would come and just barely open the door to let themselves in."

Atkinson told ABC7 that one day she saw Butler moving some things out of the office and she asked him what kind of business they were running. He told her it was part of his detective agency -- a sting operation of sorts, targeted toward men who were looking for illegal sex.

"It was in operation for six to nine months and the proceeds went to Mr. Wielsch," said Butler's attorney William Gagen. "It was Wielsch's idea, it was Wielsch's request. It's an area of expertise of Wielsch because he was charged with enforcement of laws relating to prostitution."

"Anyone want to believe anything Butler says?" Wielsch's attorney Michael Cardoza told ABC7. "Butler signed the lease for the brothel. Butler bought the furniture for the brothel. He hired the girls, he collected the money from the johns that would go in there and he said, 'Oh, I didn't keep any of that money, I gave it to other people.' Anybody want to believe that?"

Last month, in an interview with ABC7, Wielsch said he's admitted his role in the CNET drug scandal, but he denied any other criminal activity.

Friday, in reference to the brothel allegations, Wielsch's wife Diane told ABC7, "Does Butler want the public to believe that Norm did all this and his name wasn't on anything? Norm takes responsibility for everything that he has done, but this was something he was not involved in whatsoever."

San Ramon police officer Louis Lombardi did not enter a plea during a brief court appearance Friday morning in Martinez. Lombardi faces felony drug, weapons and embezzlement charges as part of the ongoing CNET investigation. Lombardi has also been implicated by Butler as having knowledge of the suburban brothel allegedly run by Butler and Wielsch. "At this point, we're anxious to see the discovery and separate fact from fiction," said Lombardi's attorney Kirk Manoukian.

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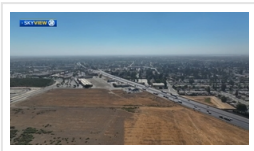
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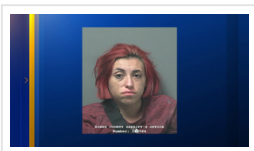
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