

Manheim Township grad facing federal charges

Accused of securities fraud

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By MICHAEL YODER, Staff Writer

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Jeffrey Bruteyn

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the FBI.

Costello said Bruteyn is being held at the federal detention center in Philadelphia and will be transferred to Texas to stand trial on the securities fraud charges.

Bruteyn ran Dallas-based Amerifirst Funding Inc., a finance company linked to used-car dealerships in Texas. The Securities and Exchange Commission accused Amerifirst of fraud in July 2007.

In its lawsuit, the SEC alleged Amerifirst sold \$55 million of risky investments to senior citizens in Texas and Florida and that Bruteyn and other associates used the money to fund an extravagant lifestyle that included a private jet,

A Manheim Township graduate is facing more than a year in federal prison and the prospect of more jail time for allegedly defrauding investors in Texas and Florida to the tune of \$55 million.

Jeffrey Charles Bruteyn, 38, of Lancaster, was sentenced Wednesday in federal court in Philadelphia to 13 months in prison for making a false statement in a passport application.

His sentence comes a day after he was indicted in federal court in Texas on nine counts of securities fraud in what investigators have called a "pump and dump" scheme.

Mary Kay Costello, assistant U.S. attorney in Philadelphia, said Bruteyn's case is not typical of others who use false identification to obtain a passport.

"It's not your usual passport fraud case," Costello said by phone Wednesday. "It was kind of a unique case because of the other investigation and how that was the backdrop for this case."

On March 11, Bruteyn was found guilty in Philadelphia of one count of making a false statement in a passport application. But the case grew out of a federal investigation in Texas.

According to court documents, Bruteyn applied for a U.S. passport at the passport office in Philadelphia in October 2007. In his application, he stated that he had been issued a passport previously but he had lost it, claiming it was "accidentally removed" from his office with some old documents.

He was issued a new passport.

However, according to court documents, Bruteyn surrendered his passport to the U.S. Attorney's office in Dallas in September 2007 in connection with the fraud investigation — a month before applying for the new passport.

FBI recordings of Bruteyn's then-girlfriend and current wife, Tonia Bruteyn, contain discussions of fleeing to Europe and the possibility of laundering money, according to court documents.

Bruteyn's alleged actions while on bail during the Philadelphia trial also were taken into account during sentencing, court documents indicate.

On Nov. 17, 2008, Philadelphia police arrested Bruteyn and charged him with simple assault and recklessly endangering another person for allegedly striking his fiancée in the face several times, knocking her to the ground and kicking and stomping her face, back and stomach.

Bruteyn also was arrested by Lancaster police on Jan. 22, 2009, and charged with aggravated assault, recklessly endangering another person and resisting arrest, all coming from another incident in which he allegedly attacked his wife, court documents said. Both arrests occurred while Bruteyn was under court-ordered supervision.

The passport charge was investigated by the U.S. State Department and

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Regulators accused members of the company of formulating a scheme to artificially pump up the stock price of a defunct company, sell the shares to investors and funnel the profit back to company executives through a series of sham investment firms.

Alan Buie, assistant U.S. attorney in Dallas, said several people related to the case have been prosecuted and Bruteyn was next in line to be charged.

Buie said he is not sure how long it will take to bring Bruteyn's fraud case to trial. He said judges typically will grant continuances for discovery of information, which adds time to complex cases.

"These (cases) are just difficult to predict," Buie said. "They can take a long time, occasionally."

Bruteyn grew up in Lancaster County, graduating from Manheim Township High School in 1988, according to newspaper accounts. He is the son of Ronald and Lois Whitcraft of Leola and the late Dr. William F. Bruteyn, who gained notoriety in the 1970s with a series of court cases related to his dental practice.

According to newspaper accounts, Bruteyn was a 1991 graduate of Baylor University with a degree in finance and later went on to the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of Business. However, court documents show that Bruteyn never graduated from Wharton, despite making that claim to potential investors.

E-mail: myoder@lnpnews.com

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