

Furniture store customers testify they get run-around

By FANNIE SUNSHINE
The Champion

A witness told Burlington court Tuesday that the man she bought furniture from at the Village Pine Shoppe in Campbellville told her he wasn't responsible for refunding her money after her items failed to be delivered.

Dr. Melanie Quartermain took the stand in the ongoing fraud trial of Charles Currie, 43, of Campbellville. She told the court she purchased a buffet and hutch from the furniture store in September, 1999 and dealt with Mr. Currie.

She testified she paid the full amount of \$799 by Mastercard and was promised a delivery date of six to eight weeks by Mr. Currie.

"After eight weeks had gone by, I started to phone the shop to see what was happening and Charles was offering excuse after excuse," she said.

"He said the furniture was coming from Quebec and he would try to fax the company to see where the furniture was. Just before Christmas he said the furniture was in and needed two days to be

stained. I kept phoning him (to see if the pieces were ready) but he never phoned back."

In February, Dr. Quartermain testified, she spoke with Mr. Currie's common-law wife Sheri Duff and told her she wanted to cancel her order and get her money back.

"She said the only way to reverse the order would be through Mastercard, but I thought he (Mr. Currie) was responsible for reversing it."

Dr. Quartermain said when she spoke to Mr. Currie about reversing the order, he said he was only an employee of the Village Pine Shoppe.

"He said he was just a sales person," she said. "He said the store was owned by several parties but wouldn't provide their names."

Dr. Quartermain said she eventually received a cheque in the amount of \$799 from Oriena Currie, Mr. Currie's mother, and cashed it at a local bank.

Steve Miller testified he purchased furniture from the shop in October, 1999 and paid \$2,700 by VISA.

"He (Mr. Currie) told me the fur-

niture would be delivered in six to eight weeks," he said. "When it didn't arrive I started calling the shop but I always got an answering machine."

Mr. Miller said Mr. Currie told him the store had experienced computer problems, the delivery truck was late and the furniture was ready but had to be stained.

In April, Mr. Miller said, he visited the store with the intent of getting his money back.

"Oriena was there. I told her I wanted the money put back on my Mastercard and she told me she had no money."

Mr. Miller testified that when he spoke with Mr. Currie, he said he didn't have any money from Mr. Miller and didn't know about any furniture that had to be delivered.

"He said if there was furniture to be delivered he would deliver it, but there wasn't any. Now I knew something was definitely wrong."

Charles Currie, 43, is charged with 25 counts of fraud under \$5,000 and one count of fraud over \$5,000.

The trial continued yesterday and today in Oakville court.

Junior Farmers to whoop it up

Music and laughter will be heard coming from Country Heritage Park tomorrow as the Junior Farmers Association of Ontario hosts the 'Sing Swing Competition'.

The event — drawing members from across the province — will see competition in instrumental, vocal and dancing categories, including square dancing, jive, two-stepping and waltzing.

Additional entertainment will be found in the gong show, air band and animal impersonation competitions.

The park is open to the general public between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. while judging occurs.

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