

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Plaintiff,

-vs-

GEORGE W BENNETT

2606 Gregory St
Madison, WI 53711

DOB: 01/27/1959

Sex/Race: M/W

Eye Color: Brown

Hair Color: Brown

Height: 6 ft 1 in

Weight: 180 lbs

Alias:

Ref. Agency: Dane County Sheriff's Office
DA Case No.: 2014DA005490
Assigned DA/ADA: SPECIAL-PROSECUTOR
Agency Case No.: DCSD 14-179283

Court Case No.: 2014CF _____

ATN: 13001406160310

Defendant,

COMPLAINING WITNESS

**Dawn Leatherberry, Brian Wilder, Cathie Kisow, Matthew Beyer, Duane Fuller,
Joshua Nordstrum, Julie Visger, Mark Voigt, Charles Wallace**

The above-named complaining witness being first duly sworn states the following:

Count 1: POSSESSION OF A FIREARM BY A FELON

The above-named defendant on or about Monday, June 16, 2014, in the City of Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin, did possess a firearm subsequent to the conviction for the felony or other crime, as specified in sub. (1) (a) or (b), contrary to sec. 941.29(2)(a), 939.50(3)(g) Wis. Stats., a Class G Felony, and upon conviction may be fined not more than Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000), or imprisoned not more than ten (10) years, or both.

Count 2: BATTERY OR THREAT TO JUDGE

The above-named defendant June 13 to June 15, 2014, in the City of Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin, did intentionally cause bodily harm or threaten to cause bodily harm to the person or family member of any judge under the following circumstances: at the time of the act or threat, the defendant knew or should have known that the victim is a judge or a member of his or her family; the judge was acting in an official capacity at the time of the act or threat or the act or threat is in response to any action taken in an official capacity; and there was no consent by the person harmed or threatened, contrary to sec. 940.203(2), 939.50(3)(h) Wis. Stats., a Class H Felony, and upon conviction may be fined not more than Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000), or imprisoned not more than six (6) years, or both.

Count 3: TELEPHONE HARASSMENT

The above-named defendant June 13 to June 15, 2014, in the City of Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin, with intent to frighten , did make a telephone call and threaten to inflict physical harm to a person, contrary to sec. 947.012(1)(a), 939.51(3)(b) Wis. Stats., a Class B Misdemeanor, and upon conviction may be fined not more than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000), or imprisoned not more than ninety (90) days, or both.

Count 4: DISORDERLY CONDUCT

The above-named defendant June 13 to June 15, 2014, in the City of Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin, while in a public place, did engage in abusive conduct, under circumstances in which such conduct tended to cause a disturbance, contrary to sec. 947.01(1), 939.51(3)(b) Wis. Stats., a Class B Misdemeanor, and upon conviction may be fined not more than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000), or imprisoned not more than ninety (90) days, or both.

FACTS:

Your complainant knows that Dane County Sheriff's Office Detective Chris Grunewald was assigned a case involving harassment and threats made to Dane County Circuit Court Judge Rhonda Lanford by George W. Bennett, DOB: 1-27-59. On 6-9-14 at 11:00 am, Dane County Sheriff's Office Deputy Scott Dzekute took the initial report about the harassment and threats to Judge Lanford. Detective Grunewald reviewed Deputy Dzekute's report and learned that George Bennett placed four phone calls to Judge Lanford's office and left a recorded message. The phone calls and messages were made by George Bennett on the following dates to Judge Lanford's office number of 608-266-1566. Bennett left lengthy voice messages and during the beginning of each message, George Bennett identifies himself as "Mr. Bennett" and he leaves a call back number of 238-7414 during the first voice message. These messages were all received at the office of Judge Lanford, located at 215 South Hamilton Street, Room 6105, located in the City of Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin.

The first message left by George Bennett was on June 6, 2014 at 7:10 p.m., the second message was left on June 6, 2014 at 10:14 p.m., the third message was left on June 7, 2014, and the fourth message was left on June 8, 2014. Your complainant recorded the messages with a digital recorder. Additionally the voice messages left by Bennett were transcribed by Branch 16 Court Reporter Brande Browne. The content of Bennett's voice messages is as follows:

1 Friday, 7:10 p.m.
2 Yeah, praise God. This is Mr. Bennett calling back. I
3 was wondering if anybody ever reads the Bible. When the
4 Judges did evil in the Bible, God punished all the

5 Judges' supporters and the clerks. I'm not God, so if
6 something happens, if God strikes your child dead or
7 something, don't come knocking on my door because I'm not
8 God. God doesn't protect thieves and liars and people
9 for perjury. The woman perjured herself four times, and
10 I ordered that Judge Lanford recuse herself.

11 So if anything happens to your clerk's
12 families or children, don't blame me. I'm not God. I'm
13 not going to harm them. Blame that evil, wicked witch
14 Lanford. You got it. She's a evil, wicked witch. I've
15 got evidence that she allowed that woman to commit
16 perjury. Her questions to me were all biased and just
17 pointed -- she's just -- she's an evil, wicked woman.

18 She's like those slave owners that raped the
19 black women, and then when they came to trial, they said
20 you wanted to be raped. That's what that judge is.
21 Don't you read the Bible. There's judges there's a
22 lot of judges in the Bible that are evil and raped and
23 murdered. That wicked woman Lanford is one of them. If
24 you're a clerk or if you work for Lanford, you better
25 just tell her to get her head screwed on right or get

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1 away from her. She is evil. You better do what the
2 Bible says. Because I'm not God, and you are going to
3 feel the wrath of God. So don't come -- come around
4 here, please. If something happens to you or your

5 children, I ain't going to lift a finger to say a damn
6 thing. God is going to punish you bad, you evil,
7 wicked people who allow perjury.

8 I still need to know how to appeal the Judge's
9 decision, so please call me back, 238-7414. I'm going to
10 call the news station too. There's four bailiffs in
11 there. Judge was ordered to do a phone hearing, but
12 she's racking up all that time for the bailiffs. You
13 evil, wicked people. Have a nice day, bye-bye.

14
15 Friday, 10:14 p.m.

16 Yeah, praise God. Again, this is Mr. Bennett calling for
17 those two young women that were in court that worked for
18 Judge Lanford. Can you have them call me? I think I
19 think I can help you keep everybody safe, we talked
20 losing -- without stepping on Judge Lanford's toes. But
21 I do need a number to call to report the perjury that the
22 women did. I don't know that number and to appeal the
23 Judge's decision. So please call me. It's very
24 important because God can protect you even if the Judge
25 does evil. God can still protect you and your loved ones

1 Thank you. Try and give me those numbers ASAP, please,
2 so I can stop calling you. Because I'm not going to stop
3 calling until I get those numbers. That's your job.
4 That's your job. It's Lanford's job, and she's not going
5 to admit to it.
6 She's going to lie just like those judges who
7 lynched the black African-American men, just like the
8 judges who locked those African-American women up that
9 were raped. If they fought back against the slave owners
10 that raped them, the judges locked them up. I could
11 tell
12 you 150 stories from the Bible about those wicked, evil
13 judges. But I'm sure you ladies got enough to deal with
the Judge. Okay. Have a nice day.

This concludes the message content.

On June 11, 2014, Detective Grunewald contacted Judge Lanford and during the interview she stated that George Bennett was the defendant in a small claims case involving a vehicle that Bennett sold to the plaintiff and after the plaintiff paid George money for the car, he took the car away from the plaintiff and refused to give it back. On June 6th, 2014, Judge Lanford ruled in favor of the plaintiff and ordered that George pay the plaintiff \$2365.00. Bennett was not happy with the ruling and the harassing and threatening phone calls to Judge Lanford's office started later in the evening of June 6th, 2014.

On June 11, 2014, Detective Grunewald met with Judge Lanford's office clerk, Diane Barrett, and received additional information reference five handwritten letters received from George Bennett. Barrett turned over copies of all five letters. Three of the five letters were addressed to Judge Lanford. Barrett indicated that she did not want to call George back after he left those voice messages about threats to the staff and family of the staff, which she indicated were concerning to her. Barrett indicated that she was hoping George would stop calling.

The following is a summary of all five letters Barrett turned over to your complainant. Copies of the letters will be attached to this complaint.

The first letter was marked as being filed on May 12, 2014. George Bennett states that he is disabled and will need further assistance and that he would also like to file a counter suit for money and damages. Bennett also suggests that the Dane County Court may be liable for damages since the summons appears prejudicial and Discriminatory.

The second letter was marked as being filed on May 20th, 2014. George Bennett requests that Scott McAndrew be taken off his case because he allowed perjury several years ago in one of his cases and "he is evil".

The third letter was dated as being filed on May 29th, 2014 and in this letter George requests that he be allowed to testify via telephone due to a disability and that he also feels uncomfortable with "Ms Johnson".

The fourth letter is dated as being received on June 4, 2014. In this letter, Bennett requests that Judge Lanford recuse herself from the case. Bennett states that he heard she hates Catholics or disabled men and refers to her as an evil witch.

The third letter is dated as being received on June 5, 2014. In this letter, Bennett requests that Judge Lanford recuse herself and makes the following statements: " Do you want to extort money from me like Sheri Jensen is trying to do. I can send you money____". Does your clerk Diane need the money you have to extort me. Don't you know that the African American women who were raped by slave owners were brought before the judge if they fought back. (men who tried to help were lynched). When they came before the judge after being raped the judge convinced them that they wanted (consented) to the sex assault so the white slave owners could not be charged! Do you want to assault me like the poor women that were raped!!! Is your court so different. Thanks for your concern. I am sure God will reward you!!! I will pray for you and Diane (clerk-Asst" The letter is signed by "George Bennett"

INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE BENNETT

On 6-11-14, Detective Grunewald along with Detective Bill Hendrickson contacted George Bennett at 2606 Gregory Street in the City of Madison. George came out of the house prior to knocking on the door and a brief interview was conducted in the driveway of his residence. Bennett was confrontational when he was told we were investigating some phone calls to a Judge and he responded by initially saying which calls and he was told of the four calls to Judge Lanford's office over the weekend. He didn't deny the calls and started talking about how we must be defending a Judge who allows perjury in her courtroom. Bennett was showed us a stack of papers and indicated that these soldiers died and this is how they are repaid. Bennett accused us of protecting the judge and that we are disrespectful. Bennett was asked if he lives with anybody and he seemed upset by the question and asked why we would know that. He was asked if he lives with his father and he said his father is deceased. Bennett cried when he talked about the soldiers that died and at several points had his hand on his face while crying. Bennett's behavior seemed irrational and any questions asked of him resulted in him accusing us of protecting the judge and that we are disrespecting the soldiers that lost their lives in military action.

George Bennett was issued a stalking letter and was told to stop calling Judge Lanford's office.

BENNETT'S HISTORY

Detective Grunewald completed a check of George Bennett's history by using Dane County Sheriff's, Wisconsin Criminal History files and City of Madison Police records. The following records are a snapshot of the lengthy history with these law enforcement agencies. Based on Bennett's contacts, he has a lengthy history of harassment and threatening behavior since at least 2002.

11-4-90 Per Dane County Sheriff's Office records, George Bennett threatening to kill State Troopers Dick Nelson and Andrew Tennessen.

3-29-02 Per a Dane County Sheriff's Office report by Deputy Tim Tyler, and by Lt. Tim Schuetz, George Bennett was cited for intentionally provoking or engaging in a fight. Deputy Tim Tyler issued him a ticket related to fighting. Bennett became upset with Deputy Tyler and filed a complaint with Lt. Tim Schuetz. During Lt. Schuetz investigation, Bennett made statements such as "I can't be held responsible for what God does to people who persecute innocent people" and "I can't be held responsible for what God does to Tyler". Shortly after these investigations, Deputy Tyler reported receiving religious literature at this residence. Bennett was interviewed by Detective Owen Dockter and Detective Kathy Dorn about the literature and although he didn't admit to putting literature on vehicles in Sun Prairie but denied placing any literature at Deputy Tyler's residence.

7-23-02, Per Wisconsin Criminal History files, Bennett was arrested by Madison Police and charged with battery and 1st degree recklessly endangering safety. He was convicted of substantial battery/use of a dangerous weapon and 1st degree recklessly endangering safety. Your complainant reviewed a police report by Officer Daniel McFarlane and he reported that the victim in this case said Bennett threatened to shoot him with a 38 revolver type handgun but then put it away and hit him with a pipe.

3-11-10, Per a Madison Police report by Sgt. Tim Radke, Bennett threatened to get a firearm at his dad's house at 2606 Gregory Street and then go to the police department. Bennett was upset that he was arrested by Officer McGee of the Madison Police Department.

10-6-13, Per a Madison Police report by Officer Don Penly, reported that a Reverend reported ongoing harassment and disturbances by George Bennett since 2003. The reverend filed for a harassment restraining order on 10-14-13 and it was granted.

1-28-14, Per a Madison Police report by Officer Timothy Smith, George Bennett allegedly sent a concerning letter to a municipal judge..

Other criminal history not documented above includes, resisting or obstructing an officer, domestic abuse, theft, bail jumping, and disorderly conduct.

Detective Grunewald reviewed many police reports indicating that George Bennett has lived at 2606 Gregory Street in the City of Madison since at least 2002 and that he is the sole occupant.

Additionally Bennett has previously made threats to either law enforcement, judges or other employees associated with law enforcement or judges. Bennett has made threats and mentioned that he could obtain a gun, and in one case made mention of responding to a police department with a gun because he was upset after he was arrested by Officer McGee.

Bennett is a convicted felon as a result of a substantial battery and 1st degree recklessly endangering safety case and so has demonstrated that he is willing to use a weapon to harm a person. In this case, Bennett hit a man with a long metal pipe, which caused a fracture of the victim's ulna. Also during this case, Bennett removed a handgun from his vehicle and pointed the gun at the victim. Bennett put the gun down during the incident and then hit the victim with the pipe. The gun was described as a black with a short barrel and a brown handle and it was possibly a 38 revolver. This case occurred 7-23-02 and is documented in Madison Police reports under case number 2002-85470.

On Monday, June 16, 2014, at approximately 2:00am, Detective Grunewald assisted with searching a second floor bedroom at 2606 Gregory Street, City of Madison. This is a bedroom located immediately to the right of the staircase that leads from the first level of the house. During a search of the bedroom, Detective Krista Ewers-Hayes and Detective Grunewald found several boxes of ammunition and include the following caliber: .22 caliber, .45 caliber, .308 caliber. .25 caliber.

Detective Grunewald assisted Detective Ewers-Hayes with lifting the mattress and underneath the bed was a gun case. Detective Ewers-Hayes opened the gun case and found a 30/30 Marlin Brand rifle, serial number AD5274. It appeared to be a functional gun. The rifle was photographed and taken as evidence by Detective Brian Lukens.

Detective Grunewald spoke with the defendant on June 18, 2014. He said he wanted to tell me something and then proceeded to tell me without prompting that he never had any guns and indicated the guns found in the house belonged to his dad. The defendant said his dad had those guns for 25 to 35 years. He went on to say that he never thought to get rid of those guns after his father died. The defendant then went on to talk about the guns that were in the house at 2606 Gregory Street and said that he hates guns and that he has only fired guns maybe three or four times. When asked how many guns were upstairs in the bedroom, and he said, "Probably several." Detective Grunewald asked him if he could list the kinds of guns that are in the house and he said there is a German Ruger and a .38 and then said, "I don't know what that rifle was." He was asked where the rifle was located, and he said, "I think it was under the bed." He said he didn't think about getting rid of it after his parents died and nobody told him to get rid of it. He said, "I never went near the stuff." He said he's not a gun lover.

Detective Grunewald asked him when he last saw the rifle, and he said he opened it and looked at it and then followed that up by saying, "I am not going to lie to you." Detective

Grunewald asked him if he looked at the gun during the past year, and he said, "I could've looked at it." Detective Grunewald asked him if he took the gun out of the case, and he responded by saying, "I don't know." He asked Detective Grunewald what kind of gun it was, and Detective Grunewald said Marlin, and he indicated later that he didn't know what the size of the rifle was. Detective Grunewald asked him if his dad had more than one rifle, and he indicated that his dad didn't have any rifles by saying, "Not really." The defendant said he received the rifle 15 years ago as payment for fixing somebody's car. He said he didn't think he ever fired that rifle and then asked me if I ran the license on the gun to find out who it had come from. Detective Grunewald asked him where he got the gun from or who gave it to him, and he said he didn't remember who he got the gun from, he just indicated that he received the gun as a form of payment from somebody whose car he fixed.

Detective Grunewald asked him if he remembered how many guns his dad had at the house and he said he had no idea. Detective Grunewald told him that he talked to his brother and he said his father had given him some guns and the defendant responded by asking about the rifle and if there was any talk about that gun and Detective Grunewald said no. The defendant responded by saying, "Yeah, I might not have ever told him about it."

Detective Grunewald asked the defendant how long he has lived at 2606 Gregory Street and he said 50 years and he confirmed that he lived at that address with his parents up until last year when they both died.

Detective Grunewald asked the defendant how he felt right now and he said he feels "stupid." He then followed that up by saying that he wants somebody to kill him and that he is just going to walk into the courtroom and ask the judge to kill him. He said he is so stupid and asked himself how he could do such stupid stuff. He denied being suicidal during this interview and said he couldn't harm an insect.

PHONE CALLS:

Detective Grunewald asked the defendant questions about the phone calls that he placed at Judge Lanford's office and he responded by saying he was very upset about the ruling against him especially since the plaintiff had committed perjury in the courtroom. Detective Grunewald asked him if she paid him for the car she gave to him and he indicated she only paid about half of what was owed to him. He said that she lied about paying him the full amount for the vehicle. He said his intent was to settle the case before court indicating before he went in front of the judge because that's what the bible says.

The defendant said that he may have verbally assaulted the judge, but he did not threaten her and later went on to say that he meant her no harm and he said God was going to do those things to her.

Detective Grunewald told the defendant that he was going to read from the transcription completed from the voice messages that he left at Judge Lanford's office and he said that he did not want me to read the voice messages out loud. He said he was "shocked and embarrassed" by the phone calls that he left for the judge. He said, "It's so stupid that he would do that." He said he didn't mean any harm to the judge, he was just trying to "reprimand her." He said he never looked up her phone number or address and only

looked up the phone number for the court and called her. He said "Sorry" multiple times during the course of this interview.

The defendant asked Detective Grunewald if he specified during the course of the phone calls to the judge's office that he was not going to harm anybody and that it was God that was going to do harm and Detective Grunewald told him yes.

US CURRENCY FOUND IN THE HOUSE:

Detective Grunewald asked the defendant about the currency that was found in the house during the course of the search warrant. Detective Grunewald asked him if he was aware that there was \$33,500 all in \$100 bills in the same bedroom where the rifle was found and he indicated he had no idea the cash was there. He told me there is about \$20,000 in the "downstairs" portion of the residence and it is hidden in a wall. It was unclear if he was referring to the first level or basement portion of the house. Detective Grunewald told him we did not locate that cash and said it is likely still there.

The defendant said he planned on giving the \$20,000 to his sister when she came to town. He said the money belongs to the family and the money hasn't been counted in years. He said she is going to pay the property taxes and he indicated \$15,000 worth.

BEDROOM LOCATION

George confirmed the bedroom where the rifle and the cash Detective Grunewald described to him was found in the bedroom located to the right of the staircase as you go up the stairs.

George said the \$33,500 should probably go to his sister as she has power of attorney.

Your complainant believes the information provided by Dane County Sheriff's Detective Grunewald, Deputy Scott Dzekute, Deputy Tim Tyler, Detective Bill Hendrickson, Detective Kathy Dorn, Detective Owen Dockett, Lt Tim Schuetz and from the City of Madison Police Department – Sgt Time Radke, Officer Don Penly, Officer Daniel McFarlane, and Officer Timothy Smith is reliable because this information was gathered during the normal course of their duties as sworn law enforcement officers.

Your complainant believes the information provided by Rhonda Lanford to be truthful and reliable inasmuch as she was the complainant/victim providing information to law enforcement and the incident reported is related to her employment as a Dane County Circuit Court Judge.

Your complainant believes the information provided by Diane Barrett to be truthful and reliable inasmuch as she is employed in Judge Lanford's office and did receive the voice mail messages and letters by George Bennett and so she is also a victim and is directly involved in the events described in this complaint.

Your complaint believes that records from the department of motor vehicle (DMV) are accurate and reliable as they are tasked with maintaining and updating vehicle registration information as a course of normal business.

Your complainant believes that records from the State of Wisconsin-crime information bureau (CIB) criminal history files are accurate and reliable because these records have been proven to be accurate and your complainant has corroborated the information by way of police reports and the criminal court system.

Your complainant believes that records from the Dane County Sheriff's Office data base are accurate and reliable inasmuch as the information is kept and stored as a part of normal business.

Subscribed and sworn to before me,
and approved for filing on:

This 24th day of June, 2014.



ASSISTANT/DEP DISTRICT ATTORNEY
DANE COUNTY, WISCONSIN



COMPLAINANT