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## **Reinhart faces 16 felony theft charges**

New Ulm accountant allegedly took total of nearly \$92,000 in funds from Ag Society, baseball boosters

By Fritz Busch - Staff Writer , The Journal

NEW ULM - A 59-year-old New Ulm man faces 16 felony theft counts in a Brown County District Court case involving \$91,727.79 in checks payable to himself or his business on the Brown County Agricultural Society (BCAS) account and \$7,907.26 in checks issued by himself payable to his business on the New Ulm Baseball Association (NUBA) account. Robert J. Reinhart, 419 S. Broadway, is scheduled to make his first Brown County District Court appearance at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, June 5.

According to the complaint, New Ulm Police met with BCAS President Lucy Gluth and Vice President Barb Lux regarding suspicions that Reinhart embezzled BCAS funds. He served as BCAS treasurer as a volunteer since the late 1990s.

Gluth said she was contacted by several entities involved in BCAS business dealings in early 2012 regarding outstanding accounts payable. In response, she met with Citizens Bank Senior Vice President Bernard Brennan and learned the BCAS account was nearly depleted of funds, the complaint said.

Reviewing copies of bank statements, checks and deposit information, Gluth found BCAS checks issued by Reinhart and made payable to Reinhart or his business in significant monetary amounts, according to the complaint.

Gluth also learned that Reinhart took a \$30,000 unauthorized loan in the name of the BCAS without approval from any other BCAS officers. She reported an additional \$10,000 missing from insurance proceeds received by the BCAS for 2010 hail damage. Gluth estimated more than \$70,000 in BCAS funds unaccounted for, according to court documents.

Gluth told police she and Lux confronted Reinhart about the alleged embezzlement, that he admitted to issuing checks to himself and his business without authorization, admitted to securing the unauthorized loan and promised to pay the funds back, according to the complaint.

At Gluth's request, Reinhart turned over all financial documents in his possession for 2007 through 2010, and the BCAS checkbook and some 2011 financial documents, according to court documents.

On March 14, 2012, New Ulm Police met with James Bastian of the NUBA who said the NUBA board removed Reinhart as treasurer the previous night after discovering records of checks totaling \$7,807.26 he issued payable to his business on the NUBA checking account, according to the complaint.

In addition, police observed records of \$4,379.75 in checks issued to the BCAS and \$6,900 in deposits in the NUBA account from the BCAS account. Police surmised that Reinhart was transferring funds between accounts in an apparent attempt to disguise his unauthorized activity, according to court documents.

Securing a search warrant for Reinhart's business, police went to his business at 1126 S Broadway and told him why they were there. Reinhart told police he planned to pay back all funds owed to both organizations, admitted to using BCAS and NUBA funds to pay business and personal debts, and denied making any major purchases with the funds, according to the complaint.

In reviewing Reinhart's business account records, police observed the account issued \$20,969.96 in checks to the BCAS from January 2009 through February 2012.

(Fritz Busch can be e-mailed at [fbusch@nujournal.com](mailto:fbusch@nujournal.com)).

