

# 'Big-Hearted Bob' still missing; rumors abound

By KEITH MURAOKA  
Sentinel staff writer

CAPITOLA — Missing auto dealer Bob DeJarnett is still missing, his "Big-Hearted Bob" dealership is still closed and rumors are still circulating.

DeJarnett apparently took flight last week, leaving behind a defaulted \$2.7 million bank loan. However, a spokeswoman at the Santa Cruz County District Attorney's Office said charges have not been filed against him.

Bob Dee Motors in Capitola's Auto Plaza has been closed since Tuesday after a court order was issued on behalf of Pacific Western Bank, the holder of the defaulted loan.

The 36 employees of the Olds-

mobile and Jeep-Eagle dealership, who haven't been paid for two weeks, first were told a new owner would take over within 48 hours. On Wednesday, they were told to wait until Friday. On Friday, the timeline had stretched to Monday.

"After we get over this little glitch this morning, it looks good for Monday," said an employee who answered the telephone Friday on the prospects of a new owner.

In both court documents filed by Pacific Western Bank attorney Peter Rehon and information provided by employees, a Tom Mantz has been identified as the new owner. No other information is available on Mantz.

Both Oldsmobile spokesman Tim Tabes and Pacific Western Bank Public Relations spokesman Will Goodrich have remained tightlipped.

Employees have been another matter. One employee, who asked not to be identified, said that DeJarnett had come into the dealership Tuesday to have his car — a silver Oldsmobile Delta 88 — washed and detailed. He then drove to the Monterey Airport, where he caught a flight to Las Vegas.

The employee said DeJarnett's wife, Rosemary, is reportedly with him. His daughter, Lisa, and son-in-law John Allen, who also worked at the dealership, also have disappeared. They are said to be in St. Louis, where DeJarnett had formerly owned dealerships since 1955.

Santa Cruz County Superior Court Judge Sam Stevens issued a court order Monday, giving Pacific Western Bank the dealership's inventory. That included 75 vehicles,

mostly new Oldsmobiles and Jeeps valued at \$1.1 million, and another \$400,000 worth of parts, office furniture and money deposited in Bank of America.

The bank's Rehon, in court documents, alleges that DeJarnett breached a so-called "flooring agreement" and is "seriously out of trust" in failing to pay the bank \$752,677 when 45 vehicles were sold.

Auto dealers commonly use flooring agreements to pay the factory for vehicles they intend to sell. The vehicles are then offered as collateral.

DeJarnett took over the Capitola dealership in November 1987. He immediately made a splash through a hard-sell television advertising campaign in which he appeared as "Big-Hearted Bob," wearing a Superman-like costume.