

Heightened security exercise greets Daley Center lawyers

By Pat Milhizer
Law Bulletin staff writer

If you came to the Daley Center for a case this morning, you walked through the metal detector.

Cook County sheriff's deputies directed lawyers to the security checkpoints, not letting them flash their attorney identification cards to skip the entrance lines.

The sheriff's office enacted what's called an "emergency preparedness readiness exercise" from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. today. In the drill, deputies control the flow of courthouse visitors by directing everybody to the metal detectors.

Deputies normally let attorneys avoid a security check as long as they show their sheriff-issued identification cards. Attorneys appeared to take the temporary measure in stride, heading to one of two lines with the rest of the courthouse staff, litigants and other visitors.

Several people who work in the building heard that the heightened security stemmed from an incident Tuesday when deputies escorted a lawyer out of the building for allegedly shouting in a courtroom.

But the sheriff's office said the two events aren't linked.

"It really has nothing to do with the

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malpractice case that's pending before Brewer.

The motion states that Brewer lacked reasonable cause to order Amu out of the courtroom. The motion accuses Brewer of not letting him speak freely and "frustrating my attempt to meaningfully make a record or be heard in your courtroom."

It also states that the judge's actions make Amu "look like the unruly troublemaker" in the courtroom.

"With all due respect, Judge Brewer, the fact that you are a judge does not make you God," Amu's motion states.

Brewer couldn't be reached for comment this morning.

According to his website, Amu rep-

resents clients in claims involving personal injury, catastrophic injury, medical malpractice, wrongful death, work injury, auto accidents and insurance disputes.

Amu states on the website that he lived in Nigeria before he came to the United States and earned a civil engineering degree in 1984. He worked as an engineer and obtained a Master of Business Administration before he earned a law degree in 1995, the website states.

The website, lanreamu.com, also lets visitors donate money to the "cause of Justice" with a credit card or by mailing a check to Amu.

altercation yesterday. Around the country, they're doing these (security exercises) in various locations," said sheriff's spokesman Frank Bilecki.

Shortly after 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, deputies escorted sole practitioner Lanre O. Amu out of the building after, Bilecki said, Amu became disruptive and shouted in Circuit Judge Eileen M. Brewer's courtroom. Amu represents a plaintiff in a medical malpractice lawsuit in that courtroom.

Amu, 50, wasn't arrested or charged with a crime. And he has no disciplinary record with the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission.

Amu said when he came to the Daley Center this morning, a sheriff's official briefly detained him and confiscated the identification card that lets him enter the building without going through the security screening.

Asked to comment on Tuesday's courtroom incident, Amu sent an e-mail stating: "Judge Eileen Brewer needs to explain her real motive for the orchestration. I am available for a full investigation and will meet at any forum."

Amu plans to file a motion for a substitution of judge Thursday in the medical

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E-mail: pmilhizer@lbpc.com