

Went on spree with card

A CASH-strapped 20-year-old who went on a spending spree with his step-brother's bank card has been ordered to pay almost £850 to creditors and the court.

Andrew Mark Cain saw his covert plan backfire spectacularly when a statement for the debit card dropped on to the doormat and he was told to leave the family home.

His problems got a lot worse when he admitted four counts of deception before High Bailiff Michael Moyle, amounting to £442.13, and was told to pay the money back along with a £100 fine for each offence.

Inspector Richard Power, prosecuting, told the court Cain had used the card to make small purchases at the Terminus Tavern in Douglas and the Archibald Knox in Onchan between March 14 and May 3.

He used a cashback facility to obtain the rest of the money in notes.

Advocate Ian Kermode said the hard-up young man had taken the card after picking up an injury in a car accident, when he could not work but was not eligible to receive benefits.

Mr Kermode added Cain, of Peel Road, Douglas, had 'come clean' the moment his furious father had shown him the statement.

In passing sentence, Mr Moyle told him: 'This was a nasty thing to do to people who were giving you assistance.'

Free community mediation centre planned

Helping to work out problems

By LOTTIE RAY

A FREE community mediation centre is planned for Islanders experiencing disputes with neighbours, landlords, local authorities or even family members.

Mediators Nancy Peterson and Frank Hanna hope to set up an Island-wide service called Manx Mediators to deal with land disputes, rights of way issues, housing problems, parking conflicts or neighbour to neighbour arguments.

Nancy said: 'These cases are what bog down the courts, council meetings or the police and stop them from dealing with more productive matters.'

'There are currently about four trained mediators in the Island but they have very little experience of cases. We need to make the public aware of mediation so any difficult situations are taken to a mediator instead of a solicitor or the police.'

She said: 'We are looking to bring in people with relevant skills in different sectors such as matrimonial, engineering or medical to be trained as mediators. So, if you are having a problem with your landlord, for instance, it would be great if you have a mediator who was familiar with tenancy agreements — someone like an estate agent.'

She said: 'It is a great scheme over

They are currently looking for some funding to cover the cost of premises for the project so that they can offer the service free of charge or on a donation basis.

Nancy said: 'What is being found is that through a community mediation programme problems are being solved quickly and with much less cost than the court system. People walk away feeling their problems have been solved and relationships have been revived.'

She added: 'Mediation sounds new-fangled but it's just people talking. It's the equivalent of your best friend or favourite aunt sitting down with you and working out a problem.'

'Instead you are going to a professional and it is often beneficial to have someone neutral involved. In many ways it's the oldest form of conflict resolution — just facilitated talk.'

Nancy has a masters degree in mediation and has mediated for Arizona's Supreme Court and a variety of high profile cases including one involving the Yankee Stadium.

She was headhunted and appointed as director of education for New York State's dispute resolution department, a role which involved overseeing 62 community mediation centres across the state.

there which has been running for 20 years now. They even have specialised centres such as for those who are gay or lesbian, Jewish or Muslim, deaf, or Spanish speaking. They even have one purely to alleviate gang violence.'

She and Frank Hanna have recently moved to the Island from the USA where they had a fundamental impact on the mediation world and trained 600 mediators.

Having co-founded the UK's Mediation Agency, they are now running their degree-accredited training courses both here and in the UK.

The first course has already started.

It has been attended by people from all walks of life including a psychologist, a physiotherapist dealing with stroke victims, a retired 70-year-old and a university student.

Nancy said: 'We tend to have two different types of people on our courses. Some want to get involved in a community mediation system which we help them achieve and others go back and use the new skills in their current job. On the course you learn skills you can apply in all different areas from corporate to the community to the home. You are taught to deal with people in all instances.'

She added: 'There is no particular type of person that is good at mediating — most people are mediators. If

you are the one that friends or family turn to you are a mediator.

'Actually I cannot think of a single person who wouldn't benefit from mediation training — the police, the clergy, airline staff, doctors, politicians. In fact we had a British cabinet member attending one of our courses in Arizona. He sat next to a janitor.'

A lot of people who attend the courses are actually those who were previously involved in disputes solved by mediation.

Nancy, a mother of three, also felt strongly that mediation is a perfect career for women returning to work after raising children.

She said: 'Most mothers trying to re-enter employment are faced with an uncomfortable place where they have been made redundant by their children while finding that their earlier career qualifications and skills are out-moded.'

She continued: 'They have a lot to give but no-one to give it to. These women have acquired peace-making and negotiation skills dealing with different situations such as schools, social clubs, community services. These talents can be put into good use within mediation for the community.'

For more information contact Nancy on 0844 478 0060 or nancy@mediationagency.com



MANX MEDIATORS: Nancy Peterson, co-director of The Mediation Agency, explains how a free Community Mediation Centre would be beneficial to the Island

Man assaulted sailors in the street

TWO sailors who came ashore for some sightseeing while their ship was anchored in Douglas bay were assaulted by a local man they stopped to ask about take-away food, a court heard.

Wayne Simms and Terry O'Neill had left Colours nightclub in Central Promenade and were heading back to their ship on September 16 when they stopped Lee Paul O'Neill in Strand Street to ask where they could get decent fast food.

O'Neill, of Hutchinson Square, attacked the pair, punching Mr O'Neill in the face and ripping Mr Simms' shirt.

They escaped as far as Loch Promenade, where O'Neill caught up with the men and assaulted them again outside Amber bar, this time in front of an off-duty police officer who told prosecutors the defendant was the 'main aggressor'.

Mr Simms came off worst from the second exchange, nursing a bruised and bloody nose.

O'Neill told police the fight had started when the men had bumped into his girlfriend. He admitted two counts of common assault before High Bailiff Michael Moyle on Tuesday.

The 28-year-old was bailed and the case adjourned until November 6 for sentencing.

Bell back from Liechtenstein

TREASURY Minister has