



## **Alleged bike thief has day, and fan, in court**

TheStar.com - GTA

### **Lawyer pushes for bail as police stress importance of locks**

July 26, 2008

Emily Mathieu  
Dale Anne Freed  
Staff Reporters

Alleged bike thief Igor Kenk may be reviled in the biking community at large, but he had at least one fan in the city at his court appearance yesterday.

Sitting in the second row of the spectators' gallery, Brandie McGee, 29, smiled at a dishevelled-looking, long-haired Kenk as he appeared in his prison-issue orange jumpsuit before he was remanded back into custody until next week.

To McGee, Kenk is a saviour. "He's what this city needs. We need people like that. We don't need them locked up," she told reporters.

"He helped me get it together . . . I was fairly down and out and unemployable . . . close to living on the street," the intense young woman, dressed in long cut-off jeans, a pen wound in her hair, said outside court yesterday.

McGee said she landed on the doorstep of his Bicycle Clinic on Queen St. W. – a \$10 "clunker" of a bike in tow – three years ago and suggested she work for him as an apprentice. In exchange for him fixing her bike, she would learn "bicycle mechanics."

In turn, he "paid ample" for her work, she said.

Kenk, the owner of the Bicycle Clinic on Queen St. W. was arrested July 16 after a police operation and now faces more than 60 charges.

The Crown and police met with Kenk's lawyer yesterday.

"We're hoping bail is a possibility. We're hoping to get disclosure of all the cases as quickly as possible," Kenk's lawyer Lon Rose said on the steps of Old City Hall.

While the case winds its way through the legal system, the cycling community put some of the focus yesterday on the failure of the devices designed to avert bike theft in the first place – bike locks.

"The number of bikes that came in with the locks actually still on them was absolutely astounding," said Staff-Sgt. Laurie Jackson.

Jackson was one of more than a dozen officers watching over the bikes laid out for the public to come and claim at two downtown warehouses yesterday.

At the warehouse, Jackson showed off the remains of a variety of locks from thin chains to the U-lock "Kryptonite" locks.

Bike thieves have used freezing agents – including dry ice – to freeze and crack the locks off, she said.

It's important to invest in a proper lock, she said. "Just keep in mind this all started because (a) guy was using a bolt cutter."

Where you bolt your bike is as important as the lock, she said.

City-wide bike posts – the metal posts with circular areas to attach your bike – are secure, Jackson said.

Chaining your bike up to something like a wooden post or chain fence offers little to no protection from thieves, she said.

"Ninety per cent of locks do very little to protect people," said Eric Kamphof, manager of Curbside Cycle at Bloor St. and Brunswick Ave.

"This is a big city – if you don't buy a good lock you are basically creating an opportunity for criminals."