

# House of woman who exploited Alzheimer's patient sold at auction

*AISLING SWIFT*

6:24 PM, Aug 21, 2013

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The bids started at \$241,000 and in less than 10 minutes, the home at World Tennis Center in Naples was sold to the 11th bidder for \$249,000.

Last week's foreclosure auction of the Europa Drive home owned by Alma Teti, 71, is the latest chapter in a 2009 lawsuit filed by Velta and Ellis Hanson, a Naples couple Teti defrauded out of more than \$2 million, when Ellis Hanson had Alzheimer's disease.

Nearly seven months after a January 2011 trial, Collier Circuit Judge Cynthia Pivacek ruled Teti had exploited Ellis Hanson, that he was a "vulnerable adult" under the law and that Teti illegally accepted millions from him during and after expensive dinners with strong alcoholic drinks.

That month, she fled after shutting off her electricity, closing her hurricane shutters and forwarding her mail to Sykesville, Md., where a private investigator has since located her.

"Velta is committed to collecting on the judgment," said Matthew Jackson, one of the attorneys who represented the couple, who foreclosed on Teti's home. "She is grateful the court ruled in the Hansons' favor and that she is making progress on getting the Hansons' funds back."

Just days after trial, Teti paid off her \$247,772 mortgage, thinking her home was safe from creditors because Florida's debtor protection homestead provision is one of the broadest in the nation. It protected O.J. Simpson from hefty judgments after he moved from California.

But because Teti abandoned her homesteaded home after paying it off with the Hansons' money, a judge in May ruled the Hansons could foreclose on it to collect part of the hefty \$2.028 million judgment against Teti, which had grown to \$2.155 million with interest as of February.

Teti still could be arrested and tossed in jail. In May 2012, the judge found her in contempt after she refused to provide financial information and undergo depositions. The judge agreed to issue a writ of bodily attachment, which allows arrest and detention, if lawyers submit one.

Financial records and testimony showed Teti accepted more than \$1 million in checks from Ellis Hanson from 2006 to 2008, nearly \$85,000 in jewelry since 2005, including a \$26,000 ring, and thousands of dollars in expensive meals, Champagne and strong drinks.

Because Hanson couldn't comprehend the tax consequences of his actions, his wife had to sell their waterfront home and move to a small rental. She's since purchased a small condo.

Ellis Hanson, now 89, was a brilliant engineer who helped invent cold-type, which changed the typesetting and printing industry. He now lives at Arden Courts of Lely Palms, a home for people with memory problems and Alzheimer's disease.

Phone numbers listed to Teti have been disconnected and attempts to reach her for comment were unsuccessful. Friends say they haven't heard from her.

Teti's homeowners association, Corinthian Gardens, also filed two liens against her for \$7,872.04 in unpaid fees.

Sue Colgan, a Naples Realtor who bid six times on behalf of the winning bidder, MFC Investments, wasn't aware of the story behind the home.

"So this money is going to help him?" Colgan asked. "That's wonderful. That's a nice ending, isn't it?"

"World Tennis Center is such a great vacation spot," Colgan said, adding that the house is "all shuttered up" and MFC's owner, Naples businessman Michael F. Conte, can now go inside to see its condition.

Conte will renovate it and try to flip it. He's flipped hundreds of houses in Naples since early 2009 and has said he usually does it within 45 days.

Testimony showed the Hansons, who met at work in 1968, were married in 1974 and moved to Naples in 1980, first living on Spyglass Lane in Port Royal, then a waterfront home in Aqualane Shores. They never bought anything they couldn't afford, never used credit cards or incurred debt and did well in the stock market.

But by the early 2000s, Ellis Hanson's cognitive abilities were declining and a banker then handled their finances. By 2005, Hanson's ability to use a computer, organize files and do simple tasks was affected.

In September 2008, his wife discovered a \$260 lunch bill for Shula's Steakhouse that he couldn't explain. She also found a letter showing he'd just written Teti a \$10,000 check, so she phoned Teti, threatening to sue her if she cashed it. Teti denied she'd received any checks.

Velta Hanson hired an investigator, who discovered he'd been paying for expensive lunches with Teti, Velta's tennis and Mahjong partner and the couple's friend for two decades.



In 2009, the Hansons sued Teti, alleging exploitation of a vulnerable adult and conversion for illegally depriving them out of their property. Testimony showed Teti also had accepted expensive gifts, including a Mercedes, from other elderly rich men.

After the ruling, Teti appealed and lost.

The Hansons' lawyers filed motions to garnish her money and in February 2012, the judge signed an order to garnish her accounts at Raymond James Associates in North Naples.

Stockbrokers already had placed a hold on them, but warned they'd fluctuate due to the stock market. Records showed the millions dwindled to \$22,510.12. Writs of garnishment to seize other accounts were sent to Regions Bank and Regions Financial Corp., but how much existed was not disclosed in court records.

Lawyers began foreclosure proceedings in January, then advertised the foreclosure and auction in newspapers after the judge ruled Teti had abandoned her homestead.

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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
IN AND FOR COLLIER COUNTY, FLORIDA  
CIVIL ACTION

ELLIS HANSON and  
VELTA HANSON

Plaintiffs,

Case No: 09-6515-CA

v.

ALMA TETI

Defendants.

\_\_\_\_\_ /

**SUBPOENA FOR DEPOSITION**

STATE OF FLORIDA     )  
COUNTY OF COLLIER    )

TO: David Rich  
Ortino Investigations  
1890 40<sup>th</sup> Terrace SW  
Naples, Florida 34116

YOU ARE COMMANDED to appear at the offices of Grant, Fridkin, Pearson, Athan & Crown, P.A., 5551 Ridgewood Drive, Suite 501, Naples, FL 34108 on Wednesday, October 27, 2010, at 1:30 p.m. for the taking of your deposition in this action.

If you fail to appear, you may be in contempt of court.

You are subpoenaed to appear by the attorneys whose names appear on this subpoena and unless excused from this subpoena by the attorneys or the court, you shall respond to this subpoena as directed.

Dated this 11 day of October, 2010.

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**GRANT, FRIDKIN, PEARSON, ATHAN &  
CROWN, P.A.**

By: 

D. Keith Wickenden  
FOR THE COURT  
Florida Bar No. 00897280  
5551 Ridgewood Drive, Suite 501  
Naples, FL 34108  
(239) 514-1000  
(239) 514-0377

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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR COLLIER  
COUNTY, FLORIDA CIVIL ACTION

ELLIS HANSON and VELTA HANSON,

Plaintiffs,

v.

ALMA TETI,

Defendant.

Case No. 09-6515-CA

**SUBPOENA FOR TRIAL**

Ortino Process Serving

Received Date: 12-8-10 Time: 12:05 PM

Served Date: 12/8/10 Time: 2:25 PM

Initials: JA ID#: 157645

THE STATE OF FLORIDA:

TO: **David Rich**  
1890 40<sup>th</sup> Terrace SW  
Naples, FL 34116

**YOU ARE COMMANDED** to appear before the Honorable Cynthia A. Pivacek, Judge of the Circuit Court, at the **Collier County Courthouse, 3301 Tamiami Trail East, Bldg. L, Naples, Florida, 34112, for the three-day trial commencing on January 19, 2011, at 9:30 a.m., to testify in this action.**<sup>1</sup>

A statement regarding how to determine when your testimony is required is attached hereto as Exhibit "A".

If you fail to appear, you may be in contempt of court.

You are subpoenaed to appear by the following attorneys and unless excused from this subpoena by these attorneys or the Court, you shall respond to this subpoena as directed.

<sup>1</sup> If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the Administrative Services Manager whose office is located at 3301 East Tamiami Trail, Building L, Naples, Florida 34112, and whose telephone number is (239) 252-8800, at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.

Dated this 8<sup>TH</sup> day of December 2010.

Coleman, Yovanovich & Koester, P.A.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Alex R. Figares  
Florida Bar No. 14305  
Edmond E. Koester  
Florida Bar No. 87882  
4001 Tamiami Trail North, Suite 300  
Naples, FL 34103  
239.435.3535  
239.435.1218 Facsimile  
Attorneys for Ellis and Velta Hanson



## EXHIBIT "A"

You have been subpoenaed to appear as a trial witness during the three-day trial commencing on January 19, 2011, at 9:30 a.m. before **Judge Cynthia A. Pivacek** at the **Collier County Courthouse, 3301 Tamiami Trail East, Bldg. L, Naples, Florida, 34112, telephone: 239-252-2646**. The trial for which you have been subpoenaed to appear has been scheduled to occur during the three-day period commencing on January 19, 2011, at 9:30 a.m. It is not certain at this time on which day you will be required to testify.

Therefore, it is necessary that upon receipt of this subpoena, you call the law offices of **Coleman, Yovanovich & Koester, P.A.**, at (239) 435-3535 and speak with Jamie Hardesty before making any arrangements to testify or before going to the courthouse. When you call, we will give you the most updated information we have with respect to the specific date and time that your testimony will be required. We will do our best to accommodate individual scheduling preferences and avoid undue inconvenience.

Unfortunately, by the nature of the trial calendar system, we will not be able to give you a specific date and time for your testimony until after the Court has provided us with such information.



IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR  
COLLIER COUNTY, FLORIDA CIVIL ACTION

ELLIS HANSON and VELTA HANSON,

Plaintiffs,

v.

ALMA TETI,

Defendant.

Case No. 09-6515-GA

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CLERK OF COURTS


2010 NOV 23 PM 1:40

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COLLIER COUNTY, FLORIDA

**PLAINTIFFS', ELLIS HANSON AND VELTA  
HANSON, FOURTH AMENDED WITNESS LIST**

Plaintiffs, Ellis Hanson and Velta Hanson ("Hansons"), hereby disclose the following list of witnesses:

**LAY WITNESSES**

- | <b><u>Witness Name / Address</u></b>   | <b><u>Subject Matter</u></b>                                     |
|--|--|
| 1. <b>Velta Hanson</b><br>c/o Coleman, Yovanovich &<br>Koester, P.A.<br>4001 Tamiami Trail N, Suite<br>300<br>Naples, FL 34103       | Will testify regarding all aspects of this case.                 |
| 2. <b>Alma Teti</b><br>c/o Grant, Fridkin, Pearson,<br>Athan & Crown, P.A.<br>5551 Ridgewood Drive,<br>Suite 501<br>Naples, FL 34108 | Will testify regarding all aspects of this case.                 |
| 3.    | Will testify regarding dealings with Alma Teti and Ellis Hanson. |

4. [REDACTED] Will testify regarding dealings and relationship with Alma Teti, Velta Hanson, and Ellis Hanson.
5. [REDACTED] Will testify regarding dealings and relationship with Alma Teti, Velta Hanson, and Ellis Hanson.
6. [REDACTED] Will testify regarding dealings and relationship with Alma Teti, Velta Hanson, and Ellis Hanson.
7. [REDACTED] Will testify regarding Warranty Deed from Ellis Hanson to Velta Hanson, and his dealings with Ellis Hanson and Velta Hanson.
8. [REDACTED] Will testify regarding Warranty Deed from Ellis Hanson to Velta Hanson, and her dealings with Ellis Hanson and Velta Hanson.
9. [REDACTED] Will testify as to the jewelry purchased by Ellis Hanson for Alma Teti, and his dealings with Alma Teti and Ellis Hanson.
10. **David Rich**  
1890 40<sup>th</sup> Terrace Southwest  
Naples, FL 34116 Will testify as to investigation conducted on Ellis Hanson and Alma Teti.
11. **Records Custodian of Bank**  
[REDACTED] Will testify as to the authenticity of relevant documents.