

## **Feds search music patron's home**

### ***Murfreesboro man is at heart of probe after civil lawsuits***

07/21/07

By NAOMI SNYDER  
*Staff Writer*

Three different federal agencies on Friday searched the home and office of Murfreesboro investment adviser Robert W. McLean, who has been accused in civil lawsuits of defrauding investors of millions of dollars.

Jennifer Pollard, a spokeswoman with the criminal division of the Internal Revenue Service, said the division assisted U.S. Postal Service inspectors and the FBI with the morning search.

"All we can say at this point is we were there on official business," she said. The FBI referred calls to the U.S. attorney's office in Nashville, which did not return calls Friday.

Over the past several weeks, seven investors, including former Middle Tennessee State University and NFL player Jonathan Quinn, have filed lawsuits against McLean. Some of the lawsuits accused him of fraud.

On Thursday, three creditors, including Brentwood venture capitalist Fred Goad, filed an involuntary bankruptcy petition against McLean. The petition was filed under Chapter 7 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code, which could lead to the forced sale of McLean's assets.

In all, creditors claim McLean owes them almost \$20 million.

David Raybin, a Nashville criminal defense attorney who is familiar with financial cases, said it usually takes six to 18 months for investigators to comb through evidence seized in a raid and determine whether a crime has been committed.

Raybin isn't part of any legal actions involving McLean, but he said the agencies that searched McLean's home and office typically look at computer and paper records for evidence of mail or wire fraud and income-tax fraud.

Some of the investors suing McLean in Rutherford County Chancery and Circuit courts claim he promised them rates of return between 8 percent and 20 percent on loans. One of the plaintiffs,

Ron Vannatta of Shelbyville, said McLean told him he would invest Vannatta's money prudently.

Vannatta's lawyer, Steven Riley, said during a court hearing Wednesday he believed McLean was operating a Ponzi scheme, where new investors' money is used to pay earlier investors.

McLean, 59, has been a major benefactor of MTSU and the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Nashville.

He has committed more than \$2 million to MTSU during the past several years, although the university has declined to say whether he followed through on his pledges.

He also has been credited with enabling the Hall of Fame to acquire "Mother" Maybelle Carter's guitar and Bill Monroe's mandolin.

### **McLean in hospital**

McLean was admitted to a psychiatric hospital in Nashville on Sunday, according to court records.

A hospital spokeswoman declined Friday to say whether McLean was a patient. McLean hasn't returned messages left at his home and office.