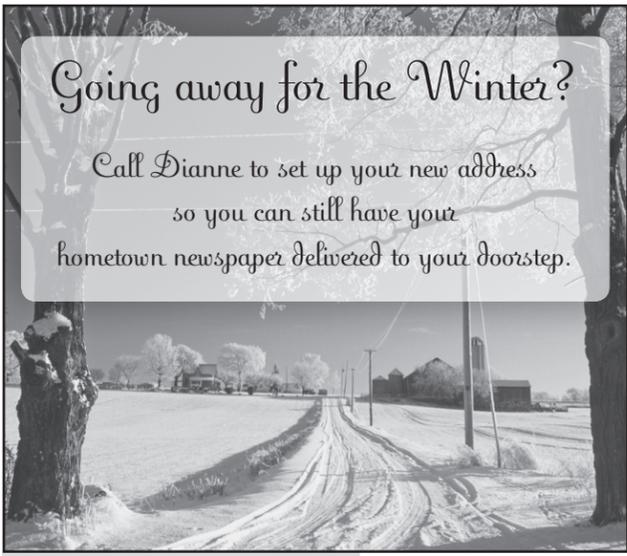


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MAQUOKETA SENTINEL-PRESS

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Character counts no matter the situation



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PUBLIC NOTICES

- JC Sheriff Sale - Household Finance vs. J. Roling et al
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Lawson appointed county magistrate

By DOUGLAS MELVOLD

Longtime Maquoketa attorney Mark Lawson was appointed as a Jackson County magistrate last week.

The Jackson County Judicial Magistrate Nominating Commission interviewed Lawson and Bellevue attorney John Kies, the two applicants for the part-time job, on Wednesday, Dec. 30, before making their selection.

A third applicant, Carolyn Clark, withdrew from consideration before the interviews.

Lawson will succeed Corliss Baty of Maquoketa, who died Dec. 6. He will serve the remaining 3½ years of Baty's four-year term, which will expire on July 31, 2013. He had served as a magistrate since 2005.

Lawson will join Ron Besch of Bellevue as Jackson County's two judicial magistrates.

District Judge Nancy Tabor, who chaired the five-member nominating commission, said both applicants "were excellent candidates."

She said Lawson will have to resign from his city attorney duties. He is city attorney for Maquoketa, Bellevue, Sabula and several smaller communities.

He also will give up his criminal practice in Jackson County, but said he otherwise will maintain his private practice.

Lawson, 55, has been an attorney in Maquoketa since 1979. He resides in Bellevue.

A native of Davenport, he graduated from St. Ambrose College in Davenport and Drake Law School in Des Moines.

He served as mental health referee in the mid-1980s, handling mental health and substance-abuse cases in Jackson County. Magistrates now handle those duties, he said.

"I am very honored to have been selected and I'm anxious to serve," Lawson commented Monday, Jan. 4.



MARK LAWSON

He added that, aside from his duties as city attorney and criminal cases, he will continue to offer the same legal services in his private practice as in the past.

A story in the Thursday, Jan. 7, issue of the Bellevue Herald-Leader that referred to Lawson's selection as magistrate incorrectly stated that state law bars magistrates from serving as an attorney in their home county.

Tabor said a date will be set soon for Lawson to be sworn in and begin his magistrate duties.

The position carries an annual salary of \$37,740.

Magistrates have the option to participate in the state health insurance plan or the Iowa Public Employees Retirement System or both at their own cost, if they wish. The job carries no paid fringe benefits.

Tabor said the state's magistrate positions have been spared the budget cuts that have affected other areas of the state's judicial branch, including District Courts and clerk of court offices.

Members of the Judicial Magistrate Nominating Commission, in addition to Tabor, are Phoebe Keck and Lin Redling, both of Maquoketa, Jon Thoms of Bellevue and Maquoketa attorneys Tom Breuch and Steve Kahler.

Snowfall means different things to different people



MSP photos by Mike Earles

New mayor offers vision for community

By DOUGLAS MELVOLD

Jason Hute gavelled to order his first meeting as Maquoketa's new mayor this week and offered a vision of an improved economy, greater cooperation and "new life" for the city.

Hute delivered a brief "state-of-the-city" address at the start of the council's Monday, Jan. 4 meeting.

Also newly seated were the remaining three of the four new council members who were elected in November. Council members Don Schwenker, at large; Todd Mang, Second Ward, and Amy Moore, Third Ward, cast their first votes.

The fourth newly-elected mem-

ber, Eric Pape, took office after the Nov. 3 election to fill the then-vacant seat.

In his address, Hute expressed appreciation to his predecessor, Tom Messerli, and to outgoing council members Galen Saunders, Marsha Myers and Tim Clark for their years of service to the city.

He congratulated the new council members and welcomed holdover members Neil Morehead, Margo Shouse and Ed Turney.

Hute also expressed gratitude to City Attorney Mark Lawson for his work and congratulated him on his new position as a Jackson County magistrate.

His new position requires that he resign as city attorney. Lawson will maintain his Maquoketa law practice.

Hute also expressed thanks to City Manager Brian Wagner and the city staff.

"Maquoketa overall is doing well financially with many important projects in process currently," he said. He noted that the debris at the site of the Main Street fire of two years ago soon will be cleaned up, "which I think makes us all feel a little bit better."

Contractors are in the process of submitting bids for the clean-up project. Bids will be opened on Jan.

14 and a contract may be awarded at the council's next meeting on Jan. 18.

"The future for that area and our downtown is bright and I hope the citizens of Maquoketa feel the same," Hute said. "Things will change over time for the better."

He said conditions are not "that bad," but said changes are necessary for the city to compete for jobs, money and notoriety.

He said he wanted to work on several issues, but did not list them.

The city's relations with Jackson

■ COUNCIL, Please turn to page 2