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- Maquoketa School District

2011

The Maquoketa Sentinel-Press staff wishes you and your family a prosperous new year!

Charges against Parker dismissed

By DOUGLAS MELVOLD

Two felony charges of child abuse against Jackson County Conservation Board Director Daryl Parker stemming from an alleged incident at a Wisconsin resort 10 months ago were dismissed last week.

In a plea agreement with the Sauk County, Wis., District Attorney's Office, Parker did not contest a noncriminal charge of disorderly conduct and was assessed a civil penalty of $263.50, a court spokesman said.

The actions, which took place Wednesday, Dec. 22, in Sauk County District Court in Baraboo, nullified a trial that was scheduled for next month.

Parker has been on a form of administrative leave since April 2. The conservation board scheduled a special meeting for 10 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 28, to consider lifting his leave status and reinstating Parker to full duties.

Parker on Monday, Dec. 27, released a statement in which he described the events leading to his arrest on Feb. 19 at the Kalahari Resort in Lake Delton, Wis. and expressed his views about the ordeal.

"As the trial date drew near, we decided to settle this matter instead of going to trial," Parker said in his statement.

He said he felt it would be in the best interest of his 9-year-old son not to have to testify at that trial. His son was Parker's witness as to what occurred.

DARYL PARKER

"It's hard to sit back and not want to receive some justice for this entire matter," Parker said. I feel that I am better than that and just want to move on with my life.

"I have decided to put the anger behind me. In fact, this has become a reminder to me just how blessed I am to have my family and friends.

"Let there be peace and let it begin with me," his statement concluded.

Parker, a rural Bellevue resident who turned 47 on Christmas Day, has been Jackson County Conservation Board director for the past 18 years.

On Monday he maintained his innocence of any wrongdoing, but called the settlement of the charges, including the disorderly conduct violation, "a satisfactory conclusion.

"I still maintain I'm innocent from everything, but in the best interest of my family this was satisfactory," he said.

Asked whether he had sought to reach a similar agreement earlier in the lengthy process, Parker said, "There were discussions back and forth, but nothing was put on the table that was acceptable to me."

He said he is looking forward to returning to full duties.

He had been placed on administrative leave with full pay since the conservation board learned of the incident and acted on April 2.

Under terms of the leave, he was required to turn in his badge, his county-issued firearm and the keys to the conservation board-owned vehicle he was allowed to use.

He was barred from performing law enforcement duties and from participating in conservation board activities involving youngsters, but was allowed to continue performing his administrative duties.

Parker had been charged with one count of physical abuse of a child, intentionally causing bodily harm and one count of physical abuse of a child, recklessly causing bodily harm. Both charges are felonies under Wisconsin state law.

If convicted of both charges, Parker could have been sentenced to up to 9 1/2 years in prison and fined up to $20,000 if he had been given the maximum sentence, with the prison sentences served consecutively.

Both charges involved Parker's alleged actions that took place during a game of laser tag at Kalahari Resort in Lake Delton, Wis., on the night of Feb. 19, 2010.

In his statement, Parker said he and his family had gone to the Wisconsin Dells for a weekend getaway at the resort, which includes a theme park. He said he was participating with his two children in several of the park activities, which included a laser tag game.

Parker said that as the evening progressed, the cliental in the park "got older and more rowdy. During our final time in the laser tag game, my son and I encountered some teenagers who were aggressive and belligerent.

He said he told one of the teenagers to "'back off' so my son and I could get away from the roughhousing going on."

In the more serious charge of intentionally causing bodily harm,

■ PARKER,
Please turn to page 2

Contributed photo

Austin Schmidt and Blair Bennis attended the Junior National Young Leaders Conference in Washington, D.C.

Local youth selected to attend conference

By KELLY GERLACH

Austin Schmidt and Blair Bennis, both local seventh graders, are still telling everyone about their summer vacation. The two were selected to attend the Junior National Young Leaders Conference in Washington, D.C., along with about 250 other outstanding middle school students from across the United States.

Austin is the son of Mary and Michael Schmidt of Maquoketa. Blair is the daughter of Kristy and Kent Bennis of Delmar.

The 2010 Junior National Young Leader Conference theme was "Voices of Leadership: Reflecting on the Past to Create the Future." The goal of the conference, according to event organizers, "is to inspire students to recognize their own leadership skills, measure their skills against current and former leaders, and return home with new confidence in their ability to exer-

■ CONFERENCE,
Please turn to page 3

New Year's Closings

New Year's Day falls on Saturday. Here is a list of services and how they will be affected by the holiday.

POST OFFICES: The window at the Maquoketa Post Office will be open from 9 a.m. to noon on New Year's Eve, Dec. 31. Postal carrier routes will run as scheduled that day. The post office will be closed Saturday, Jan. 1 in observance of New Year's Day, and there will be no mail delivery.

FEDERAL OFFICES: Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Services offices will be closed all day Friday, Dec. 31.

CLERK OF COURTS: Clerk of Courts office will be closed Friday, Dec. 31.

COUNTY OFFICES: County offices in the Jackson County Courthouse will be closed Friday, Dec. 31.

TRANSFER STATION: The Jackson County Transfer Station will be closed Friday, Dec. 31.

GARBAGE PICKUP: BFI Waste Services customers will be serviced as scheduled. Rockwell Clean-up will run regular recycling routes in Maquoketa for the New Year's holiday. Ruff n' Ready will be running routes as scheduled through New Year's.

CITY HALL: Maquoketa City Hall will close at noon Thursday, Dec. 30 and all day Friday, Dec. 31.

PUBLIC UTILITIES: Maquoketa Municipal Electric Utilities office will be closed Thursday, Dec. 30, and Friday, Dec. 31.

MAQUOKETA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: The Maquoketa Area Chamber of Commerce will close at noon Thursday, Dec. 30, and all day Friday, Dec. 31 in honor of the holiday.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: Maquoketa State Bank will close at 5 p.m. Dec. 31 and all day Jan. 1. DuTrac Community Credit Union will be closed all day Jan. 1. Fidelity Bank and Trust will be open until 4 p.m. inside and 6 p.m. drive-up on Dec. 31, closed all day Jan. 1. US Bank will be open regular hours on Dec. 31 and closed Jan. 1.

MAQUOKETA PUBLIC LIBRARY: The Maquoketa Public Library will be closed Dec. 31 and Jan. 1 for New Year's.

MAQUOKETA SENTINEL-PRESS: The Maquoketa Sentinel-Press office will be closed Friday, Dec. 31.