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Decatur, Illinois

Federal judge refuses Jackson's request

Restraining order sought by board against reverend to return to Macon Co. court.

By TOM COLLINS
H&R Staff Writer

URBANA — The case to keep the Rev. Jesse Jackson off Decatur school property is headed back to Decatur, now that a federal judge has refused Jackson's request to hear the case. Federal Judge Michael P. McCuskey ruled Friday that the school board's action against Jackson and others should be heard in state, not federal, court. "Federal courts are courts of limited jurisdiction (and have a duty) to police the limits of federal jurisdiction with meticulous care," McCuskey wrote.

"In keeping with this duty," he said, "the court has reviewed the jurisdictional issues (presented by Jackson) and find that (the federal court) lacks jurisdiction over this case."

"We're pleased by it (McCuskey's decision)," said Everett Nicholas, a Decatur attorney representing the school board.

A spokeswoman for the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, of which Jackson is founder, did not return a phone call seeking comment from the civil rights leader. Jackson orchestrated several prayer vigils and demonstrations in mid-November, culminating with his arrest for felony mob action on Nov. 17 outside Eisenhower High School. Jackson left Decatur two days

later after enrolling the students in alternative schools — even as lawyers for Rainbow/PUSH seek to reinstate the students in regular school — and has not returned to the city since.

The school board cited those demonstrations in its Nov. 17 motion for a temporary restraining order, seeking to keep Jackson, seven students implicated in a Sept. 17 fight, and select Rainbow/PUSH supporters at least 50 feet away from school district property.

The board said the demonstrations interfered with the educational process. Jackson and company could have argued against the restraining order when the case was scheduled to be heard before Macon County Circuit Judge

Jerry L. Patton on Nov. 23. Instead, Jackson's lawyers filed a federal removal action on Nov. 22 in Urbana, asking McCuskey to hear the case in U.S. District Court.

Lawyers argued that the restraining order would trample the First Amendment rights of Jackson and others, making this a federal issue.

McCuskey disagreed and said Friday that Jackson and company had failed to show a compelling reason for the federal court to supersede the state's jurisdiction.

No new hearing date has been scheduled in Macon County Circuit Court. Nicholas said Circuit Judge James Hendrian would preside over the new hearing.



ONGOING BATTLE: The Rev. Jesse Jackson stands in a sea of reporters and supporters outside Eisenhower High School prior to his arrest Nov. 17. The expulsion issue has since moved to the courtroom.

COMMUNITY SERVICE



COMMUNITY SPIRIT: Sullivan High School senior Sara Marshall has learned the true meaning of community service. As part of her service learning class, Marshall has improved her community and met many nice people.

Sullivan teen leaving an impression

High school students learn benefits of contributing to the community.

By DENISE PIERCE
H&R Staff Writer

SULLIVAN — Four years ago, Sara Marshall signed up for service projects at Sullivan High School to "get out of class."

Today, as a senior, the Allenview teen has a better grasp of what service is all about. And she likes what she sees.

"A lot of times, older people assume 'Teen-agers ... bad,'" Sara said. "But when you're raking their leaves or picking up trash, they're so appreciative — especially because they can't do it anymore."

Rosemary Light of Sullivan couldn't agree more. Not long ago, a good half-dozen young people descended on Light's home in the southeast side of town and proceeded to do some much-needed yard work.

"They grabbed rakes and blowers and did my leaves," Light said. "They worked during their class breaks and really attacked those



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Kracht.

"He started service to involve the school with the community," Sara said. "It's like a

club and, for the most part, people are doing it because they want to."

The students "grow and mature so much" through service projects, said Kracht, social studies teacher at the high school and coordinator of Service Learning.

They take ownership of their school and their community. They plant flowers and become proud of the community they live in. It's theirs, not just some place they're visiting.

Sara helps pick up recycling bins from local factories like Agri-Fab and Hydro-Gear and take the paper products to D&B Refuse Service in town. Last year, she put in three hours a day painting the weight room at the high school. She estimated that, in her high school career to date, she's put in nearly 170 hours of community service, averaging about two hours a day this year.

"I enjoy getting out in the community, showing people there are some of us in the Class of 2000 who are good and doing good things," she said.

Oklahoma City bombing victim's father speaks out against death penalty

Bud Welch, who lost his 23-year-old daughter in the 1995 blast, visits EIU.

By DENISE PIERCE
H&R Staff Writer

CHARLESTON — The death penalty cannot bring back a victim and only teaches more hatred, emphasized an Oklahoma man whose only daughter was killed more than four years ago in the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

Bud Welch, owner of an Oklahoma City service station, spoke twice on the Eastern Illinois University campus Monday — once at the Newman Catholic Center (which co-sponsored his appearance with the Haiti Connection) and later at Coleman Auditorium. He led his luncheon audience of a handful of students and staff "on a journey from extreme rage to reconciliation," a journey he himself took after his 23-year-old daughter Julie was killed with 167 others in the April 19, 1995, bomb blast. The 60-year-old Welch said daughter, who spoke five languages, was working for the Social Security Administration as a Spanish interpreter when she was killed.

All my life I'd opposed the death penalty," Welch said. "I never gave it much thought; I just knew my parents and my grand parents did. Everyone told me I'd change my mind if something ever happened to a child of mine."

When Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols were charged in connection with the bombing, Welch "didn't even want trials" for the duo; "I just wanted them fried."

Welch said he struggled with his opinion on the death penalty for nine months. During that time, he said, he was smoking three packs of cigarettes a day and drinking himself into a stupor each night.

"Finally, I got sick of the pain. The death penalty for Tim wouldn't bring Julie back; it was nothing more than an act of revenge. That's exactly why Julie and the others were dead — Tim's rage at what happened at Waco."

In September, Welch arranged a meeting with McVeigh's father in New York. "I kept glancing at the wall where there was an 8-by-10 (inch) picture of Tim, and I said, 'What a good-looking kid,'" Welch recalled. "Bill (McVeigh) said that was Tim's high school graduation picture, and a tear ran down his cheek. I could see the love."

Welch said he promised the older McVeigh he would do everything possible to prevent Tim McVeigh's execution. After the meeting, he said, he had a long cry and felt "like a tremendous weight had been removed from my shoulders. I've never felt closer to God."

Since then, he's traveled the world telling his story and urging a moratorium on the death penalty.

Welch's talk was "powerful stuff," said Roy Lanham, Newman Center director. "His rage and revenge led to more rage and revenge. He had to honestly confront that before he could come to forgiveness."

"I think it's a greater tribute to his daughter that he's seeking Tim McVeigh's life rather than his execution," Lanham added.

EPA seeks comment on ADM plant

DECATUR — Today is the last day for the public to comment on a revised air pollution control permit requested by Archer Daniels Midland Co.

The Decatur food giant has asked the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency for a revised permit for the new Xanthan Gum plant in Decatur. Xanthan gum is used to solidify foods and is frequently found in gelatin, ice cream and chewing gum.

The revised permit would allow the plant to be a major source of volatile organic material emissions. Illinois EPA has reviewed the permit application and has concluded that the application complies with applicable state and federal air pollution control regulations, including the Illinois Environmental Protection Act, the federal Clean Air Act, Illinois'

Rules for Air Pollution and the federal Prevention of Significant Deterioration rules.

Still, Illinois EPA is affording the public an opportunity to review the permit application and submit comments. The agency will consider holding a public hearing if it senses sufficient interest based on public feedback.

Requests for information, comments and questions should be directed to Chris Romaine, Division of Air Pollution Control, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Box 19068, Springfield, IL 62799-0608, or by calling 762-2113. Comments must be postmarked by midnight tonight.

The permit also is available for public inspection at Illinois EPA's offices at 2125 S. First St., Champaign and 1340 N. Ninth St., Springfield.

Phelps announces re-election bid; Republican rival has yet to emerge

Macon Co. GOP chairman says party should be able to field a strong candidate.

By RON INGRAM
H&R Staff Writer

DECATUR — U.S. Rep. David Phelps, D-Eldorado, will seek election to a second term next year by entering the Democratic primary on March 21.

If Phelps wins the party nomination in the spring, he will stand for another two-year term in the November general election.

In making his announcement, Phelps said his priorities in a second term would remain the same: protect

Social Security, shore up Medicare, pay down the national debt and strengthen education.

"I was proud to support the Patients Bill of Rights, which passed the House," Phelps said. "I voted against the final (federal) budget measure, which was filled with pork projects and wasteful spending. I am a consistent fiscal conservative and will continue to be a strong voice for taxpayers."

No Republican has come forward so far to challenge Phelps' bid for another term. That is because of lukewarm support by local business leaders for people who have expressed interest in running, said Jerrold Stocks, Macon County Republican chairman.

"I can think of three people in this community who expressed interest in the race," Stocks said. "Each expressed frustration to me with the response they received from business leaders they would need to support them," he said.

Stocks said his unhappiness extends to the Farm Bureau, in which he dropped his membership, and the Chamber of Commerce for Decatur and Macon County.

"They seem to want to be friends with the personalities we elect rather than back someone who supports the policies they favor," Stocks said. He characterized Phelps as, at best, "likable mediocrity" and said the GOP should be able to field a strong candidate.

In the last three congressional elections, attorney Brent Winters of Charleston was defeated — twice by Glenn Poshard and then by Phelps. The 15th Congressional District, which Phelps represents, is among the largest districts east of the Mississippi River and poses a daunting challenge to anyone campaigning for the congressional seat. It runs from Maroa in Macon County on the north to Metropolis in Massac County at the southern tip of Illinois, taking in all or parts of 22 counties.

Besides being geographically large, the district encompasses a diverse economy ranging from booming heavy industry and faltering agriculture in the north to closed coal mines and high unemployment in the south.

Millikin University political science Professor Brian Posler said Phelps has not done anything controversial enough to jeopardize his reelection.

"One coup for him was getting on the House Agriculture and Small Business committees, places where he can do some good for his district," Posler said. "In his news releases on his Web site, he is mostly praising legislation that passed that he had a small hand in. It's hard for a freshman to break in and create a splash unless there are a lot of them such as with the GOP in 1994."

"Re-election is the primary goal for all legislators. They can't accomplish anything unless they are there."



Phelps Democratic Congressman defeated Brent Winters to claim Glenn Poshard's House seat.