

Former Lake Co. candidate charged with falsifying petitions

By Tony Gordon | Daily Herald Staff

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A one-time candidate for Antioch Township assessor has been charged with falsifying signatures on the petitions he filed to run on April 7.

Eugene Kryczka, 37, surrendered to officials Friday after a warrant charging him with perjury was issued Thursday.

Marc Hansen, an investigator with the Lake County state's attorney's office, said Kryczka is believed to have submitted more than 50 false signatures on the petitions.

Hansen said Kryczka, of the 26000 block of West Heart O Lakes Boulevard, filed 25 petitions, each containing 25 signatures.

On 19 of those petitions, Hansen said, Kryczka signed the sworn statement stating that the persons listed actually signed the petition.

Hansen said the current assessor, Heather Kufalk-Marotta, became suspicious of some signatures on Kryczka's petitions and began calling some of the voters listed.

When people told her they had not signed the petitions, Hansen said, Kufalk-Marotta filed objections to Kryczka's petitions and Kryczka withdrew from the race.

His name does not appear on the April 7 ballot in Antioch Township.

On Friday, Kryczka appeared before Associate Judge Daniel Shanes, who had set a bond of \$50,000 on the arrest warrant.

Kryczka's attorney, Lawrence Krulewich of Arlington Heights, asked Shanes to release his client without making him post cash for bond.

Krulewich said Kryczka had cooperated with the investigation and had voluntarily provided a handwriting sample for investigators to analyze.

Assistant State's Attorney Christen Bishop asked Shanes to leave the bond where he originally set it because the public demands a clean election system.

Shanes said a cash bond was appropriate because "these charges go to the integrity of the electoral process," but lowered it to \$30,000 in light of Kryczka's cooperation.

Kryczka is due to appear in court again April 24, and Bishop said he faces up to five years in prison if convicted.

The case against Kryczka is the second recent allegation of falsified election petitions being used in Lake County.

In August, Kenneth Davison of Waukegan and Jerry Knight of Zion, were charged with falsifying petitions they were paid to circulate for state Sen. Terry Link.

Davison was placed on probation after pleading guilty to perjury in January and Knight was found psychologically unfit for trial.

Link was never charged with any wrongdoing in that case.

