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State briefs

The Associated Press

May 26, 2010



Huntington man indicted on federal bank robbery charges

HUNTINGTON (AP) — A Huntington man accused of robbing the same bank three times has been indicted on federal charges.

The federal grand jury indictment returned Tuesday charges 40-year-old Toby M. Duckett with multiple bank robbery and firearms counts. The charges carry a maximum penalty of 75 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

The holdups at the Peoples Bank branch in Huntington occurred on March 2, March 26 and April 17. Duckett was arrested April 22 at his nearby home. He is being held at the South Central Regional Jail.

Duckett's court-appointed attorney, John G. Hackney Jr. of Charleston, declined comment Wednesday.

Troubled town of Salem hires new city manager

SALEM (AP) — A new city manager is on the job in Salem.

Mark Jackson began work Wednesday, two months after his predecessor and the city clerk were fired over accusations they embezzled more than \$100,000.

Jackson was city manager for Saint Marys in Pleasants County until August 2006.

Just last week, City Councilman Israel Williams was arrested on charges he impersonated the mayor.

The 70-year-old councilman was charged with two misdemeanor counts of impersonating a public official.

The criminal complaint says he claimed to be the mayor when he called Salem International University last month, ordering it to pay business and occupation taxes.

Williams denies the charges.

Acquitted Charleston police officer sues city, mayor

CHARLESTON (AP) — A Charleston police officer acquitted of two fraud-related charges is suing the city and Mayor Danny Jones.

Keith O. Peoples filed the lawsuit last week in Kanawha County Circuit Court, claiming the charges that stemmed from an investigation launched by Jones in December 2006 damaged his reputation.

A jury found Peoples not guilty last May of working a security job at a Charleston mall while he was on duty for the city. A circuit judge also threw out a related charge of computer fraud.

Jones said Tuesday the prosecutor's office was responsible for prosecuting Peoples, not the city.

A former detective was convicted of felony charges for double dipping in 2007 and three others pleaded guilty to misdemeanors.

WVU shakes up faculty, now searching for 4 new deans

MORGANTOWN (AP) — Two deans at West Virginia University will be replaced, and one of them says he was told it's time for a leadership change.

College of Creative Arts Dean Bernie Shultz says that was the message after his performance review in December.

WVU spokesman John Bolt confirmed Tuesday the search will also begin this fall for a new dean of the Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design.

Both Shultz and Dean Cameron Hackney will serve through June 2011.

WVU is also seeking deans for its School of Medicine and School of Dentistry. Two others start work this summer.

Jose Sartarelli starts July 30 in the College of Business and Economics, and Robert Jones takes over the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences on Aug. 31.

Indicted commissioner says others voted twice, too

CHARLES TOWN (AP) — A Jefferson County commissioner charged with trying to vote twice in a zoning referendum last fall claims others have pulled it off in local elections.

Jim Surkamp told The Journal of Martinsburg he knows of nine people who did more than try: They voted twice. The double votes were all treated as provisional ballots.

But he says no action was taken against them.

Surkamp was indicted in April on one misdemeanor count of illegal voting and one count of unauthorized presence in a polling place. He since has pleaded innocent.

County Clerk Jennifer Maghan, who oversees elections, says when a person votes twice, one ballot is discarded, and no additional action is normally taken.

She says that decision is usually left to the canvassing commissioners.

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