



Chief Circuit Judge Jeff Burdette was the guest speaker at the November meeting of the Kiwanis Club. Above, Judge Burdette receives a Certificate of Appreciation from Kiwanis President Teresa Vanzant.

“Inmate”

(Cont. from front)

McDonald’s and that he only approved Denny taking his brother to the nursing home for a bedside visit to their father.

Adams said that Denny was not arrested for escape at the scene because the visit was approved by Miller. However, he said the Mt. Vernon Police Department continues to investigate the case and that they plan on turning the investigation over to Attorney General Jack Conway’s Office.

William Denny was then permitted to take his brother to visit their father in the nursing home due to the bedside visit being approved by Miller. William Denny said they immediately left the restaurant and traveled to the nursing home in Brodhead. After the visit, he said he returned Denny to RCDC and went home.

William Denny said he didn’t think he did anything wrong because the bedside visit was permitted by Miller.

“My brother and I were both told by Miller that I could take him to see our dad in the nursing home,” Magistrate Denny said. “If it wasn’t okay they should have told us and not released him to me.”

William Denny went on to say that he was in no way

abusing his power or taking any liberties as magistrate by checking his brother out of jail to see their father in the nursing home.

“I didn’t know I was breaking any law and I was definitely not abusing any power I have. My brother and I were both told that the trip was approved by Miller,” he said. “If something wasn’t okay or legal they could have told me. I would have understood and wouldn’t have taken him.”

Kentucky Department of Corrections Media Relations Specialist Lisa Lamb said their policy concerning “Transportation of Inmates to Funerals or Bedside Visits” was broken by Miller and other jail officials as they did not follow the policy regarding inmate Freddy Denny.

The policy states that bedside visits are classified as a visit to an immediate family member who is not expected to survive and deemed critically ill by an attending physician. The visits shall only be made at a hospital, nursing home or rehabilitation center.

The policy also states that an inmate shall not attend both a bedside visit and a funeral home visit for the same person. The policy went on to state an inmate should be transported by an on-duty staff member, the trip shall be completed within a twenty-four hour period, the trip shall be

made in a state vehicle and accompanying staff members should keep the inmate in sight at all times.

Although the trip was completed within a twenty-four hour period, Freddy Denny was not transported by an on-duty staff member, his trip wasn’t made in a state vehicle and he obviously wasn’t in sight of accompanying staff members at all times. Denny’s father was also not deemed critically ill by an attending physician.

Lamb went on to say that a bedside visit could be approved by a local jailer but that the state corrections policies must be followed. Lamb said they advised Miller that he did not follow policy and they received his assurance that he will follow the policy in the future. She said the issue is considered resolved and there is no ongoing investigation into the matter by the Department of Corrections.

After the incident last Sunday, Miller said he reported everything to the Department of Corrections the following day and immedi-

ately made them aware of the situation.

Miller said that for sixteen years he has taken inmates for bedside visits to see their immediate family members who are physically unable to come see family members incarcerated at the jail.

“I have took inmates to bedside visits to see their grandpa because their grandpa is unable to come to the jail to see them. The times I have done this it has been more of a blessing to me than anyone just because they get to see their loved ones they haven’t saw for a long time,” Miller said. “I think it is unfair to wait until they are on their deathbed because by then their relatives may not even know they were there. I know the inmates ought to be in jail and I agree with that. But I am not doing this for the inmates, I am doing it for their parents and grandparents.”

Miller said there has only been three times in sixteen years that a prisoner has made a bedside visit without him or another deputy

jailer. Miller said during those three times the prisoner was only released to a relative that he trusted in the community. He said two times was Magistrate Denny and the other person was someone whose name he wouldn’t disclose.

“This is not something I usually do but I felt good about William being a magistrate and trusted him. Legally he is not a deputy jailer and I understand that but he is a sworn magistrate,” Miller said. “I was short staffed with deputy jailers that Sunday of the visit and I made a judgment call on it.”

Miller said he understands the policies and that he was one of the three jailers on the committee which amends them. He said in the future that he will fight for this particular policy to be changed because as elected officials, jailers should be able to work with their local people.

“We only have one transport car so if we get a call that an immediate family member of an inmate is on their death bed and only

have a few hours to live, odds are we can’t get the inmate there in time,” Miller said. “If the transport car is already on the road then there is nothing I can do. In the future with this policy I will have to tell them I am sorry but I will do the best I can do to get them there before they pass away.”

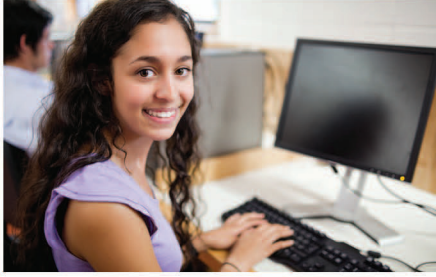
Miller said he has discussed the situation thoroughly with the Department of Corrections and that he gave them his assurance that they would abide strictly to the “Transportation of Inmates to Funerals or Bedside Visits” policy in the future.

“I have already met with all of my staff and leadership letting them know that we will have to go strictly by the policy,” Miller said. “If the guidelines in the policy can’t be strictly followed we will have to tell the inmate’s family no. I think it’s sad for the families but that is the way it will have to be in the future.”

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