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Publication: Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
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Section: B3
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Governor's son 1 of 2 fired at Scout camp after stray dog killed

ELIZABETH MCFARLAND ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

The younger son of Gov. Mike Huckabee and another teen were fired last month from jobs at a Boy Scout camp after the killing of a stray dog.

Marcal Young of Texarkana, scout executive of the Caddo Area Council that operates the camp where the dog was killed, said this week that two boys violated a Scout law, "A Scout is kind."

Young would not release the names of the boys nor explain how the dog, "probably a mixed breed," was killed.

The two teens reported the event immediately and said they had made a mistake.

"They felt it [the dog] was ill and what have you, still our policy is it was inappropriate behavior," Young said.

He would not say what the boys thought was wrong with the dog, but he said they did not suspect rabies.

Members of the camp staff receive training before camp starts and are told what it means to be "a good role model," Young said.

An anonymous, unconfirmed report describing a particular process of killing the dog and naming young Huckabee as a participant was sent by fax machine this week by an organization against cruelty to animals to the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. That report was described by Young and the governor as inaccurate.

Both men declined to say how the dog had been killed or who did it.

The dog was killed July 11 at Camp Pioneer near Hatfield. Only employees witnessed the incident. Not many of them were on hand, one source said.

Young said he chose not to reveal the names of the employees because "I just think that they're due privacy. These are young people. They make mistakes occasionally, but I'm not covering for them."

Young said the council's board gives him the authority to take care of personnel decisions. He said the council believes it took appropriate action and the matter is closed. He said he did not report it to law enforcement authorities.

A source who asked to remain unnamed said David Huckabee, who turned 18 on July 22 and was 17 at the time of the incident, was one of those fired over it.

A reporter's message left at the Governor's Mansion for David Huckabee was not returned.

Danny Frady of Texarkana said his son, Clayton, 19, was the other staff member who was fired.

The elder Frady said his son told him he came upon one or more Scouts who had the dog "hung over a limb and ... choking" so the younger Frady helped "put it out of its misery."

"I think the boy has paid his dues because he lost his job. He was one of the better counselors. He's made a mistake, and he's paid for it," Danny Frady said. "I don't think he did anything wrong to put an animal out of its misery."

Danny Frady said killing a stray dog that has become a nuisance is common in rural areas. The mistake was doing it in front of other youth staff members, Frady said.

Young said the fired employees might be required to undergo counseling if they applied to be employees again. Danny Frady said he doesn't think his son needs counseling because "he's not cruel to animals."

Polk County Sheriff Mike Oglesby said neither he nor his deputies had heard of the incident. A complaint should have been made, he said.

Prosecuting Attorney Tim Williamson of Mena said cruelty to animals is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by up to a \$1,000 fine and up to a year in jail.

"We regularly charge cruelty to animals. That's kind of my pet peeve," he said.

Oglesby and Williamson said they didn't intend to investigate because no one had lodged a complaint.

Camp Pioneer in Polk County served 2,026 campers for week-long stints from May 31 through July 25.

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The camp employed 65 staff members. Caddo Area Council includes eight Arkansas counties and two Texas counties.

Photo: David Huckabee

This article was published on page B3 of the Friday, August 07, 1998 edition in the B3 section.



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Bailey, Huckabee rift centered on unwritten letter

BILL SIMMONS ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

NW EDITION Gov. Mike Huckabee lost confidence in the former state police director partly because the director didn't write a letter that no one asked him to write.

Huckabee and former director John Bailey agreed last week that the fact that Bailey didn't write the letter was one reason the governor lost confidence in him. After learning in December that his standing in Huckabee's eyes had dipped, Bailey handed in his resignation and retired.

The letter was important to Huckabee because it involved a situation to which his youngest son, David, had been linked. A source told the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette last summer that the Boy Scouts took a disciplinary step against the youth after a dog was killed at a camp where he was employed.

Prosecutor Tim Williamson of Mena, whose district includes the camp and who was being pressed to take action, sent a letter to state police Lt. Cleve Barfield of Hope requesting state police assistance.

Bailey never talked to Williamson, but Bailey and Huckabee talked, though their memories diverge about where -- Bailey remembers a chat at a Cabinet meeting, Huckabee remembers a telephone conversation.

They agree that: Huckabee thought it was ridiculous to "waste taxpayer funds" on investigating animal deaths when human deaths needed investigation. ★

Bailey told the governor that in an earlier incident the state police decided not to investigate animal deaths.

Huckabee let Bailey know that he thought there was merit to the earlier policy.

Huckabee said in an interview that his stand with Bailey did not preclude the state police getting involved. He only wanted the agency to do whatever it normally did, he said.

Huckabee also said he never directly asked Bailey to write a letter about the matter to anyone.

The governor said he came to understand, through attorney Kevin Crass of Little Rock, that Bailey would write one.

Crass, attorney for the Huckabees, contacted Williamson, who told him that if the state police didn't get involved that would end the matter because the prosecutor would have nothing to take to court.

Crass contacted Bailey and told him the prosecutor would be finished with the case if the state police declined to get involved.

But, the attorney said, he never asked Bailey to write such a letter or to have anyone else in the state police write one, nor does he remember Huckabee ever asking him to ask Bailey to send such a letter.

"When I contacted Col. Bailey, I told him, 'I'm not asking you on behalf of anybody to do anything. But I'm asking what you intend to do with the prosecutor's request,'" Crass said. Bailey, he recalls, told him the state police had other priorities.

Crass said he told Bailey: "Colonel, if that's your position, you ought to communicate that to the prosecutor. He's waiting for a response."

The lawyer, like the governor, said his approach did nothing to preclude the state police from getting involved, if that's what agency officials thought they ought to do.

Slug Line: yxgr-letterwe for 1B Photo: John Bailey

This article was published on page B2 of the Wednesday, February 17, 1999 edition in the B2 section.



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