

# Concealed-carry mishap leads to woman's injury at county dog park

By Lydia Statz, Union staff writer | Posted: Tuesday, June 3, 2014 9:24 am

JEFFERSON — A recent day at the Jefferson County Dog Park turned into more than one dog owner bargained for when her firearm accidentally discharged, wounding her.

According to the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, a female at the Jefferson County Dog Park suffered a self-inflicted gunshot wound when she unintentionally fired her handgun on May 11.

Jefferson County Corporation Counsel Phil Ristow said during Monday's meeting of the county Parks Committee that the woman has a Wisconsin concealed carry permit allowing her to legally carry the gun on county park property. She fired the weapon while attempting to tuck it back into her belt, he noted.

The bullet injured her buttock, and she was treated for the wound at an area hospital. No other people or dogs were injured.

The Jefferson County Sheriff's Office was notified of the incident, and has been investigating what charges might be appropriate.

The county is unable to restrict patrons from legally carrying concealed weapons in county parks, but discharging weapons in county parks is illegal.

Other updates about the Jefferson County Parks system brought news of possible expansions and projects that add new accessibility to popular facilities.

The county is moving forward in its attempt to create a new recreational area on the former Watertown Outboarders property south of Watertown.

The project has been talked about for many months, but has hit many snags along the way. Now it might be closer to a final deal, parks officials learned.

The Quirk Foundation, a Watertown charitable organization, originally approved a \$25,000 grant to help the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources purchase the 6.12-acre property, which would then become a recreational area operated by Jefferson County.

However, a disagreement between the DNR and Jefferson County Parks Department over how the land should be used put that deal in jeopardy. Further negotiations approved the land for use as a fishing and boating destination, but the structures on the property will need to be removed.

The county originally had hoped to operate the original Outboarders "clubhouse" as a revenue-producing operation for the county.

County Parks Director Joe Nehmer said he is hopeful that a final purchase deal will be reached soon, and it will be brought before the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors for approval.

Additional, construction on the new playground at Korth Park in Lake Mills is nearing completion, it was reported.

The playground will be fully handicapped-accessible, including ramps allowing children in wheelchairs to access multiple levels of the play equipment.

Construction of the \$75,000 structure was paid for in part by a \$25,000 fundraising drive and through local business donations.

Jefferson County Parks Committee members were informed that parks officials had hoped that the equipment would be open for the public to use by this point, but several setbacks with manufacturing errors have led to delays. Later this summer, a formal dedication will open the playground.