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PRESS RELEASE

Edwardsville—Madison County State's Attorney Tom Gibbons announced the felony conviction and sentencing of a former City of Wood River employee who was charged last year with stealing over \$100,000 in her job as an assistant finance director.

Leslie E. Dona (d.o.b. 3/4/70) was charged on September 21, 2011 for stealing approximately \$143,000 since 2007 by altering software, fund and report manipulation and destroying records. Dona's theft came to light after she failed to report to work on August 15, 2011, which led to a missing persons report being filed. Three days later, she was located in Eureka, Missouri. Dona had been scheduled to meet with local auditors who were conducting the city's annual audit before she failed to show up for work.

Following a thorough investigation by the City of Wood River and its police department, the ongoing theft by Dona was discovered which led to charges being filed by the State's Attorney's Office.

Dona pleaded guilty today to Theft by Deception, a Class 2 Felony. In addition to receiving a 3-year prison sentence, Dona is also being required to compensate the city for the funds that she stole. Gibbons, who personally handled the case, secured Dona's Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) pension, both her contributions and the city's contribution, to be used towards restitution. Gibbons said that in discussions with IMRF, they told him they couldn't recall prosecutors ever having been successful at taking a pension for repayment for a crime. "Our citizens deserve the very best from their public employees, and I have made it a priority of my administration to hold individuals who work for the public to the highest standards." Gibbons stated. "Holding the defendant accountable for her crimes by sending her to prison and taking every last penny from her sends the strongest message to other would-be thieves that this will not be tolerated in Madison County. Leslie Dona betrayed the public's trust so we're taking away her public pension."

In addition to her IMRF pension, valued at approximate, \$30,555, prosecutors also seized money from a 457 investment account, funds from multiple bank accounts and CDs and money that her insurance company sent her following a car crash that occurred after she was located in Missouri. All of Dona's accounts and pensions were frozen immediately following her arrest and totaled almost \$55,000. The City of Wood River has also received another \$50,000 through an insurance policy they had for situations such as the theft. Dona will still have to pay the remaining funds owed to the city following her release from the Illinois Department of Corrections. Dona has been in custody since being charged last September.

"I want to thank Chief Otis Steward, the investigators from the Wood River Police Department, and the Finance Department and City Attorney and for their outstanding work on this case," said Gibbons. "Their exceptional efforts have now resulted in a successful prosecution and substantial recovery of the stolen proceeds, which will now be returned to the citizens of Wood River."

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