

Date: August 29, 2013

I, Travis Goreham, an Agent with the Missouri Department of Conservation, upon my oath, and under penalties of perjury, state as follows:

1. I have probable cause to believe that Phoenix M. Vankirk, W/M, D.O.B. [REDACTED], SSN [REDACTED], committed one or more criminal offenses.
2. The facts supporting this belief are as follows:

On August 15, 2013 at 7:30 PM, myself and Jackson County Sheriff's Deputy Tye went to Phoenix Vankirk's residence to speak with him about a deer that had been shot inside Elmwood cemetery.

After speaking with Vankirk for a short period of time he admitted that he was the one that had shot the deer. Vankirk stated that on the evening of August 3, 2013 he was standing on his front porch grilling. Vankirk stated that while he was standing there he could see over the cemetery wall and saw a deer standing in the grass. Vankirk stated he then went into his house and retrieved his .45 caliber handgun and jumped the fence of the cemetery and hid behind a tree and waited for the deer to get closer to him. When the deer was in close proximity to him that is when Vankirk stated that he shot the deer and watched it run a short distance and then fall to the ground. Once Vankirk realized the deer was dead, he then jumped back over the fence and went back to his house to get his car, in order to retrieve the deer. Vankirk then drove his car to the gates of the cemetery on Truman road and saw that they were locked. At that point, Vankirk realized that he was not going to be able to retrieve the deer. I asked Vankirk what his reason was for shooting the deer. Vankirk stated he had no idea that the deer was tame and was a friend of the community, and that his only reason for shooting the deer was to help save a little money and feed his family, which includes his girlfriend and his eight month old child. During the interview Vankirk stated he wanted to tell the community that he was extremely sorry and that if he could take back his actions he would, and that this was not a malicious act, but an act intended to put food on the table for his family.

Vankirk arranged and gave me the pistol that he used. I confirmed with the Jackson County Sheriff's Department that the pistol was lawfully owned. I ran Vankirk's criminal history and he only has minor traffic violations on his record.


Travis Goreham
Missouri Department of Conservation

The Court Finds Probable Cause

Date

Judge Jeffrey L. Bushur