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Probation chief under federal investigation for possessing child porn

December 22, 2012, 05:00 AM By Jon Mays Daily Journal staff

Note to readers: This is a corrected story. An earlier version reported that Stuart Forrest was booked into San Mateo County Jail. He was not.

Stuart Forrest, chief probation officer for San Mateo County, is being questioned by federal law enforcement officials for possession of child pornography, County Counsel John Beiers confirmed last night.

Stuart Forrest

Forrest was placed on administrative leave Friday pending results of the federal investigation, Beiers said.

Officials could not confirm that warrants were served at Forrest's county office Thursday night.

The U.S. Postal Service Inspection Service is the lead agency in the investigation and is being assisted by the FBI, said U.S. Postal Service spokeswoman Pauline Bellinger. Postal Service inspectors investigate material that is sent through the mail.

The case is active and may be turned over to the U.S. Attorney's Office, Bellinger said.

"They are taking the case and are in the process of working on it," she said.

Forrest began his career in 1976 as a group supervisor at the county's juvenile hall, was formally appointed chief probation officer in April 2009 after recommendation by a search committee of judges Robert Foiles and Marta Diaz. Following his time with the juvenile hall, Forrest oversaw the department's adult division between 1990 and 1998 and since 1998 has served as deputy chief.

He replaced Loren Buddress who retired just months prior following an 18-year career with San Mateo County. Buddress retired after a rocky year in which under his watch a teenage murder defendant escaped from juvenile hall with the help of two other wards and another teenager walked away from a detention camp and was arrested for a subsequent murder.

Forrest is also the president of the World Martial Arts Union and teaches in San Francisco, according to koreanmartialarts.com. The site also reports he has trained in martial arts for more than 30 years and was formerly the head instructor in defensive tactics training for peace officers.

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Jeff Hayden · Criminal Defense Attorney at Law Offices of Jeffrey B. Hayden
While the article spoke of an investigation being underway, some of the comments have already reached conclusions. The facts will come out in good time; in the interim, let's