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FORMER MADISON PARISH CLERK OF COURT SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT

*Caldwell convicted of using public funds
to pay personal expenses*

Shreveport, Louisiana . . . CAROLYN CALDWELL, who formerly served in the elected position of Clerk of Court for Madison Parish, Louisiana, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Robert G. James to spend 4 months in prison and 4 months home confinement for committing mail fraud, United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced. Prior to sentencing, restitution in the amount of \$12,320 was paid by CALDWELL.

CALDWELL, age 62, of Tallulah, Louisiana, was indicted in December 2006 for defrauding the Madison Parish Clerk of Court's Office by misusing the Clerk's Office funds for her own personal benefit, as well as that of her family and friends. CALDWELL pleaded guilty in September 2007 to one count of mail fraud. As a condition of her plea agreement, CALDWELL resigned from her position as Clerk of Court for Madison Parish.

Testimony at the hearing in this case revealed that CALDWELL attended the "Nuts and Bolts" Seminar in June of 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 in Destin, Florida. CALDWELL took friends and

family members who were not authorized to attend the conference on each of these trips and CALDWELL and her friends and family stayed extra nights each year. On each trip, CALDWELL paid for the additional people to travel with her, as well as for condominiums to house these friends and family members, with funds from the Madison Parish Clerk of Court. A report issued in October 2005 by the Louisiana Office of Legislative Auditor revealed that CALDWELL used \$12,320 of the Madison Parish Clerk of Court's funds to the personal benefit of she and her family and friends as a result of these trips.

U.S. Attorney Washington stated: "This defendant abused her office and simply stole public funds for her personal use. We demand the highest standard of honesty and integrity for our public officials."

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Monroe Resident Agency, and the Louisiana Office of Legislative Auditor, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney C. Mignonne Griffing.

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