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Northern Pinal County
ARIZONA
Superstition Mountain Country



Class of 2008
Keepsake Edition
see Section B, pages 2, 3 & 4



State Track Champs!
see Sports, page C-1

APACHE JUNCTION
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Inside The News

Special People



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Journey For 911



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Public Meetings

- Apache Junction City Council work session**
7:00 p.m. Monday, May 19, 2008
300 E. Superstition Blvd.
- Apache Junction City Council regular meeting**
7:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 20, 2008
300 E. Superstition Blvd.
- Apache Junction Water Company regular meeting**
6:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 20, 2008
300 E. Superstition Blvd.
- Superstition Mountain Community Facilities Dist. (sewer board)**
6 p.m. Tuesday, May 20, 2008
Fire District Boardroom
565 N. Idaho Rd.
- Apache Junction Fire District board meeting**
5:30 p.m., Wednesday May 21, 2008
565 N. Idaho Road

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Accused Molester Released — Again

After more than 2 years as a fugitive, Kennedy released on bail again shortly after his capture

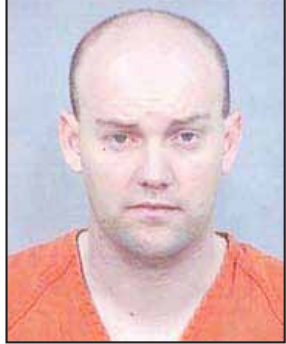
By Jill Jones
The News

APACHE JUNCTION- Bobby Kennedy, 29, accused child molester, former youth pastor and teacher who was a fugitive from justice for more than two years after being released on bail in August 2005, has once again been released on bail.

U. S. Marshalls captured Kennedy on March 18, 2008 at a residence in Lawton, Oklahoma where he was living with his wife and small child.

Kennedy, who topped the AJPD's most wanted list, had fled the Apache Junction area in August 2005 after being released on \$150,000 bail, and eluded authorities for two-and-a-half years.

Kennedy is free again on \$150,000 bond, which was



Accused child molester Bobby Kennedy (left) is free on \$150,000 bail set by Judge Bradley Soos (right).



posted at 4:30 p.m. March 29 following a bail hearing in front of Superior Court Judge Pro Tem Bradley Soos.

Kennedy is charged with 22 counts, including molestation, sexual abuse, aggravated assault and furnishing obscene materials to a minor involving at least three female students at Morningstar Academy Charter School where he was a youth minister and uncertified teacher.

Service were aware of Kennedy's release until Friday, May 16. U.S. Deputy Marshall Matt Hershey said he learned of Kennedy's release from an article in the *Arizona Republic* and Interim Chief Tom Kelly said their department was not notified of Kennedy's release.

Konstantinos Kalaitzidis, media relations contact for the Pinal County Attorney, said their office plans to appeal the Kennedy decision and is requesting a hearing on the matter.

Whether Kennedy has remained in the area is unclear. Neither the Apache Junction Police Department nor the U.S. Marshall's

Neither Judge Soos nor Presiding Judge Boyd T. Johnson were available for comment on this story and how it came to be that Kennedy, a known flight risk, was granted bail.

Recall Petitions Filed On Severs

Controversial councilman may face recall election this fall

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

APACHE JUNCTION- An Apache Junction woman filed recall petitions last week at the City Clerk's Office with 285 signatures in the hopes of ousting controversial City Councilman Joe Severs from his seat on the council.

Sharon Diehl, an Apache Junction resident, needed 222 signatures from registered city voters by Tuesday, May 13, to force a recall election. The 285 signatures she filed are in the process of being verified by city and county officials, she said.

"The main reason I want to recall Joe Severs is I thought he was causing a lot of turmoil within the city council. I told him that in 2006 and it just seemed to continue," said Diehl, whose late husband George once ran for mayor. "He's making a mockery of this whole system."

The controversy over Severs heated up earlier this year after it was learned he moved his wife and family to Gilbert. Severs told reporters the move was necessary because of the "messed-up schools" in Apache Junction. Although his family resides in Gilbert, Severs steadfastly claims he still lives in their empty house on N. Starr Rd. in



Apache Junction resident Sharon Diehl (above, left) submits petitions to City Clerk Kathy Connelly to initiate a recall election against Councilman Joe Severs (r).

Apache Junction. Severs also attracted attention by, until recent weeks, refusing to say the Pledge of Allegiance with the rest of the council before city council meetings.

Severs told the *News* Saturday that "someone in the recall effort lied about him" in order to obtain recall signatures. He said he is going to fight the recall and try to stay in office.

City Clerk Kathy Connelly confirmed that she received the signatures but, for legal reasons, declined to speak any further about the matter. She referred



The News to Title 19 of the Arizona Revised Statutes.

Diehl also said she disapproves of Severs not saying the Pledge of Allegiance before City Council meetings. She said she asked him why he does not recite the Pledge and he said it's because there isn't "freedom and justice"

see Recall, page A-5

Officer Saves Life Of Baby Girl

Administered life-saving CPR, brings back pulse



AJPD Officer Joe Lucero saved the life of a baby girl by administered life-saving CPR.

By Jill Jones
The News

APACHE JUNCTION- An Apache Junction Police Department (AJPD) officer saved the life of a 22-month-old girl last week when she stopped breathing during a seizure.

The AJPD received a call around 5:15 p.m. on Monday, May 12 informing them that a baby had stopped breathing. The little girl had been running a fever and her mother had placed her in the bathtub in an attempt to lower her temperature. According to Interim Police Chief Tom Kelly, the child had gone into a seizure and stopped breathing when the mother turned to drain the tub.

The mother did not know how to perform CPR so she yelled for a neighbor to call 911 for assistance. Neighbors reportedly attempted to administer life-saving efforts, but the child was not responsive.

When AJPD Officer Joe Lucero arrived on the scene and took over from the neighbor, the child reportedly did not have a pulse. Lucero quickly placed the child on a bench on the front patio and reportedly administered two puffs of air and child began to respond.

see Saves Child, page A-3

City Feels Revenue Crunch In Budget

Council studies tentative budget, revenues down 6.5%

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

APACHE JUNCTION- Even though city tax revenue declined 6.5% from \$26.2 million to \$24.5 million, Apache Junction will see no layoffs or cutbacks in programs for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. However, employees will not receive cost of living or step increases.

"The economy has suffered and this organization has not escaped what the larger economy is experiencing," said City Manager George Hoffman during a special city council meeting Tuesday, May 13, 2008. "The core objective of this proposed budget is to minimize the reduction in the programs and services we provide to our citizens. As a service industry, we rely on people to provide programs and services."

Hoffman added that providing the sufficient level of staffing to minimize reductions in programs and services "will be a defining challenge for the fiscal year ahead." Many departments have already seen a reduction in staffing levels through attrition. The city will not fill its 10 vacant positions.

Assistant City Manager Bryant Powell said development services vacancies will not be filled; same goes for consulting services it would have requested. The General Plan update, housing survey and state land studies will be done in-house to accomplish the goals.

"Current vacancies, we're holding them vacant in next year's budget," Powell said.

In the nondepartmental budget, proposed aviation and intergovernmental consultants will not

be funded.

Through recent years, the city has replaced its computer hardware and software on a four-year cycle. That will be deferred for a year, according to Powell.

"This is not our best practice," Powell said. "We prefer to keep a four-year cycle. We've run out on warranties, and it puts our division in a situation if we have issues. We're hoping things will turn around in the economy."

The city's library will continue to expand as previously planned, however, no new staff will be hired. Parks and Recreation capital projects will not move forward.

Trash pick-up, which was once done quarterly, will switch to twice a year, saving the city \$200,000.

"It's been my mantra to say it's not what's in the budget this year, mayor and council, it's what's not in the budget," Powell said. "We need to balance the budget and be fiscally responsible and live within our means."

Vice Mayor R.E. Eck asked if the cuts will have any affect on Apache Junction residents. Powell explained he does not anticipate the residents feeling anything "right now."

Councilman Rick Dietz said he thinks the council and city staff are fortunate because there will be no layoffs, while other cities are doing so.

"The council has exercised some restraint," Hoffman said. "It's budgetary self discipline."

The city council is scheduled to adopt a tentative budget June 3 and finalize it June 16 or 17, according to public information officer Pat Brenner.

The News Kidcast
Highs near 100, lows around 70 with rain cooling things off for the weekend.

This week's
Weather
"Artoonist"
Gabriel Gentry
Age 5
Avalon
Elementary
School

