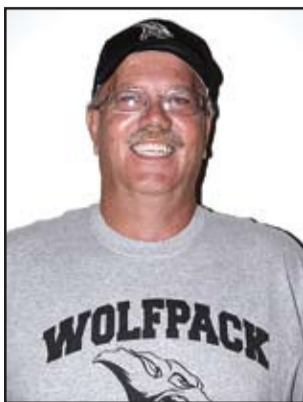




**AJHS J.V. Girls
Basketball Coach
Arrested For Sexual
Conduct With A
Minor And Luring,**
see page B-3

Time Out



Chuck Baker
News Sports Editor
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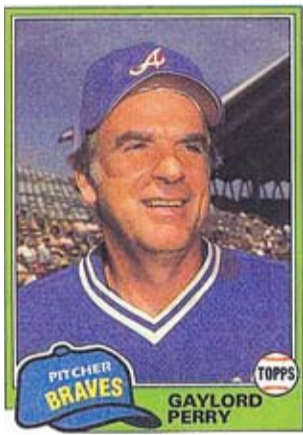
Spitting Image

Just in time for the upcoming Prospector baseball season, AJHS pitchers who would like to learn how to properly throw a spit ball should attend this Thursday's Superstition Mountain Museum's "double-header" featuring a special guest appearance from Major League Baseball Hall of Fame member Gaylord Perry, a 22-year MLB veteran.

Perry, who won 314 games in his career and became the first pitcher in history to win the Cy Young Award in both the American and National leagues.

Perry, notorious for doctoring baseballs (throwing spitters), co-authored his autobiography titled *Me and the Spitter* and will be at Superstition Mountain Museum this Thursday to sign memorabilia you may have as well as baseballs, available for purchase at the museum. All proceeds benefit the museum's building fund.

(See related article on page B-3 of this edition. The event also includes a free lecture on Apache Trail and its history as well as a BBQ.)



Sports Photos

Additional photos of AJHS sports are available through a link on the www.ajnews.com website. When directed to the link, search for "AJ News" and then the sport.

'Signings' Of Things To Come

Three Prospector football players ink "letters of intent"

By Chuck Baker
The News

Last Wednesday was National Letter of Intent Day and three Prospector senior football players, Justin Ferman, Shane McCullen and Rusty Fernando, were on hand with pen in hand.

Ferman, a fullback and linebacker, and Fernando, a defensive end, officially signed letters of intent with Glendale Community College, while running back/safety McCullen signed on with Arizona State University.

In two and a half varsity seasons, Ferman rushed for 534 yards and 10 touchdowns on offense and totaled 294 tackles and three interceptions from his linebacker position.

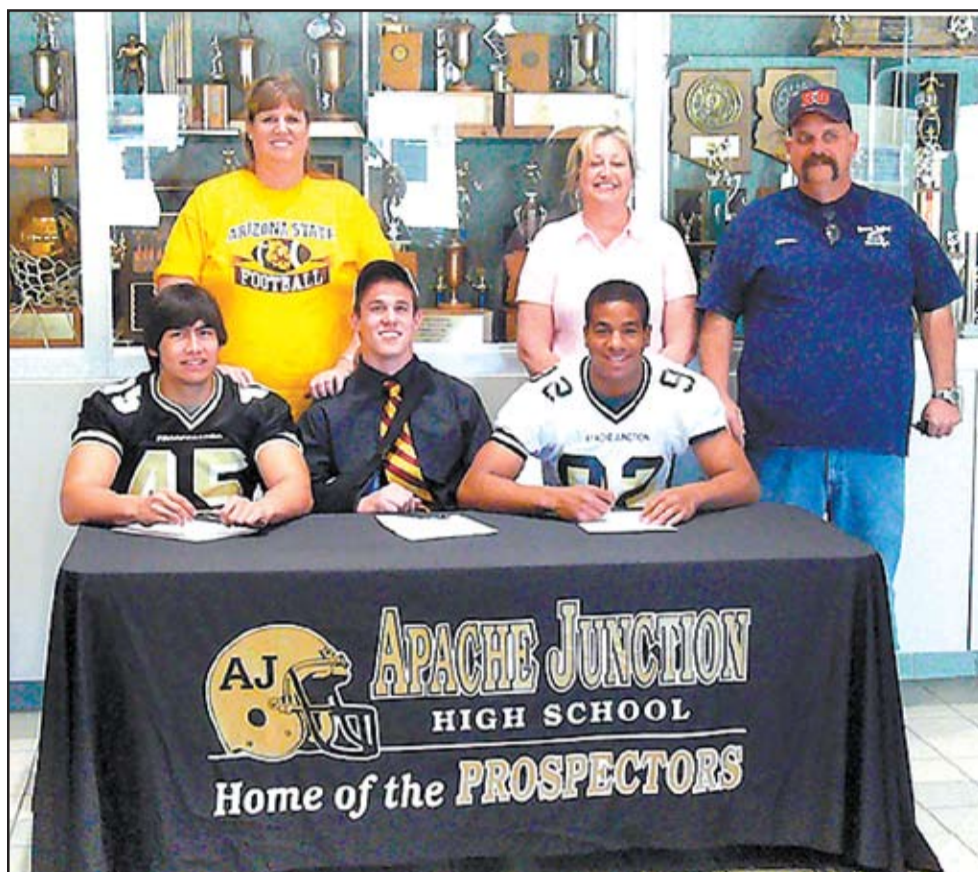
Ferman may best be remembered for the Prospectors 20-19 win over Queen Creek in 2007 where, as a fullback, he scored the

go-ahead touchdown with 2:12 left in the game and then, after Queen Creek scored a touchdown with just 57 seconds left to play, Ferman came up with a game-clinching interception in the end zone from his linebacker spot on a two-point attempt.

McCullen is the school record-holder at Apache Junction with 4,340 career rushing yards and 47 touchdowns scored in his three seasons of varsity football. Add to that the 2,128 yards he rushed for on the 9-0 AJHS freshmen team in 2005, and Shane totaled 6,468 rushing yards in four years.

Shane also holds the record for rushing yards in a single season (1,947 in 2006) and touchdowns in a single season (22, also from 2006). During that 2006 season, McCullen

see **Signs**, page B-2



Three Prospector senior football players (seated, left to right) Justin Ferman, Shane McCullen and Rusty Fernando, signed their letters of intent last Wednesday inside the north campus gymnasium. Ferman and Fernando are both headed to Glendale Community College in the Fall while McCullen will be off to Arizona State University to continue his football endeavors. Also pictured standing are Brandi McCullen (left), Shane's mom, along with Vicki Fernando (middle) and Cecil Fendley (right), Rusty's mother and uncle.

Lady Prospectors Defeat Liberty, 33-29

By Chuck Baker
The News

Despite being in the midst of an untimely shooting slump, the Lady Prospector varsity basketball team made enough baskets to defeat Peoria Liberty 33-29 last Friday night in their final home game of the season to keep alive slim playoff hopes with just two away games remaining in the regular season.

Apache Junction jumped out to a 31-14 lead over Liberty late in the third quarter before the Lady Lions, winners of just three previous games this sea-

son, made things a little too close for comfort in the final quarter.

With the win, coupled with last Tuesday's 43-26 loss at second-ranked Phoenix Shadow Mountain, Apache Junction now sports an 11-14 overall record and a 2-8 record in the Desert Sky Region.

The top 16 teams in the final 4A-I power rankings all qualify for the post season tournament. Heading into last Friday's game, Apache Junction was listed at No. 22. Their only hope to qualify for the tournament is to defeat both Scottsdale Saguardo this Tuesday, Feb-

ruary 10, and Scottsdale Chaparral this Thursday, February 12, and hope they pick up enough power points to move up in the final rankings.

Apache Junction defeated Saguardo earlier this season at home and lost to Chaparral at home by a dozen. Saguardo was listed at No. 19 in the power rankings while Chaparral was at No. 15.

In their win over Liberty on Friday, Apache Junction was led by Sierra Aulik's 12 points, four rebounds and two assists. Dianna Woodruff added 6 points, six rebounds and two steals, Emily McGann netted 4 points and had four rebounds and two assists, Riley Mullender also netted 4 points and handed out two assists, Sara Cranmer knocked down a three-pointer, Jessica Iniguez added a bucket and six rebounds, Kylie Bocksay also scored a bucket, Katie Karbo contributed six rebounds and three steals, and Katasha Braaten pitched in with three rebounds and two assists.

In last week's loss at



Two Lady Prospector seniors playing their final home game at AJHS last Friday night, Riley Mullender (right, in white jersey) and Katasha Braaten (behind Mullender) play defense against a Peoria Liberty player.

Shadow Mountain, Aulik led Apache Junction with 9 points while Mullender, Cranmer and Iniguez all tossed in 4 points.

Apache Junction hung close with Shadow Mountain and trailed just 29-22 after three quarters of play but the Lady Matadors put together a 14-4 run in the final quarter to win going away.

The Lady Prospector freshmen team tips off at

4 p.m. both away games this week followed by the junior varsity at 5:30 p.m. and the varsity at 7 p.m.

J.V. Beats Liberty

Led by 14 points, 13 rebounds, four steals and three assists from Lindsey Skinner, the Lady Prospector junior varsity team defeated Liberty 46-33 this past Friday night. Chelsey

see **Hoops**, page B-4

Itty Bitty Olympics Hits It Big

The City of Apache Junction Parks and Recreation Department hosted the annual Itty Bitty Olympics special event on Saturday, January 31, at Apache Junction High School and more than 70 boys and girls, ages 6 and younger, participated in the event that features fun, Olympic-style events and competition.

The A.J. Parks and Recreation Department would like to thank the AJHS Booster Club for providing food and beverages during the event as well as thanking the families for their participation in helping to make this year's event a success.

The overall winners in each age group are as follows:

2-And-Under Boys

1st Dalton Vangorden



The top three overall participants in the January 31 Itty Bitty Olympics special event for boys 3 and 4 years of age were (l-r) Chance Chavez, J.C. Taylor and Colton Frisbee. (submitted photo)

(2-and-Under continued)

2nd Jordan Simmon
3rd Tyler Dinn

2-And-Under Girls

1st Peyton Ortiz
2nd Sienna Oglesby
3rd Madison Mullender

3-And-4 Boys

1st Chance Chavez
2nd J.C. Taylor
3rd Colton Frisbee

3-And-4 Girls

1st Katie Williamson
2nd Tabby Rizzi

(3-and-4 Girls continued)

3rd Cheyanne Stewart

5-And-6 Boys

1st Xavier Boyd
2nd Jaden Duncan
3rd Jacob Coppinger

5-And-6 Girls

1st Maya Richardson
2nd Mackenzie Mullen
3rd Jayline Cain

(at right) Young Ethan Rosales epitomizes the spirit behind the Itty Bitty Olympics special event while participating in a ball toss competition held Saturday, January 31, and hosted by the Apache Junction Parks and Recreation Department. It isn't about who wins or loses — it's all about having fun and having someone to share it with. (submitted photo)

