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SPORTS, B1



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WINTER'S EFFECT: MANY PALO VERDE TREES FALL VICTIM TO FEBRUARY FREEZE

Record cold has lasting impact

BY DEREK JORDAN
HERALD/REVIEW

SIERRA VISTA — The impact from February's record freeze on area plant life is still being felt today, as evidenced by several Palo Verde trees in the southern portion of town that, according to one arborist, are beyond saving.

Multiple residents in the area of Laguna Avenue and Yaqui Street have contacted Carmen Miller of Arbor Solutions in recent weeks to inquire if their trees, many of which have grown brittle and discolored, have any chance of recovery.

"Palo Verdes in particular, they were hit very hard by the freeze," said Miller.

The impact that such an event will have on each tree depends on an assortment of criteria, like the depth of water in the ground, the strength of the root system, and even the direction of the coldest breeze.

Trees that were not thriving or had other health issues were more susceptible to greater damage.

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MELISSA MARSHALL • HERALD/REVIEW

Dennis Withthoft stands in front of one of his dying Palo Verde trees at his residence on Laguna Avenue on Thursday. February's deep freeze, along with insect infestation has damaged the trees.

Huachuca City sex offender ban draws lawsuit threat

Mayor receives letter from ACLU

BY DEREK JORDAN
HERALD/REVIEW

SIERRA VISTA — Huachuca City may soon find itself in court defending a recently passed ordinance barring sex offenders from public places after the mayor received a letter from the American Civil Liberties Union stating the ordinance could violate the First Amendment and "lead to litigation."

Mayor Byron Robertson announced that he had received the letter from the ACLU during Thursday's regular council meeting.

The letter, dated Oct. 31, was authored by Dan Pochoda, legal director for ACLU of Arizona. In it, Pochoda states the ordinance "could impermissibly chill the First Amendment rights of residents of Huachuca City" and lists several court cases that he said clearly illustrate that a ban on allowing sex offenders to have access to the library was unconstitutional.

Additionally, Pochoda took issue with language used by Council Member Ken Taylor and Huachuca City Police Chief Dennis Grey during interviews with a Tucson television news station KOLD about the ordinance.

The letter quotes Grey as saying he "expressed his desire to put (sex) offenders 'on a desert island and blow it up,'" while Taylor was quoted as stating he believed those targeted by the ordinance do not have any constitutional rights.

'(ORDINANCE 11-03)

COULD IMPERMISSIBLY

CHILL THE FIRST

AMENDMENT RIGHTS OF RESIDENTS OF HUACHUCA CITY.'

FROM A LETTER BY DAN POCHODA, LEGAL DIRECTOR FOR THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

"These statements are troubling and suggest that Huachuca City is not concerned with the constitutionality of enacting such a sweeping regulation," Pochoda states in the letter.

Attempts to contact Pochoda and Huachuca City Town Attorney Mary Ryan on Thursday were not successful.

Passed by the council in October, Ordinance 11-03 permits the creation of Child Safety Zones, the purpose of which is to restrict areas such as schools, libraries, parks and swimming pools to those whose names are listed on the Arizona Department of Public Safety's Sex Offender Registry.

Exceptions would be made for adults with children of their own that need to be dropped off or picked up from these areas. Sex offenders would also be given access to these areas in the event of local, state or federal elections, to speak with teachers, nurses or other officials regarding their child's health or education.

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Court upholds 1 of 3 injunctions against Mullens

BY ADAM CURTIS
HERALD/REVIEW

SIERRA VISTA — A Cochise County Superior Court judge upheld an injunction against Palominas Fire District Governing Board Member Chuck Mullens for violating attorney client privilege but denied two other requests made by the district in a hearing on Tuesday.

Division 4 Judge Ann Littrell ruled that the district failed to prove that Mullens broke state open meeting law by revealing information that had been discussed in executive session. In regard to the district's attempt to restrict Mullens from making potentially damaging, derogatory statements to members of the public, Littrell noted that the right to

free speech cannot be tampered with lightly and denied that request, which would have limited Mullens' ability to enter district property outside of meetings.

In regard to the executive session issue, Mullens testified that he did not attend that session and did not know that the confidential e-mails he attempted to distribute to the

public were part of that session.

Littrell said that Mullens' testimony had not really been disputed and, as a result, found that the district did not prove he broke open meeting law.

Mullens admitted to providing these e-mails to the *Herald/Review* and copying them with the intent to distribute

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Restoring Miracle Valley to its former glory latest goal of family's ministry

BY ERIC PETERMANN
HERALD/REVIEW

PALOMINAS — There was a time when thousands of people gathered to witness the Holy Spirit and prayed for a miracle.

There was a time when gunfire rang out and three people lay dead after a violent battle.

Ask anyone in Southeast Arizona and there is a good chance they will know something about Miracle Valley and its history. Sometimes that history is whispered; left unfinished and related with sour glances rather than words. Others recall the early days of the property,

when A.A. Allen accepted the donation of 1,280 acres of land from local resident Urbane Leiendecker, and started a revival ministry that touched thousands all over the world.

Located south of Highway 92 in Palominas, the landmarks of the property still stand as markers to a rich history that began with promise of fellowship and ended in tragedy just 24 years later.

Time has taken its toll on Miracle Valley. The original property, once measuring more than 2,500 acres at its largest expanse, has been

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ERIC PETERMANN • HERALD/REVIEW

From the left, Michael, Diane and Gilles Langevin stand outside the domed church at the Miracle Valley property south of Highway 92 in Palominas on Tuesday. The family has taken over the property and plan to restore it to its initial grandeur, envisioned by the first evangelist at the property, A. A. Allen.

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EVENT OF THE DAY
WILHELM FAMILY VINEYARDS PATRIOT SALUTE WINE FESTIVAL:
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Located at 21 Mountain Ranch Drive in Elgin/Sonoita — off Lower Elgin road 2 miles east of landfill, the Vineyard is planning numerous family activities. For information, call (520) 455 9291.

This paper is published for Jack Dotson of Sierra Vista and the rest of Cochise County.



Web site advocates alternatives to border wall, seeks donations

BY JONATHAN SHACAT
HERALD/REVIEW

BISBEE — A locally based group recently created a Web site called www.buildbetterthanaborderfence.com that solicits charitable donations to help build communities, education and understanding along the U.S.-Mexico border.

The organization was formed in response to Build the Border Fence, a state of Arizona sponsored initiative that is raising funds in order to finance and finish building the border fence.

der fence.

“The organizers behind the effort want their fellow Americans to know that not all Arizonans think building the border fence between the U.S. and Mexico is a good use of economic resources. They believe that there are many Americans that do not agree with the negative, fear inducing rhetoric around building the border fence and want their donation to build something much better,” states a press release from the group.

The funds collected will help people living in poverty, the homeless and children struggling in underfunded schools, and in doing so strengthen border communities in the areas of health, economic development, education, job training, micro loans and innovative approaches to job creation.

“As a registered charity we are not permitted to solicit directly for another organization without their permission. At this point we have ideas of where we would like these

funds to go because we live in the communities and we have identified needs. But, once we have donations coming in, we will meet and look at where the needs are and put the money out,” said Gail Covington McBride, president of the group.

Boyd Nicholl, a board member, pointed out the efforts will not be aimed at any particular area of need, but with the caveat that the projects must be along the border, and theoretically they could be on both sides of the bor-

der in Sonora, Mexico, and Arizona.

“Our main focus is to take away the fearful aspect. We used to be in great cooperation with each other across the border, and now a great deal of conflict has been generated, for what reason I am not sure, but it has nothing to do with the reality of what’s going on along the border,” he said. “It is not an armed camp across the border. People are not shooting you down.”

Seth Polley, another board member, said he thinks using

the donations to help build schools, improve healthcare and invest in business enterprises will help make the border safer because more people will stay in their homes and not illegally immigrate.

“I think it’s a good response to the dominant thinking out there that a bigger fence is the answer. It seems to me that we are more likely to have security when we have people on both sides of the border who are well educated and have a place to live and food to eat,” he said.

Fall arrives late in much of Southwest

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Forests throughout the Southwest are growing quiet as the season for bugling elk comes to an end. The aspens in the high country and cottonwoods in the valleys are dropping their golden leaves, and snow has dusted mountain tops in Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona.

There’s no denying it’s fall.

But for land managers, hunters and other outdoor enthusiasts, it was a long time coming in some areas. They had to wait a few extra weeks for summer to loosen its grip.

The slow change in season comes on the heels of months of volatile weather. Dust storms enveloped Arizona, drought paralyzed Texas and New Mexico and temperatures far above normal plagued most of the country.

The summer that would never end is how forecasters with the National Weather Service in Albuquerque referred to it.

Those sweltering temperatures are thought to be one reason fall was late in some spots. The obvious measure was the foliage.

By the end of September, cars are usually funneling up the narrow roads leading to New Mexico’s ski areas so spectators can soak in the colors. Near Santa Fe, many of the trees were still green in early October.

There were similar reports from Flagstaff, Ouray, Colo., and Taos, N.M.

“I was up in Taos last week and noticed that it was late. Everyone was talking about how late it was. But

it was very beautiful,” said Andy Graves, an entomologist with the U.S. Forest Service in New Mexico. “A lot of people are just attributing it somewhat to the drought and maybe the elongated summer. It was a weird year.”

Some areas escaped the shift of the season’s start. Along the Rio Grande in central New Mexico, officials said the yellowing of the cottonwoods was on schedule. So was the migration of the sandhill cranes and geese that visit Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge each fall.

In Gunnison, Colo., U.S. Forest Service pathologist Jim Worrall said things appeared to be normal, with only some reports of foliage changes being a week late.

With the sting of record drought and high temperatures still lingering, scientists are looking carefully at the region’s forests to ensure they are healthy. With their white bark and lush understories, aspens are sometimes looked to as a “report card” for the forest.

It was a combination of record breaking temperatures and a severe drought that peaked in southern Colorado in 2002 that triggered a sudden decline in the aspen population, Worrall said.

In Arizona, the culprits were frost and drought, said Mary Lou Fairweather, a forest pathologist based in Flagstaff.

Another aspen die-off is possible given the age of the stands and pressures of continued drought, especially in New Mexico, the experts said.

RESTORATION: Family will host free Thanksgiving meal

FROM PAGE A1

whittled to 54 acres. The most distinguishable structure, a large domed church, is a shell with only a partial roof and broken glass at every step. Of the 12 buildings on the property, many have broken windows and show the signs of deterioration that put forth a haunting scene.

What some may view as ruined, however, Gilles Langevin and his family see with different eyes. Gilles, his wife Diane and 21-year old son Michael Jeffrey Snow Langevin, have taken over Miracle Valley and envision returning the property to its original grandeur. The family is residing at the ranch house immediately west of the domed church and have already started ministering in the community.

Starting from scratch is nothing new for the Langevins. The family has traveled throughout the United States, passionately pursuing God’s leading in their ministry at prisons, in dangerous urban settings and within churches.

“We’ve had to start all over before,” Diane said. “When we received the calling to come here, we knew that Miracle Valley was supposed to go through this period of abandonment, and now it’s going to be returned to what it once was.”

The Langevins were not always Christians. Newly-married and living in Quebec, Canada, the couple began traveling as part of Diane’s job as a traveling nurse. In 1993, Diane became friends with a nurse while working in Augusta, Ga.

“She was so kind, and wonderful with the patients. She had a certain kind of peace, and it invited me to find the Lord,” Diane said.

Gilles joked nothing to do with religion. Growing up in the wilderness of Quebec, with an Algonquin Indian heritage, Gilles remained fiercely independent.

“I told her, ‘Keep that stuff away from me,’” Gilles said.

In a dream, when he was 29, Gilles remembers that he encountered someone, he doesn’t know who, that told him not to worry for what was about to happen. “I woke up the next morning thinking it was strange and very vivid,” Gilles said.

At his construction job, Gilles was training a new man and directed him to operate the earthmover.

“I told him not to be worried, because there was no one around and he didn’t have to be concerned about it,” Gilles said.

With Gilles operating a small bucket truck, he suddenly noticed the earthmover back up toward him, and the new operator completely unaware that Gilles was behind him.

“I could touch the back of the earthmover. It tipped me over, and I thought I was going to be crushed alive,” Gilles said.

For some unknown reason, the driver suddenly stopped, realizing that he was about to back over Gilles.

“After that, I decided I needed to find out why I was here. After that,

ORDINANCE: Law goes into effect on Nov. 18

FROM PAGE A1

Grey asked the council to create the ordinance after expressing concerns about a sex offender loitering around the public swimming pool.

Both the police chief and town attorney said to the council that similar ordinances did exist, mostly in municipalities on the east coast. Ryan said that legal challenges to these ordinances had failed in court.

The letter comes when at least one other Arizona town is moving forward with an ordinance similar to Huachuca City’s.

Located just west of Phoenix, the town of Buckeye recently ad-

opted Ordinance 35-11, which prohibits registered sex offenders from entering town parks and recreational facilities without written permission from the chief of police.

Whereas violating Huachuca City’s ordinance results in a \$100 fine, offenders found violating Buckeye’s ordinance would be guilty of a Class One misdemeanor.

Mark Mann, chief of the Buckeye Police Department, said the ordinance was drafted after consulting with the town prosecutor and town attorney, as well as his own detectives, and took inspiration from similar ordinances in Huachuca City and Irvine, Calif.

While there are about 45 registered sex offenders in the city, Mann said the ordinance was meant as a pre-emptive measure rather than a reaction to any particular issue.

The city recently leased 8,600 acres of Bureau of Land Management Land, significantly increasing the area of responsibility for a police force that is not expecting to see any increase in resources for several years, he said.

“This is one more tool to keep our community’s youth safe from predators,” Mann said.

The ordinance was passed by the council in October and goes into effect Nov. 18.

‘WE KNEW THAT MIRACLE VALLEY

WAS SUPPOSED TO GO THROUGH THIS

PERIOD OF ABANDONMENT, AND NOW

IT’S GOING TO BE RETURNED TO WHAT

IT ONCE WAS.’

DIANE LANGEVIN

ON THE MIRACLE VALLEY RESTORATION PROJECT

I realized I need to find God.” Gilles said.

The couple, and their young son, traveled to Maine, North Carolina and other destinations, preaching the word of God. “We would reach into the street. We would go to the prisons. We would go wherever God told us to go,” Diane said.

Michael began to develop his own ministry, learning music and writing worship songs. His efforts have made him an accomplished musician, offering his own collection of songs on his first CD with a second CD not long from being published.

The Langevins made their first visit to Miracle Valley in 2007, after being approached while doing street ministry in Tucson.

“I had someone tell me that I reminded them of A.A. Allen,” Gilles said. “They told me I needed to visit Miracle Valley.”

Living and traveling in a recreational vehicle, the family drove from Tucson and did not have a good first impression when they arrived.

“When we got here, I asked Michael what did he think,” Gilles said.

“And I told him I didn’t want to stay here,” Michael joked.

Much of the story that led to the family’s decision to locate at the Palominas property is quiet right now. Miracle Valley was owned by the State of Arizona after a questionable bank transaction and the previous owner failed to meet financial terms to formally purchase the property. At the instruction of others, the Langevins have been told not to provide specifics on the acquisition of the property.

On Oct. 31, the family put down the deposit to buy the site and are now assuming ownership of the land and buildings. Their plans have humble beginnings. On Thanksgiving Day, they will host a free dinner for anyone who wants to attend.

They also plan to develop and rebuild the property, with a long-term goal of restoring Miracle Valley to a place where people can share fellowship, and celebrate God’s glory.

In addition to his music, Michael has developed renderings of the property that feature a restored church and new or renovated buildings. “We want this to be a place that people can come to serve and to find God,” Michael said. For more information and to contact the family, visit www.miraclevalleyarizona.com, or call, (520) 678-1906.



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