

# Strip club liquor licenses OK'd

## Commission voiced little opposition

By TOM MORTON  
Star-Tribune staff writer

Two strip clubs won renewal of their liquor licenses after garnering little opposition at the Natrona County Commission's regular meeting Tuesday.

The five-member commission unanimously approved 17 licenses — seven retail, one restaurant, three limited retail licenses for clubs and four malt beverage permits — up for their

annual renewal. The renewals were considered as a group.

But strip club opponent and commissioner Matt Keating asked that the two retail licenses for C.C. Cowboys west of Mills and Northern Dreams at Interstate 25 and Ormsby Road be considered individually.

During a public hearing on the two renewal requests, no one spoke in favor and only two spoke in opposition.

Casper resident Linda Berg-

eron said Wyoming and America need to maintain the values that made it great.

Shannon Homolka, a teacher at Dean Morgan Junior High School, echoed the comments she made a year ago.

"I am opposed to the gross injustice of giving liquor licenses to strip clubs," Homolka said.

The level of opposition paled in comparison to the previous large and sometimes loud gatherings in September 2008 for Cowboys' original license application and in February 2009 for the license renewals of Cowboys

and Northern Dreams.

After the public hearing, Keating asked Undersheriff Dave Kinghorn if it was illegal for strip clubs to host events such as Miss Nude Wyoming.

Kinghorn responded they were not illegal, based on his knowledge.

Keating said America's legal system is based on Judeo-Christian values, and commissioners had an opportunity to make a difference in the community.

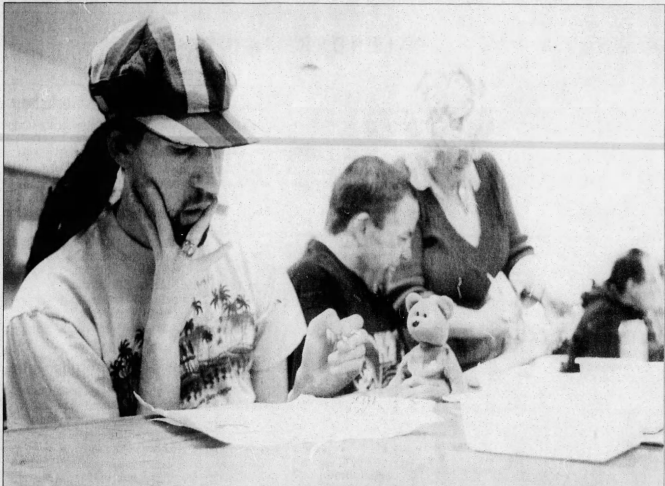
Commissioners Barb Peryam and Rob Hendry said the sheriff's office reported a minimal

number of problems at both clubs, and the Casper-Natrona County Health Department and county code enforcers found no problems, either.

Those weren't the important issues, Keating said. "I have a moral issue with it."

After the hearing, Homolka said other opponents of the strip clubs probably didn't show up in force because the commissioners didn't listen to them in September 2008 or February 2009.

"I think they [opponents] felt like they had no power," she said.



Zach Harper pauses while painting a small section of a larger 50-square-foot banner at I-Reach Lifestyles on Tuesday morning. I-Reach is one of several local nonprofit agencies that has received money raised at the American Petroleum Institute Chili Cook-Offs. This year's event is on Saturday at the Casper Events Center. (Kerry Huller/Star-Tribune)

## Three face charges related to prostitution

### Police used Craigslist to set up undercover operation

By WILLIAM BROWNING  
Star-Tribune staff writer

Three people face time behind bars after police completed an undercover prostitution operation set up through an Internet advertisement site.

Authorities say Casey Key Edmunds, of Casper, arrived at a Casper hotel Saturday night after corresponding with what he thought was a prostitute on Craigslist.

Police, however, had posted the advertisement.

After telling a female undercover officer he was looking for "deep French kissing and sex" and handing her \$150 cash, Edmunds was arrested, according to an affidavit from the case.

The 28-year-old made his initial appearance Tuesday in Natrona County Circuit Court. He pleaded not guilty to one count of solicitation of prostitution, a misdemeanor.

He remains free on \$1,000 bond while awaiting trial.

The undercover operation began last week after Casper police say they found a Craigslist ad reading, "Smokin' Hot Blonde in Town NOW and Ready to Play! Let's Have Some Fun!" — (Cheyenne, Casper, Gillette

Please see PROSTITUTION, B2



EDMUNDS



STOFFELS



DAVIDSON

# Charity Feast

## Organizers call on everyday heroes for chili fundraiser

By SALLY ANN SHURMUR  
Star-Tribune staff writer

Super heroes are easy to find these days. They're in movie theatres, on television screens and LCD monitors, coming to life through games and fantasy films.

Bob Dill, general manager of Automation & Electronics, thinks "super" heroes are also among us daily life, from active-duty military to law enforcement.

Dill, part of the organizing committee for the American Petroleum Institute's 18th annual Chili Cook-Off, expects those super heroes to raise money for a host of worthwhile groups as they ladle gallons and gallons of homemade chili at the winter's largest chili cook-off and afternoon party.

The event is from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday at the

### IF YOU GO

- **What:** 18th annual API Chili Cook-Off
- **When:** 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday
- **Where:** Casper Events Center
- **Admission:** \$10 per person
- **Benefits:** 22 local nonprofit agencies

Casper Events Center.

Representatives from 45 businesses associated directly or indirectly with the petroleum industry will cook chili to compete for prizes, but the big winners are the more than 20 nonprofit organizations that receive the proceeds. Among the annual recipients of the proceeds is I-Reach, a local program that serves adults with developmental disabilities and

Please see CHARITY, B2

### Past recipients

Decisions on who will receive money from the fundraiser and how much the groups receive will be made after Saturday's event, but most groups have received money for several years. Past recipients include:

American Red Cross - Natrona County Branch, ARC of Natrona County, Brain Injury Association, Children's Advocacy Project, Casper Children's Theater, Casper Humane Society, Central Wyoming Hospice, Central Wyoming Spay and Neuter, County Homeless Children Fund, Habitat for Humanity, I-Reach Lifestyles, Jason's Friends, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Natrona County Meals on Wheels, Platte River Parkway Trust, Renewed Hope Foundation, Safe Kids of Wyoming, Seton House, Special Olympics Wyoming, VSA Arts of Wyoming, and Youth Empowerment Council.

### Saturday's chefs

Teams expected to cook this year:

First Interstate Bank, American National Bank, Anadarko, Baker Hughes Inteq, Beacon Club, BICO, Budweiser, Casper Winco, Cobra Well Testing, Compression Leasing, Cost Plus Appliance, Crescent Directional Drilling, Donna Martenson, Double D Welding, Engineered Equipment / Cameron, Exterran, Falcon Pump, FMC, Greiner Ford, Halliburton, Hilltop National Bank, Homax, Hunting Performance, Industrial Screen and Maintenance, IPS, JPI, JW Williams, Key Energy, Kinder Morgan, M&C Sales, M&M Sales, MI Swaco, Nabors Drilling, National Oilwell Varco, Nevis Energy, Patterson, Rocky Mountain Oilfield Warehouse, SST Energy Corporation, Stewart and Stevenson, Trademark Personnel, Wenzel Downhole Tools, Wilson Supply, Wyoming Machinery, and XL Harbanding.

## Feds set human trafficking trial for Oct.

### Immigrants worked at Casper, Douglas hotels

By TOM MORTON  
Star-Tribune staff writer

The ringleaders of an alleged human trafficking ring in Kansas City, Mo., will go on trial Oct. 18 in federal court there for hiring immigrant workers, sending them to Wyoming and 13 other states and holding them in virtual slavery.

Prosecutors charge that lead defendant Arborkhodja Askarkhodjaev, a Uzbekistan national, and 14 other individuals and companies established temporary help agencies and hired hundreds of mostly legal immigrants for work in hotels and casinos, according to the May 27 indictment and a superseding indictment.

Eighteen of those immigrants were sent to hotels in Casper and Douglas.

The companies — Giant Labor Solutions, Crystal Management and Five Star Cleaning — placed the workers in overcrowded apartments or hotel rooms, withheld their wages and taxes and did not pay for overtime, according to a May 27 news release from Acting U.S. Attorney Matt Whitworth of the Western District of Missouri.

"The defendants allegedly used false information to acquire fraudulent work visas for these foreign nationals. Many of their employees were allegedly victims of human trafficking who were coerced to work in violation of the terms of their visa without proper pay and under the threat of deportation. The defendants also required them to reside together in crowded,

Please see TRIAL, B2

## Police charge man with multiple burglaries

### 28-year-old faces up to 85 years behind bars if convicted

By WILLIAM BROWNING  
Star-Tribune staff writer

Prosecutors have charged a 28-year-old man with multiple counts of burglary in connection with what police say was a series of break-ins that occurred in Casper during the last two months.

Authorities say Antonio John Flores is linked to at least seven Casper burglaries dating back to January. He is accused of breaking into residences on Kingsbury Drive, East 11th Street, East 15th Street, East 16th Street, Payne Avenue and two on Lynn Lane, according to a police affidavit from the case.



FLORES

Authorities claim that during the burglaries, Flores took — among other things — guns, digital cameras, work tools, computers and cash from purses. He allegedly entered many of the residences while individuals were sleeping, according to the affidavit.

Flores, who made his initial appearance in Natrona County Circuit Court last week, faces six counts of burglary and one count of aggravated burglary. He could spend 85 years behind bars if convicted of all charges.

Police arrested Flores last week after an officer spotted him fleeing a South Elm street residence Monday. After tracking him to his Casper apartment, officers say they found several pairs of binoculars and

Please see BURGLARIES, B2

# CHARITY

Continued from B1

acquired brain injuries, say from a stroke or sports injury.

"Our primary focus is gaining our clients some type of employment," said service coordinator Jaime Bordeaux. I-Reach currently serves 43 people in their own homes or in its small residential group home, which houses four to six people at a time.

Bordeaux says the "donation" group receives from the Chili Cook-Off is put directly to benefit the clients.

"We use it to subsidize some of the activities they take part in. It enables us to improve the quality of their life," Bordeaux said. "Many times, Social Security covers only their rent, utilities and food, and there's not much left over for leisure or recreation. We try to organize day trips and activities, especially now when everybody's got cabin fever."

Admission to the cook-

off is \$10 per person for all the chili you can hold. Because of the large crowds expected, organizers ask that no strollers be taken onto the floor of the Events Center.

In addition to chili and beverages, attendees can purchase raffle tickets for cash (\$10,000 is the grand prize) and other prizes, and will also be eligible for door prizes.

Chili winners are determined by a panel of secret judges, but attendees vote for the best-decorated booths and the people's choice award.

Last year's event raised more than \$100,000, which was divided among 22 groups.

Reach Community News editor Sally Ann Shurum at (307) 266-0520 or sallyann.shurum@trib.com. Read Sal's blog at tribtown.trib.com/Sal/blog and follow her on Twitter at www.twitter.com/WYOSAS.

# Man faces indecency charges for mall incidents

By the Star-Tribune staff

Police arrested a 26-year-old man Monday after employees at an Eastridge Mall department store said he had been frequenting the establishment, looking at women's underwear and masturbating in restrooms.

Authorities say David Keith Decock went into Macy's twice this month, carried women's underwear into bathroom stalls and masturbated, according to a police affidavit.

At his initial appearance Tuesday in Natrona County Circuit Court, Decock pleaded not guilty to one count each of public indecency and property destruction. If convicted of the misdemeanors, he faces a maximum penalty of one year behind bars.

## DECOCK

Judge Steven Brown set

a \$500 personal recognition bond.

Police received a call Monday morning about Decock being inside the department store. An asset protection with Eastridge Mall told officers that on Feb. 4, Decock had asked female customers at Macy's to try on underwear and bras for him. He then went into the women's restroom with a female undergarment and masturbated, according to the affidavit.

The protectionist added that on Feb. 12, De-

cock was in Macy's and, after picking up some women's underwear, went into the men's restroom and masturbated, according to the affidavit.

After both incidents, employees found women's underwear "stuffed" inside the bathrooms' toilets, police say. Decock told authorities he had been in Macy's on Feb. 4, but denied being there eight days later, according to the affidavit.

A jury trial will be scheduled for Circuit Court.

## CASPER CALENDAR

### Today

**Artcore**  
 At 12:15 p.m., Bach's Lurch Organ Recital at First United Methodist Church.  
**P.E.O. Chapter Y**  
 At 12:45 p.m., meet at the home of Kristy Jones.

**Wagon Wheel**  
 Info: 265-4214 or www.wskate.com.  
 From 6-8 p.m., regular session admission \$3 with own skates and \$5 admission with any rental. \$2 more includes lift.

**NIC Museum**  
 Info: 235-5247 or www.nic.org.  
 The NIC Art Museum kicks off 2010 with two new exhibitions: "The Landscape Paintings of Karen Kitchel" and "The Spaces in Between" by Kate Petley, on display through April 11.

**Trails Center**  
 The National Historic Trails Interpretive Center is celebrating Black History Month with an exhibit titled "Black Cowboys: The Forgotten Range Riders" and the exhibit will be on display throughout February. Info: 261-7780.

**Clubs & meetings**  
**Alcoholics Anonymous**  
 6:30 a.m., 917 N. Beech, open, nonsmoking.  
 10 a.m., 328 E. A St., East-side, smoking.  
 Noon, 136 W. Eighth St., Explores a Miracle, nonsmoking.  
 7 p.m., 136 W. Eighth St., See Why Serenity, nonsmoking.  
 Glenrock: 615 W. Deer St., (downstairs), (12 x 12 Study), nonsmoking.  
 7:30 p.m., 837 E. C St., AA Meeting, nonsmoking.  
 8 p.m., Douglas, 628 S. Richards, 45, Loft Group, nonsmoking.  
 8:23 p.m., Evansville: 719 3rd, Evansville Christian Church, nonsmoking.  
 Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are open. Casper info: 266-9578; Douglas info: (307) 351-1576.

**Al-Anon**  
 7-8 p.m., 136 W. 8th St., 12-24 Club, Alateen, "A Brighter Future" is for young people whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking. For grades 6 and up. Info: 377-7260 or 258-1444.  
 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 302 E. 2nd. Use east entrance, meet downstairs in Room 12. Stepping Stones to Recovery family group meeting. Nonsmoking.

**Narcotics Anonymous**  
 12 p.m., 136 W. 8th St., 12-24 Club. Open meeting, topic and discussion. Nonsmoking, wheelchair accessible.  
 6:30 p.m., 136 W. 8th St., 12-24 Club. Open meeting, discussion. Nonsmoking, wheelchair accessible.  
 Info: 266-7154. Wyoming hot line: (866) 351-1861; Web site: (http://wyomingna.org).

**Agility Club of Central Wyoming**  
 6:30 p.m., ARCO Building, 2011 Fairgrounds Rd. Open to members and anyone interested in learning about dog agility. Info: 237-7206.

**Stroke Support Group**  
 Noon-1 p.m., Rocky Mountain Therapy, 2540 E. Second St., Building 500. This month's topic is "Concentration." Lunch provided. To RSVP contact Kenyette at 577-5204.

**Rockhounds Club**  
 7-9 p.m., 5211 Rambler, Mountain View addition. Rock saws and polishing equipment are available for use. Info: 265-3187 or 234-5482.

**Cancer Support Group**  
 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 6501 E. Second St., Rocky Mountain Oncology. Open to any cancer patient/survivor, free of charge. Info: 235-5433.

**Central Wyoming Model Railroad Association**  
 11 a.m.-2 p.m., 1356 N. Center St., Fun with model trains with Scale enthusiast Harry Buhler and HO Scale collector Homer Whitlock. Info: 235-4950 or 266-6439.

**Coming up**  
**Recreation**  
 Feb. 18, 6:30 p.m., The Fort Caspar Museum will host

## IN BRIEF

FROM STAFF REPORTS

### Workforce Center offers workshop

The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services' Casper Workforce Center has teamed up with ACT Inc. to offer businesses across the city a free Career Readiness Certificate Workshop from 11:15 a.m. until 1 p.m. Thursday at the UW/CC Outreach Building at 951 Poplar Street.

"These workshops will provide an opportunity for employers and community partners to learn more about the Career Readiness initiative and the WorkKeys Assessment that is part of that initiative," said Joan Evans, director of the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services.

The presentation will feature Tom Klijianek, senior vice president with ACT. Lunch will be provided.

Please RSVP by 11 a.m. Wednesday, at 233-4605 or at ghadie@state.wy.us. For more information, contact Guy Hadley, at 307-233-4605, or by e-mail at ghadie@state.wy.us.

### DEQ to discuss Casper orphan site

The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will share recent groundwater and soil vapor test results from its ongoing investigation of an "orphan site" in Casper at an information open house Thursday.

An orphan site is an area where there may be environmental impacts, but the source is unknown and/or there are no viable responsible parties or such parties cannot be identified.

In the fall quarter of 2009, DEQ conducted groundwater and soil vapor sampling in downtown and north Casper to determine the concentration and extent of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the area. DEQ has notified individual homeowners and businesses where further indoor air investigation may be necessary.

The meeting will be held from 6 to 8:30 p.m. at the University of Wyoming Outreach Center, 951 N. Poplar, Room 150. The meeting is an open house format where DEQ will share recent groundwater and soil vapor test results, show maps and answer questions. A presentation on the environmental investigation will be made at 7 p.m.

### Customer Service Wants To Help

Classified Customer Service 266-0555

## TRIAL

Continued from B1

substandard and overpriced apartments," Whitworth said.

In late May, agents from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement transported nine of the workers from the Holiday Inn Express and Sleep Inn in Douglas and another nine from the Kamada Plaza Riverside Casper to the Kansas City area, where they were placed in temporary protective custody.

The Wyoming hotels themselves are not under investigation.

Last week, Askarkhod-

jaev and the other defendants pleaded not guilty in U.S. District Court in Kansas City to 45 counts of racketeering, forced labor trafficking, fraud, aggravated identity theft, harboring illegal aliens, wire fraud, mail fraud, money laundering, transporting illegal aliens, extortion and other charges.

Convictions on many of the charges carry penalties of up to 20 years imprisonment, and up to \$500,000 in fines, according to federal prosecutors.

Reach Tom Morton at (307) 266-0592, or at tom.morton@trib.com.

## BURGLARIES

Continued from B1

a digital camera in the home. The camera's serial number, authorities say, matched one that had been reported stolen from a residence on Payne Avenue in early February.

In a subsequent interview with investigators, Flores admitted to burglarizing several homes since moving to Casper from Iowa last August, according to the affidavit. Detective Wes Gudahl wrote in the affidavit that while Flores admitted to taking small items, "he was unwilling to

admit where he had placed the large items from several of the burglaries."

"This case remains open for further investigation," the affidavit reads.

Flores has a preliminary hearing scheduled for Thursday in Circuit Court, when a judge will decide if enough evidence exists for him to stand trial.

He remains in the Natrona County Detention Center on \$25,000 bond.

Reach crime reporter William Browning at (307) 266-0534 or at william.browning@trib.com.

## PROSTITUTION

Continued from B1

in/out 24 hrs!)" Craigslist is a popular Internet-based company that allows users to post classified advertisements at little or no charge.

Police responded to the post and arranged a meeting with the woman at a local hotel. The woman told the officer two hours would cost \$250 or one hour would cost \$200, according to the affidavit.

An officer met the woman - later identified as Jennifer Marie Stoffels - at a hotel early on Feb. 10. He told her the occasion was for his son, who had just turned 21. Stoffels told the officer "she would have sex with his son," according to the affidavit.

As investigators came into the room, police say Stoffels said "she was doing nothing wrong." After being told she was being taken to the police department for questioning, Stoffels "texted a male that was in the parking lot telling him that cops were there" the affidavit states.

That man, Tyler Craig Davidson, 43, was arrested and charged with promoting prostitution after police found him in the parking lot. Stoffels, 28, has been charged with prostitution.

Stoffels, who had two Durex tropical banana condoms in her pocket, told investigators she had been a prostitute for roughly three years and said Davidson acted as her pimp, according to the affidavit.

Police say she claimed to have come from the Fort Collins, Colo., area and had been to Casper 20 to 30 times, as well as Gillette, Sheridan and Cheyenne.

"Stoffels stated that Davidson used mental and physical abuse to get her to continue to prostitute" and took "half to three quarters of the money she made," according to the affidavit.

After seeing the Craigslist ad linked to Davidson and Stoffels, officers set up the ad. Edmunds is accused of responding to it.

Several people responded to the ad throughout last week, police say, but Edmunds was the only one who showed up at the hotel and attempted to carry out the deal.

"I don't think it's something that is running rampant," Casper Police Sgt. Steve Schulz said Tuesday when asked whether online prostitution was becoming a problem in the Casper area. "But I think we're starting to see it more."

Capt. Chris Walsh said his department is aware of how the Internet has made it easier for people to commit certain crimes. Police officers, he noted, "are paying attention" to the situation.

"If you're going on Craigslist and you're looking for illegal activity," Walsh said, "I want you to keep in the back of your mind that it may be Casper police on the other end."

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