



THE FOUNTAIN HILLS TIMES

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Another girls team crowned



Times photo by Mike Scharnow

The Lady Falcons basketball team marched through the state tournament and was crowned champions for Division III after handily defeating Valley Christian Saturday evening in Glendale. The girls and their coaches celebrated with the trophy after the victory. See story and additional pictures on Page 2B. More pictures also are in a photo gallery on our website, www.fhtimes.com.

Dispensary hours fight to council

P&Z recommends compromise

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

Mark Steinmetz, operator of Nature's AZ Medicines, the medical marijuana dispensary in Fountain Hills, got an endorsement of sorts from the Planning and Zoning Commission last week. The commission voted 5-0 to recommend the Town Council amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow additional operating hours, just not as many being sought by Steinmetz.

Currently the Zoning Ordinance allows the dispensary to operate from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The request was to expand those hours to 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. seven days a week. The commission approved a motion to recommend 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

The Fountain Hills Coalition came with several speakers ready to challenge the request.

Steinmetz had with him attorney Melvin McDon-

ald. During the build up for the medical marijuana initiative, McDonald became known as a former Superior Court judge and former U.S. Attorney for Arizona who came out in support of the initiative.

McDonald related the story of his son who sustained a severe brain injury at age 14, and how his wife lived in the shadows obtaining marijuana for their son for a number of years. McDonald himself lived with the secret those years.

He said the Medical Marijuana Act has freed them as a family to come out of the shadows.

Dwight Johnson, a coalition board member, spoke about how he and his wife have worked hard to keep their teen son drug and alcohol free. He said he believes they have been successful, but is concerned about the added hours creating more opportunity to access the marijuana.

Carole Groux, who founded the Fountain Hills Coalition, said a survey

(cont. on page 8A)

Proposed new trail draws ire

Overlook extensions studied

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

The Town of Fountain Hills has sent out 500 letters inviting residents to a meeting today, March 5, to discuss a proposed trail surrounding the hillside neighborhoods north and east of Fountain Park.

According to Community Services Director Mark Mayer, the request to consider a new trail came from some members of the

Sonoran Conservancy of Fountain Hills.

The group as a whole did not make the request, according to Conservancy Chairman Steve Fleming.

The proposed trail would extend for approximately 2.7 miles around the Puerto Del Lago, Diamante Del Lago, Arriba Del Lago, and Bella Lago neighborhoods. It also passes adjacent to Rancho Montana, Mirage Point and Mirage Heights.

The new trail would run

outside the existing Lake Overlook Trail.

There are just a couple of areas where the town has available property to build recreational trails, according to Mayer.

The McDowell Mountain Preserve, for example, already has an extensive trail system.

This proposed trail would add to the recreational hiking and walking options near the center of town.

The Sonoran Conservancy of Fountain Hills has a team of trailblazers who have volunteered to build

and maintain the trail.

Some residents have already expressed concerns related to a public trail proposal so close to their neighborhoods.

The meeting begins at 7 p.m. and is being held at the Community Center.

Mayer said the proposal could go before the Parks and Recreation Commission for consideration sometime in the future.

Input is being sought from the public at this time to gauge the idea's reception from the public, Mayer added.



Neighbors have been invited to discuss a trail proposal surrounding the Lakeside neighborhoods at a meeting tonight. The red line indicates the proposed trail. The thin blue line is the existing overlook trail.

Disc golf tourney



Times photo by Ryan Winslett

The 26th annual Memorial Championship, presented by Discraft and the Professional Disc Golf Association, took place over the weekend at Fountain Park with hundreds competing. The local course is notorious for offering some tricky shots, including California's Robert Smith's attempt to split a pair of trees and sink it in the basket. See story and additional pictures on page 12A and on our website.

Countdown to our 40th Anniversary!

This week we continue our countdown to the newspaper's 40th anniversary, which will be celebrated in June. Each week we will post on our website (www.fhtimes.com) a new page looking back through the years and summarizing the news, starting with 1974, the first year this publication rolled off the presses. Take a stroll through history with us. A special commemorative issue will be published in June.



Visit www.fhtimes.com to read full-size version

INSIDE THIS WEEK

Events:
Fundraiser set for B&G Club,
See Page 10A

Schools:
Board delays approving some contracts.
See Page 13A

Sports:
Gabby Mei (pictured) and fellow Falcons prepare for sand volleyball.
See Page 4B



WEATHER

	H	L	P
Tues., Feb. 25	75	53	--
Wed., Feb. 26	78	50	--
Thurs., Feb. 27	75	49	--
Fri., Feb. 28	79	51	--
Sat., March 1	75	52	2"
Sun., March 2	63	50	--
Mon., March 3	74	49	--

For weather updates and forecasts go to www.fhtimes.com



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