

Around Montana News Briefs (1985)

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All Montana melons untainted

BOZEMAN, Mont. (AP) — Montana agriculture officials say no watermelons being sold in Montana are from the California fields where some melons were contaminated by the pesticide aldicarb. Ralph Peck, deputy director of the Montana Department of Agriculture, said Tuesday his office surveyed wholesalers and distributors in Montana without turning up any California melons.

California man killed in crash

MARION (AP) — An elderly California man was killed and his wife critically injured when their motor home collided with a logging truck west of here Tuesday afternoon, Flathead County authorities said.

The man, in his late 70s, was thrown from the vehicle and was pronounced dead at the scene. Passers-by pulled the woman from the flaming motor home and tried to revive her. She was in "grave" condition at Kalispell Regional Hospital Tuesday evening. Names of the two victims were not released.

Cabin Creek protests heard

KALISPELL (AP) — Members of the International Joint Commission heard pleas Tuesday from northwestern Montana residents who want to prevent development of a huge Canadian coal mining project just across the border.

Many of those testifying said the project at Cabin Creek, British Columbia would spoil the Flathead River, which forms the western boundary of Glacier National Park in Montana.

Regional officials and environmentalists warned of dire consequences to the region's multi-million-dollar tourist industry if the proposed Cabin Creek twin open-pit mine complex is developed by Safe Creek Coal Ltd. of Vancouver, British Columbia. That firm is a subsidiary of the multi-national Rio Algom Inc.

Man pleads guilty in fraud case

MISSOULA (AP) -A former Missoula man has pleaded guilty to selling unregistered securities and defrauding customers of a Missoula weatherization business.

Rodney Fairchild, 34, pleaded guilty Monday in state district court here to four felony counts: two related to selling securities and two for engaging in deceptive practices.

Fairchild, who now lives in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, submitted his guilty pleas in exchange for the dismissal of 19 other felony counts.

The plea bargain also calls for Fairchild to pay about 60 victims an undetermined amount of restitution within four years. Missoula County Attorney Robert L. Deschamps III said that amount could reach \$75,000, but much of it has been paid.

The charges stemmed from actions taken by Fairchild in 1983 and 1984, when he did business as Montana Environmental Services Inc., which specialized in maintaining and weatherizing mobile homes.

Watt mediating Indian dispute

CROW AGENCY (AP) — Former Interior Department secretary James Watt said here Tuesday he is confident that a settlement can be worked out in the so-called 107th Meridian dispute between the Crow and Northern Cheyenne Indian tribes.

Watt now is a private consultant.

He said he is sure he can implement a contract drawn up by him and Crow tribal officials last year. It calls for the federal government to pay between \$60 million and \$100 million to the Crows for land taken from them because of an improper survey by the government almost 100 years ago.

The disputed lands lie along the border between the Crow and Northern Cheyenne reservations.

Environmentalists arrested in park

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, Wyo. (AP) Nine members of the Earth First environmental group who were protesting park management of the grizzly bear were arrested for distributing pamphlets and materials without a permit, park officials said.

The nine were arrested Tuesday night, and one individual was cited for resisting arrest, according to a news release from park spokesman Greg Kroll.

All were released after being cited, Kroll said. He did not release the names of those arrested.

Earth First spokeswoman Marcy Willow said the group was protesting what it sees as the Park Service's mismanagement of the grizzly bear, leading to the destruction and extinction of the threatened species.

She said three Earth First members dressed as bears, plus about 20 others, went to the Grant Village Restaurant for dinner and to distribute pamphlets to tourists. Some carried signs proclaiming "Save the Grizzly."

Arson suspected in Frazer fire

FRAZER (AP) Arson may have been the cause of a July 4 fire that destroyed the A&S Products manufacturing plant here, a Fort Peck law enforcement official said Tuesday.

Special Officer Chuck Trottier said he is suspicious because he found out only hours before the fire that a lawsuit had been filed against the tribal-owned firm, which made molded plastic products. The plant had been shut down since mid-June, he said.

The Fort Peck Tribal Council dissolved the company on June 24, agreed to bail out the firm's approximately \$250,000 in debts and planned to sell off the plant's machinery, Trottier said.

He said the early morning fire destroyed the building and the machinery inside. Low water pressure in Frazer hampered the efforts of several crews that were called in to battle the blaze, he said.

Trottier estimated the loss at \$500,000 and said the property was insured.

Wrecker stuck in Yellowstone

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, Wyo. (AP) — Fishermen near Tower Junction in Yellowstone National Park may net more than trout.

A two-ton wrecker has been sitting in the Yellowstone River since June 16.

Park officials say high water has prevented efforts to remove the wrecker from the river. About two-thirds of the truck is covered with water, they said Tuesday.

The wrecker, owned by the Yellowstone Park Service Stations, was stolen from a Canyon Village gas station June 16 and was driven into the Yellowstone River Canyon, said Charles Gallagher, general manager of YPSS.

Apparently no one was in the wrecker, when it fell 225 feet down the steep embankment and into the he said.

Marlenee likes Stockman's exit

MILES CITY (AP) -Federal Budget Director David Stockman's resignation will be "good for Montana," Rep. Ron Marlenee, R-Mont., said Tuesday.

Marlenee, the lone Republican in Montana's congressional delegation and a frequent critic of the budget director, said Stockman had "outlived his usefulness within the cabinet."

Stockman announced Tuesday that he would resign as of Oct. 1.

Marlenee is one of several congressmen who have pressured the White House to release money from the Wallop-Breaux Sport, Fish and Restoration Trust Fund. Montana's share of about \$2 million would be spent on the \$4.9 million remodeling of the Miles City Fish Hatchery on the Yellowstone River.

Melcher backs campaign financing bill

A bipartisan commission to study financing of congressional campaigns would be created by legislation co-sponsored by Sen. John Melcher, D-Mont.

"This bill is an appropriate response to mounting press and public criticism of the cost campaigns and the way political money is raised.' " Melcher said Tuesday in a news release.

Cabinet drilling decision appealed

HERON (AP) — A decision by the U.S. Forest Service to allow additional drilling in the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness has been appealed by a Heron man.

Cedron Jones also asking that the drilling be stopped pending the outcome of his appeal.

Jones filed the appeal and request for a stay July 3 to challenge drilling being conducted by U.S. Borax and Chemicals Inc. Northern Region Forester Tom Coston must decide on the stay by the end of this week.

Late last month, the Forest Service issued U.S. Borax a permit, allowing it to drill an unspecific number of holes at up to four sites just north of Rock Lake. The purpose of the drilling is to track a mineral deposit that is exposed at U.S. Borax's validated claim near the north shore of the lake.

The company has until Sept. 30 to complete its 24-hour-a-day drilling that began June 19.

OSHA awards grant to AFL-CIO

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration has awarded a \$70,000 grant to the Montana State AFL-CIO for education and training in job safety and health.

Sen. John Melcher, D-Mont., said Monday the award was made under OSHA's New Directions program. That program, he said, makes funds available to labor groups, employer associations and other nonprofit organizations to assist them in providing safety and health training to employees.

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