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Prosecutor given dismissal notice

By Joseph Barrios and Scott Simonson
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

A Pima County prosecutor said Tuesday that he's being fired, possibly in connection with the murder case against a Tucson doctor accused of having his former medical partner killed.

Deputy County Attorney Brad Roach, who last month successfully prosecuted serial rapist James Allen Selby, said he was issued a notice of the intended termination and then was escorted off the County Attorney's Office's Downtown premises.

He said as he was leaving the office he saw another prosecutor being escorted

from the premises. "I desperately want this job," Roach said. "This is what I love doing."

Roach said he was not sure how Tuesday's events will affect Selby's sentencing, which is scheduled for Monday in Pima County Superior Court.

County Attorney Barbara LaWall did not return calls seeking comment.

Dan Benavidez, spokesman for the Pima County Attorney's Office, said state laws and county employment rules prevent him from discussing personnel matters, including whether any firings occurred on Tuesday.

SEE DISMISSAL / A15



Dr. Bradley Schwartz is charged with conspiracy to commit murder.



Dr. David Brian Stidham, Schwartz's ex-partner, was slain in October.

Supervisors OK fee on new homes

Creates housing trust fund to help low-income residents buy, repair

By Joe Burchell
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

A fee of \$320 to \$15,000 to be imposed on new homes to fund down payments and closing costs for lower-income buyers was approved Tuesday by the Pima County Board of Supervisors.

The money, up to \$3.1 million a year at today's home-building pace, will go into a housing trust fund, supplementing about \$10 million in bond funds approved by voters in 2004.

Households making up to \$40,320 a year, which is 80 percent of the county's median household income, will be eligible to tap into the funds.

Although the fee will be paid by home builders, there's a "high probability" it will be passed on to buyers, said Ed Taczanowsky, president of the Southern Arizona Home Builders Association.

It will be applied to new homes authorized in any future rezonings in unincorporated Pima County. Last year there were about 2,850 homes built, a county report says.

Homes already on the market or approved, and homes within an incorporated city or town won't be affected.

Although it applies only to new homes now, Taczanowsky

SEE HOME FEE / A15

The lowdown

• The county's new housing trust fund and new housing fee are aimed at increasing the number of lower-income homeowners by making money available to low- and moderate-income buyers or assisting development programs that cater to those buyers.

• Who will pay the fee? Builders or buyers of new homes in unincorporated Pima County costing more than \$135,000.

• Who will benefit from the fund? Residents with household incomes up to \$40,320 a year who need public assistance to be able to buy a home or make critical repairs to an existing home.

• How much is the fee? The proposed fee is based on home values, ranging from \$320 for homes costing \$135,000 up to \$15,000 for homes costing more than \$1 million.

• How much will that bring in for affordable housing programs? Up to \$3.1 million a year, to go with up to \$10 million in bonds approved by voters this year.

• How will potential buyers apply and qualify for the money? That remains to be decided by a housing commission that will be appointed by the board.

• When will the money be available? That depends on how long it takes the commission to approve policies for the program and start collecting fees.

Horse sanctuary opens



Jeffrey Scott / Arizona Daily Star

Karen Harkson, founder of Equine Voices Rescue and Sanctuary between Green Valley and Tubac, kisses a foal in her care.

Drug-industry mares, foals

By Sarah Garrecht Gassen
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Gulliver, Spanky, Bella Luna and Harkies Deuce chomp hay and nuzzle each other on a sunny morning, unaware that a small group of dedicated people has formed a new nonprofit to make sure they and unwanted horses like them lead long, safe lives.

Karen Harkson and her husband, Randy, moved to the 10-acre Jumpin' Jack Ranch, between Green Valley and Tubac, in May and opened Equine Voices Rescue & Sanctuary, which was incorporated in August and is at least a temporary home now to almost two dozen rescued foals and horses.

While 15 of the sanctuary's residents

How to help

• Equine Voices Rescue & Sanctuary Inc. is in need of alfalfa hay, grain, veterinary and farrier funds, fencing and volunteers, among other things. Find out more:

- Online: www.equinevoices.org
- Phone: Call founder Karen Harkson at 398-2814.

are foals rescued in North Dakota from becoming "pony skin" leather goods, Harkson is focusing her rescue efforts on saving mares and foals that are byproducts of the pharmaceutical industry's manufacturing of Premarin and Prempro,

female hormone-replacement drugs derived from pregnant mares' urine.

The production of Premarin and Prempro has dropped by about half since 2002 when a study showed a link to increased stroke risk, according to the manufacturer, and that's creating a glut of unwanted production mares and their foals.

"You do what you can do even though sometimes it seems like such a small piece of the pie," Harkson said. "People are doing this all over the country."

"Everything here just fell into place," she said. "It was a meant-to-be thing."

Mares are kept pregnant to produce the hormone in their urine needed for the

SEE SANCTUARY / A15

Ex-pharmacy chief awaits Kino sanctions

By Enric Volante
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

The longtime top pharmacist at the former Kino Community Hospital is the first person known to face sanctions in one of the nation's biggest cases of missing painkillers and other drugs.

The sanctions come just seven months after the pharmacist, Shirley J. Thompson, was named to a prestigious seat on the Arizona State Board of Pharmacy. Today that board is to consider whether to fine her over vast amounts of drugs that were lost or stolen under her watch from the hospital pharmacy.

"Shirley was not — and I think the board will agree with this — involved in any way in intentional wrongdoing," said her attorney, Timothy J. Thomason. However, he said, board

members likely "would say the buck stops here."

Thompson could not be reached for comment Tuesday.

The Pima County Board of Supervisors agreed last month to relinquish its pharmacy license and pay a record \$111,802 fine to the state for the county-owned hospital's failure to secure and control more than 223,000 pills missing in one year at its pharmacy.

The state board and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency began investigating in April after Thompson reported that the pharmacy she directed could not account for some drugs, including large amounts of Vicodin, which contains the much-abused painkiller hydrocodone.

SEE PHARMACY / A15

COMING SUNDAY

YOUNG CROSSERS

Getting smuggled into the United States can be a perilous journey, especially if you are a child.

IN TODAY'S STAR

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Weather

TODAY'S FORECAST

Partly cloudy.
High 72 / Low 46

Tuesday: High 68 / Low 46

For complete weather information, see the back page of Sports.
www.azstarnet.com/weather

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