

The Tombstone Epitaph.

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126 YEARS IN THE TOWN TOO TOUGH TO DIE

FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 2007

In The Dark

Illegal spelunking fun for locals; city official warns of danger

By Rob Watkins

THE TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

Every year thousands of tourists flock to Tombstone to experience what Old West life was like, but there is another side of the city most people don't get to see.

It's underneath Tombstone. Miles of closed mines snake through the area as remnants of the town's historic past.

Silver brought people seeking their fortune to the area in the late 1800s. Almost overnight, Tombstone transformed from untouched desert into a bustling boomtown.

In 1886, water flooded the mine shafts, and, combined with fires that ravaged the city, people began leaving.

Now that the mining dust has settled, Tombstone is left with a series of underground tunnels resembling a giant ant farm. Some shafts stretch for more than three miles. One goes completely across town, traveling from the Bird Cage Theatre to near the new high school.

All the mines are privately owned and some are safer than others.

Andree DeJournett, former Tombstone mayor, owns one small mine shaft on his property and plans to open it up for tourists in about three months.

"It is safe and inspected," City Marshal Merlin Jay Smith said. "There are, however, some mine shafts that no one should enter."

Those words haven't stopped the locals.

Inside the mines, it is as dark as a moonless night. Eight-by-eight pine and redwood beams help keep areas of the underground shafts from caving in, but some areas have collapsed.

"It is unsafe and unpredictable to be down there," Smith said. "There have never been any deaths in the mines, but we have arrested kids and adults for trespassing."

One entrance is directly south of Allen Street on private land, but can be accessed easily and illegally. Some locals use the abandoned mines to party, explore and take precious minerals to sell to tourists.

There is no padlock on the graffiti covered door entering the mines. Only a bullet-holed sign saying, "Prohibited to Enter. Keep Out," stands between the mine and someone trying to get inside.

Chris Amacker, 19, lived in Tombstone for 12 years and now resides in Tucson. He used to regularly enter the tunnels with friends.

"A lot of people party down here," Amacker said. "There isn't a whole lot for people to do in this town."

Amacker said he watched rockslides happen right in front of him.

"It's a thrill to enter these shafts," he said. "You could die, but that's the exciting part. So much history is inside these shafts. No tourist will ever see this perspective of Tombstone."

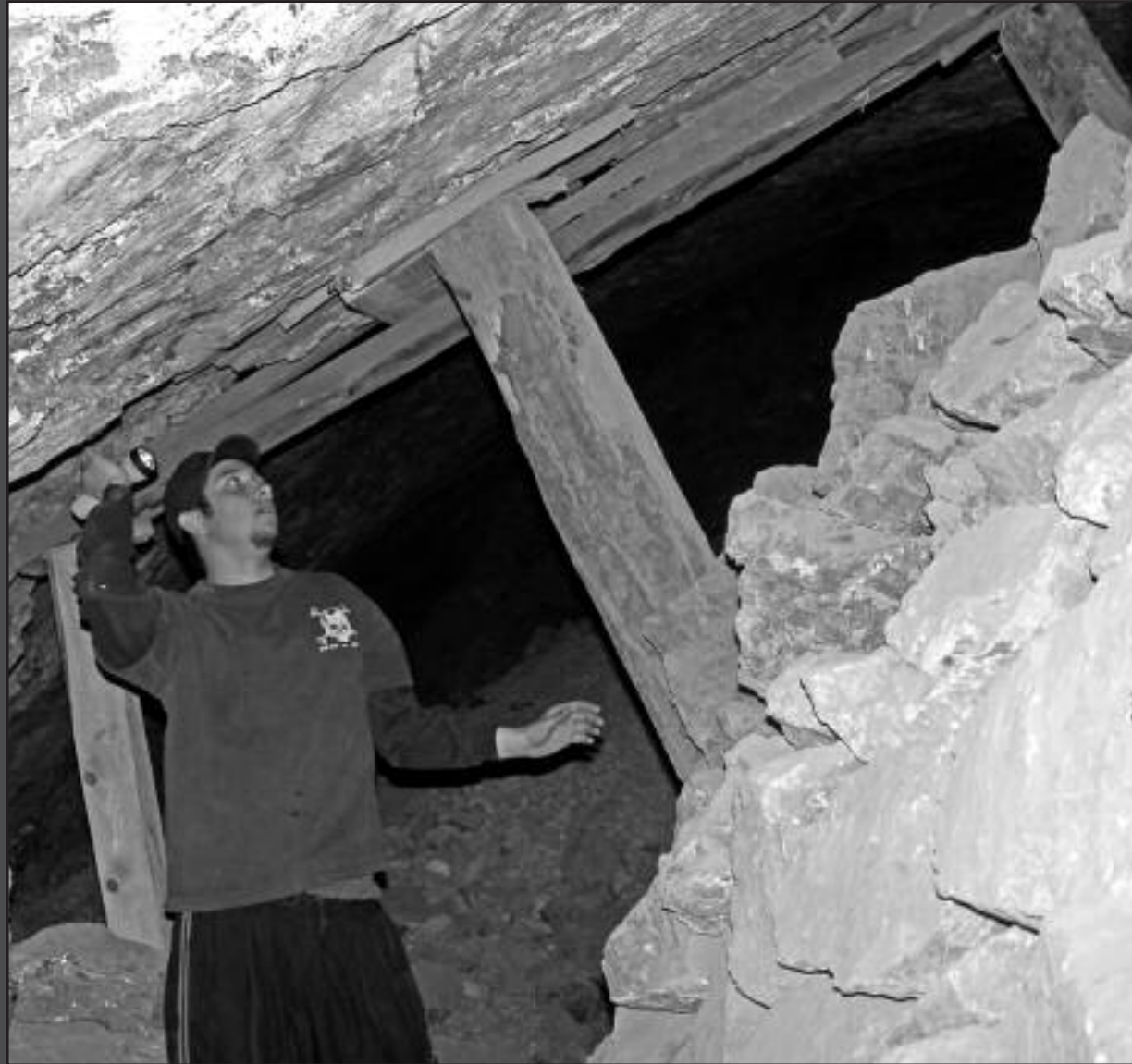


PHOTO BY ROB WATKINS

Former Tombstone resident Chris Amacker shows the way through an abandoned mine under town.

Remnants of old beer cans are scattered throughout the cave. Some walls have markings such as "A Willy was here, Tombstone 1976" and "Mary and Phil 4 Ever."

Bats dwell inside. There are hardly any other life forms aside from insects like flies and spiders.

Some people go into the mines in search of minerals such as quartz, silver and other valuable rocks.

"I know people who would come down here and break off some quartz and sell it to tourists," Amacker said.

Smith said fines and arrests are issued for people caught going onto private property and entering abandoned mines. Most intruders get a warning the first time, he said.

Chris' mother, Arlene Amacker, said she hated it when her son used to go down into the Tombstone underground.

"Only those old rickety beams are keeping you from death," she said. "You have to be out of your mind to go down there."

Border report

Immigrants' kids jailed at border, report says

By Jeanie Bergen

THE TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

Immigrant families apprehended for illegally entering the United States often are treated inhumanely when detained at U.S. facilities, according to a report released by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children.

In the report, "Locking Up Family Values: The Detention of Immigrant Families," researchers found illegal immigrants and their children held in "prison-like" conditions for varying periods of time, from days up to two years.

While the report focuses on two Department of Homeland Security detention centers, the T. Don Hutton Detention Center in Taylor, Texas, and the Berks facility in Pennsylvania, illegal immigrants captured along the Arizona-Mexico border are also detained with their children, although for a lesser amount of time.

If illegal immigrants are captured with their children, the children are kept at the detention center with their parents until arrangements can be made, said Gustavo Soto, public information officer for the Tucson Sector Border Patrol.

Soto said the Border Patrol attempts to contact family members living in the United States to pick up the children, but if their family is in Mexico, the children must be kept with their parents at the Nogales detention center.

The Mexican Consulate is contacted to make arrangements for children who need to return to Mexico, Soto said.

The Border Patrol also contacts Child Protective Services, but no data are kept on how many referrals are received on illegal immigrant children, according to Liz Barker-Alvarez, spokeswoman for Child Protective Services in Arizona.

"If the Border Patrol reports to CPS that there is a child with parents who are not willing or able to take care of them, our agency works with social service agencies in Mexico to locate their family," Barker-Alvarez said.

According to Border Patrol records, close to 12,466 juveniles were held at the Nogales detention center from October 2006 through Feb. 28, but there are no data kept on how many of those cases were referred to CPS or whether the juveniles were returned to family members living in Mexico or in the United States.

There are shelters where children can be taken if their parents are going to be detained for a longer period of time, and sometimes they are placed into state care, like foster homes, Barker-Alvarez said.

Once it is determined that an illegal immigrant will not be prosecuted for committing a crime in the United States, they are sent back to Mexico or their country of origin within four to eight hours.

"No one stays here longer than a day," said Soto about the Nogales detention center.

While the Tucson Sector Border Patrol does not keep track of how many illegal immigrant families they apprehend, Soto admits there has been an increase in families crossing as a whole.

"They're trying to avoid returning back (to their country), which would elevate the risk of one of their family members getting caught," Soto said.

Couple craves final trip to town

By Lauren B. Loeb

THE TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

From a landlord named Lil to nights spent gambling in town, Fred Tepper often reminisces of time spent in Tombstone. He dreams of visiting this place he called home one last time.

Tepper, who hasn't stepped foot in Tombstone since 1954 when he was stationed at Fort Huachuca, often finds himself reflecting on memories he and his wife Fran shared more than 50 years ago. It wasn't until recently, when Tepper began researching Tombstone, that he realized there was little information on the town he loved.

A letter from Tepper arrived at The Tombstone Epitaph local edition on March 5, expressing his desire to visit Tombstone

one more and his struggle to find resources about the town.

Born in Washington, D.C., during the Depression, Tepper and his parents and brother moved to Los Angeles when he was a child. His father soon opened a delicatessen in the Hollywood area.

"My father catered to the blossoming film industry and would serve a seven-course dinner for 45 cents," Tepper said.

He remembers his father playing cards with legends like James Dunn and Walt Disney.

A few years later, Tepper's family moved to Baltimore, Md., where he spent the remainder of his childhood and teen years and attended the University of Baltimore.

In his third year at the University of Baltimore, Tepper was at a sorority party one evening when he met his future wife,

Fran. "I saw a beautiful red-head from across the room. There was so much chemistry, and we fell in love," Tepper said.

Soon after, Tepper proposed - to the dismay of his father, who felt the couple were too young to get married.

"You want to get married - are you crazy--you can't even support yourself and now you want to support a stranger!" Tepper remembered his father saying.

Shortly after Tepper entered married life, he decided to enlist in the Reserves since he knew he would eventually be drafted. He began basic training and then became a military instructor.

After first being stationed in Georgia, Tepper received orders in 1954 that he would be transferred to Fort Huachuca.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF FRED TEPPER

Hash hunting: Chasing the hare along the streets of Tombstone

By Neil Critchley

THE TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

You may have seen them running with flashlights through your neighborhood at night, jumping over walls, running through your backyard or even in the middle of the street against oncoming traffic.

Or maybe you heard the steady clomping of their running shoes on the pavement, the sharp chirps from their whistles, or their cries to one another: "On! On!"

They are the World Hash House Harriers, an international underground club of beer drinkers with a running problem. And last week they ran amok in Tombstone.

Here's how it works: a group of people - referred to as the pack, hash or hounds - chase a trailblazer - also known as the hare - who is given a head start to lay out a trail for the hash to follow.

The hare carries a pouch full of flour and plops a dollop every so often to mark the trail, said 30-year-old Lynette "Hood Ornament" Linn, grand master of the

GoatCheez County Hash in Sierra Vista.

The goal of the hash is to catch up to and "snare" the hare, said Linn, who earned her nickname after once being clipped by a passing vehicle and for being caught 'in flagrante' atop a car. Whoever tags the hare then becomes the trail-setter, and the pack gives that person a head start to lay a new trail.

The hare also carries chalk to mark occasional "decision points denoted by a symbol - usually a circle with the letters "DP" inside, which are designed to throw the hounds off the hare's trail.

Several trails stem from the decision points and the hash has to split up and scout out the false trails to find the true trail the hare is on, Linn said. Lead runners chant "On! On!" so followers know they are on the right path.

"It's a game," said 44-year-old hasher Chuck 'Slippery Beaver' Burrows. "Most of the time you're not even thinking about running. It's a puzzle and you have to solve the

SEE **RUNNERS** p.4



PHOTO BY NEIL CRITCHLEY

Rod 'Meat Grazer' Kamph of Tucson has to drink out of the plunger for marking a poor trail during a recent hash run.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FRED TEPPER

The Teppers during in 1954 during their stay in Tombstone.

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would be transferred to Fort Huachuca. Tepper and his wife rented an efficiency apartment in Tombstone. They were welcomed by a landlord named Lil, who they remember as a sweet and kind woman. During their one-year stay in Tombstone, the Teppers found excitement in the western ambiance and became involved in the tightly knit community's activities. "We would always attend movie nights in town, every Tuesday and Thursday, and loved being able to walk one block back and forth to our apartment and the town center," Tepper said. After 1954, the Teppers moved back to Baltimore and raised two daughters. Throughout the years, Tepper worked in accounting for the state of Maryland and became actively involved with table tennis and the American Table Tennis Association. Nowadays, Fred and Fran have been married 55 years and enjoy eating out, traveling and spending time with their grandchildren. They hope to visit Tombstone one last time in the near future, to reflect on the past and create new memories to add to their blissful times spent in Tombstone. Tepper often recalls living in Tombstone while in the service as a time when he was "broke but happy."

Letters coming about water use

By Valarie Potell
THE TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

Cochise County residents who live in rural areas may receive a letter to participate in a study about well water use. The Board of Supervisors requested the study in September, but has been waiting for the University of Arizona's Water Resources Research Center to get onboard with the study, said Carl Robie, the county's water conservation coordinator. The study is meant to determine how much water is used in the county. The research center applied for a grant at the end of January to fund the study, said Kristine Uhlman, senior program coordinator with the water research center. They are expecting to hear back about the \$58,970 grant in April, said Susan Pater, county director for the Cochise County Cooperative Extension. She said the grant is through the university's Water Sustainability Program. There are more than 11,000 wells in use in Cochise County and at least 476 people will be needed for the study. Robie said that is the statistical minimum, but the university has "indicated that a larger number may be necessary." The study, which is expected to last a couple of years, will be limited to domestic wells and will not include those used for other purposes, such as mining or agriculture, Robie said. Potential participants will be selected at random and the first round of letters will be sent to those residents. If that does not produce enough participants, the center will continue sending out letters until there are enough people involved with the study, Robie said, adding that they are trying to avoid "the bias that's created with volunteers for the study." He said participants will only be selected from Cochise County residents who live outside the incorporated areas, and they are not interested in how people are using their water, but rather how much water is being used. The current standard figure used is 312 gallons per day, per person. That number is based on a hydrologic report from the Arizona Department of Water Resources from two years ago, Robie said. He thinks there are two reasons why this study is important. First, the county needs "to be able to determine the real deficit of water use," Robie said. "We are trying to determine how much more water is being taken out than is coming in through rainfall and research operations," he said, adding that currently, "we can't be sure that we're stating that deficit accurately." The second reason for the study is that the usage figure is given to subdivisions as a number for them to meet and prove they can meet water demands for 100 years. For example, if an area is zoned for one house on four acres and a builder wants to build another house in that four acres, they must make sure they can meet the number, Robie said.

AIMS anxiety runs rampant in local schools

By Rachael Freireich
THE TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

Although it was implemented in schools nearly a decade ago, the AIMS test still has very few student fans. "I know I'll pass it, but that doesn't mean I hate it any less," said Alex Parra, a Tombstone High School junior. "Anything that might keep me from graduating is something that is really annoying." Most Arizona students took the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS), the hotly debated standardized test given by the Arizona Department of Education, Feb. 27 and Feb. 28. This includes students at THS, where apprehension about the test exists among students. "I feel prepared because we had study classes the week before the test. They were led by teachers and they really did help," Parra said. "After I took the test, I felt good, but I couldn't help wondering what the results were. I didn't have any anxiety taking the test, I just came in and took my time. If things don't go well, I still have a couple more times to pass it." Since the test was added to curriculums and required for graduation on Jan. 1, 2006,

supporters and opponents have used the test as a battleground to fight over how Arizona's education system should work. Supporters say students aren't learning what they should be in schools, and that the test allows administrators and teachers to refocus their curriculums on vital requirements such as reading, writing and math. Opponents say the test proves nothing and keeps schools from graduating students who would otherwise graduate. Opponents also suggest emphasis be placed on "better" standardized tests, like the Stanford-9. THS, which enrolls nearly 400 students from around the area, generally tests close to the state average for Stanford-9 and AIMS tests. Roughly 66 percent of Arizona students who took the AIMS test last year exceeded requirements, down from the previous year's results showing nearly 75 percent of all students exceeded the requirements in all three categories. These findings come from research conducted by Great Schools, a parent research group that specializes in K-12 education. A January report by the Goldwater Institute, a Phoenix-based research group named after former Sen. Barry Goldwater and usually critical of the AIMS test, revealed AIMS tests scores peaked in 2004 and dipped

noticeably lower than federal standards in 2005. The institute suggested the AIMS test will never be as good again. Some students, many of whom are unfamiliar with the exact purpose of the test, are annoyed by AIMS, but approach it the way they do most school assignments. "I don't get nervous about the test and I'm not worried about it preventing me from graduating, I know I'll graduate," said Sheenice Smith, a THS junior. "I just took it to exceed the standards. I don't think most students really care. We just take it because we have to." As the test becomes more widely understood and expected, schools are refining its implementation. Most schools now have AIMS tutoring sessions, and teachers are focusing their curriculums around test elements. The Arizona Department of Education even has a tutoring call line, where students can call during or after school for help with any of the three parts — reading, writing and math. The state level also provides study packets and learning plans to students and teachers. "I don't see many kids getting too nervous before the test," said Fred Yale, a THS math teacher. "The overly concerned kids are the ones who will do well. The kids generally take

the test in stride. We offer about four days of prep in each subject before the test. What that means is that the students have many opportunities to prepare." THS Assistant Principal Mike Bunnell runs the AIMS test for the school and said this year's test ran smoother than he expected. "It went really well. We had a good turnout and we have very few students who need to do retakes of the test because they missed it," he said. "I also noticed the students were very responsive. I like to think it was because of the three days of preparation we had on each subject." Bunnell expected to receive the results of the test in about six weeks, before the school's seniors are set to graduate. "It's kind of important that they know," Bunnell added. For seniors who don't pass the test there is recourse, Bunnell said. "There are other options. They don't just not graduate, although that can happen," he said. "They first have to appeal to the Department of Education. Typically, the only way they grant exemptions is if a student has improved test scores and has taken the test at every opportunity. If a student misses a number of tests, that doesn't look good for them."

A half century of research

U.A. scientists study long-term ecological issues in Cochise County

By Joyanna Jones
THE TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

For more than 50 years, scientists from the U.S. Department of Agriculture have studied the area around Tombstone so they can better understand ecological issues in the desert. USDA scientists' goal is "to develop knowledge and technology to conserve water and soil in semi-arid lands." The project area is a 93 square mile region called the Walnut Gulch Experimental Watershed, which surrounds Tombstone and reaches south into Mexico. Dr. Mark Nearing, research leader at the U S D A - r u n S o u t h w e s t W a t e r s h e d Research center says the length of the ongoing project is "intentional and important, because its critical that we establish trends."



Dr. Nearing

These trends are tracked using data the scientists have collected over the years and help scientists to figure out how the desert is changing. For example, heavy droughts in the past decade have changed the area's vegetation. This data help scientists format public policy to preserve desert lands. The research benefits residents because scientists can identify and study environmental issues before they become big problems. The scientists also work hand-in-hand with the community. "We try to understand what the ranchers' problems are," Nearing said. Finding vegetation to feed cattle and making sure there is enough water are among the ranchers' top priorities, Nearing said. A large issue with a direct affect on the entire Tombstone population is making sure there is enough water to keep up with popula-



tion growth and ranchers' needs. This is an issue concerning Betty Krug, a long-time area resident. "If they keep developing the desert, we are going to run out of water," Krug said. "We need wiser use of water. People think it comes from everywhere." The original reason this project was established in 1954 was to study the effects of water conservation efforts upstream on the

San Pedro River Basin, to see how they affected water users downstream. There had been conflicts between landowners who were worried about upstream water users hoarding water. The downstream landowners wanted to make sure there was enough for them too. The U.S. government wanted scientists to study this problem to decide how public policies could end these conflicts.

The project started with \$225,000 from the USDA. The breadth of research has greatly expanded since then. The project has eight scientists who work with University of Arizona students on a \$3 million annual budget funded through the USDA. Current projects fall under four main categories: erosion and sedimentation, hydrology, creating computer models to help make policy decisions, and using remote sensing technology like satellites. Over the past half-century, experiments have contributed to producing the world's largest rangeland hydrology and erosion database. The scientists have one of the largest published collections of satellite observations combined with ground observations in the world, and their research has contributed to water harvesting technology used worldwide. "Erosion rates, relative to most rangeland in the United States are very high," said Nearing of why the scientists' research is important to Tombstone residents. "There has been a loss of capacity." This means area ranchers are having a harder time finding plants for their cattle to forage. "The land was beat up pretty bad because of mining and heavy ranching in the 1800s," Nearing said. He added that, "The ranchers need to have support. If the perception is that there is no problem, they are unlikely to get the financial support they need from the federal government." Ranchers aren't the only ones concerned about erosion. Teresa Benjamin, a Boot Hill Cemetery employee, worries about monsoons because of earth erosion. After a rainstorm, she can see damage to the graves. She said most of them are covered with rocks now to keep the graves from washing away. The area, problems and technology are always changing, said Mary Nichols, a research hydrologic engineer and member of the scientist team working near Tombstone. "Keeping science moving fast enough to respond to people's impacts of the area" is one of the challenges of the future, Nichols said. "We need to stay current," she said.

Schieffelin Territorial Days on tap

By Melissa Hansen
THE TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

Looking for a weekend full of fun and excitement? Tombstone's Ed Schieffelin Territorial Days just might be what you're looking for. Held March 10 through March 11, thousands are expected to visit Tombstone to honor and remember city founder and prospector Edward Schieffelin, according to the Tombstone Office of Tourism. Activities include an all-pet parade, mining displays, an Ed and Mary look-a-like contest, a treasure hunt for kids and gunfight re-enact-

ments, according to the Tombstone Chamber of Commerce Web site. In honor of the prospector, Tombstone Courthouse State Historic Park will hold excursion trips to Ed Schieffelin's monument Saturday and Sunday at 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., said Art Austin, monument park manager. Excursions cost \$4 and last an hour. The tour includes dialogue on the drive up to the monument which discusses the history of Tombstone and Ed Schieffelin. The dialogue will continue through the tour, Austin said. Don Taylor, assistant park manager, will give a public speech on Allen Street about the life of Ed Schieffelin and his discovery of the

Tombstone mines, Austin said. "Ed Schieffelin Territorial Days is an important event because it reminds everyone how and why Tombstone was founded," said Pat Kelly, a Tombstone Vigilantes performer. Events kick off at 9 a.m. both days and food vendors will be set up along Allen Street. For more information, contact the Tombstone Chamber of Commerce at (520) 457-9317. Ed Schieffelin: a brief history Tombstone was one of the most well known of Arizona's mining camps. Prospector Ed Schieffelin first came to Fort Huachuca with a group of soldiers.

He soon left the camp to prospect surrounding lands, but his friends told him all he would find was his tombstone. In 1877, Schieffelin discovered silver in the mines and named his claim "Tombstone." Since Schieffelin's discovery, the buzz of rich strikes made a boomtown out of the settlement that adopted the claim's name. Schieffelin continued to mine in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. He died May 14, 1897, in Grant County, Ore., at age 49. His body was buried in Tombstone nine days after his death, according to the City of Tombstone Web site.

The Tombstone Epitaph.

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Strapped for cash, Tombstone schools stake out grant-snagging strategy

By Laura Leveque

THE TOMBSTONE EPIGRAPH

Thirty-seven students filed into Fred Yale's math class at Tombstone High School on test day. But with only 30 desks, where were all the students going to sit?

The Tombstone Unified School District's new grant committee may bring district schools that much closer to being furnished with the needed supplies.

The grant committee, which is still in the planning stages, will attempt to explore, write and obtain grants the school district qualifies for, said Cathy Jones, committee chair and TUSD special programs coordinator.

Jones sent out an e-mail and posted information about the committee on the school board Web site, urging anyone interested to e-mail her with letters of intent to join the new grant committee by March 10. She said she is looking for around five dedicated people to join her on the committee and help the district acquire new grants.

A recommendation from the school board's Budget Reduction Committee prompted Jones to start the committee.

"(Because of the new committee) I think we'll get more grant money and more programs and opportunities for students that we could have never been able to afford," Jones said.

TUSD employees hope the grant committee will be able to dedicate more time and energy than they are currently able to for finding grants, as so much is needed for the schools.

The schools need full-time librarians because Joanne Coppola, the part-time librarian for all three schools in the district, is stretched too thin with her responsibilities within the schools, Coppola said.

"We need a full-time librarian and we need basics, like textbooks that aren't 15 to 20 years old. We haven't had new books for the library in two years," she said.

The need for more materials was reiterated by teachers. Aside from needing more than 30 desks for 37 students in the class, some of whom sit on boxes or crowd around one desk, Yale said Tombstone High School needs "everything."

"We are a rural school," said Yale, a three-year Tombstone High School teacher. "Find me a rural school that doesn't need everything. We need money for teachers, salaries, desks, books. It's hard to keep programs running; it's hard to buy \$75 textbooks. The parents complain, but they understand. The kids enjoy coming here. So I'll take that over a textbook any day."

Yale makes copies of the math textbook and binds them together because there are not enough books for each student to have one. He said a grant could help provide all students with textbooks.

Other than more desks, books and supplies, Jones hopes future grants can be obtained to hire new teachers.

"I hope there is a grant out there so we can hire an art teacher and a music teacher," Jones said. "That would be great."

For this school year, TUSD received approximately \$1.2 million in grants, which helps the schools function and flourish, Jones said.

Past grants TUSD has received provided the schools with a great deal of supplies and currently fund 23 teachers' salaries, Jones said.

"Without that grant money, we probably wouldn't have those people," she said.

The allocation of the grants, which consist of state and federal money, is based on need and would take into account Tombstone's poverty rates from 2003, Jones said.

"They (the grants) are very specific and what you write into a grant for, you have to use it exactly for that," Coppola, a member of the Budget Reduction Committee, said about why many grants are difficult to acquire.

Even though a tough road may lie ahead, Jones is optimistic about applying for grants.

"You have to look at it positively though," Jones said. "If you don't get (a grant) the first time, you can reapply and improve on what you did the first time."

When the committee begins meeting, they will need to

determine which grants are available and request them using the correct terminology. The probability of receiving grants depends on who the school district is competing against, Coppola said.

Last year, both elementary schools obtained a grant supplying them with \$250,000 annually for three years to enhance reading curriculum. The Reading First Grant helps the schools develop new reading programs, hire reading coaches and compile data about the students' reading abilities, Jones said.

Alex Parra, a Tombstone High School junior, hopes potential grant money will supply the school with better sports equipment, a thought echoed by other students.

"We definitely need more sports equipment," said Dorian Temple, a THS freshman. "We need more equipment for football, tennis, basketball and track, like new balls, new equipment."

The Special Programs Office, which handles special education, homeless students, state testing and many other educational facets, currently manages TUSD's grants. The new committee will be able to dedicate more time and energy to giving students the things they need.

"The state should be more obligated to help these rural schools financially," Yale said. "But we get by because of the teachers that are here. We make it work because we don't have a choice."



Lee Latimore, member of the Tombstone Art Association, views "Bonita," an acrylic painting by Alexandra Orton.

PHOTO BY JACQUELYN STAHL

Creativity fills Tombstone; ribbons awarded to artists

By Jacquelyn Stahl

THE TOMBSTONE EPIGRAPH

Sculptures, photography, pastel and colored pencil drawings, mixed media, watercolor, acrylic and oil paintings fill the Tombstone Art Gallery for the month of March.

The mayor and two judges awarded artists for their creative work March 3 at the reception for the Tombstone Art Association's 27th annual art show.

More than 40 different amateur and professional artists from Pima, Santa Cruz, Maricopa and Cochise counties entered art works in hopes of selling their pieces or winning a prize at the reception.

"Oh god, we had wall-to-wall people on Saturday," said Carol Stearns, gallery director. "I don't know where they came from."

Mike James of Tombstone and Harlan White of Sierra Vista judged the 111 art pieces by category. Mayor Tom Wright presented an award to Tead Adamezyk of

Sierra Vista, who entered a photograph called "Fall Colors at the Ranch."

Angus Wilson of Sierra Vista won "Best of Show" for his watercolor painting, "Bisbee High Rise." Wilson, Sierra Vista's Artist of the Year in 2005, was one of the judges for the gallery's art show last year, Stearns said.

The Tombstone Vigilantes and Vigilettes came to the reception and presented ribbons to the winner of each category. Ten patron's awards were given from local businesses in Tombstone and Sierra Vista. The businesses donated gift certificates or money prizes for the winners, Stearns said.

Glenn Chance of the Tombstone Art Association entered two art pieces in the show. One was a mixed media work called "Lord of the Jungle," which won first place for mixed media, a vigilantes ribbon, and sold for \$200.

Chance, a member of the Tombstone Art Association since 1986, played violin for the artists

and viewers at the reception on Saturday.

"I've played for the last two receptions," Chance said. "They liked it last year and asked me to do it again."

Stearns ran the art show and entered a piece titled "The Clantons," which won Honorable Mention and a Vigilettes award. Stearns was inspired by a picture she took of two boys dressed up as the Clanton brothers. The photo was taken at the funeral parade in October for the men who died in the O.K. Corral gunfight. The Clantons are among those honored by the parade.

"Everyone from all around came to their funeral, even people from California," Stearns said. "There were even women dressed in black. I asked 'Who are you?' and (the boys) said 'We're the Clantons.'"

The show is open to everyone, and anyone can enter their work. Art pieces range from \$40 to \$500 and are on sale in the art gallery throughout the month of March.

Why? Why? Why? Superintendent's ouster keeps everyone quiet

By Tessa Strasser

THE TOMBSTONE EPIGRAPH

The Tombstone Unified School District Governing Board made headlines with its move to eliminate the superintendent position at its Feb. 7 meeting. One question left unanswered was why the board felt the move was necessary.

It's a question that will probably remain answered. Although actions from public meetings are available to citizens, any business conducted in executive session can be kept confidential, according to the Arizona Revised Statutes.

Executive sessions concern "discussion or consideration of employment," the Statutes state. This includes the thought process behind cutting the superintendent position during the Feb. 7 executive session.

"A lot of the things that were said (about the superintendent position) were said in the executive session and those things can not be mentioned," said James "Jimmie" Dotson, a governing board member.

Superintendent Ronald Hennings said the board's decision surprised to him. The superintendent is evaluated twice a year and all of the items on Hennings' evaluation were at least satisfactory on his latest evaluation in December, Hennings said. Possible ratings are outstanding, satisfactory and needs improvement, he said.

In January, Hennings was alerted the board would move to eliminate the superintendent position at the Feb. 7 meeting.

"In prompt actions to all directives of the Boards, I got an outstanding," Hennings said. "So that was a total surprise to me come January, because it was 24 working days since December 20th after my last evaluation, where I was declared that I wasn't carrying out the directives of the Board."

Ben Barber, governing board chairman, declined to say whether the problem was with Hennings in particular or the superintendent position.

"Anything that was discussed with Mr. Hennings was in the executive session and we really can't talk about it," Barber said.

The board did not conduct research into alternatives before moving to eliminate the position. No further action was taken in eliminating the superintendent position at the Feb. 28 meeting because the board decided to wait on the Arizona School Board Association (ASBA) to send a representative to look at TUSD's administration as a whole, Dotson said.

Panfilo Contreras, ASBA executive director, said having a district with no superintendent is

very rare. Contreras said although he didn't know the exact circumstances of Tombstone, he wouldn't recommend the move.

One of the alternatives both Dotson and Barber mentioned was creating a part-time principal, part-time superintendent position, which is what a few other districts in the state have done.

"That's rare too," Contreras said. "It's generally on very, very small districts."

Dotson said no one in the district besides Hennings actually has the credentials to fill the superintendent position.

At one point, even the high school principal was operating under Hennings' superintendent license until he got his licensure, Hennings said. The district would not be able to use any of its existing principals for the superintendent position then, meaning the district would have to hire from outside for the new 50/50 position.

Hennings said this may be harder to do than the board expects. There are shortages of school district administrators all over the country. California will have 1,000 administrators retire and Arizona will have almost 100 administrators retire in the next five years, Hennings said.

"They're (administrators) just not in the pipeline," Hennings said.

Hennings, who also teaches education at Northern Arizona University, said he can already see there are fewer possible candidates.

"Where we used to have 15 or 20 people in each class, we're down to eight or nine people in the class," Hennings said. "Even if we had a huge load of people come in tomorrow, it would be four years before they'd be serviceable as superintendents. There are fewer teachers, fewer principals and fewer administrators."

Hennings said proper certification and training is very important. Even though he teaches school law, he said he still doesn't know everything.

"I know a lot of what's in there, but there's a lot I don't," he said. "That can be very dangerous. We're subject to lawsuit for liability, we're subject to Office of Civil Rights citations and Attorney General citations."

If the proper procedures are not followed, the government can and will take away funding, Hennings said.

"They will cut off your money," he said. "The check won't come. That's not a threat, that's just a promise."

Elimination of the superintendent position is not the only move in the works. The board is also asking the ASBA representative to look at the current administration to see what other possible cuts can be made in the district, Dotson said.

Hiking report

Boots made for walking on Mt. Wrightson

By Courtney C. Johnson

THE TOMBSTONE EPIGRAPH

Looking for a good workout, a nice view and a little bit of nature? Maybe a difficult hike will do.

Cave Canyon Trail #149 is the Arizona State Parks Trail of the Month for March. Nestled in the Mt. Wrightson Wilderness of the Nogales Ranger District, the two-mile trail provides hikers access to the mountain's eastern slopes and has several loop options, according to the Coronado National Forest Web site.

It is a short trail, but not an easy one, the Web site states.

"The climb up Cave Canyon Trail is relatively steep, so you'll most likely find yourself enjoying the view as you take time out to catch your breath or rest your horse," according to the Web site.

The trail, which receives a lower amount of use, offers views of the Mustang Mountains, Whetstone Mountains, Cave Creek Valley, San Pedro Valley and Huachuca Mountains, according to the Web site.

Nature lovers will find a variety of wildlife along the trail, such as scrub oak and high desert pinyon-juniper woodlands on the lower slopes, ponderosa, Arizona and Chihuahuahua pines and Douglas fir on the higher slopes, and

Coues white-tailed deer, black bears, mountain lions, Arizona gray squirrels, songbirds and hawks.

The road leading to the trailhead requires a high clearance vehicle, especially when there is water in the stream. Hikers are also advised to follow "leave no trace" laws along the trail and bring their own water.

For directions on getting to the trail, visit the Arizona State Parks' Web site, <http://www.azstateparks.com>, or call Arizona State Parks, (602) 542-4171.

Other upcoming events

•March 10: "Rock Art on the Colorado Plateau" presentation at Riordan Mansion State Historic Park; Archaeology Awareness Month presentation at Fort Verde State Historic Park.

•March 10 and 11: "Civil War in the Southwest" reenactment at Picacho Peak State Park; Ed Schieffelin Days at Tombstone Courthouse State Historic Park; Lighthouse Festival at Lake Havasu State Park.

•March 11: Swansea Field Trip at Buckskin Mountain State Park; "Fire by Friction" presentation at Red Rock State Park; "Atlal & Dart" demonstration at Red Rock State Park.

•March 13: Homeschool Family Tours at Boyce Thompson Arboretum State Park; "En Vogue: 90 Years of Riordan Women's Fashion" discussion at Riordan Mansion State Historic Park.

•March 16 and 17: 2007 Arizona Archaeology and Heritage Expo at Yuma Crossing State Historic Park.

•March 16 through 18: Lake Havasu Marine Association Boat Show at Lake Havasu State Park.

•March 17: Archaeology Awareness Month events at Fort Verde State Historic Park; Annual Mariachi Festival at Patagonia Lake State Park; "Arizona Territorial Justice Forum: The Pleasant Valley War" presentation and panel at Tombstone Courthouse State Historic Park; "Arizona 101" class at Boyce Thompson Arboretum State Park.

•March 24: Triathlon at Lake Havasu State Park; "From the Trickster to the Braggart: Folktales of Arizona" folktale presentation at Jerome State Historic Park; "Welcome Back Buzzards" celebration at Boyce Thompson Arboretum State Park.

•March 24 and 25: World War I and World War II Event at Tubac Presidio State Historic Park.

•March 25: Archaeology Hike at Red Rock State Park.

•March 31: Archaeology Awareness Month at Fort Verde State Historic Park; Havasu Classics 11th Annual Spring Show & Shine" car show at Lake Havasu State Park.

For more information, visit the Arizona State Parks Website, <http://www.azparks.gov/text/calendar.html>.

City keys on Boothill money-making proposals

By Valarie Potell

THE TOMBSTONE EPIGRAPH

The gift shop at Boothill Graveyard recently underwent a series of changes to make it run like a viable business, a Tombstone city official said.

City Clerk George Barnes said the City Council asked him to evaluate the management of Boothill in December.

"When a government gets into a business, they don't always do it like it's with their own money," Barnes said.

He worked with Boothill store manager Teresa Benjamin on a series of actions to make the graveyard more profitable.

Barnes said they changed the hours so employees were not working when there were no visitors and revised the vendor list to use only reliable companies.

"There's a lot of vendors who are great at giving you an invoice, but not good at delivery," Barnes said.

He said they also refocused the inventory to high-turnover items, brought the merchant account up to date, stopped the pre-approval of deliveries, and measured the inventory in the shop.

Benjamin said she has seen a lot of improvement in the business, even a couple of months before these changes were made because the store started stocking inventory people really want.

"Now a lot of our products either have the Boothill logo or are affiliated with Tombstone," Benjamin said. "When you have inventory on the shelf that doesn't sell, you don't do very well."

Boothill's hours were shortened so the graveyard is

now open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Benjamin said they may stay open later in the summer, but the decision has not yet been made.

Carlos Leon, Ward 1 councilman, was involved with some of the changes. He said they will be using several measures to improve security for cash made from donations. That includes keeping the only key for the donation box at city hall.

Other changes included adjustments in accounting. Barnes said some of the steps included removing inappropriate costs to make sure everything was being paid for out of the right accounts, considering the inventory value in the overall budget, and putting the costs into two brackets: one for the gift shop and one for donations.

Barnes said the council viewed the business as signifi-

cantly losing money two years ago, but after accounting adjustments and business policy changes, the business is expected to more than break even this year.

The city resumed control of the graveyard when its contract with a private operator expired in the fall. Barnes said the city could make the decision to lease the business to someone else or continue running it.

Leon said the city will continue running the business for the next six to eight months and then decide if the council wants to take bids for a private owner to run it. He said no matter what happens with the gift shop, the city will continue managing the donation box.

Leon said if any members of the public have any questions about the changes, they can call him at (520) 559-4163.

Hopkins, David Lopez win basketball honors

Sam Hopkins: coach of year

Validation. For Sam Hopkins, it has been a long time coming. The 67-year-old won his first Coach of the Year award after being unanimously voted top coach in the 2A East Conference.

Hopkins, in his first season at Tombstone, led the Yellow Jackets' basketball team to an 18-10 (10-2 in conference) record and the No. 1 seed in the East Region at the state tournament.

"Coming out here after not being recognized in Columbus, and applying for three jobs there and not getting any one of them, and coming out here the first year and making an impact like this," Hopkins said is something he never thought would happen.

But it did. As Thatcher head coach Kenny Smith went down the list at the coaches' meeting, he casually mentioned Hopkins, coach of the year.



Hopkins

Hopkins didn't know if he heard correctly: "I said, 'What? What did you say?'"

"He wouldn't answer and was laughing and looking down at the sheet," Hopkins said.

After winning 12 championships

at different levels in his career and never taking home recognition for a job well done, Hopkins was caught off guard.

Hopkins did win an award for teaching, the inaugural Teacher's Touch Lives award in Ohio, but called the Coach of the Year award, "right" beside that.

News of Hopkins' honor "reverberated back to Columbus," he said. E-mails and telephone calls came in bulk congratulating him.

In Ohio, Hopkins said race may have played a factor in being passed over for honors. He was the first black baseball coach in Columbus.

"I come out here and I was accepted, and it showed in the meeting," he said. "It didn't seem anything mattered, just the job that you did."

Was winning basketball Coach of the Year justification for Hopkins of the work he's put in over the years?

"Yes, an emphatic yes," he said.

—Roman Veysman

David Lopez: player of year

Tombstone's starting point guard David Lopez was voted Region 2A East Basketball Player of the Year. He averaged 11.2 points, 6.4 assists against two turnovers, and 3.1 steals per game, and shot 52 percent from the field, including 41 percent from the 3-point range.

"He was probably our most consistent player all year long and he just got better and better," said basketball coach Sam Hopkins.

Lopez, like Hopkins, was not expecting to receive an honor after this season.

"I was really stunned," Lopez said. "I didn't know I would be getting that award. There was a lot of really good athletes in our region this year and I really doubted I was going to get the award. I didn't even know my name was going to come up."

The credit was bittersweet because he couldn't share the award with his twin brother Tony, who was named to the all-conference second team.

"He just said he's glad that someone from our team got the award and he's glad that it was me who got it," David said.

Since fourth grade, David has been running the point guard and Tony has been the receiver of David's passes as shooting guard. David said he worked on all aspects of his game before the season, yet the one facet of the game that has always interested him is passing.

"I'd rather pass than anything," he said.

The brothers have committed to the Marines, but Hopkins is looking around for possible Division II and III destinations for them to play ball.

"We've always wanted to be in the Marines, but basketball is my favorite sport and if there's a way that me and my brother could do basketball, both of us, then we'll do that for a year or two because the Marines will always be



Lopez

there," David said.

With David and Tony in the backcourt, Hopkins had the duo he needed for the type of fast-break squad he emphasized. With the season over, the Yellow Jackets are getting credit where credit is due.

"They were the heart of the team," Hopkins said of David and Tony.

—Roman Veysman

Coronado National Park offers variety of activities

By Christian Payne

TOMBSTONE EPITAPH SPORTS

A short drive from historic Tombstone lies one of Arizona's most beautiful untapped resources, Coronado National Memorial Park.

The park, located in Hereford, Ariz., is welcoming spring's promise of warm weather and outdoor activities with open arms.

Coronado Peak Trail, a quick three-mile drive from the visitor center, is a scenic 0.8-mile hike through Arizona's desert grassland. The trailhead is located at the peak of the mountain, named Montezuma's Pass after the Aztec emperor. Views of the San Rafael and San Pedro Valleys are the focal point from the top of the mountain.

The Crest Trail, 10.6-mile roundtrip, is family and animal friendly. Dogs and horses are permitted on this

trail only. Because the trail is well-manicured, the hike can be as short or as long as preferred. Since elevation rises nearly 3,000 feet on the trail, it might be wise to bring a sweater as there is still snow on the peaks.

Deer, javelina and birds are all part of the wildlife Coronado National Memorial Park prides itself on. Park Ranger Maggi Daly attributes plentiful wildlife to the land's history.

"Coronado National Memorial has great wildlife viewing because of the unchanged land," Daly said. "It has been preserved and gone untouched for so long that the wildlife has continued to prosper."

History has a strong foundation in Coronado National Memorial Park. According to the National Park Service, the park is named after Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, the Spanish explorer who traveled through Arizona and the San Pedro River Valley in search of gold.

His expedition through Eastern Arizona and the

Grand Canyon made way for many to follow him.

"His actions had brought back knowledge of the northern lands and its people," a National Park Service brochure states. "This opened a way for explorers and missionaries to colonize the Southwest and to help develop the distinctive we know today."

Daly imagines walking the parks trail as if she were seeing the land for the first time.

"I really like to walk the trails as if I was on the expedition with Coronado," Daly said. "It is one of the most exciting things to hike the trails and imagine reaching the peak for the first time. It is amazing every time I do it."

Coronado National Memorial Park is open seven days a week and has no entry fee. Designated picnicking areas are available but camping is not permitted. A gift shop is in the visitor center with water and Coronado memorabilia. For more information and directions call the visitor information center, (520) 366-5515.

Season ends for javelina hunting fans

By Brent Gutshall

TOMBSTONE EPITAPH SPORTS

If you didn't get a javelina this spring, you're out of chances to hunt one. The Arizona 2006-2007 javelina hunting season came to a close March 1.

The spring season lasted from Jan. 1 through Jan. 25 for archery only and Feb. 9 through Feb. 18 for handguns, archery and muzzleloaders, or HAM. There was a juniors-only portion that ran from Jan. 26- Feb. 4 and the season closed out with a general portion from Feb. 23- March 1.

There were close to 30,000 permits issued across Arizona by the Fish and Game Department for the 2006-2007 hunting season. Roughly 1,700 permits were issued for unit 30B, one of several units that make up the hunting territory in Cochise County.

Tombstone is located in unit 30B, which stretches from western Benson to Bisbee.

The bow and arrow is the most popular weapon to hunt javelina, said Pat Feldt, owner of Arizona Guided Hunts, a hunting guide who leads javelina hunts all over Cochise County.

"With a bow you want to always aim for the vitals because an arrow might bounce off a javelina's skull," said Josh Mayne, employee at Trail Boss Outfitters in Sierra Vista.

Mayne is an avid hunter in 30B and the surrounding units who prefers to use a bow when hunting javelinas.

An arrow will go right through a javelina and the javelina will bleed out, said Toby Cotner, general manager at Shooters Den in Huachuca City.

The ideal range for bows, if everything is perfect, is up to 40 yards, Cotner said. The technique for hunting javelinas is called spot and stalk, look for tracks and pursue the animal, he said.

"If there is one, there is more because the javelina is a very social animal," Cotner said.

The muzzleloader rifle is another weapon that falls under the HAM portion of

javelina hunting season. The muzzleloader shoots lead balls that have manually been inserted into the muzzle, along with gun powder.

Bullet firing rifles can be used during the general portion of the season. There is a one javelina limit per hunter for the season.

Javelinas are not the most desirable meat and can not be cooked like a steak, said Cotner. Some people use it for sausage or shred it to use in burritos, he said.

"If you take a cement block and a javelina, and throw them on the grill, the cement block will finish faster and taste better," said

"If there is one, there is more ... the javelina is a very social animal."

—Toby Cotner

Bob Anderson, employee at Trail Boss Outfitters.

Javelinas do not taste like pork because they are not pigs, Cotner said. They are peccaries.

Peccaries are medium sized hoofed mammals related to pigs but often mistaken for hogs.

Most javelinas are used for mounts, not for eating, Mayne said.

Javelinas are not aggressive toward people unless they are cornered. When they are cornered they clack their teeth together as a defense mechanism and might charge, Cotner said.

Javelinas have very poor vision, which makes them a relatively easy hunt, Cotner said.

They are often used as an introduction to big game animals for kids learning how to hunt, Mayne said.

The hunting success for the spring 2006 hunting season statewide was 21 percent for all firearms, 16 percent for HAM and five percent for archery, according to Amber Munig, Wildlife Specialist at the Arizona Game and Fish.

Hunting success means the percent of people who were issued a permit and killed a javelina, Munig said.

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puzzle."

Burrows is one of the "Zen Hashers," Linn said.

Zen Hashers are people who try to guess where the hare is taking them and wander from the beaten trail in hopes of finding a shortcut, Linn said.

Decision points give slower runners an opportunity to catch up with faster runners because by the time they get to a "DP," the faster runners have marked the false trails in chalk so the slower runners know which path is true.

"It helps keep the pack together," said Teresa Stovall, grand master of Mr. Happy's Pickup Hash in Tucson.

A pickup hash is different than a regular hash because the hare hasn't mapped out a trail beforehand, Burrows said.

The GoatCheez County Hash is also a pickup hash, based out of Sierra Vista. Its members run every Wednesday.

Burrows first ran with Linn in a hash in South Korea seven years ago. The two were reacquainted when they both happened to join the Huachuca Hash House Harriers in 2004.

Linn has been hashing for nearly a decade. She remembers having some difficulty working her way into the clandestine society, she said.

She first heard about hashing in 1998 but the person who mentioned it to her wouldn't reveal more details.

"Then I met this guy in California and he told me about the hash," Linn said. "I told him: 'Take me to the hash,' and so I started hashing and haven't stopped since."

The GoatCheez Hash gathered last week at the Helldorado Brewery.

The group randomly selected the hare and David "Foo Cum Yu" Pineda, 41, set the first trail.

"I would say that Foo is the best runner of the group," Linn said.

She's right. The hash didn't catch Pineda as he laid his trail north from the brewery to the middle of Allen Street, in between both lanes of traffic, then north again into a neighborhood.

At one point the trail looped back on itself and thoroughly confused the hash. Pineda had to chug a beer for laying a bad trail.

Making the hare drink is just one of the traditions every hash has in common since hashing began in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 1938, said Dewey "Mr.



Hash runners, celebrating a tradition of sport and pleasure, make their way along a trail near Tombstone.

Blister" Miller.

Miller serves in the Army and says hashing has always had roots in the military because soldiers like to drink and need to stay in shape.

"I love the contrast in hashing," Miller said. "On one hand you're running around getting exercise, and then you're sitting around and drinking beer."

Miller has been hashing for four years and gave the following account of the history of hashing:

It all began when a group of British soldiers started running on Monday mornings to rid themselves of the excesses from the previous evening's endeavors.

The soldiers would chase the hare's trail that would invariably end at a tub of ice-cold beer provided by one of the local bars known among the troops as the "Hash House."

Hashing died out during World War II after the Japanese invaded Singapore, where the hash's founding members fought in what went down in history as

the biggest Ally defeat of the war.

All of the founding members but one returned. Albert Stephen Ignatius Gispert was killed in combat.

The founding members started hashing again in Gispert's honor and, as the group dispersed, those soldiers started hashes in their hometowns.

Hashing snowballed into today's broad network of hashes with a hash in every major city of the world, Miller said.

"There's even a hash in Antarctica," Burrows said.

Burrows has a friend who hashes in the green zone in Baghdad, and Tombstone hosted the "Nash Hash," a national hash that snared about 100 people, in May 2006, said Rich "Back Track" Dailey, 60, of the Huachuca Hash House Harriers.

But there's a reason why you've probably never heard of it before.

Hashing flies below the radar for several reasons, but mainly because of the drinking involved, Stovall said.

"Hashing isn't for everyone because of the culture of the hash," she said.

She's referring to the "Down Down" ceremony where hashers form a circle, sing vulgar drinking songs and nominate each other for silly awards in a parliamentary fashion.

"Coming up with drinking songs is an art that's all but lost in America except for in hashes," Miller said.

"Down Down" takes place at the end of every hash and is a way of discussing the trail, welcoming newcomers, sharing droll stories and planning the next hash over drinks and snacks purchased with "hash cash."

Hash cash is collected by the beer meister of the hash. It is the beer meister's responsibility to collect the money, usually a \$5 fee, and bring beer and snacks to the Down Down ceremony.

Newcomers, or "virgins," to the hash have to stand in the middle of the circle and tell the hash who made them come.

Hearing this, for some reason, always makes the hash erupt into laughter.

A song is sung to christen the virgins, who then have to drain the contents of their beverage of choice - designated drivers and non-drinkers can drink water or soda - and turn the beverage upside down over their heads to prove they finished it.

Newcomers have to run five times with the same hash before earning a nickname, Stovall said.

Special songs are reserved for the hare if the hash decides, in its parliamentary fashion, the trail wasn't any good. If it wasn't, the hare has to chug a beer as a penalty.

People shouldn't get the wrong impression about hashers, said Doug "Half-Hash" O'Neill, beer meister of Mr. Happy's Hash.

Some hashes are family-oriented and offer watered down versions of the drinking songs, Stovall said.

For those who choose to attend the adult hashes, all that is required is a good sense of humor, an immunity to sexually explicit and vulgar lyrics - no more risqué than any rap songs you may have already heard - and a thirst for beer paralleled only by Homer Simpson.

So, if in the early evening, you hear tramping in the street and cries of "On! On!" and find clumps of flour and chalk scratches on the pavement in the morning, you'll know a hash hit your neighborhood.

"They're everywhere," Burrows said.

Challenges won't derail Yellow Jackets track and field team

By Peter J. Stevenson

THE TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

On most days after school, Cory Sarasnick and the rest of Tombstone High School's track and field team drive about 45 minutes to practice at Barnes Field House recreational facilities at Ford Huachuca.

"It's rough but at least we've got a track to practice on," said Sarasnick, a sprinter and pole-vaulter.

The optimistic 16-year-old is one of four members who went to the state tournament last year and is returning this season to the Yellow Jackets track and field program, which boasts a tradition of consistent success in Southern Arizona.

Tombstone's boys team finished in 3rd place or higher in the state tourney, three times out of the last four years. Last season, they took 3rd place in the 2A-state tournament.

"The tradition kind of speaks for itself. Probably before I was even born they've been successful," joked coach Jake

Winslow. "The kids are what make it. I guess maybe the people—the kids in the town—like to run."

However the absence of a track at Tombstone High School's new facilities, 1211 Yellowjacket Way, isn't the only challenge Winslow's team faces this season.

Winslow also will have the daunting task of replacing a pair of standout athletes who graduated after last season: Sprinter Antoine Thomas, who won both the 200-meter and 400-meter dash, and distance runner Daniel Martinez, who placed second in the 3,200-meter and 1,600-meter runs.

Winslow said he hopes to fill their void with a crop of very capable freshmen and sophomores, adding that he looks forward to the challenge.

"I like it because they're fresh and they're new and they're willing to learn," Winslow said. "It seems like we're really concentrated on basics, doing the little things right now and other things will come later in the year."

Winslow said the jumps will remain his team's strong point thanks to returners Donovan Waller and Ben Phillips,

who both qualified for the state tournament last year. Sophomore Adam Martinez, Daniel's younger brother, and freshman Cody Rosengarten will help close the gap in distance events.

Josh Uchimura, a freshman and rookie to the sport of track and field, is still learning the program's ropes but he is very familiar with its tradition.

"It's new to me and I really like it," Uchimura said. "It feels really good following in the footsteps of all the other great track stars that Tombstone has... if I can do that then I know I've really done something good at Tombstone."

Sarasnick said he has embraced the leadership role in his sophomore year in order to help mentor younger members like Uchimura and fellow sprinter Kyle Smuda. In this way Sarasnick hopes to establish his own tradition.

"I like to help out, so that (next year) when the other freshmen come, the sophomores will help them out too, the way we did (this year)," said Sarasnick, who was part of the Yellow Jackets' relay team that took second place in the

4x100 meter last year.

Despite the abundance of youth on his squad, Winslow is confident of its talents.

"We might struggle a little bit in the beginning... I think by the end we're going to be pretty formidable," he said.

Girls track

Tombstone's girls team will also look to return to the 2A-state tourney for another strong showing. Last season they finished No. 13 in the state.

Leading them once again this season is senior sprinter and pole-vaulter Amanda Fuller, who placed 6th in pole vault at the state tournament last season. She believes her team will find power in numbers this year and in future years.

"We have a lot of young talent," Fuller said. "They're not as experienced as last year but we do have a bigger team. In two years they're going to be really, really awesome."