

BIG SKY

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HOME UN-IMPROVEMENT

Someone destroyed a man's plants and planters and ruined new siding at his Three Forks home.

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Felon pleads not guilty to owning dozens of firearms

BY WHITNEY BERMES
Chronicle Staff Writer

A convicted felon in Bozeman has pleaded not guilty to charges that he unlawfully owned more than three dozen guns and lied on paperwork when purchasing firearms.

Nolan David Barbisan, 28, appeared in U.S. District Court in Missoula on Tuesday and entered his pleas to one count of felon in possession of firearms, two counts of giving false statements during a firearms transaction and one

Convicted of two felonies in 2012, Nolan Barbisan is accused of possessing 46 firearms in all, including 38 varying rifles, six pistols, a shotgun and a revolver.

count of possessing an unregistered silencer.

Convicted of two felonies in 2012, Barbisan is accused of possessing 46 firearms in all, including 38 varying rifles, six pistols, a shotgun and a revolver.

Barbisan was released while the case is pending.

If convicted of these new charges, Barbisan faces up to 10 years in prison, \$250,000 in

finest and three years of supervised release. He may also have to forfeit the firearms seized as part of the investigation.

According to court documents:

In January 2012, Barbisan was convicted in North Dakota of felony counts of conspiracy to deliver a controlled substance within 1,000 feet of a school and delivery of marijuana, and misdemeanor posses-

sion of marijuana. He received two years of probation.

In May 2016, a man contacted the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives office in Helena to report that Barbisan was selling firearms and working as a gunsmith without a license in Bozeman.

Barbisan had several social media accounts showing him in possession of firearms, as well as business accounts for Custom Firearms Solutions, which he ran, selling and customizing firearms.

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Illinois man missing in Yellowstone found dead

BY MICHAEL WRIGHT
Chronicle Staff Writer

A man who was missing since Wednesday in Yellowstone National Park has been found dead.

Park search crews found Jeff Murphy, 53, on Friday. A park news release said it appears Murphy died after falling on Turkey Pen Peak.

"All of us at Yellowstone extend our sympathy to the Murphy family for their tragic loss," said Dan Wenk, the park's superintendent, in a written release.

Search teams began looking for Murphy in the Rescue Creek trail area on Thursday after his wife reported that he had failed to check-in after a planned day hike. Murphy, who was from Batavia, Illinois, had planned to hike the Rescue Creek trail to Turkey Pen Peak. The peak is about 7,000 feet in elevation and sits above the Yellowstone River.

Eight hiking teams, four horse teams, five dog teams and a helicopter were used in the search at its peak. Jonathan Shafer, a spokesman for the park, said Murphy's body was recovered early Friday afternoon.

The Rescue Creek Trailhead, which was closed during the search, has been reopened. The park's release said visitors should expect temporary closures while staff members complete the investigation.

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Murphy

Longtime roaster Ghost Town Coffee opens café in Bozeman



RACHEL LEATHE/CHRONICLE

Chad Kimm, owner of Ghost Town Coffee Roasters, stands in his recently opened coffee shop and production facility on Bridger Center Drive.

BY LEWIS KENDALL
Chronicle Staff Writer

Ghost Town Coffee Roasters, the longtime supplier for numerous cafés in and around Bozeman, now has a shop of its own.

The company opened its new 5,000-square-foot café production facility on Bridger Drive just past the Griffin Drive intersection in mid-May.

Owner and Churchill native Chad Kimm founded Ghost Town in 2006 alongside his wife, Clarissa Englehart. For years, the pair roasted beans for wholesale out of a small office off Rouse Avenue, but Kimm said the plan was always to open a café.

"It was something we had always wanted to do," he said. "We needed to find a space that was friendly enough for

The company opened a 5,000-square-foot café and production facility on Bridger Drive just past the Griffin Drive intersection in May.

production, but had enough traffic to bring people in the door. We feel like this satisfies both worlds."

With help from local economic development agency **Prospera Business Network**, Kimm and Englehart sought out a space that was both practical and affordable, eventually settling on a newly constructed building just north of Panda Sports Rentals.

Marked by a bright orange garage door, the space features a large coffee bar, a separate tasting room (that Kimm calls

"the lab") and packaging operation, as well as the pièce de résistance: a massive roaster that churns out roughly a ton of beans each week for the company's 60 wholesale customers in Montana.

There are generally three variables to control during coffee roasting, Kimm said: time, temperature and airflow. And while the 12-employee Ghost Town team meticulously test-tastes each batch, finding the sweet spot often comes down to instinct.

"There's some science, but there's also having the intuition of knowing what you're looking at and experiencing it," Kimm said.

In addition to beans, Ghost Town sells to its café customers flavored syrups and various espresso machines, for which it also offers training and maintenance.

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Montana Silversmiths opens new 'brand' store

BY CLAIRE CHANDLER
Chronicle Staff Writer

Western-themed buckle and jewelry company Montana Silversmiths will open a new storefront in downtown Bozeman today.

The store moved into what used to be Mountain Lodge Furniture, at 14 W. Main St., next to Wild Joe's Coffee Spot. It had a soft opening at the end of May.

"The store is a more complete showing of our products," Vice President Judy Wagner said.

The Bozeman branch is the company's first "brand" store, but the company isn't new to the area. Its products are sold in retail stores around town as well as in some 2,500 stores country-wide. Montana Silversmiths was founded in 1972 in Columbus, where it is still headquartered. It hopes to open more brand stores across the country soon.

It's more than just belt buckles, Wagner said. The brand store brings all the company's products under one roof, including its plated and solid sterling silver jewelry. Customers can see all the products in one setting and figure out what they want.

"They can wear the West their way," Wagner said.

Silversmiths chose Bozeman because of its thriving downtown and ease of access to tourists, especially those coming from Yellowstone National Park.

Mannequins Jewel and Sterling greet customers as they walk through the front door. Large photos of Miss Rodeos and rodeo athletes ring the walls.

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MSU research aims to help Montana families better afford child care

BY EMILY STIFLER WOLFE
MSU News Service

Data from an in-depth study comparing the costs of child care for every county in the state could help low income Montana families better afford child care.

The study, by Montana State University economist George Haynes, was commissioned by the state's Early Childhood Services Bureau to help determine subsidy rates for its Best Beginning Scholarships, which help working families whose income is less than 150 percent of federal poverty guidelines pay for child care.

Haynes, a professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics and an economics specialist with



RACHEL LEATHE/CHRONICLE FILE

Quinn Lindsley, 4, creates a rocket out of MagnaTiles at Rhiannon Shook's early childhood care program, A Place To Grow, on March 8.

MSU Extension, developed a survey — the first of its kind in the state — to help the bureau determine subsidy rates. It was funded by a federal Child Care

and Development Block Grant, which also provides money for the scholarships themselves.

The Early Childhood Services Bureau has collected market

information since the grants were first developed in 1996, but a new federal reauthorization required states receiving the block grant money to do this more comprehensive study.

Haynes and fellow researcher Lisa Curry developed the 2016 Montana Child Care Market Rate Survey with the MSU Human Ecology Learning and Problem Solving Lab, patterning it after a study done by the University of Texas.

The lab contacted every licensed child care provider in the state, receiving responses from 62 percent of the 968 providers. They asked providers about advertised rates, as well as out-of-pocket costs for specific families.

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