

# The Tombstone Epitaph.

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134 YEARS IN THE TOWN TOO TOUGH TO DIE

FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 2014



Fire ravaged the Old West Studio on April 10. After an investigation, fire officials still haven't determined the cause.

## Fire destroys gunfight studio

**Blaze flares up at the same location for the second time in four years.**

By Ashley Reid & William Brededa  
The Tombstone Epitaph

Old West Studio, a Western re-enactment stage, burned to the ground April 11 at the same location as Six Gun City Restaurant and Bar that burned down in 2010.

After an investigation that ended the morning after, the cause of the fire was listed as undetermined, fire officials said.

"It may have been a cigarette that got tossed," said Tombstone Marshal Jeff Mitchell, adding that no accelerants were found. "It's a fire investigation, not a criminal investigation."

The fire broke out at 4:15 p.m. on the corner of Fifth and Toughnut streets.

"What we had was a fire in the western part of the theater

and by the time fire units got on scene, the fire was fully evolved," said Whetstone Fire Chief Peter Bidon, whose station responded.

Tombstone Fire Department officials said there were no signs of suspicious or foul play in the blaze.

"There is not electrical power to the set. There is no electrical wires on that property, so for the most part we can rule out an electrical fire," Bidon said.

Steven Compton, who manages the gunfights at the studio, said that the actors did not see any potential signs of fire on April 11.

"We finished our third show and we checked the set and we didn't see anything wrong, so we locked up and left," Compton said.



All that remains of the Old West Studio re-enactment stage is melted bleachers and piles of burnt wood.

Compton said he received a call about the fire 20 minutes after he left the studio.

Departments from Tombstone, Whetstone, Huachuca City and St. David responded with more than 40 personnel,

four engines, three rescue and two support vehicles. The fire was out by 5:30 p.m.

In December 2010, fire destroyed Six Gun City in a blaze, the cause of which was also never determined.

## Animal control gets new ride

By Stephanie Caffall and Maci Hidalgo  
The Tombstone Epitaph

For frequent visitors slithering and prancing into town, a new law enforcement vehicle is following behind them.

In Tombstone, wild animals find temporary homes in the cracks of the wooden sidewalks, the doorways of shops and, on occasion, the doorsteps of residents' homes. They also regularly make a meal out of residents' garbage and pets.

This is when James Everetts, the head of animal control, springs to action as the driver of the new Humvee. Everetts, whose nickname is "Rattler," is also code enforcer for the Marshal's Office. The Mar-



The newly designed Humvee was given to the city by the military.

shal's Office was given the military vehicle from government surplus.

"(The Humvee) was put on the road about two months ago," Everetts said. "I designed it, with a friend and my son. It was all camouflage, but we changed it."

"They crawl over here

frequently," Everetts said. "Honestly rattlesnakes really never hibernated this year because it didn't get very cold."

According to Everetts, there have recently been a lot of sightings and phone calls placed through dispatch to remove rattlesnakes from Tombstone. They are taken three miles outside of town.

Opening the back hatch of the Humvee, Everetts pointed to and explained some of the equipment he uses while on the road. Some of the useful tools include: a bucket and snake stick and a large crate used to carry some animals.

Everetts further explained that the Humvee will need to have a gated

Humvee/Page 2

## Superintendent could be returning to TUSD next year

By William Brededa  
The Tombstone Epitaph

Karl Uterhardt, superintendent of Tombstone Unified School District, may well return next school year as TUSD superintendent.

Uterhardt was one of four finalists interviewed by the Sierra Vista Unified School District school board Saturday, at a community "Meet the Candidates" event. Among the other finalists were current SVUSD interim superintendent Kriss Hagerl, Randall Gilson, superintendent of South Central Unified School District in Nebraska and Scott Roppe, principal of Village Meadows Elementary school in Sierra Vista.

Tuesday, the board voted, 3-2, to offer the superintendent position to Hagerl. Hagerl and the board will meet for contract negotiations said Carol Jordahl, executive secretary of the superintendent.

Uterhardt said he was disappointed but he loves TUSD.

The plan now, Uterhardt said, is to continue as usual, keep an eye out for other interesting opportunities, and continue to better TUSD. In this past school year, Uterhardt has applied for five new positions. "Right now, after last night, I'm at three silver medals."

This year Uterhardt has also applied for positions at Dysart Unified School District in Phoenix, Rio Rico High School in Rio Rico and Payson Unified School District in Payson.

Wednesday, Uterhardt interviewed at Palominas School District. The PSD school board convened after candidate interviews to potentially enter contract negotiations with a candidate. As of press time a decision had not been reached.

For updates, go to the Tombstone Epitaph page at arizonasonoranews-service.com.

**Wake up and smell the coffee:** New java joint opens in Tombstone

**Shots Fired:** O.K. Corral shootout still shining one year after move



# Tombstone businesses expand online presence

By Jessica Dollin  
The Tombstone Epitaph

Online shopping is a tool some local stores in Tombstone use to expand their business and allow visitors to continue contributing to the economy from far away.

Spur Western Wear is one of the local stores to offer an online element to the shopping experience. The online shop has been available for three years.

"We don't have a lot of European sales, but a lot from England, Australia, quite a few from Germany. Certain areas seem to be better than others," owner Sonja Nerud, said,

adding that a considerable number of orders are from Canada.

Silver Hills Trading Co., which sells Southwestern jewelry, books and gifts also has an online shop in addition to its Allen Street location. Some of the items on its site range from a \$1.98 saguaro cactus golf tee to a \$139.98 stuffed rattlesnake.

A majority of the sales from Silver Hills Trading Co. come from the East Coast.

Tombstone is a tourist town, so online shopping allows customers to continue to Tombstone once the trip is over.

The chain store Original Red Dirt Shirt, is another Tombstone locale that uses e-commerce. The Tombstone shop is one of seven locations, but customers can order Tombstone specific merchandise from the website.

The Original Red Dirt Shirt shop is the only store with online shopping in

"Customers are used to it because they buy a lot of product online."

- Barbara Brown

it completely, but at this point this is just about right for us," she said.

Nerud said she considers the online shop to be an entirely independent.

"We have three physical stores and the web store is our fourth. The web store has a combination of everything, each one of them has the flavor of the community," she said.

Companies like Microsoft, American Express and HP have specific programs designed to help small businesses maintain an online presence for customers.

# City opposes bigger governing board

By Alex P. Wainwright  
The Tombstone Epitaph

Tombstone has joined opposition against legislation that would require Cochise County to expand the Board of Supervisors by two.

State Senator Gail Griffin, a Republican representing District 25, originally introduced SB1483 to require any county with a population of 125,000 or greater to have a board of supervisors with five members. Cochise County, with 131,000 residents, has three elected supervisors.

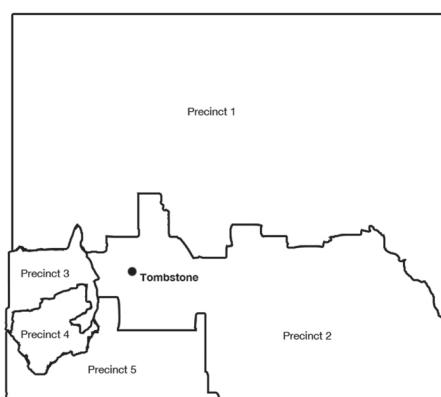
The Arizona Legislature later amended the bill to mandate that when a county has a population of 150,000 or greater, voters from the county could choose to increase to a five-member board.

Anne English, Cochise District 2 Supervisor, said this legislation is directed specifically at Cochise County. She said Cochise has done well with three supervisors and that creating more expenses to represent fewer people would not benefit the county.

"Why do we need this? No one has petitioned to put this on the ballot," said Supervisor English. "I am surprised that Senator Griffin would force us to increase government."

Councilman Don Taylor said that he was most concerned about where the funding might be cut to pay the \$250,000 to \$300,000 needed to support the new positions. That money would be used for salaries and related support expenses, including staff.

Taylor said he was worried the money might come from the Cochise road project, which would cut the program's funding by about 33 percent.



Anthony Victor Reyes / The Tombstone Epitaph

Suggested Cochise College precincts.

Councilwoman Stacey Korbeck-Reeder said she was concerned that the existing districts would be split if Cochise College's precincts are used as guidelines for the new county districts.

"Tombstone and other rural areas in Cochise County would be underserved," she said.

Senator Griffin defended her position, saying, "I feel it is good government to have a five-member board. It allows the supervisors easier communication with the citizens as well as other members of the board."

She added that the current board members would be responsible for deciding how the county would be split if voters chose to increase the size of the board. She also said that the money could not be taken from the road fund but did not specify where it would come from.

Sierra Vista passed a similar resolution on March 27.

The amended version of SB1483 has passed in the House and Senate and is awaiting final deliberations before the final vote in the Senate.

# The Tombstone Epitaph.

Founded on the Southwestern frontier by John P. Clum, May 1, 1880

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Ashley Grove / The Tombstone Epitaph

Tombstone's mines offer cool relief for tourists during the hot spring and summer months.

# Viewing Tombstone beneath the surface

## Tours look at city's rich mining history

By Courtney Johnson  
The Tombstone Epitaph

Goodenough Mine Tours offers people the opportunity to explore Tombstone's intricate mine system and to learn about the city's rich history. But be forewarned: You will get dirty.

The mine tours are located by the Million Dollar Stope at Fifth and Toughnut streets. The stope runs underground along Toughnut, and got its name after a million-dollars worth of silver was pulled from the mine.

Senior tour guide Carey Granger helped institute all three of the tours offered by Goodenough. When Granger first started working for the mines, it was nothing but an asphalt parking lot. After seven years, it is now



Courtney Johnson / The Tombstone Epitaph

Tour guide James Zuvella takes people into the mines.

a major tourist attraction.

The mines also serve as an educational experience, whether you want to learn about history, or rocks. Mining students from the University of Arizona usually take field trips to study the underground rocks, Granger said.

"There's 300 miles of underground working, you

can spend your whole life exploring and not see everything," he said.

Granger has been working with rocks for years, and he moved to Tombstone from Utah in 2002 to start a jeep tour business. When that didn't work out, he decided to switch from jeeps to mines.

James Zuvella refers to himself as the "tour guide extraordinaire" when he leads the 45-minute tour. They call it the Good Enough Tour "because it is just good enough," said Zuvella, who once worked as a character guide for Disney including Captain Hook and Tigger.

He offers lively and kid-friendly tours highlighted by his rendition of the Seven Dwarfs theme song from "Snow White."

Brian Yourich and his wife, Susan, visited Tombstone from Milwaukee, Wisc., and said they enjoyed Zuvella's enthusiasm. Brian Yourich said he

found the tour informative, and that it was a good way to spend his time in Tombstone.

Granger also gives longer versions of the tour: the Tough Nut tour takes three hours and the Girard System Extreme Tour will keep you busy for seven hours.

The Tough Nut tour was created after the mines flooded back in 2012, and last April Marines from Fort Huachuca volunteered to help Granger fix the damage. Over eight days, they moved 450 wheelbarrows of dirt.

The longer tours are more physically taxing. You have to crawl through tight spaces and descend about 400 feet underground. You need reservations for either of those tours, but you can just show up for the Good Enough tour.

With summer approaching, the mines are a pleasant escape from the blistering heat. The temperature hovers at about 67 degrees.

# Java lovers get jolt at new shop

By Ashley Reid  
The Tombstone Epitaph

Wyatt's Coffee House, the only shop in town that sells specialized coffee and espresso beverages, has been busy since it opened a few weeks ago.

The store is connected to the Wyatt Earp Theater and a bed and breakfast that is set to open in three weeks.

The quality of the rooms and the amenities are going to be what sets this bed and breakfast apart from the others in Tombstone, said manager Mark Duke.

Duke, who is from Oxford, England, moved to town two years ago

after working in construction. He decided to renovate the vacant building on Third Street and create something that both fits in and stands out in Tombstone.

"It's all related to the Wild West, but it's still modern," Duke said.

The bed and breakfast has three rooms and a parlor upstairs above the coffee house. Guests will be able to walk downstairs to order coffee and food off the menu.

Everything is decorated and styled in 1800s Western theme. Duke has scoured websites to find the perfect furnishings for the bed and breakfast.

All of the coffee served at the house is roasted in Bisbee, Duke said.

"Everything is very local," he said.

The house serves a variety of drinks such as lattes, americanos, cappuccinos and, of course, coffee.

Duke's favorite thing on the beverage menu is the house coffee, served black.

"We don't do all of the cream and sugar in England," said Duke.

As construction on the bed and breakfast and coffee house progresses, so will the menu. Duke said there are plans to install ovens.

Daniel Torres, who has been helping with the construction phase of the process, will be the main chef.

According to Everett, coyotes and javelinas have been strolling through Tombstone more often than ever before.

"This is the first time, though, that I've really had a problem (with house pets getting attacked by coyotes). A couple times they even stole people's dogs," Everett said.

While out in the desert terrain, Everett looks for footprints and also sets booby-trap trails to distract animals from town.

"By doing this, [animals] usually stray further away from town. I also pick up rocks, rub them on my hands, and then throw them back so when (animals) pick up the human scent, they get nervous and go a different way," Everett said.

## Editorial Policy

The Epitaph encourages letters to the editor, but reserves the right to edit for style and space. Please limit letters to 300 words.

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