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SUN Advocate

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Recovery efforts at Willow Creek mine proceed on schedule

By JACKIE ANDERSON
Staff reporter

One of the year's most compelling and encompassing local stories was the fire at the Cyprus Amax Willow Creek Mine on Thanksgiving Eve.

The near disaster struck fear into the hearts of residents who were immediately reminded of the 1984 tragedy where a fire at Wilberg claimed the lives of 27 miners.

Fortunately, all 54 workers manning the Cyprus Amax afternoon production crew managed to exit the underground facility without injury within 25 minutes of the Nov. 25 blaze.

Mike Dmitrich, company spokesman, confirmed that the Willow Creek mine fire started behind the longwall in what miners call the gob.

The origin of the flame at Willow Creek possibly made the difference between a mine disaster and the mine tragedy at Wilberg in 1984 where the fire erupted approximately 5,000 feet from the main entrance into the underground facility, trapping the 27 employees inside.

Also making a difference was the new state of the art emergency system in use at the time of the recent fire. The personal emergency device (PED), was used in connection with the conspec computer. The communication system allowed the longwall foreman to contact conspec and re-

port the fire in the gob; the warning then circulated throughout the conspec system.

The safety training of the crew then paid off with the quick and efficient evacuation of the mine.

With the community rallying and donating heavy equipment, landfill and man power, the Willow Creek mine was sealed within approximately eight and one half hours after the blaze began.

In contrast; after concentrated rescue efforts which included the drilling of a three-inch hole from the Little Dove mine through 700 feet of solid rock into a new entryway being cut at Wilberg, where it was hoped trapped miners may have been barricaded, providing a means to supply food, water and air; mine rescue teams entered Wilberg on Dec. 21, 1984 to find a group of nine dead coal miners only 200 feet beyond the fire.

Before rescue crews could remove the bodies of the 27 Emery Mining employees, none of whom ever reached the dead-end area at the mine's new entryway site, the blaze raged totally out of control, forcing the teams to pull out of the Wilberg mine. By Thursday, Dec. 27, 1984, eight days after the blaze began, all but two mine shafts were sealed.

The victims' remains were not recovered until December 1985. Holes drilled at the Willow Creek



All 54 workers involving in manning the Cyprus Amax afternoon production crew managed to exit the underground facility without injury within 25 minutes of the Nov. 25 blaze.

underground facility served a less portentous, though significant purpose. By extracting air samples, mine technicians were then able to determine if carbon dioxide should be pumped into the mine, making it safe to enter.

Approximately two weeks after the Willow Creek facility was sealed, reopening efforts began.

Comparing the Willow Creek fire does not diminish

the impact of the recent fire. One-hundred and eighty people are out of work because of it. Another 180 permanent employees were transferred from Willow Creek to the company's Star Point mine to continue producing coal. Only 80 people still show up to work at the Willow Creek facility.

Recovery of the mine has advanced to the 17th crosscut just out by the turn off to the bleeders.

stated Willow Creek Mine general manager, John Boylen, in an interview Wednesday.

"The recovery is going as anticipated. The main fan is on line providing ventilation for the mine, and we continue to work with MSHA on approval to advance," explained Boylen.

The mine manager said he has nothing but praise to offer for the

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Thayn disappearance remains unsolved

By LYNNDA JOHNSON
Sun Advocate editor

One of the most high profile incidents to occur in Carbon County in 1998 continues to center around the unsolved disappearance of a Wellington resident on Nov. 4.

The missing person, 25-year-old Ryan Roy Thayn, disappeared in a remote area east of Mounds approximately one mile across the Carbon-Emery County line.

Updating the status of the concentrated effort to locate Thayn on Wednesday, Detective Bill Downard indicated that the investigation still had not uncovered any verified information regarding the 25-year-old's whereabouts. But the Emery law enforcement officer stressed

that authorities intend to actively pursue all leads that surface in connection with the matter.

During an interview on Dec. 21, Downard revealed that widespread rumors were complicating Emery County law enforcement's investigation into the young man's mysterious disappearance.

On Wednesday, Downard indicated that the rumors had subsided, enabling Emery deputies to dedicate additional manpower hours to the investigation.

The Emery County Sheriff's Office launched an intensive criminal investigation into the matter after a massive land and air rescue effort failed to locate the young man.

Downard pointed out that the reward being offered for information

leading to the missing man's location still registers at \$10,000.

The detective reiterated the importance of citizens who may have firsthand information regarding the Wellington man's whereabouts to contact the Emery County Sheriff's Office directly at 435-381-2404.

Downard also encouraged Carbon and Emery residents who may have personally observed suspicious activity near the Mounds area on or about Nov. 4 to contact the sheriff's office.

Thayn's parents notified law enforcement authorities after the Seeley Oil Company employee failed to return home from work on Nov. 4.

Rescue crews and volunteers con-

(Continued on page 2A)

Child abuse statistics climbing across nation

By JEREMIAH STETTLER
Staff reporter

In contrast to the hope that further recognition and prosecution of those associated with child maltreatment, an estimated 3,195,000 children were reported as victims of child abuse during 1997, surmounting all formally recorded surveys since 1988 by 41 percent.

Although much of that increase was attributed to the emergence of a centralized statistical intake and referral facility, abuse prevention centers throughout the nation believe that the increase is predominantly due to the added awareness and concern of individuals in reporting cases of abuse.

In addition a national survey conducted by the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse suggests another explanation for the influx of abuse-related incidents and fatalities.

"Over three children died each day last year as a result of parental mistreatment. This figure represents a 39 percent increase over the last 10 years. This trend is not surprising, however, given the increase in poverty, substance abuse and violence experienced by many communities."

As confirmed by 36 of 41 state liaisons who were assigned to assess whether or not specific lifestyles contributed to an increase in abusive tendencies, substance abuse was reported as one of the top two leading attributes exhibited by abusive families. Although this statistic remained consistent with that of previous years, a 12 percent increase was seen amongst those responding.

Poverty and economical constraints followed as the second most frequently cited problem due to the pressures imposed upon a family suffering from the physical limitations of inadequate housing or unemployment.

Other factors included a lack of parental capacity and general parenting skills. Respondents at-

tributed the deficiency to either mental health problems or a poor understanding of a child's normal development.

As a general rule, however, perpetrators were most commonly reported as to having extensive childhood histories of abuse and mistreatment.

Researchers believe that a partial solution is plausible through a pursuit of prenatal and parental education for families in high-risk environments.

Reports released by the NCPA confirm this theory, indicating that abusive behavior is often a cyclic occurrence, focusing upon adults who experienced health and developmental problems during early childhood. Such factors commonly contribute to behavioral, educational and psycho-emotional problem in later adolescence and adulthood lead to a possible recurrence of violent behavior. Although such studies can only avert a limited percentage of the existing cases of child abuse, organization members believe that a scientific approach, combined with assistance from the community and other preventative organizations with invoke a significant decline in the current statistical ascent.

As a result, a vast number of organizations have arisen throughout the nation to prevent further cases of maltreatment. Such organizations include the National Exchange Foundation for the Prevention of Child Abuse, the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse, Kids Nip Out Child Abuse and Bikers Against Child Abuse.

These coalitions have been designed with several objectives in mind. As voiced by KNOCA, the intent of such groups are focused upon the stimulation of greater public awareness surrounding cases of child abuse. Education has also been a predominant concern when addressing the utilization of public resources. Comparative efforts are taking place in individual commu-

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Minor bicycle repair highlights Christmas vacation for Price youth

Young Price residents Cory Patterson and James Bravo get down to business. With the use of a screwdriver, the two cousins remove the tire from their bicycle firm as a first step in fixing a flat tire on Patterson's new bike. The boys, ages nine and 10, enjoy working on the bike and are hoping to finish in time to continue their ride.

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Child abuse climbing:

(Continued from page 1A)
 nities throughout the nation. As reiterated in a publication released by the NCPA, however, "The improvement of child protective services is dependant upon a reduction of caseloads, expansion of case-worker training and increase in funding for additional victim treatment services. Child protective services, however, cannot prevent all fatalities single-handedly.

Other formal institutions such as schools and hospitals, as well as informal, personal networks should play an active role in identifying and assessing families at risk of abusive or neglectful behavior."

On a local level, KNOCA and BACA have been highly influential in improving the domestic environment of numerous children throughout the Emery and Carbon County area.

KNOCA for instance was instigated by former Castle Heights principal John Angoti who combined his efforts with that of United Way director Jeanie Housekeeper, county commissioner Neil Brieholt and various teachers working at Castle Heights Elementary. Through their actions an isolated 12-tree school project, designed to assist the women's shelter in Price, was transformed into a \$30,000 Christmas Tree Regalia hosted by the CEU BDAC.

"It's neat to see how the community pulls together to support those who really need our help," states Housekeeper.

According to Angoti, the project has accumulated over

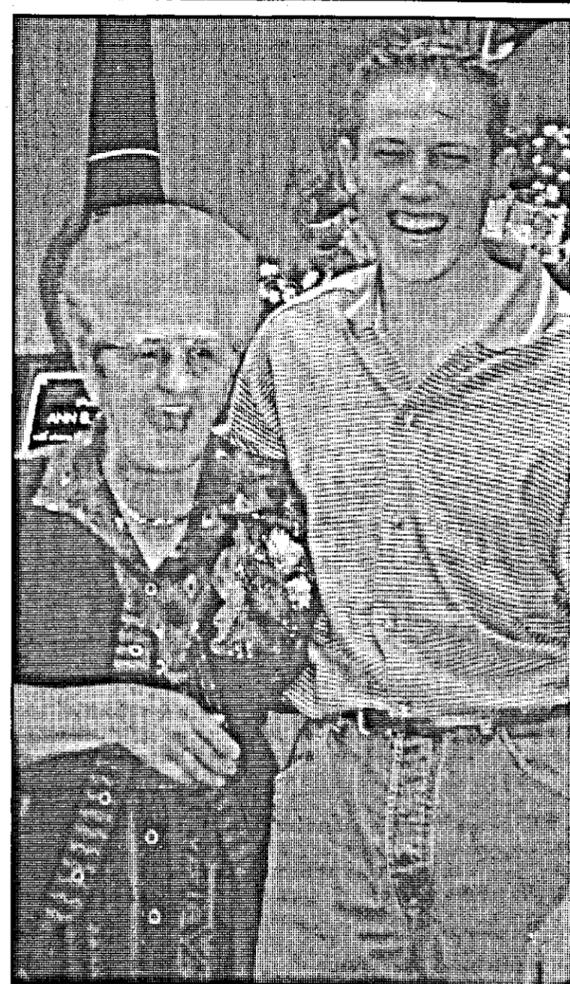
\$100,000 over the course of 10 years with the objective of funding multiple facilities throughout the community. The Turning Point Teen Parent Program, Lighthouse Life and Learning Center, Family support and Advocacy Center, RUCD Headstart Program and PS. Group Parenting Classes are but a few of the projects representing efforts made by KNOCA.

BACA has also played a vital role in ensuring the prosecution of those involved in child maltreatment.

As reported in a publication outlining the objectives behind BACA, children are often influenced in court situations by the threat of continued violence. Through the establishment of a program designed to thwart that influence through victim protection, offenses are being objectively examined and determined.

"We're not interested in what is popular and we don't care what is politically correct—we just care about the children," indicates BACA member Melody Anderson. "We have been criticized in the past for not being people's power, but we are committed to helping people learn how powerful they can be. Once they learn this, we can change our focus and move on to a new child. Those who hurt and terrorize the young and innocent are the darkest side of what we represent as human beings. Our response to their actions is critical."

Those involved in cases of child abuse are encouraged to contact BACA at 637-7233.



O'Brien retires after 36 years of service

After serving for 36 consecutive years as county recorder, Ann O'Brien concludes her service as the longest elected official in the state of Utah. Although her work with the county is scheduled to continue with further billing and accounting for various irrigation companies, O'Brien indicates that she will miss those she's worked with.

Terry & Jeanette Marasco of Castle Country Oil would like to thank everyone who helped with the JAIL & BAIL MARCH OF DIMES.

A special Thank you to Kris Cox, Helen Larsen, Karah Marasco & Brad Lohan. A very special Thank you to Joe Christman with the Highway Patrol



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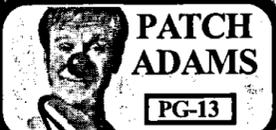
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Thayn disappearance remains unsolved:

(Continued from 1A)
 ducted an intensive search of the Mounds area, but the effort proved unsuccessful.

On Nov. 5, local law enforcement authorities discovered Thayn's abandoned pickup truck parked at the scene.

Jumper cables and two motor vehicle batteries were lying on the ground near the sil-

ver Toyota pickup. Law enforcement investigators found the missing man's coat, several knives and an unfamiliar wallet inside the missing man's truck.

The wallet contained identification and law enforcement officials later interviewed the owner.

The individual in question claimed to have lost the wal-

let while hunting in the Mounds area.

Law enforcement authorities subsequently determined that the knives belonged to Thayn.

Ryan Roy Thayn is described as a 25-year-old white male with red hair and green eyes. The missing young man stands six-foot, two-inches tall and weighs 200 pounds.

Recovery efforts continue:

(Continued from 1A)
 mine rescue teams who are working in hazardous conditions with under two percent oxygen.

"Everything is going well, and no one has been injured," emphasizes Boylen.

Officials expect to have most of the mine recovered and continuous miner sections running within the next four to six weeks.

Once accomplished, efforts will turn to recovery of the longwall. Boylen personally feels that the longwall will be in good shape, believing that the fire burned away from the longwall.

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