



SCHOOL SPIRIT SPORTS NEWS: B SECTION



# Hi-Desert Star



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Yucca Valley, California • (760) 365-3315

Saturday, August 14, 2010

## Postmus arrested at courthouse

### DA alleges former county official was under the influence at hearing

By Courtney Vaughn  
Hi-Desert Star

SAN BERNARDINO — Bill Postmus, former San Bernardino County assessor, racked up more charges on an already long list when he was arrested Thursday morning in a courtroom here on suspicion of being under the influence of drug.

Postmus, 39, was in court for a preliminary hearing for charges of grand theft, embezzlement, perjury and possession of a controlled sub-

stance, filed in 2007,

With him was former county Taxpayer Advocate Greg Eyler, 34, who faces charges of grand theft and embezzlement stemming from his time in Postmus' office.

According to Cindy Bachman, public affairs officer for the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, Postmus appeared to be intoxicated and was approached by a sheriff's deputy in the courtroom. "They believe he was under the

influence of an illegal substance, not alcohol," Bachman said via telephone Thursday.

Authorities conducted a field sobriety test on the former county official and booked him into the West Valley Detention Center in Rancho Cucamonga. He was released around 4 p.m. and issued a citation.

Investigators from the district attorney's office searched his vehicle in the courthouse parking lot.

Postmus' attorney, Stephen Levine, told the Victorville Daily Press that one of the district attorney's Public Integrity Unit investigators insisted that Postmus be tested for drug use.

"They seem to be spending a lot of resources and energy on a misdemeanor that has nothing to do with their purpose," Levine said. "I can only assume from that expenditure of energy the purpose is to grind an ax."

### Conspiracy, corruption are among charges

Thursday's incident is just one of many in Postmus' troubled past. In February last year, he resigned from his position as county assessor after being arrested for possession of methamphetamine. He admitted to



Former elected official Bill Postmus' booking photo.

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## Sky High to split principal with 29 Palms

### Tight budget prompts measure

By Kurt Schauppner

Twentynine Palms Correspondent

MORONGO BASIN — Continued budget troubles at the Morongo Unified School District have led district officials to call on Ron Cox, principal at Sky High School in Yucca Valley, to do double duty.

Starting this year, Cox will also serve as principal at Monument High School in Twentynine Palms.

Sky and Monument are the district's alternative high schools.

"The really positive thing is they are both great high schools," Cox said last week. "They both do great service to the community."

Cox explained that his schedule will vary from month to month; one month he will spend Mondays and Wednesday at Sky High School and Tuesdays and Thursdays at Monument High School and split Fridays between the two schools. The next month, he will reverse his Monday-through-Thursday routine.

"I am trying to hit all the days of the week," he said.

He will have backup in the form of district administrators and vice principals at other schools, he said.

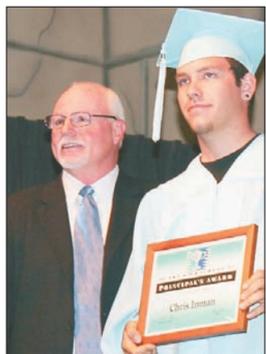
Cox admitted that the move was made because of the district's money problems.

He added that another principal in the district is doing double duty at Landers and Morongo Valley elementary schools.

### Staff support will be essential

The biggest challenge, Cox said, will be to maintain the proactive stance he is able to take when he works at a single site full-time.

"The mission is the same," he said. "There are subtle differences that make each site unique to itself. Trying to be a



RON COX, left, presents Chris Inman with an award at Sky High School's June graduation. Cox will do double duty at the Basin's alternative high schools this year.

citizen of two nations can be a tricky thing."

Asked what support he will need to make the arrangement work, Cox began with staffs at both schools.

"The teachers are already doing a lot. They are going to have to work together," he said, adding that weekly planning sessions should help schools get through the times when he is not on site.

"Obviously, this is new territory; we have never been here before," he said.

"No one, including the district and the board, thinks this is a better solution than having an administrator at each site. The economic realities mandate that this plan be initiated. I don't think there are any illusions that this is a great situation for either school.

"Both schools have a very strong support staff," he said. "That will make the transition a lot smoother."

Asked if he worried about driving to the wrong school one day, Cox laughed and said he already dreamed that he did just that.

"It's going to be a challenging year," he said. "I will do my very best to make it work and make it work for the kids. I know it is going to be a challenge."



Members of Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1, or VMU-1, smile as they open up boxes of snacks and comfort supplies in Afghanistan. The care packages were organized by Homestead Valley Community Council.

## Deployed Marines open Basin's boxes

By Rebecca Unger  
Hi-Desert Star

HOMESTEAD VALLEY — A unit of Marines deployed in Afghanistan got gifts from a desert halfway around the world when packages from the Morongo Basin arrived at their base Wednesday.

The Homestead Valley Community Council and supporters collected donations, bought comfort items like snacks and games and packed off more than 60 care boxes July 26 to the men and women of the Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1.

On Wednesday, the community council's Jim Harvey was notified that the packages had arrived.

"The Marines are overjoyed and very

### Eyes from the air

Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 deployed from the Twentynine Palms Marine base in April for a seven-month deployment to Afghanistan's Helmand Province. The squadron's mission is to use their unmanned aerial vehicles to patrol the sky and report their findings to help service members patrolling the ground know what to expect.

thankful," wrote Rachel Sandlin, readiness officer for the squadron at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in Twentynine Palms.

"The commanding officer and the sergeant major have asked that I extend their sincere appreciation for the generosity of the HVCC and the surrounding

community." Harvey said he was elated that U.S. Postal Service got them into Afghanistan so quickly. However, "The looks of some of the boxes suggest the Marines will have to come up with creative ways to eat crumbled crackers and cheese," he quipped.

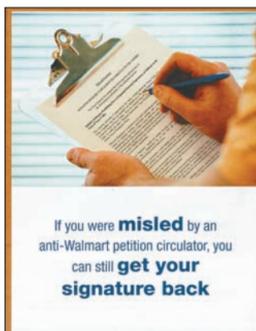
## Wal-Mart fires salvo in petition battle

By Rebecca Unger  
Hi-Desert Star

YUCCA VALLEY — The Wal-Mart Corporation ramped up its defense this week against a group seeking to ban Supercenter construction in Yucca Valley.

Wal-Mart began an in-store signature drive at its Yucca Valley store after the Coalition for Environmental Integrity in Yucca Valley started collecting signatures for a petition that would let voters decide the fate of the planned Supercenter.

Wal-Mart sent four-page mailers to Yucca Valley voters, asking them if they were mis-



The cover of the flyer.

led by the petition drive and telling them to ask Town Hall to take their signatures off of

the petition. "A small but vocal minority in town has been circulating petitions trying to reverse our Town Council's 4-1 approval of the new Wal-Mart," the mailer reads.

The mailer provides a stamped postcard addressed to the Yucca Valley Town Clerk for her to forward to the San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters.

Coalition member David Fick disputes Wal-Mart's claim that voters have been misled.

"The coalition's initiative campaign hasn't been misleading anyone," Fick stated.

"We've always told people, especially Yucca Valley voters, that this initiative is to save Yucca Valley from rapid urban decay and community retail imbalance if the proposed Wal-Mart Supercenter goes forward."

Yucca Valley Town Clerk Jaime Anderson said if the coalition receives signatures from 10 percent of Yucca Valley's 9,602 registered voters, the issue could be put on the ballot in the next regularly scheduled election.

Should the coalition garner 15 percent of the registered voters, the issue could go to a special election.



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