

Permits no longer needed for A-frames

Process wasn't helping compliance

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

The Town Council voted March 19 to eliminate the requirement that businesses obtain a permit to use an A-frame sign for advertising their business. Staff proposed the change in an effort to improve compliance with sign regulations. Lack of a permit was a rule with a significant number of violations over the past year.

Councilman Henry

Leger was somewhat perplexed by this approach. "You have a requirement, so you take away the requirement to reduce non-compliance with the rules," Leger said. "What was the original intent of the requirement?" Senior Planner Bob Rodgers the objective of the annual permit was to have business owners come to staff with the plan for the use of their sign and allow staff to go over the rules for placement, hours as well as penalties

for potential violations. Rodgers said the permit plan has not been effective in educating sign users. "If you take away the requirement you are artificially improving compliance," Leger said. "This is a difficult process and we want to be business friendly."

"Education is proactive, enforcement is reactive. This is not about punishing business. Everything we have tried to do legislatively hasn't worked. Non-compliance keeps going up."

Councilman Nick DePorter suggested using the business license renewal as an opportunity to educate business on the use of the A-frame signs. Vice Mayor Dennis Brown suggested the council could do nothing and

when it comes time to re-nest the regulations in December let the sunset lapse. If the rules are not renewed by the sunset date (Dec. 31, 2015) the use of A-frame signs in Fountain Hills would be effectively banned.

Regulations that apply to A-frame signs are defined in the town Zoning Ordinance with sign regulations. Some of the general rules are as follows:

- *Only businesses that are physically located within town commercial or industrial zoning districts or churches in residential zoning districts may display A-frame signs.
- *Signs are not to be placed within any paved portion of a street, sidewalk or median. They must be one foot behind the curb

or pavement if no curb is present.

- *Signs are not to be placed where they pose a hazard.
- *Signs are to be no more than 24 inches wide and 36 inches tall.
- *Signs must be manu-

factured and in good repair.

- *Signs may be displayed only between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m.
- *This is not a complete listing of the regulations. See the Town of Fountain Hills Zoning Ordinance for details.

Coalition director to help fight retail pot

A group of concerned Arizona residents and civic leaders announced the formation of a political action committee to oppose the legalization of marijuana for retail purposes.

The committee is called Arizona Citizens for Responsible Drug Policy.

Marijuana proponents have said they will likely seek to have the issue placed on a statewide ballot next year.

Shelly Mowry, director of the Fountain Hills Coalition, is working with the opposition group to help develop strategy and bring stakeholders together.

Seth Leibsohn, the group's chair, stated: "Marijuana is a mind-altering, dangerous substance that harms the brain, especially the teen brain, and causes any number of problems in both child development and adult behavior."

"Legalizing this drug would clearly harm our youth and society, standing as an obstacle to their success in school and in life and the future of Arizona and our country."

The group plans to raise funds to raise awareness about marijuana's harms and to oppose any ballot initiatives to legalize the drug.

Sally Schindel, the group's treasurer, knows firsthand the effects of marijuana.

"She lost her son when he took his own life, leaving a note stating, 'Marijuana killed my soul + ruined my brain.'"

"I am committed to helping Andy help others," said Schindel.

"Together, Andy and I will do everything we can to save the lives of others by vigorously fighting the greed and irresponsibility of the legalization movement."

Yavapai County Attorney Sheila Polk is also a member of the group.

A longstanding opponent of legalization, Polk is a statewide expert on the harms that marijuana inflicts on youth.

"Marijuana is especially harmful to the developing adolescent brain and its use sets youth up for a lifetime of battling addiction," she said.

"Kids who regularly use pot are three times less likely to graduate from high school."

"The single most effective measure to protect our kids from marijuana's destruction is to keep it illegal."

Merilee Fowler, executive director of MAT-FORCE, an award-winning substance abuse coalition, said, "I joined Arizonans for Responsible Drug Policy because I passionately care about our state's children and their futures."

"Some 32,000 of our high school students indicate they would likely try marijuana if it becomes legal. We have to stop this legalization train before we harm an entire generation of our youth."

The committee's website is www.ArizonansForResponsibleDrugPolicy.org.

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CPR class April 11

Fountain Hills residents can learn life-saving CPR/AED at a monthly class presented by the Community Services Department and Fountain Hills Fire Department.

The next session will be held Saturday, April 11, at the Community Center from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

The purpose of this course is to train individuals to overcome any reluctance to act in emergency situations and to recognize and care for life-threatening respiratory or cardiac emergencies in children or adults.

The classes cover adult, child, and infant CPR, the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), and first aid for choking. The Fountain Hills Fire

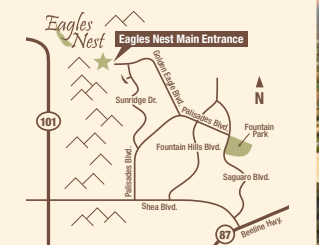
Department provides the certified CPR instructors.

Cost of the course is \$30 for Fountain Hills residents and \$40 for non-residents. High school students receive a \$10 discount. Pre-registration is required and participants can pre-register at Town Hall, Monday through Thursday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; at the Community Center, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; or online at www.fh.az.gov/recreation.

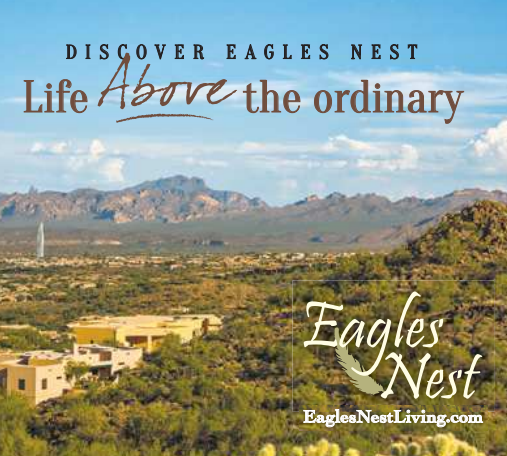
The deadline to register is 12 p.m. on the Thursday preceding the course. Those who register online should bring their receipts with them as proof of payment. Private classes for large groups can also be scheduled by contacting the town.

Town Hall is located at 16705 E. Avenue of the Fountains. The Community Center is located at 13001 N. La Montana Dr. For more information, contact Community Services at 816-5100 or the Town of Fountain Hills website at www.fh.az.gov.

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Free tax prep through AARP

Skilled volunteers from AARP Tax-Aide will prepare tax returns at no cost from early February until April 15.

All appointments will be scheduled on Mondays at the Fountain Hills Presbyterian Church, 13001 N. Fountain Hills Blvd.

For an appointment, call 816-4924 Monday through Thursday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Food for Kidz feature
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