

Courtscene

News from the District Court

Garcia faces felony charges

By Dave Delisi

Kurt Steadman did double duty as both defense attorney and translator while representing Roque Garcia in Beaverhead County District Court on Tuesday, February 1.

McCann expressed concern about the safety of the victims, highlighted Garcia's lack of ties to the community, and alleged that Garcia previously fled to Mexico when he was charged with crimes in California.

Steadman countered that the current amount was already more than Garcia could afford and that, therefore, \$75,000 was excessive.

Tucker sided with the State and Garcia's bond was set at \$75,000.



Attorney Kurt Steadman confers with Roque Garcia

Garcia is charged with the felonies of sexual intercourse without consent and incest. Documents filed with the Court allege that Garcia has molested all his minor step-daughters. The allegations were first brought to the attention of the Beaverhead County Sheriff's department by the mother of one of Garcia's step-daughter's friends.

Each of the alleged victims was later interviewed by Detective Sergeant Jay Hansen and each corroborated the allegations.

Garcia and his family moved to Dillon from Tehachapi, California, court documents state.

In District Judge Loren Tucker's court, Garcia's arraignment proceeded smoothly thanks to Kurt Steadman's fluency in Spanish, Garcia's native tongue. Tucker was careful to wait for Steadman to translate each question, comment, or explanation to Garcia, and to watch for the cues, both verbal and non-verbal, that indicated Garcia understood the proceedings.

Tucker entered a not guilty plea on Garcia's behalf to each of the charges.

The discussion of bond amount produced arguments from the State in favor of raising the current amount from \$50,000 to \$75,000. In explaining his rationale, County Attorney Marvin

Varney changes plea

Samuel Dave Varney changed his plea Thursday in District Court and received a five-year sentence for criminal possession of dangerous drugs.

Varney, 41, originally faced the three charges of possession, possession with intent to distribute, and possession of drug paraphernalia. As a result of the plea agreement reached with the State, the latter two charges were dropped.



Samuel Varney

Varney's sentence stems from events that occurred in July of 2004. Court documents state that Varney and a companion checked into a local motel at approximately 3:00 a.m. The next day, after they had checked out, the person cleaning the room noticed a box behind the TV. The box, police later determined, contained a digital scale, a funnel with residue of methamphetamine, and several small bags.

The plea agreement recommended Varney be committed to the Department of Corrections for five years, with these five years to run concurrent with another drug-related sentence Varney received in Gallatin County. Further, the plea agreement recommended that Varney pay \$300 into the Dillon City Drug Fund, that he repay the cost of his court-appointed counsel, and that he pay the mandatory surcharges levied by the Court.

During the court proceedings on this day, Varney's attorney, Mike Larson, said that "for the better part of his life, (Varney) has been law abiding." He indicated that Varney has "fallen into a quagmire" in the past few months. Should the court accept the plea agreement, Larson said, Varney hopes to go back to school and become a productive member of society upon release.

Varney's mother was in the courtroom for the sentencing hearing, and District Judge Loren Tucker thanked her for showing her support.

Given a chance to speak, Varney described the circumstances of his life at this point. He indicated that he fell in with the wrong group of people, but stated that he knew he was responsible for his decisions. "Since then," Varney said, "I've lost all I own. My wife committed suicide," he said. All his belongings were confiscated and sold at a sheriff's auction, and all Varney is left with, he said, "is some kids to raise."

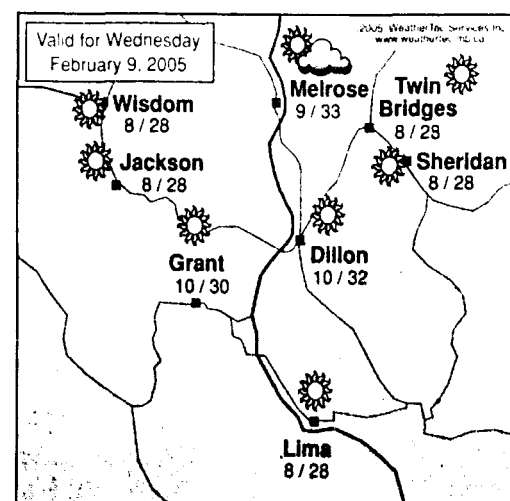
The objective of the plea agreement, McCann said, is to get Varney some treatment.

Tucker accepted the lawyers' recommendations with only a few modifications. He imposed the requirement that Varney complete a chemical dependency program before he will be eligible for parole. Tucker also eliminated the \$300 fee to the Dillon City Drug Fund, noting that Varney's \$500 monthly child support, coupled with the fees of up to \$1,600 for his court-appointed lawyer, will be challenge enough.

"It's all up to you," Tucker told Varney before wishing him good luck. Varney was led from the courtroom in handcuffs.

Southwestern Montana Weather Forecast

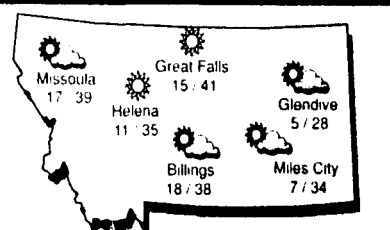
Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Sunny skies. Cool. LOW 10 HIGH 32	Partly cloudy Normal temps. LOW 15 HIGH 38	Partly cloudy Mild LOW 17 HIGH 40	Mostly cloudy. Near normal temperatures. LOW 22 HIGH 36	Mostly cloudy. Near normal temperatures. LOW 23 HIGH 37



Forecast Details for Southwestern Montana

A sunny high pressure area will move over Montana this week to bring fair weather. Temperatures will vary from cool to milder than usual for the second week of February. No precipitation is expected, except for a few snow showers on Monday.

Today's State Forecast



Climate Summary (observed and recorded at Dillon)

Historical Records for Wednesday, February 9, 2005			
NORMAL TEMPS.	WARMEST	COLDEST	MAX. PRECIP.
Low 13 High 37	55 In 1987	-16 In 1959	0.11 inches in 1998

Sunrise and Sunset	
Daylight on Feb. 9, 2005 lasts for 10 hours and 10 mins.	
Sunrise 7:39 a.m.	Sunset 5:49 p.m.

This Weather Forecast has been sponsored by:
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The Dillon Tribune

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NRCS offers \$400,000 in Conservation Innovation Grants

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is making \$400,000 available in Montana for Conservation Innovation Grants. This is a grant competition for farmers, ranchers, and others who have innovative ideas for addressing some of Montana's most pressing natural resource conservation needs.

"These grants offer seed money to look at innovative technologies and approaches to environmental solutions on working agricultural lands," said Dave White, NRCS state conservationist for Montana.

The 2002 Farm Bill established these grants as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and the first national grants were awarded in 2004. This year, Montana along with 12 other states, will offer a statewide grant competition.

Applications should demonstrate the use of innovative technologies or approaches to address at least one of the five natural resource concerns identified by NRCS in Montana: water resources, soil resources, atmospheric resources, grazing land and forest health, and wildlife habitat.

Applications are due by April 11, 2005. Details can be found on the federal eGrants website at <http://www.grants.gov> and on the NRCS website at <http://www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/>.

The grant program is offered to a diverse set of potential applicants, including state and local agencies, nonprofit organizations, for-profit companies, and tribes and individuals to help develop, test, implement and transfer innovative environmental solutions. Projects may be from one to three years in length. Grants will fund projects targeting innovative on-the-ground conservation, including pilot projects and field demonstrations. Selected applicants may receive grants up to 50 percent of the total project cost. Applicants must provide nonfederal matching funds for at least 50 percent of the project cost, of which up to 50 percent may be from in-kind contributions. An exception allows for beginning and limited resource farmers and ranchers, tribes and community-based organizations representing these groups to obtain up to 75 percent of project matching funds from in-kind contributions. The NRCS contribution may not exceed \$75,000 for a single project. NRCS is also offering a national grant competition to fund larger projects. The final rule was published in the Jan. 11 Federal Register, and applications for the national grants are due by March 28, 2005. You can find the CIG final rule and other information at <http://www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/> or contact Erik Suffridge at 406-587-6849.

Lion hunting closes in area

The hunting of all mountain lions in southwestern Montana hunting districts 323, 324, 325 and 327, which include portions of Madison and Beaverhead counties, closed at one-half hour after sunset on Wednesday, February 9, 2005. The order halting the hunt came shortly after Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks officials received word that the pre-established harvest quota for the districts combined had been met. For more information, visit FWP's web site at www.fwp.mt.gov, click on "Hot Topics" click on "Mountain Lion Status," or calling the toll-free number at 1-800-385-7826.

ChamberCorner

NEWS FROM THE BEAVERHEAD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
By Carly Anderson, Executive Director

Come visit on Wednesday

My first full week of being the new Beaverhead Chamber Executive Director has been an exciting one. Tuesday night we had our Chamber Social and Awards. This casual & fun event was very successful and was enjoyed by many. Decadent desserts and yummy appetizers provided by Board of Directors, Mrs. Barnes' Culinary Arts Classes, and local restaurants were out of this world delicious. Congratulations to our Chamber Award winners, you deserved it!

Please come to the Chamber of Commerce tonight from 4-6 p.m. to say good-bye to our outgoing Chamber Executive Director Judy Siring and meet me. Thankfully Judy will just be working a few blocks away and will still be involved in many community activities. I wish her luck.

Don't forget to attend the Bar J Wranglers concert at UM-W Beier Auditorium on Saturday at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are going fast. This concert is sponsored by the Dillon Junior Fiddlers and the UM-W Rodeo Team.

Women's Resource Center
Mardi Gras 2005
Featuring
New Orleans Style Buffet
Silent Auction, Raffles, Mimes,
Palm and Tarot Card Reading,
Face Painting, Dixieland Music

Sunday, February 20, 2005
4:30 — 8:30
Elk's Lodge

*12 per person, *22 for two. Children 10 and under are free.
No Host Bar Available.
Tickets available at the WRC or at the door.

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE
VIGILANTE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S
67th Annual Meeting will be held in the Lewis and Clark Room on the campus of University of Montana Western, Dillon.

Friday, February 25, 2005

- Registration begins at 12:00 Noon.
- Dinner by reservation will start at 12:30 p.m. (Reservation cards must be mailed by February 18th.)
- Annual Meeting will commence at 1:15 p.m.

GUEST SPEAKER
Mike Logan
Photographer and Cowboy Poet

The Dillon Jr. Fiddlers & the UM-Western Rodeo Club present
IN CONCERT



BAR J WRANGLERS
Saturday, February 19, 7:30pm
UM-Western Beier Auditorium

\$15 at the door, \$10 in advance

@ Bert's CD's, UMW Foundation Office, Beaverhead Co.
Chamber of Commerce, Fiddlers, & Rodeo Club Members

Cowboy Music & Variety Show

The University of Montana
Western