

Jon Forwood ... two for two

Laramie County District Attorney Jon Forwood catches a lot of flak for his office's record on Supreme Court reversals for prosecutorial misconduct.

The joke is that if you're prosecuted by Mary Beth Wolff, you'll get two chances to get off - at the first trial and at the retrial if you're convicted.

To say she's aggressive is like saying Mike Tyson is unpredictable - it doesn't quite do justice to the term.

But two recent issues presented to the District Attorney's office have been handled as well as can be done, in the opinion of the Cheyenne Herald.

The Maggie Carter case is written about in the columns at the right.

The second matter coming before the office was the Ed Strader citation for breach of the peace.

After more changes than a Pony Express rider, the mayor had reached the DA's office. First there were two charges against the local resident because he had objected to charges for nuisance abatement on property that he had sold 16 months earlier. After careful consideration, the mayor decided to have him

cited for making a harassing telephone call and for breach of the peace in a direct confrontation with one of the city assistant attorneys.

One of the problems for local residents now is that the city attorney's office is inhabited by a banker and two divorce attorneys - none with the proper background to understand violations as simple as breach of the peace.

After causing Ed Strader to spend significant money on legal representation, the mayor then had the action moved from municipal court to circuit court - obviously hoping to cause even more legal costs to the innocent resident.

Unlike municipal court which is presided over by two mayoral appointees, to reach the judges in circuit court requires passing through the district attorney's office.

It took Jon Forwood about as long as it takes to park in the empty downtown parking garage to decide that the single citation (breach of the peace) forwarded it by the dutiful police chief, had no merit.

The charge was kicked by Forwood's office. Dismissed. An attempted malicious prosecution was thwarted. Forwood was two for two. Jobs well done.

Gay Woodhouse has time and again provided the legal representation that prevented improper action on the part of Cheyenne city government.

As her ad in each Cheyenne Herald states, she has dedicated herself to the protection of the rights of local residents. Since setting up her private practice in Cheyenne - after serving as Wyoming's attorney general - she has become a beacon in the darkness for many residents whose rights have been infringed upon. Whether threats to property rights from illegal annexations or rezonings, or threats of criminal persecution, Gay Woodhouse has prevailed time and again - whether in the local courts or at the Supreme Court. While other attorneys choose to limit their services to governmental entities, Ms. Woodhouse is not afraid of the challenges faced in fighting City Hall to protect individual rights. And she wins.

Maggie Carter

On May 11, Laramie County assistant district attorney Craig Jones filed a five count information which charged former Cheyenne city council administrative assistant Maggie Carter with violation of W.S. § 6-5-303(b).

did not encompass all of the disclosures made by Jim Mathewson in that October 11 Herald article. Spending by city council members for personal meals, meals in bar settings, unsubstantiated spending on travel and entertainment, etc. were

6-5-303. False swearing in nonjudicial or nonadministrative proceeding; false claims or vouchers; penalties.

(a) A person commits a felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than two (2) years, a fine of not more than two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00), or both, if, while under a lawfully administered oath or affirmation in a matter where an oath is authorized by law, he knowingly makes a false certificate, affidavit, acknowledgment, declaration or statement other than in a judicial or administrative proceeding.

(b) A person is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than two (2) years, a fine of not more than two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00), or both, if he knowingly submits a false claim or voucher with intent to defraud.

While Cheyenne city attorney Mike Basom improperly advised council members about the nature of the allegations, the district attorney's office got it right.

This was never an infraction that involved the dollar amount of the alleged fraud, it was, as stated in the above box, about the false swearing on a voucher.

When an article in the Cheyenne Herald of October 11, 2004, laid out the violations (which were later confirmed in the \$15,000 fraud audit forced on the mayor by the Herald disclosures), the mayor, city attorney, city council and their house organ, the Wyoming Tribune-Eagle, immediately circled the wagons in an attempt to protect one they considered a valuable and trusted employee. They took protective actions even though that employee had effectively admitted guilt by paying back the amounts improperly charged to city credit cards and by coding the repayment in an attempt to cancel the original fraudulent coding.

The mayor did not immediately order a fraud audit. That was done only after further public pressure and the fraud audit

not made a part of the audit.

The WT-E headlined a front page story with an accusation that Brent Beeman broke the law by taking a cash advance on his city credit card, an action the WT-E deemed illegal. Nothing came of that wrongful act. Presumably because the councilman did not know that the credit card was not for his personal enjoyment. Ignorance evidently can be a defense.

There are those who remain certain that allegations of wrongdoing on the part of Maggie Carter were exaggerated and the fact that the mayor kept her on the payroll for \$6,000 additional pay was evidence that she hadn't done anything which would ever lead to criminal charges. Hence, Ms. Carter's actions could not rise to the level of a legal offense - in their minds and opinions.

It is the position of the Herald that any plea agreement must include repayment of the \$6,000 Ms. Carter was paid after her suspension and admission of fraud. She knew she was not entitled to additional salary. No felony record ... expunge - both are acceptable. But the \$6,000 **MUST** be repaid to the taxpayers.

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City of Cheyenne Paid for Police Chief's Bogus Mail-Order "Master's Degree"

CHIEF BOB FECHT REQUESTED AND RECEIVED MORE THAN \$2500 FROM THE CITY TREASURER FOR A DIPLOMA WHICH ISN'T WORTH THE PAPER IT'S PRINTED ON

By Jim Mathewson
Fecht took the great old story about the man who sold the world's largest diamond to the mayor of Cheyenne, Wyo. The story is so old that it has become a legend. The story is so old that it has become a legend. The story is so old that it has become a legend.

President of Cheyenne's worst-kept secret
The story is so old that it has become a legend. The story is so old that it has become a legend. The story is so old that it has become a legend.



Bob Fecht, Police Chief of Cheyenne, Wyo.

First!

Followed!

Wyoming Tribune-Eagle

UW's Barta eyes job in ... Schools get tough on teen drinking ... Looney moments hit the gallery

The Cheyenne Herald broke the story about Police Chief Bob Fecht on Monday, April 18, 2005.

The Wyoming Tribune-Eagle trailed the local advocacy journal with their story on Friday, April 22, 2005 - four days later!

Cheyenne's KGWN CBS Channel 5 website briefly reported (from the Cheyenne Herald's story) two days after it broke on April 18th and credited the source as "The Associated Press."

Mirror and pick-up stories are all over the US and internet now - wrongly attributed to the AP or to the copycat Wyoming Tribune-Eagle story - sometimes even the Casper Star - which never filed an original story on this subject of a bogus master's degree.

Fecht defends master's