

The Gonzaga Bulletin

APRIL 4, 2013

www.gonzagabulletin.com

VOL. 124 ISSUE 26



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Local Pizza Oven out of dough

Why a Spokane business closed and a contractor is being sued by his subcontractors

By Tom Quinn
News Editor

Hamilton Street lost another business last month, as Pizza Oven closed its doors permanently. The story of its demise is more complicated than the recent closings of University Bar and Grill, Noodle Works or Red Roof Burgers, and involves a contractor accused of scamming at least four businesses in Washington state.

From friend to defendant

Matt Rai, the former owner of the Hamilton Pizza Oven location, met Randy Fisher through a college friend.

"I got to know him so well," said Rai, who also owns a Pizza Oven and Taco Del Mar in River Park Square. "I almost went on a date with his sister. We became that close of friends."

Fisher, who did not respond to requests for an interview, now has a bench warrant out for his arrest for failing to appear in court for one of the four lawsuits recently filed against him by companies who claim he conned them out of thousands of dollars.

When Rai decided to open a Pizza Oven in the Clementine Building on Hamilton, Fisher's company, Local Boyz Construction, was the natural choice when deciding on a contractor. Rai and Fisher were friends, and Rai didn't think about withholding some of Fisher's money until the job was complete.

"I paid him everything up front because I didn't know at the time you're supposed to do like a third at the beginning, a third in the middle and a third at the end," Rai said. "I just wanted the money out of my hand so I gave it to him, and he did a



Jake Kelly photo

Pizza Oven owner Matt Rai stands in the leftovers of what used to be his restaurant in the Clementine Building near Boone Avenue and Hamilton Street on Wednesday. Pizza Oven shut its doors in March after its general contractor allegedly scammed the restaurant, forcing it to close.

really piss-poor job of building everything and didn't finish it."

Of course, it was not immediately evident that Fisher would allegedly take the money and run. Rai said Fisher and an

employee worked on Pizza Oven regularly. When they chatted, Fisher would tell Rai he wanted to get out of the construction business and buy the Scuba Center of Spokane on Division Street, a dream he ac-

complished with a little help from Rai.

"He came to borrow some money and

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Spokane denies blame in Gormley case

By Tom Quinn
News Editor

The city of Spokane and Brandon LeBaron, the parks and recreation guide who supervised the April 1, 2012, kayak trip that claimed Gonzaga student Christopher Gormley's life, have filed an answer to Susan Gormley's lawsuit on behalf of her son.

Christopher Gormley had just turned 18 when his kayak capsized on Rock Lake and he succumbed to hypothermia. Monday was the one-year anniversary of his death.

The lawsuit, which also names GU,

GSBA and GU Outdoors as defendants, alleges that LeBaron was the only member of the trip wearing a wetsuit, and that he went ahead with the trip despite winds of 25-30 mph, above the limit specified in its Spokane Parks and Recreation outdoor program instructor's manual, which states "we do not paddle on lakes when winds exceed ... 13-18 mph."

It also claims that the trip was unsafe for other reasons, including water temperature, poor cellphone service and the sheer cliffs and inaccessibility of Rock Lake. It claims GU and the city of Spokane "so negligently and carelessly planned, organized, sponsored and implemented

the April 1 kayak trip to Rock Lake that it was unreasonably dangerous and unsafe," and seeks an unspecified amount in damages.

In an answer to the complaint, filed by Assistant City Attorney Salvatore Faggiano, the city makes an argument similar to the one made by GU in its defense on March 12, putting potential blame for the incident on Christopher Gormley.

"[The] plaintiff's injuries and damages, if any, were proximately caused by plaintiff decedent's [Christopher's] own fault," reads the defense document filed on March 28, "including negligence, and assumption of the risk of known and appreciated dangers

and all times relevant was in exclusive control of the operation of his kayak."

The city also claims that blame for the incident, if any, was caused by people not under the city's control, saying any potential injuries were "proximately caused by negligence or intentional acts of existing parties and/or third parties over whom the answering defendant has no control or right of control."

The city's defense is asking for the complaint to be dismissed "with prejudice," meaning Susan Gormley would get nothing and would be barred from future lawsuits concerning the Rock Lake incident.

Do you even juice, bro?

Jamba Juice opening brings new meaning to juicing at the gym

By McKenzie Throm
Staff Writer

This week Sodexo freshened up the Rudolf Fitness Center by pushing Freshens out and bringing a new Jamba Juice in.

At noon on Tuesday, April 2, Sodexo celebrated Jamba Juice's soft opening by handing out free samples.

"We were looking to freshen up some of our concepts," said Sodexo Marketing Manager Sarah Clifford of the addition. "If everything goes through with the new building, we will be losing the COG next year, so we were looking to bring some new excitement to campus with our new food options and get people excited about what's coming down the road."

But the brand switch wasn't just a way for Sodexo to garner attention toward changes.

"[Also] we do listen



Jake Kelly photo

Sophomore Patrick Lunney flexes his brain as he is trained on the art of smoothie making by a corporate official.

to our students and what they want," added Clifford. "Jamba Juice was a brand we found that students wanted when we did our focus

groups." "I am so excited," said senior Shireen Khinda, echoing Clifford's research at the opening. "I think

it puts a fresh spin on the Rudolf Fitness Center. It's going to make Rudolf so

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Rally fights DOMA

By Jess Krueger
Contributor

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Brittani Bailey and Christine Kaila's entwined hands rise up proudly over the crowd.

Clad in a T-shirt with the widely popularized pink equal rights symbol printed on the front, Bailey, 22, holds a sign in her spare hand. It declares, in multicolored block letters, the commitment she hopes to one day make to her girlfriend of two-years: "I really want to marry her" with an arrow pointing to Kaila, 23.

"I want to be able to make a commitment that my parents made together. I saw their love growing up and I want to be able to share that with [Christine]. I want to have a family and it not be different, it not be weird; it just be normal," Bailey said.

Bailey and Kaila were among the hundreds of Defense of Marriage Act opponents gathered outside the U.S. Supreme Court while the justices heard a challenge to DOMA on Wednesday, March 27. The case seeks to overturn the law, enacted in 1996, that defines marriage as heterosexual and excludes legally married same-sex couples from receiving the federal benefits and responsibilities outlined in more than 1,100 federal laws.

Married in Canada in 1982, Bonnie Quesenberry, 63, and Fay Jacobs, 64, would have celebrated their 31st anniversary Wednesday if the United States recognized Canadian same-sex marriages.

"I was married in Canada, and this country

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