

The April 24, 2008, Whitefish Pilot contained the following article.

Spiritual guru pleads guilty in assault

A Lakeside woman who claims to espouse timeless spiritual truths pleaded no contest to one count of misdemeanor assault. Her trial had been scheduled to begin Tuesday at 9 a.m. in Flathead County Justice Court.

After entering her plea, Devra West was sentenced to a six-month deferred jail term and fined \$500.

Dr. Patricia Cole of Whitefish alleged West in 2006 hit her with a shoe and shoved her.

Justice of the Peace David Ortley issued a restraining order against West, a self-styled religious master who claims to be a prophet.

West's trial was postponed from March 11 after she failed to show up for a March 7 pretrial conference.

West is currently in Florida participating in a documentary on Mayan prophecies.

West's trial originally was scheduled for April 2007.

Prosecutors said they offered West the same plea deal she accepted Monday about a year and a half ago.

I was not working at the Pilot that week. I went to see my father in Washington. After I returned, the publisher called me for clarification and e-mailed it to me. This is what ran on May 1, 2008:

A headline in the April 24 issue of the Pilot said that Devra West had pleaded guilty in an assault case in Flathead County. As noted in the story, the Associated Press Stylebook says that when a defendant enters a no-contest plea, the person is then subject to being judged guilty and punished as if he had pleaded guilty or had entered a guilty plea. The charges will be dropped in six months and expunged from West's record.

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