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TOWN & COUNTRY

THIS WEEK

ATHABASCA ADVOCATE • BARRHEAD LEADER • WESTLOCK NEWS

TownandCountryTODAY.com

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LES DUNFORD/WN

ALL HAIL THE KING! — Elvis tribute artist Al Leblanc belts out a number during Saturday performances at the 14th-annual Blue Suede Music Festival held at the Westlock Ag Grounds Aug. 5-7. This was the first year Westlock played host to the festival which had previously been held yearly in Busby — the event had to be cancelled the last two years due to COVID-19 restrictions. See more photos on Page 28 of this week's edition.

Five years for sex offender

Event occurred in Athabasca County in 2020

BY HEATHER STOCKING
Athabasca Advocate Staff

ATHABASCA — A man accused of aggravated sexual assault of a minor pleaded guilty to that and two other offences.

In the Court of Queen's Bench in Edmonton July 29, Jacob McKinney, 35, sat rocking back and forth with his arms crossed as his lawyer Will van Engen and Crown prosecutor Sandra Christensen-Moore informed Justice Susan Richardson of a plea deal.

There is a publication ban on the name of McKinney's victim and their parents.

van Engen apologized for the late start as he was concerned about the mental and physical well-being of McKinney who had told him he was unwell.

"Mr. McKinney advised me he's in the middle of a mental health crisis," he said. "He was diagnosed with bipolar disorder after these offences."

McKinney was charged with six counts in total following the Nov. 13, 2020, incident; aggravated sexual assault, sexual contact with a child, two counts of choking with intent, one count of assault, and one count of housebreaking with intent and mischief damage.

When Justice Richardson asked McKinney how he pleaded, he pleaded guilty to sexual assault, assault and housebreaking, as agreed between the Crown and defense.

Christensen-Moore then read in the record of events.

"At approximately 3 p.m. Nov. 13, 2020, Mr. McKinney went to his co-worker's home where they had supper and sat by a fire outside," she said. "They both consumed alcohol throughout the afternoon and night."

Close to midnight McKinney went inside and his co-worker put him in a spare bed upstairs and went back down to clean up.

When he returned inside a short while later he discovered McKinney in his child's bedroom where McKinney and the child were in a state of undress and he had the child pinned down and covered their mouth causing bruising and cuts from their teeth.

A fight ensued and the father was able to get McKinney out of the house.

"Mr. McKinney pushed his way back inside and then continued to fight (with the father)," said Christensen-Moore. "(The father) grabbed an unloaded firearm from the top of the freezer to persuade Mr. McKinney to leave but he grabbed the gun and the two struggled."

See SEX OFFENDER, page 7



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