

# **Kennewick High students win county Mock Trial competition**

**By John Trumbo, Herald staff writer**

A team of Kennewick High School students proved its legal prowess in Benton County's Mock Trial competition Saturday, earning first place among six schools.

The Lions' would-be lawyers were adjudged superior in defense and prosecuting abilities in handling a mock criminal arson case that was staged in Benton County District Court facilities before real judges from the district and superior benches who volunteered their time. Each student team was required to present evidence and witnesses, as well as argue motions and give closing arguments. A panel of attorneys from the Benton and Franklin Bar Association served as jurors who ultimately selected the winning teams, said Joe Burrowes, a Benton County district court judge who coordinated this year's competition.

River Academy of Wenatchee was second, and Tri-Cities Prep was third. Other competing teams were from Southridge, Richland and Mount Spokane high schools.

Each team had two months to prepare its presentations, and had attorneys who volunteered as coaches.

Kennewick's legal coaches were Jay Flynn, Kristina McKennon and Scott Johnson.

Each team, which Burrowes said had from 15 to 20 members, was required to demonstrate a defense case and a prosecution case, which required that three courtrooms be used simultaneously for morning and afternoon sessions.

Burrowes said Kennewick and the River Academy teams are invited to participate in the state Mock Trial competitions to be held March 26-28 in Olympia. There also may be an opportunity for the Tri-Cities Prep team to join in the state-level competition.