

**Bobcat Invitational
Track meet here
Friday afternoon**

6

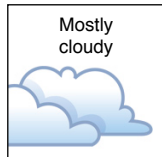
**Mountain lion
spotted again
in Thermopolis**

10

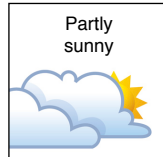
Thermopolis 3-on-3 weekend forecast from the National Weather Service



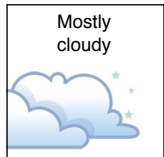
Friday 51-55



Friday Night 31-35



Saturday 55-59



Saturday Night 33-37



Sunday 61-65

Thermopolis
Hot Springs

Independent Record

SPECIAL INTERNET PREVIEW

VOLUME 110, No. 18, April 30, 2009

THERMOPOLIS, WY 82443

USPS 627-300

75¢

Over 300 teams expected

3-on-3

A big turnout for the 16th annual Thermopolis 3-on-3 basketball tournament has Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce officials asking for more volunteers on Saturday and Sunday.

Executive director Kathy Wallingford said 250 teams had registered by 11 a.m. Monday, which means the total could reach 350 by the Wednesday night registration deadline. Past experience has shown 350 teams will mean up to 2,000 extra people in town.

Volunteers are asked to do simple, often enjoyable jobs, such as keeping score and timing for the referees. The hard jobs such as setting up are being handled by high school students on Friday and the cleanup by the high school wrestling team late Sunday.

To volunteer, call the chamber at 864-3192 by Friday afternoon or just stop by the tournament headquarters near the Independent Record on Saturday or Sunday.

The event starts with the check in and tip-off party Friday in the Blair's Super Market parking lot from 4-9 p.m.

Those unable to pick up their schedules at the tip-off party may stop by the headquarters truck near Bicentennial Park early Saturday.

Tentative game times are from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. both days. Wallingford expects about the same number of courts and bas-

kets to be set up in downtown Thermopolis as last year.

The Hoop World event is co-sponsored by many local and regional businesses. The top four teams in each category qualify for the World Events National 3-on-3 Championships in Honolulu Aug. 30-31.

The entry deadline was extended from Friday to Wednesday by officials at the tournament headquarters.

Referees are coming from Colorado, Casper and Billings.

The slam dunk contest will be at noon Saturday at the flagpole. Other special contests include free-throw and three-point shooting.

Activities include a dance on Saturday for middle and high school students at the armory recreation center. It is sponsored by the parents of the Bobcat wrestling team.

Booths will be set up around the tournament site and other places in the community. In the event of rain or snow, provisions call for delaying games briefly, playing shorter games or trimming the playoffs.

Other sites on the tour in the next two months include Detroit, St. Louis, Memphis, Fresno, Reno, Modesto and San Luis Obispo.

Crews will start setting up the courts downtown on Friday. While barrels will warn drivers people are ahead, parking is still allowed in front of downtown businesses on Friday.



Tracy Durkin of Wyoming Wine Traders pours a sample of a 2006 vintage dry red into the cup of a visitor while Kinnith

Outland, center, enjoys a cup of his own at the Wine, Food and Fine Arts Festival Saturday. --Jonathan Green photo

County voters head to the polls to decide whether to adopt lodging and EDC taxes

Hot Springs County voters will decide two measures in a special election Tuesday.

Proposition 1 asks for renewal of the lodging tax. Proposition 2 proposes to add one fourth of one cent to the sales tax levied here, with proceeds going to the Thermopolis-Hot Springs Economic Development Company (EDC).

BOTH proposals would be temporary and would have to be reconsidered at elections regularly to continue. Voters would reconsider the lodging tax in the 2012 general election, about 3.5 years from now, and the EDC sales tax in the 2010 election, about 18 months.

In fact that is why the lodging tax is before the voters in a special election. It was accidentally omitted from the list of election questions last November and in the general election two years before.

The lodging tax, which is paid only by those staying at local motels and campgrounds, raised approximately \$170,000 last year and must be spent to attract more visitors.

It has been in effect here and in most other counties since the 1980s.

It is estimated the EDC tax could raise \$250,000 annually, according to the Wyoming Department of Administration. Executive director Lorraine Quarberg said the

EDC would use the funds to attract new or enhance current businesses and expenses including office staff.

THE WORDING of Proposition 2 is, "Shall Hot Springs County adopt a one-quarter of one percent (0.25%) special purpose sales tax within the County? If approved by the voters, the Board of County Commissioners of Hot Springs County would allocate the one-quarter of one percent (0.25%) to Thermopolis-Hot Springs County Economic Development Company for business retention, business expansion, business attraction, office operations, marketing, matching funds for grants, revolving loan fund for businesses and special economic development projects."

During its existence, the EDC has used a variety of funding sources, mostly from the Town of Thermopolis and Hot Springs County. Other funds have come from local businesses, the chamber of commerce, matching funds and some grants.

If approved, the sales tax in the county would be 5.25¢ on the dollar.

THE EXACT wording of the lodging tax question is, "Shall Hot Springs County adopt a four percent (4%) sales tax paid on lodging services? 'Lodging Services' is defined as the provision of sleeping accommodations to transient guests and shall include

the providing of sites for the placement of tents, campers, trailers, mobile homes or other sleeping accommodations for transient guests."

Renewal of the lodging tax is supposed to be included in regular elections but was overlooked in the election last November. The 4% tax is paid by those who stay in motels and campgrounds and is not collected on meals or any other type of sales.

State statutes require that the funds be spent in an attempt to attract more visitors, using a local lodging tax board. Most counties in the state collect the tax, and it has been in existence here since the 1980s, going to 4% two elections ago.

VOTERS WILL use the same polling places as for a regular election, with Thermopolis precincts 1 and 2 going to the fair building, precinct 3 including East Thermopolis and roughly the eastern part of the county going to the armory recreation center and precinct 4 the western part of the county going to the county museum.

Voting hours will be from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Absentee ballots are available at the county clerk's office. It is possible to register to vote at the polls.

An exact copy of the ballot is reprinted on page 8.

Related stories on page 8

Community cleanup to hit high gear here Friday

The annual community cleanup starts Friday.

Thermopolis mayor Bill Malloy and community beautification committee members are urging people to do everything possible to help spruce businesses, homes, streets, alleys and yards. The town trash truck will be making extra runs to pick

up any trash left near garbage canisters.

Neighbors are encouraged to help others in the effort. If you know of anyone who needs help in cleaning property, contact town hall. Committee members will try to find volunteers or an organization to help with the cleanup.

Weather now really is from Thermopolis!

by Jonathan Green

At least two weather websites are now incorporating observations from the Thermopolis Fire Hall reporting station into their weather reports

Most websites use information taken from the Worland airport.

The National Weather Service website (www.weather.gov) previously reported conditions in Worland for Thermopolis. The NWS forecast page for Thermopolis now displays local conditions.

Riverton NWS meteorologist Chris Jones said the change was made last week. Similar changes were made for Dubois and Kaycee.

The reporting equipment at the fire hall is not as sophisticated as Worland. Cloud cover and visibility weather conditions are not present in the Thermopolis data.

Jones said it is unlikely that will be added. A ceilometer, as in sky ceiling, costs tens of thousands of dollars.

The Weather Underground website (www.wunderground.com) substitutes data taken from the Worland airport where the Thermopolis Fire Hall does not report conditions.



J.J. Jellis, left, and Jonah Cook of Thermopolis dash for the finish in the 100 at the middle school meet Saturday.

Lane 3 plan ready for comments

by Cindy Glasson

Inberg-Miller Engineering and Owl Creek Engineering presented the draft engineering report for improving Lane 3 to the Hot Springs County commissioners on April 21.

The dead-end private road would be paved and become a county road under the proposal. It intersects with U.S. Hwy. 20 at the Pamida store and extends west to the new Ryan Bros. Trucking location. The improvements are divided into two phases that will probably be combined, the part nearest the highway and the part nearest Ryan Bros. The first phase would probably be concrete; the west end might be paved.

A third phase would link Lane 3 to Lane 7, using a north-south road.

The new businesses in that area, including B&G Industries and the KTHE Radio antenna, have raised concerns about safety, storm runoff and dust control. The biggest concern is safety at the highway intersection, where the grade is too steep. In winter, west-bound vehicles have problems climbing the grade from the highway or east-bound vehicles can slide onto the highway.

Solutions include lowering the grade by cutting into the peak and making it more gradual. Another possibility would be to move the junction slightly north, but the Pamida parking lot is there. An alternative would be to purchase the land on the southwest corner of the intersection and remove the buildings to allow sunlight to hit the road. That possibility is reportedly being discussed with the landowner, C and C Properties.

The upgrades encompass curb and gutter placement, fire hydrants and utility adjustments.

The report suggests adding a parking lane on the south sides from Pamida to Ryan Bros. but rules out a sidewalk.

According to Harry Hughes of Owl Creek Engineering, during the initial public meeting area landowners indicated sidewalks were not needed. Instead, homeowners preferred an increase

in the width of the lane in order to have parallel parking in front of their homes.

Thermopolis assistant to the mayor Dan Stansill said if the area is later moved into the town limits, the town would prefer there be sidewalks but would not view a lack of sidewalks as a stopping point. "We don't have sidewalks all over town, and that would be a lesser problem when it comes to annexation," he said

Based on resident data and a study by the Institute of Transportation Engineers, the traffic volume on the lane is small, approximately 800 vehicles per day. In order to require a turn lane from the highway or greater improvements, the traffic volume would have to reach 7,000-10,000 vehicles per day.

Using census data, it was determined that even at a 2% growth rate Lane 3 would remain well below those volumes into the year 2028.

Funding options for the project include the Commission Road Improvement Program, Industrial Road Program, Business Ready Community Program, Community Development Block Grants, Wyoming State Land and Investment Board funds, and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Landowners along the possible loop between the lanes include Carjim LLC, Ryan Brothers, Boelens Trust and Wind River Quarry. Whether the landowners donate the easements or the county purchases the easements has not yet been determined.

According to county commission chairman Brad Basse, if phase 3 is not approved "based on past experience, the entire upgrade would not be feasible." He said the county prefers not having roads where the infrastructure simply dead-ends.

Inberg-Miller and Owl Creek Engineering have requested further input from the public after reviewing the report. The report is available at the county clerk's office. Comments regarding the draft report need to be made by May 19.