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Thermopolis
Hot Springs

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SPECIAL INTERNET PREVIEW

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Residence searched

Man arrested for distributing drugs

by Tom Burkindine

A Thermopolis man was arrested Friday and charged with four counts of delivering a controlled substance.

Jeremy J. Lupini, 33, was taken into custody after Thermopolis Police Department officers executed a search warrant at his residence on Fremont and found an undisclosed amount of marijuana.

An affidavit from Officer Kevin McGinty described a series of conversations involving a female minor that led to the execution of the search warrant.

Lupini is accused of providing marijuana to the minor on at least three occasions.

McGinty said in the affidavit the accused provided the drugs at his home, the Buffalo Pasture and the Family Park on Broadway.

There are also accusations that messages of an inappropriate nature were exchanged between Lupini and the minor via computer and cellular phone.

Circuit Court Judge Thomas Harrington set Lupini's bond at \$10,000 and his first appearance is set for March 19.

Surveys being sent to random residents

by Tom Burkindine

The first phase of Thermopolis' Master Plan is underway and surveys are being mailed to community members in order to gauge which issues are most important to citizens.

Approximately 40 percent of 1,603 registered voters in town will receive a survey as part of a three-part mailing. A notice that the survey would be mailed was sent last week to 641 residents who were drawn at random. The actual survey will be sent Friday and a follow-up letter will be sent next month.

A postcard will be enclosed with the survey and those who return the anonymous survey and postcard will be placed in a drawing for prizes including dinner for two at Las Fuentes and tickets to the TeePee Pools and Star Plunge.

Ken Markert, a community planning consultant of MMI Planning in Cody, has been contracted by the town to spearhead the master plan initiative and said that if 50 percent or more of the surveys are returned, the results will be representative of the town.

"There's an inherent bias in a random sampling but if we can get half of the surveys back we can be 95 percent certain it's statistically accurate," Markert said.

The master plan will outline the direction in which the town will allocate funds during upcoming years. The survey is completely anonymous and plays an important role in assessing the needs of the community. Mayor Bill Malloy said it is important citizens understand the necessity of formulating a plan.

"Sometimes there's too much apathy," Malloy said. "People make up their minds they can't make a difference but I want people to know we need their input."

After the surveys have been collected the information is factored into the master plans, public meetings will be scheduled to inform the public on the specifics of the plan.

Markert is working in cooperation with the Thermopolis Planning Commission and town officials in the master plan process. Questions about the plan can be directed to 864-9285.

Swinging into spring



Sydney Shaffer feels the breeze on her toes as she tries out the new playground equipment at the Risen Son Christian School Monday afternoon. Behind Sydney are builders Tom Tschiffely and Kurt Shaffer. -- Cindy Glasson photo

Health Fair blood draws set to begin

by Cindy Glasson

The annual Kiwanis Health Fair is ready to kick off with the first blood draws on March 20 starting at 7 a.m.

Blood draws will be done in

the lobby at Hot Springs County Memorial hospital until 10 a.m. on Saturday, followed by additional opportunities to have blood drawn Monday through Saturday, March 22-27 from 7 a.m. until 10 a.m.

Blood draws will also be available during the same times at the Big Horn Clinic in Basin.

Lori Shay, one of the Kiwanis organizers of the event, said an appointment to have blood taken is not needed.

"They just come to the lobby, choose which tests they want and

pay for them," she said. "Then they see the phlebotomist to have blood drawn."

Shay said some of the tests will require 12 hours of fasting. Diabetics, however, need to drink plenty of water and take their necessary medications.

Some of the available tests include a chemistry panel, hemogram, blood typing, colon kits and hemoglobin A1C for diabetics.

Health assessments will be available at the health fair April 10 from 8 a.m. until noon at the

middle school.

Local physicians will go through blood tests with participants and a variety of booths geared toward better health will be on site.

Shay said the Wyoming Department of Transportation will be bringing their go-carts that simulate drunk driving and an ATV safety simulator will also be at the fair.

Booth space is still available by calling Shay at 864-5561 or by contacting any Kiwanis member.

Keeping a watchful eye



A bald eagle searches for his morning breakfast at a residence near Owl Creek.

— Lara Love photo

Rhoades ordered to pay back over \$105,000

Fifth Judicial District Court Judge Robert Skar ordered Brian Rhoades to pay \$105,742.78 to Champion Technologies.

Rhoades, 51, will also serve two to seven years in the state penitentiary under the terms of a plea agreement.

He was charged with 14 counts of larceny last year after being accused of selling chemicals to

area oilfields and maintaining the chemicals were produced by Champion Technologies, his former employer. He plead guilty to two counts.

The court acknowledged Rhoades had already paid the company \$50,000.

According to affidavits filed against Rhoades, he would refill empty 55-gallon drums with

chemicals purchased elsewhere and market them as a Champion product.

The scam, which took place from 2002 through 2008, reportedly netted Rhoades nearly \$106,000. He testified during an initial court appearance on August 28, 2009 that he began selling the barrels to relieve credit card debt.

Retired IR publisher Patrick Schmidt named to Wyoming Business Council

by Cindy Glasson

Pat Schmidt, recently retired publisher of the Thermopolis Independent Record, has been appointed by Governor Dave Freudenthal to the Wyoming Business Council.

Schmidt was contacted by Freudenthal for the appointment which happened during the legislative session. The appointment also required senate approval.

"I think the governor outlined our challenges real well during his state of the state address,"

he said.

Continuing to attract new businesses to the state with the downturn in the economy is one of those challenges.

"We can't let negativity keep us from achieving our goals," Schmidt said.

Schmidt attended a training session in Cheyenne last week along with other appointees from Gillette and Newcastle.

The State of Wyoming created the Wyoming Business Council to focus public and private efforts to build a strong job creation

base in the new economy with manufacturing and technology as core competencies while strengthening the existing business and industry groups under energy, agriculture, tourism and travel.

Schmidt is past chairman of the Lovell School Board and the Hot Springs County Recreation District Board and past president of the Wyoming Press Association. He was also co-founder of the Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors and Leadership Hot Springs County.