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Independent Record

SPECIAL INTERNET PREVIEW

VOLUME 111, No. 14, April 8, 2010

THERMOPOLIS, WY 82443

USPS 627-300

75¢

Man spots possible explosive

Bomb squad investigates

by Tom Burkindine

The regional bomb squad was called to investigate a possible explosive near Thermopolis last week.

The Region 6 bomb squad responded to the non-emergency call 12 miles north of town at 3 p.m. March 31. Region 6 Director Wes Long said a local bentonite contractor was performing an earth-scraping procedure when a heavy equipment operator spotted two wires protruding from the soil.

"He had a keen eye," Long said. "Apparently

that company had experience with running across these before."

The five-pound charge turned out to be the variety used by the United States Geological Service when digging core holes. A bomb squad from Cody was called in to attempt to detonate the charge for precautionary reasons. Squad members were unable to detonate the explosive and it was removed from the scene.

Hot Springs County Undersheriff Dave Larson also responded to the scene and said the explosive was removed without incident.

Commission signs airport contract; buys property

by Cindy Glasson

The Hot Springs County Commissioners signed an agreement to purchase property for future development and signed a five-year engineering contract for the new airport at their meeting Tuesday.

With the absence of commissioner Frank Manning, chairman John Lumley suspended Robert's Rules of Order for the meeting in order to continue with business.

According to commissioner Brad Basse, Manning's family has reported he is doing well after a heart valve replacement done in a hospital in Spokane, WA, but it is unknown when he will be allowed to come home.

In addition, county clerk Hans Odde was not available for the meeting as he was stranded in a blizzard on I-80 while attempting to return to Thermopolis after Easter break. Penny Herdt was sworn in as an official deputy clerk to cover Odde's absence.

Purchase of the Curtin's Liquor property has been in the works for several months with a final purchase price of \$245,050, a price just slightly higher than the appraisal price. Closing on the purchase will happen on April 15.

While final plans for the property have not been determined, the commissioners did indicate one of the proposed uses of the land could be a parking area.

The commissioners also entered into a five-year general agreement with GDA Engineers of Cody for engineering and surveying services for the

new airport.

GDA will develop a scope of work plan for each of the five years, adding an amendment to the agreement at each phase.

Each phase will have certain requirements and scope of work with language included in each that would allow cancellation of the agreement if substantial completion or other provisions should become unacceptable to both parties.

Dusty Spomer with GDA presented a packet to the commissioners for their review before the pre-design meeting April 20. The packet allows each of the commissioners to rank each of the development phases in order of priority to get a better idea of what is most important during the project.

The new Search and Rescue-Alternate Emergency Opera-

Continued on page 7

Town plan survey update

The survey period for the town's master plan is coming to an end Friday and officials in charge of the process said it has been very successful.

Ken Markert, a planning consultant with MMI Planning in Cody, was contracted by the town to oversee the project. Working in collaboration with the Thermopolis Planning Commission, Markert initiated the survey process last month by sending out 562 surveys to a random sampling of Thermopolis residents. In order for the survey to be statistically adequate 302 surveys needed to be collected.

Markert said Tuesday the town had received 320 and expects to receive more by the end of the week but stressed every survey will make the results more accurate.

"Statistically speaking we hit our goal of a minimal sample size," Markert said. "We expect to get to 60 percent and that is more than adequate."

There was also an open-end-

ed section of the survey which allowed citizens to expound on their concerns. The surveyed population used approximately one-third of those sections.

The results will be tabulated during the next week and presented to the planning commission during their next meeting on April 22.

Because the response was positive and the goal has been reached, a third mailing has been cancelled. That mailing would have asked residents to complete the surveys and return them for review.

"There's something good going on in Thermopolis," Markert said. "The way people have responded they seem interested in the betterment of the town."

After the information is presented to the committee, a town hall meeting will be scheduled for the public to voice any additional comments or concerns. The meeting will likely be in May, although the schedule is still under discussion.

Look at this



Journey Mehalek shows off just one of the brightly colored Easter eggs she gathered at the annual Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt in the State Park Sunday. Big prize winners of the day were Zack Hastie, Devon TenBoer, Lizzy Wagstaff and Kalli Blandford. --Cindy Glasson photo

Kiwanis Health Fair Saturday

by Cindy Glasson

Local physicians will be available for health assessments along with a variety of booths geared toward better health at the Kiwanis Health Fair at the middle school on April 10 from 8 a.m. until noon.

Those who had their blood drawn before the Health Fair will be able to pick up their results that day.

Free hearing screenings, vision screenings and bone density screenings will be available.

A dermatologist will be on site to do skin screenings and information on mammograms will also be available.

A wide variety of booths will include ATV safety and drunk driving simulation courtesy of the Wyoming Department of Transportation.

See the insert in this paper for more information.

Student Health Fair Friday

In conjunction with the Annual Kiwanis Health Fair, a student health fair will be held

at the middle school on Friday from 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m for fourth through eighth graders.

"Each of the ten to twelve booths has a presentation that lasts seven or eight minutes," said Penny Anderson an organizer for the event. "The students are broken down into small groups and guided through the presentations by high school volunteers."

Community agencies like the Tobacco Prevention Coalition, the HOPE agency and youth alternatives will be on hand along with Hot Springs County Counseling, substance abuse prevention, Gottsche and the police and sheriff's department.

"This is a really great cooperation between the schools and the different community agencies."

Precipitation down

Precipitation in Thermopolis for the first three months of 2010 comes in at only half of what it was in 2009.

Just .81 of an inch of moisture has been measured this year on the official National Weather Service recording equipment at the wastewater pumping station next to the Big Horn River. That compares to 1.60 inches a year ago, .69 in 2008, 1.45 in 2007, .95 in 2006, .83 in 2005, 2.23 in 2004, 3.52 in 2003 and 1.86 in 2002.

April 1 brought a spring snow storm to start the month out with some much needed moisture.

Temperatures show January and March being a little warm-

er than last year with February being a little colder.

Below zero temperatures were recorded on just two days in January 2010, -20 on Jan. 7 and -17 on Jan. 8. In January 2009 there were five days with below zero temperatures, with the lowest being -20 on Jan. 27.

February average temperatures were lower in 2010. The average high was 37.7 compared to 46.2 in 2009 and the average low was 14.8 compared to 19.9 in 2009.

March turned around and brought in warmer temperatures. The average high was 56 compared to 49.7 in 2009 and the average low was 27.6 compared to 22 in 2009.

Stretch those arms



Bethany Webber works at getting Nate Milek as many tickets as possible at one of the many games available at the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Banquet Saturday. The event attracted 212 people and raised \$42,000 for elk country projects. "Our donations were up, which in this economy just shows that people care about wild places and wildlife and the future for our kids and grandkids," said Jill Tonn, Wyoming Regional Director. --Lara Love photo