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Man treated at hospital

Battery charge filed after fight

by Tom Burkindine

The Hot Springs County Sheriff's Office has issued one citation and a Thermopolis Police Department investigation is ongoing after a family dispute escalated Sunday evening.

Just before 9 p.m., Carl Loos, 50, entered the Hot Springs County Joint Law Enforcement Center bleeding from various minor injuries and told officers he had been assaulted by his stepson-in-law Jeremy Pinkston, 29, in the Pamida parking lot.

He also alleged he had been further assaulted by his stepson Jessie Sovey, 24, and Pinkston

after entering town limits and was subsequently struck by a pickup truck.

Loos was transported to Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital where he was treated and released, according to officer Steve Hamann.

Deputy A.J. Helm cited Pinkston for battery in the initial fight.

Officers are collecting information in the ongoing police department investigation.

There may be additional suspects in the case and further action is likely as the investigation continues.

Ridenour resigns from board positions

by Tom Burkindine

Rick Ridenour, a three-year member of both the Thermopolis-Hot Springs County Chamber of Commerce and the Lodging Tax Board, has officially resigned due to personal and medical issues.

For the past year, Ridenour has served as vice president of the chamber and was named the chairman of the Lodging Tax Board earlier this year.

He is also the co-owner of

WOW Discount Store and El Rancho Motel in Thermopolis.

"I really appreciate all the support and hard work of both boards and it's been a pleasure to work with them," Ridenour said. "I hope in my tenure I've made some difference in the community."

Ridenour submitted his resignation to the Chamber of Commerce on May 12 and the Lodging Tax Board on May 17.



Musicians from all over the state converged on Thermopolis for the 37th annual Wyoming State Championship Oldtime Fiddlers Contest last weekend at the school auditorium. — Tom Burkindine photo

Spirits high at Oldtime Fiddlers Contest

by Tom Burkindine

Attendance for the 37th annual Wyoming State Championship Oldtime Fiddlers Contest was down significantly this year, according to Ed Capen who helps to organize the event. However, the decreased number of contestants and audience members didn't dampen the spirits of a great weekend of music and fun.

The economy likely led to fewer fans and fiddlers being able to travel for the contest, according to Capen.

For the fourth time in five years, Tyler Enders of Casper won the state championship division and will compete in the national competition June 21-26 in Weiser, Idaho.

Capen said fewer fiddlers meant they were able to compete in multiple divisions, leading to more rounds than previous years.

The event was held Saturday and Sunday in the Hot Springs County school auditorium. This was the third year the contest was held in

Thermopolis after beginning in Shoshoni in 1973.

Results in descending order are as follows:

State champion division — Tyler Enders, Casper; Casey Whiteman, Casper; Kelly Wells, Deaver; David Brinkman, Laramie; Ana Merchant, Casper; and Billy Browning, Powell.

Senior division — Brinkman; Dick Lefevre, Lander; Lynn Knapp, Cody; Billie Donovan, Casper; and Ann Robinson, Casper.

Adult division — Steve Martin, Powell.

Twin fiddles division — Enders and Whiteman; Kelly and Tally Wells, Deaver; Ana and Rachel Merchant, Casper; Brinkman and Knapp; Jocelyn Engen,

Casper; Clayton Atkinson, Casper; and Jack Crowley, Missoula.

Junior division — Sara Rodeck, Jackson; Tally Wells; Rebecca Hamilton, Jackson; Averi Reynolds, Casper; and Clayton Atkinson, Casper.

Junior-junior division — Tanner Wells, Deaver; Jillian Easum, Cody; Engen; Jennae Pope, Casper; Emma Mayer, Jackson; Conall Keegan, Cody; and Caden Colson, Jackson.

Small fry division — Rachel Merchant; Sophie Lopez, Riverton.

Novice division — Timi Reynolds, Casper; Morgan Lipes, Mills; and Jessie Walker, Douglas.

No holds barred division — Rodeck; Kelly Wells; Engen; Lipes; and Robinson.

Skates updates commissioners on state land lease fees

by Cindy Glasson

The Hot Springs County Commissioners met with State Park superintendent Kevin Skates on Tuesday to discuss the state's stand on various leases between

the state and the county.

The county has several leases with the state since various buildings and county entities are on state property.

Included in those leases are

the fairgrounds, county library, road and bridge facilities, weed and pest, schools and senior center.

During the commissioner's meeting in May, a contract was

received from the state to continue use of the facilities on state land for \$100 per month per entity.

Skates told the commissioners the state's leases have been

"all over the place" in regards to the amounts being charged for the various leases. Their intent with the new leases was to even things out among all the entities.

He went on to tell the commissioners he had spoken with his superiors in Cheyenne and they feel the relationship between Hot Springs County and the state is worth much more than the proposed \$1,200 per year.

To that end, it is being suggested a contract in lieu of the \$100 per month charge, an exchange of service be determined.

"We no longer have a park ranger," Skates said. "The sheriff's department taking care of our needs in that respect is an exchange in service that is worth a lot to us."

"Weed and pest is always available to help, too. They do some spraying for us and provide us with chemicals we need sometimes."

"And road and bridge has been

very helpful, too."

The state would like to see a listing of 'in kind' services the various county entities provide for the state park at the end of each year.

"My bosses would be happy to see an accounting at the end of the year," he said.

Commissioner Brad Basse indicated that weed and pest is their own district and could enter into a contract with the state on their own, but the county should be signing for the remaining entities.

Commissioner Mike Baker expressed some concern in reading over the contract, stating that the way it was written it looked more like the state would like an accounting of in kind services before the first of each month.

The commissioners agreed to take no action until Skates had a chance to re-confirm with the state that a full accounting at the end of the year would be acceptable to eliminate the cost of the leases.

End of the year student numbers

by Cindy Glasson

The Hot Springs County School District enrollment is down 18 students from the beginning of the 2009-10 school year.

Ralph Witters Elementary School is down seven students for the year, having started with 246 kindergarten- through fourth-grade students and ending the year with 239.

The largest drop was in the middle school where they started the year with 210 students in fifth through eighth grade, finishing the year with 196, down 14 students.

Hot Springs County High School saw an increase of three students, however, going from 203 at the start of the year to 206

on the final day of classes.

When comparing this year's end of school numbers to end of school last year, Ralph Witters Elementary went from 259 students the end of 2009 to 239 students at the end of 2010, a full 20-student drop.

The middle school lost just a single student between the end of 2009 and 2010, dropping from 197 students to 196.

Numbers at the high school, however, rose considerably, finishing 2009 with 190 students and ending this school year with 206, a 16-student rise in enrollment. That created a total enrollment decrease of five students between the end of the 2009 school year and the end of 2010.



Hot Springs County Museum Director Ross Rhodes stands on the Yellowstone stagecoach that resides in Thermopolis. The coach, which has leather springs, was used in tours of Yellowstone National Park until 1914.

— Joe Sovia photo

Stagecoach Days packed with entertainment

by Joe Sovia

It will be wall-to-wall entertainment and educational opportunities during Stagecoach Days, scheduled for Friday and Saturday at the Hot Springs County Museum. And there is no charge for many of the activities.

A quartet of local organiza-

tions are teaming up to form Four for Fun and Funding in order to sponsor the event. They are the Hot Springs County Museum, Historical Society and Pioneer Association, and Friends of the Museum.

Proceeds from Stagecoach Days events go toward stabi-

lizing the historic rock building that stands in the annex. It is planned to re-roof the building, which was a stagecoach stop and also a stable and storage area for the Emery Hotel.

Events, which begin Friday afternoon, will be held within the museum and its annex and on Seventh Street, between

Broadway and Arapahoe.

The Hot Springs County Library will have a display of stagecoach-related books during the Stagecoach Days celebration.

There are countless features that are part of Stagecoach Days.

See Stagecoach, page 11