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# Independent Record

SPECIAL INTERNET PREVIEW

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## Request filed asking for review of sheriff and county attorney

by Joe Sova

Two men have filed a formal request with the Hot Springs County clerk for investigation of the sheriff's office stemming from the Aug. 10 shooting of a horse owned by Larry and Chris Bentley.

James Weisbeck and Marty Smith filed the request with county clerk Hans Odde at 1 p.m. Monday. In the document, they are accusing county attorney Jerry Williams and sheriff Lou Falgoust of "omission of duty" by not investigating David Larson and A.J. Helm for shooting the horse and not contacting a brand inspector in violation of Wyoming State Statute 11-24-102, and of injuring or destroying the property of another without the owner's consent in violation of W.S. 6-3-201.

Weisbeck and Smith also request an investigation of Larson and Helm for those alleged crimes, according to the filing.

Larson was the undersheriff at the time of the incident; he has been dismissed from the sheriff's department. Helm remains a sheriff's deputy.

At Tuesday afternoon's regular meeting, the county commissioners read the complaint into the record. It was decided they would consult another attorney on the matter since the county attorney was named in the request for the investigation.

The commissioners will address the request at the next meeting, set for Nov. 2. The outside attorney will guide the commissioners as to what the next step will be.

The sheriff's report indicated the horse, whose name is Bud, on Mud Creek looked to be "crippled and malnourished." Larson, who was on duty at the time, was called to the scene. The report stated no brand could be found and the animal was deemed in distress. Larson then euthanized the horse with a gunshot to the head.

### Horse found by owner

The Bentleys said they did not receive notification of what transpired before Chris made contact with the sheriff's department after she found Bud dead in a field on the Bentley property.

They contend the shooting took place well within their Mud Creek property and not in the county road right-of-way.

"It's upsetting that they came on our property and shot our horse," Larry Bentley said Tuesday morning. "They destroyed property that we owned. It was the private

property issue that has bothered me more than the fact that they shot the horse."

Larry said the incident was more of a hardship on Chris than anyone. The Bentleys said Chris treated the horse each day for health conditions so he could live out the remainder of his years.

"If the sheriff would have called her and apologized this could have gone away," Larry said.

He said an investigation is moving forward and it could clear up the matter.

In the request for the investigation, Weisbeck and Smith stated they approached a county commissioner and made a verbal request for an investigation and the request was denied.

They said Williams and a county commissioner were requested to investigate possible crimes of a "sexually deviant nature." They claim Williams failed to produce a statute based on the "stated facts of the crime." The document said this

failure prohibited the Wyoming Department of Criminal Investigation from initiating an investigation.

Weisbeck and Smith asked that an "unbiased outside agency" conduct the investigation.

### Sheriff Falgoust responds

Falgoust was given a copy of the formal request for the investigation Monday afternoon and made a response for Independent Record publication that evening.

"Clearly this is a political ploy. It was filed right before the election in an attempt to influence the election," Falgoust said. "They sent it to newspapers, knowing that no hearing on the merits could occur before the election.

"There is absolutely no validity to these allegations," he said.

Falgoust is running for re-election for sheriff in the Nov. 2 general election.

"Bud was the catalyst that brought all this out," Larry Bentley said. "There are several different people that are involved in several different issues. They're (county officials) finally hearing what we have to say as a community."

Bentley said the investigation would address all the allegations, "rumors and true," and could clear up the rumors and restore honor to their office.

Up to press time Wednesday, Williams was unavailable for comment on the request for the investigation.

I'll take this one



Paylon Nelson came up with an unusual way to pack his pumpkin away from the Sheriff's Office Pumpkin Patch on Friday after school.

— Lara Love photo

## Moonlight Madness features Pinata Bash on Thursday

by Cindy Glasson

Thermopolis downtown merchants are getting ready for Moonlight Madness on Thursday, Oct. 28.

Merchants will be open late and plan on staying open as long as folks stay downtown, not putting a specific closing time on their doors.

A costume parade for the kids, organized and judged by Pinnacle Bank, will kick everything off. Costume judging will begin at Bicentennial Park at 5:45 p.m. The parade follows immediately after.

A new addition to the Moonlight Madness events will be a Piñata Bash near Game Time Athletics on Arapahoe Street, starting right after the parade. Sponsored by Las Fuentes, RoundTop Realty, Daylight Donuts, Game Time Athletics and County Title, there will be no charge to take a whack at one of the 20 piñatas filled with 50

pounds of candy.

Two spook houses are planned for the evening, a Spook Alley on the patio at Pumpernick's and Gottsche's third annual spook house fundraiser.

The free Spook Alley will open directly after the parade.

Gottsche's spook house, called "A Sensory Nightmare," will be \$4 per person admission and runs two consecutive nights, Thursday and Friday. The "less scary" ghouls will be out from 6 to 9 p.m. Thursday and the "anything goes" goblins will

show "no mercy" from 6 to 11 Friday night. Enter through Gottsche's front door. Half of the gym in the basement will be used for the spook house.

If you're looking for something to eat to keep you going during the festivities, the Masons will be selling tacos at the Masonic Lodge from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday.

## Corley: For the love of quilting

by Joe Sova

Nellie Corley has neither an idle mind nor body. No matter what the rural Thermopolis woman has had going on in her first 82 years, she's always seemed to make time for a little quilting.

Corley was anxious to see Community Arts Month arrive on Oct. 1. That's when the Hot Springs Quilt Show opened at the Hot Springs County Museum and Cultural Center. She has two handmade quilts on display this year — two of hundreds of quilts she's assembled during her love of the hobby.

"I sew all the time," Corley said last week while working on another quilt at the museum, and she usually makes three to four quilts a year. She also regularly displays quilts at Hazel-n-Pearl's in downtown Thermopolis.

She is a member of the Old West Quilt Guild.

Corley is proud of the quilts she entered in the Hot Springs County Fair this summer. She won both grand champion and reserve champion honors.

The size of the block and the number of panels vary in the quilts Corley makes. A quilt can be crib, twin, double, queen or king size. She also makes a miniature quilt occasionally.

Corley found an opportunity to begin her hobby when she was weighing trucks filled with sugar beets for Holly Sugar in the fall, a career with the company that spanned 31 years — working 10 to 11 hours a day. She also weighed trucks for the Wyoming Department

of Transportation for 25 years in the summer, overlapping her 31 years with Holly Sugar.

She started with Holly where the Wyo-Ben plant is at Lucerne. After 10 years there, the operation closed so she moved on to work at the Gooseberry weigh station for another 21 years.

There was lots of idle time waiting for the next truck to weigh.

"I needed something to keep me busy when there were no trucks," Corley said. "I started sewing (quilts) by hand."

A native of Nebraska, Corley moved to Hot Springs County from northern Colorado with her parents in 1937, when she was 9 years old. The family lived on a ranch at Owl Creek. Her husband, Royal, was a "construction man," she said, working on highways. They remained on the 192-acre ranch when he retired.

Royal died in 2002 after a 56-year marriage. Corley turned the ranching operation over to her daughter and son-in-law, Barb and Todd Rice, who also live on the property. They run a herd of cattle and raise hay for feed.

"I love it here," Corley said of living in Hot Springs County.

### Quilting in spare time

There is not much time for quilting when you're working a ranch, but Corley could often squeeze in a few

See Corley on page 10



Nellie Corley works on a quilt during the Hot Springs Quilt Show, which runs through Oct. 30 at the museum. Hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

— Joe Sova photo