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Chamber Luau: Tickets available for Saturday event

The Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce still has plenty of tickets available for its 91st annual Chamber Banquet.

The event is being billed as the Welcome to Paradise Luau.

The banquet takes place at 5 p.m. March 24 at the Hot Springs County Fair Building.

Tickets to the banquet are available at the chamber and are \$45 for an individual and \$300 for a table of six.

The annual event showcases the chamber's Business of the Year and Citizen of the Year awards as well as gives those in attendance an opportunity to bid on various auction items donated by chamber businesses and a chance to win prizes in the chamber's Balloon Frenzy.

The event's dinner menu includes prime rib, beer-boiled shrimp and all-you-can-eat king crab legs.

Nominees for Business of the Year include: CAPTEL, Wyoming Dinosaur Center, Let's Talk Cellular, Bank of Thermopolis, Storyteller, A&W Lanes, The Ritz, T&J Propane, Hot Springs County Senior Center and Hellie's TePee Spa.

Nominees for Citizen of the Year include: Dale Andreen, Angie Guyon, Barbara Rice, Karen Sinclair, Sue Jackson, Donnie Bjorhus, Twyla Owsley, Shawn Fields and Martin Bader.

"Come out and support your community's friends and businesses," said Chamber Executive Director Michelle Lue.

Tickets will be available at the chamber of commerce office, 220 Park St., until Friday. They also will be available at the door Saturday during the banquet.

For more information, contact the Chamber of Commerce at 864-3192.



County commissioner Brad Basse levels a header for the Hot Springs County Hall of Fame display on the second floor of the courthouse. Commissioners John Lumley and Mike Baker are assisting with the display. The 2012 induction ceremony is Saturday, April 14 at Days Inn. — Joe Sovo photo

HSC Hall of Fame induction tickets on sale

Tickets are now on sale for the Class of 2012 Hot Springs County Hall of Fame Induction Banquet.

The banquet is scheduled for Saturday, April 14 at Days Inn with a mixer at 5 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m. and the induction ceremony at 7 p.m.

Ticket price is \$30 for a buffet dinner.

Advance tickets are on sale at the Chamber of Commerce, Storyteller, Broadway Bygones or from a member of the Hall of Fame committee. Tickets will only be available until April 5.

This year's Hall of Fame class includes H.D. Curtis, Dr. Ben Gitlitz, Cal King, Alfred "Lefty" Graham and Ruth Clare Johnson.

Commissioners prepare to finalize airport land deal

by Cindy Glasson

The Hot Springs County Commissioners covered a wide range of items during their Tuesday afternoon meeting, including an update on the final signing for land for the new airport, a bid award for asphalt for Lane 3, an appointment to the Natural Resources Planning Committee and a lengthy discussion on the designation of county roads as off-road trails.

Airport update

The commissioners, along with landowner Joe Holden, were to sign the final paperwork on the purchase of land for the new airport Tuesday.

Weather and work obligations by Holden, however, prevented him from being at the meeting for the signing.

As an option, the commissioners made arrange-

ments to meet with Holden in Worden, Mont., on Wednesday to complete the paperwork.

In a conference call with GDA Engineers, the commissioners agreed the company could now move ahead with the design of the airport.

A work session between the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), GDA and the commissioners was set for March 26 at 1 p.m. in the commission chambers.

Lane 3 project

Heath Overfield with Engineering Associates, the company contracted to oversee the Lane 3 project, informed the commissioners WYDOT had approved the low bid for the asphalt phase of the project.

The low bidder, Dave's Asphalt of Riverton, was granted the project at a cost of \$777,936.

A pre-construction meeting will be arranged between WYDOT, Dave's Asphalt and Engineering Associates to set a date for the start of the project.

Natural Resources Planning Committee

The newest member of the Natural Resources Planning Committee (NRPC), Mark Thiesse, was appointed by the commissioners.

Thiesse is a hydro geologist for the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality out of the Lander office.

He carries a Master of Geology degree and has worked in the oil and gas industry as well as for various state and Federal agencies.

Having recently moved to Thermopolis, Thiesse indicated he wanted to help the county grow in a responsible, effective manner, and his work in the

oil and gas industry and environmental regulatory fields gives him a perspective of both sides of most issues the NRPC will be tackling.

County road designations

Road and Bridge Supervisor Ray Shaffer was contacted recently by the State Trails and Cultural Resources Division to consider making Grass Creek Road a designated off-road trail.

Doing so would allow people to travel in their 4-wheelers and other off-road vehicles down the road without the need for a license plate, merely an off-road vehicle (ORV) tag.

Several issues were discussed that would make the idea impractical, including the fact it would create a problem for law enforcement in the area.

Sheriff Lou Falgoust indicated he was concerned

See Commission on page 5

Lodging Tax Board considers requests to help fund events

by Cindy Glasson

Several requests for funding were made at the Thermopolis-Hot Springs Lodging Tax Board meeting on Tuesday afternoon.

Shasta Shafer and Donna Loffner approached the board on behalf of the Gift of the Waters Pageant committee, asking for \$2,000 this year to help cover expenses for the annual event.

Last year, they were given \$2,250, but did not use the entire amount because they were under the impression they had only been granted \$1,900, and

did not realize they had funds left over.

The Lodging Tax Board members decided to review the request as it would actually fall into next year's budget.

Tawna McQueen requested \$2,500 for this year's Hot Spot Car Rally, which is held annually on Father's Day weekend in June. McQueen said this will be the 20th year the event has been held in the State Park.

McQueen filled in the board on what things are planned for this year, including plans for raffling off a trio of pedal cars to help with expenses.

The committee was granted \$1,000 last year and was lucky enough to win \$500 in free radio advertising at the Chamber Banquet. This year, McQueen said they would really like to expand into some television advertising as well.

The board approved the Hot Spot Car Rally request as it had already been planned in the budget for this year.

Gayla Mead, representing the PRCA Rodeo committee, asked the board to consider giving them \$1,500 to help with advertising this summer's event.

Mead said there was record atten-

dance at last year's rodeo, and a video of the event, done by the state, was featured in an advertising campaign.

The group feels the advertising campaign, along with the addition of \$500 to each of the purses in the events, would help to draw top-name contestants to the rodeo, hoping to again make it the best small-town rodeo in the country as it was decades ago.

The board approved this request as well since it had already been budgeted.

Chamber Director Michelle Lue also asked the board for some funding for

weekend help to keep the chamber office doors open during 22 weeks of summer.

Lue added that it would also help to have a part-time employee during the week, as there are times she has to be out of the office for various events. She suggested \$7,200 would cover the weekend and partial weekday needs.

The Lodging Tax Board said it would be willing to help with keeping the chamber open on the weekends, but suggested the chamber would need to find another way to cover the time during the week.

Health Fair blood draws start Saturday

Health Fair blood draws begin Saturday and continue next week at Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital. They will be held at the hospital Saturday as well as next Monday through Saturday, March 26-31, from 7 to 10 a.m. Report to the desk in the hospital lobby.

Several types of blood screenings will be available, including a basic chemistry panel; vitamin D, 25 hydroxy; PSA (for men); hemoglobin; C-reactive protein; blood type; ferritin; hemogram; and colo kit. A thyroid panel will also be available this year.

Doctors and physician's assistants will be available to discuss blood draw results at the Kiwanis Health Fair on Saturday, April 14 at Thermopolis Middle School.



Lamax Construction workers cut a piece of water pipe Tuesday outside the Thermopolis Post Office as they started the Arapahoe Street Water Line Replacement project for the Town of Thermopolis. — J.D. Stetson photo

Arapahoe Street water line project underway

Lamax Construction started work Monday on the Town of Thermopolis' Arapahoe Street Water Line Replacement project.

The contractor planned to cut into the concrete and begin work from Fifth Street to Third Street on Arapahoe. The project also will tie into the water line on Broadway Street at Third Street.

The project will affect downtown traffic along Arapahoe Street in the vicinities of the Thermopolis Post Office, Law Enforcement Center, Hot Springs County Courthouse, Hot Springs County Library and the County Annex Building. It will also affect traffic on Third Street between Broadway and Arapahoe streets.

The contractor expects the work to take about a month and a half to two months to complete in the downtown area.

After the downtown area is complete, the project will continue west on Arapahoe Street, starting at the Sixth Street intersection.

The project will pick up where the town's 2010 Broadway Street water project left off.

It is being paid for through a \$290,000 grant from the State Loan and Investment Board (SLIB) and through \$336,560 in state consensus funds allocated to the county and the municipalities.

The county commissioners and the town council met in July and agreed to allocate the consensus money to the project.

The total budget for the project is \$1.119 million with both the SLIB and consensus grants plus additional matching money from the town's enterprise fund.