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FFA officers for 2012-13



Thermopolis FFA chapter officers for the 2012-13 school year were installed during the FFA banquet at the middle school commons Thursday evening. They are, front row from left, Choc Maddock, secretary; Harley Rhodes, president; and Birch Jones, reporter; back row, Paige Driver, sentinel; Jenn Cramer, vice president; and Donald Perry, parliamentarian. Garrett Dale was elected treasurer, but he is moving out of the school district and the office will be filled at a later date. More details of the FFA banquet are inside this issue. — Joe Sovo photo

Decision on Nakamura Lane slated for May 15

The Hot Springs County Commissioners worked on several issues during their meeting on Tuesday, including Nakamura Lane and the Hensley land use change request, and they received an update on progress with the new airport.

Nakamura Lane

The commissioners held a public hearing last week to listen to evidence regarding litigation filed by Mieko (Nakamura) Ayer, requesting Nakamura Lane be considered a public road rather than a privately owned road.

The case would require the road be condemned before making it public, allowing the Nakamura family access to their land at the end of the lane.

A motion to dismiss the case was filed by attorney John Davis, representing Dr. Vernon Miller.

The commissioners revisited the issue at Tuesday's meeting.

Davis asked the commissioners to consider tabling the issue for 30 days rather than dismissing the case outright to give both sides of the case a chance to work on a deal acceptable to both parties.

According to state statute,

a decision has to be rendered within 30 days of the public hearing, which was held April 19. That gives the parties just two weeks to come to an amicable conclusion.

After some lengthy discussion, the commissioners agreed to table the issue until May 15, their next meeting date. Both parties must file a report to the commissioners no later than 5 p.m. May 14, showing their good faith efforts to negotiate.

Hensley land use change

Cody and Lindsay Hensley were present during Tuesday's meeting as the commissioners discussed their final decision on a land use change requested by the couple.

In their initial request, the Hensleys had wanted to use a portion of their land for a salvage yard and another section as a feed business and recycling center. Hensley asked the commissioners to disregard the salvage yard portion of the request as he and his wife had decided against the salvage yard.

All three commissioners had completed the checklist used to determine whether or not to grant a land use change or deny it, and discussed the various is-

sues each had run into with the request.

Finding no problems with the feed store portion of the request, the commissioners quickly approved the request with no conditions.

The salvage yard portion of the request was not so simple, however, and several conditions were added before the commissioners approved the request, including an addition to a current structure on the property that would shield the dismantling of vehicles and storage area from surrounding roads.

Airport update

GDA Engineers informed the commissioners there was some potential good news in regards to Federal funding changes for small airports.

Apparently, there is a Senate bill being proposed that would return funding for small airports back to the original 95 percent sharing situation, up from the current 90 percent cost sharing that was in effect in March.

The bill would have to pass through the Senate as well as the House to go into effect.

There are still some small

See Airport on page 9

Council suspends action on liquor license ordinance

by J.D. Stetson

The Thermopolis Town Council voted to table second reading of a proposed ordinance to punish holders of town liquor licenses or permits if their employees do not receive liquor server training.

The council discussed the issue at length with several people in the liquor community, including Thermopolis Liquors and Thermopolis Café owner

Marty Oravec and Mac's Bar Manager Crystal Jackman.

After the discussion, the council decided they would give the liquor license holders a chance to help police themselves by forming a committee to address alcohol issues in town.

In Oravec's opening remarks, he said he had contacted the Wyoming Liquor Association in regard to the council's ordinance in order to answer the coun-

cil's question from the first reading with regard to what he would do about repeat offenders that have never passed a liquor license compliance check.

One of the suggestions was to form a committee with bar owners, town elected officials, police representatives and regular citizens to discuss the various issues affecting bars and alcohol crimes/complaints in town. It would not be limited to underage drinking, but to

other issues such as drunken driving, public intoxication, police calls to bars or issues of public transportation for intoxicated customers to their homes.

The council is leaving it up to the liquor establishment owners or their representatives to form the committee and get it off the ground.

Proposed ordinance

The council tabled the second read-

ing of the proposed ordinance until its next regular council meeting at 7 p.m. May 15. It also directed the liquor establishment owners to update the council on the committee progress at the next meeting.

Under the proposed ordinance, it would make it a crime for any owner or holder of a town liquor license or permit

See Council on page 11

Snowpack deemed 'awful'

Hot Springs County Emergency Management Director Bill Gordon painted a grim picture Tuesday when he presented snowpack data from Wyoming's basins to the county commissioners.

"The Wind River drainage is awful," Gordon said.

Snowpack in the Wind River drainage last year was 125 percent of normal. This year, that number is a mere 45 percent of normal.

That means Boysen Reservoir, which is currently 84 percent full, will remain that low and fall lower once irrigation water is released.

Gordon said Owl Creek will be dry again as Anchor Reservoir is just 2.4 percent capacity.

Snowpack in the Big Horn Basin was 143 per-

cent of normal last year, and is just 71 percent of normal right now.

"This is going to make for a very dry, dangerous summer," Gordon said. "We really encourage anyone who sees smoke, even if you can't give us a precise area where it is, please call dispatch and let us know."

"The sooner we can catch fires, the sooner we can locate them and get them put out."

Gordon pointed out that residents in Colorado are already losing homes due to wildfires and it's only the first of May.

"We have lots of dead, standing timber," he said. "That puts us at a huge risk for another Yellowstone fire type of season."

Town passes second reading on new Dumpster ordinance

The Thermopolis Town Council moved closer Tuesday night to passing a proposed ordinance making it a crime for any non-resident of the town to use town business and residential Dumpsters.

The council passed the second reading of the ordinance, which also makes it a crime for any person — resident or non-resident — to dump hot ashes, metals, concrete, construction materials, motor vehicle tires, hazardous waste, carpet, carpet backing, lumber, tree limbs, pipes or other hard materials that would damage compactor apparatus in a refuse truck into the containers.

The proposed ordinance also provides the initial framework

for the town to sell permits to non-residents to dump their trash in specifically marked containers located at the entrances of the town. The permit price is \$240 annually, and the town may consider breaking the fee down quarterly or monthly in order to assist people who cannot pay the \$240 in one payment.

County resident Lisa Vice spoke to the council with regard to the ordinance and her current trash disposal circumstances.

Vice admitted she regularly brings her small amounts of trash to town for disposal in town trash containers because she cannot get regular trash service where she lives in the county.

She said she tries to go to

empty containers and also tries to compost some of her trash. Vice doesn't want to keep her trash on her property in order to take a large load to the Town Landfill and she lives far enough away that the landfill is farther than she wants to drive for the small amount of trash she produces.

Vice added she believes she is not the only one who disposes of trash in the same way and that she does not want to be considered a criminal.

Hot Springs County currently pays part of the cost to run the landfill in exchange for free disposal at the landfill for county residents, said Mayor's

See Dumpsters on page 11

Day of the Child



Dean Bihl sits tall in the seat while wearing a fire helmet during National Day of the Child at the recreation center, while Carson Christensen looks over the rest of the truck. — Cindy Glasson photo

Town preps for 3-on-3

The Thermopolis 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament is gearing up for the weekend.

On Tuesday morning, the Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce and World Events reported 120 teams had pre-registered for the tournament with several more expected to roll in.

Pre-registration deadlines have been extended to Thursday at 6 p.m. Participants can either fill out a registration form online or drop one off at the chamber office, 220 Park St.

Team registration fees are \$130 for a five-member team and are due when the team turns in a registration form.

The deadline for food or other vendors setting up a booth at the tournament also has been extended to 6 p.m. Thursday. The chamber only had five vendors lined up for the tournament. Vender fees are \$200 for non-chamber members, \$150 for chamber members and \$25 for non-profits.

The chamber and the Town of Thermopolis plan to close streets starting at 5 p.m. Friday and ending at 8 p.m. Sunday. Streets affected include Broadway Street from Fourth to Sixth streets, Arapahoe Street from Fifth to Sixth streets and Fifth Street from Arapahoe to Warren streets.

The streets will not be closed during business hours Friday; however, barrels will be set up in order to warn customers of the set up crew. Downtown customers should be able to park in front of businesses normally on Friday.

