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Lions Club hosts Ranch Rodeo Friday, Saturday

Rodeo action is on tap Friday and Saturday at the Hot Springs County Fairgrounds arena during the 22nd annual Ranch Rodeo. The event, which features two evening performances, is hosted and sponsored by the Thermopolis Lions Club.

Gates open at 5 p.m. each day. Rodeo action begins at 7:30 p.m. both Friday and Saturday.

There will be a calcutta Friday at 7 p.m. where spectators can choose their favorite teams for the performances. A portion of the money raised during the calcutta and all the net concessions proceeds both days are donated by the Thermopolis Lions Club locally for eye care.

According to Trena Moore of the Thermopolis Lions Club, there will be eight teams in competition in this year's Ranch Rodeo.

Teams consist of five members, including a businessperson. Each team must include either one female or youth age 15 and under.

Popular yet challenging events include wild

cow milking, wild cow riding, branding, team doctoring, trailer loading and ribbon roping. Entry fees make up the prize pool with the top three teams getting paid.

Events for the kids will include mutton bustin' and a calf scramble. There will be special prizes for winners in those events.

Tickets for each Ranch Rodeo performance are \$5 for adults, and \$3 for children ages 7-12 and seniors (age 60 and over). Kids under 7 are admitted free. Advance tickets are available at the Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce office or from any Thermopolis Lions Club member.

Concessions will be available. The Lions Club asks that those attending the performances do not bring in any coolers.

For more information, call 921-1902 or 921-9547, or contact any Thermopolis Lions Club member.

County makes budget cuts

by Cindy Glasston

Deep cuts were the focus of attention at the Hot Springs County Commissioners' public meeting on the 2012-13 budget year on June 29.

The budget cuts were made in the face of a possible lack of Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) from the federal government. PILT are federal payments to local governments that help offset losses in property taxes due to nontaxable federal lands within their boundaries administered by the BLM, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (all agencies of the Interior Department) and the U.S. Forest Service (part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture), and for federal water projects and some military installations.

The federal government has not funded PILT yet this year, so the commissioners cut the budget rather than count on the additional \$700,000.

Additionally, income for the county is historically lower than in the past, coming in closer to \$2.5 million rather than the \$2.9 million in recent years.

The final budget will not be

approved by the commissioners until a public meeting at noon Monday, July 16.

Internal cuts

The first cuts the commissioners made on their way to a balanced budget were internal in nature, asking each entity within the county to find a way to eliminate 2 percent of its proposed budget.

According to the commissioners, every county agency followed the request, some even cancelling last minute equipment orders to comply with the request.

Two examples of cuts include \$150,000 from the courthouse budget and \$100,000 from road and bridge.

Each entity went through its budget, line by line, to find where it could effectively cut funding without citizens losing any services. The commissioners said some departments have been frugal with their spending over the years, so they will not feel the crunch as badly.

It should be noted that no cuts were made in salaries. Legally, employee salaries cannot be rolled back to previous levels.

"These people have really been team players," commission chairman Brad Basse said. "This all came up on Thursday, and \$16,000 in copiers that had been ordered were cancelled immediately."

Basse also said the lack of PILT funds is going to create a belt tightening scenario for some time.

"We cannot be guaranteed the funds in the future," he said. "This isn't an overspending on the part of the commissioners, but rather a tightening of funding from the state and federal governments."

Funding request cuts

Various public entities approach the commissioners each year with funding requests for their projects, and while this year was no different, those entities came away with much less than in previous years.

Of the dozens of requests, three entities will receive nothing from the commissioners in this budget – the Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, golf course and recreation center.

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Thermopolis Boy Scouts Austin Barral, Eli Dickey, Eli McCumber and Duke Gibbel hold up signs Monday in front of Community Federated Church in order to sell lemonade and baked goods to benefit the families of the Boy Scouts who died Saturday in a collision. The Scouts raised \$1,667.47 for the families.

— J.D. Stetson photo

Tragic crash leaves impression on HSC

by J.D. Stetson

Responders from across the Big Horn Basin spent much of the day Saturday at the scene of a head-on crash 33 miles north of Thermopolis on Highway 120 where five people, one of whom was a toddler, lost their lives.

Mortimore Ambulance Service, Hot Springs County Sheriff's deputies, the Thermopolis Fire Department, the Wyoming Highway Patrol and other agencies were involved in the recovery.

The collision occurred at 10 a.m. after an SUV containing four people crossed the center line for an unknown reason and crashed into an oncoming motor home. There was no indication of braking before the accident occurred.

A 3-year-old child, Aiden Ance, of Brookville, Fla., in the motor home died as a result of the crash.

Three of the people in the motor home, 62-year-old Barbara Ance, 12-year-old Zoey Ance and 12-year-old Alan White were transported to Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital. The driver of the vehicle, 65-year-old Richard P. Ance, was Life Flighted from the scene to St. Vincent Healthcare Hospital in Billings, Mont, according to a High-

way Patrol press release.

Deputies blocked off traffic a quarter mile each direction in order for the Life Flight to land, and the helicopter was only on scene for about 10 minutes, said Sheriff Lou Falgoust.

All four of the people in the SUV died as a result of the crash. The vehicle was one of three vehicles transporting a group of Boy Scouts from a Wyoming camp returning to Woodland Park, which is in the Colorado Springs, Colo., area.

The three Boy Scouts were 16-year-old Paul Kekich, and Nick Naples and Paul Alex Ragan, both 17. The fourth individual was 63-year-old Richard Kleiner, the Scout leader, according to the release.

Naples died after being transported to West Park Hospital in Cody. Both the driver and Ragan were wearing seatbelts, and it is unknown if the other two were wearing seatbelts.

Highway Patrol troopers continue to investigate the crash and have activated its Crash Investigation Team to reconstruct the wreck in order to learn how it happened.

See Crash on page 8

Mini mall benefits Relay for Life



Kurstin Turnbaugh takes a peek at some of JoAnn Myers' jewelry on display at the Mini Mall held in Hot Springs State Park Friday evening. Proceeds from the event, in-

cluding a barbecue and variety of booths, benefit Relay for Life, scheduled for July 13 at Hot Springs State Park. — Cindy Glasston photo

Public agencies outline threats of heat, smoke

by J.D. Stetson

Hot Springs County residents may be getting used to the heat and smoke apparent the past few weeks, but there may still be some dangers presented by the conditions.

In the past week, the National Weather Service, Hot Springs County Public Health and Hot Springs County Emergency Management have issued releases to inform the public of the risks regarding heat/smoke and other information to be better prepared.

Heat

According to the National Weather Service, heat is the number one weather-related killer in the United States.

The most obvious threat during a heat wave is toward children, pets and adults left in parked vehicles. The medical term hyperthermia is a condition caused when the body absorbs more heat than it can handle. Hyperthermia is not limited to extremely hot days, but can occur on mild days due to the warming of the air and objects in the car caused by direct sunlight through windows. Cracking the windows will not significantly reduce the heating rate.

The same heating in the car can also affect objects such as child seats and dashboards. The release suggests parents make sure the seats, buckles and belts

are not too hot before restraining the child in the car.

Other risks imposed by higher than normal heat can include heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps and sunburn.

Stroke symptoms include high body temperature, hot and dry skin, rapid and strong pulse and possible unconsciousness. Exhaustion symptoms include heavy sweating; cold, pale and clammy skin; thready pulse; fainting; and vomiting. Cramps can occur as painful spasms in the muscle, leg or abdomen with heavy sweating.

For cramps and exhaustion, remove the person from the sun or heat source and offer sips of water. For stroke, immediately call an ambulance.

To mitigate the risk of the heat-related conditions, NWS suggests rescheduling strenuous activities until a cooler time; dressing for summer; decreasing foods that cause high metabolic heat production such as meat and proteins; drinking plenty of water or non-alcoholic and decaffeinated fluids; spending more time in air-conditioned places; not taking salt tablets unless specified by a doctor; and reducing time in the sun.

Smoke

Heavy wildfire smoke from the Fontenelle Fire in Sublette

See Threats on page 7