

Kraske sells Don’s IGA to Montana corporation

by Joe Sovab
Don’s IGA in Thermopolis, as well as Worland IGA, have been sold to a Montana-based corporation.
Greg Kraske, who owns the grocery stores with his wife and partner, Ilja, said the sale would be finalized early next week when they turn the businesses over to Reese LeaVesseur and Ray O’Loughlin, based in Hardin. The purchases brings their total supermarket ownership to six. They own three Montana stores – Big Horn IGA in Hardin, Reese & Ray’s in Laurel and Reese & Ray’s in Sidney. They also own Reese & Ray’s in Buffalo.
Don’s IGA has been in the Kraske family since 1973. The store was originally owned by Don Kraske. He sold it to his son, Greg, and his wife in 2003. Don had been in the supermarket business in Montana before coming to Wyoming. The Kraske ownership ends after 39 years.
Greg and Ilja bought Worland IGA about 18 months ago, spending the first 15 months with extensive renovation.
The Kraskes were considering adding a third grocery store to their ownership package. But when he learned LeaVesseur and O’Loughlin wanted to add stores to their inventory, Greg met with them about six weeks ago to talk about a deal. Kraske had known LeaVesseur for 20 years, so Kraske felt comfortable during the negotiations.
“The opportunity to sell came along,” Kraske said. “I’m going to get out of retail.”
LeaVesseur and O’Loughlin have been in the supermarket business for about 10 years.
“They’re very successful retailers. They’re not new to the game,” Kraske said. “They’re fantastic people to work with...It’s been a very easy transition.
“It’s a good change for Thermopolis, a good change for the store,” he said of the new ownership.
Don’s IGA currently employs 22 people, including Greg and Ilja Kraske. There are 55 employees at Worland IGA. Greg said LeaVesseur and O’Loughlin have no plans to replace any of those employees.
“I’m thankful for my wife and the unrelenting support of the community of Thermopolis. We have the best customers in the world,” Kraske said.



Kim Enis kisses a pig during the Thermopolis Relay for Life on Friday at Hot Springs State Park. In competition with Shurie Scheel and Shyla Buckner, Enis raised the most money in donations for the fight against cancer and had to give the pig a smooch. — Joe Sovab photo

Relay for Life raises more than \$47,000

by Joe Sovab
In every fundraiser, you always want to either meet or exceed your financial goal. This year’s Relay for Life in Thermopolis, held Friday night at Hot Springs State Park, went leaps and bounds beyond the goal for the event.
According to the Relay for Life website, the fundraising total was nearly \$47,000 – with more money yet to be added. The amount will far exceed the goal of \$35,000. Just under \$30,000 was raised locally in the 2011 Relay for Life.
When the Relay for Life event began at 6 p.m. Friday, the amount raised was about \$37,000. Just 12 hours later, an additional \$10,000 was raised while the relay was going on.
Even before the final totals were in the books, it was determined the Thermopolis Relay for Life was the top such event in its division in money raised, per capita, for the third straight year. It was also announced it was a Relay for Life Pace-setter event for the first time.
The Relay for Life theme is “Celebrate. Remember. Fight back.” The phrase relates to the continuing battle against cancer nationwide and countries abroad. The idea is to celebrate those people who are cancer survivors, remember those who have been lost to cancer and fight back against the deadly disease.
“We’re really excited and proud of how the Hot Springs County community contributed so much for cancer patients and victims,” said Shurie Scheel, a prime-time player in this year’s Relay for Life. “It went really, really well due to really hard work by everyone involved.”
The evening began with a survivors’ dinner, followed by the opening ceremonies. All 12 Relay for Life teams were introduced and they were recognized for their fundraising totals, to that point. Katie Burrows entertained everyone with her signing while she was singing during the opening ceremonies.
Individuals who raised \$1,000 or more were inducted into the Grand Club, which includes 17 members for 2012.
A highlight of Relay for Life was the luminary ceremony just after dark. Hundreds of luminaries lined the path for walkers during the 12-hour event. The names of those lost to cancer as well as cancer

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HSCHS reunion weekend

The annual Hot Springs County High School reunion is set to kick off this weekend in Thermopolis with registration at the VFW Club on Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m.
Celebrating the graduating classes ending in 2 and 7 this year, each class will hold its own Friday night mixer and Saturday night dinner before the culminating event, the all-class picnic on Sunday.
A dance will be held at the VFW on Saturday night starting at 9 p.m. Jeb Schenck will be taking photos of each class beginning at 7 p.m. Saturday.

Class Year	Contact	Friday	Saturday
1952 - 60 years	Ellen Galyan Shirley Longwell	Candy Jack Park 12th Street, 6 p.m.	Shorty’s Liquor, 103 E. Broadway, 6 p.m.
1957 - 55 years	Carol Ann Barham	Sharon Ehli Rey 125 N. 9th, 6:30 p.m.	Eagles Club, 6th & Shoshoni, 6 p.m. cocktails, 7 p.m. dinner
1962 - 50 years	Dolly Daniels	VFW - pizza party 6 p.m.	Days Inn, State Park, 6 p.m. cocktails, 7 p.m. dinner
1972 - 40 years	Carol Bivens	809 W. Spraul Road 6 p.m.	Stones Throw, Airport Road, 7 p.m.
1982 - 30 years	Tracy Matthews	Lower Shelter (by the river), State Park 6 p.m.	Kiwanis Shelter, State Park, 6 p.m.
1987 - 25 years	Donna Skelton	VFW, 7 p.m.	Lil’ Wrangler, 800 Shoshoni, 6 p.m. cocktails (BYOB), 7 p.m. dinner
1992 - 20 years			Butch’s Place, Kirby 6 p.m. cocktails 7 p.m. dinner

Banana splits for everyone

From top to bottom, Chad, Enoch, Branwen and Timothy Vaupel were served by Kristi Thronburg and Ally Bohleen during Banana Split Day on Friday at Central Bank & Trust. Community members enjoyed the treat on another hot day. — Joe Sovab photo

Commissioners finalize budget

The Hot Springs County Commissioners moved \$10,000 from the emergency expenditures line to the library endowment fund. The endowment is a 3-to-1 match program by the state, and the commissioners felt it was an investment in the library’s future to award the funds.
The second change was also taken from the emergency expenditures line, \$5,000 for the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber had originally asked for \$10,000.
In total, the commissioners made cuts totaling \$1.9 million this year, creating the budget from \$248,274,680 in revenue.

Lapp pleads guilty to felony poaching

by J.D. Stetson
Colton Lapp, 19, pleaded guilty Monday to three felony counts of taking game animals without a license during a closed hunting season in Hot Springs County District Court.
The charges are felonies because Lapp has two prior poaching convictions within the past 10 years.
At the start of the hearing, Judge Robert E. Skar outlined the five felony and six misdemeanor charges accusing Lapp of killing five deer in December in Hot Springs County.
Lapp pleaded guilty to the first three felony charges after prosecutors accepted a plea agreement. The two remaining felony charges and the misdemeanor charges would be dismissed pursuant to the agreement.
Skar did not accept the plea agreement during the hearing and instead ordered Lapp to complete a pre-sentence investigation performed by the Department of Probation and Parole. After the investigation report is complete, the court will schedule a sentencing hearing. Skar said the process usually takes about 60 days.
Lapp currently remains free on bond and is restricted to a home in Sheridan and to work in the Sheridan area. He also currently faces probation revocation proceedings in two other Wyoming counties.
If the court accepts the agreement, Lapp would be sentenced to 18 to 24 months in the Wyoming State Penitentiary with a recommendation from the court for Lapp to attend the Wyoming Boot Camp in Newcastle. If Lapp is accepted into the boot camp and completes the program, the state would not object to a sentence modification placing Lapp on two years supervised probation, said

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County fair kicks off with horse show

Pigs and goats, sheep and cats – it’s just about Hot Springs County Fair time. “Hoof It To the Fair” is the theme for the 2012 county fair, which officially runs July 31 through Aug. 3.
Pre-fair events will get underway Saturday with the pee wee horse show along with the 4-H and FFA youth horse show starting at 8 a.m. in the indoor arena.
The annual style show and revue will be held Thursday, July 26 at the Hot Springs County Museum and Cultural Center. Judging will begin at 3 p.m.
The fun continues with the dog show on Tuesday, July 31 at 6 p.m. at the indoor arena at the fairgrounds.
Several shows will be held Wednesday, Aug. 1, including the goat, cat, rabbit, poultry and sheep shows, starting at 8 a.m. Family fun night will also be on Wednesday evening, beginning at 7 p.m.
Thursday, Aug. 2 will start with the swine show at 8 a.m., and the beef show is set for 6 p.m.
The fair culminates on Friday, Aug. 3 with the FFA and 4-H round robin in the multi-purpose building at 10 a.m. and the Judges’ Choice Bake Sale and Junior Livestock Auction at 7 p.m. The annual pre-sale buyer’s dinner will be held prior to the sale at 6 p.m.

Relay

survivors were read. Members of teams walked the path through the night, and the closing ceremonies were held at 6 a.m. Saturday – culminating with the release of balloons to celebrate the event.

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, captained by Kim Enis, was the top fundraising team. Their total was more than \$15,000. That gave them the distinction of reaching the Jade level of fundraising. Motivated Couch Potatoes was second highest with more than \$4,300. Energized Tater Tots was third, and NFST Piglets (Law Enforcement Center) finished fourth. The other teams were Winnie the Pooh Hospital Crew, Angels of Hope, A Whole New World-Cancer Free, Eric Kay, Pamida’s Haku-na Matata, Team Paintbrush Dental, Big Brothers Big Sisters and PLTI Class One.

“All the teams really put out a good effort this

year fundraising and getting sponsors,” Enis said. “I’m really overwhelmed with the generosity of the community. They opened up so much this year... It’s a wonderful community to live in.”

Enis also gave credit to Scheel, who spearheaded decoration of the state park pavilion for this year’s Relay for Life, and for the execution of the event.

“It was just beautiful. It was really well organized this year. It fell right into place,” Enis said.

She said Relay for Life attracted a number of out-of-state people who stopped by during the opening ceremonies. Some of them made financial contributions, even though they had no one personally involved in the event.

More than \$4.5 billion will be raised this year in Relay for Life during more than 5,000 events worldwide.

Wyoming libraries bring eBooks access to readers

Wyoming’s libraries have expanded their services to include eBooks. This service is free for patrons with a Wyoming library card, allowing them to check out and download eBooks..

Libraries in Wyoming have been working to bring access to a statewide eBook program for years. Now there are two eBook providers, the 3M Cloud Library and Freading. 3M Cloud Library provides access to eBooks from most of the major publishers while Freading provides eBooks from independent publishers.

Desiree Saunders, a systems librarian for the Wyoming State Library and the coordinator of the Wyoming eBook program, said, “I am thrilled to see the first stage of this program start this month and am excited to keep working with our library partners to make our eBooks collections the best they can be.”

Wyoming residents may browse the library’s website, check out eBooks using a valid library card and pin number, and download the eBooks to their computer or many common mobile devices and tablets including iPad, iPhone, Sony Reader, Barnes and Noble’s Nook, and Amazon Kindle Fire. Downloaded eBooks can be enjoyed immediately and they automatically expire at the end of the lending period. There are no late fees. For more information,

and to get started downloading eBooks, go to [gowlyd.net/econ-](http://gowlyd.net/econ-tent) tent or contact the Hot Springs County Library.

Poaching

Prosecutor Marcia Bean.

For both the remaining counts, Lapp would be sentenced to two years supervised probation per count. Probation would be consecutive for each count, which would place Lapp on six years probation total.

Additional penalties

Bean also outlined additional penalties to include a proposed lifetime suspension of Lapp’s hunting privileges in the state as well as in other states that cooperate with Wyoming in hunting programs. The agreement also would include a lifetime suspension of Lapp’s ability to purchase hunting licenses in Wyoming as well as in the states cooperating with Wyoming.

Bean stated any fines or restitution in the case can be determined by the court at sentencing and Lapp, through his attorney Nick Carter of Gillette, would reserve the right to ar-

gue the amount of restitution at sentencing.

Carter added, the restitution will only be applicable on the animals included in the first three charges and not the animals included in the remaining charges.

Bean estimated the court may need about two hours during the sentencing proceeding to present and cross examine the restitution evidence. Skar asked Bean to immediately inform Carter once a restitution amount is determined and to inform the court if the state and Lapp agree to an amount before the hearing.

After pleading guilty, Carter asked Lapp a series of “yes or no” questions to determine a factual basis for the pleas. Carter asked Lapp whether he was in Hot Springs County on the dates listed in each count, whether he took an antlered deer, whether it was a closed hunting season and whether he had prior convic-

tions. Lapp responded “yes” to each question for each of three charges.

Skar asked Lapp to explain a section of the charging documents that included a game warden’s account of an interview with Lapp. In the interview, Lapp told the warden he had killed the deer on Dec. 19 because he was upset about being sentenced in Park County on a poaching charge.

Responding to Skar’s question, Lapp said he was upset at the time because of a “mixed bag” of circumstances and for different reasons than being sentenced on the poaching charge.

At the conclusion of the hearing, Skar warned Lapp of watching his behavior between proceedings.

“If something major happens between now and sentencing, you can kiss this plea agreement goodbye,” Skar said.



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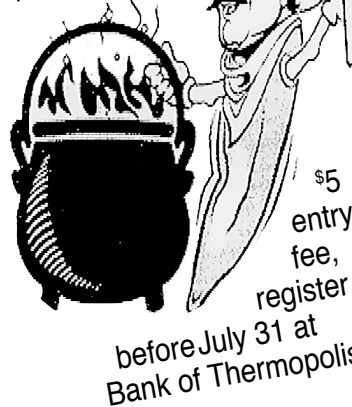
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