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Thermopolis
Hot Springs

Independent Record

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Council approves completion of project on Arapahoe Street

by J.D. Stetson

The Thermopolis Town Council voted to continue moving forward on the Arapahoe Street Water Line Replacement project during its regular meeting Tuesday night.

Town Engineer Heath Overfield presented a couple of work change directives to the council in order to move along with the project.

LAMAX Construction of Basin has worked through to 13th Street on the replacement project. The council had hoped to have enough funding to finish up to 14th Street. Overfield stated it will be close, but his office is confident there will be enough money to get the project finished.

The council voted to extend the contract time for the project to be substantially complete to Sept. 15. The contractor doesn't have to be 100 percent finished by that date, but the project must be functional by the deadline.

Overfield stated LAMAX expects to be finished laying pipe by Aug. 24 and they could start paving within the month. He estimated it would take the contractor about a week to pave the project

with most of the paving complete by the Sept. 15 deadline.

The council also voted on another work change directive to remove the replacement of curb and gutter from LAMAX's scope of work and contract and for the town to hire a separate contractor to finish the work.

Overfield said the amount of work anticipated from the original scope of work has more than doubled from original estimates based on the poor condition of the street's curb and gutter. Overfield said LAMAX would want additional payment if the contractor was to perform the unanticipated work to fix the curb and gutter.

He suggested the council hire another contractor to replace the curb and gutter and presented them a quote that would be lower than the price for LAMAX to replace the curb and gutter.

After the meeting, Mayor's Assistant Fred Crosby acknowledged the patience of the residents on Arapahoe Street this summer and said the town just asks for a little more patience to finish the project.

Gift of the Waters fancy dance



Eastern Shoshone dancer Sharmaine Weed performs during the 62nd annual Gift of the Waters Pageant at Big Spring in Hot Springs State Park. — Joe Sovo photo

Hospital seeks change to state law to bring issue to the ballot

by J.D. Stetson

The Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees and staff continue to work toward the creation of a hospital district.

At the board's July 29 meeting, hospital CEO Robin Roling said the hospital plans to work toward an action in the Wyoming Legislature to help the hospital get the initiative on an election ballot.

Currently, the hospital must get approval from the citizens or companies responsible for 25 percent of the assessed valuation — as well as 25 percent of all property taxpayers — in order to place the district question on the ballot.

The hospital has been in contact with various energy companies in the county, which are responsible for significant portions of the assessed valuation,

to express the need for a district in order to finance a new hospital facility. Since initial talks and presentation, the hospital has not received an answer from the companies on the issue, Roling said.

Without an answer from the energy companies, the hospital is shifting focus to changing the law to simplify the process to get the initiative on the ballot.

Roling said Hot Springs County is not the only county seeking a hospital district. The other counties are also running into trouble placing it on their ballots because of the state law requirements.

The hospital plans to take the issue to the Wyoming Hospital Association in order to draft the bill and to ensure there are no unintended consequences of changing the law.

It also plans to ask Hot Springs County Commissioners to take the issue to the Wyoming County Commissioners Association. The hospital hopes that by having the support of both associations the bill would become a committee-sponsored bill, which would improve its chances of passage during the upcoming General Session of the legislature.

The hospital also is facing other issues as a result of changes in the industry, such as decreases in Medicaid reimbursement for long-term care costs and other changes in the state and federal laws. Roling said a hospital district would help to alleviate some of the changes by evening out the tax revenue the hospital would receive.

Livestock Auction garners \$100,000

by Joe Sovo

With the same number of animals up for bids, the Junior Livestock Auction and Judges' Choice Bake Sale wrapped up the 2012 Hot Springs County Fair, surpassing last year's total — bringing in \$100,052.10 on Friday evening at the multi-purpose building at the fairgrounds.

The total included the highest bids paid in addition to "add-on" donations.

Those attending the auction enjoyed the pre-sale buyers' dinner, compliments of Pinnacle Bank.

There were 53 youth market animals sold, the same number as last year, as well as 12 items in the Judges' Choice Bake Sale run in conjunction with the auction. The breakdown was 21 lambs, 17 swine, 13 beef and two goats.

The per-pound average was higher in every category this year compared to 2011, when the grand total was \$97,904.20 for the auction. The market beef sold for an average of \$3.34 per pound compared to \$2.60 last year. For the 17 hogs auctioned, the average sale was a lofty \$5.26 per pound; the figure was \$4.69 in 2011.

Market lambs also surpassed the \$5 mark, bringing an average of \$5.74 per pound. The average was \$4.48 last year. There were no market goats in 2011, but two sold this year — one going for \$170 and the other for \$100.

A total of \$5,520 came in during the Judges' Choice Bake Sale, an average of \$433 per offering by 4-H club members. That included \$310 in add-ons.

In a special event, a Joey Mahoney Scholarship Fund was established with the proceeds from the auction of a pig. Red Rock Family Practice pledged to match the amount raised up to \$2,500 for the fund in the name of the 7-year-old former 4-H club participant who lost her life after a fall from her horse earlier this summer. Messenger & Overfield had the high bid of \$1,900 for the pig and the law firm added another \$200. With Red Rock matching the \$2,100, a total of \$4,200 was raised for the scholarship fund.

Beef

The 13 market beef sold at the auction brought in a total of \$52,751.85, including add-ons. In comparison, there were 19 beef sold in the 2011 auction for \$63,659.15.

Jessie Pennoyer's steer was the top seller. The 1,311-pound steer went for \$5,178.45, which excluded add-ons and feed costs. She had \$335 in add-ons. The top bid by Owl Creek Ranch was \$3.95 per pound for the heaviest entry in the market beef category.

Melissa Ward's market beef sold for a category-high \$4.25 per pound, which calculated to \$4,815.25.



Haley McDermott uses signage to advertise her lamb for sale during the Junior Livestock Auction and Judges' Choice Bake Sale on Friday evening at the fairgrounds. — Joe Sovo photo

Swine

Pigs sold in the auction increased in value during the first four bids. Katie Ferree's Overall Grand Champion sold for \$3.25 per pound. The fourth pig, sold by Barbara Kissel, went for \$5 per pound.

The 17 swine sold for a total of \$23,678.25, about \$1,400

more than last year when 18 pigs were in the auction.

Spencer Axtell's pig sold half-way through that part of the auction for a high of \$6.50 per pound. Red Rock Family Practice paid \$1,677 for the 258-pound animal. Waylon Nelson's pig brought in

See Livestock on page 10

Commissioners hear from GLF again in tax request

by Cindy Glasson

For the second time in a month, the Hot Springs County Commissioners have denied a request by the Greater Learning Foundation to support a resolution adding a special purpose, 1-cent tax on the ballot in November.

Toddi Darlington and Lorraine Quarberg approached the commissioners with a new resolution, different from the first one presented last month, in that it drops the proposed tax from 2 cents to 1 cent. In addition, the tax would last approximately six years in order to raise \$4 million toward the creation of the Big Horn Basin Nature and Discovery Center.

With the original resolution, the Town of East Thermopolis agreed to back the Foundation; however, the commissioners, Town of Thermopolis and the Town of Kirby all denied the request to see it on the ballot. In order for the special purpose tax to appear on the ballot, two municipalities and the commissioners must agree.

"Putting this on the ballot gives us the ability to send a clear message to the state that we're willing to tax ourselves to make this happen," Quarberg said. "I am convinced this project can be viable in the county."

While they support the Nature and Discovery Center, the commissioners still question whether this is a good time to burden citizens with an addi-

tional tax.

"With the state cutting budgets and us cutting budgets, is this the right time?" asked commissioner John Lumley. "We're trying to update a hospital at the same time."

There is a difference between a sales tax that would have a precise end date and a hospital district tax, however. The district tax would be a mill levy that would be perpetual.

"I'm not sure there's ever a good time," Quarberg said.

Darlington and Quarberg both expressed concern that there could be another entity in the state ready to jump at a similar project if Hot Springs County doesn't come through.

"We're worried the longer we wait, someone else in the state is going to pick this up and run with it, and we'll be out of the game," Quarberg said.

Support from governor

The commissioners questioned whether Gov. Matt Mead is going to be able to spend \$10 million on Hot Springs County with all the budget cuts going on.

"State agencies haven't reduced their budgets yet," Quarberg said. "They've been asked to think about it."

Other large projects in the state have been getting funding through financial outlays from the state.

See Commissioners on page 10

Livestock

\$1,568.75 from Monkey Welding-Jason Bow. Messenger & Overfield paid \$1,567.50 for McKenna Bomengen's offering.

Hardy Johnson showed the heaviest pig at 266 pounds. It sold for \$3.75 per pound as the second animal in the pig portion of the auction.

Lambs

The 21 lambs sold at the auction compared to 16 the year before. The

total sale was \$17,812, nearly double the \$9,538 total in 2011.

Lambs offered were blackface, whiteface and speckled face. The two whiteface lambs brought an average of \$7 per pound. The average for 17 blackface lambs was \$5.62 and \$5.50 for two speckled face lambs.

Wyatt McDermott sold the highest priced lamb. His blackface offering went for \$8.75 per pound and was purchased by Stones Throw for \$1,041.25.

Jase Longwell's blackface sold for \$7 per pound to HD Ranch, bringing in \$9.24. Strite Daniels' Overall Grand Champion went for \$877.50, or \$6.50 per pound. The minimum blackface lamb price was \$4 per pound.

Destiny Harris sold her whiteface lamb for \$1,012.50, or \$7.50 per pound. The Cake House and Yetter Trucking shared the cost equally. Rayann Lofink sold her Overall Reserve Champion whiteface lamb for \$6.50 per pound.

Yellowstone Beans purchased the lamb for \$910.

In the speckled face category, Remington Ferree—with the largest lamb—collected \$858 after a high bid of \$5.50 per pound. Worland Ford Chrysler bought the lamb.

Food and Nutrition

Twelve local 4-H club members marketed their goods during the Judges' Choice Bake Sale during the Junior

Livestock Auction. Russell Gibbel led the way as his basket sold for an auction-high \$700.

Jennifer Cramer was second highest salesperson with a collection of \$575. Other 4-H youth who sold their products during the auction were Maddie Stam, Hannah Swick, Haylee Hoffman, Katie Burrows, Oakley Bowman, Darren Leonhardt, Jessica Lutz, Selena Simmons, Jeremy Gibbel and Mary Ryan.

Commissioners

"If the people vote to tax themselves," Quarberg said, "that's going to be a powerful argument for the state to grant the funding."

Commissioner Mike Baker indicated he has heard feedback from people in the community that feel the citizens haven't been allowed to give any input on the project, that it has been a core of people who have done all the planning with little or no outside input.

"We've kept it pretty quiet

on a local level when we started working with the state," Darlington said. "We've had people from outside the area working on it with us. There will be a planning and design meeting fairly soon, and it will include the BLM (Bureau of Land Management), WYDOT (Wyoming Department of Transportation) and others."

"There's been no outreach to locals in the community," Baker said. "Why would they back something they haven't had any input in?"

During the community assessment several years ago, one of the issues brought to light was a need for improvement in tourism facilities to stop visitors from heading out of town and heading straight to Cody.

"We need to re-educate the community about the project," Darlington said. "If we don't get it this year, we'll be back again next year."

The commissioners called for a vote, but the resolution died for lack of a second.

from page 1



The Hot Springs County High School Class of 1972 includes, front row from left, Connie Gifford, Bill Larson, Lyle King, Carol Vicklund, Colleen Russell, Frank Toth, Kathy Klee-man and Delana Evertt; second row, Connie Wallingford, Georgeanne Hammond, Griff Goff, Annette Arthur, Margaret Johansen and Dale Horkey; back row, Dan Robertson, Nancy Zupan, Karen Klein, Brad Graham, Steve Novakovich, Laurie Shipp, Jon Bryan, Trish Raicevich, Mike Odde and Jim Enis.


– Photos courtesy of Jeb Schenck



The Hot Springs County High School Class of 1992 includes, front row from left, Pam Spatol Nebel, Robin Andreen Trembath, Stormy Brost Crichton, Amy Budd May, Jennie Ben-nett Briggs and Kirk Jenkins; middle row, Shannon Kerr Loeve and Shana Randall Pearce; and back row, JR Howe, Jason Valentine and Kelly Holman.

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Putting
America
Back on
Track



Like all of us, I wear many different hats – husband and father, neighbor, doctor and, now, one of your United States Senators.

It's a great honor to represent you. Wyoming is my home. Washington is just where I work.

I believe in a system of citizen legislators, not professional politicians. That's why I'm in Wyoming every chance I get - to listen to you and hear what's really important.

Washington is full of folks who just like to talk. Wyoming is full of hard working people who get things done.

I'm not discouraged. I'm not giving up. I hope you won't either. There is simply too much at stake for Wyoming families.

We have to control our federal spending, trim regulations, and reduce the debt – all while protecting our economic and personal freedoms.

It can be done and with your support I'll keep fighting for real results. Together we can put our country back on track.

Thank you.

John Barrasso

★ ★ ★ In the August 21st Primary ★ ★ ★

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The August 16th edition
of the Independent Record will feature
a special political section.

Deadline for ADS WITH PROOF
is Monday, August 13 at 5 p.m.

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431 Broadway • 864-2328 • news@thermopir.com