

Golf car raffle to help
Legion Town &
Country Club 3

2012 was a year
featuring dry,
hot weather 5

Top local sports
stories of 2012;
hoop schedule 6

Hot Springs County
government
costs released 10

Thermopolis
Hot Springs

Independent Record

SPECIAL INTERNET PREVIEW

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School district audit reviewed

by Cindy Glasson
Hot Springs County School District No. 1 received its annual audit report from Michael Wright of Michel, Wright and Associates at their Dec. 20 meeting.

According to Wright, the 50-page audit was compiled using governmental auditing procedures and while a few issues were found with the financial reporting, nothing was out of the ordinary.

Wright included a report with the audit that outlined problems with internal controls, something most agencies in Hot Springs County deal with due to the small number of employees in any given office.

This is evident in the business office at the district and typical of most small schools in the state. In addition, the audit indicated the district needs some help in getting its financials together for the audit each year, something that could be seen as a weakness. Again, it merely falls under the small staff available and is not a major problem.

Capital assets issue

One issue Wright found was

in the recording of capital assets.

During his research into the finances, Wright found items that had not been added to the capital assets line, items that had not been eliminated from there and some that had not been marked for depreciation in value.

Wright suggested the district invest in a new software program that would create a better system for keeping records of assets.

While Wright did not find any serious non-compliance issues in regard to grants, he did find a few instances where the district put the "cart before the horse," asking for reimbursement of funds before the funds had actually been spent.

Some grants are given on a reimbursable basis. The district must purchase the item or items first, before applying for reimbursement. In the end, the problem does not affect the final outcome of the financials.

"There was a glitch in the (new accounting) system that wasn't entirely your fault," Wright said. "I'm happy with how things have come out. The things I found were minor, and school districts are very complicated."

Toys for Tots



Thermopolis volunteer firefighters load the back of "Santa-1" with toys to be delivered to families in need on Christmas Eve.
— J.D. Stetson photo

Airport land purchase tops 2012 stories

Purchase of land for a new Hot Springs County airport and groundbreaking for the new facility northwest of Thermopolis was determined to be the No. 1 local story of 2012 by the Independent Record's news staff.

A pair of agreements was signed by Joe Holden, the owner of the property, and the Hot Springs County commissioners March 9 for a total of \$1,113,000, spanning two parcels of land containing a combined 482 acres. A groundbreaking ceremony was held Sept. 13 at the site of the new airport with Gov. Matt Mead and other dignitaries attending. Phase one of the construction project was to be completed by the end of 2012.

No. 2 – After a winter with snowpack well below average, Hot Springs County and most of Wyoming suffered from moderate to severe drought conditions in 2012. By year's end, the official total moisture of 4.51 inches made it the driest year in record-keeping history in Thermopolis.

No. 3 – Five people were killed in a two-vehicle head-on collision 33 miles north of Thermopolis on Highway 120 on the morning of June 28. The victims were three Woodland Park, Colo., Boy Scouts, their Scout leader and a 3-year-old boy from Florida. Residents of Hot Springs County came together to support and comfort numerous Colorado Boy Scouts.

No. 4 – Republican Nathan Winters became the new state representative from House District 28 as the result of the Nov. 6 General Election, defeating Democrat Connie Skates. Mark Mortimore was re-elected as county corner, and LeRoy Hayes and Mark Nelson were elected to the Thermopolis Town Council. Dr. Travis Bomengen, Clay Van Antwerp and Joe Martinez were re-elected to the school board and newcomer Melissa Johnson joins the board. Raymond Nettles and Jessica Slagle were elected to the Kirby Town Council.

No. 5 – Colton Lapp, who was 19 at the time of his arrest in March, received 18-24 months in prison or boot camp and four years of probation for felony poaching in November. The court also suspended his privileges to hunt or buy a hunting/fishing license for 99 years.

No. 6 – It was reported in January that the Pamida store in Thermopolis would become a Shopko Hometown store by the end of the year due to a merger of Shopko and Pamida. The Pamida store converted its departments during late-summer and fall, and the Shopko Hometown store opened in November.

No. 7 – The Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees and staff continued to work toward the creation of a hospital district. Legislation to streamline the process of placing the question of creating a hospital district on the election ballot has been filed in the Wyoming Senate. Sen. Gerald Geis sponsored the bill, which would remove the state requirements to place the special hospital district initiative on the ballot.

No. 8 – Wyoming Whiskey held its bottling celebration on Dec. 1 in Kirby for its release of the small-batch whiskey. Among those attending were Gov. Matt Mead and his brother and part-owner, Brad Mead; owner, David DeFazio; and former U.S. Sen. Alan Simpson. The initial release of the whiskey produced 18,000 bottles, which were distributed to various liquor stores and bars throughout the state.

No. 9 – In early June, the Independent Record reported that Mark Nelson would no longer be serving as Thermopolis police chief. Mayor Bill Malloy confirmed Nelson was no longer with the department, but stated Nelson had not been fired. Sgt. Mike Chimenti was serving as interim police chief at the end of 2012.

No. 10 – Don's IGA in Thermopolis was sold to a Montana-based corporation. Greg Kraske and his wife and partner, Ilija, turned the businesses over to Hardin, Mont.-based Reese LeaVesseur and Ray O'Loughlin in late-July. Don's IGA had been in the Kraske family since 1973. Here is a summary of the top local stories of 2012:

January

Within the next year, Pamida in Thermopolis will become a Shopko Hometown store. Green Bay, Wis.-based Shopko announced the impending merger of the two companies to unite Pamida's 193 stores under the Shopko brand.

Hot Springs County's registered voters received a letter in late December with information about the construction of a community convention/recreation center in Thermopolis. The letter explained that the Hot Springs County Recreation District had completed a market analysis, site analysis and project cost estimates, and had developed operations analysis processes.

Mayor's Assistant and Town Codes Administrator Fred Crosby reported McDonald's plans to expand its existing building during the next year. He said the business had finished the necessary paperwork with the town and could start construction of the 1,200 square-foot expansion project at any time.

Krista Raymond and her son James want people who visit their new sandwich and pastry shop to think of it like sitting on their "front porch" drinking a glass of ice-

use, discharge or detonation of fireworks to remain limited to five miles.

A letter has been sent to a local business outlining violations in the county and state codes regarding licensing of salvage yards. County Planner Bo Bowman would like to visit with the commissioners regarding the various salvage yards throughout the county.

March

Hot Springs County Sheriff's Office deputies released more information on a significant drug bust last week in which three people were arrested. The deputies made a traffic stop on a suspected vehicle and a search with consent resulted in the discovery of approximately one pound of marijuana as well as paraphernalia and other items associated with the use of marijuana.

The prestigious Pulaski Award, presented to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wind River/Bighorn Basin District (WR/BBD) fire program, is temporarily located at the Thermopolis Fire Hall in recognition of the BLM's partnership with Hot Springs County Rural Fire District.



The first shovels-full of dirt hit the air at the official groundbreaking ceremony of the Hot Springs County Airport Sept. 13. Pictured, left to right, are Charles Wilke (WYDOT), Jesse Lyman (FAA), county clerk Hans Odde, Gov. Matt Mead, commissioner chairman Brad Basse, commissioner Mike Baker, commissioner John Lumley and John Mahoney (WYDOT).

cold lemonade. That's why they named their new business The Front Porch. It opened Jan. 12 and is located at 536 Arapahoe St.

Tom Williamson opened Stop Light Pizzeria and Take-N-Bake at the corner of Broadway and Sixth streets. He later moved the business to a Seventh Street location.

February

The Hot Springs County Commissioners are continuing negotiations with landowner Joe Holden to purchase land for a new airport west of Thermopolis. The commissioners had filed eminent domain proceedings in early January, and if the terms of the letter were agreeable to Holden, those proceedings would cease.

The Thermopolis Town Council voted unanimously against a proposed ordinance to change the distance fireworks could be sold from the town from five miles to half a mile from the corporate limits of the town. The council directed Town Attorney Mike Messenger to draft the proposed ordinance allowing the sale of fireworks a half-mile outside the corporate limits, but also requiring the

Potential for spring flooding remains low for Wyoming, based on the latest statistics, according to a recent report from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA).

The Thermopolis Town Council voted to dip into cash reserves to access \$50,000 for completion of a new cell at the Thermopolis Landfill during its Feb. 21 meeting. The council passed a resolution to amend the town's current budget to reflect the transfer of funds from the reserve account to the landfill enterprise fund.

Plans can now proceed on the building of a new county airport west of Thermopolis with the signing of purchase agreements for land owned by Joe Holden. The pair of agreements was signed for a total of \$1,113,000, spanning two parcels of land. The administrative settlement started at \$230,000; however, attorney fees incurred during the 18-month process lowered the settlement amount.

The Hot Springs County Commissioners held a work session with the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and GDA Engineers Monday to discuss the construction timeline for the new Hot Springs County Airport.

Top 10 local stories of 2012

- 1 – Holden property sale & airport groundbreaking
- 2 – Drought, snowpack woes
- 3 – Five fatalities in June 28 wreck
- 4 – Elections (primary & general)
- 5 – Lapp poaching conviction
- 6 – Shopko Hometown opens
- 7 – Hospital district issue
- 8 – Wyoming Whiskey's first bottles
- 9 – Nelson out as police chief
- 10 – Don's IGA sold

The recent heat wave in Thermopolis led to one of the warmest temperatures in March since the National Weather Service in Riverton started keeping track. On March 23, weather service observers measured a high temperature of 77 degrees.

April

Hot Springs County Library Director Chris Bendlin has announced her retirement after 24 years at the library. Bendlin began part-time at the library, working her way up to director in 2001.

The Hot Springs Hospice Foundation (HSHF) has become a reality. This dedicated group, under the direction of Dr. Jason Weyer, completed all the necessary federal and state requirements, and the foundation became official as a non-profit organization.

Starting May 1, residents and tourists won't need a key to visit Legend Rock Petroglyph Site northwest of Thermopolis. The site is under the management of Hot Springs State Park, and will be open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. seven days a week.

May

Hot Springs County Emergency Management Director Bill Gordon painted a grim picture May 1 when he presented snowpack data from Wyoming's basins to the county commissioners. Snowpack in the Wind River drainage last year was 125 percent of normal. This year, that number is a mere 45 percent.

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. After a 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.

Hot Springs County High School's music department returned victorious from their recent trip to Denver for the Music in the Parks national competition. Out of the 42 schools in the competition, the Bobcat band brought home

See Review on page 7

Review

a second-place trophy, the choir tied for first place and the OverTones show choir received a standing ovation and tied for first place honors as well. Music in the Parks is the largest competition of its kind in the Northwest.

The Hot Springs County School District No. 1 Board of Trustees approved the hiring of Travis Anderson to replace Jason McArthur as Hot Springs County High School principal. Principal Jason McArthur will make the transition to special services director July 1.

Fifty-one seniors received their diplomas when the Hot Springs County High School Class of 2012 celebrated its graduation May 20. Co-valedictorians were Anja Abbott and Maggie Paris, and Zach Anderson was salutatorian. Long-time librarian Cindy Toth was the guest speaker.

Three candidates announced their intention to run for the House District 28 seat to be vacated by Rep. Lorraine Quarberg. Nathan Winters, chairman of the Hot Springs County Republican Party; businessman and Thermopolis-Hot Springs County Lodging Tax Board member Carl Leyba; and rural Meeteetse resident Echo Renner indicated they would file for the seat. Winters and Renner will file as Republicans and Leyba as a Democrat. Brad Basse announced he would run for another term as county commissioner.

The Hot Springs County Commissioners made what may well be their last decision regarding Nakamura Lane. During their second meeting of May, they voted 2-1 to send the issue to District Court. During a public hearing the end of April, the commissioners listened to evidence regarding litigation filed by Miekio (Nakamura) Ayer, requesting Nakamura Lane be considered a public road rather than a privately owned road.

The Thermopolis Town Council discussed at length a proposal to tie the South Thermopolis Water District to a water line being built by Owl Creek Water District west of town. The Owl Creek water line connects to a new town water line installed during the town's recent water tank project. The Wyoming Water

Both the competition and the weather were hot for the Thermopolis Cowboy Rendezvous PRC A Rodeo at the Hot Springs County Fairgrounds arena. Parade winners were Equine, White Horse Country Store/Axtell Family; Merchant, Lucy's Sheep Camp; and Youth, Mesa Allen.

Current Hot Springs County School District No. 1 employee Colleen Anderson was approved as the new business manager during Thursday's meeting of the board of trustees. Anderson will officially replace outgoing business manager Lisa Pearce on July 1.

July
Five people were killed in a two-vehicle head-on collision 33 miles north of Thermopolis on Highway 120 on the morning of June 28. The victims were three Woodland Park, Colo., Boy Scouts, their Scout leader and a 3-year-old boy from Florida. Residents of Hot Springs County came together to support and comfort numerous Colorado Boy Scouts.

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.

Flying Eagle Gallery in downtown Thermopolis has new owners. Charlie and Jo Anne Stickney have sold the local business they've owned and operated for the last five years to Tom and Shelley Butler.

The Big Horn Basin Nature and Discovery Center (BHBND C) hit a snag during a recent meeting of the Hot Springs County Commissioners. Sue Blakey and Toddi Darlington, approached the commissioners July 3 with a request to have a specific purpose tax placed on the November ballot that would increase sales taxes in Hot Springs County by 2 cents in order to raise the approximately \$4 million needed for the project.

The rumble of engines will fill the air next summer with the arrival of the Wyoming Harley

house, three guided tours and Cowboy Church. With the same number of animals up for bids, the Junior Livestock Auction and Judges' Choice Bake Sale to wrap up the 2012 Hot Springs County Fair surpassed last year's total – bringing in \$100,052.10 on Friday evening at the multi-purpose building at the fairgrounds. 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 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.

Wyoming State Board of Education officials are planning to remove Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students, known as PAWS, for 11th-grade students for the 2012-13 school year. The plan is to replace the testing with the ACT (American College Testing).

Republican Nathan Winters will face Democrat Connie Skates for the Wyoming House District 28 seat in the 2012 General Election after advancing with victories in the primary. Echo Renner of rural Meeteetse finished second and Roland Luehne was third on the Republican ballot. Skates won a close race with Carl Leyba for Democratic nomination for HD28. In the battle of the Mortimore brothers, incumbent Mark defeated Mike in the Republican race for coroner. In town council races, advancing to the General Election are: Thermopolis – LeRoy Hayes, Allan Braaten and Dick Hall. East Thermopolis – Jack Kuiper and Merle William Moore. Kirby – Ross Rhodes and Raymond Nettles. U.S. Republican Sen. John Barrasso will advance to the General Election after his primary win.

Seven of the nine top spots in the winners' heat of the 33rd annual Thermopolis Demolition Derby were earned by Hot Springs County drivers. Jason Weyer earned second place overall. Rob Laing of Casper won his third straight Thermopolis derby title. There were 42 cars in this year's derby compared to 33 a year ago.

Marathon Oil Corporation is celebrating 100 years in business this year in Wyoming. The company operates the Grass Creek Oil Field northwest of Thermopolis, and currently has 27 employees at the field.

In late August, a jury in Hot Springs County District Court did not find the State of Wyoming negligent in a 2006 incident resulting in burns to Francis Weber from hot mineral water in the Vapor Cave at the Star Lounge.

September
Former Thermopolis Police Chief Mark

Nelson announced his intention to run for Thermopolis Town Council after he won enough votes during the August Primary Election to qualify him to run in the General Election. Jessica Slagle and Irene Hurley also qualified to run for nomination in the Kirby Town Council election. Slagle accepted the nomination and Hurley did not.

Thermopolis Police officers and Hot Springs County Sheriff's deputies broke up an underage party where 14 youth were ticketed for minor in possession of alcohol at an apartment on Canyon Hills Road. A 22-year-old was ticketed for possession of a controlled substance.

The Town of Thermopolis' downtown Arapahoe Street Water Project neared completion with a final overlay. The project was expected to be substantially complete by Sept. 15.

Brit Eaton and Scott Glaves of the Destination America show "Ghost Town Gold" toured the Sessions property searching for lost treasures in an old home along U.S. 20.

Friends of NRA hosted its fifth annual dinner, auction and fundraiser earning \$34,000.

The annual fall WYO Quarter Horse sale totaled \$386,000 with 87 horses sold.

The Rodeo Historical Society chose Hot Springs County resident Bill Smith as the 2012 recipient of the Ben Johnson Award. The society awards the national award to a living person who has been involved in the rodeo industry for a number of years, has contributed to the growth and betterment of pro rodeo, and is involved with youth or community activities.

Hot Springs County prosecutors charged Forrest Fredrick Kinnaman, 23, with attempted murder in the second degree, two counts of aggravated assault and battery and one count of possession of a deadly weapon with unlawful intent. A judge later determined there was not sufficient evidence to bind over Kinnaman on the murder charge.

Hot Springs County School District No. 1 launched its "SPARK a FIRE" reading program

for students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

The Hot Springs County Commissioners held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Hot Springs County Airport Sept. 13 at the airport site northwest of Thermopolis. Gov. Matt Mead was on hand along with representatives of the Wyoming Department of Transportation, Aeronautics Division and the Federal Aviation Administration.

The Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce and the Lodging Tax Board met in an attempt to come to a mutual understanding of what the mission and goals are. The chamber sought to clarify the relationship between the two boards and the function of the executive director's position regarding the boards.

Hot Springs County School District No. 1 Superintendent Dustin Hunt shared with the school board the Wyoming Department of Education's 2011-12 Adequate Yearly Progress report, which is determined by Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS). The district met targets in a majority of the subject areas.

October
Hot Springs County School District No. 1 Food Services Director Cindy Wallingford presented a report detailing the woes facing the food service program in public schools in Wyoming. The report outlined the frustration the district faces in its inability to provide nutrition the students need due to federal mandates making food service more restrictive.

The Hot Springs County High School Homecoming King and Queen for 2012 were Kacy Conner and Emily Lesmeister. The royalty included Tanner Abbott, Michele Anderson, Kelley Sheperd, Laurel Leonhardt, Kaden Haun, Jamie Materi, Dillon Matheson, Avery DeVries, Eric Herold and Kayla Gilbert.

The H.O.P.E. Agency shined a light on domestic violence awareness month with its "Empty Place at the Table" display and its Silent Witness Display at Common Ground.

Daniel Aaron Simpson, 24, was sentenced in Hot Springs County District Court to serve one year in the Hot Springs County Jail and five years of supervised probation after being convicted of sexual abuse of a minor in the second degree.

The Legion Town & Country Club held its annual membership meeting where the membership heard about the process for finding a new club manager and the financial situation of the golf course.

The Hospital Foundation met its fundraising benchmark in raising \$250,000 in matching funds for a state program that allows the hospital to use the interest raised on a \$500,000 account to buy new capital equipment.

Hot Springs County Commissioners received a 135-page energy savings report from Trane outlining ways for the county to save energy through improvement to its courthouse



Alyson Miller picks up a plastic egg during the Thermopolis Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt in Hot Springs State Park.

a pair of celebrations for National Afterschool Day and celebrating afterschool programs around the nation.

Mortimore Ambulance Service announced the ambulance would no longer respond to "non-reimbursed lift assists," which are calls where the patient does not have a medical issue and only needs help in getting up. The patients also are not transported to the hospital. Later, the service said it will respond when called, but it will begin to charge the non-reimbursed lift assist patients for the service.

The Thermopolis Town Council signed a water pipeline agreement with Owl Creek Water District and South Thermopolis Water & Sewer District with regard to a proposed pipeline connecting the districts to the town. The town would be the owner of the pipeline after it is installed and the one-year warranty period has expired.

November
A 6-month-old Worland infant was killed during a traffic crash near mile marker 133 on Highway 20 North. The head-on collision occurred after a 2004 Ford Expedition, driven by Heidi Dietrich of Worland crossed the center line and hit a 2006 Ford Pickup driven by Jessica Slagle of Kirby.

The Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce accepted the resignation of Executive Director Michelle Lue, and began searching for a replacement. It also added new board members Thomas Butler of Flying Eagle Gallery, Kevin Dickey of Owl Creek Veterinary Service, Bob Rollings of The Ritz and Diane Sova of the Bank of Thermopolis.

LeRoy Hayes and Mark Nelson won the two open Thermopolis Town Council seats during the General Election. Republican Nathan Winters beat Democratic candidate Connie Skates in the House District 28 race. Dr. Travis Bomengen, Clay Van Antwerp, Joe Martinez and Melissa Johnson won the election for school board. Town of Kirby candidates Raymond Nettles, Ross Rhodes and Jessica Slagle resulted in a three-way tie. In a drawing of lots, Nettles and Slagle were elected.

Arnold Pennoyer was honored as the Ag Citizen of the Year by the Thermopolis FFA Alumni. The McCumber and Axtell families were also honored with the Century Farm/Ranch Award during the Harvest Moon Ball.

The Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce set a date of May 4-5, 2013, for the 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament and a downtown location.

Colton Lapp, who was 19 at the time of his arrest in March, received 18-24 months in prison or boot camp and four years of probation for felony poaching. The court also suspended his privileges to hunt or buy a hunting/fishing license for 99 years.

The Hot Springs County Commissioners received reports regarding the failure of a contractor to substantially complete paving on Lane 3 within the contract term.

Members of the Kirby Creek Coordinated Resource Management Group received the Bureau of Land Management's 2012 Rangeland Stewardship Award for the work it has done in the Kirby Creek to benefit livestock grazing, wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation and more.

The Children's Resource Center celebrated its 40th anniversary of helping children and families in Hot Springs County.

The Thermopolis-Hot Springs County Lodging Tax Board welcomed two new appointments to the board. The Town of Thermopolis appointed Angie Guyon and the Town of East Thermopolis appointed Cindy Ellison.

The Thermopolis Town Council approved a new 10-year franchise agreement with Bresnan Communications, also known as Optimum.

December
The Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees and Hot Springs County



Kim Enis kisses a pig during the Thermopolis Relay for Life at Hot Springs State Park. Enis raised the most money in donations for the fight against cancer and had to give the pig a smooch.

Development Commission (WWDC) recently proposed a connection with South Thermopolis Water District in order to reduce costs involved in the South Thermopolis upgrade and renovation project.

The 29th annual Spring WYO Quarter Horse sale at the Hot Springs County Fairgrounds was a success. All of the 87 horses were sold.

Hot Springs County School District No. 1 trustees accepted the resignation of business manager Lisa Pearce during the May 17 regular meeting. Pearce is resigning, and she and her family will be moving to Kodiak, Alaska.

Connie Skates has made the decision to run for Wyoming's House District 28 seat on the Democratic ticket.

June

The race for House District 28 has added another candidate on the Republican ticket, local business owner Roland Luehne.

The Hot Springs County Commissioners approved designating Lane 3 as an official county road and participated in a report from the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) on the latest State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) at their first meeting in June.

Mark Nelson is no longer the Thermopolis Police Department chief. After the Thermopolis Town Council's executive session to discuss personnel during its June 5 meeting, Mayor Bill Malloy confirmed Nelson is no longer with the department, but stated Nelson had not been fired. Police Sgt. Mike Chimenti was serving as acting police chief.

Hot Springs County and the remainder of Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) District 5 will be seeing a marked decrease in the amount of funding provided for road maintenance in the coming years. The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) will be funnelling money normally used in District 5 to other districts within the state.

The Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has chosen to continue to pursue a new contract with Colorado-based World Events to bring back the 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament next year. The chamber had a total net income of \$1,831.83. The chamber spent \$37,898.48 on the tournament and brought in \$39,730.31 in income and sponsorships.

The 20th Annual Hot Spot Car Rally brought in a record number of vehicles to Hot Springs State Park for Father's Day weekend. There were 146 entries this year, topping the previous record of 143 set two years ago.

Owners Group (H.O.G.), July 11-13, 2013. Jeni Dorman of Thermopolis traveled to Laramie recently to approach the H.O.G. selection committee about bringing their 20th anniversary convention and rally to Hot Springs County. The convention could bring in more than 300 Harley-Davidson owners.

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 they would turn the businesses over to Hardin, Mont.-based Reese LeaVesseur and Ray O'Loughlin next week.

This year's Relay for Life in Thermopolis went leaps and bounds beyond the goal for the event. 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 in the 2011 Relay for Life.

The Hot Springs County Commissioners approved the final budget for the 2012-13 fiscal year on Monday during a public hearing. In total, the commissioners made cuts totaling \$1.9 million this year, creating the budget from \$248,274,680 in revenue.

Hot Springs County School District No. 1 trustees unanimously adopted the new fiscal year (FY) 2012-13 budget July 18 after a public hearing to outline the parameters of the budget. The budgeted expenditures are \$14,287,502. That compares to a \$15,514,130 total budget for the just-completed 2011-12 school year.

Hot Springs County continues to be in moderate drought with little to no precipitation in June and sparse precipitation in May. Precipitation in July has reached .13. Ranchers have been moving their cows from pasture to pasture trying to keep their cattle crop fed throughout the summer but are quickly running out of places with enough grass and are having to dip into feed reserves. Many farmers have been fortunate enough to be able to draw water from the Big Horn River, but they have had trouble keeping their crops irrigated, leading to a shortfall in production and quality. While the crop producers are seeing high prices for their crops, the ranchers are anticipating tighter margins as they go into the shipping season early because they are running out of feed.

August

Hot Springs State Park was the site of the 62nd annual Gift of the Waters Historic Indian Pageant the first weekend of August. The pageant was held at the Big Spring in the park. Events during pageant weekend included plays both evenings along with a Saturday parade, Indian dancing, Thermopolis Kiwanis Arts & Crafts Fair and buffalo burger and bratwurst sale, 5K/10K run/walk, fire department open