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Thermopolis Hot Springs

Independent Record

SPECIAL INTERNET PREVIEW

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OverTones in action



Bailey Fisher holds on tight to Michael Meier during an OverTones show choir performance at the Pre-Festival Concert held April 16 at the school auditorium. The show choir, concert choir and concert band all earned "superior" ratings at the District Music Festival. For results, see page 8. — Joe Sovo photo

District 1 board leaves school times unchanged

by Cindy Glasson

School start times at Hot Springs County School District No. 1, at least for now, will remain the same after attempts to pass new school hours failed at the school board's April 18 meeting.

A series of meetings for parents held by the district last week to explain the proposed changes in start times failed to garner much interest.

Board members, however, have received calls from a number of parents voicing their concerns about the possible time changes and asking questions about the loss of teaching hours for students.

Surveys of parents, staff and students at all three schools show a majority do not want a time change and are apparently happy with the current school hours. Parents in the elementary grades, especially kindergarten parents, are still concerned about the length of the day for the youngest students.

At the meeting, board member Hub Whitt proposed changing the start times for the high school and middle school, but leaving the start time as it is at the elementary school.

Board member Tom Sullivan Jr. said he is torn about the time changes suggested.

"I like the high school and middle school collaboration idea," Sullivan said, "but I hate losing the time at the elementary school. The teachers don't like it either."

"The elementary grades are the foundation of our teaching and if we give up that time we'll be doing them (students) an injustice."

"I still think the length of day for the elementary school is too long," said board member Travis Bomengen. "If we change two (schools) and not the other, it doesn't make sense to leave the little

ones with the longest day.

"I understand the problem with lost instruction time, but we had a shorter day before and were able to get things done. I don't think we can leave their day longer while shortening up the other two."

Input from parents

"I have had phone calls from parents who like the start time as it is," Whitt said. "That's when they're (students) ready to learn. The later the day is they start losing attention."

"I'm all for collaboration, it's definitely something we need to do, but I don't see changing the grade school start time."

Board member Clay Van Antwerp pointed out that having a different start time at the elementary school would be a nightmare, both logistically and financially for the district.

"We need to think about a district-wide approach," board member Joe Martinez said. "We're still above state requirements hours wise, which gives us a little cushion."

"If we start shortening the days, we're going to have to start looking at extending the school year and nobody wants that."

The board voted down Whitt's motion, bringing to the floor a motion for the originally suggested school-wide time change.

"We're just losing too much time," Van Antwerp said. "We're talking about 30 hours a year of lost instruction."

"With so much testing we're losing too many hours already. I think the better option is to table it to look at other options, keep things the way they

See School on page 12

Council approves first reading allowing arrests

by J.D. Stetson

The Thermopolis Town Council voted at its April 16 meeting to entertain first reading of an ordinance allowing Thermopolis police officers to make arrests on various criminal charges under town code.

In the past, officers have chosen not to make arrests on violations of certain town codes because it was questionable whether officers had authority to arrest because of direction prohibiting jail time as a punishment for breaking town codes.

Town Attorney Mike Messenger said the new ordinance encourages officers to enforce town ordinances

and does not mandate arrests on most offenses.

The new ordinance specifically applies to suspects ticketed for driving under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances, unlawful operation of a youthful driver with a detectable alcohol concentration, reckless driving, breach of peace, assault and battery, fighting, public intoxication, resisting arrest, conspiracy, property destruction, imitating a town officer, annoying amplification of the human voice, trespassing, contempt of court or any violation of town code charging a misdemeanor and the offending party poses a threat to himself or others.

Arrests are only mandatory under circumstances of drunken driving or driving under the influence of a controlled substance.

Under arrests for reasons other than drunk driving or driving under the influence of a controlled substance, the ordinance allows jail personnel to release the individual on his/her own recognizance after the subject is sober and does not pose a danger to themselves or others.

For drunk drivers or drivers under the influence of a controlled substance, the person will be held until they can be arraigned by the Municipal Court judge, or after 72 hours from the date

and time of the arrest upon signing appropriate documents and promising to appear in court.

The ordinance stipulates under existing town codes there is no right to a jury trial concerning offenses listed under the proposed ordinance.

Messenger said he consulted Police Chief Mike Chimenti with regard to the ordinance. The council passed the ordinance on first reading. The second reading of the ordinance could take place during the May 7 council meeting.

Annexation

Mayor's Assistant Fred Crosby

presented the council with a standard agreement between the town and landowners pertaining to future development around the town.

The agreement form intends to allow the landowners to connect to town water and sewer at in-town water rates in exchange for compliance if and when the town chooses to annex the property into the town.

Crosby said it is a way for the town to control growth west of the current town limits as a new water line is constructed connecting the town system to the Owl Creek Water District and

See Council on page 12

Lockdown at elementary executed Friday morning

Parents bringing their children to school at Ralph Witters Elementary Friday morning were met by law enforcement sweeping the area.

According to police, a note was found by a substitute teacher, taped to a locker, which contained the word "bomb" in it.

Superintendent Dustin Hunt, along with police and the sheriff's office, were notified of the note around 7:30 a.m. Officers were on scene by 7:45 a.m. and began sweeping the building and the grounds as a precaution.

Police say the note, written by a student, turned out to be nothing more than a joke about being "the bomb," a phrase used by kids to indicate they are "the best," but officers felt it was better to be safe than sorry and called for a lockdown while the premises were searched.

Some parents kept their children out of school for the day in spite of the "all clear" given by police.

At this time, there is no indication that any charges will be filed.

Missing woman found deceased

The body of a missing Thermopolis woman was found the morning of Wednesday, April 17 above the school bus garage by Hot Springs County Search & Rescue members on horseback.

She has been identified as 70-year-old Carol Stedman. According to the Hot Springs County Coroner's Office, Stedman died of natural causes.

It was the culmination of a search involving personnel from the Thermopolis Police Department, Hot Springs County Sheriff's Office and Search & Rescue. "It was a cooperative effort," Sheriff Lou Falgoust said.

Stedman was reported missing by her son at 6:55 p.m. Tuesday, April 16 to Thermopolis police, who began an immedi-

ate search of the area around the woman's home on the north side of town, the library and surrounding area as well as public buildings and alleyways. Police Chief Mike Chimenti said the man indicated his mother had gone to the library earlier in the day and had not returned home. They share the same home.

Chimenti said several officers were utilized in the first-day search, most of which was in darkness.

Search & Rescue as well as the Hot Springs County Sheriff's Office were called in to assist with the search, which was eventually suspended late Tuesday night until the following morning.

Sheriff's Lt. Danny Peb-

bles reinstituted the search Wednesday morning with boats launched on the Big Horn River; the search was also extended to the outlying areas of town. Pebbles said there were three Search & Rescue personnel and a deputy in the boats.

"We focused on places where we didn't look (the night before)," Pebbles said.

Because of the proximity of the woman's residence to T-Hill, two Search & Rescue members began combing that area on horseback. Within an hour, they located Stedman's body about one-quarter mile from where the horseback search began.

Stedman's obituary is published on page 5 of this issue of the Independent Record.

Earth Day Blue Heron



Weather and sunlight conditions were just right for a unique photo of a stork feeding in a cooling pond on Earth Day Monday at Hot Springs State Park.

— Photo courtesy of Mary Gordon

School from page 1

are for now. I think there are ways to get that collaboration time in without losing instruction time.”

Seeking best solution

“We don’t have a good solution right now,” Bomengen said. “We’re still above the required hours and there are a lot of great things going on at the schools.

“I think the collaboration would create more efficiency with the teaching, but I’m not sure losing that much instructional time is that good.”

“We’ve made some good gains in our reading and writing,” VanAntwerp said. “We’re going to have to do that in math and science, too, so time is a precious resource and cutting back isn’t a good idea.

“We want to do the absolute best for our kids. We need to be very cautious about giving up that

time.”

The board discussed putting the collaboration time at the end of the school day rather than trying to fit it in during the early morning; however, it was pointed out that would be difficult too, since the elementary teachers escort students to Lights On Afterschool as well as to the buses, making after-school collaboration difficult.

“With more than 70 percent of the elementary staff against this change, that’s a big red flag to me that we need to revisit this,” said board member Melissa Johnson.

The board voted down the earlier start time as well; however, they want to review the school hours again to see if there is a way to have the collaboration time and the length of the school day mesh in a way that will be more appropriate.

Council from page 1

the South Thermopolis Water and Sewer District.

The agreement allows the town to determine requirements for installation, inspection and usage of the service. The agreement also will be binding on any future purchasers or heirs who take possession of the property in between the time the agreement is entered into and when the property could potentially be annexed.

The council approved the agreement form as it was presented.

Banner permit

Crosby also presented the council with a proposed permit form for entities that may want to use future highway banners to promote events.

The town is currently working with the Department of Transportation and the Thermopolis Cowboy Rendezvous PRCA Rodeo committee to allow banners to be placed at town entrances.

The town currently has one set of poles already available on the north side of town and is working on getting a permit

to use the poles and to install new poles on the south and west entrances.

Crosby proposed the town permit as a way to mitigate any liability incurred by outside entities using the poles.

The permit gives entities permission to hang banners on the poles from specific dates and invokes immunity to the town from any liability for the issuance of the permit to a third party.

The council approved the permit form with a unanimous vote.

Thermop FFA achieves ‘silver’ status

The Wyoming FFA Association announced that Thermopolis earned “silver” chapter status for 2012-13 from among the 52 schools at the Wyoming State FFA Convention held April 8-11 in Cheyenne.

Other silver chapters are Big Country (Cheyenne South), Buffalo Bill (Cody), Clear Creek (Clearmont), Douglas, Encampment, Frontier (Cheyenne East), Gillette, Jim Bridger (Mountain View), Lander, Meeteetse, Saddle and Sirloin (Newcastle), Pine Bluffs, Pinedale, Powell-Shoshone, Rocky Mountain (Byron), Saratoga, Southeast, Star Valley, Torrington/Lingle, Wind River and Windy City (Casper).

Gold ranking chapters are Buffalo, Casper, High Plains (Cheyenne Central), John B. Kendrick (Sheridan), Kaycee, Little Snake River (Baggs), Paintrock (Basin/Greybull), River-ton, Shoshoni and Snowy Range (Laramie).

The Chapter Awards Program recognizes FFA chapters that successfully complete an annual program of activities, a written plan guiding the chapter’s year of service. Each chapter is evaluated for their work in student, chapter and community development.

The Shoshoni FFA was named the 2013 Wyoming FFA No. 1 chapter.

Thermop placed sixth in the Agricultural Technology and Me-

chanical Systems Career Development Event at the state convention.

The Agricultural Mechanics CDE is a competitive activity that allows students to apply classroom knowledge to real-life situations. Activities included were a written exam, team activity, demonstration of problem-solving skills and hands-on performance activities. Areas of emphasis included environmental and natural resource systems; machinery and equipment systems; structural and energy systems; and industry and marketing systems.

Paintrock FFA, based in Basin, was the farm mechanics team champion. The team will represent Wyoming at the 2013 National FFA Convention in Louisville, Ky., in October.

Thermop tied for first place in the Team Problem category.

In Ag Mechanics, Thermop finished in sixth place from among 38 entrants. Jenn Cramer, Birch Jones, Will Denny and Jason Bowman were team members.

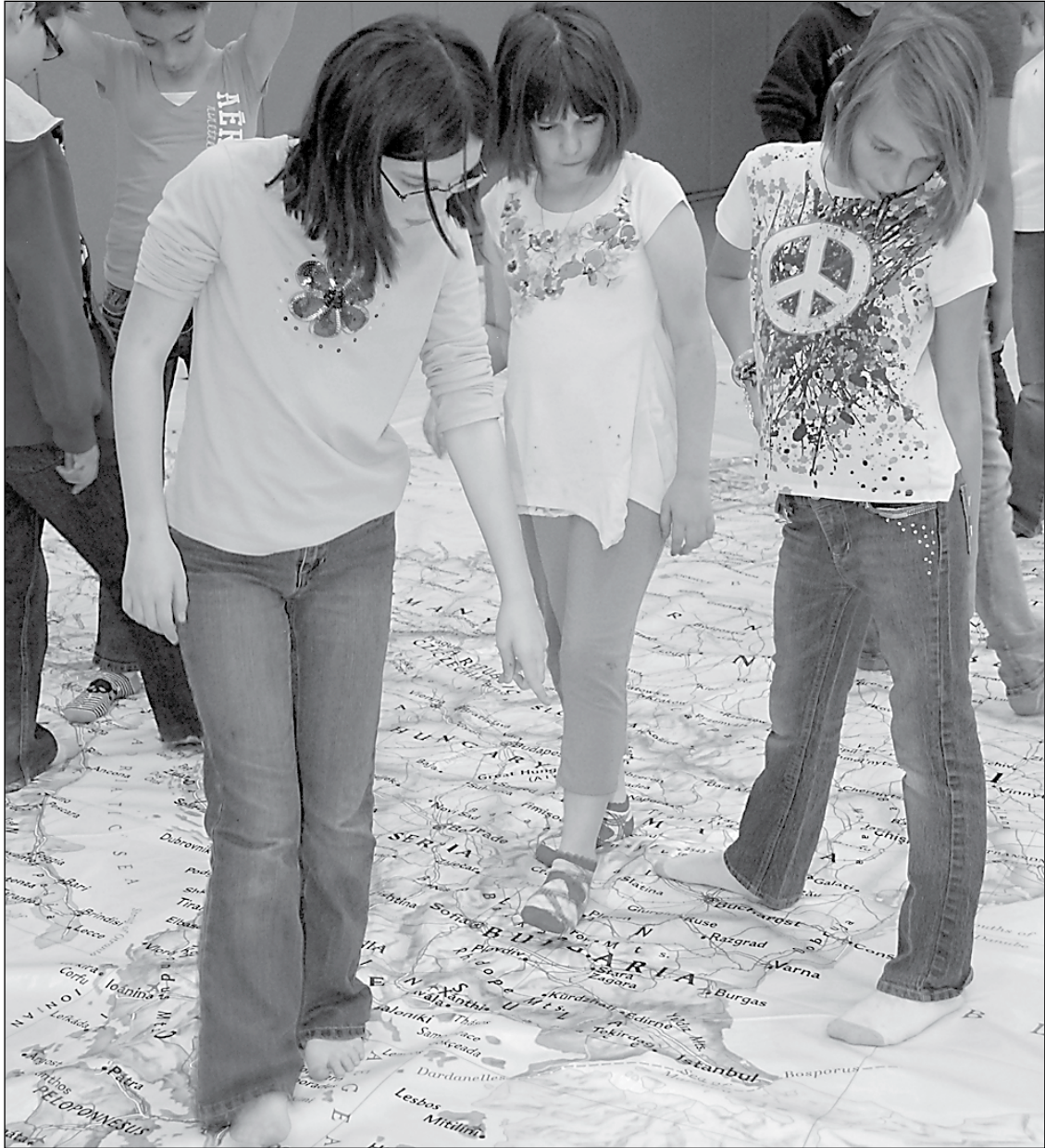
Thermop was 13th in Meat Evaluation with Harley Rhodes, Jerry Umbdenstock, Mayce Sprigg and Cameron Igou making up the team. Sasha Bleak, Rhodes, Umbdenstock and Jon Moon teamed for 14th in Ag Sales. In the Livestock Judging category, Teryn Jackman, Katelyn King, Melissa Ward and

Moon placed 21st.

In individual events, Rhodes placed seventh in Extemporaneous Speaking.

Moon, Cramer and Paige Driver received their FFA state degrees at the convention.


Earth Day map exploration



Thermopolis Middle School fifth graders Krynn McGinty, left, Deanna Owings and Tailor Bearly explore all the countries on a huge, 35-by-26-foot map during Lights On Afterschool on Earth Day Monday at TMS. The giant map allows students to learn geography in a big way, using different games to find places. This is the fourth map students have been able to use this year, courtesy of the Wyoming Geographic Alliance.

– Cindy Glasson photo

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

April 25-May 2 Thur., April 25	Town of Thermopolis Spring Clean-up Storytime, county library, 10:30 a.m. Thermopolis Toastmasters meeting, museum, noon HS State Park volunteer meeting, headquarters, 5:30 p.m. Power in The Constitution, Big Horn Federal, 7 p.m.
Fri., April 26	Wyoming Reined Cowhorse competition, fairgrounds Acoustic Jam, Shell Southside, 6 p.m. Relay for Life Purse Auction, fair building, 7 p.m. Open gym, armory, 7-9 p.m. Second Chance Prom, adults, TMS commons, 7:30 p.m.
Sat., April 27	Wyoming Reined Cowhorse competition, fairgrounds Adult Scabble, county library, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Open gym, armory, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Sun., April 28	Centennial Singers rehearsal, Community Fed. Church, 4 Wyoming Reined Cowhorse competition, fairgrounds
Mon., April 29	HS Drama performance, auditorium, 7 p.m.
Tues., April 30	4-H Donkey Basketball, high school gym, 6:30 p.m. Hospital Board meeting, conference room, 6:30 p.m. HS Drama performance auditorium, 7 p.m.
Wed., May 1	Storytime, county library, 10:30 a.m. Prevention Coalition, Gottsche ADL room, 11:30 a.m. Weed & Pest Board meeting, district office, 5 p.m. Bobcat Booster Club meeting, HS Commons, 7 p.m. Open gym, armory, 7-9 p.m.
Thur., May 2	Storytime, county library, 10:30 a.m. Thermopolis Toastmasters meeting, museum, noon Cemetery Board meeting, Riverside Cemetery, 2 p.m. Severe Weather Spotter training, annex, 6 p.m. FFA Banquet, TMS commons, 6:30 p.m. HS Drama performance, auditorium, 7 p.m. Thermopolis Gun Club meeting, armory, 7 p.m.

Call 864-2328 to have your community event listed.

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For more information and appointments, call the numbers listed below. Dates are subject to change.

DATE	PROVIDER	SPECIALTY	PHONE NUMBER
May	C. Lowther	Dermatologist.....	307-587-7000
May 7	V. Miller	General Surgeon.....	307-347-8115
May 7	S. Emery	Orthopedic Surgeon.....	866-330-1952
May 7	WY Cardiopulmonary	Cardiology.....	800-445-3501
May 8	G. Kim	Nephrology.....	800-648-6274
May 9	P. Byorth	Ear Nose Throat	800-332-7156
May 9	J. Sweet	Allergist	406-238-2501
May 13	D. Myers	Gynecologist.....	866-587-1155
May 14	V. Miller	General Surgeon.....	307-347-8115
May 15	C. Schreiber	Urologist	800-648-6274
May 15	A. Rashkow	Cardiology.....	307-578-2980
May 17		A1C Clinic.....	307-347-8801
May 17	Billings Clinic	Diabetes Education.....	307-347-8801
May 20	P. Tallman	Dermatologist.....	866-988-3376
May 21	V. Miller	General Surgeon.....	307-347-8115
May 21	WY Cardiopulmonary	Cardiology.....	800-445-3501
May 22	C. Lowther	Dermatologist.....	307-587-7000
May 28	V. Miller	General Surgeon.....	307-347-8115
May 28	S. Emery	Orthopedic Surgeon.....	866-330-1952
May 30	M. Copeland	Neurosurgeon.....	866-822-1530



Washakie Medical Center

Banner Health