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Thermopolis
Hot Springs

Independent Record

SPECIAL INTERNET PREVIEW

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THERMOPOLIS, WY 82443

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3-on-3 prep work slated for Friday

Players from around the state and region are set to take to the streets Saturday and Sunday for the annual Thermopolis 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament.

Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Amanda Moeller said it has been gangbusters the past few weeks registering teams for the event.

Moeller did not have an accurate figure for the number of teams that had registered as of Monday evening, but said the preparations are going as well as can be expected.

Moeller expected streets may close at or near 5 p.m. Friday, but work will begin well in advance of the closure.

Broadway Street from Sixth to Fourth streets will be closed during the tournament, as will Fifth Street from Warren to Arapahoe streets.

Town Public Works Director Ernie Slagle said the town plans to make street closure barrels and

Dumpsters available Friday morning. Town workers will also fill the hoop bases provided by event contractor World Events with water.

The tournament will end Sunday and the streets may open after the areas are cleared Sunday afternoon. Town workers will collect the Dumpsters and barrels Monday morning, Slagle said.

Although the deadline has passed for pre-registration, participants may still be able to register up to the Kick-off Party/team check-in Friday from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Hot Springs County Fair Building. Late entries are only granted if space is available.

Late registrants will also have to pay a \$20 late fee on top of the \$130 registration

fee. Teams can consist of from three to five players.

For more information, contact the chamber at 864-3192 or the event contractor at 916-813-4557. Registration information is also available at www.HoopWorldBasketball.com.



Purse Auction



Everyone who attended the Relay for Life Purse Auction on Saturday evening at the fairgrounds had a good time. The event raised \$3,025 for 2013 Relay for Life. Model John “Joanne” Borgan raised the most tips and was crowned Mr. Relay. Above, model Phillip “Sue” Scheel shows Sharon Skiver a purse.

— Joe Sovo photo

Hospital to gauge public opinion on districting

by J.D. Stetson

The Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees has approved moving forward with a measure of public opinion regarding the formation of a hospital district in Hot Springs County.

During Tuesday’s regular meeting, the board allowed CEO Robin Roling to contract with George K. Baum and Company to undergo a process to inform the public on the possibility of forming a hospital district and to gauge public perception and support of a district.

The cost of the study is expected to

be \$21,000. It will likely entail public meetings to gather information and will need to be completed by a July deadline.

The results of the study will determine if there is enough public support for the hospital to make a request to the Hot Springs County Commissioners to bring the district issue to an election in November.

Board members agree the commissioners will need the request during a July meeting in order to fulfill the 30-day advertising period and public hearing requirements of a recently enacted statute allowing the commissioners to

place the issue on the ballot after the conditions are met.

The board also discussed a recent workshop focusing on financing for a new hospital facility and various feedback board members have received from the community on the district issue and the proposition of a new hospital.

Board member Carol Pickett said many people have expressed a desire to include other health care providers in the district besides the hospital. She said members of the public would like to see Thermopolis Rehabilitation and Care Center and Hot Springs County

Counseling Center join the district and receive some of the funds collected from the district.

Roling stated she received positive feedback while visiting with the public during the recent Thermopolis-Hot Springs Kiwanis Health Fair. She said many people are supportive of a new hospital, but others questioned the need for a district.

The board has been examining the financing options for a new facility for several years. Consultants in the past have indicated that forming a hospital district is a factor in several of the options.

Chairman Bill Williams expressed the need for the hospital not to rush into making a request to commissioners without the study and public support because of possible repercussions on future plans if the issue were to fail in an election.

“We need to do it right the first time,” Williams said.

However, board member Brian Green and Roling expressed concerns about increased interest rates and construction costs of building a new facility the longer the project is delayed.

See Hospital on page 13

School district holding its own with graduation rate

by Joe Sovo

Graduation rates in public schools have been a common topic of conversation in Wyoming for many years. Every school district strives to see its graduation rates at a high level. In fact, the board of trustees of Hot Springs County School District No. 1 has set the goal of the rate at 100 percent.

Statewide, however, graduation rates in Wyoming showed a slight drop, according to data compiled and released by the Wy-

oming Department of Education (WDE) at a press conference late last week.

Wyoming’s graduation rate of 78.89 percent in 2011-12 is down from the 2010-11 rate of 79.74 percent. The percent in 2009-10 was 80.42 percent. Of the state’s 48 school districts, 34 maintained a graduation rate of 80 percent or higher.

“We look at this as an indicator of the work we have to do,” said WDE Interim Director Jim

Rose. “I think the schools and the department and I know the Governor and the Legislature are all enlisted in making these numbers increase so that every student has the opportunity and benefit of a Wyoming education.”

For students in the Thermopolis district, the graduation rate in 2011-12 was 89.47 percent – well above the overall state average. Five school districts had a rate of 92 percent or better. They are Washakie 2 (Ten Sleep), Big Horn

3 (Greybull), Crook 1 (Sundance), Fremont 6 (Wind River) and Big Horn 2 (Lovell), in that order.

“Getting our community and our parents involved, that’s when success stories happen,” district superintendent Dustin Hunt said Monday. “I applaud our (school) board.”

The question has been posed: “Is a 100 percent graduation rate feasible and attainable?” he said. “The board is not going to choose to leave people (students)

behind.”

Hunt said when he came into the school district, serving as the high school principal, the HSCSD graduation rate was below 80 percent. Since then, the district has had a rate from the mid-80s to as high as 93 percent – in 2010-11.

Utilizing district’s Learning Center

“We have done some things outside the box to make things happen,” Hunt said, such as

implementation of the district’s Learning Center and placing an emphasis on seeing all students graduate.

He said keeping the number of students utilizing the Learning Center small facilitates learning, with more personal instruction from teachers.

“We’ve tried to become students ourselves to see why students DON’T graduate,” Hunt

See School on page 13



Connie Hart, RN, poses while sitting on a bed in the Emergency Room at Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital. Hart has worked as a nurse for 42 years, 39 of which have been in Thermopolis. May 6-12 is National Nurses Week.

Finding care and satisfaction being an RN

by J.D. Stetson

For nearly four decades, Connie Hart has cared for patients as a registered nurse at Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital.

She’s seen trauma, sickness and new life through the eyes of a caregiver as she’s watched the community’s health care evolve to today’s current model.

Hart has practiced nursing for 42 years, 38 of which were at Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital. She graduated from high school in Havre, Mont., in 1968 and graduated from nursing school from St. Vincent’s Hospital in Billings, Mont., in 1971. She joined the U.S. Air Force after nursing school and came to Thermopolis in 1974.

The 62-year-old remembers what the hospital was like when she first started. She remembers higher volumes of patients and various babies delivered by Dr. Vicklund and patients treated by Dr. Spiller, Dr. Miller, Dr. Willson and many others.

She remembers patient rooms in the north end of the hospital filled with Gottsche Rehabilitation Center patients healing from strokes or injuries sustained in vehicle accidents. Hospitalization for vehicle crash injuries was more common in the 1970s and

1980s, Hart said.

Back then, mothers of newborns could plan at least a four-day stay in the hospital. Now, they’re usually discharged after 24 hours, Hart said.

But there’s one thing that won’t ever change. The satisfaction Hart feels after seeing a patient saved or healed.

RN profession

Despite what many people think regarding the nursing profession, Hart says it isn’t all glamour.

“You have to really want to be able to help people from birth to death basically,” Hart said.

When she first started, nurses were deemed doctors’ “helpers.” But now, the relationships have become more of a collaboration between colleagues.

Nurses spend more time with patients and are vital in providing doctors with observations and educated recommendations.

“You don’t feel like you can’t question what (the doctors) are saying and you have to be an advocate for the patient also,” Hart

See RN on page 13

National Nurses Week

From May 6-12, the nation celebrates National Nurses Week. The week starts with RN Recognition Day on Monday and ends with the celebration of Florence Nightingale’s birthday May 12. Nightingale is the founder of nursing as a modern profession.

The week recognizes registered nurses in various public, private, educational and independent health care organizations. Nationally, registered nurses comprise the largest health care profession.

The American Nurses Association (ANA) has selected the theme “Delivering Quality and Innovation in Patient Care” for 2013.

At the April 16 Thermopolis Town Council meeting, Mayor Bill Malloy signed a proclamation encouraging residents to honor registered nurses and celebrate the nurses’ accomplishments and efforts to improve health care in the community.

Hospital

Board member Margaret Stansill also said there is a possibility the law may be changed during the upcoming 2014 Budget Session of the Wyoming Legislature.

The board also discussed other potential challenges that may go before the public for election if the district issue is passed. Those issues include the election of a new board of trustees to oversee the district and the election on a potential bond to finance the building of a new facility.

The final determination was to proceed with the study and gather the information in order to prepare for a possible presentation to the commissioners.

Budget

During Tuesday's meeting, the board approved the hospital's 2013-14 budget, which includes a \$650,000 funding request to commissioners for the purchase of various capital equipment.

An itemized list of new capital equipment breaks down the priority of each item in the request. The highest priority items are needed for safety or agency requirements. They include a neo-natal vital signs monitor, a laboratory coagulation analyzer and a refrigerator for the dietary department.

Items listed under the second priority due to the potential of increasing revenue or reducing expenses include surgical equipment, a Stryker power system and a diagnostic imaging reader.

Other items listed in the third priority in order to improve staff satisfaction or replace failing equipment include a cardiopulmonary function system, a nuclear medicine machine, an ultrasound upgrade, IV pumps, re-

placement computers, a blood pressure monitor, a trauma chiller, two vehicles and a laundry washer.

Overall, the hospital is expecting to end the current budget year in June with a net total surplus of \$562,838. The budgeted total net surplus for the end of the next budget cycle in June 2014 is expected to be about \$1.2 million, which assumes increases in non-operating revenue from the request to the commissioners, and that the hospital meets federal requirements for meaningful use and is reimbursed for the part of the expense of the hospital's Electronic Medical Records (EMR) implementation.

For operating revenue, the hospital projects to end the current year with \$14.06 million and is budgeting for \$15.08 million next year.

For expenses, the hospital anticipates \$13.6 million at the end of the current year and is budgeting for \$14.9 million next year.

EMR implementation

The hospital continues work toward the June 18 go-live date for its new EMR system. Interim Chief Nursing Officer Kath Virgil-Belding updated the board on developments, timelines and trainings concerning the EMR.

Roling added there have been some bumps along the way and that more bumps will be expected as personnel and physicians undergo training. Roling added Billings Clinic has been very responsive as challenges have been presented regarding the new system.

The goal of the EMR is to meet the federal requirements for meaningful use. After the hospital obtains meaningful use, it can be reimbursed a portion of the cost to implement the system.

Roling indicated the reimbursements have already been influenced by the national sequester and may be smaller than anticipated, but the funding is still vital to the hospital.

"We cannot afford not to meet meaningful use, and we are going to move forward," Roling said.

Miscellaneous

Chief Financial Officer Shelly Larson reported the hospital received a \$15,000 grant from the Wyoming Department of Health Office of Emergency Medical Services.

The grant will be used to purchase IV pumps to replace existing pumps and increase the hospital's stock of pumps. Marketing Manager T.J. Schoenewald reported in a written report that about 790 people came through the hospital for blood draws during the lead-up to the health fair.

Schoenewald reported the Wyoming Institute of Population Health also hosted a meeting Tuesday with county health care leaders to start preparations for the community needs assessment based on data already collected in the county.

The group decided to focus the assessment on the subject of obesity and overweight people in the county. Schoenewald shared a statistic that two out of three adults in Hot Springs County is now overweight or obese, according to the group.

Future meetings regarding the assessment are slated throughout the next two months. The assessment is scheduled to conclude July 1.

In Roling's written report to the board, Roling announced Kelli Hoblit will be the new director at the Big Horn Clinic in Basin.

Donkey basketball



Melissa Ward had a fabulous time riding and shooting during the Donkey basketball games at the high school Tuesday night. The gym was filled with laughs as spectators watched the antics of both the donkeys and the teams.
– Cindy Glasson photo

School

said. "We try to make them better (students)."

Hunt said the WDE graduation rate uses a formula based on four-year completion of high school by students.

"We all learn at different rates. If a student graduates, he

(or she) deserves a lot of credit," he said.

The district's Early Childhood Resource program plays a key role in getting beginning students started on the right track in attaining a quality education. (An upcoming story

about the program will include comments from Hunt and Early Childhood Resource Liaison Amy Ready.)

Calculating graduation rate

In addition to the four-year

adjusted cohort graduation rate, the WDE also tracks five- and six-year rates. The five-year numbers released last week show roughly a 2 percent graduation rate increase among many subgroups. Students on Individual Education Plans also saw

a 7 percent rise in graduation rates when looking at a six-year graduation rate versus a four-year rate.

Wyoming calculates graduation rates using a methodology established by the United States Department of Education. Fed-

eral requirements define the "four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate" as the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who entered high school four years earlier.

RN

said. "Granted, they have the education and the knowledge, but we're with the patients more, so we are more of a patient advocate."

She also appreciates when new nurses join the staff and bring new knowledge to the seasoned veterans. She said the training and insight the nurses provide help improve the quality of care.

Back when she attended school, nurses went directly from high school to nursing school. Now, students must become certified nurse assistants before admission, which gives many of the new nurses an idea of what to expect once they enter the hospital setting.

When Hart started as a nurse, she worked 8-hour days five days a week. Now, she works 12-hour shifts, three days a week. She said the change allows for a little extra down time, but there are also extra trainings and longer workdays. Ev-

ery two years, Hart becomes recertified in advanced cardiac life support as well as undertaking trauma, pediatric trauma and various other classes.

Her nursing position has also become more intensive with regard to patient care. Now, nurses provide more education to the patients with regard to general health, such as smoking and hand washing.

Overall, she said the profession entails great responsibility and the willingness to work at all times – even on holidays.

"It's a 24/7 job," she said. "We have to rotate our time through holidays and vacations and weekends because we are open all the time."

Family care

Hart spends most of her time in the Emergency Room, but she has worked in all areas of nursing from the nursery to

the operating room. The hospital doesn't have designated staff for each specific area and most of the nurses are required to cross train for each area.

In the ER, she has seen horrific traumas caused by accidents and the pain it causes family members as they learn about their loved one's treatment or fate.

As a nurse, she's likely the first person who can offer comfort and caring to those family and friends as they struggle with shock or grief.

"It can be very intense because we have to take care of (friends and family) also and to allow them that ability to grieve or be angry," Hart said. "You're treating the family."

In the past, the hospital performed a large number of ground transfers by ambulance to other hospitals because the hospital did not have the capability to treat the specific injuries.

Now, due to the availability of Life Flight, more of the patients are flown to the other hospitals for specialty care after accidents. Hart said the citizens of the county are extremely lucky to have the quality care of a critical access hospital and its physicians.

She said there have been patients who went on to other hospitals who survived their disease or trauma because they were treated first at HSCMH.

Appreciation and dignity

Hart recalled the case a few years ago of a woman who suffered a broken neck in an accident. About a year after the accident, she remembers that the woman came back and visited with the nurses.

"She didn't remember everything, but she was walking and talking and she had a fracture that she should have died from," Hart said.

She recalled another patient who suffered injuries in a rock slide car accident who came back after healing from his injuries years later. She said it was wonderful and fantastic to see those people come back and express appreciation and remembrance.

Hart also recalls a time when federal regulations wanted nurses to stop learning patient names and the nurses would instead refer to them by their ailment. She said it made patients feel like they weren't important. Hart said the patients are extremely important and that part of a nurse's job is to preserve dignity during their time of weakness.

"You have to treat everybody like a person," she said. "I think no matter how everything evolves there's always going to be a need for nurses and doctors. People are always going to get sick or get hurt."

Public notices

Notice		at hscplanner@hscounty.com.	
The Hot Springs County Board of Commissioners is asking Hot Springs County Residents to apply to serve on the following Hot Springs County Boards and Committee:		Pub. May 2, 2013	No. 6828
Library Board, Three unexpired (3) year term	One Member	PUBLIC NOTICE DISPOSITION OF HOT SPRINGS COUNTY OWNED PROPERTY Hot Springs County will hold a public auction for the disposition of a parcel of land located at 143 Lane 3. The auction is for the lot only and any improvements or metal garage on the lot at this time will be relocated within two weeks after the end of the auction. There is a water line to the parcel and sewer is available through the South Thermopolis Water & Sewer Dist. Hot Springs County reserves the right to reject any bid that does not meet a predetermined minimum amount. Payment by good funds shall be remitted on the day of the auction. The auction will be held on May 21, 2013 at 3:00 pm in the meeting room of the Government Annex Building 117 N. 4th. The auction will be conducted by the Vice Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners and any instruction or rules set forth on the day of the auction shall be final. A public viewing of the property with County Officials will be held on May 17, 2013 from 3:00 – 4:00 pm. Hans Odde, Hot Springs County Clerk	
Land Use Planning Board, unexpired Three (3) year term	One Member		
Lodging Tax Board, Three (3) year term	One Member		
Lodging Tax Board applicants shall be from the lodging and or tourism industry.		Pub. May 2 and 9, 2013	No. 6827
Residents of Hot Springs County interested in applying to serve on a Board should submit their County Board Questionnaire (available on the County website www.hscopy.com or at the County Clerk's Office) to the Hot Springs County Clerks Office no later than 5:00 p.m. May 3, 2013. Applications will be considered and appointments made at the Hot Springs County Commissioners Meeting May 7, 2013.		NOTICE OF EXECUTION SALE Notice is hereby given that a Civil Judgment was rendered in the Circuit Court of the Ninth Judicial District of Fremont County, Wyoming, civil action number CV-2010-0283, whereby Rocky Mountain Recovery, Inc., was Plaintiff and Mary M. Price was Defendant, and such Judgment was rendered in favor of the Plaintiff and against the Defendant and the current balance owing is \$4,628.13, plus costs and accruing interest, and the undersigned Sheriff, pursuant to an execution issued by such Court, has levied on the following described property: 2010 black homemade 4-place snowmobile trailer/VIN #S46396W 2003 Artic Cat 900cc snowmobile/VIN #4UF03SNW53T161696 1985 Prowler 23' camper trailer/VIN #1EC1S2329F9508411 Notice is further given that said property is currently being stored by the Hot Springs County Sheriff's Office and that the undersigned Sheriff or his representative, pursuant to said Judgment, will sell the above described property at public sale, to the highest bidder for cash on the steps of the Hot Springs County Courthouse, Thermopolis, Wyoming, on the 14th day of May, 2013, at the hour of 11:00 a.m. Dated this 17th day of April, 2013. Hot Springs County Sheriff's Office Lou Falgoust, Sheriff	
Hans Odde Hot Springs County Clerk			
Pub. April 25 and May 2, 2013	No. 6819	Pub. April 28, May 2, 9 and 16, 2013 No. 6825	
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING Lawrence Burgess has requested approval from Hot Springs County for a Home Occupation Permit, to conduct retail sales and service of firearms from his residence south of Thermopolis. The subject property is a 5.0 acre parcel located in the northeast quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 14, 24, Township 42 North, Range 95 West, approximately 3.5 miles south of Thermopolis. It fronts on the west side of State Highway 20 South, approximately 1,000 ft. north of Rimrock Drive (County Road 35), and contains a residence addressed as 352 Hwy. 20 South.		PUBLIC NOTICE Hot Springs County School District #1 LEGAL NOTICE INVITATION TO BID The Board of Trustees of Hot Springs County School District No. 1 will accept sealed bids for the sale of the following vehicle: 2002 Bluebird All American Rear Engine Transit Bus 48 Passenger with blown engine Item located at Perry's Truck Repair in Riverton, sold as is/where is. Sealed bids will be accepted until 3:00 p.m. Monday, May 13, 2013 at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids will be considered at	
A public meeting will be held before the Hot Springs County Board of County Commissioners at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 7, 2013 in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the County Annex Building. Anyone requiring additional information should call the County Planning Office at 864-2961. Those unable to attend are invited to comment in writing to: <i>County Planning, 415 Arapahoe St., Thermopolis, WY 82443</i> , or by e-mail		Pub. May 2, 2013 No. 6826	