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Veterans Day salute



Cliff Johnston, Rod Slocum and Dave Weber salute veterans as part of the VFW Post 2281 Honor Guard Monday morning during a Veterans Day Ceremony in front of the VFW. — J.D. Stetson photo

Town Council passes readings

by J.D. Stetson

The Thermopolis Town Council passed first reading on an ordinance stopping companies from dumping concentrated liquid waste at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and second reading of an ordinance that limits the time a pet can be claimed by an owner before it becomes the property of the animal control authority.

The wastewater ordinance was brought about in order to extend the life of the current wastewater treatment cells and because Worland has developed facilities specifically for disposing of septic system waste.

The ordinance had little discussion, save for an amendment creating a date for the ordinance to go into effect. The council chose to enact the ordinance Jan. 15, in order to give contractors who dispose of waste at the facility time to make other plans.

The system does not affect waste dumped directly from recreational vehicle holding tanks, which may still be dumped at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Language in the ordinance allows town employees to reject disposal of any other liquid/semi solid waste arising within or outside the town.

Animal impoundments

The council passed second reading of the impounded animal ordinance without any discussion. The ordinance amends town codes to allow three business days for an owner to pick up an impounded animal before it becomes property of the town or for the animal to be euthanized or placed in the custody of another person.

The code currently allows up to five business days for the owner to pick up the animal, which is inconsistent with the current policy of the Hot Springs County Veterinary Clinic, which houses

and cares for the animals on the town's behalf.

The ordinance will align the town codes to the existing policies.

Water projects

Town Engineer Heath Overfield informed the council that contractor Lamax Construction Inc., has started work on the Seventh Street Waterline Replacement Project.

The project will replace the existing line up to the airport water tank. The contractor hopes to continue through the fall in order to finish work in the area along the pavement before more winter weather hits.

The contractor also has begun a winter shut down on a small portion of the 14th Street water line project, which will resume in the spring.

Miscellaneous

The town council received an update from Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Meri Ann Rush regarding plans for Shop Small Town Saturday and the Lighted Christmas Parade Nov. 30.

Rush informed the council of an expanded schedule including children's crafts, photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus, as well as the traditional parade route.

Rush also asked for the town's public restrooms to be open during the event.

Mayor's Assistant Fred Crosby informed the council the town has applied for a \$2,000 grant to pay for U.S. flags at Town Hall and at the intersection of Fifth and Broadway streets.

The town also received a donation from Kelly Puntene in memory of Donna Puntene. The donation is reserved for buying and planting trees at town parks.

EDC 'Beanstalk' proposal No. 1 among 10 submissions

by Joe Sovia

Thermopolis Hot Springs County Economic Development Company (EDC) received a pleasant surprise earlier this fall with the announcement that a "mock request-for-information (RFI)" proposal, called Project Beanstalk, was rated No. 1 among 10 submissions to be graded by Wisconsin-based company Ady Voltedge. It was prepared for the Wyoming Business Council (WBC).

Last summer, Lorraine Quarberg was contracted to formulate proposals for Project Beanstalk, which featured a presentation on how and why a specific business

could be located in or near Thermopolis. EDC President Mark Mortimore said the board had the understanding it was a bona fide proposal when in fact it was a "test" of how economic development companies are doing in Wyoming and what they can do to recruit businesses to their area.

"Our proposal was rated best," Mortimore said. "We found out it was an evaluation of what we had to offer and why we would be a good fit for their business."

According to Ady Voltedge, the mock RFI project was designed to provide guidance and tools to Wyoming's LEDOs (local economic development organizations)

and offer recommendations as to crafting the best responses to future RFIs.

In Quarberg's two proposals, one was to locate the prospective business at a developed site on Black Mountain Road, known as Big Horn River Ranch, LLC. The other was to build at the Red Rock Commercial Center about two miles south of Thermopolis. Each proposal had its own advantages and incentives.

Amanda Moeller was hired part-time as the EDC CEO in September. She attended a workshop on how to run a LEDO as a business rather than a nonprofit and how to write a winning proposal

during the WEDA conference Oct. 9-11 in Cody. The Thermopolis Hot Springs County EDC "scorecard" on its proposal was discussed.

The scorecard had six areas. Ratings on a scale of 0-5 for EDC: completeness, 4.5; clarity, 4; organization, 4.5; strategic positioning, 4; value added info, 4.5; and creativity, 4. The overall rating was 4.35, which placed EDC above the other nine proposals.

Comments on the scorecard indicated there was very good branding and creativity throughout the response. It was graded as well organized, even while submitting

two proposals rather than one. There was great clarity, which aided the organization and consistent branding. However, the response could use a "little bit more clarity in some of the maps and attached documents."

"Thermopolis needs to get back in the game," Moeller said, since EDC had been without an executive director for several months. "We have so much potential. We need to move forward."

Moeller's regular office hours at Thermopolis Town Hall are 9 a.m. to noon, Monday-Thursday. Her phone number is 864-2348.

Tree Festival home Relocates to hospital lobby

A major change is planned with regard to the annual Thermopolis Christmas Tree and Wreath Festival this year.

The event has changed locations to Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital. Red Rock Family Practice and the hospital have teamed up to host the popular event, in which proceeds are procured for the Community Fund.

The decision to move the event location, which has traditionally been located at Central Bank & Trust, was due to the growth of the event and an increase in manpower to set up and staff the event.

Hospital Marketing Director John Gibbel, who also sits on the Community Fund board, said both the hospital and Red

Rock are two strong groups to help meet the expectations of the event. The hospital lobby also is a strong location to display the trees, Gibbel said.

The event is planned for Tuesday, Dec. 10 with dinner served at 5:30 p.m. and the auction at 6:30 p.m. The trees will be delivered Dec. 11.

Pickup for the trees and wreaths for decorating will be from Nov. 30 to Dec. 2 — allowing the trees to be on display for a week before the auction.

Past decorators will receive priority for the limited number of trees and wreaths available. To reserve a tree or wreath, contact Cassie at Red Rock Family Practice at 864-5534.

Campaign Finance Reports

The Hot Springs County Clerk's office has released the campaign finance reports for the two opposing groups in the hospital district special election.

The Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital board of trustees asked Hot Springs County Commissioners to hold the special election to form a district in order for the hospital to stabilize and acquire additional tax revenue in the wake of pending changes in the healthcare industry as well as aging facilities.

The district issue failed to pass election last week with the majority of voters opposing the increased property tax burden.

The Yes For Our Hospital Committee (YFOHC) reported \$3,689.50 in total receipts, and the Just Say No To The Hospital District (JSNTTHD) committee re-

ported \$3,051.25 in total receipts.

The YFOHC received \$2,925 in total individual contributions and \$764.50 in total in-kind contributions for newspaper ads and yard signs. The JSNTTHD received \$2,688.97 in total individual contributions and \$362.28 in total in-kind contributions for newspaper ads, stamps and newspapers.

There were no contributions to either groups from political action committees, political parties, corporations, organizations, associations, loans or anonymous contributions.

The YFOHC committee reported one un-itemized receipt for dessert brownies.

Full lists of individual and in-kind contributors for both groups are available at the County Clerk's office.



Thermopolis FFA Alumni Association President Phil Scheel presents the 2013 Ag Citizen of the Year award to Bruce Thurgood and the Rising Star Award to Jayci Mead during the Harvest Moon Ball. — Cindy Glasson photos



Hillberry, Thurgood, Mead honored

by Cindy Glasson

Local farmers, ranchers and FFA alumni gathered at the county fair building Saturday evening for the annual Harvest Moon Ball to honor those who are keeping the spirit of agriculture alive in Hot Springs County.

The 2013 Century Ranch Award was given to the Dee Hillberry family, fourth-generation homesteaders in the area.

Dorothy Milek provided a detailed account of the Hillberry family, from the time they moved west through their 115-year history in Hot Springs County.

Ag Citizen of the Year

Ag Citizen of the Year was awarded to Bruce Thurgood who, with his family, has lived in Hot Springs County about 27 years.

Thurgood moved to the area to work for Jim and Willard Wilson.

For the Wilsons, he was able to do nu-

merous things with their large cattle operation and after 10 years he and his wife leased the Talovich property south of town, just outside Wind River Canyon.

They were able to expand their personal operations there, working the property for a decade before selling the place to move north of town off West Sunnyside Lane.

They continue to raise cattle, sheep and hay.

Thurgood provides a grinding service in the Big Horn Basin and northern Fremont County.

Rising Star

The Rising Star Award for 2013 was presented to Jayci Mead for her accomplishments as one of the newest and youngest stock contractors in the country.

JC's Dream Team Bucking Bulls has been very successful the last couple of years.

Her 2013 Million Dollar Bucking Bull contender, JJ's Dream, trained by L.J. Jenkins, finished a strong fifth at Champions Tour 3 this past March and was a standout at the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas this fall.

Mead's passion and work ethic have helped her become one of the youngest stock contractors in the country and everything is in place for her to be very successful with her business.

T.J. Owsley and Ransom Logan were the other nominees in the Rising Star category.

Other awards

The FFA Alumni Association also presented a plaque to Hot Springs County 4-H for celebrating its 100th anniversary.

In addition, a plaque was given to the Hot Springs County Museum and Cultural Center for display in commemoration of the county's centennial.