



Current crossing

Tanner Jensen is all smiles as he pulls himself to shore with all his might during the river crossing activity on Saturday afternoon at the fifth-annual Camporee held at Hot Springs State Park. Jensen is a Webelo, which is the last level for a cub scout before he

advances to become a boy scout. The event was for boy scouts, cub scouts and others interested in participating. It attracted more than 500 people to the area from many different places in Wyoming. See story page A8. -Michael Stafford photo

Locals encouraged to 'do it yourself' when planning for future

by Michael Stafford

Bringing in new businesses isn't the answer. Nor is bringing in consultants from another city to solve the issues facing Thermopolis. Change has to come from fostering existing businesses and coming up with solutions from within the community.

Those were some of the main messages the speakers conveyed at the Hot Springs State Park meeting last Thursday at the County Museum. The theme of the meeting was economic development and three individuals provided the attendees with their ideas on how to create a more vibrant future for Thermopolis.

"If you put your destiny or your fate in anybody else's hands, you're going to fail," said speaker James Klessens.

Klessens, CEO and President of Forward Cody was one of the speakers as well as Leah Brusci-

no, Northwest Regional Director of the Wyoming Business Council and Amanda Moeller, Director of Economic Development for the local area. For the majority of the meeting, the three speakers brought their ideas to the gathering, not about what the future of Thermopolis should be, but how the local community can grow in their own way.

Bruscino had the floor first and focused on the components of economic development.

"WEDA (Wyoming Economic Development Association) created a model to show economic development," she said.

The model resembled a pyramid with four tiers, each of which had related components that foster development. Bruscinostarted with the lower tier and foundation of the pyramid, which consisted of leadership, civic development and the role of public policy.

"If any leadership is unfriendly, that hurts economic development," she said.

The next level consisted of three blocks—quality of life, workforce development and infrastructure development. She explained that through promoting the positive aspects of the community, attracting workers and having projects and growth potential ready to start, businesses can be attracted to a community.

"It's hard to grow a business or start a business if you don't have a good work force," said Bruscinostarted with the lower tier and foundation of the pyramid, which consisted of leadership, civic development and the role of public policy.

The third tier in the pyramid included existing business development and entrepreneur development. Bruscinostarted with the lower tier and foundation of the pyramid, which consisted of leadership, civic development and the role of public policy.

ing the community and fostering new business.

The top tier had a single block of attracting new business. Bruscinostarted with the lower tier and foundation of the pyramid, which consisted of leadership, civic development and the role of public policy.

"Taking care of our existing business is going to give us our leads for business recruitment," she said.

Following Bruscinostarted with the lower tier and foundation of the pyramid, which consisted of leadership, civic development and the role of public policy.

"You gotta walk that lonesome valley, you gotta walk it by yourself," he said quoting lines from a

traditional gospel folk song.

Klessens explained that locals know what the town needs, wants and what resources are available. He said that in order to further development in the future, there needs to be broad community support behind ideas and that the community should know what resources it has and fix deficiencies that would prevent it from growing.

The speaker also shared a story of his personal ties with Thermopolis. He said that when he was a child, his family had visited the town with the possibility of moving there. He told the crowd he remembered the area as being vibrant and engaging. However, now years later, he said he believes the vibrance that he once saw in the town has faded. He encouraged the audience to try to recapture that vibrance in their vision for the future.

"You have to be engaged because it's your decision," he said.

Moeller was the final speaker at the meeting and kept her presentation brief. She pointed out some statistics on the amount of increase of travel impact on the county compared with surrounding locations. While Hot Springs, Big Horn and Washakie were all on par with their increase of around \$9 million over the past 13 years, Park County (which includes the City of Cody) far surpassed them by growing more than \$130 million.

"We don't have to be Cody, but we can be a better Thermopolis," she said.

In addition to the speakers, attendees and those from the Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources spoke a little bit about some of the ideas they have for Hot Springs State Park (see story page 5).

Busted! Its time to find yourself an attorney

by Cindy Glasson

The second installment in a series involving drug and alcohol issues in Thermopolis and Hot Springs County, this time we'll be dealing with what the job is of both the defense attorney and his counterpart, the prosecuting attorney. We will also touch on statistics, both locally and nation wide that will give us some insight into how big the problem really is.

"You have the right to remain silent." "Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law."

Hopefully, the only place you've heard these words, known as the Miranda Warning, is on television. For some, though, it is the next step in a process that may have been months in coming, your arrest by law enforcement.

In Hot Springs County, once you are arrested, you're taken to the Law Enforcement Center (LEC) for booking which will include being fingerprinted and having your photo taken. Within 72-hours of your arrest, you will be arraigned by a judge who will

read the charges against you and determine whether you're released on your own recognizance, what bail may be set or if you will remain in jail.

Now is the time to get yourself an attorney or the court will appoint one for you.

Defense

The attorney on your side is called the defense attorney, and like a defender on a football field protecting the quarterback, your defender is required to act as an advocate in your best interests.

Your defense attorney will help counsel you and act as your representative with police or other investigators, possibly perform their own investigation, and speak on your behalf during court appearances.

They are required to have a clear understanding of the Constitution, specifically your Fourth Amendment rights, which protect you against unlawful searches and seizures as well as the Fifth and Sixth Amendments

that give you the right to remain silent, preventing you from becoming a witness against yourself.

Much of the work your defense attorney will do will revolve around trial preparation. That will include any plea deals or settlements that could reduce your sentence.



Prosecution

Conversely, the prosecuting attorney acts like the linebacker on the field, ready to sack you as soon as the whistle blows.

In a drunk driving case or a drug related case, the prosecutor is the person making the decision whether or not to go forward with the case and he takes three things into consideration: is the case legally sound, can the case be proven and does it fall within relevant policy considerations?

The prosecutor will look at your past driving history in a DUI case and any prior criminal activity when it comes to drug related cases.

When it comes to reducing your charges and negotiating with your defense attorney, the prosecutor has the right to use his discretion. Reducing the charges can translate into a reduced sentence and possibly reduced penalties, including lower fines or less time behind bars.

By the numbers

The United States of America has the highest incarceration rate in the world according to the Huffington

Post. There are 2.2 million Americans in prison or in jail, accounting for one quarter of the world's prisoners.

A review of the inmate roster for our local jail over a 30-day period shows an average daily inmate count of 14, both male and female.

Of those inmates, 30% are in jail for drugs or alcohol related offenses in Hot Springs County.

Nationally, 25% of inmates in county jails are there because of drug related charges, putting us above the national average.

Possession of drugs accounts for 11% of inmates, while trafficking accounts for 13% according to drugwarfacts.com.

From 1990 to 2009, our country saw a jump of 78.9% of inmates in the correctional system incarcerated because of drugs.

Somewhere between 60% and 80% of drug abusers commit a new crime after release from prison while 95% return to drug abuse after their release.

Only 11% are receiving any kind of treatment while locked up.