



School board plans for 2015-16 year

by Cindy Glasson
The Board of Trustees for Hot Springs County School District No. 1 met on Wed., July 15 to discuss final budgeting items and other business as the start of the 2015-2016 school year approaches.
One of the most important items of the evening is the receipt of full accreditation received by the district from Superintendent of Public Instruction Jillian Balow.
The Department of Education reviewed staff certification, NCA accreditation, assurances and district systems before making the recom-

mendation.
County taxpayers will be happy to hear that mill levies for education will not change for the coming school year, remaining at 33.250 mills.
The estimated assessed valuation for the county is \$231,459,737, higher by nearly \$4 million dollars over last year.
Of course, with a projected decrease in property values looming on the horizon, the board wants to ensure they have adequate funding for essential programs and therefore asked business manager Colleen Anderson to research how many mills

the district is allowed in the event they need to be raised in the future.
The board approved signing an ongoing agreement with the Recreation District for use of school district owned vehicles (buses) for transportation as well as a waiver of fees for the rec district's use of school facilities such as the gymnasiums in the various school buildings.
The board also approved a contract for audiology services for the year with Big Horn Basin Hearing, Inc., and physical therapy services through Gottsche Rehabilitation Center for the coming school year.

On third and final reading, the Transportation and Athletic Handbooks for the 2015-2016 school year were unanimously adopted as well as the student handbooks, on second reading, for the middle school.
The board also approved transferring Kevin Gerber from special education paraprofessional to behavioral intervention paraprofessional for the coming year, transferred Brockton Merrill from fifth grade teacher to third grade and transferred John Gores from third grade teacher to literacy instructional facilitator, effective Aug. 21



They're all smiles

Oakley Bowman takes a lap while showing her dog during the herding group conformation judging at the Hot Springs County Fair Dog Show.

photo by Holly Thomas

Fire District, Fire Department go head-to-head

by Cindy Glasson
A proposed agreement between the Thermopolis Volunteer Fire Department and the Hot Springs County Rural Fire District has become a hot issue between the two entities.
The fire district collects a mill levy through the county each year and is in charge of disbursing those funds to the fire department. That disbursement, \$80,713 for the year, is given to the department in four quarterly payments.
On July 18, three days before the quarterly payment was to be made, the district brought a written agreement to fire chief Mark Collins, insisting he sign the agreement before any disbursement of funds would be made.
Collins brought the agreement to the members of the fire department who unanimously voted against signing the document.
The last written agreement between the district and the department expired in 2002 and the two entities have been working by "gentleman's agreement" for the last 13 years.
One issue the department has with the agreement is that it was done in secrecy. According to department officers, at no time was the department made aware an agreement was being drafted until they were presented with it and told to sign it and that the quarterly payment to the department would be withheld until it was signed.
"We are not being treated as partners," county attorney and volunteer firefighter Jerry Williams said at the department's officers meeting Sunday night. "This is not the way to negotiate a contract."
The department uses the funds for equipment, fuel for the fire trucks and other necessary, fire related

items. Without the money from the district, the department will not be able to put fuel in the trucks or pay their bills.
The department receives \$45,500 from the Town of Thermopolis, \$4,500 from the Town of Kirby and \$3,515 from the Town of East Thermopolis for fire protection in those towns, but that \$53,500 won't last long.
"We're not asking for anything we haven't asked for in the past," chief Collins said. "Actually, we've asked for less funding than we did last year. We're only asking for about \$700 more than our budget from 2001."
The district currently has \$1,320,197 in their coffers with an expected mill levy amounting to \$746,000 coming in soon.
Another issue with the agreement is verbiage, specifically as it refers to the use of equipment.
The district owns all of the fire trucks used by the department. In the proposed agreement, the trucks are to be used for fire related purposes only.
While that means they may use the trucks to fight fires, it eliminates trucks from parades, prevents them from being at the football field to cheer on the Bobcats, keeps them from standing by at the demolition derby and stops them from giving rides to the children during their open house or during Fire Prevention Week.
The fire district consists of three publicly elected members who meet once a month. They are chairman Phil Scheel, Wedge Taylor and Ray Baird.
A fire department representative attends each of those district

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Gift of Waters Pageant Saturday and Sunday

by Cindy Glasson
Gift of the Waters Pageant weekend is filled with so many activities you're sure to find something to interest everyone in the family.
Saturday morning starts out early with a 5K/10K walk-run at 7:30 a.m. in Hot Springs State Park. Registration forms may be picked up at the Chamber of Commerce.
The Gift of the Waters parade begins at 10 a.m. and will wind its way through downtown.
At the conclusion of the parade, dancers from the Shoshone Tribe will perform around the flagpole at the intersection of Broadway and Fifth Streets.
The dancers welcome anyone to join them, so bring the whole family.
Young and old alike will enjoy a trip to the firehall for the annual open house presented by the Thermopolis Volunteer Fire Department starting at 11 a.m.
The firemen will be grilling up hotdogs and taking the kiddies for rides on an antique firetruck.
Folks can look over all the apparatus the fire department has while enjoying a little lunch.
Then it's off to the Folk Festival in Hot Springs State Park, which opens at 10 a.m. featuring artists and activities of all kinds.
The final event of the day is the 65th Annual Gift of the Waters Pageant.
The pageant begins at 6 p.m. at the Big Spring in Hot Springs State Park.
Bring your blanket and sit on the grass or your lawn chair and enjoy the historical re-enactment of the giving of the waters from the Shoshone to the "Tibo".
The Folk Festival will also be held on Sunday and the final performance of the pageant will also be on Sunday, again at 6 p.m.

Folk Festival celebrates artisans

The first major folk festival in Wyoming in 20 years will be held Aug. 1-2 in Hot Springs State Park, Thermopolis.
The Big Horn Basin Folk Festival includes a juried folk & fine arts show/sale, trading post sale area, food vendors, music performances both days, a mountain man camp with outdoor activities, and more than two dozen demonstrators and try-it-yourself hands-on activities for all ages.
"This celebration honors our artisans and skilled crafts persons, especially in the middle and northern part of the state," said Annie Hatch, Wyoming Arts Council folk arts specialist. "This is an opportunity to recognize the people who live, work and create here."
The festival is one of the largest gatherings of crafts persons recognized for quality by the state of Wyoming and Wyoming Arts Council. It includes members of the Wyoming Artist Roster, individuals who have received Arts Council apprenticeship awards, and participants from the recent Art of the Hunt events.
"This is a rare opportunity to see so many of our state's skilled crafts people in one place," said Annie Hatch. "Many don't participate in a typical art festival or sale. They may never produce enough to sell. Or they may reserve what they make for fam-

ily and friends."
Buffalo Bill Boycott and Shoshone elder Willie LeClair will be performing Saturday.
There will be regional musicians, arts and crafts demonstrations, juried art show and sale, Kiwanis Trading Post, mountain man camp, chainsaw artist Roy Pilcher and David Osmundsen with his portable forge fashioning metal art.
There will be a number of workshops throughout the two days including Basque dance, gourd painting, quilting, spinning, weaving, sewing, taxidermy and rope making.
Wall hangings based on images from Old Trail Town in Cody and the Wyoming west and the Rainbow Snake Project 18 ft. mural made by Thermopolis Middle School students will be on display.
The festival is sponsored by Hot Springs Greater Learning Foundation with support from the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund, National Endowment for the Arts, Hot Springs Travel & Tourism, Thermopolis Community Fund and Wyoming Arts Council.
For more information visit www.wyomingfolkfestival.com.



Roy Pilcher will be creating his chainsaw sculptures Saturday and Sunday.