



Airport grand opening Saturday

by Chandler Smith

The new Hot Springs County Airport grand opening is slated to take place Saturday, Nov. 7. The grand opening celebration will start at 9:30 a.m. when the first plane will land at the airport, signaling the lifting of the NOTAM (notice to airmen) and the opening of the airport to the public.

At 11 a.m. Governor Matt Mead will fly into the airport, and shortly after at 11:15 a.m. the master of ceremonies will give a welcome speech and introduce the guest speakers to the podium.

At 11:45 a.m. the ceremonial opening will

take place with a ribbon cutting. Lunch, catered by Incredible Edibles, will be served at noon.

Children 16 and under will be given a ticket to win a free flight on the afternoon of Nov. 7 for themselves and one adult over the age of 18. Drawing will be held at noon. Must be present to win.

The new airport is approximately 10 miles northwest of Thermopolis off of highway 120. The groundbreaking took place on Sept. 13, 2012. Actual construction started on Oct. 16.

The new airport, according to GDA engineers, cost approximately \$22 million. Funding was provided by grants from the Federal

Aviation Administration, Wyoming Department of Transportation State Aeronautics, Wyoming Office of State Lands and Investments and local agencies.

Nate Messenger has been hired as the fixed based operator (FBO) of the airport. Messenger, who owns Owl Creek Aviation, LLC, will hold this position until June 30, 2020.

As FBO, Messenger will be in charge of all airport activities including light maintenance, sale of fuel, maintaining airport equipment and facility inspections.

More information can be found at www.gdaengineers.com/hsc.



photo by Chandler Smith

Students greeted by knights

Ralph Witters Elementary students received a special Halloween treat Friday when the heroic Knights of Red Rock and their trusty steeds welcomed students to school. Sir Travis Bomengen and Sir Jason Weyer also made a visit to downtown Thermopolis during their travels.

School board expels student

by Durward D. Jones

The Hot Springs County School District Board held a special meeting Friday, Oct. 30 at noon. All board members were present except Dan Pebble who was absent.

The meeting was called to order and then a motion was made to move into executive session by Dr. Travis Bomengen for discussion of a student matter and personnel changes. The Board adjourned from executive session 30 minutes later.

A motion was made by Bomengen and seconded by Clay Van Antwerp to expel a student from Hot Springs County School District #1 for the remainder of the 2015-2016 school year.

Chairman Tobi Johansen mentioned that the board would consider allowing the student to re-enroll for the next semester, only if the student seeks counseling. The councilor would then have to issue a letter on the student's behalf explaining the student is making progress and is fit to return to school.

The parent and student would then have to meet with Thermopolis Middle School Principal Daniels to review

the letter and discuss re-enrollment before bringing it before the board. It was noted that it is the board's prerogative to expel a student for one calendar year if need be.

All present board members voted for the expulsion of the student.

The board then moved on to staff recommendations. Dr. Bomengen made the motion and Melissa Johnson seconded it. The following personnel changes were approved unanimously.

The board accepted the resignation of Nicole Herra and Deborah Brown. Herra is a math teacher and Brown is the Principal of Ralph Witters Elementary School. Both will resign at the end of their teaching contract for 2015-2016. Both Brown and Herra qualify for the early notification bonus.

Janet Chimenti and Sonja Holm will be retiring from their positions at the school district at the end of their 2015-2016 contracts. Chimenti is the school nurse and Holm is a first grade teacher. Both qualify for the early notification bonus.

Shyla Buckner resigned as a paraprofessional with her resignation effective Nov. 6, 2015.

Town water rate increase passes

by Durward D. Jones

Tuesday's Thermopolis Town Council meeting began with the council approving a catering permit for Cindy Ellison during the FFA Harvest Ball Nov. 14.

Assistant to the Mayor Fred Crosby gave some feedback in place of the Town Engineer Heath Overfield, explaining to the council that Wilson Brothers will fix a sewer man hole crack on First Street within the next week or so. Crosby also brought to the council's attention that he needed their approval for notice to proceed for Barnum Inc. to start two bore jobs; one under the river and the other under Highway 120. The council approved the notice to proceed.

Director of public works Ernie Slagle reported they have a couple of snow plows ready and full of sand. Slagle also said they just had a sanitary survey for the water

treatment plant by the EPA. They will know the results in a couple of months. If there are any discrepancies, they will have to fix them. The survey is conducted every three years.

Crosby reported as codes administrator the new Pizza Hut building is going up. Local contactor Kurt Shaffer is framing the building.

The third reading of the new water ordinance was done by the Town Attorney Mike Messenger. After the reading Messenger had a couple of grammatical amendments for the ordinance. Mayor Mike Mortimore made a motion to approve the amendments, the motion passed. The Mayor then opened the floor up for discussion of the ordinance.

One member of the community, Wedge Taylor, had a several concerns and comments. One question was does the new rate increase just cover the water plant or distri-

bution systems? Mortimore responded that it would cover both, but the primary goal is to keep the plant up and making water.

Taylor was concerned about the increased rate at the salesman. The salesman is a bulk delivery system by the water plant that uses quarters; many rural residents use it to fill their cisterns with potable water. Taylor has a water truck and delivers to many of these people. The price rate went from \$4 per thousand to almost double at \$7 per thousand. Taylor expressed that this is high and it is going to be difficult for him and his customers to adjust to the new rate. Mortimore explained that they based the price off the national average which came to \$7.60 and they rounded down to \$7 as it works better for the quarter system.

See Water on page A6

Commissioners hear Youth Alternatives update

by Chandler Smith

The Hot Springs County Commissioners discussed for the last time the final preparations for the new county airport, set to open on Nov. 7.

The airport project, which formally began October 16, 2012, passed Wyoming Department of Transportation Aeronautics Division and Federal Aviation Administration inspections last week "with flying colors," according to GDA engineer Jeremy Gilb.

Gilb added that the inspectors were "very impressed" with the status and function of the airport.

One of the last orders of business yet to be completed at the airport is the installation of fuel tanks. A state inspector has to come view the area in question before the concrete on which the tanks will rest can be poured.

Mountain View Builders will start the underdrain project on Nov. 16, over a week after the airport opens, but Gilb reported to the commissioners that the Mountain View is aware they will be performing work on a 'live' airport.

In other business, Barb Rice from Youth Alternatives had good news to share with the board. District courts have referred three youths to the program, which until this point was uncommon, which, according to commissioners and Rice herself, is a very good sign. Jerry Williams, Hot Springs County Attorney, noted that from all Youth Alternatives programs, Hot Springs County has one of the finest and most successful.

The program seeks to keep teenagers out of correctional facilities by providing a so-called 'single point of entry', which al-

lows counselors to gather information from schools, parents, law enforcement officials, and teachers before deciding where to send a youth that has been charged with any criminal offense.

After Rice's report, the commissioners opened bids for a new county vehicle. Two bids were from Fremont Motors and Worland Ford. Worland Ford gave a bid price of \$28,068.75 and Fremont Motors gave two quotes, one for \$25,985.00 and another for \$25,455.08. The commissioners decided to give the contract to Fremont Motors for \$25,455.08.

Chuck Carver, who is in charge of maintenance in Thermopolis, said that the recently completed Museum roof, "turned out really nice," and that he is looking into ways to keep icicles off the roof this winter.