

Opportunities to give back

For all Hot Springs County residents wishing to give back to their community while helping to shape the future, a number of board positions are vacant and are accepting applications.

Five crucial Hot Springs County boards have positions available to interested community members.

The Fair Board has one vacancy which is a five-year term.

The Natural Resources Planning Committee has five positions available, each serving a three-year term.

Weed and Pest has three positions open, each serving four-year terms.

The Big Horn Basin Nature and Discovery Joint Powers Board has one vacancy for a three-year term.

The Predatory Animal Control Board is the final board with a vacancy. The one available position will serve a three-year term, and the applicant must be a Sportsman member.

A Sportsman member is a board representative that is not engaged in raising sheep, goats or cattle.

The applicant must also hold or have held

a valid Wyoming fishing or hunting license or a Wyoming wildlife damage management stamp within the last twelve months.

County residents interested in serving on a board should submit their County Board Questionnaire to the Hot Springs County Clerk's office no later than 12 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 4, 2016.

The questionnaire can be found on the county's website, www.hscounty.com, or picked up at the County Clerk's office.

Appointments will be made during county commissioners meeting on Jan. 5.



photo by Lara Love

Beautiful day for a hay ride

C.J. Kavilis is getting a thrill from having some hands-on experience driving a team of horses during the free hay rides at White Horse County Store Saturday. Ame Longwell, far right, owner of Black Mountain Shires provided instruction and guidance. Enjoying the ride are Whipp Longwell and Rocky Yetter.

Next step toward renovations

by Chandler Smith

The Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital Board took its next small step towards building renovations, carefully discussing plans that have been mired in contentious discussion since a failed hospital district vote two years ago.

After a thorough study by the Erdman healthcare planning firm, it has come to light that in order to maintain the exceptional healthcare service to which Hot Springs County residents are accustomed, the present half-century old facility needs to be expanded and modernized.

With Erdman's suggestions in mind, the board discussed ways to achieve the renovations that are often conflated with the failed district vote. Doctors, administration and board members made it clear Wednesday renovations were needed for the hospital to maintain quality service for decades to come.

The board was in favor of Erdman's Building Plan C, which would construct a new facility onto the present one, utilizing the entirety of the hospital's present land without crossing East Arapahoe, which board members agreed would cause a host of problems both for the community and the hospital.

Although board members liked Plan C, it was evident the plan would need reorganizing. Administration stated that the present layout of the suggested plan would not be as efficient as possible for the employees at the hospital, with fairly large distances between departments that may present logistical problems for the staff's workflow.

With this in mind, HSCMH

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Retail sales holding steady

by Durward D. Jones

With a large focus of the Christmas season towards retail, the Christmas creep continues to emerge earlier every year. Stores are starting to have Christmas merchandise displays as soon as Halloween.

Consumers are divided on getting Christmas shopping done early or waiting until December. Some clearly have a bah humbugian attitude while others display an ambitious desire to be the early shopper.

Many consumers blame the retailers for the ever expanding holiday creep, but in truth, it is due to the retailers responding to the drive of the consumer. Much of this may be a result of the instant gratification movement, the "I want what I want when I want it" generation, a term coined by psychologist Kit Yarow in her book "Decoding the New Consumer Mind: How and Why We Shop and Buy" about catering to our technology-addled brains.

In a small town like Thermopolis, what does the Christmas season mean to local retailers? Has the small community of Thermopolis caught up with the technological and instant gratification of the current generation? The short answer is the retailers are doing the best they can. "The Amazons of the world are hard on retailers," said Dan Herdt of Owl Creek Graphics.

Owl Creek Graphics does custom embroidery and screen printing. When asked how they felt about the holiday shopping season and how it was going so far, Herdt responded with saying the store is doing okay and they are getting a lot of Christmas shoppers. Herdt feels it has been the slow reduction of the oil field business this year that has put a hurt on big orders. The store has been doing a lot more small orders instead of the usual big ones normally coming in this time of year. When asked how a small business can fight the Amazons of the world, Herdt said he remains cautiously optimistic because of the need for quality customer service a local small business can provide.

New business owner Susan Turnbull of Gooseberry Gardens Quilt

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