

Aggrivated homicide trial underway

by Cindy Glasson
Dozens of Washakie County residents were called as potential jurors Monday for the Jay Cody Shinost trial being held in Fifth Judicial District Court in Worland.
Shinost is facing four counts; one of aggravated homicide by vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, one count of aggravated homicide by vehicle with reckless driving, and two counts of being in control of a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol.
All four counts stem from a single vehicle roll-over on May 14, 2014, which took the life of Madisen “Maddie” Price and left her sister,

Delanie, with severe head trauma. A fourth person, Dylan Balstad, was also severely injured, requiring a life flight to the Casper Medical Center. Delanie spent months in a coma at Denver Children's Hospital before regaining consciousness.
Shinost's attorney, Richard Hopkinson, asked for a change of venue, moving the trial out of Hot Springs County in order to give his client a better chance for an impartial jury.
Judge Robert Skar is presiding over the proceedings with Hot Springs County Attorney Jerry Williams representing the State as the prosecuting attorney.

It took nearly four hours to seat the 12 person jury, along with two alternates, made up of five men and nine women. Two alternates were seated due to the possible two-week duration of the trial.
Williams began the State's case by outlining what he hoped to prove to the jury through a series of witnesses, based on detailed reports from the Wyoming Highway Patrol's specialized crash team, including the condition of the vehicle after the crash, and what doctors and nurses at the hospital witnessed

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photo by Dennis Nierzwicki

Ready, aim, release

Kaylee DeVries releases her arrow after drawing her bow and holding the shot Tuesday at the fair building during an eighth grade physical education archery unit. Instructor Shannon Hill discussed how important it is to “encourage our students to be lifelong movers” and how much the students enjoyed the 3-D target shooting.

Representative Winters talks issues

by Lara Love
The 2016 Budget Session will convene with the Joint Session of the Wyoming Legislature and the Governor’s State of the State address on Monday, Feb. 8 at 10 a.m. at the Jonah Business Center in Cheyenne.
House District 28 Representative Nathan Winters represents Hot Springs County and portions of Big Horn, Fremont and Park Counties. Senator Gerald Geis of Worland represents Senate District 20 which includes Hot Springs County.
Winters will be headed to Cheyenne in the coming days and said a major issue this year will be the fiscal shortfall. “Wyoming’s fiscal profile looking forward for the next few years is bleak,” said Winters.
Winters said according to the Wyoming Taxpayers Association, the forecast in October of 2015 included a \$160 million shortfall. In January, \$32 million was added for a total \$192 million shortfall.
Winters explained the shortfall is hitting now with the sharp decline in oil prices along with declining coal production and sales which peaked several years back. He added there are no anticipated spikes in coal bed methane production so Wyoming is facing some tough times.
“There are going to be some challenging decisions regarding the budget and I really appreciate the work the Joint Appropriations Committee has done over



Nathan Winters

the last month taking the Governor’s proposed budget and looking at what should stay in and what can be changed and moved around to try to make good plans for our upcoming session,” said Winters.
One of the things Winters said he is aiming to do this year through a budget amendment is work on wolf predation issues. “We are in a unique situation in the state of Wyoming where we had this plan for wolf predation with a trophy game zone and a predator zone. A federal injunction was laid down by a D.C. judge that took away the ability for land owners to take care of wolf issues on their own within the predator zone,” said Winters.
As a part of the original management plan, predation payments were less within the predator zone because landowners were able to take care of the problem themselves. Since the injunction, landowners cannot take an animal which is harming their heard but there has been no change in the predation payments. “Landowners within the predator zone are not getting the reparation they need,” said Winters.
“We are still pushing for the Wyoming plan in court and we don’t want to do anything that would jeopardize that. If we change our plan now because of this one federal injunction and not allow it to go through the process, the possibility is we [Wyoming] could lose our wolf plan,” Winters said.
Winters is aiming to bring relief to landowners until Wyoming has full del-

isting of the wolf. The plan Winters is pursuing includes input from several individuals including Jim Magagna with the Wyoming Stock Growers Association. His plan would provide temporary relief to landowners for predation payments while the injunction is in effect.
“The Wyoming Retirement Center (WRC) is something I am paying very careful attention too,” said Winters. “They [WRC] are not specifically listed in any of the legislation as such, but there is a piece of legislation that is being advanced that describes to the Wyoming State Hospital (WSH) and the Wyoming Life Resource Center (WLRC).
According to Winters, in the legislation the mission statement of the WLRC is being expanded to take the mission statement from the WRC. The WRC is not directly mentioned but Winters wants to highlight the fact that the WRC is somewhat involved in the piece of legislation.
Winters is also working with other senators and individuals around the state to insure the first amendment is protected “in all points, for all people.” “Once again I believe it is important for us to take a look and make sure no citizen of the state of Wyoming is discriminated against in regards to their faith,” said Winters.
“Our culture has come to a place of crisis,” said Winters. “We have to make sure that political discourse can remain open and free and people can live according to the dictates of their consciences,” he added. Winters says he is aiming to do just that during this legislative session.
Winters is hosting a public Legislative Listening Session Thursday, Feb. 4 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Best Western Plaza Hotel, 116 E. Park St. Refreshments will be served.

Town Council puts splash park to rest

by Durward D. Jones
The Thermopolis Town Council put the idea of a splash park to rest during their Tuesday meeting.
Town Engineer Heath Overfield stood before the council once again and presented the numbers to construct the splash park in the Bicentennial Park located downtown. The water feature was planned to increase activity in the downtown area by giving families a fun place to go during the summer months. The council originally set aside \$100,000 to spend on the feature.
Overfield had been working on ways to reduce the cost of the construction, but in the end there was just no way to get the price to the \$100,000 mark. Overfield presented the board with a final cost of \$175,000 to \$200,000.
Mayor Mike Mortimore said he felt it would send a positive message to the people of the town to have the feature, but also recognized it may be an expense the town does not need. Mortimore also brought up the way that the state’s economy is falling due to oil prices and coal revenues dropping. Mortimore recognized that residents would be upset the council just raised water rates and then wants to put in a water feature. He assured everyone that they are two separate items; money for the park could not transfer over to alleviate the rate increase.
Council member Mark Nelson felt maybe the council should wait and see what the next year’s budget would look like. Mortimore pressed that if the

council does not get started on the project, it just may not happen, or the price would increase even more next year.
“I’m a little scared of the economy in Wyoming,” said Nelson. Nelson was very concerned about spending money the town does not have, even though Mortimore assured him the money was there.
In the end the council did not make any motions to continue forward with the splash park, and with a heavy heart the Mayor announced the project dead.
Other discussion included Stephanie Gilbert addressing the council during citizen participation about street closures during this year’s Octoberfest. Gilbert asked to close Broadway from the stoplight to Fourth Street and Fifth Street from Warren to Arapahoe during the hours of 8 a.m. on Sept. 24 to 10 a.m. on Sept. 25. The council voted in favor but told Gilbert to talk to the banks using Fifth Street for their drive up window to make sure the street closures will not interfere with their business.
Brad Morrison of the Recreation District was present with news of the recycling trailer. He said they have found a volunteer to take the trailer to Riverton. Concern was brought up by Morrison that he did not want to burn out the volunteer as he is making the trip every week. Kevin Skates from Hot Springs State Park said they may be able to help in the coming summer months but currently they are just unable to help due to budget cuts and