

HSSP master plan meeting Monday

by April S. Kelley

The Hot Springs State Park Master Plan was released to the public on April 18. An open house seeking public input on the draft master plan will be Monday, May 2 from 5-7 p.m. at the fire hall in Thermopolis.

Director of the Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources Milward Simpson said this is a really exciting master plan that needs public input.

“It is crucially important that the community feels like they have some input on the park,” he said. “In a sense, they are part owners of the park for helping to envision its future.”

The purpose of the 20-year master plan is

to guide the long-term physical improvement, management and use of the entire 1,110-acre park. The plan includes publicly and privately owned buildings, lands west of Highway 20, the bison pasture and the recreational and thermal features. It provides a comprehensive planning and decision-making structure to accommodate recreational and developmental amenities, infrastructure and access in balance with the preservation of cultural and natural resources.

Many changes are slated in the draft of the master plan, including some additions to the park such as the addition of two acres designated for camping areas where there cur-

rently are none.

Some park facilities will also be eliminated, according to the draft plan. The plan shows Hot Springs State Park having only one outdoor pool and only one indoor pool, which means one of the already existing outdoor pools and one of the already existing indoor pools will be eliminated.

For more information, to read the plan in full or to leave public comment on the plan, visit hotspringsmasterplan.com. Maps and a copy of the draft master plan are also on display at the Hot Springs County Library and Hot Springs State Park Headquarters. Comment cards are available at both locations.



photos by Mark Dykes



Paris Masquerade

Eric Herold, above, dips his date, Elizabeth Lofink, during the grand march in the school auditorium before the Hot Springs County High School Junior/Senior Prom Saturday.

The room was packed, and though the lights were down camera flashes from friends and family made the stage seem like a Hollywood premier.

Darren Leonhardt and his date, Eryn Robinson, were named Prom King and Queen during the coronation ceremony.

Following the grand march, prom attendees moved to the Days Inn for an evening of dancing and fun with a “Paris Masquerade” theme.

After-school program facing budget cuts

by April S. Kelley

The Hot Springs County School District’s Lights On After-school program has received budget cuts from their federal grant through the 21st Century Community Learning Center. The grant is a five-year grant that must be reapplied for every year. In years four and five of the current grant, there will be significant budget cuts. Year four will receive a 10 percent cut — approximately \$14,000 — that will take effect in May 2016. Year five will receive a 15 percent cut — approximately \$22,000 — that will take effect in May 2017.

“The whole point of this grant is to help programs start-up some quality, after-school enrichment programs and learn how to be self-sustainable,” program coordinator Jenny Davis said. “In rural communities, it’s more difficult to do this.”

Davis said the organization has applied for several grants to help fill the gap of the budget cuts for year four. The program was awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Wyoming Community Foundation and the Hot Springs Endowment Fund gave a grant to help pay for snacks for the program.

Next year will be more worrisome because the program will not have the additional funds from the grants, Davis said.

“The goal is to start raising funds now to help plan for next year,” she said. “What we really need is a group of parents to form a task force to help advocate for funds. We need to do reoccurring events that will bring in money every year.”

Davis explained that because the 21CCLC grant is a federal grant, the program’s staff cannot solicit outside funds themselves, which is why fundraising efforts by a parent task force is crucial.

“Without help and support from the community, we will have to cut some programming,” she said. “We are raising our future and we do not want to have to make those cuts.”

The belief of the program is that all students can be successful, Davis said.

“We keep kids after-school,” she said. “We support working families. Not only are we keeping kids safe, we are providing them with quality, enrichment programs that will support them throughout life.”

Davis said any and all donations will be accepted by the Lights On After-school program, but parents are strongly urged to get involved.

There will be a Lights On Advisory meeting from noon-1 p.m. Thursday, May 12 in the vocational building in the Lights On room. Lunch will be provided.

“We will discuss Lights On programming, 21CCLC goals, partnerships, funding and future plans,” Davis said.

Davis said there will also be a fundraiser meeting from 5:15-6 p.m. Thursday, May 12 in the vocational building.

“We will extend programming for students until 6 p.m. so parents can attend,” she said. “We will be organizing a parent task force and fundraising ideas to support the continuation of 21CCLC programs.”

Time to clean-up Thermopolis

by Mark Dykes

This year, Mayor Mike Mortimore has proclaimed May 9-12 a Town Spring Clean-Up. Mayor’s Assistance Fred Crosby explained every year the town chooses a week residents can set certain items by the dumpsters for pick up. He noted a brush truck — a rear-loaded refuse truck — will be utilized for collection.

Friday is not included in the week of the clean-up, and Crosby noted it’s a day when they are typically short-staffed. The event, he said, is an annual thing to try and make the town look better.

Property owners are encouraged to clean sidewalks in front of their homes, properties or businesses. The street sweeper will operate during the clean-up to remove debris from streets.

Debris resulting from property clean-up should be placed next to trash dumpsters in sturdy boxes or heavy-duty bags so as not to break when picked up. Materials placed by dumpsters should be outside a two-foot buffer zone, so as not to impede normal trash pickup. Large pieces of wood, metal, rocks and the like should not be placed in dumpsters, as such items could cause damage to hydraulic lifts and compaction mechanism on sanitation trucks.

After placing items by dumpsters, call Town Hall at 864-3838 or 846-9285 for pickup.

The Town landfill is currently open 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Saturday. For residents who privately contract yard work and tree/shrub trimming, it is the contractor’s responsibility to dispose of debris by taking it to the landfill. Crosby noted contractors are charged for dumping such material, but homeowners are not.

For more information see ad on page A6 of this paper.

Legend Rock among top ten in USA Today poll

by Mark Dykes

Home to hundreds of petroglyphs, Legend Rock northwest of Thermopolis is considered a sacred site by many. It was recently named number 7 on a USA Today poll of the best archaeological sites across the country.

Hot Springs State Park Assistant Superintendent John Fish said a seventh place finish is fantastic, and he’s pleased to see Legend Rock made the final cut. It’s very large in terms of petroglyphs, and is one of the best-preserved glyph sites, he added.

Volunteers are always needed, as they are all the site is manned with. There is a volunteer camp post set up from May to September, and visitation hours are 8 a.m.-6 p.m. during those months. Any other time, the site is closed and keys must be checked out. Legend Rock is set up for self-guided tours, but additional tours for special interest groups can also be arranged. Fish said people should protect the site by staying on the trail and keeping dogs leashed.

As for the poll, 10Best teamed up with archaeology and travel experts to nominate 20 sites, then turned it over to readers to determine the best in the U.S.

- Other placers in the poll include:
1. Ocmulgee National Monument in Macon, Ga.
 2. Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site in Collinsville, Ill.
 3. Moundville Archaeological Park in Moundville, Ala.
 4. Mesa Verde National Park in Mesa Verde, Colo.
 5. Seminole Canyon State Park and Historic Site in Comstock, Texas
 6. Poverty Point National Monument in Pioneer, La.
 7. Bandelier National Monument in Los Alamos, N.M.
 8. Wupatki National Monument in Flagstaff, Ariz.
 9. Chaco Culture National Historic

Park in Nageezi, N.M.

Other sites nominated in this included Aztec Ruins National Monument in Aztec, N.M.; First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park in Ulm, Mont.; Horseshoe Canyon Great Gallery in Moab, Utah; Hudson-Meng Bison Kill Site in Crawford, Neb.; Lava Beds National Monument in Tulelake, Calif.; Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village in Avella, Penn.; Medicine Wheel National Historic Landmark in Big Horn County, Wyo.; Newspaper Rock State Historic Monument in San Juan County, Utah; Ozette Archaeological Site in Neah Bay, Wash. and Serpent Mound in Peebles, Ohio.

