



Exercise looks at dam break possibility

by Mark Dykes
Monday afternoon, County Emergency Management Coordinator Bill Gordon hosted a meeting with regard to what would happen to Thermopolis should the dam at Boysen Reservoir break. Gordon noted he has the utmost faith in the dam's integrity and in the Bureau of Reclamation, but having a plan in place now will help people get out of the way should something happen.
Those attending the meeting included representatives of law enforcement, town governments, emergency services, businesses and the community at large.
For the sake of the scenario of a dam break,

Gordon said there would not be a specific cause cited, and it would look at the worst-case incidence. He further added looking at the worst case would get the town ahead of the game in terms of incidents, as it would mean a full evacuation.
Gordon presented recreations of inundation maps put out by the Bureau of Reclamation at the Corps of Engineers. He emphasized the maps are not the official maps. For the purpose of discussion, Gordon focused on the area from the Wedding of the Waters going north.
Gordon explained if there is a dam breakage, for any reason, the Bureau of Reclamation center in Casper has sensors that notify

them the level of the lake is dropping indicating the lake would empty out. From that point, it would take about 15 minutes for local dispatch to receive word. At that time, there would be about 45 minutes before the water comes out of the canyon and hits town. Within two hours, level is at over 50 feet, and "we've got to be gone," Gordon said.
Also during the meeting, Gordon pointed out the likely escape routes would be to the north and west. There needs to be more than one route out of town, due to problems that can result from traffic congestion. Additionally, it

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photo by April S. Kelley

Summer carnival fun

Children bowl at the Summer Carnival Celebration at Thermopolis Rehab & Care Center on Saturday. Bowling was one of the many activities, including face painting and a dunking booth, at the summer kickoff event. Music, food and fun were all a part of the celebration.

Meeting Tuesday to discuss hospital district, tax

by Mark Dykes
On June 21, the Hot Springs County Commissioners will host a public hearing regarding the formation of a hospital district, which will provide operating revenue for Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital, and the Specific Purpose Sales and Use Excise Tax, which will go toward remodeling and adding on to the hospital building.
The Thermopolis Independent Record is providing information from those who support the tax and the district formation, as well as those opposed to it.

Vote yes supporters
Karen Sinclair said the June 21 hearing would be "the beginning of the beginning," as the commissioners are not making a decision on the district or the tax; rather, they are deciding whether these items will be on the ballot for the people to decide. She is hopeful the commissioners will let the people decide.
"I do believe this decision is about the future of our community," Sinclair said, noting there is now the opportunity to keep a medical community with quality medical professionals, which she is worried of losing.
As a businessperson, Sinclair said she sees the connections of economic value and health. "You have medical health that we're asking our community to support, local medical health within our community, and economic health for our community." She further noted the hospital employs about 100 people, and if services are lost because the community doesn't support the hospital through taxes, there isn't going to be a group or a governmental entity that's going to come in and save us; that idea has already been investigated by the hospital board.
"There's nobody on a white horse coming to save us. We need to save ourselves. We need to save our healthcare in our community." She added it's not a new idea to use tax dollars to help the hospital, but the district would provide a more stable funding source.
Businesspeople also see, Sinclair said, not only the jobs created for people who live here and work at the hospital, but people who come from outside the county to see their doctor(s) here and utilize the facility, or to simply visit a patient.
"I don't think people understand how many people are actually using the hospital."
The hospital was built in the 1950s, for 50s-style medicine, Sinclair said, but today that style of medicine is different and the building is no longer set up for it. The hospital board has tried hard to listen to the community in keeping the hospital in its same location, rather than moving it entirely.

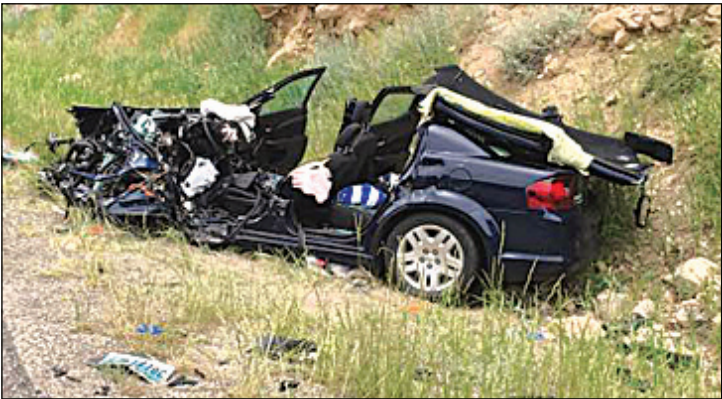
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Cheyenne woman dies following Wind River Canyon crash

Alcohol being investigated as contributing factor

One person died and another was hospitalized after a Saturday afternoon crash in Wind River Canyon.
Cheyenne resident Jamie Winters, 41, died as a result of the crash which occurred at 12:40 p.m. near mile post 123 on US Highway 20 approximately 8 miles south of Thermopolis.
According to a news release from the Wyoming Highway Patrol, Winters was driving a 2014 Dodge Avenger passenger car northbound on US 20 when the car crossed over the centerline into the southbound lane of travel. A 2012 Dodge 3500 pickup truck pulling a stock trailer was traveling south when the northbound Dodge entered the southbound lane of US 20.
The driver of the Dodge truck, 52-year-old Randel Patton of Silt, Colo., attempted to steer

right to avoid a crash but was unable to do so due to a guardrail present in the west ditch. The Dodge collided with the rear-end of the pickup and the stock trailer.
Winters was not wearing her seat belt correctly but was not ejected. Winters was transported by ground ambulance to Hot Springs Memorial Hospital where she succumbed to her injuries. Patton was wearing his seat belt and was uninjured. A passenger riding with Winters in the Dodge Avenger, 22-year-old Cheyenne resident Steven C. C'Bearing, was not wearing his seat belt and was transported by ground ambulance to Hot Springs Memorial Hospital and was hospitalized. His condition is unknown.
Alcohol is being investigated as a contributing factor in this crash that marked the 31st highway fatality in Wyoming for 2016. There were 56 fatalities during this same time period in 2015.



Damage was extensive to the pickup and stock trailer involved in the accident in Wind River Canyon Saturday. The car involved was a total loss.

courtesy photos Michelle Patton