

Motion for new trial in Schwan case

by Mark Dykes

A motion for a new trial and evidentiary hearing has been filed in a case against Matthew Schwan, who on March 15 was found guilty of aggravated homicide by vehicle, in the death of Reilly Schwan. The charge is from a May 14, 2016, incident, during which Matthew struck Reilly with a vehicle; that vehicle had to be lifted off Reilly at the scene.

Following the trial, Schwan was allowed to remain on bond, and a pre-sentence investigation was ordered.

According to the motion for a new trial, filed last Friday, after the trial a family mem-

ber of Matthew's contacted defense counsel via text message and provided a screenshot taken from a Facebook page on March 15. After further investigation it is asserted a juror posted on Reilly's Schwan's Facebook page indicating either actual bias and/or implied bias against Matthew.

The actual or implied bias of the juror stems from his failure to disclose his relationship with Reilly, and this question was posed during the voir dire process by the State of Wyoming. While the juror admitted to knowing Reilly, he failed to disclose the nature of their relationship and, in fact,

remained mute on the answer and didn't indicate he had any further information.

Additionally, after the conclusion of the trial, defense counsel reviewed the testimony of Thermopolis Volunteer Fire Department Chief Mark Collins and recalled the mention of a surname with regard to one of the firemen who assisted in the extrication of Reilly.

After further investigation it was discovered a second juror is married to a Thermopolis volunteer fireman and her brother-in-law is also a member of the fire department. The

See Airport on page 8



High jump

photo by Cindy Glasson

Jacob Strenger takes a flying leap into a pool of freezing cold water during the Jackalope Jump on Saturday. The event, hosted by the Hot Springs County High School cheerleaders, features brave souls taking the leap after raising donations that go to the Special Olympics.

HSCSD issues, renews contracts

by Cindy Glasson

Questions regarding staffing changes at Hot Springs County School District No. 1 have been flying through the community with many wanting to know which educators and staff have been retained and which ones will not be seen next school year.

Non-teaching contracts were renewed for Sierra Barber, Lonnie Music, Cortney O'Connor, David Duncan, Ryan O'Connor, Liz Ryan and Brenna Huckfeldt.

Initial contracts were granted to Stephanie Boren, Ashlee Burton, Shane Corpening, Katlin

Despain, Matthew McPhie, Holly Mickelson, Rebecca Nelson, Carrie Ryan, Vivian Sannes, Laqey Shaffer, Kinley Taylor and Korinne Thoren.

Initial to Continuing contracts were extended to Brockton Merrill, Cody James (CJ) Scholl and Jill Strenger.

Continuing contract teachers are Brenna Abel, Emma Christoffersen, Nichole Ciz, Stephanie Czarowski, Donna Daniels, Brandon Deromedi, Catelyn Deromedi, Jennifer Emery, Toby Emery, Jackie Frankson, Ronda Freel, Todd Helms, Emmy Hergert, Cassie Hetzel, Shannon Hill, Heidi Hunt, London Jenks, Aimee Kay, Eric Kay,

Becky Martinez, Mary McGillivray, Alex McLean, Staci Morrison, Thomas Olsen, Dawn Peterson, Parke Price, Amy Ready, Kristing Ryan, Jacob Smith, Cory Sova, Jacob Strenger, Dan Sylju-berget, Britton VanHeule, Bethany Webber and Jennifer Weber.

Resignations were accepted by the school board from Aaron Taylor and Jessica Hostetter.

The district is currently advertising for the following positions: high school English, high school Industrial Arts (auto-votech), elementary special education and high school and middle school vocal and band instructor.

Hospital board begins bylaws review

by Mark Dykes

Monday night, the Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees received a copy of the board bylaws from Board Attorney Ron Jurovich, who invited the board members to look over them and bring any questions to him. He further noted he revised the bylaws and highlighted points for board members to think about.

Among those items highlighted concerned the name of the district, whether the hospital should retain 501c3 status and when the annual meeting is held. Jurovich noted board members might notice some additional issues as they read through the bylaws, and he invited them to contact him to discuss them.

Action on the bylaws is expected at the next board meeting, April 25.

Also during the meeting, Chief Financial Officer Shelly Larson reported there has been some discussion to provide the board with a monthly graph relating such information as net income, losses and full-time employees.

Larson also reported she audited all the hospital's patient days, and what she found was there were patients who discharged in July who had been in swing bed for a long period of time. Those days were taken into account, she said, which caused a change in the number of patient days, though overall they are on track.

Hospital CEO Margie Molitor reported Jeremiah Cannon started working at the end of February as a nurse practitioner. Cannon is under a shared contract between the hospital and Red Rock Family Practice. Molitor further explained he is a Red Rock employee, but the hospital contracts with him for services two days out of the week at the Big Horn Clinic. Cannon began seeing patients independently last week.

With regard to pulmonary rehabilitation, Molitor noted Joe White would like to set up a rehabilitation clinic in Thermopolis, which would be a revenue growth opportunity for the hospital. White is also looking at possibly doing home sleep studies. These would be an abbreviated test, but would

provide people with information as to whether they need more extensive testing.

Molitor also reported regarding the balance scorecard for the fiscal year, noting it would see some changes in the future to make it easier to read, possibly breaking it down into simply what the hospital's score is and what the goal is. Currently, the score may be a specific number, but that number fits into a determined percentile in comparison with all other hospitals across the country. This can make the scorecard challenging to interpret.

With regard to specifics on the scorecard, Molitor noted the ER is above the 75th percentile in all their scores. As for the influenza vaccine rate among employees, Molitor said they would try hard to address it, but she's not sure if they will. There's been some good progress, going from 68 percent of employees vaccinated to 88 percent, but that still falls below the 90 percent goal. The next fiscal year could see a mandatory influenza vaccination program.

Airport features new GPS system

Access to the air transportation system plays an increasingly vital role in day-to-day safety, security and business throughout the state and the nation.

By using instruments in the plane, a pilot can fly an aircraft safely when visibility is restricted, such as flying in the clouds. When the visibility is poor near the ground, a pilot must rely upon these instruments and exact flight procedures to guide them safely to the runway.

For the first time ever, the citizens of Hot Springs County have an airport serving them with an advanced instrument approach. The old airport did not have this capability due to its location being so close to terrain.

"The surrounding terrain was a big issue at the old airport," FBO Nate Messenger said. "When weather was bad -- low cloud layer, rain, snow, poor visibility -- you would have to land in Worland."

"Life flights, not just local aircraft, would have to go to Worland and then the ambulance service would have to drive them there. This is not only safer, but will save patients money, too."

See Airport on page 8