

# Snow water percentages explained

by Mark Dykes

In order to stem any alarm over numbers, Hot Springs County Emergency Management Coordinator Bill Gordon recently explained what is happening with the Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) percentages in the Wind River Mountains. The SWE is the amount of water contained in the snowpack.

As of May 15, the SWE was 210 percent. On May 22, it was 304 percent, and on May 29 it was 410 percent. It is important to understand the climbing percentages does not reflect increasing snow depth or SWE amounts.

Though the amount of snow in the mountains has not increased dramatically in the

past three weeks, the percentage has doubled. Historically, snowmelt would have begun by now and a reduction in SWE would have begun. This year, the melt is a bit later than normal. The percentages seen are simply how this year's snow info compares to the historical median from 1981-2010. It is not an indicator that we are facing an ever-growing SWE.

The forecast is for slightly warmer temperatures up high this week. Gordon stated, "I believe by late this week we will see increasing runoff from the Wind River Mountains into Boysen as well as the western streams here in Hot Springs County."

The Bureau of Reclamation is formulating their operations plan for June 1. Gordon has a call with the bureau on Friday.

Releases from Boysen Dam are expected to remain at 7,000 cubic feet per second until at least Thursday, when the Bureau of Reclamation will release the June forecast.

Slightly warmer temperatures this week in the western end of the county above 9,000 feet should begin the runoff of Owl Creek, which will be monitored visually and via gauges. Gooseberry and Cottonwood should increase as well. Sandbag production and distribution contingency plans are in place, but are on standby as of Tuesday afternoon.



photo by Mark Dykes

## Unfurling the colors

Members of the community, including Thermopolis police officers and Hot Springs County deputies, help set up flagpoles at Hawk's Avenue of Flags for Memorial Day. The avenue, first seen a year ago, now has over 90 flags which will again be flown for Veterans Day.

# Students treated to Farm to Table day

## Teaching kids about where dinner comes from

by Cindy Glasson

Students from Ralph Witters Elementary and Risen Son Christian School found out a bit more about where dinner comes from during the Farm to Table day last Thursday.

A joint effort between the school district, Farm Bureau and the Pioneer Association featured folks from the University of Wyoming Extension Service and local growers who gave students a deeper understanding of where their food comes from.

Students from Thermopolis Middle School who raise animals brought pigs, sheep and cattle to the fairgrounds for the day, showing the youngsters not only how to show animals, but filling them in on what they actually weigh, what they feed them and why its important to buy meats that you know came fresh from the farm.

Along with the animals, they were shown the different cuts of beef and which area of the cow their steak came from and what part of the pig they ate if they had ham for Easter dinner.

They discussed different fruits and vegetables, learned the ins and out of bee keeping and even got to make their own butter from scratch.

Their day culminated with a delicious lunch using many of the things they had just learned about, including the fresh butter.



photo by Cindy Glasson

## Where it comes from

Students from Ralph Witters Elementary and Risen Son Christian School participated in a Farm to Table Expo last week to learn where the food they eat really comes from.

# Celebration planned for buildings turning 100

by Cindy Glasson

Main Street Thermopolis is working on a few things for this summer, including a celebration for the downtown buildings slated to turn 100 this year.

At their meeting last Thursday, the committee discussed getting the building inventory completed by July 1.

The inventory will include current owners, size of the building and any history they can gather.

Octobrewfest will be coming this fall, with a beer garden, vendors of all sorts and fun and games for the entire family.

With so many buildings celebrating their 100th birthday, the group thought a great theme for this year's event could be a birthday party.

As you drive through Wyoming you may notice signs by the side of the road indicating that section of road is maintained by certain groups.

Main Street Thermopolis is checking in to getting a section of highway coming into town that they can be responsible for. That means they would be out periodically cleaning along the sides of the road and the sign would indicate Thermopolis is a Main Street town.

They also discussed the possibility of starting something similar in town with an "Adopt a Block" program where businesses or civic groups could choose a block to be responsible for.

Details would have to be worked out as to what people would be responsible for, like weeding, and they will have to check with the Town to see if putting up small signs would be possible.

At their next meeting, June 22, the group will be setting their budget for the year as well as voting on officers.