

Record high temps over the weekend

by Mark Dykes

This past Thursday brought with it many reasons to be thankful, and one of those was the unusually high temperatures seen in the area for the day and leading into the weekend. Tim Troutman, the warning coordination meteorologist from the national Weather Service office in Riverton, said data was not used directly from Thermopolis, but readings from nine miles northeast of town showed a high temperature of 69 degrees, a record high and a temperature that's 23 degrees above the norm. There was also a 48-degree spread from the high to the low of 21 degrees. This differs slightly from information on page 2

because data from the Thermopolis Town Water Treatment Plant is used there. Troutman noted it really warmed up this past week, with highs of: 53 degrees on Saturday, eight degrees above the norm; 55 degrees on Friday, 10 degree above the norm; and 61 degrees on Thanksgiving, 15 degrees above the norm. The temperatures are certainly cooling in the evening hours, Troutman noted, coming in a slightly over 35 degrees at night. The Monday forecast showed the warming trend would continue that day with a high of 56 degrees, but a cold front coming in would bring the temperatures back to normal for the area.

It has been an "out of the ordinary" November in terms of temperatures, Troutman said, and about every five years we'll see a November like this. He further explained the current weather pattern we are in has allowed for warm, southwesterly wind flows, creating the higher temps. The pattern, he said, is indicative of a La Niña. Looking at the next eight to 14 days, Troutman said the temperatures are expected to be at or slightly below the norm, and precipitation should be about normal. Over the next month, it is forecasted both precipitation and temperatures are forecasted to be above normal.



photo by Mark Dykes

'I know you!'

Brennen Cornwell gets an up close visit with Santa Claus with a bit of help from his dad, Tanner, while grandpa Pat grabs a photo of the memorable event. Santa and Mrs. Claus visited with plenty of families during a stop downtown on Saturday.

Thermopolis hosts interim committee

by Mark Dykes

Monday and Tuesday, Thermopolis was home to a meeting of the Joint Transportation, Highways and Military Affairs. Senate District 20 representative Wyatt Agar noted the interim committees meet three times, and each meeting lasts two days, essentially providing six days to discuss the various bill drafts and choose those they plan to pass or sponsor. Agar, who was only able to attend the meeting Monday morning due to other obligations, requested discussion regarding the draft bill 18LSO-0151 regarding a vet-

erans' skilled nursing center. Agar explained the bill, essentially, allows them to move forward regarding the center. The number of aging veterans who are in need of critical care is increasing, Agar said, and the bill allows for leverage of federal dollars which would cover 65 percent of the cost of a care facility. Day-to-day operation of the facility would also be covered by federal dollars. The bill was passed by the committee, Agar noted, which will allow for a Level 2 study into the nursing center to address where the facility will be built, what the

cost will be and whether there is enough skilled staff to operate it. Another bill draft that passed by the committee was 18LSO-0274, regarding Purple Heart Day. Agar noted this bill will help bring more recognition to our veterans. Senator Curt Meier, who co-chairs the joint committee along with Representative John Eklund, said the landmark legislation for the upcoming term will be in regard to the long-term care facilities the state has for veterans. Meier also commented on bill draft

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Hoyer sentenced to 2-4 years

by Mark Dykes

Joshua Hoyer was fined \$5,000 and sentenced to 2-4 years in prison for possession of a controlled substance with intent. In August, he agreed to plead guilty to the charge in exchange for dismissal of charges of possession of methamphetamine and delivery. The State of Wyoming, as part of the agreement, would not argue for a sentence of more than 5-8 years. The charge to which Hoyer pled stems from a Dec. 4, 2016, incident during which he was contacted by Autumn Boyle, who asked him to obtain the drug. Attorney Marcia Bean argued Hoyer has a history of serious criminal charges and the 5-8 year sentence would be appropriate. She also noted Hoyer, while in jail, assaulted another inmate and broke his jaw. Attorney Joe Hampton argued for a sentence of 1-3 years, noting Hoyer was at the bottom of a list of contact for methamphetamine, and law enforcement hadn't been targeting him but got him anyway. Hampton further pointed out Hoyer was a middle man in this incident and he was used. Hampton also noted Hoyer is a good person with an integrity about him, despite his criminal history, and in the right environment he could be a successful member of society. Hoyer apologized for his actions to his family and the community, and said he knows he made a bad decision and has come to understand he needs structure and treatment. Judge Robert Skar pointed out Hoyer has a number of years involved with drugs, meth being the biggest, and he was concerned that Hoyer's prior history shows he's still in that business. Though Hoyer has a long history, Skar noted he doesn't have a lot of convictions related to drug offenses.

Additional Title 25 assistance offered

by Cindy Glasson

The Hot Springs County Commissioners had a short meeting last week, covering a bid opening and a contract as well as discussing an offer regarding Title 25. The commissioners opened the bids for a drain project that will be done in conjunction with the roofing project at the Hot Springs County Senior Citizens Center. The project will require removal of some cement near the north side of the building as well as some of the asphalt in the north parking lot. A drain will then be installed that will take the water from the roof to a drain in the parking lot, eliminating the possibility of a slip and fall due to ice. The bid was granted to Owl Creek Excavation in the amount of \$4,877.50. With the weather as nice as it is, the commissioners are hoping to get started on the roofing project as soon as possible, wanting to get it completed before the depths of winter. To that end, they approved a contract with an architectural firm, Nelson Architect, to take care of the roofing plans and other items. The

contract is for \$11,840. Frank Robbins, pastor of the Set Free Church in Thermopolis, approached the commissioners offering his services to help with the Title 25 situation between law enforcement and the hospital. Robbins said he would be more than willing to come to the hospital, if called, to evaluate an arrestee since many are on drugs or alcohol when they are brought in. "We have a place to keep them for a while, too," Robbins said. "We can do counseling for them. We do a lot of suicidal counseling." Commissioner Tom Ryan told Robbins they appreciated the offer, but he was not sure it would be legal for them to do as the state would have a lot to say about it. County Attorney Jerry Williams recounted the steps that are taken when a Title 25 patient is brought in, evaluation at the hospital, a 109 hearing in order to hold them, then a 110 hearing to have the person committed if necessary. Robbins said they have seen people lie in this situation, wanting to do anything to keep from

being labeled and to keep the state out of it. "They trust us," he said. "They don't see us as a threat. We've just been really trying to think of a way to help." Williams said he believes the Set Free Church does a good job and is very helpful, but unfortunately, the state puts a lot of constrictions on law enforcement and the hospital as far as what they can disclose. "We would like to have you help before it gets to a Title 25 situation," Williams said. "Many of them need a support system, people checking on them, like a pre-diversion. "Once an officer says they are detained, we're limited with what we can do, but if you can get in there before that, to kind of re-route them, that would be great. Early diversion is the best." Robbins agreed, saying they need to come together to help a growing portion of our population that isn't getting the help they need. "They're falling through the cracks," he said. "We get some of those, but we can do more. These people need somebody. Now we don't have the answers, but we are offering our help."