



Election races still on for some

by Mark Dykes

Though the Primary Election decided a lot of races locally and statewide, some on the town and county level are still undecided.

Primary Election results show Mike Chimenti won the Mayor of Thermopolis race with 449, but because this is a nonpartisan race the top two candidates will move on to the General Election. That means incumbent Mike Mortimore, who received the next highest number of votes with 273, will be on the General Election ballot.

Similarly, the Thermopolis Town Council race is also nonpartisan. Because there are two seats available, the top four candidates move on to the General. Though incumbents

John Dorman Sr. and Tony Larson received the most votes — Dorman with 584, Larson with 451 — candidates Krista Raymond, who received 339 votes, and John Fish, who received 284, will also be on the ballot for the General Election.

John Winter (R) and Howie Samelson (D) will face off in the General Election for the House District 28 Representative seat.

For the two open positions for Hot Springs County Commissioner, Tom Ryan (R), Jack Baird (R) and Sonja Becker (D) will appear on the General Election ballot.

Also in regard to the General Election, some have taken to campaign for write in votes and to get their name on the ballot.

Attorney Jill Logan filed paperwork, along with the required number of registered voter signatures, to have her name added to the General Election ballot for the Hot Springs County Attorney position. Current county attorney Jerry Williams will be her contender.

Dan Pebbles has publicly announced a write-in campaign for Hot Springs County Sheriff. He will be going up against Jerimie Kraushaar, winner of the Primary Election.

Additional information regarding any write-in campaigns will be announced as we receive them.

See next week's Independent Record for names of those who filed for county board vacancies.

THERMOPOLIS INDEPENDENT RECORD

YEAR 118, WEEK 35, Sections: 1, August 30, 2018

THERMOPOLIS, WY 82443

USPS 627-300

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School board considers program for three-year-olds

by Cindy Glasson

Hot Springs County School District's Board of Trustees discussed starting a program for three-year-olds at their meeting last week.

Amy Reedy, who coordinates the early childhood program for the district, said surveys had been sent out to the caregivers and child care providers in the community to get their feedback on the possible start of such a program.

There are, of course, pros and cons to the move, and a big part of the discussion is not wanting to create competition or bad feelings with the other providers in town.

"We want to make sure all three-year olds have the opportunity to be in a program of some kind," Reedy said. "This is something the parents have asked for."

Reedy said she was willing to look at a program, what it would entail and what classes would look like as well as what changes she would need to make in her current program schedule to make it happen.

Superintendent Dustin Hunt said they are still gathering information to make sure everything is correct before going through with a program.

The board agreed to make a decision at their September meeting, giving Hunt and Reedy the time to finish putting together the information. If everything looks good, the program would start in October.

Spanish Language educator Korinne Thoren, spent six weeks of her summer vacation studying in Mexico.

Thoren told the board she is excited to begin implementing some of the techniques she learned into her classroom.

Thoren said the main focus is going to be on conversational Spanish, actually speaking the language.

"We won't just be learning the words and the grammar," she said, "they'll be learning actual, real world phrases they can use, common phrases."

While learning the basics of the language, the grammar and such is great, Thoren feels using the language in a conversational manner inside the classroom will encourage the students to use it more often outside the classroom and be better prepared if they intend to travel or continue their foreign language education.

The new student trustee, Jeffrey VanAntwerp, gave a brief report on student activities during the meeting as well. Homecoming is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 29, and this year's theme is Casino Night. The dance will be held in AG building starting at 9 p.m.



photo by Dennis Nierzwicki

Centennial slide

Ammon Gevas plunges down the bouncy house slide at the Best Western Plaza Hotel centennial celebration on Saturday. Marking the 100th anniversary of the building, the Best Western offered t-shirts, food, music and family fun.

Repairs needed at Hot Springs County jail

by Cindy Glasson

The Hot Springs County Commissioners were informed last week about some issues going on in the jail in regards to maintenance.

According to maintenance supervisor Anthony Fruciano, they are starting to have problems with doors and locks in the jail failing pretty regularly.

"This is a safety issue for both the employees and the inmates," Fruciano said.

No real, professional maintenance has been done on the doors or locks for years, it has just been the maintenance crew doing what they could, "maintenance guy stuff," he added.

Fruciano and the jail staff are concerned about the safety issue, so Fruciano began looking for professional companies that could come in and look at what needs to be done. One of those companies was the original manufacturer/installer from 1981, Southern Folger.

The commissioners determined it would be best to go with Southern Folger since it is their original equipment and that the costs should be split between the town and the county.

For the county, the funds will come out of the jail repair line in the budget.

GDA Engineers were at the meeting to discuss the condition and possible proposals for Black Mountain Road from its beginning to mile marker 8.6.

The consensus per the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) is 90 percent of the road is in poor condition and a decision needs to be made whether to

do nothing, take it back to a gravel or dirt road or do complete reconstruction of the 8.6 mile stretch.

WYDOT suggests taking core samples along the road at various intervals with three different options, 65-70 test holes, 30-35 test holes or 17 test holes.

Dusty Spomer with GDA said GDA was proposing something a little more aggressive than WYDOT when it comes to the core samples. Spomer said the width of the road, the ground soils and overlays are different all along the way, so they would have preferred more holes drilled to cover the entire scope of the road rather than go with fewer holes that could create change orders along the way, increasing the risk of cost overruns.

"We want to get the repairs done for a reasonable cost," Spomer said. "More soil information will help with that in the design aspect."

Commission vice chair Phil Scheel disagreed, saying he didn't think there would ever be a perfect design and doesn't see throwing a ton of money or time at it.

Commissioner John Lumley and commission chair Tom Ryan disagreed.

"We're spending Hot Springs County's money," Ryan said, "so we want to do it right. Its worth the extra time."

Knowing the depth of the asphalt, the base of it and the soils in the area are critical to the job and change all along the road.

The commissioners determined WYDOT geology can drill the 65-70 test holes, spaced about 700 feet apart along the road, but they will have Rimrock Engineering drill extra test holes in addition to WYDOT's proposal.

HSCHS ACT scores come in below state average

by Cindy Glasson

The Wyoming Department of Education released the ACT data for students who took the test this spring.

Those students who took the statewide test were juniors this spring, incoming seniors this fall.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jillian Balow, said, "The ACT is a college readiness exam that opens doors for Wyoming students through the Hathaway Scholarship."

"By 2020, 65 percent of all jobs will require training beyond high school according to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce. These results show that through the Hathaway Scholarship, nearly 70 percent of our students have better access to that training at our community colleges or the University of Wyoming."

Hot Springs County juniors who took the test this spring show an 18.3 composite average. The 44 students averaged 17.1 in English, 17.7 in math, 18.9 in reading and 18.8 in science.

Their average scores are 1.2 lower than the state average of 19.5. This is also a significant drop, 1.5, from their 2016/2017 scores.

There are four levels available to Wyoming students for the Ha-

thaway Scholarship, Honors, Performance, Opportunity and Provisional.

In order to qualify for Honors, students must score at least 25 on the ACT. Performance requires a score of at least 21, Opportunity, 19 and Provisional, 17.

Working toward raising scores

Hot Springs County High School is working to raise the bar and close the gap in student learning according to high school principal Breez Daniels. The following statement was received from Daniels in response to questions regarding the ACT scores.

"A traditional high school often suffers from "cohort" achievements. This means that some classes of students (a grade level cohort) perform well over time, they compete with each other for honors and tend to drive up scores as a group. While another cohort may suffer from more than one year of ineffective instruction during their K-12 experience and become frustrated with learning, driving down overall scores.

Our vision at Hot Springs County High School is to create a no opt out learning environment where

every student is academically on track to achieve their individual best results each school year. This year there are 131 enrollments in concurrent enrollment/dual credit college classes, in comparison to 114 last school year. At HSCHS we believe all students are capable of learning at high levels.

Transitioning to this type of learning environment where teachers and students work together to achieve learning goals has not come without growing pains. This type of learning culture requires students to turn in every assignment and retake assessments until they can demonstrate proficiency. For the teacher this creates a cycle of teaching, re-teaching, and interventions to support students each week. Students are taught responsibility by not being allowed to opt out of learning. The best way to learn to be responsible is to be required to be responsible.

The lower ACT composite score of 18.3 in spring 2018, 1.5 percent lower than the 19.8 average composite the previous year, was not a surprise for HSCSD1. Student scores are tracked over time and several interventions such as

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