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Thermopolis
Hot Springs

Independent Record

SPECIAL INTERNET PREVIEW

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Election voting certified

Official election results have been received from Hot Springs County Clerk Hans Odde after canvassing that was held Thursday, Nov. 8 at the courthouse.

Representatives from both parties, Ann Deromedi and Marlene Christofferson, along with Odde, worked their way through approximately 2,800 ballots by hand to ensure the numbers were correct.

One of the races in question was the Kirby Town Council where Ross Rhodes, Jessica Slagle and Raymond Nettles each received 15 votes for the two available seats on the council.

With a three-way tie, state statutes require drawing lots to break the tie for the winners of the two seats. The tie was con-

firmed and, in this case, the winners were Slagle and Nettles.

There was a shifting of a single vote for three candidates in the Hot Springs County School District board election as well.

The initial vote tallies for school board are in parentheses followed by the certified vote totals:

Travis Bomengen, (1,653) 1,653

Melissa Johnson, (1,421) 1,422

Joe Martinez, (1,116) 1,117

Britnee Nelson, (719) 720

Daniel Pebbles, (1,114) 1,114

Clay Van Antwerp, (1,575) 1,575

Therefore, incumbents Bomengen, Van Antwerp and Mar-

tinenez were re-elected along with

newcomer Melissa Johnson. Karen Leyba, whose seat was up along with Bomengen, Van Antwerp and Martinez, did not run for re-election.

Excellent voter turnout
According to Odde, 2,541 of the 2,714 registered voters in Hot Springs County cast their ballots in the General Election. That was 93.63 percent.

Odde said 567 of the 576 absentee ballots that were sent out were completed and returned in time to be counted in the election, which is a 98 percent response – the best ever for Hot Springs County.

He said 21 percent of the county voters who cast ballots were through the absentee option.

Turkey trotters



Twenty people braved cold, wind and snow to participate in the Turkey Trot at the high school track on Saturday. Leading the pack, left to right, are Amy Anderson, Anna Wassing and Andy Wassing. See page 6 for results. — Cindy Glasson photo

Town to sponsor CBD grant for new H.O.P.E. Agency building

by J.D. Stetson

The Thermopolis Town Council agreed to set a public hearing to hear a request from the H.O.P.E. Agency to sponsor a Community Development Block Grant for a new building.

Agency Director Jennifer Domhoff requested a hearing during the Nov. 6 council meeting.

Domhoff said the agency wishes to demolish its current building on the northwest corner of Big Horn and Springview streets and to rebuild in the same spot.

Mayor's Assistant Fred Crosby informed the

council of the protocol to advertise the public hearing at least 10 days before the hearing in order to inform the public.

The agency did not have an estimated cost of the project, but Crosby said he thought the maximum allowable amount for the grant is about \$500,000.

As the sponsor, the state funds would flow through the town, but the H.O.P.E. Agency would be responsible for the application and construction details.

Domhoff said the agency's deadline for submitting the application is Jan. 15.

The public hearing is scheduled to take place during the Dec. 4 council meeting.

Other business

The council accepted a bid for a new furnace and improved insulation at the town cottage near the Town Shop on Sorenson Street. The cottage has traditionally been used to host Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings.

The winning bid for the furnace was \$1,500 to Stehlin Plumbing and the bid for the insulation went for \$1,120 to Shaffer Construction.

Town Attorney Mike Messenger also provided a new draft of a franchise fee agreement with Cablevision. After review, the council asked Messenger to contact Cablevision for the final version of the agreement.

Crosby also announced the town has now started to accept credit cards and electronic funds transfers through banks as alternate ways for customers to pay their utility bills.

Crosby said there is an additional fee for the credit cards in order to recoup the cost of the equipment and service.

Chamber sets date, location of 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament

by J.D. Stetson

After months of seeking input on whether to change the date or location of the 2013 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament, the Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors have chosen to leave the tournament downtown and during the first weekend of May – May 4-5, 2013.

At its board meeting Nov. 8, the board discussed the feedback from a special meeting in October and possible changes to the layout of the tournament.

Board President Meri Ann Rush stated the board needed to set a date and time for the tournament in order to continue pursuing a one-year contract with World Events to organize and run the tournament.

Rush said the contractor has already taken steps to address some of the board's concerns regarding the 2012 tournament, which included bracketing and personnel issues.

Keeping the tournament the first weekend in May also prevents the tournament from conflicting with other 3-on-3 Tournaments in the state, but it also increases the chances of poor weather.

The board discussed some alternatives in case

of poor weather and decided the 3-on-3 Committee should create a backup plan.

A proposed change to the layout of the tournament would place the courts on Fifth Street between Warren and Arapahoe streets with vendors along Broadway Street in front of Thermopolis Town Hall.

The change would allow customers access to various downtown businesses along Broadway Street during the tournament. Businesses would also be able to set up booths in front of their shops.

The board also discussed the formation of a volunteer committee to find a coordinator for the various volunteers for the tournament.

Christmas parade

The chamber will host the 2012 Thermopolis Lighted Christmas Parade Saturday, Nov. 24 starting at 6 p.m.

The board discussed the possibility of working with the Hot Springs County High School Student Council to nominate and choose a Snow King and Snow Queen for the parade, which is a former tradition the board wishes to bring back.

The board also discussed groups that will

be roasting chestnuts during the parade and some other ideas to help make the parade a future success.

The board decided it needed to invite various volunteers and others to join the Christmas Committee in order to build new ideas for next year's parade.

The parade lineup will be at 5:30 p.m. near the Senior Center. The route will run west on Arapahoe Street to Fifth Street, south to Broadway Street, west on Broadway until the turnaround at Sixth Street and then run back down Broadway to end at Bicentennial Park.

Float entries are due to the chamber at 5 p.m. Nov. 21. For more information, contact the chamber at 864-3192.

Lodging tax

The executive committee of the chamber board, which includes Rush, vice president Phillip Scheel and secretary/treasurer Tawna McQueen, asked the board to approve a compromise with the Thermopolis-Hot Springs County Lodging Tax Board with regard to a billboard the chamber owns, but has traditionally been governed by the lodging tax board.

In July, the chamber renewed a five-year lease with Kent Hesselthaler for a billboard south of Thermopolis.

Under the compromise, the lodging tax board would reimburse the chamber the \$1,250 paid for the lease and the board would continue to manage the billboard as it has always done.

The lodging tax board informed the chamber board that if the chamber chose to keep the billboard and offer it to the chamber's members, the chamber would be responsible for insurance, maintenance and any other unforeseen expense of the billboard.

Because the lodging tax board is not allowed to own property under state law, the ownership of the board would remain with the chamber. Historically, the lodging tax board paid to construct the billboard on the property.

The board discussed the merits of the compromise and decided the chamber logo should appear on the billboard along with any other materials the lodging tax board chooses to include on the billboard.

The chamber board members also wanted to get the compromise lease agreement in writing with the lodging tax board.

Reading On the Rooftop



Thermopolis Middle School Principal Breeze Daniels, Superintendent Dustin Hunt and Special Services Director Jason McArthur try to keep warm while reading 20 pop-

ular middle school books on the rooftop Monday during the Reading On the Rooftop Challenge. The challenge lasted from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. — J.D. Stetson photo

Early deadline for IR Nov. 22 edition

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, next week's Thermopolis Independent Record will be published a day early. The Nov. 22 issue will go to press on Tuesday rather than Wednesday and will be available around town Tuesday evening, Nov. 20. Most mailed copies will arrive in post office boxes and on county rural routes Wednesday morning, Nov. 21.

Since we'll publish early, the display advertising and public notices deadline for the Nov. 22 issue will be 5 p.m. Friday. The deadline for classified ads is noon Monday.

The deadline for submission of information for stories will be noon Monday rather than Tuesday. Our office will be closed Thanksgiving Day, but will be open Friday, Nov. 23 for regular business hours.

Thanksgiving services

The Community Thanksgiving Service will be held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 20 at the Community Federated Church. This annual service gives our community an opportunity to come together to thank God for His blessings, to pray for the needs of our country and local community, and to spend time in fellowship over refreshments after the service.

A free-will offering will be taken at the service for the Tran-

sition Fund to assist individuals/families passing through town who approach any of our churches for a meal, gas or overnight lodging.

Churches sponsoring this service are: Community Church, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Hot Springs Christian Church, Living Waters Assembly of God Church, Risen Son Southern Baptist Church, River of Life Fellowship and St. Francis Catholic Church.