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After crashing into Dillon Matheson, Brad Beccera's car comes to rest on the roof of Matheson's car during heat 2 of the Thermopolis Demolition Derby. The heat was stopped and restarted after Beccera's car was moved back to the ground. Matheson continued driving. More Derby photos will be posted on our Facebook page. — Joe Sovia photo

Commissioners approve hospital district for ballot in special election

by Cindy Glasson
The citizens of Hot Springs County will get the chance to have their voice heard regarding a hospital district at a special election slated for Nov. 5 after a public hearing held by the Hot Springs County Commissioners Tuesday afternoon.

The commissioners' chambers were filled with about 30 people for the public hearing with 14 of them speaking out both in favor of and against a district.

The meeting started with County Clerk Hans Odde explaining the process involved in requesting a special election for the proposed district.

Commission chairman Brad Basse reminded the public the issue of the district is a tax issue, not whether or not a new hospital is to be built, and the question before the commissioners is if a proposed district should be decided by a special election or held until the general election in 2014.

After nearly an hour-and-a-half of public opinion, Basse closed the public hearing before calling for a vote.

Before voting, each of the commissioners had comments regarding the issue at hand.

"I recognize that the hospital is a significant portion of what is needed for this community,"

commissioner Mike Baker said. "We are recognized as a great place to retire, too, and it's important for those who live here."

"I think the mix we have with the thought of a new hospital and a hospital district is very much a stir in this community. It's making it very confusing. They need to be clarified, separated."

"I would like to see it held (voting on the district) until 2014."

"I concur there is some confusion," commissioner John Lumley said. "We do need to educate the public about the differences, but I'm not sure waiting would make it any better in people's minds."

"They will either educate themselves or not, no matter whether we put it on a ballot now or later."

"I've been very supportive of this the whole time," Basse said. "I figure it's going to cost me about \$100 a year in taxes and that's a small price to pay. I spend more than that in a year on coffee."

"I want to place it on the ballot at the time it has the best possible chance of passing, and I feel now is that time."

The special election for a hospital district passed with aye votes from Basse and Lumley and a nay vote from Baker.

Munger claims Demo Derby title

by Joe Sovia

It was a Thermopolis driver who broke Rob Laing's supremacy in the Thermopolis Demolition Derby on Saturday evening at the Hot Springs County Fairgrounds arena.

Laing had won three consecutive derby crowns, but Aaron Munger unseated the Casper driver — claiming top honors with the win in the 10-car championship heat in front of an overflow crowd. Munger took home a \$2,000 first-place check.

Munger took the hard road to the derby title. His red "Cap'n Crunch" car was knocked out in the very first heat of the evening. However, Munger made it through the losers' heat and went on to the finals to win it all.

Brad Beccera finished second, earning \$1,000 — giving Thermopolis a 1-2 finish in the annual event. Kyle McIntosh of Greybull was third (\$700) and Laing was fourth (\$500).

Thermopolis drivers closed out the top seven finishers. Zack Larson was fifth (\$300), Jason Bowman sixth (\$200) and Jason Weyer seventh (\$100).

In the much-anticipated five-entrant Truck Derby — a new Demolition Derby event — Nathan Sargent of Thermopolis was the winner, earning \$500. Two other local drivers finished in the money, as Cody Hensley was second (\$400) and Luke Kimes third (\$300).

Despite a fire under the hood of her Y-4 car, Ashley Rollings of Worland won the three-entrant

women's Herbie Derby. She won \$500. Thermopolis drivers Taylor Sprigg and Lisa Shaffer were second (\$400) and third (\$300), respectively.

That same Y-4 car whose fire had to be extinguished by volunteer firemen was driven by Alex Campbell in the men's Herbie Derby, which paid three local drivers. Travis Long was the winner (\$500). Campbell was second (\$400) and John Cramer third (\$300).

Munger and Bowman emerged from the losers' heat to earn a berth in the championship heat, each winning \$75. The top two finishers in heats 1 through 4 each pocketed \$75 and moved on to the finals.

Here are the heat winners:

Heat 1 — John Harter and Dylan Shaffer. Heat 2 — Hensley and Beccera. Heat 3 — McIntosh and Laing. Heat 4 — Weyer and Larson.

Excitement early in Derby

There was no shortage of excitement during this year's Demolition Derby.

Less than a minute into heat 2, car No. 77 — driven by Beccera — crashed into the passenger side of No. 68, driven by Dillon Matheson while going backwards. Beccera's big Cadillac rolled onto the roof of Matheson's car — crushing the right-front part of the roof. To avoid possible injury to Matheson, officials stopped the heat. Steve Jellis and Julia Schleusner used their Bobcat skid-steers to

move Beccera's car back to the ground, then modified the roof to make the car drivable. With Matheson uninjured, the heat continued, and Beccera and Hensley wound up having the last two cars moving to advance to the finals.

After lots of crashing and banging in the women's Herbie Derby, Rollings and Sprigg collided once again. The result was a gasoline fire under Rollings' hood. Within 30 seconds, volunteer firemen had the fire extinguished. That ended the women's Herbie with Rollings declared the winner. Sprigg was at a disadvantage with her purple and gold car, painted in memory of LeRoy Hayes. She drove most of the heat with only the front wheels of the car turning.

Weyer, who was runner-up in last year's Demolition Derby, had a couple of mechanical problems. He spent most of his prep time before the finals welding a broken motor mount. Once in the arena for the finals, his fuel pump went out — ending his evening prematurely. Weyer said Sunday he already has his Derby car for next year — a station wagon.

Frankie Getzfreid and Darrell Ike were the first two drivers knocked out in the Truck Derby, followed by Kimes. Sargent's pickup was hung up facing a dirt berm on the north end of the arena, with Hensley locked in behind him. Sargent was able to rock his truck backwards, breaking Hensley's hold. Sargent went on to the victory by delivering the fatal blow as Hensley had to sur-

render since a fire started in his engine compartment.

Derby another success

The annual Thermopolis Demolition Derby is a Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce event.

"The derby was another great success," chamber president Phillip Scheel said. "We had a few less cars, but the Truck Derby picked up some of that slack. I'm excited about the enthusiasm the Truck Derby brought. I anticipate it to grow and be an important part of the Derby."

According to Scheel, the Demolition Derby is the most attended event each year at the fairgrounds arena. "This year was no exception," he said.

Scheel was pleased to see a driver from Thermopolis take home the first-place money.

"The winner's check goes to a hometown boy. Congratulations to Aaron," he said.

Scheel said "hats off" to all the Derby organizers and other volunteers as well as the Thermopolis Volunteer Fire Department and Hot Springs County Fair Board for making the event possible. Scheel indicated Dick Dickeson was in the crowd's nest to announce his 14th consecutive Derby.

Jellis, Schleusner and Stevie Ann Jellis donated their time and Bobcat skid-steers to keep the arena in great shape during the Derby. They also applied water inside the arena before the Derby to keep down the dust and dirt.

Healthy-opolis sign-ups being taken

Hot Springs County agencies are now ready to start accepting participants for Project Healthy-opolis.

The program constitutes the county's communitywide federally required assessment and will focus on the nationwide epidemic of obesity.

Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital is partnering with Prevention Management Organization of Wyoming Hot Springs County Office, Hot Springs County Public Health,

Hot Springs County Counseling Center and others to facilitate the program.

According to statistics gathered through state agencies, 62.7 percent of Hot Springs County residents are either obese or overweight — based on Body Mass Index (BMI).

The program will entail a class of 20 volunteers, ages 18 and over, who will attend a 15-week course focusing on local weight loss resources, affordable foods and diet and an exercise program. The program will also

involve a second group that will serve as a control group and will not change routines.

The first class will start Sept. 9 and will last from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Classes are scheduled to take place each Monday at the same time.

Interested participants are encouraged to call the front desk at the hospital at 864-3121 to sign up for either the class group or the control group. The participants have the choice which group they prefer.

Rotary Turtle Trek drawing Saturday

The Eighth Annual Great American Turbo Turtle Trek is scheduled for 1 p.m. Saturday in the cooling ponds at Hot Springs State Park. The event is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Thermopolis.

Members in the community can adopt a turtle for a \$10 fee in order to win prizes should the turtle be among the first to be picked from the pond.

The grand prize is \$1,000 in

cash; second, a Mossberg 715T AR style 22LR rifle; third, big screen HDTV; fourth, weekend at Super 8 with swimming and dinner for two included; fifth, two-night stay in a deluxe room at Red Pole Lodge in Cody; sixth, one night stay and play package for two at Deadwood Gulch Gaming Resort; seventh, gas grill donated by Tumbleweed Propane; eighth, a Kindle Fire; ninth, microwave oven; and 10th, Blu-ray

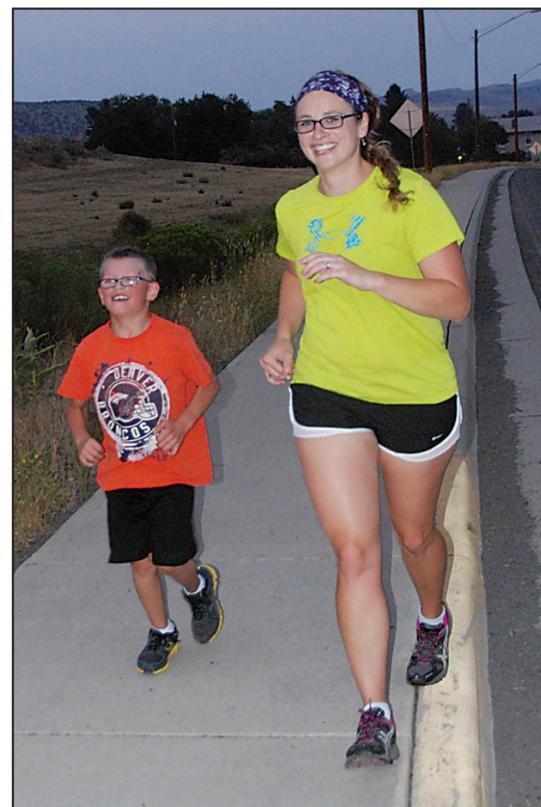
DVD player.

Other prizes include a \$100 gift certificate from Thermopolis Hardware, a \$100 gift certificate from Thermopolis EyeCare, a \$100 gift certificate to Meeteetse Chocolatier, a remote controlled Ferrari car, a remote controlled Porsche car, a Dinosaur Fossil Dig at Wyoming Dinosaur Center, a social hour party for 10 at Days Inn, a guided whitewater raft trip for four with Wind Riv-

er Canyon Whitewater, a framed print, a family pass to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, a one-night stay at Wind River Casino Hotel, a \$50 savings bond donated by Mike Messenger, a one-day swim pass for four at Star Plunge and more.

Entrants will not need to be present at the drawing to win prizes. Turtle adoption tickets can be attained from any local Rotarian.

Gottsche 5K Run



Jason Moody and Lori Moody run in the Gottsche Rehabilitation and Wellness Center Sunset 5K Aug. 15. The next monthly run will be the Family 5K Sept. 19 at a time to be determined.