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Bobcat Cheer Clinic



Hot Springs County High School cheerleader Annelisa Herold leads a group of kindergarten, first and second graders during the Bobcat Cheer Clinic Friday at Ralph Witters Elementary. The clinic was attended by several dozen elementary students who learned cheerleading basics and later showed off the moves during halftime of a high school girls' basketball game that evening. — Drew Foster photo

Thermop man wants to be out of town limits

by Drew Foster
As the saying goes: There's a first time for everything. Steve Jellis and his family want to raise a steer, shoot guns and light fireworks on their 119.5 acres in northwest Thermopolis, only town ordinances prevent them from doing any such things. Jellis could move outside town limits, or he could move town limits. He's aiming for the latter. Though, even then, at least one of those restrictions might apply. Jellis asked the Thermopolis Town Council on Feb. 4 to de-annex his 119.5 acres from Thermopolis, essentially pulling back the town limits to a point where his property would fall within Hot Springs County's agricultural zone.

"To my knowledge, this is the first de-annexation that has ever come before the Town of Thermopolis, ever," said Rick Hudson, a representative of Jellis, while addressing the council.

Council members took no action on the request, but said they'd consider it. The Hot Springs County Commission determined in November that Jellis' de-annexation would have "negligible impact on Hot Springs County."

The town would lose about \$265 annually in city property tax if Jellis' de-annexation request was approved.

One of the council's concerns was that Jellis could subdivide his property after de-annexation. Jellis said he has no plans to do so. "There's 80 acres of solid rock up there — you can't subdivide up there," Jellis said.

Instead, he said his 15-year-old daughter wants to raise a steer, and he wants to plant crops, shoot guns and light fireworks.

"I've got my hands tied with that property," Jellis told the council.

Thermop ordinance forbids lighting fireworks within five miles of town limits, so even if the de-annexation is approved, Jellis still may not be able to celebrate the Fourth of July or ring in the

New Year to his satisfaction. Mayor Bill Malloy encouraged Jellis to approach the town's variance board to allow his daughter to raise the steer.

Jellis said his property sits 2.2 miles from the spotlight in downtown Thermop. He currently receives water, but no other municipal services. If Jellis' land were to be de-annexed, he could continue to receive town water. However, continuing to use town water would allow Thermop to re-annex Jellis' land in the future, Town Attorney Mike Messenger said.

Councilmember Mike Mortimore was guardedly supportive of Jellis' proposal.

"I wish you hadn't said anything about shooting," Mortimore told Jellis before adding, "other than the gun thing, I don't see a disadvantage to having you de-annex."

Resident and former councilman Dick Hall spoke out against the proposed de-annexation. Hall said Thermop's only natural path for expansion lies to the west and would be blocked by Jellis' proposed de-annexation.

"If that's closed, the town of Thermop will be encapsulated forever," Hall told the council.

The issue was tabled until the council's first meeting in March.

3-on-3 Basketball Tournament

The town council approved downtown street closures by a 5-0 vote for the Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce's annual 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament, set for May 3 and 4. Closed will be Broadway Street from the stoplight to Fourth Street, and Fifth Street from Arapahoe to Warren streets. The basketball tournament runs from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, May 3, and from between 8 or 9 a.m. on Sunday, May 4, to whenever the brackets finish. To register, visit www.hoopworldbasketball.com. Registration costs \$130 for up to five players. For more information, call the chamber office at 864-3192.

State of the State: Mead plugs 'conservative budget'

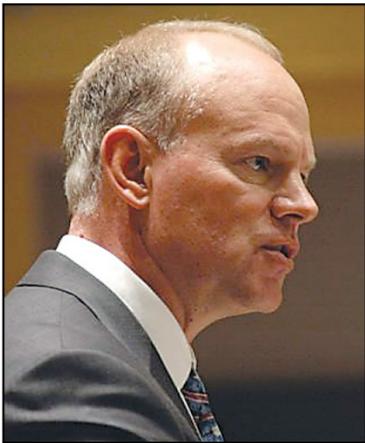
by Cindy Glasson
Wyoming Gov. Matt Mead presented his State of the State address to the 62nd Wyoming State Legislature Monday morning, kicking off the 2015-16 biennium budget session.

After many years of rising budget numbers, Mead was pleased to announce his proposed budget puts an end to the upward trend — showing a nearly flat budget in comparison to years past.

Growth and diversification were key to Wyoming's progress over the last three years, according to Mead.

"For example," he said, "we have growth in manufacturing and growth in data centers and growth in other technology-related businesses."

His budget, while conservative, includes investments in Wyoming's infrastructure, such as \$175 million earmarked for local governments, \$23.5 million for homeland



Gov. Matt Mead

security that will include funding for school and courtroom security, money to improve services for the elderly and developmentally disabled, and funding to improve state facilities such as the Boys' School, State Hospital and Veterans' Home.

The big three in Wyoming — energy, tourism and agriculture — will also get a shot in the arm with this budget, including \$29 million for the Wyoming Tourism Board and another \$30 million to State Parks and Historic Sites.

Hot Springs County could benefit from both of those line items as well as the sug-

gested \$120 million set aside for the State Loan and Investment Board (SLIB).

Push for water projects

Water projects for the state were also on the governor's mind.

"Water projects are expensive, take time and the permitting is difficult," Mead said. "They are easy to put off until tomorrow, but I submit today is the day to begin. We must all begin to push for water projects — big and small, for ag, industry, wildlife and other purposes. It will be a great legacy of this legislature to say we did all we can to protect Wyoming water."

Mead briefly spoke on a federal level, saying Obamacare has not engendered confidence as far as he was concerned, saying he wants to see proof of performance with the health care reform and does not support Wyoming expanding Medicare.

The governor concluded his remarks with kudos to local government, emergency crews, the Wyoming National Guard and law enforcement as well as citizens of the state who are an inspiration.

"Citizens are our greatest resource," he said.

2nd Friday ArtStroll focus on Valentine's Day

The Smoking Waters Art Guild (SWAG) invites the public to attend the 2nd Friday ArtStroll to be held Friday from 6 to 9 p.m. in downtown Thermopolis. The theme for this month's event is "Date Night Stroll" to coincide with the Valentine's Day holiday Friday.

"We are very excited about this month's stroll," guild member Toddi Darlington said. "The downtown restaurants will be added to our stroll lineup. Each restaurant will offer a Valentine Date Night Stroll special."

Participants will again have their map

signed at each store for a chance to win one of several gifts given by stroll participants. Present your map to the participating restaurant of your choice and you will receive a special valentine gift. Some restaurants are offering a free valentine dessert with your meal; others are giving a discount or a free gift. In addition to the involvement of restaurants, some businesses will be hosting area artists.

Storyteller Books and Espresso is proud to host the work of nine artists who belong to a group called WAV (We of Artistic Vision). This is the first loca-

tion the group will have their quilts on display. There will also be a three-ring binder of artist statements and descriptions of their quilts.

Local artwork will include jewelry maker Linda Simpson; quilt and textile artist Gayle Phipps; visual artists AB Word and Barrie Bryant; and stained glass artist Marcia Nelson, along with several other artists. Also enjoy live music as part of the 2nd Friday Artstroll this Friday.

There will be at least 10 merchants participating in this month's 2nd Friday

ArtStroll. Here are the businesses and their special offers:

- Las Fuentes — Free valentine dessert with meal purchase and presentation of map.
- Front Porch Deli — Free cookie with presentation of map.
- Bangkok Thai Restaurant — Free valentine dessert with meal purchase and presentation of map.
- Wonderful House — Special offer to be announced.
- Broadway Bygones — Linda Simpson, jewelry artist and live music.

- Storyteller — Textile and visual artist Gayle Phipps and WAV quilts.
- Flying Eagle Gallery — Visual artists AB Word and Barrie Bryant.
- Connie's Corner — Stained glass artist Marcia Nelson.
- Hazel-n-Pearl's — Homemade treasures.
- W.O.W. Discount Store — Visual artists Angela Siem, and Gavin and Rachel Turner.

According to Darlington, other artists could be added to the ArtStroll lineup by Friday evening.

Fireman's Ball in spotlight Saturday

The Thermopolis Volunteer Fire Department's annual Fireman's Ball will be held Saturday night at VFW Post 2281.

Beginning at 6 p.m. Saturday, the firefighters' awards banquet will be held at the fire hall on 14th Street. The Fireman's Ball dance, which is open to the public, begins at 9 p.m. at the VFW. Dakota Country, a South Dakota band, returns to provide the music for the dance.

Tickets for the fundraiser drawing are \$2 apiece and can be purchased at the door. Attendance to the ball is free, but donations are accepted, Fire Chief Mark Collins said, adding that last year's event raised roughly \$9,000.

Prizes include gift certificates ranging from \$50 to \$300 and are redeemable at any business in Hot Springs County. Drawings for prizes will be held during the dance.

Collins indicated net proceeds from the fundraiser will go toward purchasing equipment needed by the volunteer fire department.

Sweetheart of a Garage Sale

To celebrate Valentine's Day, the first Sweetheart of a Garage Sale will be featured Saturday

at the Thermopolis VFW. The event is sponsored by the VFW Ladies Auxiliary. Hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

According to organizers, the garage sale is expected to be a tremendous success — given the number of local and out-of-town vendors who will participate.

There will be about 20 tables of items, including antiques, guns, tools, crafts, food and drinks. There will also be many household items, including furniture.

There will be a table with muffins and coffee for purchase from 9 to 10:30 a.m. A soup lunch will be offered from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The VFW Ladies Auxiliary is holding a raffle this week, culminating at the end of Saturday's garage sale. Tickets are \$1 each or six for \$5. Prizes, donated by the auxiliary, include a Justin barbed wire leather hand-tooled belt buckle, 4-foot tall Easter egg tree and blooming winter bulbs.

Tickets can be purchased during the garage sale. Proceeds will be donated to the Thermopolis Volunteer Fire Department.

No early bird shopping will be allowed at the garage sale. The doors open at 9 a.m. Saturday.

4-H dual-purpose cake



From left, Hayden Johnson, Lance Axtell and Mac McCumber have fun playing with and eating the construction cake at the 4-H chili supper and auction Saturday. There were 165 people served and \$3,400 raised for local 4-H clubs. — Joe Sova photo