



Something doesn't smell right

by Cindy Glasson

A couple of cracked pipes in the Law Enforcement Center sent maintenance director Anthony Fruciano on a mission to discover what the cause was.

The first indication something was amiss happened when water appeared in the ceiling tiles above the judge's chambers. Fruciano found a two-foot section of pipe with a crack in it, cut that section out and replaced it.

Then on Sunday, about 1 a.m., a call came from dispatch that there was not only water, but the smell was unbearable.

Fruciano found a six-foot section of pipe with

an 18" crack in it, leaking water from the jail kitchen, accounting for the smell.

The pipe taken out is known as Orangeburg Pipe, a combination of wood pulp and pitch compressed together. Used from the 1860s until the 1970s when it was discontinued, Fruciano said you can tell just from the look of it what is Orangeburg.

The real question is how, in the 1980s, the Orangeburg got into the Law Enforcement Center. Several areas have now been identified as having the discontinued pipe and the maintenance crew will be looking through every nook and cranny to find it all so it can be

replaced with PVC.

FBO Nate Messenger talked with the commissioners about the possibility of the county putting in a large hangar out at the new airport.

Messenger said he had recently had some cancellations due to the lack of hangar space for overnight stays.

If such a hangar were to be built, one that would hold larger aircraft as well, the pilots or plane owners would be charged a per-night fee for parking at the airport, a common practice.

It would not only bring in some money from

See Commissioners on page 8



photo by Mark Dykes

Celebrating Dr. Seuss

Crazy hats and hair were part of a fun week celebrating Dr. Seuss at Ralph Witters Elementary, and students brought plenty of flair to their classrooms and the cafeteria. Enjoying their lunch are, left to right, Payton Straley, Peighton Vargas and Zennin Sosa.

Education budget still in negotiations

\$150 million difference between House and Senate budgets

by Mark Dykes

Though he and others are eagerly awaiting news regarding the education budget, Senate District 20 representative Wyatt Agar said Tuesday afternoon that the matter was still in "round robins" with Appropriations, essentially in closed door negotiations.

The Senate and the House, Agar said, both know what they've voted on and both sides were just waiting to see the end result. He noted there was a \$150 million difference between the budgets the House and Senate have passed out.

Much of what the Senate has voted for deals with SF117, which focuses on modifying the education resource block grant model, amending worker's compensation provisions related to school finance, providing for a hold harmless provision and requirements for reports and other administrative action.

Agar was unsure of what would come from the Appropriations, but noted all of the stakeholders were able to have a voice at the table.

Other "hot button" topics that are on the horizon, Agar said, include looking at the House

version of the "stand your ground" Senate file, which addresses issues such as modifying when defensive force can be used and civil liabilities. Agar doesn't expect the House bill to be much different from the Senate file.

Also forthcoming is House Bill 14, which addresses extraterritorial jurisdictions and municipalities. Early on, Agar said, the Wyoming Association of Municipalities really pushed back on this, but they have since been working with the County Commissioners Association to draft a copy everyone is comfortable with.

Investigation of internal dispute involving Curley

by Lara Love

According to Frank Eathorne, Wyoming Republican Party Chairman, an allegation of assault against Wyoming Republican Party Secretary Charles Curley is "an important issue that is under investigation."

The allegations surfaced Tuesday when Nate Martin of Better Wyoming issued a statewide release stating "Curley reportedly became angry at Wyoming GOP Executive Director Kristi Wallin as the two of them and others boxed up leftovers from the Laramie County Republican Party's Lincoln Day Dinner on February 23."

The release states that the two verbally argued, and as Wallin at-

tempted to walk away from Curley, Curley allegedly grabbed Wallin and began violently shaking her, tearing her shirt.

Martin states that his information is based off of interviews from sources in and around the Jonah Building during the Wyoming State Legislature's 2018 budget session. Curley was contacted Tuesday evening and declined to comment at this time.

According to the Better Wyoming release, Curley has been asked to resign his position with the Wyoming Republican Party and has refused. When asked to respond, Eathorne politely declined to comment regarding that statement.

However, he did explain the process involved during the investigation. Eathorne noted the Republican State Central Committee will meet soon to hear the allegations and evidence then determine if further action should be taken.

"We will be following the due process stated in our by-laws and Robert's Rules of Order," added Eathorne.

The Better Wyoming release states "Sources say Wallin is potentially reluctant to press charges against Curley because she's afraid of what Curley might do if he's backed into a corner. Others have said Wallin has retained counsel."

During a phone interview Tuesday evening, Martin said he had

been made aware that a police report had been filed with the Cheyenne Police Department. Proof of a police report or a copy of said police report was not available at press time.

Curley has been an active member of the Hot Springs County GOP, serving as Vice Chairman in 2010-11 and Chairman in 2013-14. He served as a delegate to the 2016 Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio.

Curley refers to his political platform as "Grass roots."

The Thermopolis Independent Record staff will be following this developing story closely and will issue further developments as they arise.

Council approves second reading

by Mark Dykes

Tuesday night, the Thermopolis Town Council approved the second reading of an ordinance with RT Communications, allowing the company to put telecommunications lines on town property to provide and maintain communications lines, except where they are restricted.

In other action, council approved of a street closure for Oktobrewfest. The closure is for Broadway from Fourth to Fifth during the event, which is on October 6. Council also approved of the use of the old fire hall for the bands to set up.

Oktobrewfest will be from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m. this year, and include activities such as music through the event, a bouncy house, Cornhole tournament and various food and non-food vendors.

Mayor Mike Mortimore was approved to sign letters of support for the Big Horn Basin Nature and Discovery Joint Powers Board and the Hot Springs Greater Learning Foundation's pursuit of grants from the Laura Musser Foundation and the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund. The grants would be used to help build the Big Horn Basin Nature and Discovery Center's Children's Outdoor Learning Area.

In October of 2009, the town joined with the Hot Springs County Commissioners to form a joint powers board to oversee the planning, construction and operation of the Nature and Discovery Center. The Children's Outdoor Learning Area is the first phase of the venture. The Joint Powers Board and Greater Learning Foundation are working together to seek grant funding for the children's area.

Toddi Darlington, chair for the Joint Powers Board, further described the project, which will include entrances into the state park, a small parking lot and sidewalks around the lot and the children's area. Sidewalks will also take

See Town on page 8