



Two bound over on drug charges

by Mark Dykes

Daniel L. Ford and Samantha V. Vandervort have been bound over to Hot Springs County District Court on charges against them. Among other counts, both are facing charges related to drugs.

Ford is charged with felony counts of wrongful taking or disposing of property and two counts of possession of a controlled substance, as well as two misdemeanor counts of use of a controlled substance. Vandervort is charged with a felony of causing bodily injury to an officer and misdemeanor possession of methamphetamine.

According to court documents, on April 24 officers executed a search warrant on Ford's residence. The house was photographed prior, and during the search several used needles were found in Ford's bedroom; there were several exposed needles and others with caps. An officer noted the syringes are consistent with drug use.

Also located were several spoons with burn marks and containing a white powdery substance/residue. One spoon also had a hard piece of cotton in it. An unopened package of syringes was also located. Elsewhere in the house was found a copper pipe, a "T"

shaped pipe, a grinder and green material believed to be marijuana.

In the garage, officers located a four-wheeler that was torn apart — fender kits identified the vehicle as a Yamaha Big Bear — a leaf blower, gas cans and a back seat rest for a four-wheeler. Officers were aware of a theft case being investigated that involved a leaf blower, a Yamaha Big Bear, three two-gallon gas cans and a chainsaw. The items were reported missing from a location about 2.5 blocks away from Ford's

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photo by Cindy Glasson

Planting for the future

Sixth graders from Thermopolis Middle School worked hard last week planting four new trees in Hot Springs State Park as part of the Arbor Day celebration. The celebration was sponsored by the Red Dirt Master Gardeners and each student went on a nature hike to identify different species of trees in the park, learned about the proper planting techniques for trees and even got to take home a bush to plant.

Council approves ordinance on loud vehicle pipes

by Mark Dykes

Tuesday night, Thermopolis Town Council approved an ordinance which repeals Town Code Section 10-123 and reenacts it to read that it shall be unlawful for any person to engage or participate in any motor vehicle speed or acceleration contest, commonly known as a drag race, or to engage or participate in any exhibition of speed or acceleration on any street in the town limits.

Further, the ordinance states it's unlawful for any person to engage in exhibition of a motor vehicle's pipe or mufflers without acceleration, commonly known as racking the pipes, or creating a disturbance with loud pipes or mufflers. This provision may be cited in lieu of any breach of peace ordinance or code section.

Town Attorney Mike Messenger said the language was updated as previous language would make it difficult to prosecute drag racing. The provision regarding loud pipes and mufflers was added, Messenger said, because people with loud mufflers or no mufflers like to "rev the hell out of the pipes," and there was no provision to deal with that. Mayor Mike Mortimore expressed concern that the ordinance would negatively affect people getting vehicles ready for the demolition derby. That is not the intent of the ordinance, Messenger said, and it is more to address what's happening in the streets and late at night.

As the ordinance was presented in an emergency situation, it does not require the regular three readings prior to being approved. The ordinance states an emergency exists because of problematic language in Town Code Section 10-123 and drivers who are violating that section.

In other action, council approved the street closure for the Gift of the Waters Pageant Parade on Saturday, Aug. 5. Also during the meeting, Town Engineer Anthony Barnett provided an update on some water projects. With regard to lines in Hot Springs State Park, Barnett said things were going pretty well but the hot water line behind the Wyoming Pioneer Home broke and will need replacing.

Regarding the recent break on Canyon Hills, Barnett said Wilson Brothers, who is already working on the water line replacement project, will fix the break as well. It's estimated the fix will be during the week of July 18.

Another water topic has been drainage issues along upper Fremont. The issues were brought to the attention of council by Ray and Belinda Moore, and Barnett reported that Big Horn Redi Mix was chosen to go into two different locations to drain what water they can. It will not alleviate the entire problem, he said, but will lower the groundwater to the level where it can go into the storm drain.

Another topic brought up at the meeting was in regard to a company that wants to contact citizens and inform them their service lines from their homes to the main are their responsibility. The company provides contracts in which they will pay up to \$8,500 if such lines need to be replaced. Acting almost like a franchise agreement, the company would pay the Town \$1 for each contract signed.

Messenger said people should exercise caution if they choose to sign up for a contract, as using a credit card could mean the contract would renew automatically unless a person was vigilant. Messenger further pointed out that the contracts are for service lines only, and the company providing them is not liable for anything inside the home.

Choice made for new enhanced 9-1-1 system

by Cindy Glasson

The Hot Springs County Commissioners made a choice for funding of the proposed new enhanced 9-1-1 system at their meeting on Tuesday afternoon.

After going through the offers from various local banks as well as Motorola, the company creating the system, the commissioners determined they would take the funding offer through Big Horn Federal which carried the lowest interest rate for the 10-year term.

The county's IT coordinator, Dean Peranteaux, will contact Motorola to get the system going, which the commissioners would like to have installed as soon as August.

Via conference call, Thane Magelky with Malone Belton Abel P.C., the company working toward a solution for the roof on the multi-purpose building, the commissioners

were updated as to the costs they are looking at.

A contract, including a warranty, has been sent to the original roofing contractor for his perusal. If he is in agreement with the contract, it will then go to the commissioners for review.

If everyone is on board, the repairs to the roof could be done in June with the insulation to be completed shortly after.

The commissioners decided to go with a foam insulation option rather than traditional batting insulation as it will sit directly against the roof. Magelky said it is very difficult to get batting insulation tight enough to be effective and requires more upkeep.

The hope is to have the entire project finished before the county fair the first part of August.

