



Overfield to fill judicial vacancy

by Mark Dykes

With the retirement of Fifth Judicial District Court Honorable Judge Robert E. Skar in October, a decision was made by Governor Matthew Mead to appoint attorney Bobbi Overfield to the fill the vacancy.

Born and raised in Riverton, Overfield grew up on the farm owned by her family, the Carlsons. She attended the University of Wyoming, completing her undergraduate work in 1999 with a degree in Rangeland Ecology and Watershed Management, then earning her JD at the UW College of Law in 2002. She took a job the same year with Corthell and King, a law firm in Laramie, as the city prosecutor.

She explained the firm had a general practice and was contracted to do the city's prosecution, similar to what is done in Thermopolis.

After three years with Corthell and King, her husband Heath was offered a position managing the Engineering Associates office in Thermopolis in 2005. She began her work here the same year, alongside attorneys Mike Messenger and Ron Jurovich; Jurovich left the practice in 2012, and she and Messenger remained as partners. She has previously served as prosecutor, public defender and Circuit Court Magistrate.

Overfield has been certified as a mediator through the State of Wyoming Ag and Nat-

ural Resources Program. She has served as a mediator and Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) in numerous family law situations. She is a member of both the Wyoming and Colorado State Bar, the American Bar Association and is a Board Member of the Wyoming Trial Lawyers Association (WTLA). She served on the Executive Board for the WTLA last year and also writes the criminal law summaries for the WTLA publication the Coffeehouse.

Outside of her work she is active in the community, previously serving as the President of the Thermopolis Rotary, she participated

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photo by Mark Dykes

Dance off

Atley Benefiel, left, and Boden Deromedi show off their skills as they dance to the music of Hurricane Mesa during Ryan Bros. Trucking 60-year celebration on Saturday. In addition to the live music, people enjoyed a pictorial history of the company, games of Cornhole and refreshments including hamburgers, hot dogs, cake and a variety of drinks.

TV Draw dumping problems

by Cindy Glasson

Early this summer the students involved in the Youth Alternatives Program along with local citizens, went out on East River Road and cleaned up tons of trash, televisions, furniture and all manner of "targets" from an area known as TV Draw.

At Tuesday's County Commissioners' meeting, Youth Alternatives director Barb Rice said people are already back out there filling it up again. She suggested some signage about "No Dumping" might need to be put up in the area.

The land in question is actually a BLM allotment and the holder of the allotment has said he may close down the area entirely if the dumping continues.

The commissioners heard from Maintenance Director Anthony Fruciano a couple of weeks ago about some security issues in the jail, including locks and issues with some cells.

At that time, the commissioners agreed the original 1981 manufacturer, Southern Folger, should be the company called in to complete the repairs.

Fruciano said the company will be here the first week in October to start making the repairs. He will be shadowing the technician that will be doing the work so he can get a better understanding about



New junk is being dumped at TV Draw on East River Rd.

how it is all put together and the knowledge to be able to fix small issues when they arise.

He is also doing some research and getting bids on some security items that are needed for both district and circuit courts.

There have been some issues at the Senior Center regarding a roof leak in the area where the walk-in freezers are located.

Fruciano said there are a couple of options the commissioners could consider, one being resealing of the current roof that sits on top of the freezers, or building a roof over the top of the existing roof.

In any case, a permanent solution will need to be found.

There is some SLIB funding left from the emergency roof repairs a few months ago, so they will need to make sure those funds can be used for the new emergency.

Hot Springs County Planner, Bo Bowman met recently with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) at the old airport to go over some mitigation items that will need to be addressed before any new use for the area can be considered.

Bowman told the commissioners there were some things like old oil, paint and chemicals that will have to be disposed of. He is looking into various disposal opportunities that could be used.

Mayor explains water well project concerns

by Mark Dykes

Water has been on a lot of people's minds lately, with plenty of discussion in and outside of meetings of the Thermopolis Town Council. The Hot Springs County Rural Water Joint Powers Board has been a strong proponent for drilling a new well at Lysite Mountain in order to tap the groundwater there, and has presented a case that indicates there would be lower water rates and better tasting water for board members.

Most recently the joint powers board - consisting of the districts of Owl Creek, South Thermopolis Water District, East Thermopolis, Hot Springs County Commission and, possibly, Lucerne - has come before the town council to ask for their support in the well project. However, there are some concerns that Mayor Mike Mortimore has with the project, one of them being depreciation.

Mortimore explained the town depreciates everything it put in, for instance the tanks on Round Top. Depreciation is not done on the portion paid by the town, but on what it costs to do a project.

He noted the town funds depreciation 100 percent, and that depreciation is factored in over a given number of years.

With regard to a \$32 million project - what the Lysite Mountain well project was most recently estimated at - the goal is to have \$1 million in depreciation in 20 years. That works out to funding depreciation at about eight percent, he said, about \$50,000 per year.

Looking at a smaller example, Mortimore looked hypothetically at a \$10 piece of equipment depreciated over 10 years. If that depre-

ciation were funded at 100 percent, \$1 would be put aside each year. At the end of 10 years, you would have the \$10 to replace the item. Funding at eight percent means only eight cents would be put aside each year; a total 80 cents after 10 years rather than the needed \$10. There might be funding agencies that can help, Mortimore said, but only to 60 percent - or \$6 - meaning you would still have to come up with \$3.20 to replace the item. He pointed out this is not taking into account inflation and the probability the item will cost more in 10 years.

Funding depreciation at 100 percent was not something started when the town was first formed, Mortimore said, so it tends to be something of a forced savings account. Money for various projects, such as the sudden line break on Canyon Hills Road is often taken from depreciation reserve.

When talking about water, Mortimore said one thing that should be a red flag to everyone but doesn't seem to be is when discussion first began about doing a well there was the idea of putting one at Buffalo Creek. However, the town was not interested in having a well that would impact the Big Spring.

That could've put an end to a previous deal with Big Horn Regional, which Mortimore had joined when mayor back in the late 90s and early 2000s. He pointed out he joined in support of Lucerne, and he was originally told Ten Sleep would have enough water for everyone. However, after he left the new mayor and council were told there would need to be a new well and

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