



Drug bust results in several felony charges

by Mark Dykes

Two hearings have been scheduled in Hot Springs Circuit Court in regard to a drug bust on Nov. 24.

Raymond L. Norcutt Jr. of Casper, who attended Hot Springs County High School in the early 2000s, is scheduled for a preliminary hearing on Dec. 21 on 11 felony charges including six counts of possession with intent to deliver methamphetamine, one count of possession of meth and four counts of possession with intent to deliver various substances including oxycodone, methadone hydrochloride, oxycodone hydrochloride and hydrocodone bitartrate.

Ellie M. Quinday is scheduled for a pre-trial conference Dec. 14 on a felony count of possession of a controlled substance.

According to court documents, a Thermopolis Police officer observed a vehicle blocking an alleyway, in violation of the town code, and attempted to enforce the code. The officer turned his patrol vehicle into the alley, facing the suspect vehicle. As the patrol vehicle drew closer, the suspect vehicle also began moving and veered into a yard to pass around the patrol vehicle.

A short pursuit followed, during which the suspect vehicle veered into an oncoming traffic lane, and the vehicle was finally stopped.

The driver had no license but gave his name as Norcutt, whom the officer recalled from extensive narcotics and weapons violations relayed by various law enforcement agencies. These included a notice to be on the lookout for Norcutt trafficking meth from Casper to the Big Horn Basin and a Department of Criminal Investigation (DCI) drug bust from June of 2018 during which he was found to be in possession of 10 grams of meth.

During the stop, the officer observed Norcutt making furtive movements. Due to this and his not having a license, Norcutt was

See Bust on page 8



photo by Mark Dykes

Dance moves

Dancers Myia Medina, Hannah Lippincott, Anna Gunderson, Kaylee Bazzle and Maile McCumber bring some hip-hop moves to the Hot Springs Dance LLC's production of The Nutcracker. This year was the Christmas recital, with more than 100 dancers from Thermopolis and Worland performing.

Two named WCA Coaches of the Year

by Mark Dykes

The Wyoming Coaches Association recently named Thermopolis cross country coach Stephanie Metz and golf coach Joey Johnson as Coaches of the Year for the 2018 fall sports season.

This is Metz's sixth year with Hot Springs County School District No. 1, and she was an assistant swim coach before moving to Wyoming. She taught third grade her first year in the district, and during the past five years she has been teaching eighth grade math. One of the years she taught seventh and eighth grade math.

Metz was a middle school assistant track coach her second year working in the district, and stayed in that position for a total of two years. She became the head middle school track coach for two years after that, and this year she will move into a high school coaching role as the distance coach, as a high school assistant coach, while still getting to coach MS distance runners as well.

This was her second year as the head middle school and high school cross country coach.

As to her successes, Metz stated, "When judging the success of the programs, I look at a lot of different things, one of which is our numbers. The participation in middle school track and cross country have been awesome. I want students to stay active in whatever sport or activity interests them."

"I'm also looking at the attendance in our 5K runs. The cross country team has a goal



Stephanie Metz

to grow the 5Ks we put on for the community as a fun way to get out with family and friends on a Saturday morning. The Monster Dash we hosted in October was a huge success with over 50 participants, as was the St. Patrick's Day run last year, which were both new fundraisers we hosted. In addition, I'm incredibly proud of all the athletes that place in our championship meets, like State and Conference for cross country and Best of the Best for middle school track."

Her coaching philosophy is "modeled around the whole athlete. Not only do I want to train champions, but I expect them to be leaders for their teammates on and off the course as well. I emphasize the importance of hard work, grit and perseverance to all my athletes so they may emulate these characteristics in all facets of their life."

Metz further added, "Coaching is a very rewarding experience, and I was lucky to coach this groups of athletes. It was a tough season that required a lot of grit. The team had to pull together to get through some hardships, but they did just that. Coaching high school and middle school athletes together can be another challenge, but the high school athletes always stepped up to exemplify how to train and race like a champion. I could not be more proud of this group of athletes, it was an amazing season and I cannot wait to see what else they ac-



Joey Johnson

complish this year!"

Johnson began working and coaching golf for the district in the fall of 2018 with some reservation as he had never coached an athletic sport before. "Then I thought, I love golf; I've spent the last eight years taking my sons to junior golf tournaments and I have coached high school and college kids before, just in a different venue. So why not give it a try?"

He has always enjoyed working with youth. The first 19 years of his career he taught Vocational Agriculture and FFA and was a junior college livestock judging Coach for Northwest College in Powell from 2000-2004. During that time, he stated, "I had the distinct pleasure to work with some amazing youth and we took home ten State Championships in Livestock Judging, Horse Judging, Environmental and Natural Resources and in Agriculture Sales and Service in Wyoming and South Dakota, and we placed in the top 10 at eight of those national events at the National FFA Convention."

The highlight of his college coaching experience was winning the Second High Jr. College Team at the National Cattle Judging Contest at the Dixie National Livestock Show in Jackson, Miss., and coaching the National Champion High Individual in that same contest in the Spring of 2004.

"Working with the THS golf team this past fall will be an experience I will never forget," he stated. "For me, it's fun to get to

See Coaches on page 8

Town audit shows positive changes

by Mark Dykes

At their Nov. 29 meeting, Thermopolis Town Council approved the audit of the financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, with much appreciation for the time and work Koerwitz, Michel, Wright and Associates put into preparing it.

Among the highlights listed in the audit, the town exceeded its liabilities at June 30, 2018 by \$28,567,974 (net position), compared to \$27,705,536 in 2017. Of that, \$7,463,589 can be used to meet the government's ongoing obligations to citizens and creditors.

The town's governmental funds reported total fund balances of \$7,830,794. Of that, \$6,361,067 can be used to meet government's spending requirements.

During the year, the town's proprietary fund increased \$1,147,942 due to a grant and transfer of \$881,270 and net operating income of \$270,598.

The total assets for the fiscal year are \$33,424,387, compared to \$32,247,973 in 2017, reflecting a 3.6 percent change overall. Current and other assets

increased from \$10,269,407 in 2017 to \$11,175,301 in 2018, or 8.8 percent. Capital assets increased from \$21,978,566 to \$22,249,086, or 1.2 percent.

Current and other liabilities total \$2,759,941, and long-term liabilities total \$2,351,096 for a total \$5,111,037 in liabilities. There were also \$392,462 in deferred outflows and \$137,839 in deferred inflows.

Regarding the General Fund, at the end of the fiscal year the balance was \$5,941,031 compared to \$5,812,430 in 2017. Revenues came in at \$2,887,279 and expenditures were \$2,438,110 less than budget. When other financing uses of \$128,601 — \$310,568 in transfers out — are taken into account, the net change in the fund balance was \$128,601.

An additional finding in the audit shows the town employs a Clerk/Treasurer and two assistants in the business office. The level of staffing does not include sufficient personnel for adequate segregation of duties. The potential effect of

See Town on page 8