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Thermopolis
Hot Springs

Independent Record

SPECIAL INTERNET PREVIEW

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Fireman's Ball set Feb. 9; open to all

Mark your calendars for the 43rd Annual Fireman's Ball on Saturday, Feb. 9 at the VFW Club in Thermopolis.

For years, the Fireman's Ball was the premier event of the year in Hot Springs County. In the early days, it was a very formal affair, held close to Valentine's Day at one of the many hotel ballrooms.

Over the years, the ball has become less formal, but one thing has not changed—the firemen still hold the free event to say “thank you” to the citizens of the county for all their help during the year.

This year, Dakota Country from Belle Fourche, S.D., will be providing the music for the evening with a mixture of country, swing and rock and roll. The group has opened for

many Grand Ole Opry singers and will be sure to please all those in attendance.

You may have already received a number of tickets in the mail from the fire department for the drawings that will be held at the event. Tickets are also available at the door or from any volunteer fireman

While the dance is free, folks are encouraged to purchase the tickets to help the fire department purchase rescue tools.

The \$2 donation per ticket makes you eligible to win gift certificates ranging from \$50 to \$300 that will be usable at any business in Hot Springs County.

The dance will run from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. with drawings around 11 p.m. You need not be present to win the drawings.

100th day of school



Students at Ralph Witters Elementary School line up outside Wednesday morning to receive their 100th day of school stickers from principal Deb Brown. Each of the classrooms

did something special for the day. “You're 100 days smarter,” Brown said as the students entered the building to a little rock and roll music. — Cindy Glasson photo

Man charged in break-ins; three juveniles involved

by J.D. Stetson

Hot Springs County Sheriff's deputies and Thermopolis Police Officers have apprehended suspects in several break-ins at local businesses and churches between Jan. 20 and Jan. 23.

Deputies arrested Dru Dennis, 23, on suspicion of the burglaries and determined three boys, two 15-year-olds and a 17-year-old, were involved in the break-ins.

Dennis made his first appearance in Hot Springs County Circuit Court Friday where Judge Thomas Harrington explained the charges against Dennis.

Harrington listed the 28 total charges, which include: 10 charges of felony burglary, 10 charges of conspiracy to commit burglary, sev-

en charges of misdemeanor property destruction and one charge of felony property destruction where the damage equaled or exceeded \$1,000.

The felonies are each punishable by a maximum prison sentence up to 10 years, a maximum fine up to \$10,000 or both the fine and imprisonment.

The misdemeanors are each punishable by incarceration up to six months, a \$750 fine or both.

Break-ins

According to court documents, the police department

responded to Loonie's Bin Jan. 20 after being alerted of a possible break-in. Officers saw the door was damaged and it appeared as though someone had tried it open.

After the owner was contacted, officers determined at least two bottles of liquor were missing. It would later be found that more alcohol was taken. Law en-

forcement observed footprints at the broken door that led to the alley behind the building.

On Jan. 22 in the early morning hours, law enforcement received a report of a break-in at A Cut Above, a salon, where a window had been broken out and law enforcement found more footprints. It appeared nothing had been stolen, with the possible exception of a fire extinguisher. The damage included two broken windows, screens and a chair appeared to have been stabbed with a knife. The knife was left inside the chair.

Officers then received a report of another break-in while investigating at A Cut Above. They responded to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, where someone had broken

glass on the south side of the building. Two doors had been forced/kicked open and pry marks were found on file cabinet doors. Officers found more footprints and further damage. Nothing had appeared to have been taken.

Later that day, officers received a report of a break-in at City Rags (also known as The Marketplace) on Broadway Street where witnesses stated a glass door had been shattered. The suspects had allegedly taken a cash register with approximately \$80 inside. There was no other damage noticed.

Officers then received a report that a vehicle owned by the Hot Springs County School District and parked at

See Break-ins on page 10

Judge Thomas Harrington listed the 28 total charges against 23-year-old in Hot Springs County Circuit Court.

Education State Administration bill signed into law

Superintendent Cindy Hill filed a lawsuit in Laramie County District Court Tuesday

Senate File 104, Education State Administration, will become law after action taken by the 62nd Wyoming Legislature.

The measure passed both the House of Representatives and Senate, and was signed by Gov. Matt Mead on Tuesday afternoon. The bill was sponsored by the entire leadership of both houses of the Legislature of both parties, the co-chairmen of the Joint Education Committee and the Joint Appropriations Committee.

The bill will result in a clear separation between the powers and duties of the Superintendent of Public Instruc-

tion and the Department of Education, which will be led by interim director Dr. James O. Rose, who was appointed by the governor Tuesday. Mead will have until Dec. 1 to appoint a permanent director from a list of three nominees from the State Board of Education.

The Wyoming Supreme Court has held, “These and other constitutional expressions should leave no doubt that the legislature has complete control of the state's school system in every respect...” (Washakie Decision). The Legislature passed SF104 to meet this constitutional responsibility.

As noted by Speaker of the House Tom Lubnau, “This is not action that is taken lightly, or without diligent study and research over the course of the past several years, and ensures that we have a department that is dedicated to implementing and managing the very important educational laws and policies that the legisla-

ture has enacted to drive Wyoming's educational system to the head of the class...commensurate with the enormous investment that Wyoming has and will continue to make in our children's education, and our future.”

SF104 'financially neutral'

As it passed the Legislature, SF104 is financially neutral and does not negatively impact the state budget. It does not increase costs or add additional employees. It does fix the systemic problems that have hampered the Legislature's efforts to improve education statewide for decades.

These intrinsic dysfunctions and confusion between the policy-making role of the Legislature, and the administrative and managerial role of the Department have been noted as far back as 1985 in a Management Audit Report, again in 2006, and most recently in the series of Educational

Accountability statutes that have been adopted in 2011 and 2012 following the Legislature's frustration after essentially doubling funding for education, yet not meeting the Legislature's mandate to ensure Wyoming's graduates are career and college ready.

It was noted during debate on the bill in the House that there are many precedents for this kind of action in Wyoming history, including reorganization of the office of the elected State Auditor in 1989, and the simultaneous creation of the Department of Audit as a separate agency with the Executive branch.

House Minority Floor Leader Mary Throne noted the history surrounding the office of the superintendent during the original constitutional convention, and the many times the duties and powers of the office have been changed over time.

In her comments, Throne empha-

sized the duty and the responsibility of the Legislature to act saying, “We owe it to our children and to our constituents to do the job we are elected to do, to set policy, and to ensure those policies are followed with fidelity. It is our belief that the concept established by SF104 will stabilize the operation of education in the state and provide the public and educational community with the necessary support to carry out laws enacted by the Wyoming Legislature.”

As passed, SF104 preserves for the superintendent a number of important responsibilities including constitutional duties along with a budget and staff to accomplish those duties, but transfers in an orderly process most duties that deal with financial and administrative components.

Find information about SF104 and all other bills on the Legislature's website at www.wyoleg.gov.

Icy rapids in the Big Horn



The Big Horn River is a beautiful sight along East River Road where the water flows from under a sheet of ice and into an area of rapids. — Joe Sovo photo

Hospital Districting bill passes State Senate, enters House

by J.D. Stetson

Senate File 19, the Hospital Districting bill, has passed the State Senate and has been introduced in the House of Representatives.

The bill passed third reading in the Senate Jan. 23 by a vote of 28 in favor and 2 against. Sens. Cale Case of Fremont County and Drew Perkins of Natrona County were the dissenting votes, according to the bill's digest available on <http://legisweb.state.wy.us>.

The bill would allow county commissioners to pass a resolution to place the issue of forming

a hospital district on the election ballot for voters to decide.

It would remove current state requirements to first demonstrate that entities responsible for 25 percent of the assessed valuation and 25 percent of property taxpayers are in favor of a district before it can be placed on the election ballot.

According to the digest, the bill was introduced in the House Thursday, Jan. 24, and was referred to the House Corporations, Elections and Political Subdivisions committee for review on Friday.

Nine members of the house committee include Rosie Berger of Sheridan County, Gregg Blikre of Campbell County, James Byrd of Laramie County, Gerald Gay of Natrona County, Matthias Greene of Albany County, Dan Kirkbride of Platte/Converse Counties, Jerry Paxton of Carbon/Albany/Sweetwater Counties, Ruth Petroff of Teton County and Dan Zwonitzer of Laramie County.

As of Monday, the bill had yet to be scheduled for consideration by the committee, according to the daily committee schedule.

Break-ins

from page 1

the high school had been broken into. The driver side window had been broken out and the center console had been rummaged through. Officers watched surveillance video of the car and noticed subjects removing a box from the trunk of the school vehicle.

School employees notified law enforcement of the discovery of a cash register tray in the Ralph Witters Elementary School parking lot on Springview Street. Numerous coins were found with the tray.

Officers then received a call about a break-in at the Hot Springs County Library. Officers located a broken window and found more footprints. The suspects took a cash register tray that contained about \$200 in bills and an unknown amount in coin.

On Jan. 23, law enforcement received three more reports. The first was property damage at Risen Son Baptist Church, where nothing was taken, but the damage was similar to the damage seen at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The next was a re-

port of a second break-in at the library and the third was a break-in at the City Rags Arapahoe Street store. Jewelry and about \$120 were taken from the store. A desk drawer at the library was broken into, but nothing taken.

Investigation

Officers viewed surveillance video from the school parking lot that showed a dark, crew-cab pickup enter the lot. Law enforcement thought the pickup looked much like Dennis' truck, according to court documents.

Officers went to Dennis' home and saw the pickup and noted the similarity of tire treads that matched treads found near Loonie's Bin and City Rags.

Officers and deputies made contact with Dennis and noted several shoes on the floor of the home. Law enforcement received permission to examine the shoes and found a pair consistent with footprints found at some of the crime scenes.

Deputies interviewed Dennis, who admitted to allegedly committing the

break-ins at the library, Loonie's Bin, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Risen Son Baptist Church, A Cut Above, both City Rags and the car in the high school parking lot, according to court documents.

Dennis also admitted to allegedly breaking into a vehicle in the vicinity of Chevy Chase and Amoretti streets and taking a portable DVD player, according to court documents.

Dennis told deputies where to find some of the alleged stolen property in his home, and deputies obtained a search warrant and found several allegedly stolen items and a hammer allegedly used to break windows.

During the interview, deputies also learned of the minors' alleged involvement in the break-ins and conducted an interview with one of the minors. Deputies learned further details of the break-in at Loonie's Bin, revealing more alcohol than just two bottles was allegedly taken, and the suspects allegedly took \$36 in cash and a flag.

The interview of the minor also

revealed the suspects had allegedly entered five vehicles the night of the Loonie's Bin break-in, but they only took items from the vehicle at Chevy Chase and Amoretti streets, according to court documents.

Initial appearance

During Dennis' initial appearance in court, prosecutor Jerry Williams asked Harrington to impose a \$200,000 bond due to the extreme amount of property damage and the number of charges.

Williams also asked the judge to impose conditions requiring Dennis not to have any contact with the three minors if he is released, to check in daily with law enforcement and to not leave the county without permission from the court.

Dennis, who had requested a public defender earlier in the hearing, said he felt the bond was high, and that he would not be able to post the bond. He said he needed help to take care of issues with alcohol, and he was also currently taking medications.

Harrington commented on the affidavit and charges concerning the crime, saying the information presented was disturbing. He said he considered the crimes a "crime of violence," and that if the defendant talked to anyone who had their home, business or church broken into, he would know the traumatizing effect of the actions.

Harrington chose to impose a cash-only bond of \$250,000 and to impose bond conditions prohibiting Dennis from any contact with the minors, prohibiting Dennis from leaving the county or state without court permission, prohibiting consumption of alcohol or be in a place where alcohol is sold, prohibiting taking any drugs or medications that are not due to an active prescription, submitting to random testing and reporting to law enforcement two times a day.

He also chose to schedule a hearing for 9:30 a.m. Feb. 1 to determine if there is sufficient evidence for the charges to be bound over to Hot Springs County District Court.

HSC High School CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Thurs., Jan 31**
Girls Basketball at Meeteetse, JV/6:30 p.m.
Wrestling at Worland Triangular, 5 p.m.
- Fri., Feb. 1**
Girls Basketball at Rocky Mt., 4/5:30 p.m.
Boys Basketball at Rocky Mt., 4/7 p.m.
Wrestling at Riverton Invite
Speech at Natrona
- Sat., Feb. 2**
Girls Basketball vs. Big Piney 12/1:30 p.m.
Boys Basketball vs. Big Piney 12/3 p.m.
Wrestling at Riverton Invite
Speech at Natrona
Indoor Track at Chadron Invite
- Mon., Feb. 4**
Freshman Girls Basketball at Worland, 5 p.m.
Freshman Boys Basketball at Worland, 6:30 p.m.
- Thurs., Feb 7**
Freshman Girls Basketball at Riverton, 5 p.m.
Freshman Boys Basketball at Riverton, 6:30 p.m.
Wrestling vs. Lovell

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UROLOGY Update



TREATMENT FOR ENLARGED PROSTATE

Each year, millions of men in the United States are affected by non-cancerous enlargement of the prostate ("benign prostatic hyperplasia"), which can lead to lower urinary tract symptoms ranging from frequent and painful urination to urinary retention. If left untreated, BPH can also lead to kidney failure, which is why men with BPH are urged to get treatment. The good news is that recent research indicates that more men are receiving oral medications (the most common first-line treatment) for enlarged prostate. Unfortunately, fewer men are getting the surgery they need to correct the condition. As a result, incidences of BPH-related kidney failure are rising. With this in mind, BPH patients are urged to seek treatment when drugs fail.

Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) affects more than half of men in their 60s and as many as 90% of men in their 70s and 80s.

New patients are gladly accepted.

Urological Services
of Northern Wyoming
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Average APR Finance Savings **\$1,724¹**

0% APR² OR **\$189 PER MO. LEASE ON CAMRY LE¹²**
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36 mos** with \$3594 due at signing plus taxes and fees¹² (Excludes Hybrid)

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"BEST RESALE VALUE: FULL-SIZE PICKUP TRUCK"⁶



Average APR Finance Savings **\$3,919¹**

0% APR² PLUS GET **\$1750 OR \$2750 BONUS CASH⁷ OR CASH BACK³**
Financing for 60 mos with \$16.67 per \$1000 borrowed
(CrewMax model only)

NEW 2013 COROLLA
34 Estimated MPG⁷
"BEST-SELLING COMPACT CAR IN AMERICA"⁸



Average APR Finance Savings **\$1,966¹**

0% APR² OR **\$1000 CASH BACK³**
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\$169 PER MO. LEASE ON COROLLA LE¹³
OR
36 mos** with \$2124 due at signing plus taxes and fees¹³ (Excludes Matrix)

NEW 2012 RAV4
28 Estimated MPG⁷
NAMED "2011 BEST BET" BY CARS.COM¹⁰



Average APR Finance Savings **\$2,502¹**

0% APR² OR **\$1500 CASH BACK³**
Financing for 60 mos with \$16.67 per \$1000 borrowed

\$199 PER MO. LEASE ON RAV4 4X4¹⁴
OR
36 mos** with \$3799 due at signing plus taxes and fees¹⁴

NEW 2013 HIGHLANDER
25 Estimated MPG¹¹
AVAILABLE ALL-WHEEL DRIVE



Average APR Finance Savings **\$3,396¹**

0% APR² OR **\$750 CASH BACK³**
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\$329 PER MO. LEASE ON HIGHLANDER¹⁵
OR
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