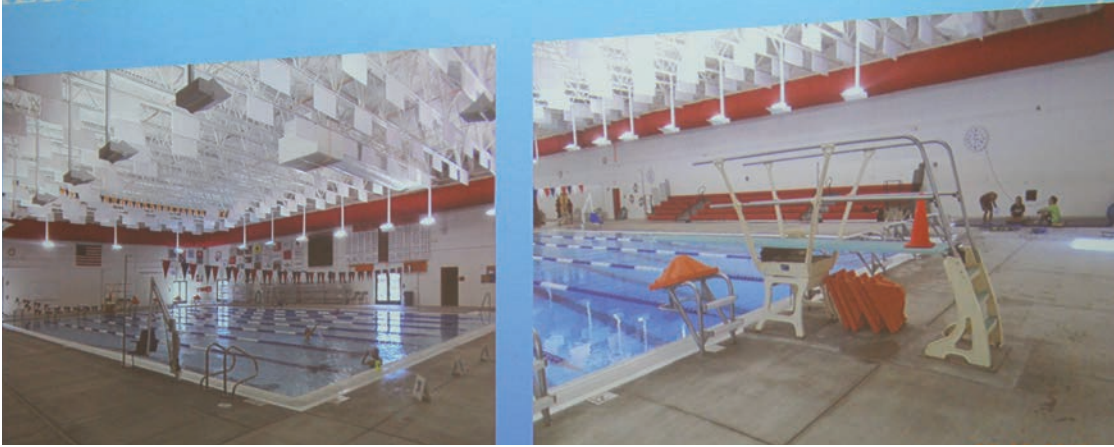


UINTA COUNTY HERALD

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Pictured above are examples of the new pools that would be in a new aquatic center that the Evanston Parks and Recreation District is proposing to build with monies from a temporary special purpose tax initiative. (HERALD PHOTO/Kayne Pyatt)

New aquatic center?

Having to endure 'frequent breakdowns and closures, Evanston Parks & Rec to seek temporary tax for new facility

By Kayne Pyatt
Uinta County Herald

EVANSTON — An aging swimming pool in Evanston's Parks and Recreation Center brought recreation director Kim Larson to the Jan. 22 meeting of the Uinta County Economic Development Commission (UCEDC). Larson's request to the commission was for their support and partnership in asking for a Temporary Specific Purpose Tax initiative in order to build a new aquatic center.

"In the fall of 2023, we had a feasibility study done by Burbach Aquatics and Albertson Engineering as to whether we should refurbish the old pool or build a new one," Larson said. "The existing pool was built in the early 1980s and was designed with a lifespan of 20 years. We have put \$25,000 into repairs trying to keep it operational, but we have had frequent breakdowns and closures. It is at the end of its useful life. The pool gets constant use and our community has outgrown it. We need to look at replacing it."

She showed slides of overflowing water on one side of the pool's edge, due to the facility settling, that they have to remove every four to six hours for safety reasons; pictures of the storage area under the pool and the corrosion on the pipes due to chemicals and other products all being stored together in one small room; and the poor HVAC system, which creates air problems inside the pool area.



Evanston Parks and Recreation District Director Kim Larson asks UCEDC members for support for a temporary special purpose tax initiative to build a new aquatic center near the Evanston rec center. (HERALD PHOTO/Kayne Pyatt)

Larson said the health inspector visits the pool often. She added that ADA (American Disability Act) requirements are not met at the current pool. Also, the current pool cannot be used for competitive events due to its shape.

Larson used a slide presentation of a new aquatic center designed by Burbach Aquatics and Albertson Engineering. Location for the new aquatics center would be the land above and east of the recreation

AQUATIC CENTER, A8

Evanston woman charged with five counts of forgery

By Amanda Manchester
Herald Reporter

EVANSTON — An Evanston woman has been charged with five counts of felony forgery. Donnalisa Martinez, 43, was arrested in December 2024 after allegedly attempting to cash multiple stolen checks at Benedict's Market in Mountain View.



FORGERY, A8

Senate: Homeowner property tax cut should be 25%, not 50%

By Carrie Haderlie
Wyoming Tribune Eagle
Via Wyoming News Exchange

CHEYENNE — State senators have cut a measure to give all Wyoming homeowners property tax relief in half, after approving a 50% cut earlier this week.

The Senate approved Senate File 69, "Homeowner property tax exemption," on second reading Friday. For days, senators caucused in the Capitol. Often directed by Sen. Majority Floor Leader Tara Nethercott, R-Cheyenne, lawmakers were asked to bring their "goldenrod" documents, detailing the rate at which property taxes have increased across Wyoming over the last few years, to caucus.

On the Senate floor, lawmakers have debated how to apply cuts that would offer taxpayers relief without cutting too deeply into funding for county and city services, education and things like special hospital districts.

On Tuesday, the Senate debated whether to provide local governments with a state backfill, or mechanism to make up lost revenue under the proposed cut. The Senate voted not to backfill any local

PROPERTY TAX, A5

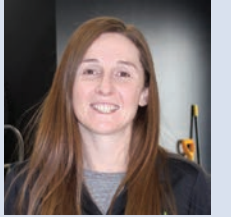
Vol. 89, No. 6

Wednesday

February 5, 2025

\$1.25

INSIDE



We asked Makayla Woodward 15 Questions

B3

YOU SAID IT

"They wanted our team to feel like a family through and through, and just to have that camaraderie amongst them, and they truly set the tone for this year. I'm super-grateful for everything they've done for their underclassmen to make them feel like part of a state championship team."

— EHS Classics coach Candice Spivey referring to the seniors on the team

WEATHER



Rain and snow with a high of 44. Low tonight 25.

Full forecast on A2

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READ, REUSE, RECYCLE!



Recreation district hosts ice skating party at Bear Ponds



A pet dog watches while children skate on Saturday, Jan. 26, at the Bear Ponds during an Evanston Parks and Recreation event that included free skate rentals, hot chocolate and doughnuts. (HERALD PHOTO/Kayne Pyatt)



Children enjoy an afternoon of ice skating at the Bear Ponds. Parks and Rec offered free skate rentals, hot chocolate and doughnuts during an ice skating party held on Saturday, Jan. 26, from 3-5 p.m. (HERALD PHOTO/Kayne Pyatt)

Addicted Power Sports buys now-closed Basecamp inventory

By Kayne Pyatt
Herald Reporter

EVANSTON — After the owners of Basecamp decided to close the doors for that Evanston business, Tim Ray and Addicted Power Sports partner, local veterinarian Sam Nelson, purchased all of the Polaris stock and Lynx snowmobiles to add to their inventory of Kawasaki, Yamaha, Ski-Doo and Can-Am. Ray and his son, Gunner, manage the sports store located at 127 Bear River Dr.

Ray and Nelson bought the retail business in December of 2021. Ray grew up in Evanston and after high school he lived in Ogden, Utah, for some time, moving back to Evanston in 2011. While in Ogden, he worked with power sports in the Newgate Mall and at ADS Power Sports. After moving back to Evanston, Ray worked in the oilfield for 11 years until he and Nelson purchased



Addicted Power Sports owner Tim Ray and son, Gunner, stand outside their shop. With plans to grow, the business recently purchased the Polaris line of inventory, along with Lynx snowmobiles, from Basecamp in Evanston, which recently closed its doors. (HERALD PHOTO/Kayne Pyatt)

INVENTORY, A4

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News

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Weather forecast



Thursday: High of 43; low of 37. Sunrise: 7:28 a.m.; Sunset: 5:47 p.m. Mostly cloudy. Rain showers in the evening transitioning to snow overnight.



Friday: High of 40; low of 15. Sunrise: 7:27 a.m.; Sunset: 5:48 p.m. Periods of snow. Snow showers before midnight. Becoming partly cloudy later.



Saturday: High of 26; low of 7. Sunrise: 7:26 a.m.; Sunset: 5:49 p.m. Partly cloudy skies. A few flurries or snow showers possible. Mostly clear overnight.



Sunday: High of 26; low of 7. Sunrise: 7:25 a.m.; Sunset: 5:50 p.m. Sunny, along with a few afternoon clouds. Mostly clear overnight.

Local businesses donate to VFW Auxiliary



On Jan. 9, Vickie Fruits, the vice president of the VFW Auxiliary, accepted a check for \$13,750 from Lori Bateman of Cowboy Joe's and Sportsworld. The funds were raised during last November's Salute to Heroes bourbon fundraising event. The total amount raised was \$27,503, and the other half of the money was gifted to VFW Post 4280. Pictured are Vickie Fruits, VFW members Mitch Mayer and Ray Fruits, Lori Batman, and VFW members Richard Smith and Nate Rees. (HERALD PHOTO/Amanda Manchester)

House committee passes bill making pen and paper ballots default in elections

CASPER (WNE) — The House Appropriations Committee on Wednesday passed a bill that would make pen and paper ballots the default method to mark ballots in Wyoming.

Secretary of State Chuck Gray testified in support of the bill and added that Laramie County — Wyoming's largest county by population — is the only county in the state that does not have pen and paper ballots as their default.

"It accounted for 16% of votes cast statewide in the 2024 general election, and Laramie County uses this Express vote system where voters insert a ballot card in a machine, select their candidates on a touch screen and receive a printed ballot with a list of their votes," he said.

HB 245 passed with a 6-1 vote.

Gray and Rep. Christopher Knapp, R-Gillette, the sponsor of the bill, said that the tabulator provides a bar code that does not let electors verify their selections.

Gray added that the barcode system is an unsatisfying way to vote.

"The tabulation machines count votes on these ballot cards by reading bar codes that are printed on a ballot card, not by reading the printed names on the voters ballot," Gray said. "Relying on the bar codes decreases trust in our elections, because electors cannot verify that the bar codes under ballot correspond to the candidates they voted for."

Laramie County Clerk Debra Lee delivered prepared remarks to the committee and said that the touch screen system the county uses reduces error.

"Because the ballot style is linked directly to the registration, the risk of human error is greatly reduced with our touch screen system," she said. "Touch screens ensure the accuracy of the vote. Voters have two opportunities to review their ballot before it's cast: once on the screen and then on the printed paper. Touch screens produce an error-free ballot."

The bill will now head to the House.

Degenfelder happy about federal Title IX announcement

CHEYENNE (WNE) — The U.S. Department of Education announced Friday that the 2020 Title IX rules will be reinstated to replace the 2024 rules proposed by the Biden administration.

The 2020 rules "better guarantee due process for students and staff involved in Title IX investigations and confirm that individuals are protected based on their biological sex assigned at birth," according to a news release from the Wyoming Department of Education.

The Associated Press reported that in a memo to education institutions across the nation, the agency clarified that Title IX, a 1972 law barring discrimination based on sex, will be enforced according to a set of rules created by former Education Secretary Betsy DeVos.

The rules govern how complaints of misconduct are investigated and how to settle cases where students present differing accounts.

The Biden administration had sought to overhaul the rules and expand Title IX to protect LGBTQ+ students.

"This is great news from the Trump administration as we continue to work on protections for women in Wyoming, including several bills currently before the Legislature," State Superintendent of Public Instruction Megan Degenfelder said in the release. "This is about safety and fairness, and I will never stop fighting for our girls."

Rock Springs man pleads not guilty to multiple counts of first-degree sexual abuse of a minor

SWEETWATER COUNTY — A Rock Springs man pleaded not guilty last week to multiple counts of first degree sexual abuse of a minor as well as other charges related to the alleged abuse.

Richard Allen Turner, 56, was arraigned in Sweetwater County Third District Court on Monday, Jan. 27.

Turner is facing 13 counts of first degree sexual abuse of a minor, second offense; three counts of unlawful delivery of a Schedule I drug (methamphetamine) to a minor, and three counts of child abuse.

If he's found guilty of all charges, Turner faces 13 life sentences without parole, up to 90 additional years on the drug and child abuse charges and up to \$220,000 in fines.

Turner's trial is set for 9 a.m. on June 2. Bond will remain at \$500,000 cash only. A pre-sentence investigation was ordered.

According to the affidavit of facts, on Nov. 19, 2024, Detective Jennifer Saloga of the Rock Springs Police Department received a letter written by the minor involved in this case. Addressed to Turner, the letter contained the minor's profession of love for Turner even though he "has hurt her in the worst of ways."

Saloga interviewed the minor, who described in detail the sexual abuse and drug use. The minor also told the detective that Jennifer Fahrney, who was also arrested, was in a "close relationship" with Turner.

Fahrney is also accused of participating in the alleged abuse. Fahrney, 38, was arraigned Jan. 2, 2025, on 66 total felony charges, which include sexual exploitation of a minor and child endangerment. She pleaded not guilty to all charges and faces a maximum prison sentence of 858 years.

Turner and Fahrney were arrested on Oct. 22, 2024, when a welfare check on children was conducted at a Rock Springs home. Fahrney and Turner were living in a camper trailer

at the residence.

Senate says volunteers and district employees should have immunity at crosswalks

CHEYENNE (WNE) — Volunteers and school district employees may soon have governmental protection as they help at crosswalks to children get to and from school safely.

Senate File 110, "Inclusion of crossing guards for governmental claims act," is moving through the Senate, and adds crossing guard volunteers and school district faculty to the Wyoming Governmental Claims Act. According to Sen. Evie Brennan, R-Cheyenne, the bill codifies state law to extend immunity from financial liability to include crossing guard volunteers, faculty and school district staff.

"All we're doing is including volunteers and school district employees acting as roadway crossing guards," Brennan told the Senate on Thursday afternoon. "This bill came about as there (was) a student that was killed in a crosswalk in our district several years ago."

The Cheyenne mother who lost her son has worked hard to make sure other students can get to and from school safely, Brennan said. But when she asked districts in Wyoming to have a district-sponsored crossing guard program, she was told it was not possible.

"They said that they couldn't do that ... one of the reasons was that they said that volunteers and staff of the school don't have immunity, so they could be sued," Brennan said. "I would just ask that we take this roadblock away, and that we would include volunteers and public school employees in our governmental claims act so that our kids can get to and from school safely."

Gray applauds House passage of bill to ban ballot drop boxes

CHEYENNE (WNE) — On Thursday, the Wyoming House of Representatives passed House Bill 131, which, if approved, would ban the use of ballot drop boxes in Wyoming.

Banning ballot drop boxes was a key plank of Secretary of State Chuck Gray's election integrity reform agenda announced earlier this year. House Bill 131 passed the House on third reading 51-10.

"I applaud the House's passage of House Bill 131," Gray said in a news release. "Banning ballot drop boxes has been a key priority to advance election integrity, ensuring voter confidence and transparency in Wyoming elections. I want to commend the House's passage of this bill, which is a key priority of our election integrity reform agenda. I look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature to achieve meaningful, conservative election integrity reform."

The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration.

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Viewpoints

In government we trust?

By Joshua Wood
Saratoga Sun

Who will watch the watchmen?
If certain members of our Wyoming Legislature have their way, House Bill 298 will ensure the watchmen will watch themselves.

If you are reading this, then you are one of the more than 400,000 Wyoming residents who read your local newspaper either in print or online. Chances are, you are also part of the 78% who read public notices in your local newspaper or the 68% who believe state and local governments should be required to publish public notices in newspapers as a service to the community.

For more than a century, Wyoming newspapers have published public notices in a way which makes them the most accessible to you, the public. Meeting minutes, zone changes, rate increases and more are published in newspapers available to read on newsstands, at schools, local libraries and senior centers.

This accessibility gives Wyoming residents more than just required notice, it gives them the power to advocate for themselves.



In Encampment, community members successfully organized an effort in 2018 to oppose the construction of a cell tower following a public notice published in the Saratoga Sun.

In Laramie County, residents successfully filed suit against Anadarko Petroleum Corporation—and its parent company Occidental Petroleum Corporation—over mineral rights. The residents noted the importance of public notices in regards to individual mineral rights. Public notices regarding lease agreements filed by Anadarko alerted multiple stakeholders and gave them evidence to protect their mineral rights.

You could just read your paper every week. There was a listing of APDs (Advanced Planning Notice) filed by Anadarko with the gas and oil Commission and the classified thing on the back. If you look, if you know your legals, you could watch them march across the county, blocking everything.

Most notably, following public notices published in local newspapers regarding a proposed rate increase from Rocky Mountain Power, Wyoming residents showed

TRUST, A5

Heiner explains three controversial education bills he co-sponsored

By Rep. Scott Heiner
R-Green River

The Wyoming Legislature has completed three of our eight weeks in Cheyenne for this year and the scope of topics covered by the 550 bills that have been filed wracks the brain and humbles the spirit. As the House Majority Floor Leader, one of my duties is to order each day's bills for discussion and debate on the House floor.

This is a duty that I do not take lightly. The 62 duly elected members of the Wyoming House each represent thousands of citizens and, while I may not agree with every bill on my desk, I try to be fair and assume that each member has brought his or her own bills for specific reasons.

There has been a lot of chatter this year about education. Of particular note,

three bills have been making headlines, sparking vigorous debate. As a co-sponsor of all three contentious bills, I find it worthy to explain them as most, if not all, coverage has failed to shed light on both sides of the story.

House Bill 199 is the first of the three bills to make it all the way through the Wyoming House of Representatives and is now on its way to the Senate. This bill expands on the State's current Education Savings Account program, and if passed, will establish universal school choice in Wyoming.

I co-sponsored this bill because I strongly believe that public school dollars should fund students, not systems and that parents should have a choice in their children's education. Under the bill, school-aged children can apply for an education savings account

of \$7,000 to use on qualifying homeschool curriculum, tutoring services, or private school tuition.

The money will not flow to individual parents but will be administered by an outside party that will ensure that it is spent appropriately.

Opponents of House Bill 199 claim that it will drain resources from public schools. In reality, public school funding is based largely on enrollment and will not be impacted — this bill accounts for this set-up, ensuring that public schools retain their per-pupil funding model.

The Wyoming Constitution charges the Legislature with providing for the education of our kids. House Bill 199 furthers that charge by allowing tax dollars to follow the students — but only if the parents seek to utilize the program.

Homeschool families who desire no government

HEINER, A5

letters

Think before asking for harmful tax cuts

Editor:

While I feel this letter may not be agreed with by some, I feel it is important to say. Property taxes are high, and I realize that it has put a burden on some folks; however, there is help for those who truly need it.

If you can afford more than one home and have several \$80,000-plus vehicles, ATVs, motor homes, etc., don't complain. I'm personally offended by billionaires using our beautiful state as a tax haven.

I like having plowed and maintained roadways, law enforcement, fire protection, safe running water, infrastructure, etc. I

want our children to be well educated and have safe, well-maintained schools and buses. This is only a fraction of what our tax dollars provide.

Think about this: if you had to provide all of these services for yourself, how could you possibly afford it? If you keep up and maintain the roadway in front of your home but the person down the street doesn't, it still impedes your path to work. How do you deal with this?

Do we all charge a toll to those who drive on "our" roads or simply refuse to let others pass? Who will put out fires? How will law enforcement get to you in

an emergency? How will all children be educated?

Once again, this is just a fraction of what you would have to provide yourself.

Please take time to think before you ask for taxes to be cut. I realize that inflation has been hard on everyone, but as I look around, I see very few who have cut back on spending. I believe we are responsible for inflation — if we continue to buy, "they" will keep prices high.

Those who say they can cut or eliminate taxes and still provide services are lying to you!

Colleen Kunz
Bear River



Surveilling your toilet water is the antithesis of small government, but the Freedom Caucus wants to do it

Anti-abortion Wyoming legislators who were the first in the nation to approve a bill banning all medication abortions changed their strategy this year after a state district court in November rejected their work as unconstitutional.

They didn't bother sponsoring any bills to challenge the ruling, which found the ban violated residents' right to make their own health care decisions. The legislators are pinning their hopes on the Wyoming Supreme Court reversing the case on appeal.

But as a fallback, Republican lawmakers took a page from the playbook of Students for Life, a national anti-abortion organization. It's spent the last two decades trying — and failing — to convince federal agencies and courts that fetuses and chemicals from medication abortions disposed of in public water systems pose a threat to humans, wildlife and the environment.

Lucie Holt, president of Students for Life at the University of Wyoming, told the House Labor, Health and Social Services Committee last Friday that "do-it-yourself chemical abortions are making our public waterways mass graves."

The number of inaccuracies packed into that one short sentence are almost impressive.

Despite a stack of facts against House Bill 159, "Protecting Water From Chemical Abortion Waste," including the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's blunt declaration there's no evidence to back up the sensational claims, the panel voted 6-2 to send it to the full House.

If committee members had read the

20-page FDA denial letter of the Students of Life's petition to mitigate the alleged hazards to wastewater from mifepristone, the first of two drugs used in a chemical abortion, the vote might have been different.

The FDA found mifepristone excreted by patients at levels less than 1 part per billion in aquatic environments. The agency said concentrations that small don't have a significant effect on the environment.

Upon hearing that information, supporters of the bill should have ended the charade and punted HB 159 into oblivion.

Of course, they didn't dare. This extreme measure is sponsored by Rep. John Bear, R-Gillette, former chair of the far-right Freedom Caucus that has taken control of the House and can pass anything it wants.

Rep. Rachel Rodriguez-Williams, R-Cody, new head of the caucus and chair of House Labor, rushed to get Bear's bill passed like she was going to a five-alarm fire.

Members of the public were limited to two minutes each to testify. In a move I've never seen before, she didn't allow committee members — there to get information about proposed legislation — to ask experts giving public testimony any questions. When Rodriguez-Williams halted public comment after about 30 minutes, she shut out at least seven people waiting online.

To preempt claims HB 159 is a pro-life bill, Bear noted it protects the life of a mother and the public. "It's not intended to protect the life of an unborn child, which

unfortunately will never be able to make snow angels in the snow, go to a prom, own a business and have a family," Bear said.

I'm glad he cleared that up. For a minute I was starting to suspect the measure had nothing to do with safe water, but was just a smokescreen to effectively make medication abortions so difficult to obtain that women would turn to unsafe options, like ingesting dangerous plants.

Winter Black testified she's hearing women share tips about such alternatives. "Bills like this are not going to stop people from ending their pregnancies," Black said. "It's only going to make it far more dangerous for women to do so."

The Freedom Caucus wants to make it tough, if not impossible, for Wyoming women to obtain a medication abortion. Another one of its proposals, House Bill 64, "Chemical abortions-ultrasound requirement," would require a pregnant woman to receive a transvaginal ultrasound no less than 48 hours before obtaining medication for an abortion.

Sara Burlingame, executive director of Wyoming Equality and a former legislator, described it as a "gruesome" procedure that "would empower a doctor to penetrate a woman's body in order to get information for the state."

Under HB 159, a woman seeking a medication abortion must be given a "catch kit" and a fluorescent red or orange biohazard bag to capture the remains of a discharged fetus. The bag must be taken to the medical

provider within seven days and the woman examined by a physician.

"I don't think this is pragmatic or practical," said Wendy Volk of Cheyenne. "We have a critical shortage of medical providers. There will be very few who will be willing to give out prescriptions for drugs for this."

The bill would make it a felony for physicians or pharmacists to violate the law, punishable by a \$10,000 fine, up to three years in prison, or both. Volk is spot-on. Who's going to risk such a penalty?

But given there's no solid way to test for mifepristone in the water, or to know why someone took it, enforcing this bill seems nearly impossible.

Rene Hinkle, a Cheyenne OB-GYN physician, explained mifepristone has many uses, including to stop postpartum hemorrhaging of women who are bleeding out after deliveries. It's also given to patients with Cushing's disease.

Hinkle also pointed out the chemicals Bear purports to be concerned about aren't released from the body in fetal tissue, but in other bodily substances. She asked the committee if women who have medication abortions "are going to also have to catch their urine and feces?"

"That's not feasible, that's not sanitary, we should not be doing this," said Christine Lichtenfels, executive director of Chelsea's Fund, a Lander nonprofit. "There are much greater [harmful] sources to regulate, such as fracking chemicals."

Jennifer Zygmunt, water quality ad-

TOILET WATER, A6



DRAKE'S TAKE
BY KERRY DRAKE
WyoFile.com

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LETTERS POLICY

The Viewpoints page is a public forum and is intended to provide a venue for community insight, thought and expression. Letters to the editor are welcomed and strongly encouraged.

The *Uinta County Herald* reserves the right to edit all letters for length, content and clarity. A letter — whether submitted on paper or electronically — must include the name and address of the author, as well as a valid contact phone number for verification. Letters will be printed with the name and city of residence of the author.

Letters addressing a business dispute, attacking a private individual or containing libelous or obscene statements will not be published. Further, we reserve the right to refuse to print any letter we feel inappropriate for publication.

Letters should be 500 words or less from local residents about local topics. Writers are limited to two letters per month; letters related to political campaigns will not be published the week prior to an election.

The opinions published on this page do not necessarily reflect the views of this newspaper, its publisher or advertisers. Deadline for submission of letters to the editor is 8 a.m. Friday.

UINTA COUNTY HERALD

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Records

Send us your obituaries, births announcements, wedding and engagement announcements from families and other community announcements for our records section. Send information and photos to editor@uintacountyherald.com. Thank-you letters will be published at a nominal charge.

obituaries

Steven Roy Brent July 21, 1960 – Jan. 25, 2025

Steven Roy Brent, age 64, of Evanston, passed away fighting and determined on Saturday, Jan. 25, with friends by his side.

Born on July 21, 1960, in Napa, California, to Betty Pease and Billy Brent, Steve spent his teenage and young adult years in Detroit, Michigan, where his passion for muscle cars came to life. Steve and his friends loved cruising Woodward Avenue in search of drag races, always pushing the limits of speed while trying to avoid trouble.

His love for cars set the foundation for his lifelong career and adventures in the automotive industry. In 1984, Steve moved to Evanston to manage and operate the newly opened Big O Tires after working in Grand Junction, Colorado. His expertise, drive and dedication quickly made him an essential part of the community.

After leaving Big O Tires, Steve opened his own automotive shop just north of town before moving on to his "forever job" at Intermountain Safety.

Steve was more than his work; he was a natural athlete who brought his competitive spirit to the local pool, golf and softball leagues. Bowling was a standout passion for him, and he achieved the rare



and impressive milestone of rolling perfect 300 games three times.

Steve tried to play golf every chance he got, shooting nearly scratch scores when competing with some of Evanston's best golfers.

Though Steve had a rough-and-tough exterior, those close to him knew of his heart of gold and quiet compassion. Over the last three years, Steve developed a special bond with his neighbors, the Day family.

Together, they shared countless projects, from yard work to house repairs, and Steve always had time to help. Whether fixing an engine, teaching the Day children how to bleed brakes, or playing basketball and solving puzzles, Steve became an integral part of their lives. He ensured the kids were safe

after school and found joy in mentoring them, embodying the warmth and generosity often hidden behind his rugged demeanor.

Steve is survived by his amazing dog, Hooter (spoiled like no other), and was talking daily to his high school sweetheart, Kim; his sister, Betty Venhuisen; and his stepsister, Janet Wagner. He will be deeply missed by his friends, family and neighbors.

In honor of Steve's wishes, his ashes will visit the local golf course and then be shot out of a close friend's racecar exhaust at a future event — a fitting tribute to his adventurous spirit.

Please keep your happy memories and stories of Steve in your thoughts and prayers and share with a family member when spending time with them golfing, bowling, hunting or working on a car or truck.

Instead of flowers or gifts, if you feel compelled, please donate in Steve's name to a local youth golf league, youth bowling league or any youth sports league that can use the support.

Steve's legacy lives on in the roar of a finely-tuned engine, the bonds he built in his community and the hearts of all who were lucky enough to know him.

Joyce Pyatt Casey Oct. 9, 1930 – Jan. 28, 2025

Joyce Pyatt Casey, 94, passed away on Tuesday, Jan. 28, in Thermopolis. Joyce was born on Oct. 9, 1930, in Hutchinson, Kansas. She married Edward D. Casey on Nov. 1, 1949. They were married 35 years until his passing.

Joyce was a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Evanston, where she lived for many years. She was a licensed preacher, composer of music used in church services and an accomplished poet. She was also active in Evanston's Sagebrush Theatre Productions.

Joyce loved giving her handmade quilts to friends and family; she was skilled at cross-stitch embroidery and other hand work.

In the last years of her life, she moved to Thermopolis to be near her granddaughter, Alyson (Chuck) Muller; and great-grand-



daughters, Rhiannon and Brianna Muller. Joyce was an active member of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Thermopolis at the time of her passing.

She is survived by her children, Ariel Baker, Peggy (Pete) Graeff, Ardith (Paul) Baker, Ed (Clella) Casey and Wes (Genevive) Casey; her sister, Kayne Pyatt of Evanston; 13 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; one-great-great-grandchild; and many nieces and nephews.

Joyce was preceded in death by her parents, Albert Pyatt and Marie Pyatt Beyda; her husband, Edward Casey; her daughter, Sue Woods; a great-granddaughter; four sisters; and one brother.

Cremation will take place, and a celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Trevor Dean Hiner Jan. 9, 1984 – Jan. 21, 2025

Most beloved son of Kerri Lamb of Evanston, and Alfred Dean Hiner of Hawaii, Trevor Dean Hiner passed away in Seoul, Korea, while attempting to save the life of a citizen of Korea.

This selfless act of courage and honor Trevor displayed speaks volumes as to the man he was in life. He will always be remembered by those that knew and loved him as a most loving son, brother, grandchild and friend.

He always treated others

with kindness, dignity and respect and he never missed an opportunity to tell his mom he loved her. He will always be her gentle giant.

He is survived by his siblings, Seriah, Samantha, Jahiem and Thomas Lamb; as well as step-parents, Walter Lamb and Elizabeth Hiner.

With his passing, we bear in mind the words of our Savior Jesus Christ in John 15:13 — "no one has greater love than this, that someone should surrender his life on behalf of his friends."



Jolene Janway (Butcher) Dec. 11, 1952 – Jan. 17, 2025

Jolene Janway, 72, of Evanston, passed away peacefully on Friday, Jan. 17, surrounded by her family. She was born on Dec. 11, 1952, in Roosevelt, Utah, to James and Ruth Butcher.

Jolene raised two children, Travis and Jennifer Janway, and was a proud grandmother to four granddaughters: Kacey (Skyler) Bond, Hailee, Jaelay and Maddison; as well as three great-granddaughters: Rylee, Khloee and Ivey. She is survived by her two brothers, Charles (Donna) Butcher and Richard (Bernie) Butcher.

For many years, Jolene worked for the City of Evanston, where she met and served many locals. She had



a deep love for the history of Evanston and spent much of her time documenting it. She loved writing and has published two books.

She also created beautiful collections of photos, each

telling a unique story of her life. Jolene was an avid traveler, visiting many states and was always eager to share fascinating stories about her adventures.

Jolene had a kind heart and welcomed everyone with open arms. She was known for her warmth, generosity, and she was a comfort to others. She gave the best grandma hugs.

Her deep love for Jesus was central to her life, guiding her actions and the way she loved those around her. Her family and friends will forever remember her for her unwavering faith, creative spirit and the many cherished memories she leaves behind.

INVENTORY

from A1

Cycle City and later purchased a second adjacent building.

"We plan to grow and expand," Ray said. "We sponsor lots of local events: the rodeo series, the Monster Truck Rally in May; poker runs and more. I am on the SWOT (Southwest Wyoming Off-road Trails) board of directors. Harley Fearn has given us permission to use his access this summer for a poker run that will start here at the shop."

The *Herald* asked Gunner what the best thing about working with his father is.

"I like building the business with him. I lived in Utah for a year after graduating from high school but after moving back here I've worked for Dad ever since. I like it."

Ray said, "I really like being able to spend time with my son every day. I like teaching him the business and maybe someday he will take it over."

Ray said the business gets a lot of buyers from the Wasatch Front and currently the biggest market is for side by sides.

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86%

Of Wyoming adults cite local newspapers or newspaper websites, as their **"most trusted"** source for **PUBLIC NOTICES** vs. government and related sources.

Public notices enable citizens to monitor actions of government, and serve as watchdogs for government officials and private interests.

Source: *The Wyoming Market Study, 2022; by Coda Ventures*

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78%

Of Wyoming adults read **PUBLIC NOTICES** in print or digital newspapers.

Public notices enable citizens to monitor actions of government, and serve as watchdogs for government officials and private interests.

Source: *The Wyoming Market Study, 2022; by Coda Ventures*

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Evanston, Uinta County, southwest Wyoming and Rich County, Utah, news. Send your news tips and information to editor@uintacountyherald.com, send us a tweet at @UintaCoHerald or message us at www.facebook.com/UintaCountyHerald.

UCCD: It's time to order seedling trees

The Uinta County Conservation District is taking orders for seedling trees and shrubs to be delivered in the spring.

Seedlings are a great, cost-effective way to establish conservation plantings such as windbreaks, living snow fences, noise or visual barriers and to create wildlife habitat.

Seedlings sell out quickly, so now is the best time to reserve the trees you need for

your planting.

Order forms and tree descriptions are available on UCCD's website at www.uintacountycd.com, or you can stop by the office at 204 East Sage St. in Lyman to pick one up.

UCCD also offers help with design and species selection for your planting as well as supplies, like weed barrier, tree protectors and polymer. Call 307-288-0214 or stop by the office today.



The Uinta County Conservation District is taking orders for shrubs and seedling trees to be delivered in the spring. (COURTESY PHOTO)

PROPERTY TAX from A1

government and then approved increasing the cut from 25% — originally included in SF 69 — to 50%. That increase was proposed in an amendment brought by Sen. Troy McKeown, R-Gillette.

Sen. Evie Brennan, R-Cheyenne, brought a second reading amendment Friday to restore the original 25% property tax reduction to the bill.

"We know that we have constituents and people in our state who are having a hard time getting the food on the table, getting clothes on their kids. We do want to provide those people with a little bit of relief," Brennan said.

But a 50% cut could impact future generations who depend on local services, she said, as well as cut crucial services like police, fire departments and hospitals.

"We can't afford to lose another hospital," Brennan said. "We can't afford for people to not be able to be close to a place that, when they have a stroke or a heart attack, that they can get the services they need within that 90 minutes to three hours."

McKeown, who voted against bringing the reduction down from 50% to 25%, said he knows of a hospital in Campbell County that has been operating "in the red" for two years, but has a new four-tier parking structure "with marble floors."

He added that salaries for administra-

tion are "through the roof."

"We can give them more money," McKeown said. "They will just spend it. It is time that some of the special districts became efficient."

Sen. John Kolb, R-Rock Springs, said he would vote for Brennan's amendment because Sweetwater County has already cut its own budget, and a 50% reduction would affect services.

Sen. Stacy Jones, R-Rock Springs, noted on the floor that the senators learned 10 counties had experienced property tax increases of over 50% between 2019 and 2023, meaning that a cut of that much would effectively penalize Wyoming's 13 remaining counties.

Across the state, property taxes increased 65.2% during that time period. That average is skewed by an outlier county, Teton, which saw the highest increase at 111%, for a collection increase in those years of \$103.7 million.

For five years in a row, Teton County has lowered its own property tax collection rate.

In Laramie County, property taxes have increased by 53.7% over the same time period, meaning the county has collected \$28.9 million in additional property taxes from 2019-2023, the latest data available.

Sweetwater County, however, saw the lowest property tax increase at 19.5%, equating to an increase of \$3.6 million collected.

To address the county-by-county

disparity, Sen. Cheri Steinmetz, R-Torrington, offered an amendment that would have treated counties differently based on an \$850 million collection threshold.

Counties over the threshold include Laramie, Natrona, Campbell, Sweetwater, Fremont, Park, Teton, Lincoln, Converse and Sublette — but also, those are the counties that have seen the greatest collection increases.

"I understand where we are cutting the excess that we have received in property taxes," Steinmetz said. "This brings some balance to those smaller, hardship counties, and it sweeps in a few others to not cut to the bone."

Sen. Tim Salazar, R-Riverton, asked how Steinmetz arrived at the \$850 million cutoff; his county, he said, collects \$851 million.

Steinmetz's amendment failed. However, Brennan's amendment to reduce the relief offered under SF 69 from 50% to 25% passed in a 19-12 vote.

"We are asking 13 counties to reduce their budgets to help 10 counties. Is this responsible? I don't think it is responsible," Jones said, suggesting that counties could take inspiration from Teton and lower their own collection rates.

"Twenty-five percent is responsible, and it still helps out every single citizen in this state that pays property taxes."

SF 69 faces a third reading vote in the Senate next week; if it passes the Senate, it will cross over to the House of Representatives for consideration.

TRUST / from A3

up at public meetings in force. This resulted in the Public Service Commission re-examining the proposal and reduced the total amount of the rate increase.

Even more important, public notices are archived by your local newspaper and at the Wyoming State Archives thus providing a vital, permanent record.

In Byron, for example, Mayor Pam Hopkinson needed to find a public notice which had been published in 2012 regarding the sale of an old school building. The Town of Byron didn't have a copy of the notice in their files, but it could easily be found in the archives of the Lovell Chronicle.

House Bill 298 would undo all of that.

This bill, introduced late in the legislative session, intends to create a centralized electronic notice system maintained by the Secretary of State's Office. In short, the government would keep an eye on the government. This should be reason enough for anyone to oppose this bill, however there are additional reasons to voice your opposition.

To begin with, a centralized electronic notice system has already been established by the Wyoming Press Association, which represents all legal newspapers in the state. Daily and weekly newspapers in Wyoming upload public notices to this website—which is freely available to the people of

Wyoming—to ensure the most notice for the residents of our great state. This online and mobile-friendly website is easily searchable by municipality, county, publication and date.

Why spend taxpayer money to reproduce something which private industry has already addressed?

Speaking of taxpayer money, the fiscal note for this bill drastically underestimates the cost of maintaining a centralized electronic depository.

To build the system, the Secretary of State's Office estimates anywhere between \$175,000 and \$225,000. What the fiscal note does not include is the additional cost of maintaining this website along with security to ensure it is not attacked by bad actors.

This doesn't account for the expense of IT and equipment, or the expense of marketing the website to Wyoming residents who know they can find public notices in their local newspaper.

Finally, let's talk about accountability.

Under House Bill 298, the Secretary of State's Office would provide proof of publication to other government entities or individuals, another example of government being its own regulatory check. Newspapers already provide that check, issuing sworn affidavits of publication for each and every public notice published in our pages. By going strictly digital, and trusting the government to regulate itself,

HEINER / from A3

funding, oversight, or interference can rest easy knowing that the program isn't mandatory.

In an effort to further support traditional homeschool families like my own, I have co-sponsored another bill, House Bill 46, to allow non-ESA homeschool families to operate without notifying their local district of their intent to educate at home. This bill has also passed the House.

House Bill 200 is the second eyebrow-raising bill, and it was passed by the House Education Committee last week with major revisions. This bill amends Wyoming's parental rights laws that were enacted last year, which requires school staff to notify parents of changes in their kids' mental health.

House Bill 200 builds on this and makes clear that the duty to notify exists while a child is under the care and control of the school during normal class time and during extracurricular activities. I worked with the bill's lead sponsor to remove requirements for curriculum and classroom materials to be published on the school district's website as I felt that lesson plans are intellectual property of the teacher and should not be required to be made public.

Much like how bills change as they progress through the legislature's two chambers, teachers change their lesson plans and materials continuously as they adapt to the needs of the students. This bill will head to the House floor this week and, with these changes, I feel it will accomplish its intent, which is to keep parents informed about their kids while at school and during school activities.

House Bill 100 is perhaps the most chatter-inducing bill filed this session. It would allow local school districts to adopt policies, if they want, to hire qualified individuals to teach classes without a state-issued teaching license and was offered as an option for districts struggling with teacher shortages, especially in the areas of career and technical education.

I co-sponsored this bill because I believe in local control. If one of our rural districts, with community input and buy-in, sought to enact a policy to hire community members, the elected school board trustees ought to be trusted to enact their own carefully crafted policies.

The state should not be limiting local school boards authority and directing them who to hire. As an example, if a local school district could not find a welding instructor, this would allow them to hire an experienced welder to teach the course even though that person may not hold the required teaching certification.

This aligns with my personal view that we should have less government oversight and allow local school districts to determine the qualifications that they want for a teacher.

Like all conservatives, I believe all kids should have access to quality education that best meets their needs. Some excel in a public-school setting, while others thrive at home or in private schools.

Whatever the case may be, families should be empowered to choose what works best and to be informed of what their kids are learning while we navigate the everyday challenges of schooling in a rural state.

potential bad actors could change digital notices. Printed in newspapers, these notices cannot be changed.

As Governor Mark Gordon once said, "That permanent record, one that cannot be altered, is very important."

If you, like us, believe the government should not serve as a watchdog for the government then contact your representatives and senators in the Wyoming Legislature today. Tell them you want public notices to remain with an independent third-party with professional minimum standards: your local newspaper.

Joshua Wood is operations director for Stevenson Newspapers and president of the Wyoming Press Association Board of Directors.

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Senior Citizens Menu

Wednesday, February 5
 Sweet & Sour Pork, White Rice, Egg Roll, Oriental Vegetables, Mandarin Oranges, WW Roll

Thursday, February 6
 Taco Salad, Tortilla Chips, Sour Cream & Salsa, Mexican Rice, Churro

Friday, February 7
 Potato Crusted Cod, Street Corn, Tossed Salad, Tartar Sauce, WW Roll, Pudding Cup

Monday, February 10
 Chicago Dog, WW Bun, Pickled Beets, Tator Tots, Cookie

Tuesday, February 11
 Cheesy Tortellini With Spinach, Tomatoes & Sausage, Tossed Salad, Mixed Tropical Fruit, Garlic Bread

ALL MEALS SEED WITH FRUIT, VEGETABLES AND BREAD
 MENU SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

Faith

The church communities in Evanston, Uinta County, southwest Wyoming and Rich County, Utah, are vital parts of our readers' daily lives. Help us share with them your important church news in these pages. Email church news and information to editor@uintacountyherald.com.



Rest in Christ!

Are you tired and worn out? Do you often feel like it's a real struggle to make it through the day? Does it feel as if you're stuck on a treadmill that just keeps spinning faster and faster with no sign of slowing down? Do you long for a break from the overwhelming demands of life?

In Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT), Jesus says, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

Jesus offers rest for our souls, but he also provides rest for our entire being. Doesn't that sound nice? Could that be the remedy most of us have been searching for but not finding?

The Jewish Sabbath laws — including one of the Ten Commandments — pertain to God's mandate that people take a regular break from their work so that they can experience rest. The Sabbath laws were given to humanity as a gift from God to remind us of his work of creation and redemption.

In observing them, we're not only called to cease from work, but we're also encouraged to enjoy God's presence, cultivate holiness, and allow ourselves to be set apart for his purposes.

In the Old Testament, the Sabbath laws not only required a weekly day of rest, but they also established monthly, seasonal, and multiannual observances. However, with the coming of Christ, we now can find that rest in him every day. As the Apostle Paul states in Colossians 2:16-17, "... these rules are only shadows of the reality yet to come. And Christ himself is that reality."

Jesus began many sections of his Sermon on the Mount with the words, "You've heard it said ... but I tell you..." He referenced the law — or some of the traditions that had been added to the law — and then proceeded to provide a better, fuller explanation of it to his followers. For example, he made it clear that it's not enough that you don't murder; you shouldn't harbor hate in your heart toward others.

Also, it's not enough that you abstain from adultery; you shouldn't entertain lustful thoughts in your mind.

Jesus didn't touch on the subject of the Sabbath in this sermon, but if he had, I think he may have said something along these lines.

"You've heard it said that you should remember the Sabbath and keep it holy by taking a day of rest once a week, but I tell you, you should set apart every day for the Lord. You should daily love, worship, praise, and honor me. You should daily rest in me — physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and relationally.

"You should daily humble yourself, submit to me, and obey my commandments. You should daily renew your mind and spirit in and through me. You should daily cast all of your cares upon me. You should daily come to me, take my yoke upon you, and learn from me."

What will we receive if we do all of these things? True, complete rest — body, mind, and spirit! We can experience this rest up to a point here on earth, regardless of our circumstances or status in life, but we'll experience its fullness only when we're directly in his presence.

According to Hebrews 3-4, this rest is still available to us today. Don't just occasionally rest in Christ. Rest in him all day, every day!



CROSS TALK

By TIM FLOYD

Set your mind on what matters most

Have you ever wondered if something is holding you back from experiencing the promises of God in your life? I remember a time when I was hearing about all the promises of God but never actually experiencing them.

I heard about peace, but I didn't have any. I heard about joy, but I was unhappy all the time. I could see God's promises in his word and I believed them, but something was missing. As I spent time studying God's word, I came to realize that the root of my problem was found in the wrong mindsets I was living with.

The story of the Israelites is a good example of what a difference our mindset can make. In Exodus 13, we read about how God called them out of Egypt to possess the Promised Land. But what was supposed to be an 11-day journey ended up being a 40-year journey through the wilderness — all because they didn't know how to think right (Deuteronomy 1).

One wrong mindset the Israelites had was, "Please make everything easy for me because I can't take it when things are too hard." When things got hard for them and they had to fight their enemies, instead of turning to God, they started grumbling and complaining about their situation. They thought their enemies were the problem, but it was really their thinking.

So instead of moving forward and experiencing the good things God had planned for them, he had to take them the long, hard way through the wilderness in order to prepare them to possess the Promised Land.

Like the Israelites, sometimes we're not ready for all that God has planned for us,

so we spend a little time in "the wilderness" growing up and learning how to trust him. I know what this is like. There was a time when I had an "it's just too hard" attitude and mindset about things I needed to face.

For example, when God spoke to my heart that I needed to completely forgive people who had hurt me, it seemed impossible to me. But realizing that he didn't expect me to do it in my own strength gave me the courage to take a step of faith and choose to forgive, trusting that God would change my heart and set me free from the misery of bitterness and unforgiveness.

It wasn't easy, but the peace and joy I now have is so much better than living with the bitterness and resentment of unforgiveness. And I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing today if I hadn't obeyed God in this area of my life.

God sometimes has to bring us through hardship to test us, humble us, and to see if we will keep His commandments in the wilderness. Deuteronomy 8:2 (NIV) says, "Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands."

God wants to help us learn how to obey him in the wilderness because if we don't keep his commandments when life is hard, then we won't keep them when everything is going our way. He wants us to be strong enough and mature enough to keep moving forward in his plan for our lives.

Instead of having the mindset that says, "It's just too hard!" the truth is that

with God's help, you can do whatever you need to do in life. Philippians 4:13 (NIV) says, "I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

So, when the enemy starts to tell you that your circumstances are impossible, you'll never make it, and you should quit, you can be confident knowing this promise from God: I can do whatever I need to do through Christ who gives me strength. You can look to God for the strength you need to deal with whatever life throws at you.

Once we adopt a right mindset to replace a wrong one, we must be determined to keep our thoughts headed in that direction. Colossians 3:2 says to "set your minds and keep them set on what is above (the higher things), not on the things that are on the earth" (AMPC).

You do that by focusing on the promises of God in his word, choosing to trust what he says more than what your circumstances look like, what others say, or how you feel. The truth is God loves you; he has wonderful plans for your life, and he wants you to experience all he has for you.

Instead of focusing on the hard things in your life, think about all that God has helped you through and all he has in store for you. Set your mind on Him and follow his lead through the wilderness to your Promised Land!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's four-part teaching resource *Right and Wrong Mindsets*. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting www.joycemeyer.org

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. For more information, visit www.joycemeyer.org.

TOILET WATER / from A3

administrator of the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, said she's not aware of any approved methods to detect chemical waste directly linked to abortion pills. Given the low amounts and infrequent use of mifepristone, and the dilution that would occur, she said it's unlikely the chemical would be detected in water sampling.

Evansville Mayor Candace Machado testified her constituents are asking, "Why are our legislators wasting our taxpayer money on bills that are inappropriate, inhumane and frankly absolutely ridiculous? I'm in agreement with them."

Rodriguez-Williams interrupted to tell the mayor to focus on the bill.

Machado plowed ahead full speed. "It's extremely inappropriate that we are spending taxpayer money on these bills when they are infringing and imposing on human rights and targeting women in this state," she said.

Sheridan's Emma Laurent of Wyoming United for Freedom believes the bill's supporters are using other states' model legislation "to create conspiracy fodder to scare women into thinking their private health care decisions are now traceable and therefore open to retribution."

House Minority Leader Rep. Mike Yin, D-Jackson, and Rep. Ken Clouston, R-Gillette, were the only committee members who voted against the bill. Clouston said he's pro-life but found HB 159 "a little bit unreasonable and maybe a little ahead of its time."

Believe me, this bill won't get better with age. It should be defeated now and buried forever.

I wholeheartedly share Yin's view: "Telling women that they have to capture their miscarriage in a bag is probably one of the most shameful things I've seen the government ask people to do."

Rodriguez-Williams significantly limited people's testimony. I'd like to include more thoughts from opponents, but I'll leave the last words to Burlingame.

"In an effort to make some medical abortions illegal or monitored or policed by the state," she said, "we're now opening up everybody's homes to the state."

"DEQ says it doesn't distinguish between some medical waste and others, or distinguish between menstrual blood and miscarriage blood," Burlingame added.

Then she spoke directly to the Freedom Caucus: "The idea that the folks who brought you here to represent them want you to grow government to the size that it can fit in our toilet is not something that's supported by the facts."

Veteran Wyoming journalist Kerry Drake has covered Wyoming for more than four decades, previously as a reporter and editor for the Wyoming Tribune-Eagle and Casper Star-Tribune. He lives in Cheyenne and can be reached at kerry.drake33@yahoo.com.

WyoFile is an independent nonprofit news organization focused on Wyoming people, places and policy.

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789-2358
Pastor Kirk Probasco

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Sunday Worship..... 9:00 a.m.
Matins Tuesday, 8:00 a.m.
Open Bible Study:
6:30 p.m. Tuesdays
Contact information: Pastor Jonathan Lange at (307) 789-0042

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Evanston
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Saturday..... 4:15pm (English)
Sunday Mass..... 9:00am (English)
5:00pm (Spanish)
Holy Days of Obligation
9:00am & 7:00pm
Sacrament of Penance
Saturday - 3:00-4:00pm
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Morning Worship Service:.. 11AM
Evening Family Service:..... 6PM
Wednesday Bible Study:..... 7PM

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
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www.livingthelifealtogether.com
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship..... 10:30 a.m.
Youth groups available
Small Group Ministries
Pastor: Brett McMorris

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
Evanston Wyo Stake
Wards Meeting @ 721 W. Cheyenne Dr. - 789-2648
Riverview Ward Service begins 9:00 AM
YSA Branch Service begins 10:30 AM
Independence Ward Service begins 12:00 PM
Wards Meeting @ 251 Elm St - 789-3746
Almy Ward Service begins 9:00 AM
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4th Ward Service Begins 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
Wards Meeting @ 632 Twin Ridge Ave - 789-0263
8th Ward Service Begins 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM
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We want to share your group's or organization's upcoming events with our readers. Send your news and event information to editor@uintacountyherald.com.

This Week in Uinta County

Wednesday, Feb. 5 Jumpstart Evanston

Nonprofit economic development organization Jumpstart Evanston is hosting its annual Business Bootcamp and Start-up Competition. The third class is laws and business licensing from 6 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 4, at the Roundhouse in Evanston. The course offers seven weeks of expert training and an opportunity to compete for up to \$20,000 in funding.

Thursday, Feb. 6 Your Pet, Your Heart

Come share stories about the animals in your life at 3:30 p.m. on Thursdays, at 937 Sage St. Call Sheryl Sherman at 307-313-0964 for more information.

Thursday, Feb. 6 Galentine's Day

Celebrate Ladies with Downtown Evanston's Galentine's day from 5 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 6. Pick up a bingo card at Seevers Jewelry or CDW & Co. + The Makery for a chance to play and win Main Street Cash!

Friday, Feb. 7 Swing Dancing

Caddie Welling is teaching swing dance lessons from 8 to 9 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 7, at the Rec Center in Evanston. Cost is \$20 per couple, register online at evanston-parksandrec.org.

Saturday, Feb. 8

Ice Fishing Derby

The Sulphur Creek Ice Fishing Derby begins with check-in at 6:30 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 8, at Sulphur Creek Reservoir, at the boat ramp. All participants must check in prior to going onto the ice for accountability purposes. Cash-only registration costs \$30 for adults, \$20 for youth ages 8-14. No checks will be accepted. Pre-registration can be paid through Venmo. Call 307-679-7119 for registration.

Saturday-Sunday, Feb. 8-9

Free Rental Weekend

Evanston Parks and Recreation is offering free winter rentals for the weekend of Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 8-9. Join us for a weekend of fun with free ski rentals on Saturday only; free snowshoe rentals both Saturday and Sunday; and free ice skate rentals on Sunday only. For more information please call 307-789-1770.

Saturday, Feb. 8 Winterfest

BEAR Project presents Winterfest, a nonprofit fundraising event to benefit the Bear Ponds Greenway. Festivities including: curling, skating, kids' activities and cross-country ski races begin at 11 a.m. at the Bear Ponds. Free entry. Hot food, hot cocoa and cold beer will be for sale. Free ski rentals

available at the Evanston Rec Center while supplies last.

Saturday, Feb. 8 Bourbon Bash

Border Beverage hosts its annual Bourbon Bash from 6 to 8 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 8, at the Evanston Youth Club. Enjoy raffles and auctions; all funds go to charity. Free admittance.

Monday, Feb. 10 Prevention Meeting

The Uinta County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition will meet at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 10, at the Human Services conference room in Evanston. Lunch will be served.

Tuesday, Feb. 11 City Council Meeting

The Evanston City Council will meet at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 11, at Evanston City Hall.

Tuesday, Feb. 11 School Board Meeting

The Uinta County School District No. 1 Board of Trustees will meet at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 11, at the district's administrative building at 537 10th St. in Evanston.

Wednesday, Feb. 12 Jumpstart Evanston

Nonprofit economic development organization, Jumpstart Evanston, is hosting its annual Business Bootcamp and

Start-up Competition. The fourth class is Finance Your Business from 6 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 12, at the Roundhouse in Evanston. The course offers seven weeks of expert training and an opportunity to compete for up to \$20,000 in funding. Register online at: <https://jumpstartevanston.org/register/>.

Thursday, Feb. 13 Family Caregiver Support Program

The Family Caregiver Support Program is scheduled at 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 13, at the Uinta County Senior Citizen Center. Lunch will be available on the second Thursday of each month.

Thursday, Feb. 13 Chamber Luncheon

The Evanston Chamber of Commerce presents Smart Dwellings for this month's Lunch & Learn at noon on Thursday, Feb. 13, at the Legal Tender. Cost is \$12 for chamber members, \$15 for non-members, no charge if not eating.

Thursday, Feb. 13 Kid's Yoga

Join Sadie for kids yoga ages kindergarten and up from 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 13, at the Evanston Rec Center. \$10 per person.



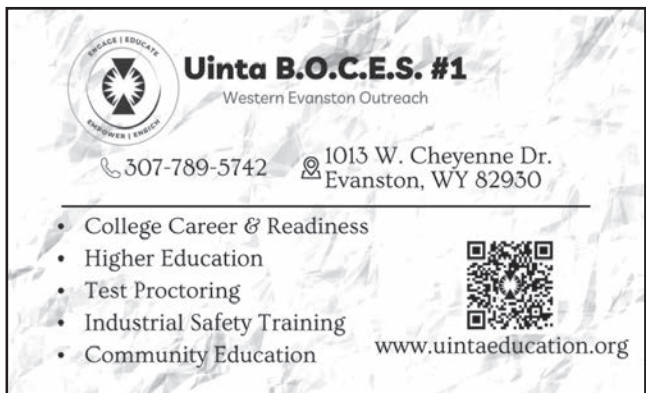
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News

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Evanston's Donnalisa Martinez was arrested on Sunday, Jan. 25, at the Cash Store in Fort Bridger. She's been charged with five felony counts of forgery. (FILE PHOTO)

FORGERY / from A1

View. According to the Uinta County Sheriff's Office, Martinez was arrested again on Sunday, Jan. 25, at the Cash Store in Fort Bridger.

According to the court affidavit dated Dec. 12, Martinez was identified by her distinctive tattoos on security camera footage on three separate occasions between September and October 2024.

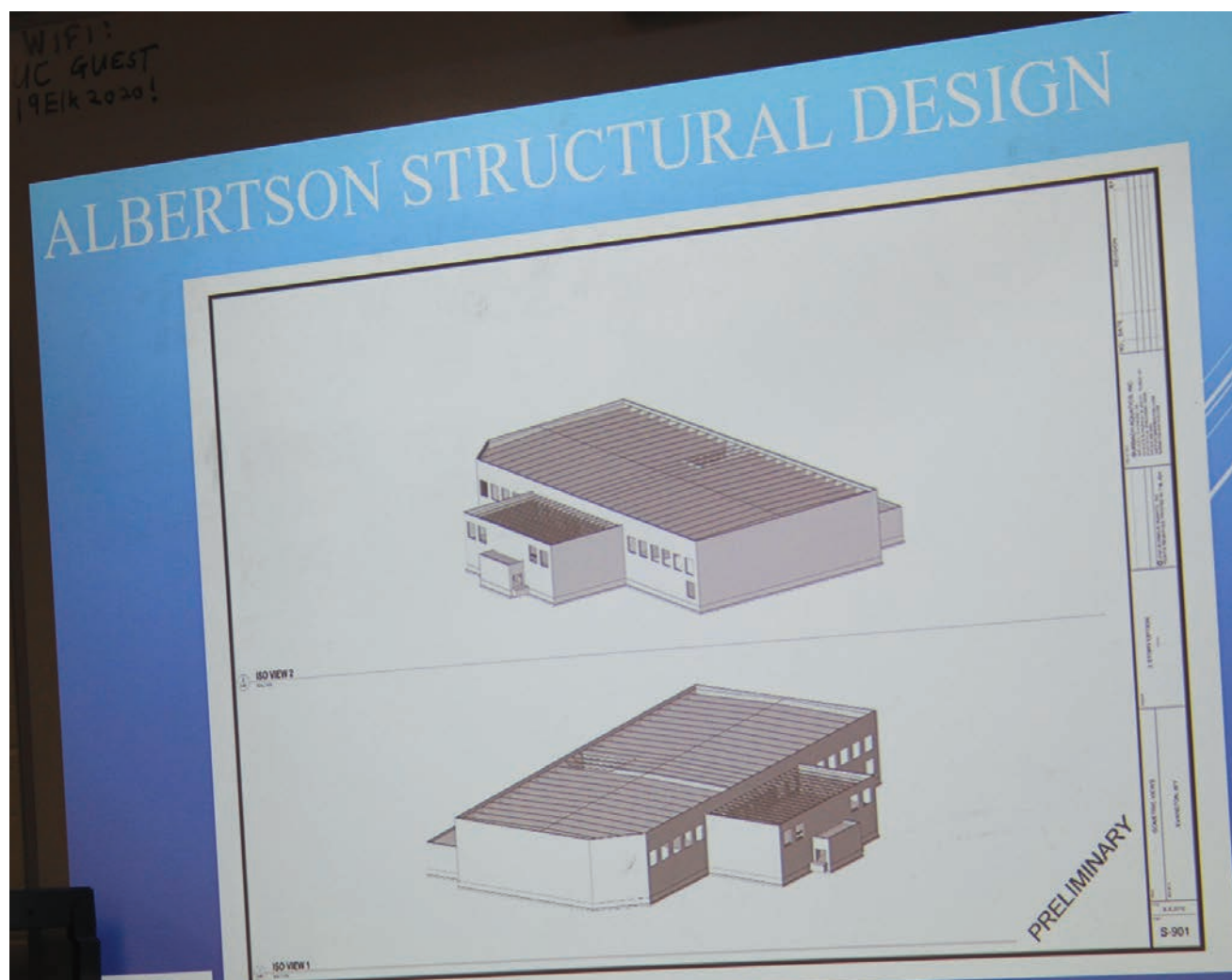
The amounts Martinez allegedly tried to cash varied from \$100 to \$455. All of the checks were unpaid due to the invalidity of the accounts.

Martinez's attempts to cash the checks this past fall uncovered two other alleged prior attempts in 2023 from a closed checking account belonging to her brother, who did not authorize her use of the account and recognized her handwriting.

"The handwriting and signature was [sic] nearly identical to the other alleged forged checks," the affidavit states.

According to the affidavit, Martinez has an "extensive criminal history of arrests including drug abuse, theft, child abuse, battery, DUI, obstruction, probation violation, contempt of court, forgery, retail theft, [and] interference with officers with bodily injury."

Martinez is currently out on bond awaiting a preliminary hearing scheduled for Feb. 6. If convicted, Martinez faces up to 50 years in prison and/or \$50,000 in fines.



Albertson Engineering's design for the two-level aquatic center presented by Evanston Parks and Recreation District Director Kim Larson at the UCEDC meeting held on Jan. 22, is pictured above. (HERALD PHOTO/Kayne Pyatt)

AQUATIC CENTER

from A1

center. On the main floor of the two-level aquatic center (43,000 square feet) would be two separate pools — one specifically for competitive swimming (4,500 sq. ft.) and the other for general recreation swimming (4,955 sq. ft.). The pools would be separated so competitive events and recreation swimming could take place at the same time.

The new facility would be ADA compliant throughout the building. There would be restrooms on both floors; two family changing rooms; men's and women's locker rooms; coach and lifeguard rooms; a spa; storage rooms; a lazy pool for exercise and a children's heated pool.

The upper floor of the building would have large windows and an observation deck so viewers could watch the swimmers. There would be a concessions area with tables and chairs and a large room for meetings or parties.

"The estimated cost for the new

aquatic center is \$19.1 million," Larson said. "We plan to do fundraising and will attempt to get multiple donors or one big donor. We have already formed a nonprofit in order to do the fund raising, the Evanston Recreation Foundation. We can write grants for ADA equipment and for free lessons and safety programs but none are available to build the pool. Burbach Aquatics also helps communities with fundraising efforts and to garner support. They provide guidance and advice."

Larson said there would be multiple uses for the old pool area. It would be filled in and could be used for a multi-purpose room, gymnastics area or a half-court basketball space. She said there are lots of possibilities for using the area and that renovation would be an extra cost. One estimate for the conversion of the old pool was at \$1.83 million.

There was much discussion from commission members on how to get taxpayers to support a temporary specific purpose tax. Director Gary Welling said it might be important to do a survey

to see how many people come from the Valley to use the recreation center and pool.

Commission member Eric Wyatt from Lyman said, "People in the Valley want their own recreation center."

A comment was made that it would help to sell the idea of a temporary special purpose tax to the voters if Larson could get hard numbers as to what a family with a certain income might be paying extra annually due to the special tax.

Larson said they planned a two-year window for construction of the facility but getting the temporary tax would make it take longer. They would like to see a special election held for the temporary specific purpose tax this year.

She said she is scheduled to talk to county commissioners and city councils in the county and ask for their support and help, as well.

Commission chair Dan Wheeler and commission members thanked Larson for coming and wished her luck on the project.

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EHS Classics 3rd in Jazz, Hip Hop at State Spirit



EHS Classics head coach Candice Sivey poses with her award after being named the 4A Coach of the year at State Spirit. (COURTESY PHOTO)



EHS Classics members Elly Lundholm (left), Karlyn Capener and Bailey Wright perform at the 2025 State Spirit Competition late last month in Casper. The Classics placed third in 4A Jazz and Hip Hop, while coach Candice Spivey was named 4A Coach of the Year. (COURTESY PHOTO/Andrew Towne, Casper Star-Tribune)

Resilient team shines in face of adversity, jump to 4A

By Don Cogger
Herald Sports Editor

Resilience. Going into the 2024-25 school year, that was the one-word challenge the Evanston High School Classics chose as their mantra, the word that would come to define their season as they began the training in defense of their state title.

Little did they they know, way back in August, just how fitting that word would become, when adversity would slowly begin to creep in — first in the form of a jump in class to 4A, then back in December, when the team was given their placement order for their routines: First out of the gate for Jazz Dance, fourth for Hip Hop.

Not exactly prime locations, to be sure. But the Classics, according to head coach Candice Spivey, more than embodied their challenge word, and performed like the defending champions they are, placing third in both Jazz Dance and Hip Hop in the ultra-competitive 4A classification.

“We knew going into it we were going to have our work cut out for us, just with the placements we were given,” Spivey said. “But really, there was nothing to be mad about at the end of the day.

These girls — in a large category, in 4A — they really did hold their own. I think maybe had we been later in the hip hop division, we could have placed a little bit better. But our hip hop scores were at least 10 points higher than we’ve been the last couple of years, so the fact that we set the standard so high in the hip hop division with those scores, it truly says a lot about what our girls went out and did that day.”

Spivey went on to explain why placements are so important, especially with jazz dance, and why being first is such a tough draw.

“For jazz, it’s kind of twofold,” she said. “It’s never easy going first in general — you have to set the standard for the day. And with jazz that day, it was really hard to hear our music, so I think going from the cheer to being the very first in the dance category, you have to warm up the judges, and the judges don’t know what they’re going to see.”

Trained as a high school drill team judge in Utah — something she still does to this day — Spivey said one thing you realize straight away is that the first three or four routines are probably going to be scored lower, just as a matter of course. In a category as large as 10 schools



Members of the EHS Classics perform at the 2025 State Spirit Competition late last month in Casper. The Classics placed third in 4A Jazz and 4A Hip Hop, while coach Candice Spivey was named 4A Coach of the Year. (COURTESY PHOTO/Andrew Towne, Casper Star-Tribune)

you have to leave room for teams that are coming.

“You can always go lower, but if you score too high off the bat, you can’t necessarily go higher,” Spivey explained. “The girls knew coming out — the first of six in jazz and fourth of 10 in hip hop — that we were going to have to be near perfect if we wanted to be able to place this year. A lot of nerves, when you’re the

first to go out.” And that’s where resilience came in.

“Ironically, that really played into our year — not making excuses for ourselves, and we were going to have tough times but it’s what we’re going to do to overcome those tough times that will be the success of our season,” Spivey said. “Having that word in the

back of our minds, the girls just embraced it.”

That’s not to say it was always easy.

“There was probably a two-week period there where our energy was down in practice, and you could kind of tell they felt defeated,” Spivey said. “But putting that word up and really going back to that word, and studying it some more, and

saying that we wanted to be intentional, and, really, if I’m being honest, stop focusing on a state championship, it changed our mindset. We just wanted to go into state and be proud of what we put on the floor, and at the end of the day, have people talking about what Evanston brought to the floor. And that’s exact-

CLASSICS B8

EHS Cheer takes fifth in 4A All-Girl Stunt Division at State

Team competes with pride, resilience after jump to 4A

By Don Cogger
Herald Sports Editor

The Evanston High School cheer team was in Casper late last month for the 2025 State Spirit Competition, and though the team was smaller in size and competing in a larger classification, the Lady Devils performed well, placing fifth in the 4A All-Girl Stunt category.

This year’s State Spirit squad — Talia Case, Lizzy Ellsworth, Ellika Fredenberg, Ashlyn Kopp, Olivia Miller, Catie Morrow and Josie Wilson — had the distinction of being the smallest team in 4A, though undoubtedly with the biggest heart.

“Overall, the team performed incredibly well,” said EHS head coach Sidney Lebert, who — along with assistant coach Holly Blair — had the team ready to go. “Despite being the smallest team in the 4A All-Girl

Stunt Division, our athletes brought an impressive level of power and energy to the mat. They executed their routine with determination, and even after a fall, they kept their spirits high and finished strong. We couldn’t be prouder of how they represented our program, both in skill and in character.”

EHS cheer — the defending state 3A champs from a year ago — faced adversity this season ahead of State Spirit, with a bump up to 4A, and a smaller state roster making the trip to Casper.

“We knew the challenges were significant, especially moving up to 4A with just seven athletes,” Lebert said. “Our focus was on maximizing the strengths of our team—emphasizing clean execution, strong stunts and building their confidence. The girls showed incredible dedication during practices,



Members of the EHS Cheer team and their coaches are all smiles following their performance at the 2025 State Spirit Competition in Casper late last month. Members include Talia Case, Lizzy Ellsworth, Ellika Fredenberg, Ashlyn Kopp, Olivia Miller, Catie Morrow and Josie Wilson and coaches Sidney Lebert and Holly Blair. (COURTESY PHOTO)

CHEER B8

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WE SUPPORT OUR RED DEVILS

Meet The Devils

Grey Hamilton — EHS Wrestling



Q: How long have you been wrestling, and how did you get into it?

A: I actually just watched an old video of me trying to wrestle [older brother] Kolby when I was probably about three, but my whole family have been wrestlers, and at this point, we know it's just something we're gonna do every weekend for a long few months.

Q: Are you involved in any other sports/activities?

A: I've been in love with football for just as long as wrestling, and I'm looking to make a big jump next season and keep getting to that next level.

Q: What's been the most memorable moment of the wrestling season for you this year?

A: There have been tons of ups and downs, for sure, but the best was probably after going 2-4 the first weekend to losing my first match in Viewmont and beating three seniors and three juniors in a row to come back for third. Especially beating a Star Valley senior in the blood round. And wrestling under the spotlight in Evanston's always cool.

Q: What are your hobbies outside of sports?

A: Ninety percent of the time I'm doing something to improve in athletics —whether it's footwork or lifting or just throwing a football or watching tons of wrestling. But when I'm not, I'll just hang out with my family or friends.

Q: Do you have a favorite movie or TV show?

A: It's gotta be "Remember the Titans," for sure.

Q: What are you enjoying most about this year's team?

A: It's been nice to have such a young team, because it's not as intimidating, and there's never really been anyone who's treated me like a freshman or let me use it as an excuse. And it's fun to watch Kolby step into a little leadership after all the work I've seen him put in.

Q: You wrestled well at the Lander Invite, and just competed at your first Ron Thon. What are your expectations for the rest of the season?

A: Lander was fun — and I kinda sucked it up at Ron Thon — but it was good to get that experience now, rather than later. I'm just looking to take that next step, and the goal always has to be a state title. I've never been satisfied with second, but the expectation is more of placing in the Top 3 if I get to the next level. But we're always working for first.

Q: In your opinion, what makes a good teammate?

A: I think like I said before — they don't let you make excuses, and they've gotta push you to accomplish your goals. Wrestling is an individual sport, but you'd be surprised at how important the team is. Karter Moore is usually my practice partner, and we push each other every day and I've gotten a ton better from him.

Q: What's it like wrestling for coach Wagstaff and coach Moore?

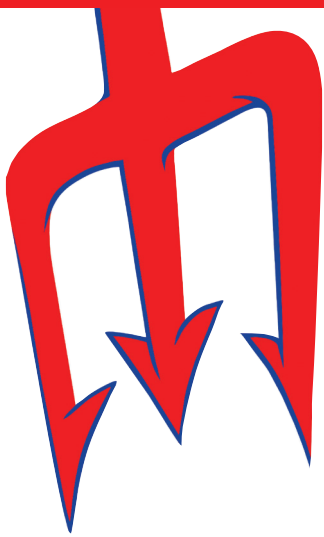
A: I've seen huge improvement this year, and they've grown my confidence a ton. They understand my goals, and it's great to have them and coach Gerard and coach Shelton there, so all four can help get me there. I feel like I relate really well with all of them in different ways.

Q: When you wrestle your older brothers, can you hold your own? Who do you do better against?

A: I can compete in the living room or messing around after practice, but if it really came down to it, it would be rough. I've never really wrestled live with Kyson — just drilled — but he'd for sure beat me. I try to avoid wrestling Kolby, because he just likes to make it hurt until I get too mad. It would end bad one way or the other, but it's always exciting.



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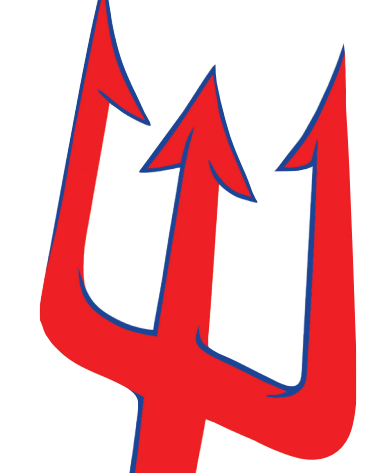
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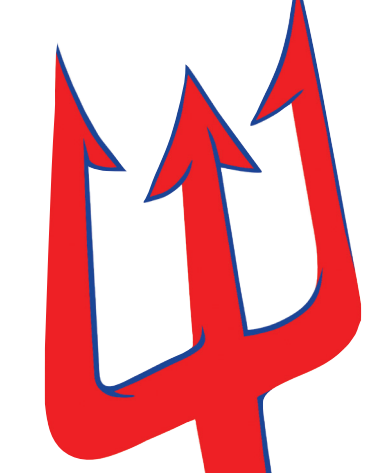
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Community/Outdoors

Senate panel wants all federal lands in Wyoming except Yellowstone NP

Ag committee asks Congress to give the state 30 million federal acres — including Grand Teton National Park.

By Angus M. Thuermer Jr.
WyoFile.com

A Wyoming Senate panel is demanding that Congress give the state all federal lands and mineral rights in the Equality State, except Yellowstone National Park.

The Agriculture, State and Public Lands and Water Resources committee voted 4-1 for a resolution that demands Congress confirm by Oct. 1 its intent to turn over the property. Senate Joint Resolution 2, "Resolution demanding equal footing," covers some 30 million acres "that derive from former federal territory."

That amounts to about 47% of the state's land area, the resolution's lead sponsor Sen. Bob Ide, R-Casper, told the committee. The property in question includes Grand Teton National Park, Devils Tower National Monument, the Bridger-Teton, Shoshone, Targhee, Black Hills, Bighorn and Medicine Bow-Routt national forests, plus the Thunder Basin National Grassland and Bureau of Land Management acreage.

In addition to seeking property belonging to all Americans, the resolution demands federal mineral rights in Wyoming, which amount to 69% of the rights in the state.

Citing the Constitution, Ide said "Congress shall have the power to dispose," of the land. He interpreted what that means.

"It's a mandate to dispose," he said. "They don't have the authority not to dispose."

"You can't do the opposite of something that's specifically directed in the U.S. Constitution," Ide said.

He agreed with Scott Brown, who told the committee during public testimony that, "by virtue of your oath [to uphold the Constitution] you are required to vote in favor of this resolution."

Sens. Tim French, R-Powell; Troy McKeown, R-Gillette and Laura Pearson, R-Kemmerer, backed the resolution. Sen. Barry Crago, R-Bufferalo, voted against it.

Misreading

The resolution claims two violations of the U.S. Constitution, including that federal ownership puts Wyoming on an unequal footing compared to other states and that federal control of land in Wyoming violates the Bill of Rights.

Those arguments have been part of the foundation of a revived Sagebrush Rebellion that most recently culminated in the U.S. Supreme Court's rejection of a petition by the state of Utah. The Beehive State sought 18.5 million acres of Bureau of Land Management property.

But Utah's arguments are based on "wrong-headed assumptions," made by an advocate who misreads and misinterprets the Constitution and cherry picks definitions, according to a widely cited article by John D. Leshy, a professor at UC Law in San Francisco.

Alec Underwood, program director for the Wyoming Outdoor Council, agreed. The Supreme Court's rejection "is based on over 100 years of case laws showing that this is impossible

legally," he said.

Ide saw the Supreme Court rejection differently. "They sent it back to district court and told them to kind of work their way up the ladder," he said of the court's 12-word order that reads only: "The motion for leave to file a bill of complaint is denied."

If Congress acquiesces to the resolution's demands, Wyoming would be willing to negotiate turning some property back to the federal



Squaretop Mountain in the Bridger Wilderness stands over the Green River as the moon shines through smoke from the Pack Trail Fire on Oct. 12, 2024. (WYOFILE/Angus M. Thuermer Jr.)

LANDS, B5

15 Questions

Makayla "Mak" Woodward
Parts Manager at Addicted Power Sports

What do you like most about living in Evanston?
The seclusion and solitude

If you won the lottery, what is the first thing you would do with the money?
I'd buy land, move my entire family somewhere warm and buy all the farm animals.

Do you have a dream you've yet to fulfill?
My dream is to spend my time traveling.

What's something interesting about you that most people don't know?
I love mycology.

If you had a super power, what would it be?
The ability to heal others.

What is your favorite genre of music?
Metal.

What do you like to do in your free time?
I love camping and being outdoors in the summer.

If you could meet a famous person, living or dead, who would it be?
Ryan Reynolds.

What do you read the most?
Lately it's been romance.

Do you have any pets?
I've got three dogs, two cats and a ball python. We would have more if it were up to my husband.

What would you like to see happen in your life this year?
To be able to slow down and enjoy my time.

What's the best thing about winter?
When it's over.

Who is your hero or role model?
My husband is my hero. He suffers from chronic pain but still continues to do what he can for our family.

What is your proudest accomplishment?
Making the decision six years ago to pull myself out of a very dark place and completely change my life.

What is your favorite TV show?
"Supernatural" — I could watch it a million times and never get tired of it.

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CLASSICS

from B1

ly what we did."

Asked what the mood was like down on the floor as the team awaited the final announcements from the judges, Spivey said the team was cautiously optimistic; they knew they had left it all on the floor. When the results were announced, it was a bittersweet moment.

"You know, at the awards ceremony, you could kind of feel a sense of sadness," she said. "But when I looked at my team — when we were taking pictures and stuff — I said 'You have everything to be proud of; every single thing you did today you can be proud of. We left it all out on the floor.' And it truly was like the most incredible thing, because it wasn't tears of sadness — it was the happiness of 'Look what we achieved, look what we've done and this is super-great.'"

This year's State Spirit competition was extra-special for Spivey, as she was also honored as the WHSAA 4A Coach of the Year.

"It's a validation of your vision and your belief and the direction that you've tried to take your team, but it's hard to take credit for that because I have a vision and a belief that it's the people around you that make you better and push you to achieve your goals and it's truly what this

has been," she said. "It's not just me, it's a team of girls, it's an incredible group of parents, it's an assistant coach in Lexi Frongner that believes in your vision, as well, and goes along with the crazy ideas. My family sacrifices a lot for me to be able to do this coaching gig, and they truly are my greatest supporters. Without surrounding yourself with incredible people you can't be incredible yourself. I truly attribute it to the people that I'm surrounded by. It was a very, very sweet feeling and to see the excitement on the girls' faces, and to see the excitement on my daughter's face and to hear how proud they are, it feels good."

As the girls boarded the bus home, Spivey said only one girl opted not to ride back with the team, as she was leaving on vacation with her family. With an unforeseen detour, the ride home ended up taking about seven hours — it's seven hours she wouldn't trade for anything.

"So it ended up being a seven-hour bus ride home, but I mean the girls were laughing and there were conversations, and they were playing games together," she said. "You wouldn't have known that there was that little sense of defeat. It truly was like good energy, and the girls were proud of what they did, and our crowd was amazing when we walked back to our dressing room. They were all there cheer-



Members of the EHS Classics are all smiles after placing third in both 4A Jazz and 4A Hip Hop at the 2025 State Spirit Competition in Casper last month. Members of the Classics include Addison Asay, Lily Barker, Karlyn Capener, Kya Coles, Rebecca Davis, Brooklynn Gillett, Aspyn Higdon, Jordyn Hughes, Hannah Liechty, Ellysa Lundholm, Kenadee Moore, Elizabeth O'Connell, Marissa Parks, Julia Perez, Lucie Rex, Raegan Roetker, Oakley Sponenburgh, Torrance Walker, Jazlin Welling, Bailey Wright, Cambree Young and Teigan Spivey. Coaches are Candice Spivey and Lexi Frongner. (COURTESY PHOTO)

ing for us, giving us hugs, congratulating us and other teams sitting there saying 'We can't wait to see what you come back with next year.'"

Next year's team will look decidedly different — gone will be the seven seniors who make up the core group of this team, and have never not

known success as a member of the EHS Classics. Spivey said Addie Asay, Aspyn Higdon, Cambree Young, Hannah Liechty, Kya Coles, Lucie Rex and Rebecca Davis are, "seriously, the most incredible group of seniors I've had the privilege to work with."

"They wanted our team

to feel like a family through and through, and just to have that camaraderie amongst them, and they truly set the tone for this year," Spivey said. "I'm super-grateful for everything they've done for their underclassmen, to make them feel like part of a state championship team and like they matter, even though they

haven't been on the teams previously...we still have a long month ahead of us before our season's over, and they've got smiles on their faces and they're having fun, they're still creating that fun atmosphere for all of these underclassmen and it's hard to imagine them not being there next year."

CHEER

from B1

pushing through tough routines and supporting one another. Their commitment and teamwork were key to overcoming the hurdles we faced."

Resiliency was a key word for both EHS spirit teams headed into State Spirit, and Lebert said her team's dedication to the work and each other was

nothing short of inspiring.

"They approached every challenge head-on, refusing to let the size of their team or the pressure of competing in 4A define their performance," she said. "Even when things didn't go perfectly, like during the fall, they never lost their focus or energy. Their ability to finish the routine with pride and composure speaks volumes about their grit. They truly embodied what it means to persevere through adver-

sity." Though the team doesn't have a designated captain, Lebert said leadership naturally emerged within the team, often when it was needed the most.

"Different athletes stepped up in their own ways, whether it was motivating the group during tough practices, offering encouragement after a mistake, or setting the standard through their work ethic and focus," she explained. "This

shared leadership created a strong sense of unity, where everyone felt responsible for the team's success. At State, it was inspiring to see how they supported one another, with each athlete contributing to the team's energy, resilience and positive mindset both on and off the mat."

Asked what the bus ride home was like for the team, Lebert said there were mixed emotions — pride, reflection and gratitude.

"While we didn't come

home with a repeat championship, there was a strong sense of accomplishment in what we had achieved," she said. "Knowing we made an impact and earned the respect of other 4A teams, despite the challenges we faced, was incredibly rewarding. We also spent time talking about the support from our cheer community, which means so much to us. Their encouragement throughout the season reminded us that we're part of

something bigger than just the competition."

As for what's next for EHS cheer, Lebert said she's super-duper excited (inside joke) about the open clinic on March 4 for current students in 8th to 11th grade that kicks off the recruiting process for the upcoming season.

"We're eager to grow our program, welcome new talent and continue spreading school spirit throughout our community," Lebert said.

Safety in Ag Seminar



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February 26, 2025

11:00 am-2:00 pm

Seminar Topics

Safety in Ag - Michael L. Pate, Professor, USU, general overview of safety, statistics, emergency contacts

First Aid and CPR - Amanda Barnes, PA-C, Star Valley Health

Lunch - provided by Uinta County Conservation District and other generous sponsors TBA

Fire Safety - Marc Young, Battalion Chief, Uinta County Fire

Moving Livestock Safely on Public Roads - Trevor Rasmussen, Undersheriff, Uinta County Sheriff's Office

How to be safe around equipment - Real life story and lessons learned from injury sustained on the ranch

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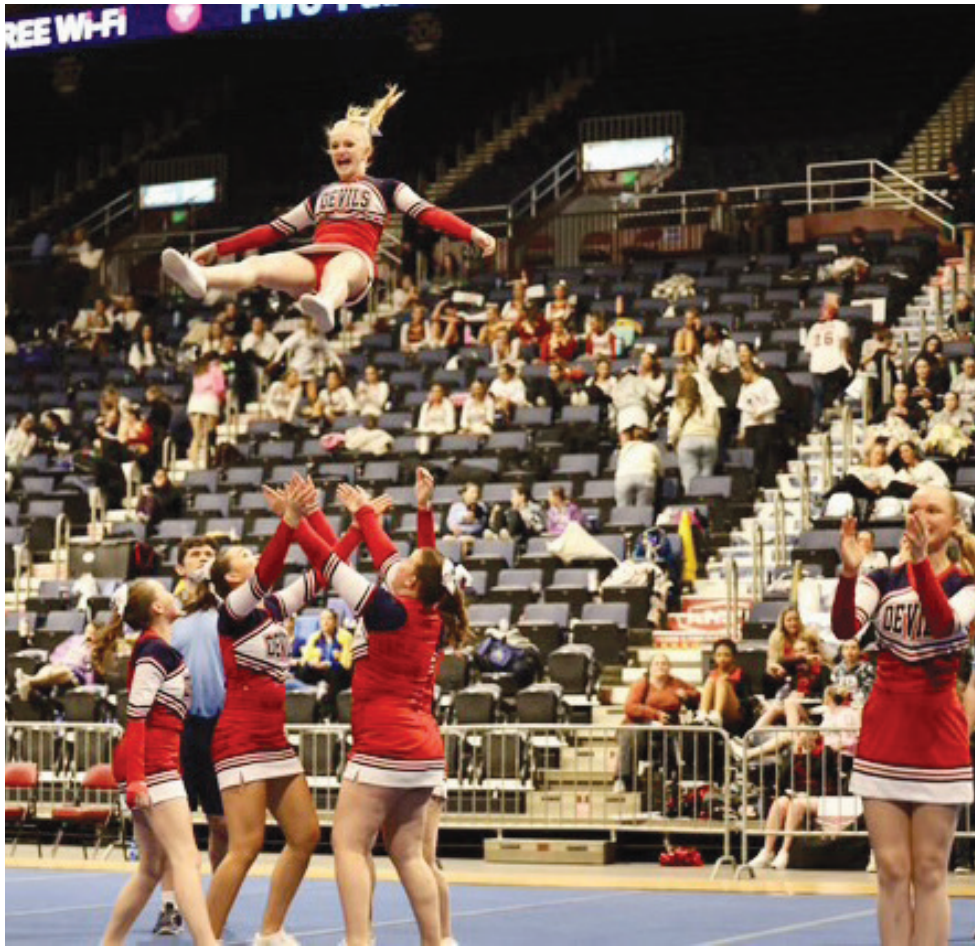
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Members of the EHS Cheer team perform their All-Girl Stunt routine at the 2025 State Spirit Competition in Casper last month. The Lady Devils finished fifth in 4A All-Girl Cheer. (COURTESY PHOTO/Kenyon Lovato)



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