

The Sundance



"Where the Kid got his name"

The County Newspaper of Jerry Adams

Times



Continuing the Crook County news since 1884

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75 Cents

Sundance, Wyoming 82729

Headed for Iraq.. 700,000 gallons of water

all to one customer

Sundance City Council has busy meeting



Local men called up last Friday and headed for Fort Dix, New Jersey. are shown above left to right Chance Bock, Kenny Byrne, J.J. Bock, Robert Morgan and Ryan Swanson. The men are members of the Alpha Battery 2-300 Field Artillery Regiment and will be headed to Iraq to perform alongside military police as they carry out various security missions.

In what was otherwise a less than exciting meeting of the Sundance City Council Monday evening the hit of the evening was in the report given by City Maintenance Foreman John Kiplinger. Kiplinger reported that a water line from the curb stop on the city main to the shop/residence of Richard Mertz had broken at sometime. The result of the break sent 700,000 gallons of water into, under and around the Mertz building. The Mertz property is located on Government Canyon road and the building has been unoccupied for some time. Mertz told the city he had someone looking after the property and was surprised at the nearly \$3000.00 water bill he will be receiving. Mertz had been paying the city the minimum water billing during the time he has been absent and assumed he had it all under control. The city fathers were sympathetic with Mr. Mertz's problem but felt he would have to pay for the water regardless of how the water was used.

The council took action to accept the transfer of the frontage road on the south side of the Interstate from the Crook County Commissioners.

Ordinance No: 1, 2004, dealing with a natural gas franchise for the community, was approved for publication. Miller shared with the council some concerns that had surfaced regarding the cost of the natural gas to local citizens. In a study of bills from Newcastle residents it appears that the natural gas was selling for an equivalent of around seventy cents a gallon for propane and a year ago as low as the middle forty cents a gallon. Roberts said it was important to note that local residents would have the choice of using whatever they want to, they were not required to use the natural gas if they preferred to use propane.

Discussion was held regarding the proposed Capital Facilities Tax that may be brought to the voters for approval. Miller shared with the council some of the requests for the funding that the county communities were requesting. He suggested that Sundance should request \$350,000 for the purpose of paying down existing debt the city has incurred. The council voted in favor of the proposed tax request as long the revenue would be used for the debt reduction.

Miller reported to the council on his discussion with the Crook County Commissioners for the consideration of establishment of a fire protection district. He said the commissioners listened to the proposal but had a negative response. He said it is apparent they are not interested in exploring the possibility of the fire district concept. Fire Chief Brian Scribner stated they had fifty-five man hours on calls for the last month and had one new member join the department. When questioned regarding the response of members when needed Scribner replied during working hours it is very difficult to

get enough, however after normal working hours they have a good turn out.

Mayor Miller shared the efforts to correct the deficiencies found by the recent auditors' results. The corrections involve a variety of housekeeping items, including requiring one of the two signatures on checks to be that of the mayor or the acting mayor, questions regarding the necessary backup support for grant monies made available from FEMA for the expansion of the flood plane survey. Other items included: correction on how the city budget was prepared and presented, and the lease of two vehicles without the councils approval at the time of the lease agreement regardless of the councils previous approval of the leases in the budget.

One of other major issues brought to the council's table was a request by Kaski for a variance on his subdivision project to allow him to only pave the streets in his first phase of the project. He was requesting approval to not pave the street leading to the present paved city street. He also requested different numbers for the lots than were approved on the original plot. He requested the change for the benefit of his internal management. The council denied the requests.

City Engineer Ken Rathbun shared with the council a revised estimated cost for the 585 waterline project. The original estimate and the figure that was applied for in original grant and loan applications was \$294,000. The new estimate shows an increase of \$84,000, placing the total project cost estimated to be \$378,000. Rathbun estimates that of the \$84,000 the present owners of the water district will be responsible for approximately \$21,000 of the increase amount.

Police Chief Todd Fritz requested approval from the council to once again lease for \$1.00 a Harley Davidson motorcycle for summer use. On a vote of two to one the council approved the lease agreement.

Rocky Courchaine, Bobbi Kiser and Helen Emerick shared with the council activities proposed for the city this summer. They requested assistance with portable toilet facilities and approval of any street closures necessary for the events. They also shared brochures they were in the process of preparing for the city, and were looking for financial support to have the brochures printed. Miller asked if this was a project of the Sundance Chamber. He shared with the group the monies that are presently given to the chamber for this kind of use. Miller asked what the brochures would cost to be printed, Courchaine stated the cost of printing the present brochures by the Devils Tower Tourism Association was five cents each. The city agreed to support any activity suggested by the group but did not make any decision on extra financial assistance until it could be presented in the next budget workshop.

Moskee bill defeated

Following a long and often heated debate that has stirred for a number of months, the 30,000 plus acre Homestake lands purchase proposal was dashed by a vote of 14 to 16 on the Wyoming Senate floor during legislative activity on Wednesday. The measure's failure came on the heels of a successful amendment to revive the hampered proposal by adding a funding provision back into the bill. The original funding was stripped from the bill as it passed through the legislative process in earlier proceedings. Wednesday's appropriation amend-

ment, allowing for a \$30.4 million fiscal allowance was passed by a measure of 17-13 and appeared to signal a ray of hope for the proposal's supporters as the proceedings continued. Feelings of optimism were quickly wiped away though as immediately following the successful amendment vote, proponents killed the bill by a 3 vote margin. Senators Burns (R-Sheridan), Hanes (R-Cheyenne) and Northrup (R-Cheyenne) each voted in favor of the fiscal amendment but ultimately swung the majority as they voted to defeat the bill during its third reading.

Last day of February turns tragic

Conditions resulting from the weekend storm that passed through the region bringing heavy snow and strong winds are being blamed for one traffic related death along with a number of other traffic accidents.

Gillette resident Sheila Elwonger was killed when the 2003 Ford she was driving slid across the median and was struck by a tractor-trailer on an ice covered stretch of I-90 approximately 10 miles west of Sundance on Sunday morning. According to WHP reports, the driver of the semi was not injured in the accident.

In another weather related accident, a multi-vehicle pileup just west of Sundance on I-90 forced a temporary closure. The chain reaction accident reportedly occurred after a vehicle towing a trailer jackknifed, blocking oncoming traffic.



Reports from around the state indicate that over 300 traffic accidents occurred, due at least in part to the widespread winter storm, 74 of which reportedly involved injuries. Interstate 90 was closed by South Dakota officials until late Monday from Wall to the Wyoming border.

Heavy snow and poor conditions also forced Sundance and Moorcroft schools to postpone their Monday morning starting times by two hours while school in Hulett was cancelled entirely on Monday.

Jim Byrne benefit March 5-6

There will be a benefit for Jim Bryne on March 5 and 6. On March 5 there will be a supper auction and dance at the Hulett Civic Center beginning at 6:00 p.m. The supper will be a barbecue beef supper. Adults will be \$8.00 and kinds under ten will eat free. A silent and live auction will follow. Some of the items include: propane, western saddle and tack, antiques, artwork and crafts, taxidermy work, stud fees, animal feeds, desserts and many more items. Auction items are still welcomed.

The community is asked to bring brownies, cookies, cakes and pies to serve as desserts and auction items.

A dance will follow the auction with music provided by "The good ol' boys".

On Sunday March 6 there will be team roping at the 2-4-6 Arena, Harold and Deb Adema, HWY 14, Sundance. All entry fees go toward medical expenses there will be no stock charge and will be prize roping only. Entries will be taken at noon with the roping beginning at 1:00 p.m.

All proceeds from all events will go to help defray medical expenses for Jim Byrne.

Contact Harold and Deb Adema, Don and Terri Johnson or JL and Dianna Driskill for more information

Music in our schools month

March is Music In Our Schools Month and the Sundance High School music department will be very active with clinics, concerts and festivals.

The SHS Choir will start things off by participating in the celebration of Dr. Seuss's 100 Birthday by singing at lunchtime on March 2. On Wednesday, March 10, several JH and HS groups will perform a concert for the elementary students from 1:45-3:00 p.m. in the SHS Auditorium. Some of the same groups will perform for the HS student body the following Wednesday, March 17 from 2:40-3:25 p.m.

On Friday, March 19, the HS Choir will help sponsor the University of Wyoming Centennial Singers concert at 7:30 p.m. in the SHS Auditorium. The Centennial Singers will also do a clinic with the SHS Show Choir from 1:30-3:00 p.m.

On Saturday, March 20, all JH Band members and some vocal students will participate in the NE Dis-

trict JH Solo and Ensemble Festival in Newcastle. Students will perform solos for judges and all performances are open to the public.

Four SHS groups will participate in the Chadron Jazz Festival in Chadron, NE on Monday, March 22. The groups competing at the festival are, SHS Jazz Band, SHS Jazz Combo, SHS Jazz Choir and the SHS Show Choir "Adrenaline".

The music department will finish out the month with their annual Pops Concert on Tuesday, March 23 at 7:00 p.m. in the SHS Auditorium. The concert will feature all ten performing groups from the JH and HS and is one of the biggest concerts of the year!

The SHS music students and their director wish to thank the entire community of Sundance for their continued support of music in our schools, their attendance at concerts and their support of the various fundraising efforts!

Sundance Times purchases Pioneer

Sundance Times Publisher Curt Moberg announced that successful negotiations have resulted in the Sundance Times' acquisition of the Wyoming Pioneer. The Pioneer is currently entering its fifteenth year of publication. Seaton Publishing of Spearfish founded the newspaper and have owned it throughout its tenure.

Jeff Moberg has been named as publisher for the newly acquired

paper and expects to see little change to the newspaper's focus. "Our goal in entering this endeavor is to continue to offer the high level of service and coverage the Hulett community has come to expect. We are anxious to continue the tradition started by Seaton Publishing and look forward to working with the community as we evolve together."

Moberg said he expects the

transition to go smoothly as no major operational changes are expected to be undertaken as part of the move. Melissa Bears will continue to lend her considerable talent to the paper as has been the case throughout the last fifteen years.

The change in ownership will take effect March 1, 2004, making the Pioneer's March 4 issue the first under the new owners.

Kiwanis Club plans "Stars of Tomorrow"

Performance Friday March 26

The Sundance Kiwanis Club is once again sponsoring the Stars of Tomorrow program for county performers. They will be holding tryouts on Monday, March 22 at 3:30p.m. at the Sundance Elemen-

tary, the Moorcroft auditorium and the Hulett auditorium.

The performance will be held Friday, March 26 at 7:00 p.m. in the Sundance High School auditorium. Dress rehearsals will be

held the same evening at 6:00 p.m.

Further information can be obtained from any Kiwanis member or by contacting Joe Baron, project chairman.



Merritt Mollenbrink is shown above advising the driver of the Midwest Motor Express that the snow he has just driven upon was not such a good idea. With the help of John Kiplinger and the city front end loader the truck was extracted from the windrow of snow and sent along his way.