



Rocky Courchaine and Doug Carter mix bottles containing names of ticket holders hoping to win the "big bucks" as the Sundance Chamber of Commerce \$1000 shopping spree drawing commenced last Friday night. Lee Middleton was awarded with 25 Sundance Bucks for being the first of fifty names drawn during the evening's festivities. The next drawing is scheduled for Friday, December 12 5:30 p.m. at Wild West Video and Espresso.

Emotional Moskee land tract meeting held

By Shelly Ritthaler

On Thursday December 4, an emotion charged public meeting was held in Sundance between local residents and representatives from the Wyoming Wildlife Federation to discuss the pending sale of the Moskee land tract, which is also known as the Homestake Land, just south and east of Sundance. Bob DeRocher, the local Wyoming Wildlife Federation representative from Hulett who organized the meeting says, "The Moskee Tract is such an important and beautiful piece of property it would be a terrible thing if it was sold to developers." Homestake Mining first owned the land along with the Homestake Gold Mine in Lead South Dakota just across the Wyoming border. Homestake merged with Barrick Gold Corporation a leading international gold company and this piece of property transferred to Barrick Gold. Since that time, Barrick let the property operate as it always has with its livestock grazing permits intact, and its hunting operations in the hands of a local outfitter. Then Barrick Gold Corporation announced the

sale of its Homestake properties. The tract of land in northeast Wyoming contains about 30,600 acres of land located in the Black Hills region of the state. It contains forestland, optimum grazing and agricultural land, and premier fishing and hunting opportunities. Barrick is asking an estimated \$32 million which is based on the appraised price. As meeting organizer Bob DeRocher said, "This piece of property with its wildlife is prime hunting ground that should be preserved for the public good and use. That is why I called this meeting, to see if the WWF could help us get the state of Wyoming to buy it and preserve the public use of this land rather than allow it to fall into the hands of developers who will cover it with home sites." Another thing about the tract of land is that it provides direct access to Forest Service lands giving greater public access to those federal holdings. Representing the Wyoming Wildlife Federation at this meeting was Larry Baesler, the executive director of the organization and Gwyn McKee the WWF board president. Baesler said, "The goal of our organization is to influence the state of Wyoming to make more land available to sportsmen and sportswomen. We aren't experts at land acquisition. We are lobbyists. What we can do is try to influence the state to acquire this property and make it available to sportsmen and the public." Baesler took an unofficial poll of those attending the meeting and found that of the approximately forty attending, 38 were in favor of pursuing having the state acquire the property; two were opposed. Baesler said, "That is a good enough consensus for the WWF to get involved and take action on this proposal." Baesler also said, "It would be a shame to lose this tract of land to a developer who would carve it up into

Crook County declared drought area A secondary drought disaster area

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman has named Crook county a secondary drought disaster area, making ranchers and farmers eligible for federal assistance, according to U.S. Senator Mike Enzi, R-Wyo. In an Dec. 2 letter, Veneman declared 33 counties in South Dakota to be primary drought disaster areas. Crook county was named a secondary natural disaster area because it neighbors one of the primary disaster counties. Farmers and ranchers in both primary and secondary counties will be eligible for consideration for low-interest emergency loans from the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Eligibility for an FSA loan is based on the extent of loss, security available and repayment availability. Producers in these counties must apply for the loans before Aug. 2, 2004 for losses incurred since January 1, 2003. "I am pleased Wyomingites in Crook county will have the opportunity to apply for the assistance they need to keep their operations running. It is assistance like this that is helping our farmers and ranchers weather the blows that nature has dealt us," said Enzi. For more information regarding the drought designations please contact the Crook County FSA office at 307-283-2870.

SHS Christmas Concert announced

The SHS Music Department will present their annual Christmas Concert on Tuesday, December 16 at 7:00 p.m. in the SHS Auditorium. The evening of holiday music will feature the JH Concert Band and Choir, the SHS Concert Band and Choir, the SHS Jazz Combo and a small ensemble consisting of flute, guitar and voice. The concert is free and the doors will open at 6:00 p.m. The SHS Band Parents will once again be providing a Chili Supper before the concert. The chili supper will be held in the SHS commons from 5:30-6:30 p.m.. There are no advanced tickets for the supper. The cost is \$5.00 for adults and \$2.00 for children 10 and under. The meal includes dessert, hot dogs, bread sticks, chili, drinks and more! All proceeds from the chili supper go toward the SHS Band Trip fund. Every four years the SHS Band attends a major national festival and next year is their next trip! What more could you ask for? A meal with live entertainment followed by an evening of listening to holiday favorites. This is one you won't want to miss!

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County resident convicted in poaching case

Clinton Lee Busenitz of Hulett pled guilty to four separate counts brought on after he was witnessed illegally shooting a deer northwest of Hulett on November 1. According to Game and Fish officials, Wyoming Game Warden Jason Sherwood was watching a herd of mule deer on the afternoon of November 1 when he noticed Busenitz's pickup speeding toward him. As the pickup rounded a corner, Sherwood noticed a rifle barrel sticking out of the vehicle window. Sherwood next witnessed a doe deer fall as multiple shots were fired from the subject's vehicle. Sherwood stopped the pickup and questioned

Busenitz about the incident. Reportedly, Busenitz first denied the shooting but later confessed after Sherwood explained his having seen the act. Busenitz was convicted of wanton destruction of a deer, taking a deer without a license, shooting from a public road and trespass following the incident. On Tuesday, November 18, Crook County Circuit Court Judge Fred Dollinson sentenced Busenitz to 30 days in jail with 28 suspended, fines totalling \$1360, \$60 in jail fees and \$1000 in restitution. Busenitz had his hunting privileges suspended until 2010 and his rifle held by the court pending forfeiture proceedings.



Wyoming newest Senator, Chuck Townsend is sworn in by Supreme Court Justice, Michael Golden in Cheyenne on Friday.

Townsend sworn in Member of the 57th Wyoming State Senate

C.L. "Chuck" Townsend, of Osage, was sworn in as a member of the 57th Wyoming Legislature on Friday, December 5, 2003. Wyoming Supreme Court Justice, Michael Golden, administered the oath of office and presided over the ceremony in the Senate Chambers at the Capitol Building in Cheyenne. Senator Townsend was joined at the ceremony by his wife, Pat, and daughter, Kara, as well as several members of his extended family. Senator Townsend is a crude oil producer and rancher from Northeast Wyoming and is a member of the Petro-

leum Association of Wyoming, the Wyoming Business Alliance, and the Lion's Club. Senator Townsend was appointed by the Crook, Weston, Niobrara, Converse, and Goshen County Commissioners to fill the Senate District 1 seat vacated by Bill Barton, who resigned from the Wyoming Legislature due to health reasons. Senate President Kunz has appointed Senator Townsend to the Senate Agriculture, Public Lands, and Water Resources Committee.

Flu vaccine supply dwindling

According to Crook County Public Health Nurse Barb Coy, her office administered their last dose of influenza vaccine Monday afternoon. Crook County joins a long and growing list of regional and national communities in short supply of the flu vaccine. An early start to the flu season and widespread concern over this year's outbreak are credited with a run on the vaccine. Coy said they are unable to receive any more adult vaccine but she does expect to receive vaccine for children under the age of three in early January. Parents of children under 8 years old who have already had one dose and require a booster are asked to still come to the office one month after first dose as originally planned. Limiting the spread of the virus is the number one priority at this point, "washing hands cannot be over emphasized," noted Coy who added that staying home from work when sick and avoiding crowds will also provide better odds of avoiding the infection. If you do show signs of infection - temperatures of 102 and higher, body aches, nonproductive cough, and sore throat, Coy recommends you contact your doctor for possible treatment. While options for combating the flu are limited and most infections will clear up without treatment, Coy advises that at-risk patients may be able to avoid more serious complications such as pneumonia with adequate treatment.

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