

News Letter Journal

Weston County

December 29, 2022

Newcastle, Wyoming

Year 136 Week 52

Temps plummet, but 1990 record stands

Alexis Barker
NLJ News Editor

Newcastle fared better than other places — avoiding power outages, massive snow drifts and deaths — as arctic air moved

across the nation dropping temperatures to well below zero, and wind chills to dangerously low levels.

Temperatures began to drop on Dec. 21, according to weather data, reaching minus 17

by 5:30 p.m. The wind chill was minus 43.

By 9:40 p.m., the real temperature had reached 24 degrees below zero with wind chills reported to be minus 50. Temperatures remained

extremely cold overnight, with wind chills dropping to minus 57 on Dec. 22.

Due to the cold conditions and potential dangers associated with the weather, various local businesses and entities closed

their doors and encouraged people to remain at home for their own safety.

“Due to the forecasted dangerous low temperatures for Thursday (Dec. 22), I am closing all county offices in

an attempt to keep employees home, inside and safe,” Weston County Emergency Management Coordinator Gilbert Nelson said. “Frostbite and hypothermia is a real

— See Storm, Page 10

2022 A LOOK BACK

the year's top stories

The year 2022 was packed with its fair share of interesting ups and downs for Weston County, and there was especially a lot of change in the local government. New faces will appear on the Wyoming State Legislature as well as the city council, county commission board and the school board, with the results of the primary and general elections. Notably, after months of discussion, the City of Newcastle approved a backyard chicken ordinance. Another frequent topic was the ongoing dispatch debate. There was also a fair share of heartwarming stories about those who have promoted positivity in our community. Here is the breakdown of the events that affected Weston County in 2022, as told in the pages of the News Letter Journal, along with some images from the year.



Photo by Walter Sprague/NLJ

At the start of 2022, in January, the Newcastle Ice Association held a hockey demo and clinic at the Par Pacific Wyoming Refining Ice Rink. The free event brought out experienced youth hockey players as well as plenty of inexperienced youth who had never tried to play hockey before.

January

• Seth and Kristine Rhoades, local dentists and operators of Black Hills Dental, were chosen as the News Letter Journal's 2021 Person(s) of the Year for their dedication to community and family. Seth, a 2000 Newcastle High School graduate, took over the dental clinic in 2014 from his step-dad, Richard Ratts, when Kristine joined the team. The couple often volunteers in the community, from the Newcastle Booster Club to RPM Days to being volunteer sports coaches. They also offer free dental work to local veterans on Veterans Day.

• The Sixth Judicial District (Campbell, Crook and Weston counties) would be getting its second new judge within just six months, according to a Jan. 4 press release from the Judicial Nominating Commission. The new judge would replace Thomas W. Rumpke, whose resignation would be effective March 2. The Commission chose three nominees, Matthew F.G. Castano, Paul S. Phillips and Ronald W. Wirthwein Jr., to forward to Gov. Mark Gordon, who would then have 30 days to appoint one of them.

• A chapter came to a close for Doug and Diane Hudson when, after owning

Mondell Heights for 12 years, they sold the care home to Don and Ruth Taylor. The building, a former county hospital, opened under a boarding home license in 1989, and it was purchased by the Hudsons in 2010. The Hudsons were able to secure an assisted living license in 2012. Now under new ownership, the Taylors, who became official owners Jan. 4, hope to give excellent elderly care. Some changes on the horizon include staffing changes, updated com-

puters and hopes to build.
• In light of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to allow the COVID-19 vaccine mandate for health care facilities receiving Medicare and Medicaid money, Weston County Health Services staff would have until Jan. 27 to be vaccinated. Staff would need to submit an exemption form by Jan. 19, or get the first of a two-shot series or the first of the J&J vaccine by Jan. 27, and the second by Feb. 28. At the time the

News Letter Journal article was written, 35 members were either unvaccinated or had not submitted any exemption form. The WCHS board of trustees had originally approved a vaccine mandate policy on Nov. 18, after the Biden administration's vaccine mandate (the mandate drafted by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services). The hospital district was concerned that it

— See Year in Review, Page 2

Hess: the running priest

Hannah Gross
NLJ Correspondent

When the Rev. Brian Hess was assigned to the Newcastle parish in the summer of 2019, he became perhaps one of the youngest priests Corpus Christi Catholic Church has ever had. That may be fortunate, as it gives him the energy he needs to look after three parishes — Newcastle and the two mission parishes in Sundance and Upton — and he is always running, quite literally.

According to parishioner Shirley Harder, they call Hess “the running priest,” but not only because of his busy ministerial life. Hess also enjoys pushing his body to its limits by competing in ultra marathons, which is anything longer than the 26.2 miles of a regular marathon.

“I think it helps keep him a high-energy kind of a guy,” said Mitch Haynes, a member of St. Anthony's in Upton. “Running is a good way for him to decompress because it's something that he really loves; ... it is relaxation for him, as crazy as it sounds.”

Hess was never an athlete nor did he partici-

pate in high school sports, but as a boy, he was a Boy Scout, and enjoyed camping with the family and the outdoors. He took that to a whole new level during seminary training in Denver.

“The bug kind of bit me there,” Hess said. “I got hooked by the idea of a marathon while I was there.”

He signed up for one and soon realized he would have to start training “to get a bib under

— See Hess, Page 10

Submitted photo

Rev. Brian Hess, known by his parishioners as the “running priest,” not only stays busy looking after the Newcastle parish, which encompasses Upton and Sundance, but he also enjoys extreme running in what little spare time he has. The young priest has already competed in several marathons and ultra marathons, including a 200-mile race in the Cascades of Washington state.



WEATHER FORECAST

Thursday
Partly Cloudy
Hi 35, Lo 15



Friday
Partly Cloudy
Hi 36, Lo 24



Saturday
Mostly Sunny
Hi 39, Lo 24



Sunday
Snow
Hi 38, Lo 21



Monday
AM Snow
Hi 28, Lo 15



Tuesday
Mostly Sunny
Hi 30, Lo 16

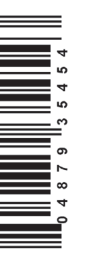


Wednesday
Partly Cloudy
Hi 33, Lo 22



INSIDE

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- Sports in Review, Page 11



8 0 4 8 7 9 1 3 5 4 5 4 3

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Year in Review

could lose as much as \$15 million if the mandate wasn't enforced.

• A court hearing for the suit filed by Garrett Borton against Weston County Commissioner Tony Barton was finally scheduled for March 31. Judge James Michael Causey was to consider the motion by Barton's lawyer to dismiss for failure to state a claim on which relief can be granted. The suit was originally filed on Oct. 26, 2021, since which time both parties had submitted several responses to the allegations and requested relief to the issue presented. Borton sought injunctive and declaratory relief concerning Barton's qualification to function as a county commissioner. While he didn't ask for Barton to be removed from office, he did request a temporary injunction, which would be "a command to refrain from a particular act," according to statute. This would require Barton to refrain from voting as an elected official, and he would no longer receive compensation from the county. The petition filed by Borton also asked for a permanent injunction in which the court grants the requested relief.



Top: In this NLJ photo taken by Walter Sprague in January, German Lopez, Hercules Custom Concrete forman, adjusts one of the smaller blocks of the retaining wall being repaired on South Summer Ave. **Above:** The Anna Miller Museum hosted a presentation by Seth Parsons in February, where he shared animal hides and skulls with youngsters, in this photo by Alexis Barker. **Below:** a group of ice fishers were captured by NLJ's Kim Dean at LAK in February.

February

• Seventeen students in Nikki Bartlett's seventh grade English class participated in a nationwide poetry contest for grades six through eight. Preslee Fitzwater, Baleigh Knight and Kaitlyn Blumenthal were chosen to be published in a poetry collection book featuring selections from all over the United States.

• The Wyoming Department of Health reported that the number of COVID-19-related deaths totaled 17 for Weston County. Statewide totals were tallied at 1,650 since the start of the pandemic. The Department of Health also reported 110 confirmed cases within the past 14 days, but Weston County Health Services' CEO Maureen Cadwell explained that there were probably more cases due to unreported in-home testing. Active cases as of Feb. 8 were 23, and hospitalizations were down to zero. Fully vaccinated Weston County residents amounted to 2,553 people, or 36.86%, as of Jan. 31. Statewide, 257,790 Wyoming residents, 44.54%, were fully vaccinated.

• At age 89, Lorraine Davis still got in the saddle after all these years, riding from the time she was just a small child. Whether pleasure riding or helping move cattle, she still enjoyed her time spent riding, especially with her granddaughter Kyla Popma and family. Davis was born west of Newcastle in Pedro, Wyoming, near the Osage oil field, in 1932. She graduated from Newcastle High School in 1950 and married her husband, Russell, in 1953. In 1962, the family moved to a ranch on Beaver Creek. Popma and her husband took over the family ranch about 11 years ago.

• According to Weston County School District No. 1 Superintendent Brad LaCroix, the hope was to construct an unspecified building as a multi-purpose room using Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief 3.0, or ESSER 3.0, funds. The hope was for a place to expand school activities, after-school activities and summer activities and have a place for events, practices, etc. The school district received \$3,751,067.75 in federal funding from the state through ESSER 3.0, which is part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. However, the district would need to partner with the city or county for continued funding of utilities and maintenance of the building, so as not to take from the general fund. The community would also need to work together to figure out a plan to staff the facility. Another option for the funds was to use it to recruit and retain staff with incentive stipends. In addition, the district was going to allocate \$86,000 to update the bookmobile, \$112,134 for summer and after-school programs, \$17,000 for healthy snacks, \$300,000 for equipment and supplies, \$200,000 to possibly expand the elementary school playground and \$98,067 to help deal with physical and emotional health of staff and students.

• Weston County remained split in a redistricting


— See **Year in Review**, Page 6



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nlj IDEAS

Happiest of New Years

I hope you all had a happy holiday, no matter what you and your family and other loved ones celebrate.

But now it is time to gear up for one last hoorah for 2022. That's right friends. It is time for the New Year's Eve celebrations.

No matter how you choose to celebrate, there is always a bit of reflection on the year past, what you could have done differently, and friends or family lost. The good, the bad. Hopefully more of the former and less of the latter.

One thing a lot of folks will do is make resolutions. I look at them as the little white lies we tell ourselves to make us feel good for a few days before they fall by the wayside. I never make them...as I know I will never stick to them.

I am weak. I get it. I have told myself countless times I will be a better human. Then I fail, and revert back to my sarcastic, sinning soul. (For what it is worth, my sins tend to be beer and the occasional nicotine fix. I know, "Oh! The horror!")

Which brings me to my next fun thought, the New Year's Eve party! Now I am an old enough fella that I spent more than one New Year's Eve bouncing between the Bronco, the Corner, and the Rockpile, with maybe a foray to the D&S thrown in there. None of those are in existence anymore. Times change. Places go up in flames. What can ya do?

Nowadays I tend to be more sedate. I spend the evening at home, and am usually asleep well before the ball drops.

But what about the rest of the country? I am sure there are a lot less fuddy-duddy folks than me out there.

I am glad you asked! A recent email from the boss showed that drinking games were one of the most

popular searches for upcoming celebrations. It was ranked by state, and here is the top ten, from 10 on up to #1: Hawaii, Maine, New Hampshire, Alaska, Montana, Rhode Island, North Dakota, Delaware, Wyoming, and topping the list Vermont. Good to see the Cowboy state repping at the top of the heap!

That information begs the question, "what are the most popular drinking games?"

As a younger man we played things like Circle of Death, the Beer Hunter, Three Man, and various other dice and card games. Yellow Octopus compiled data on this, and they came up with the three most popular games. Number 1 is Ride the Bus followed by Ring of Fire and I Drink and I

know Things. I was unfamiliar with any of these, so I had to dust off the Google machine to research the parameters. Ride the Bus seems to be fairly complex after the first 3 rounds, and I can completely see things rapidly falling into mayhem. If you are interested you can find the rules on Thrillist.com. I Drink and I know Things looked thoroughly confusing as I browsed it on Queen-of-the-Party-games.com. Ring of Fire seems pretty straightforward, and can be found at Ringoffirerules.com if you are so inclined. Wyoming's choice of games is Circle of Death, which, if my dusty brain remembers correctly would be similar to Ring of Fire — played with cards and each card with a different meaning.

No matter what your choice of fun is, please remember to be safe, and do not under any circumstance drink and drive. There are plenty of ways to get home without being a danger to others. It could be the start of the best year of your life, and a tragedy is no way to end it. Happiest of New Year to you all. I will see you in 2023.



Dustin Bergstrom
Dusty Mind

POLL of the WEEK

QUESTION:
Who should be the next president?

- Donald Trump
- Joe Biden
- Someone Else

Go to newsnj.com to vote!
Look for results in next week's News Letter Journal.

RESULTS:
When does your family open Christmas gifts?

- Christmas Day ...47% (7 votes)
- Both40% (6 votes)
- Christmas Eve ...13% (2 votes)

Deadline for Letters to the Editor is noon on Friday

News Letter Journal:
WPA and NNA
Award Winner

WHO



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WHAT

We strive to cover all the news and entertainment important to the people of Weston County, Wyoming. Our entire staff takes part in the decision-making process of what appears in these pages and all content is locally generated. If you have a story idea please contact any of the people you see here. NLJ editorials appear in the upper left hand corner of this page and are written from the position of the newspaper, usually with the influence of several people, and in the hope that they will carry the weight of our 100-plus years of leadership. The personal columns and letters appearing elsewhere on this page, and others, represent the opinions of single individuals and do not necessarily reflect the position of the newspaper. The NLJ welcomes and encourages your Letter to the Editor. We will print all signed, original letters of local interest. Please provide a phone number for verification. We will not publish letters that are libelous or scurrilous in nature. Letters of thanks are offered at a reduced price in our classified section.

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WHEN

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WHY

To provide news and entertainment for, and to serve the best interests of, the people of Weston County



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Let's remember heroes who also became victims

Heroes and victims. Sometimes an off-hand remark can become amazingly prescient.

During a news meeting of Cowboy State Daily staff on Dec. 21, we were talking about how to cover the big storm headed toward the state. I casually mentioned we need to watch out for "heroes and victims."

Little did I know that within 36 hours, three wonderful Wyoming men would become both heroes and victims.

The people of Wyoming need to give thanks to first responder Tyeler Harris, 29, of Saratoga and to Safety Officer Bruce Lang, 68, of Pine Haven, who lost their lives trying to save others. We also mourn the loss of Jason Otto, 48, who accompanied Lang on the rescue mission and lost his life, too.

An EMT, Tyeler was killed when struck by a semi at 4 a.m. on Interstate 80 while helping a stranded motorist. Lang drowned while trying to rescue someone from Keyhole Reservoir in the far

NE part of Wyoming.

"These two events occurred on opposite ends of the state some 322 miles apart. And yet, since we are of such a small population, we feel the agony of losing two of our finest. We literally feel the pain of this loss. And at Christmas, it becomes even more sad.

So, folks, during your holiday celebration this year please pause

to thank these men for their service and thank all those other folks out there giving of themselves so selflessly during such a busy and bitter cold time.

At the top of my list are the Highway Patrolmen who are out patrolling our roads.

On Dec. 21, these brave men and women dealt with 787 calls, 196 motorist assists and 104 crashes. Lt. Kyle McKay said it was like no other time he has experienced in a 20-year career. It was chaos.

And Dec. 22 looked every bit as bad. These poor folks were exhausted when they

finally got to celebrate their holiday.

I am also thankful to the tow truck drivers and EMTs out there picking up the pieces of these accidents in absolutely blinding conditions. Plus, there was record cold.

Our hospitals and clinics are full right now because of COVID-19, flu, RSV, and broken bones suffered in falls on the ice. It is super busy. These folks want to spend time with their families, too, but duty calls. Thank God for their dedication.

This column was originally intended to be light-hearted and a gentle reminder to readers to be careful and to remember the real reason to celebrate this great holiday.

So, let's switch gears and let me share some old Wyoming stories involving the Worland family and the Schmidt family, both with long-time history in the state.

Author John Davis who lives in the town of Worland and also lives in the house owned by the Worlands, for whom the town was named, wrote the following:

"In my book Sadie and Charlie, I wrote

about a Christmas story involving Sadie and Charlie Worland. The Worlands and their social crowd were preparing a big Christmas feast, with Sadie Worland cooking a whole pig in her oven (which didn't quite fit). Her friend Helen Howell cooked several pies.

"Just before the big dinner, Howell called Sadie Worland and told her that the Howell dog had eaten all the pies. Sadie replied: 'Helen, think nothing of it, the damn pig blew up.'"

Davis concludes: "Whether because of the inability to close the oven door or the way it was being cooked, the pig exploded. We don't know how all this was finally worked out or what the celebrants ended up eating that evening."

Meanwhile down in Cheyenne: A famous cartoon concerning folks named Schmidt is often circulated around the Internet these days.

My old pal Pat Schmidt, former publisher in Thermopolis and Lovell, has some observations about this story. Here is how he describes how members of

his family have dealt with this situation:

"Now in the height of the Communications Age, humorous cartoons from back in the 1950s and 60s are still generating mirth and merriment on the Internet! Or is that regenerating?"

"Take the case of our family and one particular cartoon. Over decades, reactions from family members have ranged from my father's outrage to my grandchildren's extreme merriment.

"You've seen the cartoon. Santa Claus is parked atop an old outhouse, angrily berating his lead reindeer, 'Damn it, Rudolph, I said, The Schmidt-house!'

This year has been exhausting. Let's hope and pray that 2023 will be a great time for all of us.

Bill Sniffin is a retired newspaper publisher who has penned a number of books about Wyoming. Check out additional columns written by Bill at www.billsniffin.com, and find volumes from his coffee table book series, which have sold over 30,000 copies, for sale at the News Letter Journal.

There's much to be thankful for

The year is almost over, and the first impulse for many of us might be to say "good riddance." For most people, 2022 hasn't exactly been easy. We started the year still dealing with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Russia's invasion spurred gas prices to levels that many found difficult to afford. We experienced the worst inflation of the past 40 years. Mundane parts of public life were infected with politics and strife.

But despite the economic challenges and the polarizing issues, we managed to get through it all. And there was a lot of good in our state along the way.

Economically, our fortunes have improved. Two years ago, the talk was of layoffs and an energy downturn. We were dealing with closed businesses and virtual schools. Now, the industries that buoy our economy are performing much better. Oil is up, and so is natural gas and coal. Utilities are investing in new renewable projects. Wyoming has a chance to become a leader in a revived nuclear industry. And it's important to remember just how far

we've come since the dark days of early 2020. Our schools are open. We've seen growing investment in our communities. Many of our downtowns are flourishing, with new places to spend time with our friends and family.

In other words, it's important to not only remember the good times that we've had of late, but also all the things we should be thankful for as 2022 comes to a close.

In the new year that is to follow, we have a few wishes. That Wyomingites will look out for one another, whether that means fixing a neighbor's flat or making sure that the less fortunate in our communities have shelter and

food. That we place others above ourselves, exemplifying the best of the frontier spirit that we strive for. And that we spend less time focused on what separates us and more energy on the myriad things we share: a love of community, of the outdoors, of the wild and unique place that is Wyoming.

From all of us, we wish you well this holiday season.

Casper Star-Tribune
Dec. 25
Guest Column

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News Letter Journal
at newsnj.com

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news by
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News Letter
Journal on
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2022 A LOOK BACK

remembering those we lost

HARVEY LEE NOBLE
Oct. 28, 1954–June 6, 2020
RICHARD A. 'DICK' TAYLOR
Oct. 19, 1934–Oct. 23, 2021
JOSEPH 'JAY' MANUEL LEE
Aug. 25, 1934–Dec. 8, 2021
MARLEEN RAE PENFIELD
June 14, 1938–Dec. 13, 2021
EDWARD DEAN EISELE JR.
Sept. 22, 1947–Dec. 14, 2021
JACK GRIEVES
April 21, 1932–Dec. 20, 2021
RICHARD LEE GOULD
June 12, 1945–Dec. 23, 2021
ROBBY RAY SHUMAKE
Aug. 21, 1955–Dec. 28, 2021
PAM SOMMARS
Feb. 25, 1962–Dec. 29, 2021
JASON SCOTT GARHART
Nov. 20, 1984–Jan. 3, 2022
ROBERT EMIL MILLER
Jan. 7, 1966–Jan. 11, 2022
RONALD DALE SCHNEIDER
July 29, 1941–Jan. 12, 2022
JOSEPH JERRY DUBSKY
Dec. 19, 1951–Jan. 14, 2022
GARY LEE SMITH
Sept. 18, 1944–Jan. 21, 2022
ELAINE RAE (GARHART) KAUL
May 2, 1963–Jan. 22, 2022
WILLIAM GLEN NOVAK
Oct. 17, 1960–Jan. 28, 2022
ELIZABETH FLOR (TOTH) CUMMINGS
Feb. 28, 1920–Jan. 31, 2022
DORIS 'DODE' CONSTANCE (MOLSTAD) VOSS
Jan. 27, 1922–Jan. 31, 2022
YVONNE JEANNE NELSON
Nov. 9, 1935–Feb. 10, 2022
BRADFORD GLENN HOFLAND
April 5, 1941–Feb. 12, 2022
RONALD G. TRELOAR
May 5, 1941–Feb. 14, 2022
ALLEN VOTROBEK
May 4, 1947–Feb. 17, 2022


JOHN J. KANE III
July 5, 1947–Feb. 27, 2022
EDITH SHEPHERD
July 25, 1931–Feb. 27, 2022
LAURA DEE GOODE
Dec. 15, 1953–March 7, 2022
DELLA J. FORDYCE
Aug. 5, 1941–March 14, 2022
MARY LOU ROSS BUFFINGTON
Sept. 14, 1937–March 19, 2022
GLORIA JEAN LACHELT GRUMMONS
Feb. 4, 1944–March 19, 2022
RANDY DOIL MORGAN
April 6, 1958–March 21, 2022
CHARLES 'CHUCK' MATHEWES BAYNE
July 2, 1955–March 22, 2022
HAZEL RUTH (BORGIALLI) JOHNSON
May 6, 1935–March 25, 2022
HENRY 'HANK' CURTIS VICKERS
June 2, 1924–March 27, 2022
CHARLES RICHARD 'CHUCK' MEYER
Aug. 29, 1959–March 30, 2022
DONNA ELLIOTT
July 28, 1935–April 6, 2022
HOWARD CHARLES PICKERD
May 25, 1947–April 7, 2022
ERNEST MERLD WELTON
May 14, 1949–April 7, 2022
BERTHA MAE BILLINGS
Nov. 1, 1939–April 13, 2022
PEGGY ANN (WHITMAN) GREGG
Jan. 27, 1945–April 13, 2022
JANICE AUDREY (HEISER) MANDERS
Sept. 29, 1954–April 14, 2022
WAYNE WILLIAM STANTON
Sept. 29, 1942–April 15, 2022
TIMOTHY CHARLES RAWHOUSER
Dec. 14, 1966–April 18, 2022

JOHN LAWRENCE ELLIS
1935–April 22, 2022
VERNA IRENE STANTON KELTNER
Sept. 30, 1929–April 24, 2022
CHAD WAYNE POTTER
Feb. 6, 1975–April 26, 2022
JOAN M. UHL
Dec. 8, 1936–April 26, 2022
GARY R. COLE
Jan. 16, 1948–April 30, 2022
FRANKIE ESQUIVEL
Oct. 4, 1931–May 2, 2022
RICHARD CLARK LEHMAN
Oct. 18, 1934–May 17, 2022
KIM JEFFREY MICHAELIS
Aug. 1, 1958–May 23, 2022
DIANE KAY HOBBS
Feb. 11, 1956–May 25, 2022
LEROY HOUSTON LAMB
April 10, 1935–May 27, 2022
MAUREEN 'BUNNY' DOROTHEA CARRO
April 6, 1941–June 1, 2022
ROBERT VANCE PEELE
April 23, 1974–June 4, 2022
ERNEST DEAN WRIGHT
Feb. 3, 1940–June 4, 2022
ELIZABETH 'BETH' ANNMARIE FERRIS
March 17, 2004–June 12, 2022
KATHRYN LOUISE (THOMPSON) HOLWELL
July 20, 1921–June 12, 2022
JUDY ANN LASHMETT
Sept. 4, 1957–June 13, 2022
ROGER DEAN HUBER
June 7, 1962–June 19, 2022
JOSEPH 'JOE' RICHARD CUMMINGS
July 6, 1977–June 20, 2022
JANICE LORENE RITTER DUMMER
April 22, 1938–June 30, 2022
JOSEPH 'JOE' THALER
March 17, 1938–July 1, 2022

MABEL G. SCHAIDT
Feb. 18, 1953–July 2, 2022
JOSEPH 'JOE' MIGLIA
May 21, 1932–July 3, 2022
BRIAN ALLEN GOULD
Jan. 17, 1967–July 6, 2022
PAMELA RENEE STEVESON
July 27, 1961–June 19, 2022
GAVIN CHASE REYNOLDS
Jan. 19, 2005–July 21, 2022
DONALD 'PETE' LEE PETERSON
Nov. 3, 1938–July 22, 2022
DANIEL E. MAHONEY
May 31, 1958–July 25, 2022
JUDY LEE BARTELS
Aug. 14, 1948–July 26, 2022
PATRICIA OCENE WILSON
Sept. 30, 1955–Aug. 3, 2022
EARL BURDETTE HAMILTON
Aug. 19, 1924–Aug. 9, 2022
IVA LEA CARTER
Dec. 19, 1949–Aug. 10, 2022
CONSTANCE CHARLOTTE (MARTIN) (MICHELI) VASQUEZ-FLOREZ
April 7, 1946–Aug. 19, 2022
CLIFFORD RAY WILLSON
Aug. 18, 1942–Aug. 19, 2022
GRETCHEN MARYLOU FOERTSCH
Aug. 21, 1948–Aug. 20, 2022
DOUGLAS LEROY HUNTER
Oct. 6, 1956–Aug. 26, 2022
JOHN KENNETH ALLENDER
1932–Aug. 29, 2022
VERYLIN 'DEAN' WRIGHT
Nov. 11, 1928–Aug. 31, 2022
GREGORY BRUGGEMAN
March 5, 1953–Sept. 4, 2022
FRANK EUGENE STEVENS
June 23, 1948–Sept. 4, 2022
BETTY LOU ALDINGER
Jan. 29, 1944–Sept. 5, 2022
RUDY J. FISHER SR.
Aug. 10, 1943–Sept. 11, 2022

NORMA MARIE REMAN
March 11, 1934–Sept. 14, 2022
TERRY ALLEN SHRADER
Nov. 22, 1950–Sept. 16, 2022
EDWIN HARRY KRELL
Nov. 26, 1929–Sept. 17, 2022
TOMMY EUGENE FORDYCE
June 6, 1942–Sept. 22, 2022
PEGGY DEAN MORRIS
Feb. 7, 1938–Sept. 29, 2022
MICHAEL JOHN ZEIMET
Aug. 30, 1955–Sept. 29, 2022
CATHY KAY McMEEKIN
Dec. 16, 1955–Oct. 22, 2022
ROBERT EDWARD KLEINFELDT
April 5, 1932–Oct. 25, 2022
BARBARA LEE MOUDY
March 1, 1933–Oct. 25, 2022
CHARLES JAMES 'JIM' McLELAND
Oct. 27, 1949–Oct. 26, 2022
MARLYN JOSEPH HOFFMAN
May 8, 1937–Nov. 2, 2022
GENEVIEVE ANNE ELLIS
April 14, 1938–Nov. 6, 2022
PATRICK HENRY BRENNAN III
May 7, 1941–Nov. 7, 2022
JOANN HAWK
Sept. 1, 1945–Nov. 7, 2022
GERD GUSTAV ACHENBACH
Oct. 1973–Nov. 10, 2022
ANDREW N. MITICH
Feb. 13, 1955–Nov. 11, 2022
RUBY SCHLUP
Oct. 1, 1926–Nov. 14, 2022
NANCY MAE (ROSWADOVSKI) WILLIAMS
Oct. 16, 1938–Nov. 20, 2022
ROGER LEWIS
Nov. 18, 1946–Nov. 25, 2022
BETTY J. SMITH
Sept. 19, 1952–Nov. 29, 2022
JAMES LOUIS GERKE
Sept. 5, 1946–Dec. 2, 2022
HOWARD CRAFT
April 25, 1941–Dec. 5, 2022
MARJORIE JEANETTE FAWCETT HUBER
March 4, 1936–Dec. 7, 2022
PAUL MARSHALL KIPPER
–Dec. 11, 2022
FREIDA LINCOLN
Dec. 31, 1934–Dec. 16, 2022
LAWRENCE 'LARRY' PATZ
Nov. 8, 1948–Dec. 17, 2022

The Broken Chain



We didn't know that morning,
God was going to call your name.
In life we loved you dearly,
In death we do the same.
It broke our hearts to lose you.
You did not go alone.
For part of us went with you,
The day God called you home.
You left us beautiful memories.
Your love is still our guide.
And though we cannot see you,
You are always by our side.
Our family chain is broken,
And nothing seems the same.
But as God calls us one by one,
The chain will link again.

*Charles Townsend
1943-2011*

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Daily Devotional Reading

December 30 Matthew 1:1-25	January 3 Proverbs 1:1-16
December 31 Jude 1-25	January 4 Matthew 1-2
January 1 Genesis 1-15	January 5 Luke 1-2
January 2 Psalm 1-3	<i>Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society</i>

- **ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH:** Rev. Norm Brotzman, 216 S. Seneca, 746-2249. Call to Worship 9:30 am; Children's Church during Call to Worship; Faith Rally Sunday 6 pm
- **BAHA'I FAITH:** Firesides (open to all) 1st & 3rd Fridays 7:30 pm at 15 Skyview Dr, 746-3626
- **CAMBRIA COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH:** 19 Stampede St. 746-2321. Sunday School 9:15 am; Worship 10:30 am; Youth (6-12 grades) and Adult Bible Study Sunday Evening 6-7 pm; Wednesday Night Youth and Adult Bible Study 6 pm; Life Recovery Bible Study Sunday Night 7 pm
- **CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH:** Rev. Kenti Barling, S. Summit & Winthrop Streets, 746-9684. haydishall@hotmail.com. Service times: Sunday 4 pm
- **CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH:** Pastor Rob Carr, 224 West Road, West of Dow Park, 746-2415. Sunday Worship 9 am
- **CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS:** Bishop Ty Checketts, 120 Ash, 746-4131. Sunday Sacrament Mtg 9 am; Sunday School 10:20 am; Relief Society & Priesthood Mtg 11:15 am
- **CHURCH ON THE HILL:** Pastor Wayne Wilson, 301 Delaware, 746-9663. Adult Sunday School 9:30 am; Prayer 10:15 am; Worship 10:45 am; Prayer Service Tuesday 6 pm; Undeafated Youth/children's ministry (3 years old-12th Grade) Wednesday 6 pm
- **CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC CHURCH:** Father Brian Hess, 19 W. Winthrop, 746-4219. Saturday Mass 5 pm; Sunday Mass 8 am; Weekday Mass 7 am
- **COUNTRY CHURCH:** Four Corners, Pastor Bill Haley and Micah Popma, 746-9712. Worship 10 am
- **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH:** Pastor Ben Roberts, 903 S. Summit, 746-2188. Sunday School 9:15 am; Worship Service 10:30 am; Evening Service 6 pm;

- AWANA Clubs Wednesday 6:30 pm
- **FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH:** Rev. Ron Sample, 23 N. Seneca, 746-4119. Adult Bible Study 8:45 am; Traditional Church Services 10 am; 10:15 am Children's Church; Youth Group Sunday evenings 5:30-7 pm
- **GATEWAY FELLOWSHIP:** Pastor Jon Anderson, 12 Old Hwy. 85, Evangelical Free Church, Bible Study 9:15 am, Worship 10:30 am. Call 746-8091
- **KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES:** 5018 US Hwy 16, 746-2319 or 746-4517. Tuesday 7 pm. Congregation Bible Study, Theocratic Ministry School and Service Meeting. Sunday Public Talk 10 am; Watchtower 11 am
- **NEWCASTLE FOURSQUARE CHURCH:** Pastor Mick Bohn, 1525 S. Summit, 746-3618. Sun. Worship 10 am; Wed. Night Prayer
- **OSAGE COMMUNITY CHURCH:** 348 Sheridan St. in Osage, 465-2341. Sunday School 10 am; Worship 11 am
- **SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST:** Pastor Lester Bently 612-240-7536, 78 Old Hwy 85. Saturday Sabbath School 9:30 am; Worship 11 am
- **ST. ANTHONY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH:** Father Brian Hess, Upton. Sunday Mass 5 pm
- **UPTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH:** Pastor Donnie Holt, 834 Pine, Upton, 468-9302. Worship 9 am; Fellowship 10 am
- **VICTORY NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH:** Rev. Theodore L. Halls, 414 Pine, 746-4366

And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort. ~ 2 Corinthians 1:7



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25 Years Ago
Jan. 1, 1998

Laurie Potts — our woman of the year. She came to Newcastle as so many have come, by accident. But Laurie Potts' presence has made Newcastle a better place to live. Having landed in Newcastle, Laurie and her husband Homer began to get involved in the community.

Robbie Lliteras has accomplished what few girls her age achieve — the Girls Scouts' coveted award. Lliteras spotted an ad in the newspaper. The ad asked for people to make quilts and/or afghans for homeless children. Lliteras expanded on that idea and began with quilts for children treated at accident scenes.

Brian and Peggy Powell maxed out their credit cards last summer to stock up for the future. Brian and Peggy admit the move to the Alaskan village of Kotik was a culture shock.

Brian left his position as the biology teacher at Newcastle High School to teach typing, U.S. History, Health, Biology and General Science in Kotik.

Peggy, who was a substitute teacher in Newcastle, embarked on her first full-fledged teaching job in Alaska.

The Artful Gals Club held their annual Christmas dinner with turkey and trimmings at noon, Dec. 18, at the Senior Housing room. Concluding the meeting, members and guests enjoyed the afternoon playing Bingo.

50 Years Ago
Dec. 28, 1972



Weston County's History Through the Archives of the News Letter Journal

The Rev. Ware G. King will assume the duties of vicar of Christ Church Episcopal on Jan. 1. Rev. King has been in the ministry for some 30 years and has served churches in Idaho, New York and New Jersey prior to moving to Wyoming in 1955.

Bruce Rowland Fowler, 18, has been charged with breaking and entering at the Salt Creek Freightways facilities in Newcastle. Four younger youths have also been charged in the break-in but their cases will be handed in juvenile court.

Miss Sharon Kummerle was an overnight guest of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Cimburek and family Tuesday. It was the 16th birthday of the Cimburek twins,

Marry Anee and Helen Jean.

The Christmas party of the Sew and So Club was hosted by Mrs. John Toth at her home Thursday afternoon, Dec. 14, and music was furnished by a guest, Mrs. Rex Shenton. Christmas gifts were exchanged by the ladies and a social afternoon was spent.

This year's Smokey Bear poster contest has been expanded to include Woodsy Owl, the antipollution symbol and environmental spokesman. Woodsy's motto is: "Give a Hoot—Don't Pollute" while Smokey reminds everyone: "Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires." Contestants may submit two posters (one for each conservation character), but will be eligible for only

one National award.

100 Years Ago
Dec. 28, 1922

The city hall was filled to capacity Sunday evening at the community tree program. The crowd began to gather late in the afternoon, when one of the large trees near the armory, which had been decorated, was lighted up with true Christmas style. Santa Claus was on the scene and every child present was given a large sack of candy from his bounteous supply.

Oliver Kugland, 16-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Kugland of this city, was accidentally shot while on a hunting trip up Cambria canyon Tuesday afternoon. At first it was thought that the wound would prove fatal, but indicators are now that he will recover.

A.I. Putnam, who was a resident of Newcastle many years ago, and who has frequently visited in the city of late years in his capacity as state examiner, will become state deputy auditor under Vincent Carter, commencing the first of the year.

Announcement by the Edison Theater: Realizing that times are so that many people with large families can not afford to enjoy our entertainments, we have decided to cooperate with you and establish a Family Program which will be shown every Wednesday and Thursday night. Our program will be the usual good Pathe picture with the addition of a fine serial, "The Winners of the West."

Happy New Year!
Weston County Courthouse will be closed on Jan. 2, in observance of New Year's. We will be open again for regular business on Jan. 3.

BOARD OPENINGS

The Weston County Board of Commissioners is accepting Letters of Intent for the following board positions:
PREDATOR (SPORTSMAN #1): 1 OPENING
PLANNING: 2 OPENINGS
MALLO BOARD: 1 OPENING

These positions will be open until filled. Those wishing to apply may mail a letter to:
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Newcastle, WY 82701
or bring the letter in person to the Weston County Clerk's Office, Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



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Birth

Michael Crow

Michael David Crow was born Nov. 8, 2022, in Brussels, Belgium where his daddy is a major in the U.S. Army, stationed at NATO headquarters. He joins 2-year-old brother Luke, and parents David and Laurel Crow. He weighed 8 pounds, 6 ounces at birth.

His paternal grandparents are Pat and Barbara Crow of Newcastle, Wyo. Maternal grandparents are Carmin and Claudia Grandinetti of Louisville, Ky.



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GRANGER STONE LESMEISTER June 21, 2022, to Amanda and Jesse Lesmeister
BODHI PAUL HOSTETTER Aug. 2, 2022, to Virginia Garcia and Cody Hostetter
MICHAEL DAVID CROW Nov. 8, 2022, to David and Laurel Crow

WESTON COUNTY MEETINGS & EVENTS CALENDAR

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LET US KNOW WHAT'S UP!

Is your group or organization hosting an event? Send your event listings to design@newsjlj.com for inclusion in the News Letter Journal's weekly What's Up Calendar, sponsored by Pinnacle Bank.

Fri. Dec. 30	9AM 9AM-4PM By Appt. 1PM 5:30PM	Caramel Rolls Peggy Perkins Retirement COVID Booster Clinic Bridge BINGO	W.C. Senior Center Wesco Gas, 78 Hwy. 450 W.C. Health Services W.C. Senior Center VFW Hall
Sat. Dec. 31	5PM 5PM	Solemnity of Mary Solemnity of Mary	Corpus Christi Catholic Church St. Anthony, Upton
Sun. Jan. 1	8AM	Solemnity of Mary	Corpus Christi Catholic Church
Tues. Jan. 3	1PM 1PM	Bridge Dominoes	W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center
Wed. Jan. 4	9AM 9AM 1PM	Exercise Class Toe Nail Clinic Marathon Bridge	W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center
Thurs. Jan. 5	7AM 1PM 1PM 7PM	TOPS #218 Crafts American Legion Auxiliary Mtg. AA Mtg.	W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

to our friends and neighbors

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Year in Review from Page 2

plan passed through the Wyoming House of Representatives, but the plan would need to pass the State Senate as well. The plan, called 62-31, would also add two more House districts and one more Senate district. Throughout the process, Weston County representatives fought to keep the county whole, so as to guarantee that a representative was living in the county. According to the Legislative Service Office, redistricting is the process of redrawing the geographic boundaries of an area from which people are elected as representatives. Per the Wyoming Constitution, the process needs to be completed before the first budget session following each U.S. census to reflect population shifts. The bill, HB 100, passed the House on Feb. 18 on a 54-6 vote and was then introduced and referred to the Senate Corporations Committee.



NLJ's Alexis Barker captured indoor fun during the cold month of February, at the Weston County Children's Center Family Fun Night, top, and during indoor soccer, above.

March

- Newcastle Middle School paraprofessional and intervention specialist Keeley Anderson was honored with the 2022 Recognizing Inspiring School Employees (RISE) award in a ceremony on Feb. 23. The U.S. Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona, gave a presentation via Zoom, and Gov. Mark Gordon and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Brian Schroeder were also present. The 2009 Newcastle High School graduate began working with Weston County School District No. 1 as a substitute teacher in 2016 and then as a special education paraprofessional the following year. She worked in that position until becoming the intervention specialist in 2019.
- On March 1, the Weston County Commission voted unanimously to set aside \$672,000 to pay for possibly setting up a county dispatch service, separate from the city's. Because of tensions between the city and county, city officials decided to move the dispatch center and Newcastle Police Department from the Weston County Law Enforcement Center to the city offices, and the county decided to assess the cost of starting its own dispatch.

While the commission wanted to form a joint powers board to oversee dispatch services, the City Council and Mayor Pam Gualtieri were not in favor of the idea. Estimated cost for the county to start its own dispatch service was \$800,000.

- After passing the Wyoming Senate on Feb. 28 on an 18-12 vote, Senate File 62, or the Civics Transparency Act, died in the House Education Committee on a 4-5 vote on March 8. The bill would have required teachers to post their class materials online for public view, and Weston County School District No. 1 celebrated its demise. The bill was sponsored by Weston County legislators Rep. Chip Neiman, R-Sundance; Sen. Cheri Steinmetz, R-Lingle; and Sen. Ogden Driskill, R-Devils Tower.
- Father and son Carl and Tony Lenardson, members of the Cambria Bowhunters Club, attended the 2022 Indoor National Championship, hosted by the National Field Archery Association, in Louisville,

Kentucky on March 18-20. Tony won the championship in the Freestyle Limited Adult Male Division, his fourth win at nationals in four different age divisions. Previously, he had taken the win in cubs, youth and young adult, now adding adult to his slate.

- After one sentencing in a sexual assault case on Feb. 28, the Weston County Attorney's Office was preparing to take yet another case to jury trial in April. As reports of sexual abuse continued to come in, there were about six cases being worked on in the previous few months, according to Deputy County Attorney Jeani Stone. The six most recent cases involved 10 different victims. In some of the cases, the actual abuse occurred years prior. According to Sheriff Bryan Colvard, Weston County had seen an increase in sexual abuse reports, mostly old incidents, over the past year. Wyoming has no statute of limitations on sexual abuse charges, and perpetrators can be charged at any time.



Fireman Gene Diedtrich, center, was honored in March by Gov. Mark Gordon. Gordon presented Diedtrich with a commemorative coin and declared March 8 as Gene Diedtrich Day (photo by Alexis Barker).

April

- Weston County resident Garrett Barton took Weston County Commissioner Tony Barton to court on March 31 over questions about Barton's residency in Crook County. Barton was a Weston County resident when he was elected to his four-year term in 2018, but he moved out of the county in 2020. He argued that he had the right to fulfill his term, but Barton said residency in that county's particular precinct is required to be a qualified elector,

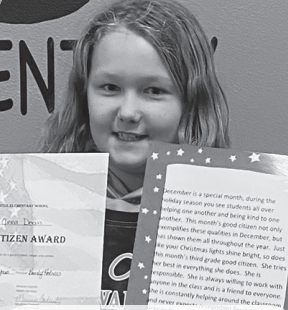
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GOOD CITIZENS

DECEMBER 2022

American Legion Post # 3 proudly presents Good Citizen Certificates to these Newcastle Elementary School students



Anna Dean
3rd, Mrs. Wynia

December is a special month, during the holiday season you see students all over helping one another and being kind to one another. This month's Good Citizen not only exemplifies these qualities in December, but has shown them all throughout the year. Just like your Christmas lights shine bright, so does this month's third grade Good Citizen. She tries her best in everything she does. She is responsible. She is always willing to work with anyone in the class, and is a friend to everyone. She is constantly helping around the classroom and never expects recognition for it. We are so lucky to have her in Room 132. Congratulations to our third-grade Good Citizen, Anna Dean!



Laura Lipp
4th, Mrs. Jones

The spirit of the season shines all year long in our December Good Citizen. This dedicated student can be counted on to be responsible and always do her best. Her schoolwork is completed with minimal errors, she follows daily routines without reminders, and pitches in without being asked. In addition, I can rely on this young lady to work well with everyone in our class. Her calming nature makes her a fantastic learning partner. She helps to make our classroom a fun place to learn. Her classmates feel she is a good citizen for the following reasons: She is honest, thoughtful and caring. She helps everyone. She is willing to play with anyone. Her brain is always working and learning. She is generous and shares her stuff. She is a great listener. She takes her time and makes sure she does her best. She shares her knowledge with everyone. She is responsible. Our Good Citizen's respectful and kindhearted characteristics gleam among our classrooms and make her a friend to all. Congratulations, Laura Lipp!



Kase Smellie
5th, Mrs. Orban

The month of December brings many good tidings and holiday cheer, not only for people around the world, but also to our fifth-grade classroom. This month's Good Citizen has brought much cheer to our classroom this year. He is always one to walk in with a smile and tell you, "Good morning." He lends a helping hand wherever help is needed, and jumps in to help any friend. He gives 100% to his classwork and puts his best effort forward to complete any task that he is given. This student has met many expectations of what a good citizen represents, and continues to grow as one every day. I am proud to announce this month's Good Citizen, Kase Smellie.

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Year in Review from Page 6

In mid March, the Wyoming State Quilt Guild was held at the Newcastle Lodge and Convention, where 35 quilters met and worked on various pieces. Photo, above, by Siri Karr. At right, May brought with it the annual Newcastle Elementary School Talent Show, featuring music, jokes and dancing. In this photo by Alexis Barker, Nathan Streeter joins in the fun.



according to Wyoming law. Barton requested a temporary injunction from Sixth Judicial District Court Judge James Michael Causey, which if granted would mean that Barton would receive no financial compensation from the county and would have to refrain from voting as an elected official. However, Barton's attorney, Samuel R. Yemington, said that the residency law was not in effect when Barton was elected and so it is invalid until the next election. The case was later dismissed.

- Issues between residents and county officials continued when Gillian Sears accused Weston County Clerk Becky Hadlock of two potential illegal activities at the April 5 Weston County commissioners' meeting. Sears said Hadlock violated Wyoming Statute 6-5-108(a) when she published the minutes of the commissioners' Nov. 2 meeting, "which manipulate the facts" of the commissioners' secret vote to replace Rep. Hans Hunt in House District 2 to place the vote in a more positive light. Hadlock said the minutes accurately reflect the meeting and were approved by the board, stating that County Attorney Michael Stulken answered all questions from the crowd and that the anonymous vote was done legally. With three affidavits, Sears argued that this was not the case. Additionally, Sears claimed Hadlock intended to "sabotage (her) legitimate request for information" regarding records of the surety bonds connected to the Weston County commissioners. Hadlock said neither she nor County Treasurer Susie Overman knew why only three instead of all five were bonded, but she claimed her suggestion of paying the bonds and applying them retroactively was not to cover anything up, but was merely to "remedy a situation."

- On April 19, the News Letter Journal and Weston County residents Karen Drost, Raymond Norris and Patricia Baumann filed a petition for access to public records and for declaratory judgment and injunctive relief against the Board of Weston County Commissioners due to the secret vote. The petitioners felt the vote was in violation of Public Meetings Act, W.S. 16-4-401 et. seq., which requires action of a governing body of an agency to have a public meeting, and Public Records Act, W.S. 16-4-302(f)(i). The petition demands that the commissioners identify the ballot each one marked, and after a hearing of the court, an order is filed directing the commissioners to provide all forms of public records regarding the reasoning for and the use of secret ballots.

- Northeast Wyoming, which includes Campbell, Crook, Johnson, Sheridan and Weston counties, experienced the largest inflation in the state for the final quarter of 2021 at 10.4%, 1.1% higher than the state average and well above the nationwide inflation rate at 7%. This is the highest inflation rate Wyoming has seen since the 11.8% recorded in the third quarter of 1981. However, Weston County was below the statewide average (100) cost of living in half of the six areas: food (98), housing (75), and recreation and personal care (98). Transportation costs leveled with the state average, but apparel and medical came out higher at 107 and 110, respectively.

- Weston County was hit by a spring blizzard on Saturday, April 23. The storm began as a thunderstorm on Friday evening with a few inches of rain, but the wind speed soared to 70 mph and the rain turned to snow, dumping 9 inches of snow in Newcastle and up to 14 inches in other parts of the county. The blizzard was untimely for the over 200 ranchers who were in calving season.

- 2022 Newcastle High School graduate Toby Johnson received the WyTeach Award, which recognizes excellence in those who plan to teach as a career, according to NHS science instructor James Stith. Johnson plans on studying secondary

education, biology and chemistry at the University of Wyoming.

May

- An ongoing dispute between Weston County and the city of Newcastle regarding dispatch services provided by the city has been brewing for some time, but it escalated this year. The Weston County Board of Commissioners decided on May 2 to create a new dispatch center operated by the Weston County Sheriff, with the city police department maintaining its own, separate service. The commissioners, Sheriff Bryan Colvard and emergency response manager Gilbert Nelson all supported the creation of a joint powers board, which was opposed by the city and Mayor Pam Gualtieri. The cost of the new dispatch center was estimated at \$800,000, and the board decided to move forward with the Motorola/Spillman system as its database and radio provider instead of the CIS system used by the Newcastle Police Department. The dispatch center operated by the police department, which has been formally evicted from the Weston County Law Enforcement Center due to the continuous dispute escalation, was to be moved to City Hall.

- On April 27 and May 4, the Weston County School District No. 1 board of trustees approved \$787,369.20 in raises for school district employees, effective the following school year. The cost of the raises for salaries of administrators and directors totaled \$146,473.20 per year, including benefits, and the rest was for certified and classified staff. Teachers received a \$3,500 raise, bringing the base salary of teachers to \$50,000, ranking 12 out of 48 in the state for teacher pay, according to Superintendent Brad LaCroix. Directors and managers received \$8,000 raises, the three principals received \$10,000 raises, and LaCroix was approved for a \$20,000 raise. LaCroix said the rationale behind the raises was to ensure the best possible recruitment and retention of teachers despite the "huge teacher shortage out there." Additionally, staffing size has been constant despite declining enrollment numbers, so the school district was "right-sizing" itself by not replacing the four teachers who retired at the end of the school year.

- The Board of Weston County Commissioners approved raises, totaling \$420,000-plus a year, on May 3 for all county employees and elected officials, except for themselves. There was debate whether to give raises to the employees or elected officials, but the commissioners argued that the employees are the ones who keep the county running. A 15% cost-of-living adjustment, beginning on July 1, was approved for all county employees, both salaried and hourly. A \$9,000 raise was given to the treasurer, assessor, clerk and clerk of district court, and a \$15,000 annual raise was approved for the county attorney and sheriff, effective after the 2022 election.

- The Weston County Commissioners voted to hire a special attorney at a special meeting held on April 26 to represent the county in the lawsuit filed by the News Letter Journal and several county residents regarding the secret vote

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Year in Review

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cast by the commissioners to replace former-Rep. Hans Hunt with Rep. J.D. Williams. Deputy County Attorney Jeani Stone said that a special attorney was needed because of a conflict of interest with County Attorney Michael Stulken taking the case addressing the concerns of the secret ballots. The commissioners also hired a mediator to assist the county's negotiations with the Newcastle City Council in the dispatch services dispute.

• Newcastle Middle School male students had the opportunity to participate in the Men in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) day held at the school on May 11. The purpose of the event, which was organized by science teachers Jody McCormack and Clint Colgrove, was to expose the middle school students to career paths by exploring stations that highlighted various STEM fields. Newcastle Middle School Principal Tyler Bartlett said the presenters, made up of local men working in a STEM career, engaged the students "hands-on ... to see real-life applications for what they're learning in math and science." The presenters noted that they hope to inspire the younger generation to pursue careers in this area and were impressed with the students and the school's interest in learning about their passions and noted that they hope to inspire the younger generation to pursue careers in this area.

June

• Former Newcastle Police Chief Samuel Keller was arrested for domestic assault on May 30, when he threw a full beer can at his girlfriend's face after she tipped back his chair. Keller resigned as chief, pleaded guilty and was released on his own recognizance by Circuit Court Judge Lynda Bush, according to documents and reports from Weston County Sheriff Bryan Colvard. Keller was sentenced to six months of unsupervised probation, \$520 in fines and 180 days (172 which were suspended) on June 8. His resignation was accepted by the Newcastle City Council via email but was later formally accepted in open meeting on June 20. The council also approved Mayor Pam Gualtieri and Councilman Don Steveson jointly serving as chief until Keller could be replaced, which raised the concerns of council members Lance Miles and Tyrel Owens, as well as police officer Peg Miles and officer Levi Tacy's wife, Rebecca Tacy. They said that they would be more comfortable having an interim chief with experience in the police department.

• At the City Council's June 6 meeting, City Councilman Ty Owens moved that the council research, then adopt, a backyard chicken ordinance, after community members expressed their desire to revisit the issue during a public meeting on May 25. Owens said the meeting revealed "overwhelming" support for allowing backyard chickens from the estimated 20 people who showed up. Some of the concerns of opponents of the ordinance included the added attraction of predators, the noise and cleanliness of chickens, the avian flu, irresponsible pet owners and the enforcement of the ordinance. The city has to determine how many chickens that will be permitted in relation to property size, how the concerns will be addressed and who will enforce the ordinance. Owens said the council could write an ordinance that best fits the community by looking at other communities that allow backyard chickens.

• The governor-appointed Wyoming Wildlife Taskforce forwarded a unanimous recommendation to the Travel, Recreation, Wildlife, and Cultural Resources Committee of the Wyoming House of Representatives to split white-tail and mule deer hunting licenses in the state. Currently,

the two species are simply referred to as "deer." Wyoming Game and Fish Department Director Brian Nesvik said that a distinction is needed to recognize them for the two "completely different" species they are for management purposes. On the other hand, local Game and Fish wildlife biologist Joe Sandrini said that the current management system works and does not need to be changed. He added that the higher demand for mule deer could result in an imbalance of the licenses purchased, if the licenses were split. Local hunters Everett Dean and Craig Ausmann said that they didn't understand how splitting the tags provided better management if individuals could still purchase tags for both species. However, task force member Sen. Ogden Driskill said limiting mule deer licenses for a time could grow mule deer herds and eventually provide better hunting opportunities. He admitted it would take years for additional regulations, if any, to be taken by Game and Fish.

• Two locals were recognized for their career excellence, nurse Allison Farella and Newcastle Middle School Science teacher Jody McCormack. Farella received the People's Choice Award as part of Rapid City Journal's 2022 Nurses Contest after she was nominated in early spring by her mother, Lynnea Prell, for her "diversity of nursing skills." Farella said she loves being a nurse because it helps those who are in need and makes a difference in their lives, adding that she can't see herself leaving the nursing field. McCormack was named the 2022 Wyoming Middle School Science Teacher of the Year after receiving a nomination from friend and NMS special education teacher Jennifer Steveson. She nominated McCormack for her creativity, passion and dedication to teaching her students "hands-on." McCormack said she feels blessed to work at NMS.



• Every year, the Newcastle Elementary School takes its fifth grade class to Mallo Camp for a weekend in the Black Hills, where they can pan for gold, go fishing, do archery, conduct science experiments, learn survival skills and other activities that reflect "roughing it" in the outdoors. Jeremy Bland was unable to participate in this camping trip when he was a fifth grader, so his classmate and Newcastle Hall of Fame member Koree Khongphand-Buckman re-created the Mallo camping trip for her friend. Nearly 60 people came, including former NES principal Bette Sample and her husband, Ron, to tell the famous "Stumpy" ghost story to the guests. Bland said everyone was "super-involved," and there were young kids from age of 2 to adults participating in the fun.

July

• The city of Newcastle approved its \$8,108,121 budget for fiscal year 2023, which began July 1, 2022 and ends on June 30, 2023. The new budget is over \$730,000 more than the

previous year's, most of which is being used for the sewer lagoon maintenance, according to City Clerk-Treasurer Stacy Haggerty. This project includes monitoring water quality and levels and cleaning out the sludge. A \$600,000 grant from the State Loan and Investment Board was also put toward the lagoon project. Another large project for the city included the remodeling of the Newcastle Police Department, and \$1,511,000 was set aside for the department. Whetsell Carpentry was awarded the remodeling bid for \$233,766, which includes projects such as a dispatch area, new flooring and doors, new offices, extensive wiring and more. Other budget items include \$229,500 for the Newcastle Volunteer Fire Department, \$170,500 for health and welfare, \$904,000 for streets and alleys, and \$2,297,000 for water fund requirements.

• The Weston County Board of Commissioners voted to appoint advanced practice nurse Kristen Johnson as the new public health officer on June 21. The position was vacant for 18 months after the removal of the previous health officer, Dr. Mike Jording, on Jan. 5, 2021, and Johnson was the only person to express interest in the position. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she provided information on Facebook and believes relating information to the community is important in her new role. Johnson said she wants to serve as a resource to educate people on both treating and preventing illnesses.

• Weston County had \$644,714 in unclaimed property out of Wyoming's nearly \$100 million it would like to return to its rightful owners. The largest single property in the county totaled \$26,053 out of the 8,544 properties. According to State Treasurer Curt Meier, the amount paid out last year represents 9% more being paid out than the previous year. Issued by



June brought with it sunny weather and outdoor events, including RPM Days, held at the Weston County Fairgrounds. In the photo above, captured by Walter Sprague, children braved the deep mud during the bubble gum race. Below, after the races, the Brandon Jones Band from Rapid City, S.D., gave a spirited concert — which was unfortunately cut short when the weather took a turn for the worse (photo by Walter Sprague).

time of his arrest for domestic assault against his girlfriend, according to information provided by the Wyoming Office of the Attorney General, Division of Victim Services. Funds from FOCUS were used to offset Keller's rental costs in the home he shared with his girlfriend, but it was not confirmed if he received that assistance. Keller joined the board in September 2020 as a member at large and was listed as the treasurer for fiscal year 2022. Keller resigned the day following his arrest, but FOCUS board President Denise Piscioti said he was serving only as a member at large at that time and did not answer why the information filed regarding Keller's title with the Division of Victim's Services was inaccurate. Additionally, FOCUS was awarded \$97,391 for fiscal year 2023, suffering a nearly \$35,000 budget cut from the previous year and a total of \$60,000 since 2020. The total budget for the year amounted to \$108,442. Director Stacie Hoxie said the agency was struggling to address victim needs, adding that services are free and 100% confidential. There are no requirements to receive aid or services and no limit on the amount of help a person can receive.

• Unsafe amounts of total coliform were discovered in a round of water testing performed on June 11 and June 14 in Gray Addition in the city of Newcastle. Public Works supervisor Greg Stumpff said total coliform is an "indicator bacteria" because it usually indicates the potential presence of other disease-inflicting bacteria. However, after flushing and resampling, Stumpff reported that the issue was resolved on July 22 and the water was free of both total coliform and E Coli coliform.

August

• The rainy spring was followed by fire season when the Fish wildfire 7 miles south of Sundance crept close to Weston County borders the night of Aug. 1. The fire was reported at 11:30 a.m. on July 31 and burned 6,800 acres by the time it was 98% contained on Aug. 9. The fire was kept from entering the county by 3.5 miles, but Weston County Fire Warden Daniel Tysdal and his crew extinguished two smaller fires in the county earlier that day (on Aug. 1) — one in Ferguson Canyon and the other south of Newcastle by the LAK ranch. The Newcastle High School FFA reported that \$2,260 in donations was raised to purchase water and energy drinks for the personnel fighting the fire. The Newcastle Lodge and Convention Center also collected donations, reporting a Suburban and flatbed trailer load of donations.

• First Northern Bank of Wyoming, the oldest bank in the state, bought First State Bank, according to an Aug. 2 press release. First State Bank has been a local independent bank in Newcastle since 1924, owned by Northeast Wyoming Bank Corp. since 1964, but it was decided to

transfer ownership due to retirement and other factors. First Northern began in 1885 and is owned by First National Buffalo Bankshares Inc. President and CEO Tom Holt said the board of directors is excited and privileged to continue the "legacy partnership" between First State Bank and Newcastle.

• City engineer Mike Moore resigned on Aug. 15, and the Newcastle City Council voted to not fill the position in favor of creating and hiring a grant writer for the city. The city works department was removed after an executive session on Aug. 1, putting the oversight of the city works department under supervisor Greg Stumpff. Councilman Don Steveson said hiring a grant writer to apply for the grants Moore would have applied for, seemed more beneficial to the city than bringing in another engineer. Outside engineers will have to be hired for projects, but if it proves to be less cost efficient, the option to restore the city engineer position was left open.

• The votes for the 2022 primary election for Weston County totaled 2,757 ballots. The following incumbents secured their seats as Republican nominees for the general election, running unopposed as no Democrats filed for any local races: Bryan Colvard for Weston County sheriff, Becky Hadlock for county clerk, Tina Cote for clerk of the district court, Kara Lenardson for county assessor, Michael Stulken for county attorney and Susan Overman for county treasurer. Additionally, Scott Beachler secured the vote for Weston County coroner. Chip Neiman for House District 1 won the unopposed vote, and Allen Slagle for House District 2 ousted incumbent JD Williams by 11 votes. Cheri Steinmetz for Senate District 3 received more votes than Marty Ertman, although Ertman won the Weston County race. Incumbent Ogden Driskill for Senate District 1 barely squeezed out a win in the close race against Roger Connert and Bill Fortner.

• 2022 Newcastle High School graduate Jacob Dunsath took a passion developed during the start of the COVID pandemic and decided to pursue a career from it. Due to the free time COVID regulations started, Dunsath learned to cut his own hair while living in Oregon and decided to open up a barber shop behind his house after moving to Newcastle. He hopes to further his career at Rapid City Barber College to obtain his official barber's license and build from there.

September

• Parents raised concerns with the Weston County School District No. 1 board of trustees after a Newcastle High School teacher sent a "pronoun survey" to students. Superintendent Brad LaCroix sent a memo dated Sept. 2 stating that moving forward, all staff members are required to address students by their given names on PowerSchool unless otherwise directed by the student or parents. Parent Gillian Sears

said there is "no education value to a political agenda" because "it won't help students understand the curriculum better." Another concerned parent Paul Bau asked that the school have a more open line of communication with parents and guardians in similar situations.

• Momentary power outages two days in a row on Aug. 30-31 occurred in and around areas of Newcastle, causing havoc across the city with a cloud of smoke from the Wyoming Refining Co. This resulted in the brief shelter in place at the Newcastle high and middle schools and the closure of roads around the refinery. The outage was originally reported as a power surge, but Marsha Nichols, community affairs and public relations manager for Black Hills Energy, said it was a momentary power outage resulting from a failed mechanical device in the power line serving the Newcastle area.

• A flare shooting a heavy plume of black smoke at the Wyoming Refining Co. on Sept. 10 scared several people, but according to company President Mike Farnsworth, the secondary flare was triggered by overpressure in an upset unit and presented no safety concerns. Mike Baldwin, the company's health, safety, security and environment manager, said that it is part of a safety system that collects hydrocarbons from a process unit, and there was no direct link between the flares and the "power blips" a few weeks earlier.

• Daren Downs took over ownership of the Dogie Theatre on July 1 from Geju Theaters and the late Gerald Bullard. Downs worked at the theater in high school and said he always loved the "big screen experience." He was excited to take on this new role and enjoys engaging with the community behind the popcorn and pop stand on the weekends. Weston County School District No. 1 personnel indicated in a survey that they are grateful for the affordable prices and friendly staff of the local theater.

• Newcastle was greeted by the 18 slow-moving, colorful array of tractors on Sept. 8 for the Black Hills South Dakota Tractor Run. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it had been four years since the last tractor run and about 14 years since the tractors trekked to Newcastle. The run started on Sept. 7 in Custer with people from all over the Midwest and continued to Hill City, Keystone and Mt. Rushmore. The second day, the drivers made their way to Newcastle and stopped at Pizza Hut for lunch before returning to Custer. At 15 miles per hour, it took a full day, but several drivers hinted at wanting to spend more time in Newcastle the next time they came through.

• Newcastle High School science instructor Zach Beam was named the 2023 Wyoming Teacher of the Year on Sept. 22 for his dedication to making an exciting and educational



An active shooter training day was held in June at Newcastle Middle School, where actors played the role of shooters in a simulated crisis. Local law enforcement officers, health care professionals and emergency responders participated in the training. In this photo by Alexis Barker, Newcastle police sergeant Levi Tacy and Wyoming Highway Patrolman Kevin McMaster team up in the command post to assess the situation.

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Year in Review from Page 8.....

learning environment for his students “with innovation and explanation,” according to state Superintendent of Public Instruction Brian Shroeder. Beam has implemented the STEM program, which combines academic concepts with real-life applications, to his students to bring fun into learning. A short ceremony was held in the Crouch Auditorium to present Beam with a plaque, followed by refreshments in the commons area.

October

• Three Weston County commissioners expressed concerns about Deputy Weston County Attorney Jeani Stone’s work on both the county employee handbook and a dispatch contract or resolution at the Sept. 20 board meeting. The four-month \$20,180 agreement listed various issues Stone was to address during that time, including the employee handbook, personnel issues, board training, contract review and other duties. However, expecting the handbook and city contract in June, Commissioners Nathan Todd, Don Taylor and Ed Wagoner agreed that an update was needed. Stone responded at the Oct. 4 meeting that she was “trying to fix years of dysfunction” before breaking for health issues.

• After learning of the Board of Weston County Commissioners’ use of group text messaging as a form of communication, lawyer Bruce Moats, representing the News Letter Journal and some concerned citizens in a case filed against the Board of Weston County Commissioners, asked to depose Commissioner Don Taylor. Taylor revealed the texts to Kari Drost during an exchange on Sept. 11, and Moats said that the messages violate the Public Meetings Act by conducting “business hidden from the public.”

• During the ongoing dispatch debate between Weston County and the city of Newcastle, the county asked Newcastle to continue providing dispatch services at the “status quo” until both entities complete their dispatch projects. City Attorney Dublin Hughes asked the commissioners in September, on behalf of the city, to terminate the dispatch contract for the year 2020-21, which would discontinue the county’s month-to-month payment basis.

• After “partially meeting expectations” by the Wyoming Department of Education on the Wyoming Test of Proficiency and Progress (WY-TOPP), both Newcastle Elementary School and Newcastle High School were finding ways to improve scores and were preparing improvement plans to submit to the state. A few grades showed deficiencies in math and reading. Additionally, the resignation of Alexandria Barrett-Stith on Sept. 11 created a math teacher shortage at Newcastle High School, leaving the school with one certified math teacher. NHS partnered with Carnegie Learning

to provide virtual classroom instruction until a full-time teacher could be hired.

• Jim Hurley and Mike Zkiab, who recently moved to Newcastle, began offering a free computer clinic at the Weston County Senior Center every Monday from 1 to 3 p.m. Both retired military veterans, the two had worked on military computer systems and said they have enjoyed expanding their knowledge and expertise ever since. Anyone having issues with a slow computer, forgotten password or needing a system update, see Hurley and Zkiab, who are willing to help.

• Donna’s Main Street Diner was sold on Sept. 1 to Becca and Tom Curley, who added barbecue to the menu, making it known as “Curley’s Que Diner.” They also extended the hours to 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week. Formerly from Washington, the Curleys lived on a hobby farm and enjoyed hosting backyard barbecues from their commercial kitchen. When they moved to Newcastle in February in search of a new adventure, they wanted to get plugged into the community. They originally bought a food truck to serve their barbecue, and now that they own the restaurant, they are full-time members of the Main Street business community.

November

• Voters who showed up to the polls on Nov. 8 elected two incumbents and two new trustees to the Weston County School District No. 1 board of trustees. Newcomer Sean Crabtree took the most votes of the 11 candidates with 1,121, followed by incumbent Dana Gordon with 1,009 and newcomer Joe Prell with 941 votes. Jason Jenkins received two votes more than Marcia Lambert to secure the final seat. Despite the active write-in campaigns in the other general election races, the winners of the primary election still came out on top.

• Newcastle Area Chamber of Commerce director Barbie Turner and board President Sandy Martin resigned on Nov. 8 after an exchange with city leaders during a presentation to the Newcastle City Council the night before. Chamber Vice President Garrett Borton said in a letter to chamber membership that the resignations put the chamber in a sticky situation moving forward and he was seeking help to keep the entity functioning.

• After 58 years of serving the community, ownership of First State Bank of Newcastle transitioned to First Northern Bank of Wyoming of Buffalo, the oldest bank in Wyoming. Along with new ownership, the transition, which will be completed in March 2023, Mike Morrison will be the new bank president upon the retirement of former president Darwin Rabenberg. Morrison hopes to

— See Year in Review, Page 10



The theme of the 2022 Weston County Fair in late July was “Ride the Tide to the Luau!” (Photo by Alexis Barker)

CONGRATULATIONS!
to the winners of the News Letter Journal’s
Christmas COLORING CONTEST
Each winner per age group won 2 Tickets to the Dogie Theatre!

6 & Under

Lucy Bartlett
Age 5
Daughter of NIKKI Bartlett

Age 7-10

Mary Slagle
Age 10
Daughter of Ann Slagle

Age 11-16

Gail Slagle
Age 12
Daughter of Ann Slagle

Thank you to all of our contestants!
Special thanks to Black Hills Title Company for judging the contest.

Year in Review

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Madness on Main, now in its fifth year, was held in September on Newcastle's Main Street. The all-day affair featured various contests of skill, a water fight with spray provided by the Newcastle Volunteer Fire Department, and culminated in a street dance in the evening (photo by Alexis Barker).



In late September, NLJ's Hannah Gross attended the Weston County Historical Society's Fall 2022 Trek where 43 attendees visited historical buildings along the Cheyenne River, including the old Darlington School on Lynch Road.

offer more services, including overdraft protection, business remote deposit capture, and trust and investment services.

- Members of the public presented their concerns regarding a new ordinance approved by the Newcastle City Council on Sept. 19 to regulate the parking and placement of recreational vehicles and trailers on public property within city limits during the winter months. However, after reviewing the ordinance, which amended Section 16-35.1 of the Newcastle, Wyoming, municipal code, the council stood by its decision to enforce it. The reasoning behind the ordinance is to allow for easier snow removal.

- Local author Melissa Stroh rapid-released the first four books of her "Tale of the Clans" series, a project that has been 20 years in the making. Stroh was finally able to realize her dream of becoming a published author, a goal she's had since she was a teenager.

The historical fiction novels set in 10th-century Ireland were created to point their readers back to God through deeply developed characters designed to deal with normal life problems, situations and feelings, often barely clinging to the edge of hope and faith, she said.

- Ashley Tupper, an advanced practice registered nurse, expanded her private medical practice, Hometown Medical Clinic, by opening a 6,000-square-foot facility on Newcastle's Main Street in the former Newcastle Hardware building. The additional space and updated facility allowed Hometown Medical to expand lab services, bring in specialists and rent space to Rehab Solutions. In addition to running an independently owned health care practice, Tupper is able to fulfill her dream of raising her family in a small town and is grateful for the support of the Newcastle community.

December

- Weston County is well represented in 2023 Wyoming Legislature leadership with the election of Sen. Ogden Driskill, R-Devils Tower, as Senate president and Rep. Chip Neiman, R-Hulett, as majority floor leader for the 67th Wyoming Legislature by the Republican Caucus on Nov. 19. They will assume their positions at the start of the legislative session on Jan. 10. Neiman secured his position by one vote over veteran Rep. Jared Olsen, R-Cheyenne.

- Even during a statewide decrease, K-12 enrollment in Weston County School District No. 7 increased by 54% as a result of the K-8 virtual program provided by the school to students across the state. The student body population increased from 471 to 725 from the 2021-22 to 2022-23 school year, according to a Nov. 29 press release from the Wyoming Department of Education.

- After a seven-month battle over backyard chickens, the Newcastle City Council officially adopted an ordinance permitting the practice after its third reading on Dec. 5, 2022. The ordinance allows interested persons to submit a \$20 application for six hens to a lot. The ordinance also addresses concerns regarding coop upkeep and violation fees. Councilman Ty Owens said he felt like he finally fulfilled a campaign promise and can now "move on to talk about something else."

- Paul Bau was selected to fill a vacancy on the Weston County School District No. 1 board of trustees on Dec. 7 after long-time trustee Ronnie Mills resigned on Nov. 9. Trustee John Riesland suggested that the board appoint Marcia Lambert because she had the next highest number of votes on the general election ticket, but after extensive discussion,

the board instead chose to collect letters of interest from individuals who wanted to fill the seat.

- The Newcastle City Council voted to remove former City Clerk-Treasurer Greg James from the Planning and Zoning Commission on Dec. 5 after they had voted to appoint him to the open seat at the Nov. 21 meeting. Council Members Ty Owens, Daren Downs, and Ann McColley stated that they were blindsided by James' quick appointment and were not aware of the open seat. It was decided to advertise the position for two weeks before filling it.

- Through the collaboration of Weston County Sheriff Bryan Colvard, community service officer Becky Swentesky and the Newcastle Middle School, the Sheriff and Chief's Club Award was created to recognize local students for good citizenship based on integrity,

respect and personal fortitude. Every quarter, a boy and girl from each of the three grades are selected to receive the award after nominations are sent by teachers and coaches.

- After 20 years without a full-time priest, Christ Episcopal Church of Newcastle finally has a new rector, the Rev. Kenli Barling, living in Newcastle. Ordained as a priest in 2020, Barling has enjoyed learning about God since she was a little girl and hopes to do what she can to help people along the walk of their spiritual journeys. Barling said the community has been very welcoming and she is excited to meet new faces as she settles in.

The News Letter Journal's 2022 Year in Review was compiled by KateLynn Slaamot and Hannah Gross.

• • •

Storm

from Page 1

concern with these temperatures. With consultation with the NWS (National Weather Service) with the forecasted temperatures and dangers, I feel it is the right thing to do for our employees, as well to hopefully keep the public inside and safe as well."

In addition to the Weston County Courthouse, Nelson's closures also impacted the Weston County Library and Weston County Extension office. Local businesses also

closed, including Hometown Medical Clinic, the News Letter Journal and Isabella's.

Weston County School District No. 1 chose to start Christmas break a day early, canceling school on Dec. 22 because of the frigid temperatures. The Weston County Children's Center also closed early.

While the winter storm made it cold enough to keep people indoors, it wasn't cold enough to break any records

locally, according to Susan Sanders, warning coordination meteorologist with the NWS in Rapid City.

"Record lows this time of year are pretty extreme ... You'll notice the records were set in 1990 and 1983 — both those years had very long-lasting cold spells in the last half of December," Sanders said. "1983 was the coldest December in Newcastle with an average temp of 8.9, several degrees below the No. 2 at 13.3

degrees. The average low for the month was minus 2.7."

According to the records provided by Sanders, the coldest Dec. 22 in Newcastle occurred in 1990, with a recorded temperature of minus 31, 7 degrees colder than the real temperature recorded this year.

While Newcastle fared well during the storm, with no reported power outages or stranded motorists, some of the surrounding areas experienced more negative effects from the

storm that ended up impacting about 60% of the country's population.

According to the Guardian, the storm knocked out power in communities from Maine to Seattle as temperatures plummeted drastically below normal from east of the Rocky Mountains to the Appalachians.

Closer to home, power outages were reported by Rocky Mountain Power in Casper, with over 4,400 people being impacted. Another 2,079 meters

were left without power in the Gillette area according to Powder River Energy Corp.

Unlike Newcastle, Casper also set a record low of minus 42, shattering the previous record of minus 33, according to the NWS.

"More importantly, 42 below is the coldest temperature ever at Casper Airport," the weather service said. "The next coldest temperature was 41 below zero which occurred on 12-21-90. Records go back to 1939."

Hess

from Page 1

(his) shirt." He enjoyed the marathon so much, he signed up for one every year while in Denver, in addition to shorter races.

However, the marathon didn't work out in his final year of seminary, so Hess gave his first "ultra marathon" a try instead. It was a 50K race, roughly 31 miles.

"I thought, it's only 5 miles more than a marathon. This shouldn't be too difficult. But it was on trails instead of roads, and it kicked my butt," Hess said. "It was a totally different beast that I was not ready for, so I survived it, but that's all that can be said about that race."

Around that time, which was about five years ago, he became an ordained priest and moved back to Wyoming. The busyness of life set in, and he couldn't run as often. Eventually, however, the many trails in Wyoming encouraged him to pursue trail running as a hobby.

Before coming to Newcastle, Hess served as a priest in Sheridan, Jackson and Cody, as well as the smaller surrounding towns in those areas, giving him the opportunity to take long all-day hikes in mountain country. Those all-day excursions prepared him for ultra-running, which he described as "long hiking with a bit of running mixed in."

So, he signed up for a 50-mile trail race in 2019, figuring if he averaged 4 miles an hour or so, he could be finished before dark.

"I have never been so tired or muddied or sore, but I loved it," Hess said.

Finding the time

Because Brian Hess is in charge of three parishes, which each have their own budget, Mitch Haynes, a member of St. Anthony's and the Pastoral Council, said Hess is basically the "CEO for three companies." He dedicates a lot of time to preparing homilies and completing his priestly duties. Additionally, he is the director of vocations for the Diocese of Cheyenne.

Hess also dedicates about 45 minutes of running every day during the week and tries to run six to eight hours on the weekends. During the off season, Hess averages 20 miles a week, but he will run as much as 50 to 70 miles in a week during the peak of training. His "sweet spot" is 30 to 40 miles a week.

"I don't know how he finds time for it all," Haynes said. "You need a young guy that can do that."

Hess said the secret to balancing the ministry with his training is scheduling. To create more free time, he strictly limits television and media consumption.

"You can accomplish a lot in your life if you schedule well," he said. "A priest should work hard ... and if I'm going to spend a lot of time running, one thing that has to go is television, which rots your brain anyway."

According to Haynes, in the past Hess would squeeze runs into his lunch break and use vacation time to compete in races.

That scheduling allows Hess to keep pursuing what he loves, without neglecting his duties.

"I think he sees running as contributing to his ministry," said Leslie Patterson, an organist and cantor for Corpus Christi. "His vocation as a priest is preeminent in his life, and I think running is just one of the many ways he supports that calling from God."

Haynes said Hess is a gifted speaker, and Patterson added that he is an excellent preacher and cares about his duties.

"He has a deep love for our Lord and has offered his whole person, his whole life, up to him by following the call to priesthood," Patterson said. "He is determined and upbeat, holy and hopeful."

Hess said he is also grateful for the congregation's understanding.

"The people of my parish are very supportive of this. They know that it makes me happy to be able to do this," he said. "The parish here is my family, and I'm very grateful for their support. Being out in nature helps me connect with God."

And then he thought, why not sign up for the 100-miler held in Arizona a few months later? This trail is a 20-mile

loop in the desert that contestants run five times, and it took Hess about 30 hours to complete.

"That was a whole different experience," he said. "I thought, that's fun — now I need to try some mountain stuff."

But that still wasn't enough for the young priest. He ran some 100-milers in the mountains before throwing his name into the lottery for a 200-mile race in the Cascades of Washington state.

"Somehow, through a stroke of really good luck or really bad luck, my name got drawn," he said.

During the 100-mile races, Hess just sacrifices a night of sleep, but this race presented a whole new set of challenges, because it takes days to complete, according to Hess.

In addition to the normal strategies of hiking, eating and changing shoes, he said, he has to factor in a few hours of sleep and deal with sleep-deprived hallucinations.

What he loves about the long ultras is the country he sees and the communities of people he meets. Because the long races have a lot of hiking and involve a lot of strategy, the camaraderie is more relaxed and less competitive than marathons.

There are also pacers and crews who sacrifice their weekends to show up at the aid stations, bring a change of shoes and clothing, offer encouragement and even run the second half of the race.

"It's such a team effort," Hess said. "It's been a great way to stay connected to old friends and really make new friends."

"His energy and dedication is another example he sets for his parish-

ioners to do our best and stretch our abilities," said Debbie Douglas, from St. Anthony's.

Hess enjoys running because it helps him clear his mind and connect him to God. He often ruminates over the Bible passages from the week's readings, often making connections in his brain.

"There's always a lot of things going on in my life," he said. "(Running) is taxing on the body, but it relaxes the brain," he said.

Staying motivated is the key because these races are all mental, according to Hess. This year, he had his first DNF (did-not-finish) when he attempted three 100-milers in a season. He completed the first two, but partway through the third, he lost all motivation.

"I learned that these races are more mental than physical," he said. "You're signing up for the pain, but if you're going to finish, you have to have a good reason to be out there."

He hopes to redeem himself, try it again and "get vindication." He has a goal one day to complete the Triple Crown of 200s, which is three 200-mile races in one season.

"Father Brian is such an inspiration to me," said parishioner Wendy Kipp, of St. Paul's in Sundance. "So, as he continues to push for himself as for us — also for the love of God — I will continue to cheer him on."

And speaking of motivation, knowing what is waiting for Hess at the finish line is what keeps him going: a pair of sandals and a beer.

Sports

News Letter Journal

SPORTS SCHEDULE

NEWCASTLE HIGH SCHOOL			
Wrestling			
1/6-7/23	VJ Shane Shatto Invitational Douglas	A	NOON
1/13/23	VJ Newcastle Invitational	H	9AM
1/14/23	VJ Blazer Duals	A	NOON
Men's Swimming			
1/12/23	VJ Buffalo HS	A	4PM
1/14/23	VJ Douglas HS	A	10AM
Ladies' Basketball			
1/6/23	V9 Torrington HS	H	4PM
1/12/23	V9 Wright Jr/Sr HS	A	4:30PM
1/14/23	V9 Rapid City Central HS	A	TBA
Men's Basketball			
1/6/23	V9 Torrington HS	H	4PM
1/12/23	V9 Wright Jr/Sr HS	A	5:30PM
1/14/23	V9 Rapid City Central HS	A	TBA

Rants and Raves for 2022

It's that time again, where we all look back at the last 12 months to reflect on the happenings of the year. Ever since Covid, things have changed, and while overall we are in a much better place than two years ago, there have still been ups and downs.

As per usual, I will start my reminiscence of the year with my rants, as I always like to end on a positive note — especially when maneuvering into a new year.

My rants are actually rather few this year. I know that some are more than happy to bid adieu to 2022, however I am mostly grateful for the normalcy that has returned after what seems like an age since Covid.

Therefore, my No. 1 rant is once again the shortage of officials and coaches in high school and youth sports. I don't know if parents and fans simply refuse to believe that "someone" won't step up to fill these vital roles or what it is, but the abuse heaped upon these brave souls who put themselves in the bullseye from said parents and fans is apparently getting to be too much.

In a perfect world, everyone's child would be equally as talented as everyone else, so they would get equal playing time. Believe me, everyone, including coaches and officials, would be overjoyed if that were the case.

But the fact of the matter is that they are not. As parents, we need to be able to see our children, and their teammates, objectively and

— See Karpe, Page 18



Sonja Karp
Karpe Dogie

YEAR IN REVIEW

the year's top athletes

Sonja Karp
NLJ Sports Editor

The reviews on the year 2022 as a whole are still out, as it brought with it many ups and downs, however, Newcastle High School athletes were able to tally up some special memories throughout the year.

The Lady Dogies played a near-perfect season in basketball, the Lady Dogies made a repeat trip to the state soccer tournament in the spring, and the Lady Dogie volleyball team also took their second consecutive trip to the state tourney after going seven years without punching their ticket.

The Dogies secured themselves a playoff berth last fall in football, after just missing out on post-season play in 2021 when they lost a heartbreaker in their final regular season contest.

Even individual Dogies made headlines during their seasons in 2022, with one bringing home a state title and another joining the 1,000-point club in basketball.

Let's take a look back at how each team, or individual, achieved their success.

Womack becomes state champ

Josh Womack finished his senior season with only three losses, a regional championship, and capped it off with a state wrestling championship in the 220-pound weight class in February. He led Newcastle/Upton to an 11th-place finish at the 3A state wrestling tournament with his 2-0 title win over Carson Tims of Mt. View, handing the senior his second loss of the season.

"My goal all year was to win the title, so that was my mindset going in," Womack said. "I knew that I'd come this far and I had to leave everything



Photo by Sonja Karp/NLJ

In February, Josh Womack finished his senior year with a State Championship title at 220 and an overall record of 47-3.

out on the mat. I went as hard as I could, and left no regrets."

His trip to the championship began by dominating his opponents in the first and quarter-final rounds, where he wrestled a total of 1:02 between the two matches. In his semi-final round, Christian Peterson of Worland put up more of a fight, but Womack was able

to get the pin at 5:25 into the match.

"I'd wrestled him at the beginning of the season, and he's a tough opponent and a really nice guy," Womack said, smiling. "I had to keep my momentum going and keep moving to stay in good position. He wanted to throw a big move on me, so I had to keep my hips underneath me."

From there, there was just one match standing between Womack and a state title.

"Josh wrestled a perfect state tournament. He made no mistakes," head coach Lee McCoy said at the time. "The only time he's lost all season has been when he took a risk, so going into the championship match he was going to make Tims make the mistakes, and he did."

In the title match, Tims was giving Womack the respect he had earned throughout the season by trying to stay away from Womack and his signature fireman's throw.

Womack got a point for an escape in the second period and another point from Tims' stalling in both the first and second period, which gave him those two points overall. Tims almost got an escape in the third period, but Womack put him back on the mat and rode it out to take the win.

"There were a couple of close calls

where Tims almost got to his feet, but Josh threw him back to the mat each time holding him scoreless," McCoy explained. "He wrestled his match and there was no way the kid was going to beat him. It was pretty special and the perfect way to end a very good high school career."

Womack's win ended his senior season with a 47-3 record and his name being added to the Wall of Fame at NHS.

"It took me a second to realize it, but when the ref blew that final whistle, it hit me that I had just won a state title," Womack said. "It was pretty awesome."

Jay drops the K

Heading into a cross-quadrant makeup game against the Burns Lady Broncs, NHS junior Jaylen Ostenson was on the cusp of achieving the milestone of having scored 1,000 points in her high school career on the hardwood, in February.

Foremost in Ostenson's mind as the game got under way was to get another win with her team who had lost only one game in the season, and the Lady Dogies accomplished that goal with a

— See Sports in Review, Page 12



Photo by Sonja Karp/NLJ

Jaylen Ostenson joined the 1,000 point club last year at home against the Burns Lady Broncs. The junior finished the 2022 season with 1,214 career points.

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Sports in Review from Page 11.....

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Photo by Nicole McFarland/NLJ

The Lady Dogies brought home the first hardware since 2008 with their fifth place Consolation Championship last season at the State Tournament.

decisive 65-32 win. Ostenson also hit, and surpassed, 1,000 points before the first half came to a close.

"I knew I was getting there, but I didn't realize how close I was until you [Sonja Karp] told me," Ostenson said following the game. "My goal for the game was not to score a thousand points at all. My goal was to win the game and if it happened, it happened. It was kind of cool that it did happen at home though."

"It was a nice milestone for her to achieve," said Chad Ostenson, NHS ladies' basketball head coach and Jaylen's dad. "It came as a result of a lot of work, a lot of time in the gym, and a lot of shots put up. It also takes good teammates. Without them, she doesn't get the ball and doesn't get the looks, and she would give them a lot of credit too."

Ostenson finished that night leading all scorers with 21 points and she also brought down 10 rebounds for a double-double, finishing the 2022 season with 1,214 career points.

the tournament as anyone except Douglas [state champs], but losing the first put us out of the fight for the title," Ostenson said with a sigh. "We played 11 quarters of really good basketball, but when you're going up against the best teams in the state, even one bad quarter can hurt you — and on Thursday morning, it did."

The Lady Dogies played the first contest of the 3A Tournament as they tipped off against the No. 2-seeded Lady Tigers of Lander.

Other than the start of the first quarter, where the Lady Dogies played pretty tight and struggled to adjust to playing on the wide-open, big court of that venue, they played the Lady Tigers tough. Having to foul in the waning moments of the game, and good free-throw shooting by Lander inflated the score to a seven-point differential of 45-52 when the final buzzer blew.

"I've got to give credit where it's due, the kids did battle back to tie it with three minutes left," Ostenson said. "I thought we might just get over the hump, but then they hit a pretty big three down the stretch."

The Lady Dogies had less than 24 hours to mourn the loss of winning a state title and dust themselves off before they took on the Mt. View Lady Buffalos.

"The loss to Lander was pretty heartbreaking because we knew we could have, and probably should have won," admitted [Tieman] Stanton. "But then we had to get the mentality that it wasn't over yet, and we could either crawl in a hole and cry, or we could use it as a way to push through our next games."

The team that took the court

that morning was the team that Dogie fans had watched all season. Where they had struggled a bit, comparatively, to shoot from beyond the arc in their last few contests, they exploded off the tip and were dialed in from downtown.

"Mack the Gun" Conzelman was back in town as she went 5-7 from three, McFarland hit 2-3, Ostenson 2-4 and Tidyman 1-3 which added up to 30 of the ladies 58 points in the contest.

"Things just started to click for us," Conzelman said after the game. "I think it was the shoes. I wore Jaylen's shoes in the Lander game and then went back to mine for Mt. View."

Newcastle took the lead and never looked back as they cruised to their 58-40 win over the Lady Buffs.

The win set them up to take on the Lady Trailblazers of Torrington in the consolation championship.

"We got pretty good at playing that early game," chuckled Ostenson. "But this was an important one because we wanted to win the last game of the year. There are only three teams who get to do that, and we wanted one of those to be us."

Things began a little slow for both teams with Torrington striking first hitting a three-point shot. The Lady 'Blazers finished the first frame with the 15-9 lead over the Lady Dogies.

After having a discussion at the break, the Lady Dogies hit the court for the second quarter and ran over the 'Blazers 24-11 to take the 33-26 lead into the locker room. Once they took the lead, they never looked back.

— See **Sports**, Page 13

Lady Dogies become 3A Consolation Champs

It wasn't the trophy they had in mind as the Lady Dogies set out at the beginning of the season, but head coach Chad Ostenson's squad brought home the first one since 2008 as they finished as the Consolation Champions at the 2022 3A State Tournament in March.

"We won as many games at



Photo by Alexis Barker/NLJ

The Lady Dogie soccer team made their second consecutive trip to the state tournament last season. Though they came home empty-handed, the repeat trip was exciting for the squad.

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Dr. A. Schabauer Feb. 16

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Wellness Wednesday, W.C. Upton Clinic 1st & 3rd Wednesday, 7-9 am

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Sports from Page 12

Torrington made a valiant effort to try to get back in the game, however, couldn't dig out of the hole. The 64-54 win gave Newcastle the first trophy since 2008 as they were awarded the Consolation Championship and they ended the season with a 23-3 record.

Ladies secure state berth

Heading into the last week of the 2022 season, the Lady Dogie Soccer team held firmly to the fourth seed in 3A East, and having recorded two decisive wins against Torrington and Rawlins earlier in the season, felt confident of racking up two more against each team by week's end.

Strategic defensive play by the Lady 'Blazers in Torrington the week prior, however, threw the question of making the state playoffs in question as they narrowly defeated Newcastle 2-1. Fortunately, head coach Jessie Stearns' squad rallied to take the 1-0 victory over the Lady Outlaws of Rawlins in their last home match of the season.

Torrington's strategy was to play

a defensive game, pulling nine of their 10 players into the backfield in order to thwart the Lady Dogies' offensive game.

"We talked about needing to step up our game at half time, and play like we are capable of playing," Stearns said. "And we came out much better in the second. Angel [Perez] only touched the ball two times, and we played almost the whole 40 minutes on our offensive half of the field."

With nine defenders guarding the Lady 'Blazer's goal, Stearns moved Hailey Beaström out of the back field and into the attack position to give her squad seven offensive players. Though it took awhile, Beaström would end up being the one to get the Lady Dogies on the board.

The goal came with six minutes to play and was a result of a corner kick. Gabby McVay delivered the ball to Beaström, who had forced the keeper out of position, and the freshman finished it to the back of the net.

The Lady Dogies had a day to bounce back before hosting the Lady Outlaws.

"The loss put a lot of pressure on us," Stearns said. "We had to win

against them, or it would mean that we had to win this week against tougher opponents to secure our spot for the state tournament."

The Lady Dogies had a lot of opportunities to score in the first half, but just couldn't find the back of the net, so the teams went into the halftime break knotted up at zero.

With 30 minutes to play, Newcastle got a free kick from about 25 yards out, and McVay put it on frame and over top of the Rawlins' keeper to find the back of the net.

"It looked almost identical to one of her goals when we played them last time," Stearns said. "Their goalie is tall, but her timing was just a little off, and the ball went over the top of her fingers and it just slipped under the crossbar."

From there, the Lady Dogies continued to hold Rawlins out of the goal to take the 1-0 win, and secure a spot at the state tournament.

Newcastle ended the contest with five shots on goal, and secured their spot in post-season play at the state tournament. There they ran into tough teams from the west side and went two-and-out to end their season.

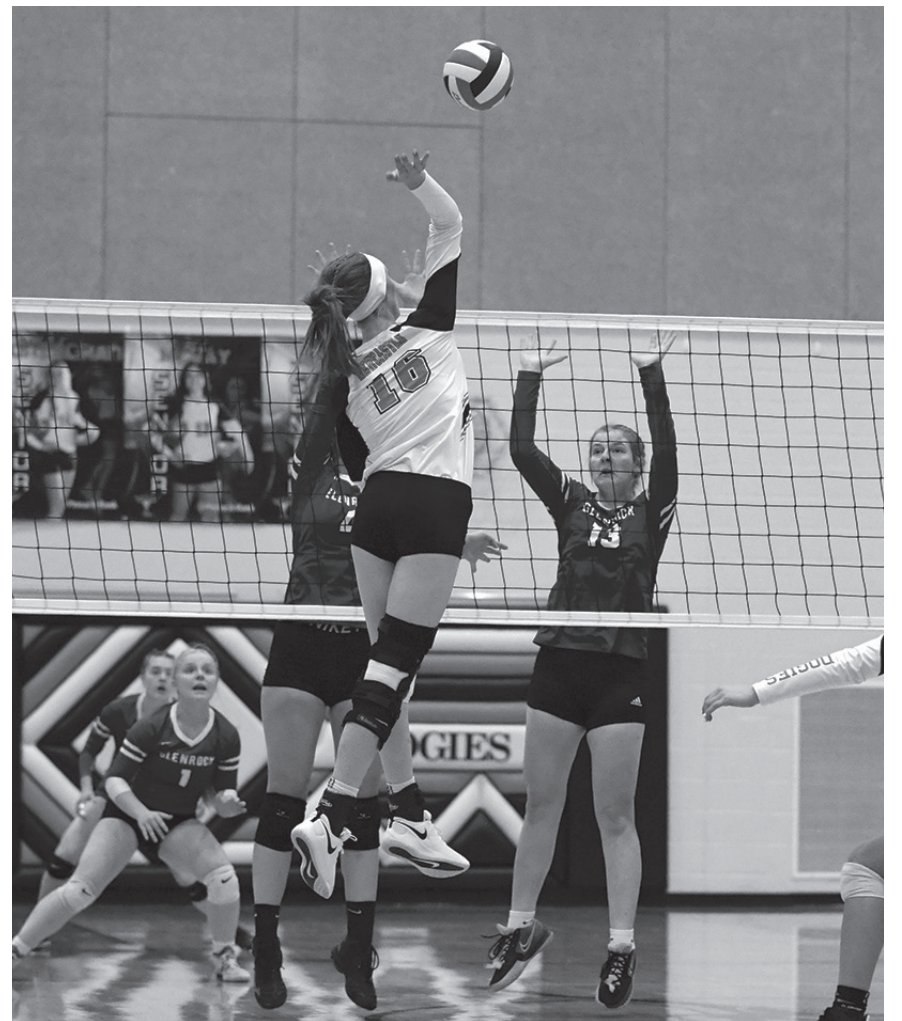


Photo by Nicole McFarland/NLJ

The Lady Dogie volleyball team made a return trip to Casper for the 3A State Tournament in the fall.

Bloom makes All-Conference

Despite adverse conditions — gale-force winds and cool temperatures — the Dogies and Lady Dogies gutted it out along with the pack in for the 3A East Conference Meet in October, in Torrington, and sophomore Aspen Bloom finished fifth and ran her way to All-Conference honors.

"We were prepared for the wind, but nothing like we experienced when we got there!" said assistant coach Jessica Troftgruben, following the meet. "It was so windy that the Torrington group didn't even set up a table. They were driving around on golf carts locating coaches to give instructions and our supplies."

Bloom was once again the sole runner for the Lady Dogies, and Troftgruben noted that Bloom was nervous as she prepared for the race.

"She knew she had a chance to get All-Conference, and she was feeling

the pressure." Troftgruben acknowledged. "We discussed racing strategies with the tough wind, and she knew she had to run smart when facing the wind and take advantage when the wind was at her back."

Bloom jumped off the line and stayed with the leading runners right from the start, maintaining fourth throughout most of the race. As the runners neared the finish line, things started to heat up.

"We could see that the runner behind her was waiting to make her move and possibly using Aspen as a windbreak at times," Troftgruben explained. "It was a battle to the finish line for fourth and fifth place, with Aspen taking that fifth-place spot."

Not only did Bloom earn All-Conference honors with her finish, she also set a new personal record with her time of 21:18, which was impressive

given the conditions.

"Aspen runs so smooth and graceful," Troftgruben said. "There are times when it seems effortless, but I know she feels differently. It was so awesome that she finished so well."

At the state meet, Bloom was right on her best time of the season, finishing in 21:27.27, putting her at 21st place in the race.

Netters went to the Dance

In October, the Lady Dogies punched their ticket to the Big Dance — otherwise known as the 3A State Volleyball Tournament — by taking third place at the 3A East Regional

— See Sports, Page 18



Photo courtesy of Julie Morris

Aspen Bloom shows just how excited she was to not only earn All-Conference honors with her fifth-place finish in the 3A East Conference meet, but also how pumped she was to have set a new personal record while running in very tough conditions.

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Public notice is hereby given that the following listed water users have submitted proofs of appropriation and/or construction under the following permits as approved by the State Engineer. The below-listed proofs of appropriation or construction will be held open for public inspection from January 9 through January 13, 2023, during the hours of 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., at the following location(s): Board of Control, 2100 West 5th Street, Sheridan, Wyoming; and State Engineer's Office, Herschler Building 2W, 122 West 25th Street, Cheyenne, Wyoming. Any person claiming a water right interest in the same sources of supply to which the below-advertised proofs refer may inform the Water Division Superintendent of his/her desire to contest the rights of the person or persons seeking adjudication. The statement of contest shall be presented within fifteen days after the closing of the public inspection and shall state with reasonable certainty the grounds of the contest. The statement must be verified by the sworn affidavit of the contestant, his/her agent or attorney. If no contest is initiated as allowed by Section 41-4-312, Wyoming Statutes, 1977, the advertised proofs will be submitted to the State Board of Control for consideration during its meeting beginning on February 6, 2023, with the Division Superintendent's recommendation that certificates of appropriation or construction be issued.

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(Publish December 29, 2022)

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(Publish December 29, 2022)

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Last week's answers

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 - *Like poke bowl
 - Magician, in the olden days
 - Type of wrench
 - Campaigner, for short
 - Traditional sock pattern
 - *Southeast Asian spiky fruit, pl.
 - ____-di-dah
 - Unequivocally detestable
 - Same as ayah
 - "That is," Latin
 - Urge Spot to attack
 - Chilled (2 words)
 - Observation point's attraction
 - *Soft and soft type of tofu
 - Ship pronoun
 - Thrusts out or causes to protrude
 - One way to steal gas
 - Without professional help, acr.

- Energy to motion converter
 - H.S. math class
 - *Wasabi is popular in this cuisine
 - *Type of soda bread
 - g in 10 g
 - Francis Coppola's middle name
 - End of tunnel
 - Casanova, e.g.
 - In the thick of
 - Saturn's wife
 - Human limb
 - *Russian borscht vegetable
- DOWN**
- *Brew from China, originally
 - *American ____ browns
 - Acreage
 - Sort of (3 words)
 - Marie or Pierre, physicists
 - Southeast Asia org.
 - Lowly laborer
 - Like a bug in a rug
 - Princess Fiona, by night
 - Square root of 100
 - Thwarted
 - SNL's fortÉ
 - *Nationality that gave us gelato
 - Administer
 - Wound fluid
 - Not dead
 - Radices, sing.

- *Clarified butter of Indian origin, pl.
- *Peking fowl
- Mennonite's cousin
- Jack Black's Libre
- Martin of "Apocalypse Now"
- Terrorist org.
- Fat of olives
- *Like certain meatballs
- Tear-jerker
- Hog heaven
- Posthumous type of tax
- Like 90 degree angle
- Reassembled dwelling
- Feudal dwelling
- Poppy tears
- Acid "journey"
- Semis
- France/Switzerland border mountain range
- Not all
- Canal in a song
- U.N. workers' grp.
- Banned insecticide, acr.

**FIND THE SOLUTIONS
 IN NEXT
 WEEK'S PAPER**

Gwamma by JaNel M. Farnsworth

Newcastle City Council Minutes

**NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2022**

Mayor Pam Gualtieri called this regular meeting of the Newcastle City Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Those present were Mayor Gualtieri; Council members Don Steveson, Ann McColley, Daren Downs, Lance Miles and Tyrel Owens. Also present were Public Works Supervisor Greg Stumpff and City Clerk/Treasurer Stacy Haggerty.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mayor Gualtieri requested to add Mr. & Mrs. Ferguson to the agenda regarding parking on South Summit Ave. Ann McColley moved, seconded Daren Downs to approve the agenda as amended. **MOTION CARRIED.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ann McColley moved, seconded Don Steveson to approve the minutes of the regular meeting and executive session of Monday, December 5, 2022. **MOTION CARRIED.**

NOMINATIONS FOR RECOGNITION: Newcastle Chamber of Commerce

CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION: None
CITIZEN'S BUSINESS—IN WRITING: Approval of the annual Plumbing and Electrical Licenses for 2023. Don Steveson moved, seconded Tyrel Owens to approve the Plumbing Licenses and Electrical Licenses as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.** The licenses are as follows:

The following have requested plumbing licenses for the 2023 calendar year. All fees have been paid and proof of insurance and bond have been provided.

Powder River Heating & Air Conditioning - Master Plumber: Jaye Drake; Journeymen: Brett Osman, Steve Sales; Limited Mechanical Apprentices: Eric Means, Jason Wacker, Jose Zavala

Andersen Plumbing and Contracting - Master Plumber: Clay Andersen; Apprentice Plumber: Nathan Andersen

Wolf's Plumbing and Heating, Inc. - Master Plumber: Scott Hartman; Journeymen Plumber: Dan Hartman

Black Hills Plumbing & Heating - Master Plumber: William Simianer; Apprentice Plumbers: Chris Scull, Michael Paterson, Josh Kaufmann

Mountainview Plumbing & Heating - Master Plumber: Brian D. Olson; Apprentice Plumber: Rob Wisnewski

21 Electric/Plumbing - Master Plumber/HVAC: Aaron Napolitano

Summit Plumbing & Heating, LLC - Master Plumber: David J. Hopkins; Apprentice Plumbers: Robin King, Cameron Richardson, Eloy Martinez, Michael Haynes

The following have requested Limited Plumber Licenses for the 2023 calendar year. All Fees have been paid and proof of insurance and bond have been provided.

Black Hills Gas Holdings, LLC (Gas Piping) - Limited Plumbers: Donny Munger, James Curren, Mark Christiansen

Black Cat Construction (Water, Sewer Line) - Limited Plumber: Jeff Sorch

Wayne's Heating and Air (Gas Piping) - Limited Plumber: Wayne Anderson

Culligan Soft Water of Hot Springs, Inc. (Soft Water Service) - Limited Plumber: Richard D. Ostad

The following request Limited Mechanical Plumber License for the 2023 calendar year. All Fees have been paid and proof of insurance and bond have been provided.

Always There Heating and Cooling - Limited Mechanical Plumber: Timothy Almy

Comfort Systems Heating & Cooling Inc. - Limited Master Mechanical Plumber: Cary Wendling (Gas Piping)

Precision Mechanical - Limited Mechanical Plumber: Stephen Van Dam; Apprentices: Brian Morgan, Michael Bales, Patrick Sloan, Johnny Reed, Austin Youngblood

Midwestern Mechanical - Master Plumber: Chris Hetzel; Limited Mechanical Plumbers: Daniel Whitney, Louis Cambell

Climate Solutions, Inc. - Limited Mechanical Plumber: Nathan Kintz

Tessier's Inc. - Limited Mechanical Plumber: David Del Soldato

The following have requested Electrical Licenses for the 2023 calendar year. All Fees have been paid and proof of insurance and bond have been provided.

Homestead Works Electrical - Master Electrician: Howard D. Bogue

ProElectric, Inc. - Master Electrician: Curtis E, Jub; Journeymen Electricians: Charlie Lynn Smith, Keith Norman King; Apprentice Electrician: Tyler Phinney

H&H Electric - Master Electricians: Christopher David Hill, Curtis J. Maxwell; Journeymen Electricians: Jason Gray, Broady Read

21 Electric - Master Electrician: Joshua Liggett; Journeyman Electrician: Ryan Yuronich; Apprentice Electrician: Payton A.

Parks
ITC Electrical - Master Electrician: Michael Carruth
Rick's Electric - Master Electrician: Rick Phillips; Journeymen Electrician: Trenton Engle; Apprentice Electricians: James Lewis, Tate Engle
Hunter Electric - Master Electrician: Zachary Hunter

Arrow Electric, Inc. - Master Electrician: Richard R. Andrews; Journeymen Electrician: Rhett James Williams; Apprentice Electricians: Shane Bohlander, Bryce J. Perkins
Whites Construction, LLC - Master Electrician: Brian K. Swan; Apprentice Electrician: Nathan G. Baker

CITIZEN'S BUSINESS—VERBAL:
Bruce Perkins was present to ask the Council to consider leaving the Main Street sidewalks as no skate boarding or bike riding when the ordinance pertaining to such is updated.

Caleb Carter was present to give an annual report for the Natural Resource District.

Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson were present to request that the Council reconsider the parking restrictions recently posted on portions of S. Summit Ave.

MAYOR/COUNCIL REPORTS:
Mayor Gualtieri referenced funding for the new hanger at Mondell Airport. Request had been made for the City to contribute 2% of the cost which would be \$18,905. Ann McColley moved, seconded Tyrel Owens to approve this funding request. **MOTION CARRIED.**

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:
City Clerk/Treasurer Stacy Haggerty stated that with observed New Year holiday being on Monday, January 2, 2022 the next Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 3, 2022.

Public Works Supervisor Greg Stumpff referenced the Public Works report for projects and work done.

Mayor Gualtieri reported that Chief Bowles was out of town and would return January 5th or 6th. She then reported on calls of service, there had been 36 for the CSO, 2 for the City Crew, and 69 to the Police Department with a YTD of 4,537. There was discussion on accrual of vacation for the Police Department, Clerk/Treasurer Haggerty will contact Attorney Hughes and will discuss at the next Council Meeting. Councilmen Owens stated that he had contacted Chief Bowles and he will attend via phone for the next step in obtaining the Chapter 56 permit.

City Attorney Dublin Hughes was absent.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS: Mayor Gualtieri requested members of the personnel committee stay after the adjournment of this meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

CLAIMS AGAINST THE CITY: Tyrel Owens moved, seconded Lance Miles to pay the claims against the City dated December 19, 2022. **MOTION CARRIED.** Don Steveson moved, seconded Ann McColley to adjourn this regular meeting of the Newcastle City Council at 8:07 p.m. Meeting adjourned.

Claims: Ad Pro, supplies, \$18.90; Advanced Drug Testing, testing, \$26.00; Alpha Communications, tower rent, \$95.00; American Business Software, monthly maintenance, \$49.00; Matthew Anderson, mileage, \$400.00; Patricia Bauman, deposit refund, \$100.00; Black Hills Energy, energy services, \$178.83; Black Hills Energy - Custer, deposit for primary line to Well 5, \$14,567.43; Butler Machinery, supplies, \$949.13; Contractor Supply, supplies, \$875.13; Culligan, water, \$65.00; Decker's, supplies, \$89.51; Derek's Field Service, repairs, \$1,261.40; Ditch Witch Undercon, line locator, \$8,368.82; Double D, supplies, \$939.40; DustBusters, salt, \$9,541.49; Eastern Wyoming Equip., parts/supplies, \$5,479.46; Energy Laboratories, testing, \$64.00; Farnsworth Services, lagoon/sanitation, \$32,445.00; Ferguson, support, \$2,437.43; Frontier, parts/supplies, \$4,747.39; Gateway Travel, fuel, \$7,319.53; Hansen Equip., trimmer, \$208.00; Knecht, parts/supplies, \$759.32; Marco, PD copier fees, \$663.56; March Tech., copier fees, \$279.48; Minuteman, tire repair, \$20.00; One Call, CDC/CON, \$42.75; Rapid Delivery, delivery fees, \$72.16; Rick's, electrical services, \$2,234.80; Genell Rothleutner, cleaning services, \$200.00; Short Stop, fuel, \$3,814.96; Top Office, supplies, \$15.90; Torgerson's, sweeper repair, \$63.10; Valli, monthly maintenance, \$140.57; Becky Vodopich, cleaning services, \$300.00; Voice Products, PD camera install, \$31,328.00; WC Health Services, drug testing, \$100.00; WC Road & Bridge, fuel, \$440.94; WC Treasurer, airport/youth expenses, \$4,023.25; WC Clerk, election fees, \$4,734.63

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Pam Gualtieri, Mayor ATTEST: City Clerk/Treasurer, Stacy Haggerty

(Publish December 29, 2022)

Cowboy State Look-In

Courtesy of the Wyoming News Exchange



WYDOT vs. Mother Nature

JACKSON (WNE) — Billowing flurries of snow have kept avalanche technicians on their toes trying to keep people safe from Mother Nature's winter fury.

Wednesday morning kicked off with a natural avalanche, to the dismay of the Wyoming Department of Transportation.

County avalanche specialists had planned to execute a controlled slide along the Hoback River Canyon on Wednesday morning. But they called it off because, while 6 inches of snow had been predicted over Tuesday night, the canyon saw only 2 inches.

Instead, a natural slide struck at around 8:15 a.m. Wednesday, covering half of the road on a section of Highway 191/189.

WYDOT closed the road at around 9 a.m. to perform snow control work on the slide paths Cow of the Woods and Calf of the Woods. After stimulating more snow to come down and cleaning snow from the road, WYDOT reopened it at around 10:30 a.m.

Inclement weather across the county spurred "no unnecessary travel" advisories on Highway 89, from the southern Grand Teton National Park boundary to Moran Junction, and on Highway 89 from Alpine Junction to Jackson.

The southern entrance of Yellowstone National Park to Grant Village was closed entirely, even to over-snow vehicles, and all roads into Idaho Falls from Teton Valley, Idaho, were closed due to icy roads and visibility issues.

For folks driving out of town for the holidays, Rich Ochs, the county emergency management coordinator, recommends packing a "Wyoming bag" of emergency supplies, including a sleeping bag, warm clothes, food and water, batteries and a shovel.

"If you're traveling for the holidays, the two websites everyone should be checking are weather.gov/riw and wyoroad.info," he said.

This story was published on Dec. 22, 2022.

Support for coal communities

SHERIDAN (WNE) — Ramaco Resources, Inc. formed the Ramaco Foundation, a philanthropic organization that will invest in the regions where its employees work in West Virginia, Virginia, and Wyoming through grant-making and partnerships with local nonprofit organizations.

As part of its launch, the foundation has awarded grants worth \$100,000 to organizations fighting childhood hunger in Wyoming and supporting education and workforce development in West Virginia.

"The regions where our staff and their families live are the backbone of this country and deserve far, far more investment and attention than they receive," said Randall Atkins, chair and CEO of Ramaco, who also serves as the chair of the foundation's board of directors. "We are proud to be a member of these communities and for this opportunity to give back and support their success."

The foundation's activities will be focused on southern West Virginia, southwestern Virginia, and Sheridan County, where the company

has operations. In addition to Atkins and Jenkins, the foundation's board of directors includes Debra Wendtland, a prominent Sheridan-based attorney and one of the nation's leading adoption specialists, according to a press release.

The foundation is organized as a public benefit corporation under the Wyoming Nonprofit Corporation Act and is classified as a 501(c)(3) organization under the Internal Revenue Code.

This story was published on Dec. 22, 2022.

Elk in Bighorns had brucellosis

BUFFALO (WNE) — Brucellosis, a disease of concern for wildlife and livestock alike, was recently detected in the western Bighorn Mountains.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department announced in November that a blood sample from a hunter-harvested bull elk tested positive for brucellosis, a disease that impacts reproduction in animals, primarily affecting elk, bison and cattle.

Infected females of these species abort calves during their first pregnancy. The disease is transmitted when animals come in contact with the bacteria, which most commonly occurs during birth.

It also impacts reproductive organs in males, like the one detected in the western Bighorns, though bull elk cannot spread the disease and it hasn't been detected in area livestock, state veterinarian Dr. Hallie Hasel said.

However, if the disease spreads to cow elk, who could pass it on to livestock, the Wyoming State Livestock Board will implement surveillance testing in cattle in the Bighorn Mountain region, Hasel said. If domestic cattle contract the disease, not only is it likely that they will

abort pregnancies or birth weak calves, but producers will also have to quarantine an infected herd and test regularly, a process that is both expensive and time consuming.

"We're fairly confident that if it's just this one (elk), it won't have any negative impacts on producers," said Jim Magagna, executive vice president of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association.

Currently, within the disease surveillance area, which spans northwestern Wyoming where the disease is most prominent, female cattle are tested for the disease before they are shipped.

Animals don't show symptoms of brucellosis, according to the Wyoming Brucellosis Coordination Team.

Humans could suffer from brucellosis infection if they handle an infected reproductive tract or fetus, according to Game and Fish. Symptoms in humans include recurring low-grade fever, joint or back aches, night sweats and depression.

This story was published on December 15, 2022.

BLM Wyoming seeks comments

CHEYENNE WNE) — The Bureau of Land Management Wyoming released an environmental assessment that analyzes 209 oil and gas parcels, totaling approximately 250,950 acres, for a proposed lease sale that would be held in June 2023.

The release of this environmental assessment starts a 30-day public comment period, which will end Jan. 23.

The BLM completed scoping on these parcels in November and is now seeking public comment on

them, potential deferrals and related environmental analysis, according to a news release.

The BLM will use the input from the public to help complete its review of each parcel and determine if leasing of these parcels conforms with all applicable laws, policies and land use plans. All parcels that are leased as part of an oil and gas lease sale include appropriate protections and stipulations, such as seasonal timing limitations and controlled surface use to protect

sage-grouse habitat and other important natural resources.

The parcels the BLM is analyzing, as well as maps and instructions on how to comment, are available on the ePlanning website at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2021772/510>.

This BLM lease sale will include updated fiscal provisions authorized by Congress in the Inflation Reduction Act.

This story was published on Dec. 24, 2022.

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Please see our website at wchs-wy.org for details.

Position	Status
Assistant Director of Nursing	LTC, FT
Home Health RN	FT
CNA, In-Home Services	PT
Radiology Technician (\$15,000 Sign-On Bonus)	FT
RN – Long-term Care	FT/PT/PRN
CNA – LTC (\$1,000 Sign-on Bonus)	FT&PT
Acute Care CNA	FT
Acute Care RN	PT/PRN
Nutrition Support Aide	PT
CNA	FT/PT/PRN
Dietary Aide	PRN
Environmental Services Aide	FT, PT, PRN

Employment Applications can be found on our website or picked up at the hospital front desk. Fax completed applications/resume packets to 307-746-3726, or email CTurner@wchs-wy.org. WCHS performs post offer, pre-employment drug screening. EOE.



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To learn more and to apply visit firstnorthern.bank or stop by our Newcastle branch at 24 N Sumner Ave and submit your resume to Mike Morrison.

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Sports from Page 13.....

Tournament in Wheatland. From match one against Rawlins to their third place win over Buffalo, the Lady Dogies were there to play. "Everything really clicked for us," said head coach Mickey Crabtree, following the game. "We were placing the ball well, we got a lot of run-throughs, we got so many touches at the net, we were getting the digs off those touches, and everything was really firing on all cylinders." The Lady Dogies started their tournament pitted against the Rawlins Lady Outlaws, which was the first time the two teams had met. "It was the first time we'd seen them this year, but the girls came ready to compete," Crabtree explained. "We talked a lot about their legacy, and what they wanted to leave behind, so they showed up ready to play."

The team was determined to maintain their focus on themselves, and that was just the ticket, as they pretty handily defeated the Lady Outlaws in three sets, 25-11, 25-17 and 25-19.

The win set Newcastle up to play Wheatland in the semi-final contest. Wheatland was the No. 1 team in the Southeast quadrant, they were ranked third in the state, they defeated Newcastle just a couple two weeks prior, and they were playing on their home court.

Despite all of these challenges, the Lady Dogies gave the Lady Bulldogs everything they could handle in the five-set loss.

"I really thought we had them, and I think the whole crowd did," said Crabtree. "But in that game, we struggled with the consistency piece of putting together a run of points, and they are a great team with a lot of talent."

The Lady Dogies had Wheatland on their heels in the first three sets. They came out blazing, and took set one 25-21, with the Bulldogs making a late-game surge to close the gap. Newcastle then lost the second

set 22-25, but turned around to take the third 25-18. In set four, Crabtree's crew stumbled a bit, just long enough to give Wheatland the advantage, which they used to tie up the match, winning 25-12. Then in the fifth and deciding set, the Lady Bulldogs used their momentum to take the win 15-7. The loss sent Newcastle into the loser-out game against Moorcroft. The Lady Wolves had taken Douglas to five sets in their opening match-up and defeated Torrington in the first loser-out contest.

"The girls went into it feeling good," Crabtree said. "I think we were all a little nervous, but we knew we just had to go in and play our game, and the girls showed up and got the job done."

The squad elevated their already high level of play from Friday to Saturday and made it clear early and often that Moorcroft had no business being on the other side of the net. The front line put up a wall, and as a team scored 14 points on blocks, with Stanton racking up four solo blocks and contributing on five block assists.

The combination of great defense and a solid and aggressive offense led to the three set victory, 25-14, 25-13, and 25-15, securing the Lady Dogies a state tournament berth.

All that was left was to decide seeding for the state tournament, which meant a third- and fourth-place contest remaining against Buffalo with whom they had split victories during the regular season.

As the match began, it didn't take long for everyone watching to see that Newcastle had a lot more intensity and urgency than did the Bison. As the Lady Dogies cruised to easy wins in the first two sets, 25-12 and 25-17, then came from behind to win the third set 25-23.

At the state tournament, the Lady Dogies played hard, but went two-and-out to end their season.



Photo by Alexis Barker/NLJ

It came down to the final contest, but the Dogies secured themselves a playoff berth for the first time in seven years.

Dogies go to 2A playoffs

Everything was on the line for the Dogies in their last regular season of 2022 against Torrington, in October. The winner would keep their season alive and head into the playoffs, while the loser's season would end.

It was tight at the end of the first half, but in the second, the Dogies took over and never looked back to cruise to a 39-14 win over the 'Blazers, clinching a spot in the playoffs for the first time since 2017.

"It was a pretty exciting night," head coach Matt Conzelman said after the game. "You know we've just been preaching that if you make a mistake, not to let it compound into more — and I think they've really bought into that, and they played pretty well."

The Dogies received the ball to start the contest and scored on their first possession with a three-yard scamper by Holden McConkey up the gut. Dylan McFarlin was good on the PAT to give the Dogies a 7-0 lead with six minutes to play in the

first quarter.

"I think that was the first time we scored on the opening drive," Conzelman said. "We ate six minutes off the clock and drove about 75 yards down the field, so it was a great way to start the game."

The 'Blazers were able to answer back as time ticked off the clock in the first and tied things up 7-7 as the teams headed into the second. Torrington then took a 14-13 lead into the locker room at half time.

"I reminded the guys that everything was going really well," Conzelman said. "We had made some defensive adjustments that were working pretty well, so we just coached that up. I also said that the third quarter was going to tell a lot about how the game was going to end, so we needed to take over immediately when we got back out there."

The 'Blazers received to start the second half, but the Dogie D took Conzelman's words to heart and forced a fumble, which was recovered by Jacob Prell. Offense drove down the field, and on first and goal on the two-yard line, Quint Perino

picked up his second touchdown of the evening on a QB keeper to recover the lead for his team.

Dogies began the fourth quarter with a turnover on downs, however defense once again stepped up to stop the 'Blazers on the 4th and four on Newcastle's 49-yard line.

On first down, McConkey broke through the middle of Torrington's line and ran 51 yards for his second TD of the night. The pass fell incomplete on the two-point conversion attempt, so the score was 25-14 in Newcastle's favor with 9:49 remaining in the game.

With 4:57 to play, McConkey punched the ball into the end zone once again, and this time McFarlin's PAT was good to extend Newcastle's lead to 32-14.

With 3:02 to play in the game, Torrington went for it on fourth and 20, but the Dogie D held them so took over only 10 yards away from the end zone.

On second down, McConkey scored his fourth touchdown of the night on a two-yard scamper, and McFarlin was right on the money with his

PAT, so the Dogies extended their lead to 39-14.

"Us scoring 20 points in the fourth quarter was huge," Conzelman said. "We haven't done that for a long time."

Senior Jacob Prell was a force on defense in the last home game of his career, racking up 23 points on defense with a fumble recovery, three solo tackles, three tackle assists and three tackles for loss. For his efforts, Prell was awarded Sportsman of the Game.

McConkey was the workhorse for the Dogie offense as the senior racked up 261 all-purpose yards and four touchdowns on the night.

"Jacob and Holden were on fire," Conzelman said. "It was an awesome way for them to end their career at Schoonmaker Field."

The win was huge for the Dogies as it extended their season at least one more week. As the No. 4 seed from the East, Newcastle was pitted against the No. 1-seeded Lovell at their house. Unfortunately, Newcastle was unable to get past the Bulldogs, so their season came to an end.

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Karpe from Page 11.....

be ready to admit that our child may not be the most talented on the team.

We also need to be able to put ourselves into the shoes of coaches and officials and figure out if we could do the job better. If so, maybe then we need to step up and fill some of those shortages.

Coaches give up a lot of time with their families to coach your kids, and they are not doing it for the money. When I was coaching, I figured out what my hourly wage was, and it was less than 20 cents an hour. Now, I haven't coached since 2009, but the pay for the job I did is still the same today.

When you sacrifice all that you have to in order to coach youth sports, it makes it so much more difficult to have your character and abilities slandered.

We need to be better. With that said, it's on to my raves for the year.

To start, I want to rave on those brave souls who continue to coach and

officiate despite the hardships associated with the jobs.

Thank you for having the passion and love for sports and kids that makes it possible for you to stay with this thankless job.

I must temper my last comment. When I say "thankless," I don't mean that you get nothing from it. That is about as far from the truth as possible.

The benefits of coaching far outweigh the drawbacks. There's not a lot that can compare to getting to spend time with kids, teaching them how to be the best they can be in the sport they love.

The relationships you are able to build with young people when you spend that amount of time with them — often in rather emotional situations — continue long after your time on the court or the field with them ends.

That's why you do what you do, and again, I thank you for your dedication. I also want to rave on those parents

and fans who wholeheartedly support their children's coaches even if they don't always agree with them. What you do for the team means so very much, and knowing that you stand behind the program means the world.

I'm sorry that the few bad apples out there make it hard for everyone.

Of course, I need to rave on those athletes who give everything they've got to play the sport they love.

It's a rare occasion when every single player on a team is fully satisfied all of the time. They disagree with coaches and officials. They have good games and not-so-good games. It is often painful to play sports. The physical demands are not for the faint of heart, and injuries can and do happen.

But they play despite the pain, and we all thank you for that.

So, with that said, I am very much looking forward to 2023 and hope for nothing but raves in the coming year.

Happy

NEW YEAR

From Our Entire Team!

The News Letter Journal will be closed on Monday, Jan. 2

PERSON OF THE YEAR

WHO WILL IT BE?

News Letter Journal
Person of the Year Award will be announced in next week's newspaper!

Don't miss our special edition, chock full of stories about the nominees who made a difference in Weston County in 2022.

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