

News Letter Journal

Weston County

April 13, 2023

Newcastle, Wyoming

Year 137 Week 15

WY-TOPP testing on the horizon

Alexis Barker
NLJ News Editor

As the end of the school year creeps closer, schools in Weston County School District No. 1 are beginning to enter the

WY-TOPP testing window. While both Newcastle Elementary School and Newcastle High School have been designated as “partially meeting expectations” by the Wyoming Department of

Education after last year’s tests, but all three of the district’s schools have worked to address areas of concern in between testing windows.

Last year’s results

As previously reported, according to information provided by Sonya Tysdal, the district’s curriculum director, two different grade levels saw a majority of their students performing below basic while

others saw significant declines in the percentage of those performing at a proficient or advanced level.

Last year, Newcastle’s fifth-grade students were ranked 38th out of 48 districts across

the state in math, with 40.35% of the students performing at a proficient or advanced level, down 6.71% from the previous year’s scores.

— See **Testing**, Page 6

School expels student for gun incident

Alexis Barker
NLJ News Editor

The student who brought a gun to school on March 15, leading to lock-downs at both Newcastle High School and Newcastle Middle School, has been expelled for one year. The Weston County School District No. 1 board of trustees voted in favor of the expulsion following a brief executive session on March 29.

Before the vote, Chairman John Riesland addressed a room full of people.

“Before we get started, I know some of you might

— See **Student**, Page 2

Administrator out, planner in Council changes job description in search of help

Alexis Barker
NLJ News Editor

To avoid confusion with state statutes regarding city administrators, the Newcastle City Council voted to change the advertised position from city administrator to city planner during its regular meeting on April 3.

The council voted on Feb. 21 to begin advertising for a city administrator, whose top priority would be grant writing, as a way for the city to tackle important infrastructure needs.

As previously reported in the August 2022 story “City will no longer have an engineer,” the council decided to not hire an engineer to replace outgoing Mike Moore, who retired Aug. 15. Instead, the city elected to hire someone to help fund projects. It would then use an outside engineer when needed.

— See **Planner**, Page 2

Why do our teachers leave?

Alexis Barker
NLJ News Editor

The Weston County School District No. 1 board of trustees wants to use exit interviews or surveys to better determine why teachers and other staff members leave the district. The hope is to use the information to learn what the district can do to better retain quality employees.

Over the past two months, the board has accepted the resignations of fourth grade teachers Stacey Jones and Laura Giesler, Newcastle High School science instructor Jim Stith and Newcastle High School special education teacher Travis Unterseher. Another 12 employees are retiring at the end of this school year.

According to the district’s executive secretary, Celo Dickey, the district has so far accepted 16 resignations or retirements, including both classified and certified staff, for the upcoming school year. She reported that

— See **Teachers**, Page 6

Road rage



Photo by Amy Meneroy/NLJ

Recent snowfall is fast melting, and sunny, warm temperatures mean spring is finally in the air. At first glance they may look as though they are embracing, but these gobblers were actually battling for the love of another on a sunny afternoon as they strut their stuff for females of the flock, causing a slight traffic jam in Custer Highlands on Monday.

Letting the Spirit take control

Walter Sprague
Art and Culture Reporter

“After 61 years, I’m still trying to figure out the English culture,” the Rev. Calvin Hill said. “It’s very different than the Navajo.”

The full-blooded Navajo embraces his native culture while at the same time adopting the culture around him. To Hill, the blend is part of what makes him both unusual and yet accessible to others. The new pastor of First United Methodist Church of Newcastle said he realizes that he may shock people when they first meet him. But it usually doesn’t last long.

“Sometimes, there is a surprise on people’s faces when they first meet me,” he chuckled. “Especially since Calvin Hill is such a normal English name. Sometimes they can’t help it. But it’s OK. I understand the looks I first get.”

Although his hair is cut short on the sides, Hill dons a spiky style on the top of his head. But the braids that hang down to his waist can really take some people aback on first meeting him.

“It’s pretty obvious,” he states, “That I’m typical to most Americans.”

Hill was born in Los Angeles, but his family moved to Ganado, Arizona, when he was only 2 months old. Today, Ganado is still almost 90% Native American, according to Wikipedia. But Hill

wasn’t only raised as a Navajo. He was also taught to have a deep respect and love for America. His father was a code talker for the United States Marine Corps. Especially during World War II, the code talkers were vital to the efforts of the Marines on the Pacific front for transmitting information quickly, and it was essential that the enemy could not break the code. The complex nature and the unfamiliarity of the Navajo language made it perfect for the code to be built on. That service by his family has created a deep sense of patriotism and the importance of what America was and still is. Hill is proud of that side of his heritage, he said. Yet the family never forgot their Navajo culture.

Hill even participates in traditional tribal celebrations and dances in the Navajo Nation, dressed in traditional tribal garb with a twist. His gowns have symbols of his Christian faith emblazoned on them. And he also can speak Navajo and several other languages, including Hopi, Zumi and Ojibwe (Chippewa). His wife, Sheri Ann, is full-blooded Ojibwe.

“We are very happy to be here,” Sheri Ann said, “It’s different. But we have met a lot of really nice people. The support we’ve been given is great.”

She also says that the beauty of

— See **Hill**, Page 8



Photo by Walter Sprague/NLJ

Rev. Calvin Hill, the new pastor of First United Methodist Church of Newcastle, poses for a photo next to the hot dog at the Antlers Hotel on March 23.

WEATHER FORECAST

Thursday
Cloudy
Hi 63, Lo 34



Friday
Cloudy
Hi 46, Lo 27



Saturday
Partly Cloudy
Hi 53, Lo 30



Sunday
Sunny
Hi 64, Lo 38



Monday
Partly Cloudy
Hi 70, Lo 38



Tuesday
Partly Cloudy
Hi 69, Lo 40



Wednesday
Showers
Hi 58, Lo 39



INSIDE

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HELP US GET MORE INVOLVED IN THE COMMUNITY WITH YOUR IDEAS!



We recognize there may be opportunities to contribute we haven't identified, and we're asking for your help with this, Weston County!

We will share submissions and select **TWO WINNERS** to receive: **\$100** GROCERY OR GAS GIFT CARD & **\$500** DONATION IN YOUR NAME TO A LOCAL ORGANIZATION OF YOUR CHOICE!

Complete the form in our branch or online by **SATURDAY, APRIL 15th**, to collaborate with us AND for a **CHANCE TO WIN!** Winners will be announced May 1st.



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A Friday for good

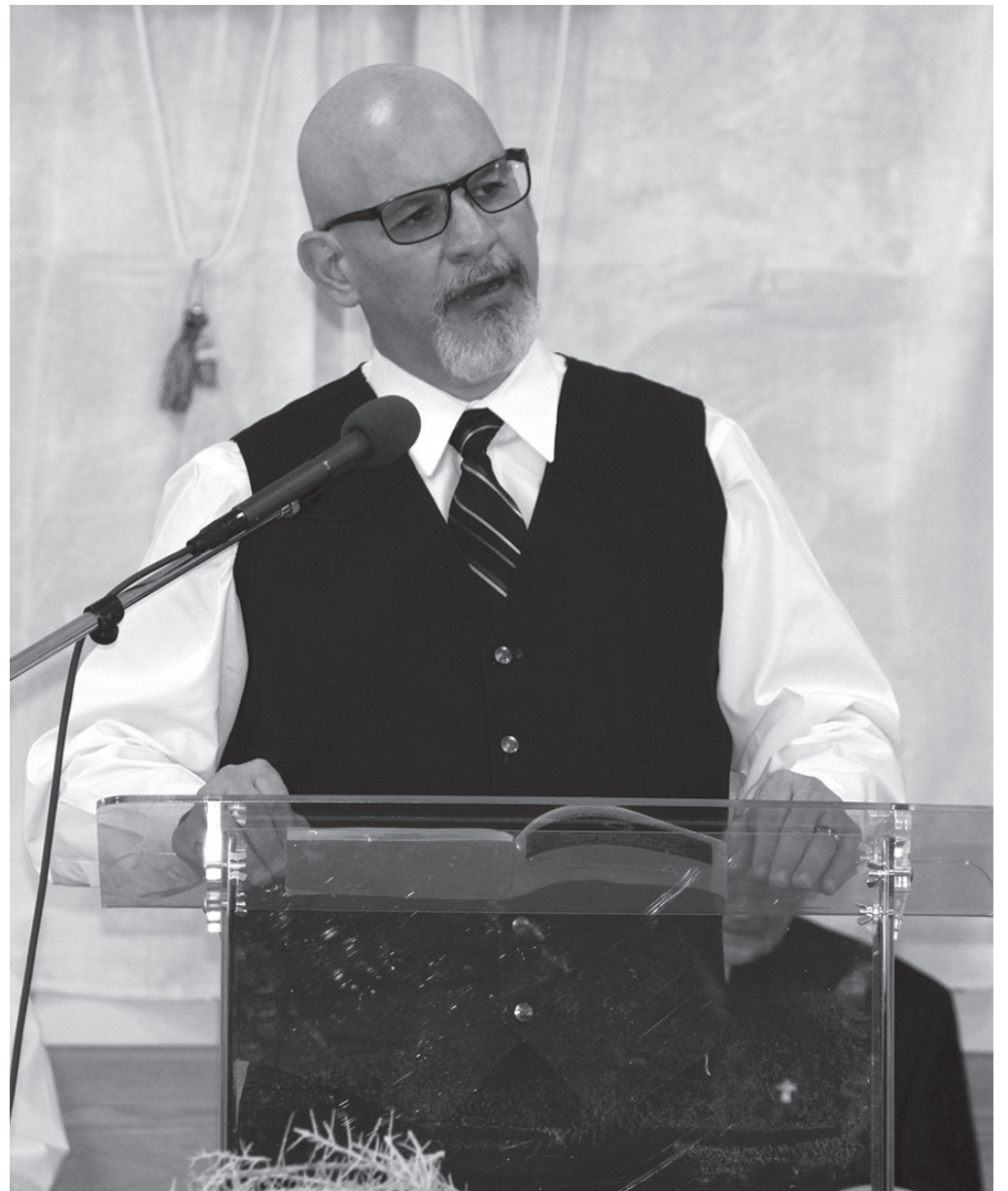


Photo by Walter Sprague/NLJ

First Baptist Church of Newcastle hosted the annual Ministerial Association Good Friday Service on Friday, April 7. The well-attended service had scripture readings, responsive readings, hymn singing, and a couple music specials. There was an offering taken for BREAD (the local food bank) as well, and \$695.75 was raised by the generous congregation. Pictured, First Baptist Church pastor Ben Roberts reads Luke 23:39-43 during the service.

LIVE AUCTION

BAR DIAMOND X RANCH (SCOTT & HILDA HRADECKY)

SATURDAY, MAY 6TH @ 9:27 A.M.

204 KENWOOD DR. NEWCASTLE, WY. 82701

DIRECTIONS & AUCTIONEERS NOTE: In Newcastle, take Business Loop to Weston County Fairgrounds and turn South on Fairgrounds Rd., follow road 1 mile (road will gradually turn to right) to stop sign, auction will be located at the intersection on Kenwood Dr., watch for signs!!! Scott & Hilda have decided to liquidate everything including the property, everything will go, so come by Friday for an early preview of the auction and check out some great items up for sale or if your looking for a great horse property close to town, the property will soon be listed as well!!!

Skid Steer • Stock Trailer • Livestock Scale
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700 Arapahoe Ave,
Gillette, WY 82718
Auctioneer: Justin Biesheuvel

Council rejects land donation

Alexis Barker
NLJ News Editor

Following a 50 minute-long executive session on March 6, the Newcastle City Council let a motion to accept a land donation by an anonymous donor die. Before the motion failed, the council discussed the city's ability to upkeep the land.

"The individual wanting to donate the property wished to remain anonymous to the public for the donation, therefore this was done in executive session," City Clerk-Treasurer Stacy Haggerty later told the News Letter Journal. "The purpose of the donation was for green space. The council discussed the want and ability to maintain such a space, therefore they decided not to accept the donation."

Planner

from Page 1.....

During the April 3 meeting, Mayor Pam Gualtieri said that there had been questions regarding the city administrator position.

Councilman Don Steveson explained that a state statute described city administrators as "administration of all duties."

"We wanted department heads to manage their departments," Steveson said, noting that the person hired would be expected to assist when needed and to find grants and funding for the city.

City Clerk-Treasurer Stacy Haggerty added that she had found the reference to different forms of city government in state statute, including a city administrator form of government.

According to a handbook for municipal elected officials regarding forms of government in Wyoming, the city manager form of government uses a "chief administrator," who is employed by the governing body to handle the city's or town's administrative affairs. It notes that this form is adopted because many of the tasks involved in handling the affairs of a municipality call for special training and skills and because demands have risen for professionally trained experts to take over these duties.

"The elective officers of a city or town adopting the city manager form of government are council members elected as provided by law," the guide says.

City Attorney Dublin Hughes explained to the council that the problem with using city administrator as a job title is that people might not understand the intention of the position because of the correlation with the city manager form of

CITY BEATS

Notes from the April 3, 2023, meeting of the Newcastle City Council

The council approved the requested electrical license for Nextec/Ace Electrical Services.

Seasonal sewer forgiveness for the Anna Miller Museum was approved by the council.

Mayor Pam Gualtieri read a proclamation proclaiming April as Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month. She also read proclamations proclaiming April 24 as Arbor Day in the city of Newcastle and the week of April 9-15 as National Public Safety Telecommunications Week.

Gualtieri reported that she had been contacted by a county resident regarding changing the city ordinance referencing providing services to residents outside of city limits. The consensus of the council was that no changes would be made and that the city would continue to limit services, including garbage, water and sewer, to residents inside city limits.

government. Because of this, he said, it would be better to have a different title for the newly created position, although having a city administrator is totally different from a city manager in that specific form of municipal government.

The council voted to change the job title from city administrator to city planner. At this time, a detailed job description for the position has not been approved by the council.

Student

from Page 1.....

be here to talk about what took place on March 15 at the school," he said. "At this meeting, we cannot discuss that because it is an ongoing investigation."

He noted that any concerns, questions, solutions or anything else should be directed to the Newcastle Police Department or Weston County Sheriff's Office.

Riesland assured those in attendance that "down the road" the board would be discussing school security.

"We will have those conversations, as of tonight, we cannot do that," he said.

Riesland explained that the board had to remain as impartial as possible so the board could effectively perform its duty as jury in the expulsion hearing for the student.

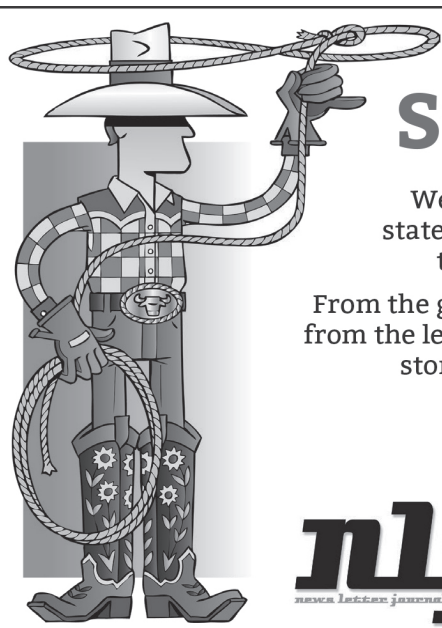
"We don't want to have too many facts or too many non-facts or whatever is out there to influence our votes," he said. "Just so you know, we won't discuss that tonight."

Riesland also touched on criticism of the school's communication with parents and the community during the incident, stating that he was told that parents had received

information from other parents and friends before the school's provided any. He explained that the administrators, police department, sheriff's department and staff were "pretty busy" addressing the situation.

"Until we had some facts, nothing was put out," Riesland said, noting that as soon as information was available, it was released through proper channels.

"Everyone walked out of the school, it doesn't get any better than that," he said. "We need to be very inspired by that. Thank God for that result."



Statewide News

We've lassoed the news from around the great state of Wyoming and are bringing the best stories to you on our News Letter Journal website.

From the grizzlies in Yellowstone to the latest from the legislature in Cheyenne—we have the stories you want to know about.

Look for "The Cowboy State Tidbit", a piece of Wyoming history, daily on the News Letter Journal FaceBook page.



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Please contact us by calling 307-746-2777, via email at editor@newslj.com, or stop by our office at 14 W. Main St. in Newcastle



nlj IDEAS

Reading the fine print out loud

Community members and County Commissioners have rightfully had a lot of questions regarding the “geofencing” used to track the economic impact of local events.

At face value, the visitors center plan is data tracking of the futuristic, Orwellian variety that raises hairs almost as high as it does suspicions. Here’s the short of it: State grant dollars will be used to pay a Utah company to track spending in Campbell County at the National High School Finals Rodeo this summer.

This will be done via two geofences: one around Camp-plex and another around the entire county. The geofence is an invisible barrier that tracks visitor behavior, not in the good-or-bad sense of “behavior,” but in the consumer science sense of it.

Crossing the invisible fence lines will ping credit cards, debit cards and cellphones, collecting information about the money spent, whether the spender is local and where the spender traveled while in town.

Apparently, the data will tell that story without identifying individuals. Whether you trust the latter point is up to you, and more than fair to question.

However you define privacy, this plan feels like an invasion of it. But as invasive as it seems, it’s no different than the invasiveness all of us who use a credit card or carry a cellphone are subjected to every day.

Our visitors — and us — will become anonymous dots tracked around town, just like we have been for years, and just like we

consent to every time we hit “accept” on terms of agreement without reading them.

When a few locals pushed back against the geofences this week, their claims of spying and questions of constitutionality, with some exceptions, were fair. A commissioner and a handful of residents — who are not representative

of the community as a whole — compared the geofencing plan to communism. Bill Fortner, a former state representative, compared the data collecting to “Chinese propaganda.”

That all prompts an interesting corollary.

Because when our own federal government (publicly) made the major leap toward allowing this type of tracking and data gathering, it was branded “The Patriot Act.”

That law was approved shortly after 9/11 ostensibly to help catch terrorists, and while it may have helped that cause, it also broadened government access to otherwise private information of U.S. citizens without probable cause.

So, is it patriotic or a foreign adversary’s tool for communism?

Others can debate whether it’s patriotic, a communist ploy or neither, but you can imagine those within the invisible fences of China making the same claims of our own government’s tracking, while laughing at our own government’s attempts to market it as an act of patriotism.

What our local government is doing is not a government sales job. The data it’s paying for is information that is already being

tracked by private credit card and cellphone companies. It’s also information that the people being tracked (i.e. all of us) on some level consented to.

The information we pump out to private companies steadily throughout the day is bought and sold on the open market regularly, often with much worse intent.

The visitors center openly shared this information with commissioners and the public. Telling the public about the data tracking was the right thing to do and officials in our community did it.

When you get government transparency, don’t expect it to be pretty. To save yourself some headaches, don’t expect it to always make sense either.

Just as importantly: don’t mischaracterize what it is. Campbell County is many things, and as ridiculous as it is to put a fine point on it, a communist party is not one of them.

In this case, our local government is doing what’s already being done in other Wyoming communities, with the hope that some good will come of it. More traditional economic impact studies may not be as invasive, but they’re expensive, presumptuous and their accuracy can be dubious.

If taking a peek at invasive data points that are already being collected will give us more reliable measurements of how much money events like national rodeos and next summer’s Camporee bring in, then maybe the right answer is to begrudgingly accept it.

The same way we’ve accepted it on many cell phone screens before, without reading the fine print. Now that it’s being read aloud, can we really act surprised at what it says, and what we’ve agreed to?

Guest Editorial

Gillette News Record
Jake Goodrick
April 8, 2023

POLL of the WEEK

QUESTION:
Would you start a business in Weston County right now?

- No
 Yes

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

RESULTS:
Are our schools safe?

- Yes 70% (16 votes)
 No 30% (7 votes)

Deadline for Letters to the Editor is noon on Friday

We love hearing your opinion! Send your letters to the editor to editor@newsj.com. Please note, all letters must include name and contact information for verification. Sometimes we receive great letters, but we need to verify your identity. For more information, call (307) 746-2777.

News Letter Journal:
WPA and NNA
Award Winner

WHO



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Photographer: Tyler Sage

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.

WHERE

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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

All moms are special - here is a story about mine

Living during the Great Depression of the 1930s was a difficult time for just about everybody. Some had it worse than others.

My mom, little Betty Brockmeyer, had it tough. She had an unimaginable difficult childhood — and yet in all my memories of her as our mother, she always maintained a sunny disposition.

Her childhood was a story of courage and resilience.

She was the daughter of deaf-mute parents who struggled during those depression years. From the time she was seven until she was 16, she had to serve as their speaker when her parents needed something. Life was hard for everyone during those days but folks with disabilities especially had it hard.

If you saw the movie CODA about a child living with deaf-mute parents (2022 Best Picture Oscar winner) then you know a little about my mom’s life.

Later she met my dad during World War II, they got married,

and started their family.

Her life story ended July 15, 2020 when she died from ramifications of the COVID epidemic. Her birthday is coming up later this month on April 16. She would have been 99 this year. Our family celebrated her life at a funeral in northeast Iowa in June last summer.

As the second oldest of her 11 children, it is easy for me to remember the tastes and smells of our home growing up in our big house in a tiny town.

How tiny was our town? Our town of Wadena was so small both “resume speed” signs were on the same post — just on opposite sides. It was so small we did not have ten commandments — we had six commandments and four suggestions. Just kidding. But I digress.

The smell of babies, both good smells and not so good smells, permeated our home. Mom was a great cook and specialized in making homemade bread. With such a big family, the house was full of the smells of cooking all the time.

She was an expert in baking

bread. To this day, most breads are irresistible to me. My mom was of German descent so we always enjoyed the smells of goulash, stuffed peppers, porcupine meatballs, and other casserole dishes. My dad was Irish so we had shepherd’s pie, corned beef cabbage, and other various dishes.

After our dad died in 2000, she lived on her own until she was 92. We would visit my mom at her home in Lafayette, CO. She always made me salmon patties because I loved them growing up in a Catholic household that required fish on Fridays. A great personal memory.

My mom and dad moved to Lander in 1978 from Iowa and brought my three youngest brothers with them. Jerry, Ron, and Don graduated from Lander Valley High School and graduated from the University of Wyoming. Ron lives in Cheyenne where he heads the Wyoming Education Association. Another sibling, my sister Susan Kinneman, lives in Riverton and teaches at Wind River High School.

My parents left Wyoming and moved to the Denver area in 1991 so they could be more accessible to all my siblings.

The reason I am a journalist is because of my mom.

When I graduated from high school, my dad wanted me to help a friend of his run gas stations in a neighboring town. I had been very good at running my dad’s service stations.

But my mom saw me as a journalist after having been editor of the high school newspaper. She literally forced my dad to borrow \$300 to pay for my journalism short course at Iowa State University, which started me off on an ongoing 59-year career. Thanks mom, for seeing that in me and for fighting so hard for me.

Recently, the memory of a taste or smell from 70 years ago came wafting over me during a visit in Las Vegas. While tasting a Shepherd’s Pie dish at the famous Hennessy’s Pub on Fremont Street, I inhaled this wonderful concoction of hamburger, gravy, peas, and other seasonings. That gravy was identical to what my mom fed us for all those meals over potatoes, bread, toast, or whatever.

My dad also loved it and recalled it being served often during the war. He called it SOS (sh*t on a shingle) from his army days. I always loved

it, too.

So, sitting there in Las Vegas, those tastes and smells brought back childhood memories of my mom’s cooking as they cascaded over me from 70 years ago.

I sure miss her.

As I write this, one of our colleagues is mourning the loss of his mom, who died earlier this week.

I reached out to other members of the Cowboy State Daily staff to remind them these are the times to remember how much a phone call to your mom is appreciated. Be sure to ask her about her childhood. Talk to her about your memories of smells and tastes growing up.

So, all of you out there who still have your mothers — call her. She is going to love it.

I wish I could call mine.

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.

NEED TO TALK TO A PUBLIC SERVANT?



Weston County Commission Members’ contacts:

Ed Wagoner (Chairman)	746-2351
Garrett Borton	746-8618
Don Taylor	746-8582
Vera Huber	746-9122
Nathan Todd	468-2381
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Obituaries

RUTH ELEANOR (VOGEL) LISTON
April 26, 1928–March 30, 2023

Ruth Eleanor (Vogel) Liston, 94, passed away on March 30, 2023, at Weston County Hospital, Newcastle, Wyoming.

She was born on April 26, 1928, in Lincoln, Nebraska, to Charles and Alma (English) Vogel, and was raised on a homestead ranch south of Newcastle.

On May 16, 1950, she was united in holy matrimony to John L. Liston in Topeka, Kansas. He passed on June 26, 2006.

A Great Bend resident for 61 years prior to moving to Newcastle in 2011, Ruth worked for the USD 428 Central Kitchen for 11 years as well as a homemaker. She was a member of the Prince of Peace Parish at St. Rose in Great Bend, Altar Society, and Church of Corpus Christi in Newcastle. Ruth's life was her family and she cherished time with them.

Survivors include two sons, John C. Liston of Newcastle, and Matthew P. Liston (Kim) of Larned, Kansas; three daughters, Mary Ellen Liston of Reseda, California, Kathleen M. McGahee (Michael) of Woodstock, Georgia, and Patricia Neybert (Ken) of Ellijay, Georgia; seven grandchildren, Sean McGahee, Jennifer McGahee, Anna Wilbanks, Daniel Liston, Richard Liston, Sarah Betzen, and Patrick Liston; seven great-grandchildren; and daughter-in-law, Janet Liston-Polley.

She is preceded in death by her husband; a son, Kevin M. Liston; her parents; and son-in-law, Frank McDonald.

Visitation will take place from noon to 8 p.m. Monday, April 10, at Bryant Funeral Home, with an Altar Society Rosary at 4 p.m. and Vigil Service with Rosary at 7 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial took place at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, April 11, at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church with Father Prakash Kola presiding. Interment will follow at Great Bend Cemetery. Memorials have been designated to Prince of Peace Parish or Society of the Little Flower, in care of Bryant Funeral Home.

Condolences may be sent and notice viewed at bryantfh.net. Arrangements by Bryant Funeral Home, 1425 Patton Rd., Great Bend, Kansas 67530.



Ruth Liston

MIKE LOFING
May 30, 1935–April 1, 2023

Mike Lofing went home to be with the Lord Jesus Christ on April 1, 2023, after a brave battle with cancer. He was surrounded by the love of his wife and family.

Mike was born May 30, 1935, to Natalia (Dolly) and Coney Lofing in Laurel, Mont. He worked the family farm. As a young man he had many adventures across the country.

Mike enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1953, and proudly served his country

at the DMZ in Korea during the Korean War. He was awarded the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Service Medal, and the United Nations Service Medal. He was a true patriot who loved his country.

In 1976, he met the love of his life, Patricia Jane Mosbarger (Keen). They were married Sept. 4, 1977.

The two faced this life as an unstoppable team. They farmed (Montana), prospected for gold (California), and built many homes together (Wyoming and Texas).

In 1996 they moved to Newcastle, Wyoming, to be close to family. He loved being with people and could be found around town talking, smiling, telling stories and sharing the Gospel.

Mike started farming at the Marlin Geier Ranch in 1998 and loved to drive the John Deer swather.

Mike and Patsy were among the founding members of Gateway Fellowship Church.

Mike loved God's Word and read his Bible daily.

He loved his family and left a great legacy with his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Dolly and Coney Lofing; his brother, Martin; his sister, Pat; and his daughter, Pam Sommars.

He is survived by his wife, Patsy Lofing; sisters, Shirley and Violet; son, Delmar Keen;

daughter, Demah Belden; sons-in-law, Earl Belden and Larry Sommars; his grandsons, Jeff Kern (Chrisondra) and Timothy Keen; granddaughters, Tonia Ralls (Shawn), Heidi Espe (Brad), Temah Alleman (Thomas), Jamie Lambert (Kelly), Jessica Kern, Alisha Keen, Julie Widener

(Dax), Jamie Woodruff (John) and Jonna Irwin (Jeremy); 37 great-grandchildren including Anthony and Adam, Janaya, Lilly and Isaac, Shyanne and Shaydon, Ameilia and Natalia, Evelyn, Daphne, Zechariah, and Marjorie, and Krista, Kauner and Kern; as well as countless nieces, nephews, friends and neighbors.

A memorial service will be held at the Weston County Senior Center on April 12 at 2 p.m.

Mike Lofing was truly loved and will be missed, but we will see him soon in God's Glory!

WILLIAM MARTIN METZ
DEC. 5, 1955–MARCH 26, 2023

We are deeply saddened to announce that William Martin Metz passed away March 26, 2023, due to his long battle with cancer. He had his wife and daughter at his side.



William Metz

William "Bill" was born on Dec. 5, 1955 in Brooklyn, NY. He worked as a civilian for the Department of Defense for 30 years where he retired after working in the position of a Director of Material Command in Huntsville, Alabama. He began his Defense Department experience in 1985 working for the Air Force. He transferred to the Army Corps of Engineers in Fort Worth, then worked at Army Corps Headquarters in D.C. He then moved to Army headquarters in D.C. where he worked as assistant chief of Installation Management. Next he was administrative assistant to the Secretary of the Army. From 2006-2014 he was director of Mission Support for Operations and Logistics and Director of the Plans, Programs, and Resources Directorate at Army Materiel Command in Huntsville.

His education began with a bachelor's degree in anthropology from Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pa. He earned a master's degree in anthropology with an archaeology emphasis from Ball State University, in Muncie, Indiana.

Following these degrees he worked as a cultural resource archaeologist mostly in Wyoming, after a year of fieldwork in Mississippi. His master's thesis was on the history of the oil and gas industry in Wyoming. He next moved into a BLM state office archaeology position in Cheyenne, Wyoming, where he initiated the Wyoming BLM Native American reburial policy. Because the BLM position was temporary and lacked retirement benefits, Bill switched to working as a supervisory archaeologist at nearby Warren Air Force Base. He obtained funding to complete inventories of archaeological sites on the base landscape and assessments of historic buildings from the Fort D.A.

Russell era in order to prepare a cultural resource management plan for the base. Bill hired an historical architect for the buildings, and for the archaeology section of the plan he hired Alice Tratebas, whom he later married. His supervisor at Warren thought Bill had the makings of an effective Defense Department manager and provided him a range of trainings to expand his skill set. Additional duties broadened his experience to include management of natural resources at the base, such as a herd of rare white antelope, becoming a community planner, and handling contracting for the base. Eventually supervising

cleanup of hazardous waste spills was added to his duties. Having to wear a pager to respond to all hazardous waste events and exposure to toxins and carcinogens did not agree with Bill, and he moved to a job in Texas working on the NEPA process for base realignment and closure and subsequent Department of Defense jobs.

During his career in the Department of Defense, he earned a Master's Degree in National Security and Strategic Studies at the U.S. Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. Additional education included the Defense Leadership and Management Program (Executive Leadership Development) and Army Management Staff College, Fort Belvoir, Va., (Sustaining Base Leadership and Management Program). In his long military career, he was in charge of moving Army Materiel Command from Virginia to Huntsville, Alabama, wrote speeches for generals, testified before congress, and resolved numerous Defense issues in Washington, D.C., Huntsville, and other posts he filled.

Bill had long enjoyed fantasy books and films and played fantasy themed computer games. He beta-tested a number of computer games during their development.

He will be buried in his favorite state of Colorado that he has always been drawn to since a young age when he camped at Colorado River Ranch and enjoyed leading rafting expeditions and horseback riding.

After Bill retired, he and Alice bought land in Colorado and Bill oversaw the building of a retirement home that they had designed. Sometimes he regretted not becoming a full

— See Obituaries, Page 6

Happy Birthday to our Mom, Pat Adams!

Our wish for you is that you continue to live your life the way it should be, surrounded by loving family and friends.

Friends, please join us Saturday, April 15, from 3-4 p.m. at the Newcastle Country Club for cake and coffee.

WESTON COUNTY TRAVEL COMMISSION BUDGET MEETING

April 19, 2023 • 5:30 p.m.

Newcastle Lodge & Convention Center
Tubb Town Room, 22918 U.S. Hwy. 85, Newcastle
(meeting was rescheduled due to weather)

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Daily Devotional Reading

April 14 1 Kings 13-15	April 18 2 Kings 1-3
April 15 1 Kings 16-18	April 19 2 Kings 4-5
April 16 1 Kings 19-20	April 20 2 Kings 6-8
April 17 1 Kings 21-22	

Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society

- **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. christchurchnewcastle@gmail.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. Calvin Hill, 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

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ~ Hebrews 4:14

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25 Years Ago
April 16, 1998

County resident Jack Grieves complains about the condition of Grieves Road. Jack believes that the road carries more traffic and is in worse shape than any in Weston County. There seems to be agreement from all parties that the county road system is not up to par.

"It's sad, but I don't foresee any big changes coming. The county valuation slipped from \$120 million down to \$50 million. It's back up to about \$65 million now, but the county just can't compete with wages offered by mining companies," said County Commissioner Walt Soper.

An inspection conducted by the State Fire Marshal's office revealed problems with the wiring system at the community education building. The school district has three years to make the necessary improvements.

Craig Ausmann officially took over as postmaster of the Osage Post Office on February 28. He had been Officer in Charge (OIC) of the facility since November 22, essentially fulfilling the duties of a postmaster without the official title.

Newcastle High School Senior Tara Phillips was among the students who pumped iron to raise money for the school. Shiloh Cobb grimaces as he lifts weights during the recent Lift-A-Thon at the Newcastle High School weight room last Tuesday. The event was organized by Dan Olson and Darren Heslep to raise money for the weight room.

In time for Wyoming's celebration of Arbor Day on April 27, Newcastle has once again earned a Tree City USA designation by the National Arbor Day Foundation. This is the third year Newcastle has received the national recognition.

50 Years Ago
April 12, 1973

Colonel Jack P. Brubaker, Wyoming State Director of Selective Service, has announced the presentation of a Certificate of Appreciation to Virgil L. Thorpe, M.D., of Newcastle, in grateful recognition of the valuable service contributed to the nation and to the Selective Service System as Medical Advisor to Local Board



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

No. 23, Weston County.

Harry T. Thorson is "Mineral Man of the Year" in Wyoming. Thorson of Newcastle is a pioneer bentonite production and owner of Thorson Oil Company (TOCO) at Newcastle. Thorson was honored "for his cumulative contribution to community, state and industry."

Colleen Elizabeth Donelan of Newcastle High School has been chosen as the runner-up in Wyoming's 1973 Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow contest. Colleen will be awarded a \$500 educational grant.

On April 4, sixty-two Weston County sheep producers were mailed \$90,165.27 for incentive payment on their 1972 sales of shorn wool and unshorn lambs.

The annual Easter egg hunt for children of the Newcastle

area will be Saturday, Apr. 21. The scramble for eggs will start at 1 in the afternoon at Dow Park in West Newcastle.

Darlene Hansen, NHS sophomore, placed second in the senior botany division at the recent state science fair. Her project was "Which Detergent Phosphate or Non-Phosphate has the Worst Effect?"

New officers were elected at the annual meeting of the Newcastle Women's Bowling Association held last week. The banquet committee reported that the women will again have a joint banquet with the men this year, which will be held at the Flying V Cambria Inn.

100 Years Ago
April 12, 1923
Attorneys Diefenderfer &

Wakeman write the school board that their position in the case of District No. 7 vs. District No. 1 was completely vindicated by the decision of Judge Illsley, sustaining them in every particular in their demurrer to the petition of defendant for a writ of error coram habis to reopen the case for trial. — Upton Gazette

The foregoing is an evident attempt to convince the people generally that the School District No. 7 is entitled to a large sum of money from District No. 1. ...Under this decision, School District No. 7 has a judgment for approximately \$10,000, when it is not entitled to any money at all in excess of approximately \$100.

For the past few days oil has been appearing in the pipes at the Billy Creek Gasser, piped for use in the Billy Creek field south of Buffalo, in increasing quantities. In fact, it has been stopping up the pipes and has caused trouble in the heating plant.

Announcement of the marriage at Los Angeles, California, March 5, 1923, of Glenn Nichols, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. A.M. Nichols of Newcastle, to Miss Virginia Dell Hill of that city will come as a good deal of surprise to Glenn's many friends in Newcastle.

Last Monday morning at 7:10 occurred the tragic death of Thomas Miller, a resident of this city. The fatal accident occurred at 6th street crossing where Miller was struck by an east bound passenger train.

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From the vault ...

Photo Courtesy of WC Historical Society

This is the general store and hotel, possibly in Osage, date unknown.

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@newsli.com for inclusion in the News Letter Journal's weekly What's Up Calendar, sponsored by Pinnacle Bank.

Day	Time	Event	Location
Thurs. April 13	7AM	T.O.P.S. #218	WC Senior Center
	9AM	T.O.P.S. #218	First Baptist Church
	1PM	Bridge/Crafts	WC Senior Center
	6PM	VFW Auxiliary Mtg	Newcastle Lodge
	7PM	Alcoholics Anonymous	WC Senior Center
Fri. April 14	9AM	Caramel Rolls	WC Senior Center
	1PM	Bridge	WC Senior Center
	6PM	BINGO	VFW Hall
Sat. April 15	3-4PM	Pat Adams Birthday	Newcastle Country Club
Sun. April 16	2PM	Oral History — Mick Bohn Lightning Strike Survivor	WC Senior Center
Mon. April 17	9AM	Exercise Class	WC Senior Center
	1PM	Computer Clinic	WC Senior Center
	6PM	WC Children's Ctr Dir Mtg	WC Children's Center
	7PM	Newcastle City Council Mtg	City Council Chambers
	7PM	Alcoholics Anonymous	WC Senior Center
Mon. April 17-21		Well Water Testing-p/u kits	WC DNRC Office
Tues. April 18	9-11AM	WC Commissioners Mtg	WC Courthouse
	11AM	Story Time	WC Library
	NOON	WC Cowbells	WC Senior Center
	1PM	Bridge/Dominoes	WC Senior Center
	4PM	T.O.P.S. #218	First United Methodist
	6PM	WC Republican Party Mtg	WC Senior Center
	6PM	Helping Hands Found Board Mtg	WC Senior Center
	6-7PM	Legion Riders Mtg	Forestry Dept
	Wed. April 19	6:30-8:30AM	Wellness Wednesday
7-9AM		Wellness Wednesday	Upton Medical Clinic
9AM		WC Senior Svcs Board Mtg	WC Senior Center
9AM		Exercise Class	WC Senior Center
9AM		Toe Nail Clinic	WC Senior Center
10AM		Cribbage	WC Senior Center
Noon		Lions Club Mtg	WC Senior Center
5:30PM		WC Travel Comm Budget Mtg	Newcastle Lodge
6-7PM	Trap Shoot	Shotgun Range	

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Teachers from Page 1.....

the number of resignations and retirements for both classified and certified staff has ranged between 11 and 16 since 2020: 16 for the 2020-21 school year, 15 for the 2021-22 school year and 11 for the 2022-23 school year. The district employs 166 people, 88 of whom are certified and 78, uncertified.

In addition to accepting the resignations or retirements of 16 individuals, the board voted on March 29 to terminate one classified employee. According to Superintendent Brad LaCroix, the terminated employee was Martha Bickford, a bus driver for the district. No explanation was given for the dismissal.

Newcastle isn't the only district struggling with teachers, LaCroix told the News Letter Journal. He said that there are currently 52 district openings in the state listed on the Wyoming School Board Association's job listing webpage.

"It is not just a district issue," LaCroix said, noting that the district has so far been able to replace the employees who are leaving the district for various reasons through transfers and new hires. "If we are unable to replace those people, then we have an issue."

In fact, the only position that has not been filled at this point is the result of the school board

declining a recommended applicant to fill the vacancy.

"The only position we have not been able to successfully fill was not because of the admin team," LaCroix said. "Bryce (Hoffman, Newcastle High School principal) recommended a math teacher, but the board chose not to take it."

He added that there is currently a math teacher shortage statewide.

Although the resignations and retirements to date for next year are comparable to those in recent years, the trustees still hope to visit with outgoing staff who are willing to provide reasons for their

leaving to administration and board members.

"There will be some people that don't want to do it. It could be a valuable tool. We could learn what we could do better," trustee Dana Mann-Tavegia said at the board's March 29 meeting.

Trustee Paul Bau suggested that the board give departing staff options for providing the information the district wants, such as an interview, a survey or an email.

"I think any time you can get information on why someone is leaving or transferring – what makes them comfortable – that is what we should be after,"

he said. "What will get us the honest feedback is what we need to do."

None of the other trustees objected to giving departing staff options suggested by Bau, trustee Tina Chick did state that she was not comfortable with only one person conducting the exit interview.

"My thinking is ..., someone might hear something different than what you hear. It is pretty easy to put a twist on something," Chick said. "I am not comfortable with that."

Chick said she favored the creation of an interviewing group rather than entrusting the task to a single person.

In addition to the lengthy discussion about departing staff members, the board also approved contracts for next year for 17 continuing contract teachers and non-tenured certified staff. According to LaCroix, the reason for the gap in approval is due to the requirement to notify these staff members of their contract renewal before April 15 or their contract is continued.

Those contract renewals are in addition to contracts for next year that have already been approved for the district's administrators.

Approval for directors and hourly staff are still pending.

Testing from Page 1.....

In reading, the fifth-grade class ranked 36th in the state, with 49.12 students performing at the proficient or advanced level, a 5.98% increase from the previous year.

Tenth-grade students in the district ranked 33rd in math, with only 36.21% of students scoring proficient or advanced, despite a 12.02% increase in performance from the year before.

In reading, the students were ranked 40th in the state, with 41.38% of students categorized as proficient or advanced, down 10.23% from the previous year.

Ninth-grade students at Newcastle High School experienced declines in both math and reading, with 42.11% (29th in the state) of students proficient or advanced in math and 49.12% (33rd in the state) of students ranked as proficient or advanced in reading. These percentages represent a 19.29% and 26.32% decline, respectively.

Other areas of decline in local scores were seen in fourth grade. According to the report, 54.41% of students performed at a proficient or advanced level in math, a 22.41% decrease from the previous year. The grade ranked 26th in the state.

Also seeing a decline in performance levels was the eighth-grade class. While 52.73% (22nd in the state) of the students performed proficient or advanced in math, that was 11.98% lower than the previous year.

Test Prep

At the high school, Principal Bryce Hoffman said the school worked on targeting math and English language arts. Both of these areas required improvement plans after last year's WY-TOPP testing.

"To target students in math, we took the students who struggled in math before and placed them into an ER group to work on standards that our students did not perform well on previously and on the WY-TOPP interim. Another strategy to target this area was to review geometry standards with sophomore students who are in Algebra II," Hoffman said. "The sophomore test is a geometry test,

and so these students have not been exposed to those standards for a year. So this review was designed to refresh some of those skills that they may be rusty on."

As far as English is concerned, Hoffman said that the students in ninth grade were placed in a class to work on skills in which they have shown deficiency on past state and local testing. He noted that teacher judgment was also a factor in deciding student placement.

At the junior level, students worked on preparation for the ACT (college testing program), as well as focusing more in both English and science.

At the elementary school, Principal Brandy Holmes reported that the school specifically targeted math. As part of its improvement plan, the school had two specific goals addressing math, both of which focused on building and implementing a more consistent program across all grade levels.

"Using the Bridges Math program, all grade levels have committed to implementing key components with fidelity. We have also utilized assessment data to target interventions more systemically," she said. "Grades three through five have utilized WY-TOPP modules throughout the year to help practice and monitor progress. This also gives an opportunity for individual goal setting."

Despite not having to create a school improvement plan, Newcastle Middle School Principal Tyler Bartlett said that teachers at the school have spent a lot of time throughout the year looking at how they can "take things up a notch."

"We challenged ourselves to continue to improve on areas of strength, while also addressing any perceived concerns. Every year is a new experience for our students with new teachers, new standards, etc.," Bartlett said. "We're continually evaluating how we're doing throughout the year with assessments besides WY-TOPP to try to ensure students are getting what they need."

To accomplish these goals, he said, the school continues to use the Power

“The challenge is not to just continue to evaluate what we're doing as teachers, but also continue to find ways to motivate students to give their best on a test that doesn't really impact them in any meaningful way,” he said. And while Bartlett has openly expressed his dislike for standardized testing, he explained that it is another piece of evidence that can be used to analyze a student's learning and growth. "It gives us more data to reflect on as educators," he said. Hoffman had similar sentiment on the test, stating that it can provide positive insight into the areas where a student may be struggling. "Our hope is that the data is accurate to give us another set of measurements for students to better understand their struggles and academic needs," he said. "WY-TOPP is another data point we can use to reflect upon individual performance as well as our programming as a whole. When compared to information we already have, it helps us to pinpoint areas that are going well and areas needing more focus," Holmes added. It is important to remember that it is one test, on one day, Hoffman said. "When considering student performance, I would like us to look at the student as a whole throughout the school year. Measurement over time is a better indicator of their understanding of the content and their growth," he said. "Students in general seem to carry more stress over the ACT test than the WY-TOPP. The ACT can be linked to college admissions and scholarships." Holmes said that while it is frustrating that the scores don't reflect the hard work and growth that the staff sees in students, it is only one piece of data from one particular day. "We know that we need to look at the whole picture. This is an opportunity for reflection and growth, which is never a bad thing," she said. Bartlett noted that he doesn't think students and staff at the middle school are feeling the stress necessarily. "Sure, our teachers want our stu-

— Tyler Bartlett, Newcastle Middle School Principal

Hour intervention period. This time provides opportunities for students to receive extra help in literacy and math.

"This is entirely based on individual student need, and groups are built according to all sorts of evidence, including classroom assignments, teacher judgment, district common assessments, progress monitoring tests like Acadience and WY-TOPP tests," Bartlett said. "Teachers are continuously evaluating their curriculum road maps and working to fine-tune what we're doing based on all evidence we're seeing with our students."

Why test

With all of that in mind, he said, each year is unique and while last year's scores were positive at the middle school, this year may be completely different.

Obituaries from Page 4.....

time rafter as a career. He wrote the following passage to begin an unfinished story:

"Chapter 1 – Flowing Water
I learned much of my philosophy from the river. Everything from my sense of time, ability to react to crisis, working with people, even management and logistics. But maybe most importantly, how to listen."

He will be dearly missed by his wife, Alice; daughter, Lacey; and granddaughter, Mekiya.

He was predeceased by his parents, William and Anna May Metz; his in-laws, Edmund and Gladys Tratebas; and his aunts and uncles, Dorothy, Fred, Sunny, Heinz, Martin, and Yusef.

His memory will live on in his siblings, Robert (Annie), Ann (Adriana), Tim, Eric, Dan (Leighann), Mark (Ruth), Debbie, Kerri, and Anthony; his aunts, Laura and Dorothy; his nieces and nephews, Veronica, Jennifer, Samantha, Jonathan, Christopher, Ashley, Melanie, Alexandra, Jillian, Rebekah, Jayme, William, Joshua, Renzo, and Dante; as well as his cousins.

RUSSELL RAINBOLT

Sept. 11, 1974–March 31, 2023

Russell Rainbolt passed away at his home on March 31, 2023.

He was born Sept. 11, 1974, to William D. and Connie (Hobbs) Rainbolt in Roosevelt, Utah.

Russell was educated in Williston, North

Dakota, and Upton, Wyoming, and graduated from Upton High School in 1993. He met the love of his life, Amie Flattum, in July 1994 and they were united in marriage on July 17, 1998.

Russell was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, William and Florence Rainbolt; maternal grandfather, Delbert Hobbs; grandparents, Jack and Letha Webster; three uncles, Jim Rainbolt, Tom Rainbolt, and Benny Hobbs.

He is survived by his wife, Amie of Newcastle; children, Dominic (Kennedy) of

Rock Springs, Wyoming, Courtney (Nick) Tuohoski, Westminster, Colorado, and Brittney of Newcastle; sister, Sonya Rainbolt of Sundance; parents, William and Connie Rainbolt of Upton; mother-in-law, Susan Orsborn of Newcastle; and many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends.

Russell had a great love of family. He loved the outdoors of Wyoming and the Black Hills, hunting, fishing, and long rides in the great outdoors on his Harley.

No services are planned at this time.

Friends may sign his online guestbook and leave written condolences for the family at blackhillsfuneralhome.com.



Russell Rainbolt



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Grade-schoolers, above, take off to grab as many Easter eggs as they can after being given the go-ahead. Many of the children use Easter baskets to gather eggs, but for others, at right, only large bags will do. At left, even adults got in on the fun. Here, Nathan Williamson grabs for another egg on the ground.

Photos by Walter Sprague/NLJ

Everyone gets in on the hunt

The Newcastle Community Egg Hunt was held at Newcastle Country Club on Saturday, April 8. The hunt was split into five age groups, ranging from under 2 years and younger to high school and adults. Each group also had a drawing for a male and female bike to be given away. A couple hundred people came to the event.



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Hill

from Page 1

Newcastle and the surrounding area is wonderful.

"Every place we've served has been great in its own way, but most of the time, it has been in really big cities," she continued.

Since the early 1990s, the Hills have served in cities such as Grand Rapids, Michigan; Chicago; Portage, Indiana; and Evanston, Illinois. All of them have been what Hill calls "English" churches. Sometimes he has felt that his Navajo influences were unaccepted by some people. Still, he has been blessed by good churches and people. Hill said Newcastle is much smaller than most places he's served as pastor. He thinks that helps to feel better connected quickly with his congregation. He likes that. And while

there is still some surprise with some people when they first meet him, it isn't anything upsetting or insulting. He actually finds it a bit humorous. And with Newcastle, things also feel different.

"This felt like home very fast," he said, "Newcastle was praying, and God called us here. The response, especially after they heard me speak, is as if it is an answer to a longing they've had for some time."

The couple has what Hill described as a similar vision to what Samuel had in the Bible when he was called. They believe it is a divine choice that has brought them to the community. After a couple of prompts by the Holy Spirit, it became clear that it was, indeed, God calling them to Newcastle.

"I'm also the only full-blooded Navajo ordained in the United Methodist Churches," Hill said. "That can be something of a problem for some people."

He said that unique issues have come up in the past because of it. For instance, Hill was recently nominated

to be a bishop. But because of some cultural differences, some colleagues stood in the way and prevented that from coming to pass.

Other people don't have those prejudices. Lynda Russell, Newcastle resident and Methodist church organist, said it is great working with Hill.

"He explains a lot of what it is like in his Navajo life," Russell said, "And he always makes it interesting and connected with the subject of his sermons."

She also appreciates what he does with the children in the church.

"We used to have only two or three kids come to church. But this last Sunday, it has grown to 12 or 13 kids," Russell said.

"He also has a big booming singing voice and loves to sing," she continued, "He really encourages the people to sing out during the hymns. This last Maundy Thursday service, he asked for the congregation's favorite hymns, and we sang those. When we sang 'Victory in Jesus,' he told us it was the first hymn translated into the

Navajo language."

Russell also said that she likes his order of service. There are a few changes to the order that Ron Sample had (Sample served as interim pastor before Hill). But people seem to like the way he has it organized.

Hill's vision for the church is to get back to letting the Spirit of God take control of what goes on in the church. He said this drives how he feels God is leading him to serve.

"Today's church," he said, "seems to be more interested in the institution of the church than following the Holy Spirit. I don't want to do things that way. It's time the Spirit takes over again."

The Hills believe that it is by following the Spirit that they have been able to live a godly life while still keeping in touch with their Native American heritage and traditions. They are grateful for that. And they feel this is part of why they were called to serve in Newcastle. Hill said he looks forward to seeing the great things God has in store for the city.

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Sports

News Letter Journal

SPORTS SCHEDULE

NEWCASTLE HIGH SCHOOL

Track			
4/13/23	Belle Fourche HS	A	TBA
4/21/23	Douglas HS	A	TBA
4/28/23	Buffalo HS (Buffalo Twilight Invite)	A	TBA
5/5/23	Sundance HS	A	TBA

Ladies' Soccer			
4/13/23	Douglas HS	A	4PM
4/15/23	Rawlins HS	A	NOON
4/20/23	Torrington HS	A	4PM

Men's Soccer			
4/13/23	Douglas HS	A	4PM
4/15/23	Rawlins HS	A	NOON
4/20/23	Torrington HS	A	4PM

High School Rodeo			
All dates tentative/subject to change			
4/21-23/23	Rock Springs: Cutting/RCH TBD;		
	JH - Fri; HS- Sat & Sun	A	
4/28-30/23	Big Piney: Cutting/RCH TBD;		
	JH- Fri; HS Sat & Sun	A	

Rounding the bend



Photo courtesy of Jan Farella

Kaylee Lambert prepares to make a run to the finish after completing the poles on April 2 during the first in the Jackson Youth Rodeo Series, in the Four Seasons Arena at Weston County Fairground. See more photos on Page 14.

Players play on

Life expectancy in the U.S. is 79 years, and life expectancy for playing competitive sports is just a minute fraction of those years.

So, how cool is it to get the opportunity to play sports beyond high school? For most athletes, their four years of playing competitive sports in high school is about all they can expect, but for some the chance to play on is gifted to them if they are talented and work hard.

When you attend a small high school, if you want to play you're going to get to play. You may not be a starter, but you will get a uniform and have a chance to be a part of the team, which is awesome.

The drawback of playing for a team from a small school is that your chances to be noticed by college athletic recruiters aren't as good as they would be if you play for a larger high school.

However, lately Newcastle athletes have been blessed with the opportunity to extend their life

on the court or field by playing at the next level.

In just the last few months, three seniors have committed to playing either basketball or volleyball in

college next season, and there may be more deals in the works — and last year there were at least five who went on to play collegiate sports.

That's a pretty good percentage of athletes for Newcastle High School.

Now, the college experience for each of these players is certainly different than it was in high school.

Yes, there are open gyms that happen throughout the year, and



Sonja Karp
Karpe Dogie

— See Karpe, Page 14

Conzelman signs with Dickinson State

Sonja Karp
NLJ Sports Editor

Another Lady Dogie hoops player has committed to play at the next level. On March 28, MacKenzie Conzelman signed on the dotted line to play basketball for the Dickinson State Blue Hawks next season.

All roads seemed to lead to Dickinson for Conzelman. Both of her parents, Matt and Kim Conzelman, graduated from DSU, and head Lady Dogie basketball coach Chad Ostenson had formed a relationship with the Blue Hawks head coach Eric Nelson. Ostenson and Nelson began to talk about Conzelman at the end of last season.

"Knowing the Conzelmans' history with the school, it being both of their alma maters, I thought it would be a good fit for her," Ostenson stated. "I mentioned her to him when I was up there last season, and he watched some film of her shooting. I really like him as a coach and I think Mack will

— See Conzelman, Page 10



Photo by Sonja Karp/NLJ

MacKenzie Conzelman's family, high school basketball coach and college basketball coach were on hand to watch her sign to play for the Dickinson State Blue Hawks next year. Back row, from left: Joslyn Conzelman, Eric Nelson, Chad Ostenson. Front row: Drew Conzelman, Matt Conzelman, MacKenzie Conzelman, and Kim Conzelman.

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NLJ file photo

Newcastle High School senior Holden McConkey has been named to the North roster for the Shrine Bowl.

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McConkey to play in Shrine Bowl

Sonja Karp
NLJ Sports Editor

It's been since 2018 that Newcastle has had a football player named to the North roster for the Shrine Bowl, but the drought is over as senior Dogie running back/quarterback Holden McConkey got the call a few months ago to be a member of the best-of-the-best football team this summer.

The 50th annual Wyoming Shrine Bowl All-Star Football game will be played at the Harry Geldien Stadium at Kelly Walsh High School in Casper on June 10.

Big Horn head coach Kirk McLaughlin and his staff chose their roster from players in the northern part of the state using not only All-Conference and All-State lists, but also from their own experience with players.

"When you play a team, you see the playmakers, and I know that Holden stuck out in McLaughlin's mind," declared Dogie Head Coach Matt Conzelman. "We went down and watched the championship game, and he asked me if I brought Holden with me. He wanted to put him in a Big Horn uniform, so I know that he liked him as a player."

McConkey believes that the coach is interested in having him play in the running back position, one that he played

for three of his four years at Newcastle High School. However, he transitioned to the role of quarterback in 2022 due to the position being open.

"When coach McLaughlin called, he talked to me about where I'd play and he was thinking more running back," McConkey began. "But I'm also with Colson Coon from Sheridan, who is a two-time Gatorade Player of the Year award winner, who is also a running back/quarterback, so I may be going back and forth."

McConkey is not a surprise choice for the North team given he is a two-time All-Conference and one-time All-State selection — and as a player he is quick, slippery and moves very well with the ball.

There's more than just a game in store for the athletes selected to play in the Shrine Bowl, however. McConkey and crew will spend a week prior to the contest practicing, but they will also be involved in public relations activities, including a visit to the Shriners Children Hospital in Salt Lake City, Utah, where players will visit with the children there signing autographs and just spending time with them.

"All the guys that I've talked to after they've gone say that they enjoy all of it and love to go to the Shriners Hospital and talk to the kids and sign autographs," Conzelman said.

"It's also great for them to get to meet and get to know the other kids and then play with the best of the best, so I'm pretty happy that Holden will get to experience all of that."

McConkey stated that he is excited for the opportunity, and also that he would consider the option of playing at the post-secondary level if the chance presents itself.

"I have been undecided, really, about playing college football, and I didn't really start thinking about it until my senior year," he admitted. "I don't know where I want to go, but I'm leaning toward [University of Wyoming] because I have qualified for several scholarships there, and with so many UW players in the transfer portal, who knows."

College scouts do attend the Shrine Bowl, where the best players in the state are gathered and competing, so if not UW, perhaps another school will see all that McConkey could bring to their team.

"As good as he is on the football field, his character matches that 100%, so it's pretty awesome for him," Conzelman said. "College scouts will be on hand. I don't know if he's made any decisions on if he's going to play next year, but I think any team would be crazy not to want him on their roster."

Conzelman from Page 9

really like it up there."

Once Ostenson set the plan in motion, Conzelman did the rest to get herself a place to play next year.

"Chad asked me if I wanted to go to Dickinson since my parents did, and it was definitely on my radar," MacKenzie said. "But, I kind of wanted to go some place that was warm, and it's freezing there."

"But then Coach Nelson reached out to me. I went on a visit over the summer and watched the team play in the fall, and he asked me if I wanted to play for him," she continued. "I did really like it when I visited and I'm really excited for everything but the cold."

Coach Nelson made the trip to Newcastle to be on hand as MacKenzie made her commitment, and even brought down Blue Hawks jerseys for a photo op. The jerseys he brought bore the number 23, which was Conzelman's number throughout her career at Newcastle High School.

"He asks and brings the jersey number that players want," the senior said. "But then he told me that I'd have to battle it out once I get up there, but I'll win."

Both Matt and Kim are also excited for their daughter to be attending their alma mater where Kim was Homecoming queen and Matt played football and rode bulls with the rodeo team.

"We knew it was an option, because she was looking at a few schools. I think we had more fun going on the tour than she did, but we're happy and excited that she's going there," Matt said. "I wondered why I was going to North Dakota myself, but Dickinson is in the banana belt up there, and I really liked it. It's a good school with good people."

The offer to play was made more enticing when Coach Nelson offered MacKenzie some scholarship money to play for the Blue Hawks. Being offered scholarship money for being a legacy was also a contributing factor in her decision.

She will begin pre-season workouts in the summer and the season will get under way in late October.

"I'm really excited to get to play next year," MacKenzie grinned. "I know a couple of other people who are going to play, so that will be great, and I'm just happy that I will get to play basketball again."

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Newcastle City Council Minutes

**NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MINUTES
MONDAY APRIL 3, 2023**

Mayor Gualtieri called this regular meeting of the Newcastle City Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Those present were Council members Don Steveson, Ann McColley, Daren Downs, Tom Voss and John Butts. Also present were, Public Works Supervisor Greg Stumpff, Police Chief Charles Bowles, City Clerk/Treasurer Stacy Haggerty. City Attorney Dublin Hughes was present via Zoom. Councilman Tyrel Owens was absent.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Ann McColley moved, seconded Daren Downs to approve the agenda. **MOTION CARRIED.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Don Steveson moved, seconded Tom Voss to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of Monday, March 20, 2023 **MOTION CARRIED.**

SWEARING IN OF POLICE OFFICER: Nick Kaminski was sworn in.

NOMINATIONS FOR RECOGNITION: Sheri Worden for the opening of Serendipity Nails located at 1114 W. Main Street.

CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION: Newcastle Girls Varsity Basketball players, managers and coaches for their hard work and dedication this 2022/2023 season and placing 3rd at the state tournament.

CITIZEN'S BUSINESS—IN WRITING: Nextec/Ace Electrical Services, LLC requested electrical license. Master Electrician: Alan Ainsworth Clark. Tom Voss moved, seconded Don Steveson to approve this request. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Zachary Rohde requested a 24-hour catering permit from 9:00 a.m. on May 6, 2023 to 9:00 a.m. on May 7, 2023 on behalf of West End Bar and Grill for the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Banquet to be held at the Weston County Event Center on May 6, 2023. Don Steveson moved, seconded Daren Downs to approve this request. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Anna Miller Museum submitted a letter to request seasonal sewer forgiveness. Tom Voss moved, seconded Ann McColley to approve this request. **MOTION CARRIED.**

CITIZEN'S BUSINESS—VERBAL: Tasha Townsend was present to request the Council's support for the upcoming Madness on Main event scheduled for September 2, 2023. She also requested relaxation of open container from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. between Sumner Ave. to Seneca Ave. Ann McColley moved, seconded Tom Voss to approve this request. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Tasha Townsend also requested the Council's support for the Fall Festival to be held on September 16, 2023. Teresa Gross was present to inform the Council that the RASDak Bicyclist would be coming through Newcastle on June 4, 2023 with approximately 250 riders. Ms. Gross suggested that this would be a good opportunity to promote the City of Newcastle.

MAYOR/COUNCIL REPORTS: Mayor Gualtieri read a proclamation, proclaiming April as Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention month.

Mayor Gualtieri read a proclamation, proclaiming April 24, 2023 as Arbor Day in the City of Newcastle.

Mayor Gualtieri read a proclamation, proclaiming the week of April 9th to April 15th 2023 as National Public Safety Telecommunications week.

Mayor Gualtieri read Ordinance No. 1, Series 2023 which heading reads AN ORDINANCE ANNEXING TERRITORY DESCRIBED IN THE PETITION FOR ANNEXATION DATED JANUARY 18, 2023. Don Steveson moved, seconded Ann McColley to pass Ordinance No. 1, Series 2023 on the first reading. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS: Mayor Gualtieri stated that concerns regarding the title of City Administrator in the advertised position have been brought to her attention. After discussion was had Don Steveson moved, seconded Daren Downs to avoid State Statue confusion to change the title of the position to City Planner. **MOTION CARRIED.**

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS: Public Works Supervisor Greg Stumpff referenced provided reports stating that he had received quotes from three companies for the cleaning and repair of water tanks being: Rubicon \$10,275; Liquid Engineering \$19,070; Midco \$11,498. Consensus was for Midco to do the work required. He then stated that he was working with Inberg-Miller representatives on the Landfill No. 2 expansion and closure. Expansion

will be needed to allow room until the County landfill opens, the estimated cost of expansion is approximately \$6,500.00. The personnel committee had met regarding the Building Inspector position, it is recommended that Adam McFarlin continue to fill the position part time. Mr. Stumpff then reported that he plans to attend SLIB meetings later in the week for ARPA funding.

Police Chief Charles Bowles reported calls of service: Total month to date 467 - WC Sheriff 145, Newcastle PD 181, Upton PD 57, Newcastle Ambulance 40, Upton Ambulance 9, Newcastle FD 2, Upton FD 2 and WC Fire 31. Chief Bowles reported on an incident regarding a possible active shooter within the school system, stating the response time was great and would like to thank the WC Sheriff's Office and Wyo. Highway Patrol for their assistance. He then stated that the majority of Police Department furniture and equipment have been moved, with hopes that the rest will be moved soon.

City Attorney Dublin Hughes had no report. City Clerk/Treasurer Stacy Haggerty requested early closure of the City Office in observance of Good Friday, closing at 12:00 p.m. Request was granted. Mayor Gualtieri reminded the Council of the Budget work shop to be held at 5:00 p.m. on April 11, 2023.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS: None **OTHER BUSINESS:** Mayor Gualtieri reported that she had been contacted by a County resident regarding changing the City ordinances to provide services to residence outside of City limits. Consensus was, no changes will be made.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Don Steveson moved, seconded Ann McColley to suspend the rules and go into executive session reference litigation per W.S. 16-4-405(a)(iii) at 8:07 p.m. **MOTION CARRIED.** Daren Downs moved, seconded Tom Voss to return to regular session at 9:01 p.m. **MOTION CARRIED.** No action was taken coming out of this executive session.

CLAIMS AGAINST THE CITY: Ann McColley moved, seconded Don Steveson to pay the claims against the City dated April 3, 2023. **MOTION CARRIED.** Tom Voss moved, seconded Daren Downs to adjourn this regular meeting of the Newcastle City Council. Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Claims: 21 Electric, electrical services, \$1,460.70; Advanced Drug Testing, preemployment testing, \$26.00; Ameri-Tech Equip., parts/supplies, \$5,099.55; American Business Software, website updates, \$52.15; American Engineering Testing, Rodeo/7th Ave. project engineering, \$9,934.00; American Water Works Association, membership, \$365.00; Matthew Anderson, mileage, \$200.00; AT&T Mobility, PD cell phones, \$352.93; Bomgaars, supplies, \$542.19; Campbell Co. Health, FD CPR/AED/1st aide, \$200.00; Campbell Co. EMS, monthly distribution, \$8,333.33; Century Link, E911 services, \$956.19; Chuck Bowles, reimbursement/supplies/training, \$2,010.00; City of Newcastle, wa/sw/ga, \$749.80; Contractor's Supply, parts, \$1,744.82; Derek's Field Service, repairs, \$450.50; Douglas Dumbrell, municipal judge, \$1,078.40; Energy Laboratories, quality report, \$125.00; Farnsworth Services, contract work, \$59,479.73; Fisher Sand and Gravel, gravel, \$2,713.64; Frontier, supplies, \$463.77; Hansen Equipment, trimmer line, \$424.00; Hometown Medical, preemployment physical, \$175.00; Hughes Law Office, attorney fees, \$3,500.00; Mastercard, fuel/supplies/training, \$6,027.74; Newcastle Equipment, repairs/supplies, \$1,620.38; Newcastle VFD, supplies, \$1,215.45; Northern Safety, supplies, \$948.42; Outlaw Motors, alignment, \$69.95; Petty Cash, postage/supplies/easement, \$156.69; Postmaster, postage/permit, \$824.00; Range, phone/internet, \$2,774.17; Bruce Reed, deposit refund, \$52.73; Genell Rothleutner, PD cleaning services, \$200.00; Salt Creek Water District, sewer services, \$555.00; Smith Psychological, preemployment evaluations, \$800.00; Chet Smith, deposit refund, \$139.52; Michael Staiger, mileage, \$517.50; Bryant Streeter, monthly distribution, \$1,333.33; Summit Plumbing, plumbing services, \$1,428.20; Lucky Teigen-Grummons, FD cleaning services, \$300.00; Kayla Townsend, deposit refund, \$43.17; Verizon, PW cell phones, \$380.88; Becky Vodopich, cleaning services, \$300.00; WC Health Services, preemployment physical, \$203.00; WC Treasurer, airport demo/phone/energy services, \$4,568.57; WC Humane Society, dog food, \$35.00; Wilder Graphics, laminations, \$51.80; Wyo. Assoc. Rural Water, membership/conference, \$395.00

Pam Gualtieri, Mayor
ATTEST: City Clerk/Treasurer, Stacy Haggerty
(Publish April 13, 2023)

Public Notice

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
CHEYENNE, WYOMING
NOTICE OF ACCEPTANCE OF AND FINAL
SETTLEMENT FOR HIGHWAY WORK**

Notice is hereby given that the Wyoming Department of Transportation has accepted as completed according to plans, specifications and rules governing the same work performed under that certain contract between the State of Wyoming and, S & L Industrial, LLC, The Contractor, on Highway Project Number B214022 in Campbell, Crook, Johnson and Weston Counties, consisting

of pennant signing, and the Contractor is entitled to final settlement therefore; that the Director of the Department of Transportation will cause said Contractor to be paid the full amount due him under said contract on May 17, 2023. The date of the first publication of this Notice is April 6, 2023.

Pam Fredrick
Senior Budget Analyst
Budget Program
Wyoming Department of Transportation
(Publish April 6, 13 and 20, 2023)

Cowboy State Look-In

Courtesy of the Wyoming News Exchange



Property tax refund apps open

CHEYENNE (WNE) – The Wyoming Department of Revenue has announced that the newly expanded property tax relief program for homeowners is now open for applications.

The program assists eligible Wyoming homeowners – especially those with fixed or limited incomes – who are struggling to pay their property taxes.

“With this program, Wyoming is taking a step

forward toward helping those who need it most,” Gov. Mark Gordon said in a news release.

Under the expanded program passed by the Wyoming Legislature earlier this year, homeowners can apply for a refund of up to half of the median residential property tax amount or 75% of their property tax bill, whichever is less.

To be eligible, Wyoming homeowners must meet certain income and residency

requirements. Applications will be available through the Department of Revenue’s website or local county treasurer offices.

The application deadline for 2022 property taxes is June 5. For more information, including eligibility requirements and how to apply, visit <https://wptrs.wyo.gov/>.

This story was published on April 8, 2023.

Gordon challenges EPA deferral

CHEYENNE (WNE) — On Wednesday, Gov. Mark Gordon, through the Attorney General’s office, submitted a petition for review of the Environmental Protection Agency’s decision to defer action on Wyoming’s state implementation plan for ozone transport to the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

This follows the March 14 petition by Wyoming to reconsider and stay the effect of the EPA’s deferral disapproval of the state’s plan.

“The petition illustrates how the EPA arbi-

trarily deferred Wyoming’s SIP by overlooking their own ozone modeling data and applying it differently to Wyoming than in their decisions on other states,” a news release from the governor’s office stated.

“Wyoming is not a significant contributor to ozone pollution in our neighboring states. Data supports the work that went into our state plan,” Gordon said in the release.

This story was published on April 7, 2023.

Wildlife fencing project continues

SHERIDAN (WNE) – The Bighorn Fencing Initiative exists to connect different agencies and identify and accomplish wildlife conservation projects through fence modifications or removal.

This summer, three projects are planned to remove fencing in Sheridan and Johnson counties.

The Bighorn Fencing Initiative is comprised of the U.S. Forest Service, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming Mule Deer Foundation, Sheridan Community Land Trust and other organizations.

The initiative is geared toward repairing, modifying and removing fences on public

and private lands to reduce wildlife deaths and help sustain wildlife migration. It relies on volunteers in the community to help complete projects.

Fences can have a significant impact on wildlife, as animals can become entangled in the wire or be unable to cross, which can lead to starvation. This happens due to loose wires or fences designed without wildlife in mind.

“For every two and a half miles per fence, they found on average that one ungulate dies getting tangled up every year,” SCLT Conservation Program Manager Meghan Kent said.

For the same span of fence, an average of two ungulates also die from not being able to cross or getting separated from

their mothers.

Modifications include expanding the space to at least 12 inches between the top two wires, regulating fence height for wildlife to jump over and adding a “goat rail,” which is a PVC pipe used to secure the bottom wire to the post to allow for animals like young wildlife to cross under the fence.

The projects the wildlife fencing initiative undertakes encompass this work but mainly involve removing fencing that is no longer used or is damaged.

“There are tons of modifications to make fences wildlife friendly while still providing its original purpose,” Kent said.

This story was published on April 8, 2023.

Avian influenza kills Jackson cougar

JACKSON (WNE) – Highly pathogenic avian influenza has killed a Jackson mountain lion.

It has also killed a fox in Hot Springs County and three other Wyoming pumas, two in Big Horn County and one in Natrona County.

In Teton County, the female lion was found west of South Ely Springs Road near the Snake River on March 26. The Wyoming Wildlife Health Laboratory confirmed that she was positive for bird flu as well as pneumonia, which could have been related to the influenza.

State officials were not, however, surprised to see the disease cross from birds to mammals. It has happened nationwide.

Hank Edwards, supervisor of the Wildlife Health Laboratory, said he suspects the mountain lions that contracted the virus ate infected waterfowl carcasses.

But Jessica Jennings-Gaines, a state wildlife disease specialist, said the fact that the disease

has spread to marine animals — harbor seals in Maine and a bottlenose dolphin in Florida — means carcass consumption might not be the only way the disease is crossing from waterfowl to other birds and mammals. It could also be spread from birds pooping or dying in the water.

Humans are rarely infected with the virus, which typically pops up only in people who have extended, close contact with birds. It can, however, be dangerous. Fifty-three percent of the roughly 870 people who have contracted the disease between 2003 and 2023 have died.

Like the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Jennings-Gaines said the risk to humans remains low. But, she said, if people see a bunch of dead birds, or a dead mesocarnivore with no obvious injuries or cause of death, they should call the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

This story was published on April 6, 2023.

Avian influenza found in domestic cat

THERMOPOLIS (WNE) – The Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory diagnosed the highly pathogenic avian influenza virus in a barn cat near Thermopolis.

According to WSVL, wild birds, particularly water fowl, have been affected in large numbers by HPAI, but in recent months the virus has been detected in wild carnivorous mammals including mountain lions and a red fox.

This is the first report of HPAI in a domestic cat in

Wyoming, and it likely became infected from ingesting meat from wild waterfowl.

Clinical signs for mammals include those that are associated with neurological signs including change in behavior, decrease in awareness of surroundings and loss of energy. These signs may be indistinguishable from an animal affected with rabies.

For testing of domestic species, the WSVL recommends that the veterinarian submit the

whole carcass.

Please contact the Wyoming Game and Fish Department for disposal recommendations for any dead waterfowl or to report dead or sick wild carnivores.

As the HPAI outbreak continues, residents are advised to use gloves and masks when handling sick or dead mammals and birds and report any sick wildlife to the WGFD.

This story was published on April 6, 2023.

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DEADLINE FOR LEGALS IS FRIDAY

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Prepaid Cash Rate: 3 weeks/20 words/\$15

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FOR RENT Three bedroom

3 bed/2 bath double-wide w/carport & central air. Looking for clean, responsible renters. No pets, no smoking. \$950 + propane & electricity. Landlord pays water, sewer & garbage. Please call 307-746-5918 to view & fill out application.

FOR SALE Land for sale

For sale, 35-acre wooded tract, 11 miles south of Newcastle. \$160,000. 307-630-2977.

COMMUNITY Helping Hands Foundation of Weston County

Are you in need of funds for medical traveling assistance? Contact Glenna at 307-468-2316 or Carol at 746-2298.

Alcoholics Anonymous

AA meets at WC Senior Center family room, 627 Pine St., Mondays and Thursdays, 7-8pm. Contact Stan 746-9199.

TOPS

TOPS meets at three Newcastle locations each week: Tuesday at 4pm at First United Methodist Church, call Joyce Brown at 307-629-1033; Thursday at 8am at WC Senior Center, call JoAnn Dunn at 746-2654; and at 9 am Thursdays at First Baptist Church, call Ellen Butts at 746-4251. All are welcome!

Hope Dealers

NA meets at Church on the Hill, 6:30-7:30pm, every Tuesday. Call Shawn at 307-575-6641.

Veterans

Veterans Outreach and Advocacy Program (Wyoming Dept Health/BHD) Operation Enduring Freedom/

Operation Iraqi Freedom eligible. For assistance, call 307-630-3230.

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NOW HIRING Bakery/Deli Clerks

Full-time and part-time positions include some evenings and weekends. Employee discounts and benefits. EOE.

Apply in person or send resumé to Decker's Market, P.O. Box 249, Newcastle, WY 82701



Wanted: Motorcycle Coaches

Apply online today!

https://www.dot.state.wy.us/home/dot_safety/motorcycle-safety/become-a-ridercoach.html

Beginning Rider Coaches are paid \$300 per weekend session.

Application deadline is April 24, 2023



NOW HIRING Gift Shop Associates

Associates for gift shop, FT and PT. Employee discounts and benefits. EOE.

Apply in person or send resumé to Decker's Floral & Gift, P.O. Box 249, Newcastle, WY 82701



Bus Drivers and Substitute Drivers

Weston County School District #1 is seeking Bus Drivers and Substitute Bus Drivers.

Qualifications include:

- Must be at least 21 years of age
- Be able to pass necessary drug tests
- Background check
- Possess or be willing to obtain a CDL with the proper endorsements (Training Provided)

Applications are available at the Administration Office, 116 Casper Avenue, Monday-Friday or on the school webpage at wcsd1.org. WCSD #1 is an EOE.



NEWCASTLE APARTMENTS

has 1, 2, and 3 bedroom apartments for rent. HUD subsidized. Section 8. Rental based on income. 2115 Delaware • Newcastle, WY (307) 746-9330 TDD 1-800-877-9975 This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



JOB OPENING

First United Methodist Church

Administrative Assistant 16 hours a week, M-Th, 8-noon. Call Betty Petranek for more information 307-941-1539.

CITY OF NEWCASTLE — NOW HIRING CITY ADMINISTRATOR

This position is responsible for assisting in managing the day-to-day operations of the City of Newcastle, Wyoming.

Essential Functions:

- Implement City Council policies, procedures, directives, and decisions
 - Create and submit grants on behalf of the City of Newcastle
 - Work with other city department heads on essential projects and work through grants and fundings available
 - Work with state and federal agencies
 - Perform related duties
- Knowledge Required by Position:**
- Public administration principles and practices
 - Relevant federal and state laws, local ordinances, and city rules and regulations
 - Functions and operations of city departments
 - Economic forecasting principles
 - Public relations principles
 - Skilled in project management and strategic planning
 - Skill in interpersonal relations and in dealing with the public
 - Skill in oral and written communication



The City of Newcastle offers an extensive benefit package including health insurance and Wyoming retirement. Full job description and application are available at City Hall, 10 W. Warwick, Newcastle WY 82701, Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (307) 746-3535. Salary DOE. EOE

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Please call for pricing

EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR

Weston County Children's Center/Region III Developmental Services is now accepting applications for an Early Childhood Special Education Instructor for the 2023/2024 school year. This is a full-time position with benefits. Must have or be able to obtain Wyoming PTSB certification.

Please call 307-746-4560 for more information, or mail resume to 104 Stampede St., Newcastle, WY 82701.

WCCC/Region III is an EOE.



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AT CROUCH AUDITORIUM
(LOCATED AT NEWCASTLE HIGH SCHOOL)

Weston County Concert Association
2022-2023 Season, Newcastle WY

Membership prices are \$10 for Students, \$40 for Adults, or \$85 for Family.
Contact Dawn Rushton at 801-200-6406, or Jan Ellis at 307-746-9754 for purchase.

Sponsored in part by a generous donation from Don and Lois Thorson.



More rodeo to enjoy

The first in the Jackson Youth Rodeo Series was held on Sunday, April 2, in Newcastle. The next in the series will be held on April 16 and April 30 at the Weston County Fairgrounds, in the Four Seasons Indoor Arena. Anyone who would like to participate must enter by midnight on April 14. A link to the entry form can be found by visiting the Jackson Youth Rodeo Series Facebook page or by calling MacKenzie Jackson at 620-255-5031 or Billy Jackson at 307-575-8011. Top, Chesni Leonard in the goat tying event. At left, Carter Farella in break-away roping.

Photos courtesy of Jan Farella

Find important information at wcsd1.org.

CLICK THE BOARD TAB FOR:

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Karpe

from Page 9

camp and workouts suggested and offered in the off season, but players have the choice whether or not to take advantage of those opportunities to hone their skills.

In college, putting in time to your sport in the off season is not a choice. Coaches expect their players to hit the weight room, and get themselves into good physical shape, in addition to working on their game skills all year round.

They also have academic requirements, which usually includes having players attend study sessions throughout the school year to ensure that their grades are where they need to be.

Obviously, players who are recruited and offered a position at the post-secondary level have probably taken advantage of the optional workouts, camps and open gyms throughout their athletic career, because otherwise they probably wouldn't be given the option. However, in college it ramps up to a whole new level.

With that said, the benefits of playing in

college are many and they truly outweigh the obligations and commitment. Because not only are the athletic demands higher than they were in high school, but also the academic expectations as well.

Players are usually given scholarship money to play for a college to help defer the cost of post-secondary education.

Being required to attend study sessions means that students have every opportunity to do well in their classes. They also have access to tutors in the event that they may be struggling with a subject or two.

The action-packed schedule of college athletes also means there is less down time for extracurricular activities that may not be quite as conducive to having a successful college experience, if you know what I mean.

Every time I hear of another high school student who is offered the opportunity to play at the next level, I can't help but feel excited for them.



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