

LOCAL
**Students
of the Month**
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SPORTS
**Alpine skiers shred
slopes at White Pine**
See **B1**



Pinedale Roundup

Newspaper of the Upper Green River Valley, Est. 1904

FEBRUARY 24, 2023

One Dollar

Hospital, long-term care facility receive final green light

By Robert Galbreath
rgalbreath@pinedaleroundup.com



ROBERT GALBREATH PHOTO

Community members applaud the Sublette County Board of Commissioners' 3-2 decision to commit \$5.4 million to the Sublette County Hospital District to close the remaining gap to fund construction of the critical access hospital and long-term care facility.

PINEDALE – Applause reverberated through Pinedale Library's Lovatt Room on Tuesday, Feb. 21, as the Board of Sublette County Commissioners passed a motion, 3-2, to approve the Sublette County Hospital District's (SCHD) \$5.4-million request to fund a shortfall in the cost to construct a critical access hospital and long-term care facility.

The split vote followed more than two hours of intense discussion among commissioners, impassioned public statements and testimonial from the SCHD's management and construction team.

Commissioner Mack Bradley made the original motion that, "We, as a board, support the SCHD ask of \$5.4M today to enable them to carry on with the project."

Fellow commissioner Tom Noble seconded the motion.

Bradley, Noble and commission chairman Sam White voted in the affirmative while commissioners Dave Stephens and Doug Vickrey voiced the "nays."

SCHD trustees and administrators appeared before the county on Feb. 7, initially requesting \$9.2 million to cross the financial finish line and lock in the estimated \$75.2-million price tag for the new health-care campus.

At the Feb. 7 meeting, commissioners declined to take action on the SCHD's appeal, requesting the hospital district return on Feb. 21 after exploring additional fundraising options.

Over the course of two weeks, the SCHD team reduced the original \$9.2-million request to \$5.4 million.

On Feb. 13, the Joe Ricketts family announced a \$1-million donation to the Sublette County Health Foundation.

See 'HOSPITAL' on page **A7**

Barger family safe after house fire

By Cali O'Hare
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BARGER —The American Red Cross is assisting two adults and two children after a Feb. 21 house fire on Sauk Trail in the Barger subdivision. Red Cross assistance includes care, comfort, mental and health services, disaster supplies, lodging and assistance with other immediate needs. No one sustained any injuries in the fire.

Firefighters from Sublette County Unified Fire (SCUF) battalions 1, 2, 4 and 5 were dispatched to the scene at approximately 4:30 a.m. Tuesday morning for what was reported as a possible chimney fire. Firefighters determined the blaze was actively burning in the attic space surrounding a pellet stove chimney, with smoldering in the blow-in attic insulation. Flames had consumed the roof trusses in the area immediately adjacent to the chimney. The homeowner and occupants had evacuated and were waiting outside in a vehicle, according to SCUF Chief Shad Cooper.

"Due to the early activation of 911 Dispatch, firefighters were successful in keeping the fire small with minimal structural damage," Cooper said.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation, but Cooper said it "appears to be related to adjacent combustible materials that were close to the chimney in the attic space."

SCUF reminds the public to regularly inspect and clean fireplaces, wood stoves and chimneys and regularly replace the batteries smoke detectors.

Leyva changes pleas to fewer charges

*'Cold sentence' hearing
is not yet scheduled*

By Joy Ufford
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SUBLETTE COUNTY – At what would have been his Feb. 21 pretrial conference before a rapidly approaching March 13 trial, Nicholas A. Leyva, of Daniel, changed his pleas to two felony assault charges.

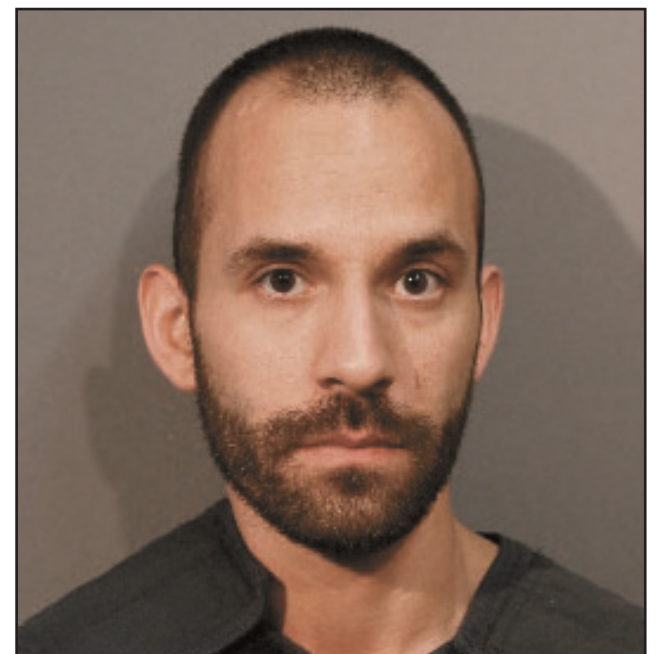
Leyva has been in custody since his Aug. 21, 2022, arrest, after he and his his husband Dr. Buck Wallace had a domestic dispute about their pending divorce, according to court records. Wallace drove to a neighbor's, collapsed and requested life-flight medical treatment at Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center, records show.

Leyva was charged with aggravated assault and battery for a striking injury to the head with an unidentified object, aggravated assault and battery with a foot on the throat, felony strangulation of a household member and misdemeanors of domestic battery, property destruction and breach of peace.

Sublette County Attorney Clayton Melinkovich later added a felony charge of attempted second-degree murder.

Leyva pleaded not guilty to all of the charges at his 9th District Court arraignment before now-retired Judge Marv Tyler. The case was assigned to newly appointed Judge Kate McKay, who heard Leyva's changed pleas of no contest on Feb. 21.

On Feb. 14, Judge McKay set the change of plea hearing and vacated the pretrial conference and jury trial. Melinkovich proposed the plea agreement, filed Feb.



Nicholas A. Leyva

14, saying if Leyva pleaded guilty or no contest to one charge of aggravated assault and battery plus the strangulation charge, the county attorney would ask Judge McKay to dismiss the other charges.

These pleas are "cold" — meaning Leyva was not offered reduced sentences and Leyva's attorney Alex Freeburg and Melinkovich will argue for appropriate sentences before Judge McKay at an as-yet unscheduled sentencing hearing.

The only concession in the plea agreement is that sentences would run concurrent, or at the same time.



THE ROUNDUP, ROUNDED UP

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Tonight: 18th annual Backcountry Film Festival

From Wyoming Wilderness Association

PINEDALE — Calling all “go big or go home” winter enthusiasts! Get ready for goosebumps as you “ooh!” and “ahh!” at the impact and importance of our winter wildlands through this collection of short films. The 18th annual Winter Wildlands Alliance Backcountry Film Festival will show in Pinedale on tonight, Feb. 24, at the Sublette County Library beginning at 7 p.m.

All proceeds benefit Wyoming Wilderness Association (WWA). WWA is a local nonprofit with a mission to protect Wyoming public wildlands through advocacy, education and stewardship. WWA began in 1979 as a group of local wilderness advocates who helped pass the 1984 Wyoming Wilderness Act. As of 2022, WWA had 3,600 members and supporters whose voices give them the inspiration to continue their work for a wild Wyoming. The Backcountry Film Festival is one of their favorite events to host and they are excited to bring it back once again. Produced each year as a celebratory, backcountry community event by the Winter Wildlands Alliance, the 18th annual Backcountry Film Festival film line-up is full of snowy, cinematic adventure sure to inspire both the local backcountry and general communities.

Winter Wildlands Alliance is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and preserving winter wildlands and a quality human-powered snow sports experience on public lands. Whether it's adventure, environment and climate, youth outdoors or ski culture — you'll find it all in this award-winning lineup.

Admission is free and the event is open to the public. All funds raised directly benefit local projects and programs that help protect Wyoming public wildlands.

Pinedale Theatre Company announces The Music Man

PINEDALE — Pinedale Theatre Company (PTC) enthusiastically announces their production of Meredith Willson's The Music Man, coming in the fall of 2023. With spectacular music and relatable characters, The Music Man is a popular stage production that has entertained audiences for decades. The show will begin with auditions in early August and premiere in October.

PTC is thrilled to introduce Anne Mason as the director of the upcoming production. Mason is the founder and producing artistic director of Relative Theatrics, where she has acted in, directed, designed and produced over 40 productions. She is passionate about transforming skills and lessons from within the theatre sphere into tools for all facets of community, industry and humanity. A Laramie native, Mason holds a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Theatre Performance from the University of Wyoming. She has worked professionally with Capital Stage Company, Sacramento Music Circus, Missoula Children's Theatre, Snowy Range Summer Theatre Festival and the University of Wyoming. Mason was named one of Laramie's 2016 20-Under-40 Young Professionals, a Wyoming Women of Influence Nominee in 2020 and 2022, a 2021 University of Wyoming Rising Alumni, a 2020/21 Performing Arts Fellow with the Wyoming Arts Council and the 2022 recipient of the Wyoming Governor's Arts Award. Mason is a graduate of the Leadership Wyoming class of 2022.

To stay in the loop and receive the most up-to-date information about The Music Man, follow Pinedale Theatre Company on Facebook and Instagram @ Pinedale Theatre Company.

Greenhouse/hoop house workshop planned for Feb. 25

SUBLETTE COUNTY – Greenhouses and hoop houses can be helpful to Sublette County gardeners hoping to extend our short growing season. Indoor gardeners can grow heat-loving plants, such as tomatoes, peppers, beans and cucumbers. However, it takes some special finesse to learn how to do so successfully.

The Sage and Snow Garden Club along with Sublette County BOCES are sponsoring a workshop on Saturday, Feb. 25, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. to bring in local experts from Sublette County to share their special tips. Participants will learn about the different types of greenhouses and hoop houses, tips on installing an irrigation system, how to heat and cool for success, about raised beds and containers, the best soil mixes and fertilizers, which plants do best in an indoor setting and how to control insect pests and diseases. A handout with workshop highlights will be distributed to participants.

Participants must register in advance with BOCES at:

<https://subletteboces.ce.eleyo.com/course/282/adult-winter-2023/greenhouse-workshop>.

Registration fee is \$20. Lunch is on your own – bring a sack lunch! The workshop takes place in the Sublette BOCES Boardroom. If you have questions about the workshop, please call Arlinda McLaughlin at 307-231-9402.

In addition, as part of this course, we will be offering a greenhouse tour, on Saturday, April 22, to give participants the opportunity to visit several greenhouses to see how they were built. Participants will be responsible for their own transportation.

Yellowstone recruiting for 2023 Youth Conservation Corps program

MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS – How would you like to work, learn, play and grow in Yellowstone's wonderland? Yellowstone National Park is currently recruiting for the 2023 Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), a residential work-based education program for students between the ages of 15 and 18. Visit the YCC program webpage at <https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/management/yccjobs.htm> to apply. Completed application materials must be postmarked by March 1, 2023.

Two 1-month-long YCC sessions will be offered from June 11-July 12 and July 16-Aug. 15. Forty-four youth will be randomly selected from across the country to participate in the program. Applicants must be U.S. citizens and 15 years of age by June 11, but not over 18 years of age by Aug. 15.

No previous wilderness experience is necessary, but enjoying camping is a plus since it will be required four nights a week during work assignments. Applicants should possess a positive attitude, a willingness and ability to work and learn in a physically active outdoor program. Participants will be required to live in the park, and a minimal fee will be charged for room and board.

Participants develop their job and leadership skills while exploring personal values, gaining self-esteem, expanding their awareness of work ethics, and learning firsthand about environmental and conservation issues. Corps members also participate in evening and weekend recreational activities and discover the many options for careers in the National Park Service and other land management agencies.



Weekly Weather Forecast

Pinedale, Wyoming • Feb. 24 - March 1

Today

Sunrise: 7:04 a.m. **Sunset:** 6:03 p.m.

High: **13°** Low: **-3°**

RealFeel® 33° -7°

Day: Cold with a snow shower.

Night: Partly cloudy.

Saturday

High: **29°**

Low: **7°**

Partly sunny
and not as cold.

Sunday

High: **30°**

Low: **10°**

Considerable
cloudiness.

Monday

High: **26°**

Low: **8°**

Mostly cloudy,
snow showers.

Tuesday

High: **29°**

Low: **6°**

Rather cloudy
and cold.

Wednesday

High: **18°**

Low: **3°**

Cold with
a little snow.

Outstanding students recognized

By Robert Galbreath
rgalbreath@pinedaleroundup.com

PINEDALE – The Sublette County School District No. 1 Board of Trustees honored three Students of the Month for January at its Feb. 9 regular meeting.

Pinedale Middle School’s Student of the Month, Ryder Allen, will be recognized at March’s board meeting.

Pinedale Elementary School third-grade teacher Kelli Rigo nominated Monet Bailly as January Student of the Month. Bailly is the “perfect example” of the monthly trait of perseverance, Rigo wrote to trustees.

While Bailly and her family are new to Pinedale, the third-grader made the transition “seem easy,” Rigo said.

“Monet immediately became involved in ice skating, dance and community theater,” Rigo noted. “In addition to all of these extracurriculars, Monet also regularly participates in classroom activities, even when they are challenging for her.”

Bailly persevered through obstacles in math and reading to demonstrate significant growth in both subjects, Rigo highlighted.

Bailly “completely crushed” the winter benchmark assessments in reading, Rigo added, improving her scores by 66 percent. In math assessments, Bailly achieved her goal of growing by 29 points.

Pinedale Elementary Principal Heather Ryan echoed Rigo’s statements.

“Monet advocates so much for herself and works incredibly hard,” Ryan told trustees.

Pinedale High School senior Toree Andersen received the January Student of the Month award and was nominated by teachers and peers as an example of honesty.

“Toree embodies the trait of honesty,” wrote a teacher. “In the classroom, Toree maintains high standards for her academic integrity. She is also an individual that her peers and others around her can count on to have a truly genuine relationship. Most importantly, Toree is honest with herself and holds herself to high standards of excellence in all aspects of her life.”

A classmate described Andersen as “one of the most honest people I know.”

“Toree will say the truth no matter what,” the student added.

Pinedale High School Principal Brian Brisko said Andersen’s honesty extended from the classroom to athletics and the wider community. Andersen displays honesty by courageously reaching out for help, Brisko said.

“One thing I really appreciate about Toree is that if she’s struggling with something, she’s not afraid to say, ‘Hey Mr. Brisko, I really need help,’” he added. “That speaks to her character. I’m super proud of Toree.”

Skyline Academy Principal Kellie Jo Williams introduced senior Jobanny Mendoza as January Student of the Month for exemplifying service to the school and



ROBERT GALBREATH PHOTO

The SCSD1 Board of Trustees recognized three Students of the Month at its Feb. 9 meeting. Pictured, from left, are senior Jobanny Mendoza, Skyline Academy, senior Toree Andersen, Pinedale High School and Monet Bailly, Pinedale Elementary School. Pinedale Middle School’s Student of the Month, Ryder Allen, will be honored in March.

community.

Mendoza volunteers as a peer mentor with the Pinedale Middle School band, said Williams.

“He works with students (at Pinedale Middle School) individually to enhance their skills and then works on his own music,” Williams added.

Mendoza is also involved in an internship at the Pinedale Aquatic Center, and his

supervisors summed up his work as “phenomenal,” Williams told trustees.

Skyline teacher Melissa Allen highlighted Mendoza’s willingness to “help wherever and whenever.” She commended Mendoza for exhibiting “excellence” in the classroom, at his internship and his peer mentor program.

“Jobanny had the opportunity to graduate early from Skyline Academy, but has chosen to stay to complete his internship,

continue with band and continue his peer mentorship,” Allen wrote. “I have had the privilege of witnessing Jobanny’s maturity and confidence grow over the years. He has worked really hard to overcome challenges that have been placed before him. I am proud of the hard work and dedication that he has put into becoming a better person and student. I look forward to seeing what the future holds for Jobanny.”

Updated publication contains ‘Just the Facts’ about Wyoming

CHEYENNE (WNE) — A new edition of “Just the Facts” has been released by the state of Wyoming’s Economic Analysis Division. The updated publication provides an easily accessible collection of statistics, presenting a broad range of quality-of-life factors in Wyoming. Information categories include demography, education, the economy, transportation, housing, geography, tourism, agriculture, tax environment, and crime and law enforcement. The data displays facts for the most recent period for Wyoming, its ranking relative to other states and the change from the previous period.

Some examples:

- Wyoming’s population of veterans was 8.1 percent in 2021, ranking fourth, compared with 9.8 percent in Alaska (most) and 3.6 percent in New Jersey (least).
- The Wyoming median household income was \$65,204 in 2021, ranking 31st, compared with \$90,203 in Maryland and \$48,716 in Mississippi.
- Wyoming’s homeownership rate was 72.1 percent in 2021, ranking 12th.

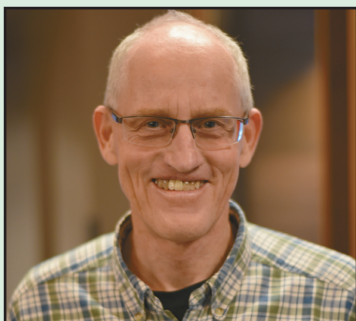
“Policymakers and the general public can use this publication in a variety of ways — it can help to identify certain areas warranting further study, or it enables people to see how Wyoming is faring compared to other states,” said Wenlin Liu, chief economist with the Economic Analysis Division. “With comparison, numbers become a lot more meaningful and revealing to readers.”

The publication can be downloaded at state.wy.us/Wy_facts/Facts2022.pdf.

Street Talk

By Terry Allen

Is there really anything we as citizens can do about climate change?



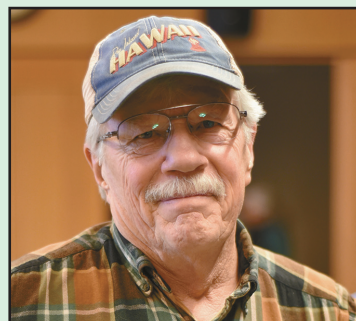
Absolutely! It is important for citizens to reach out to their political leaders and ask them to support bipartisan climate solutions.

Bill Barron,
Salt Lake City



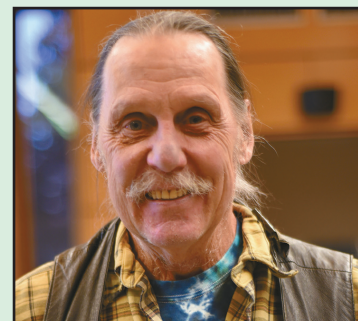
Yes, we can quit consuming so much, use solar panels and convert to electric vehicles. A little of everything makes a difference.

Jana Weber,
Pinedale



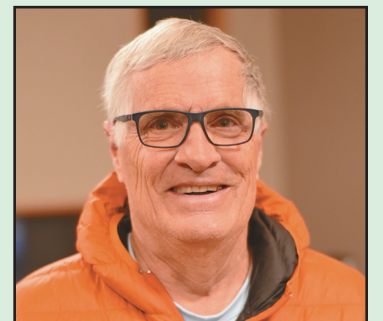
I have a local heritage going back to 1876. I’m an advocate for taking care of our planet. Join grassroots efforts to raise awareness.

Frank Bird,
Pinedale



Think nationally and internationally, but act locally. CURED has done a lot to clean up our gas and oil fields. Recycle and be watchdogs of our energy.

Dave Vlcek,
Pinedale



It all starts with individually and collectively changing some of our wasteful habits. That will move us towards our goal.

Roger Weber,
Pinedale

COMMENTARY

How to know you're married to the right person



LOCAL COMMENTARY
TRENA EIDEN

Officials in Switzerland recently advised couples they should shower together to reduce natural gas consumption. Reading the headline, I thought it was a spoof but no, the Swiss energy minister actually felt it to be a solution. When I told Gar, his immediate response was, "Let's move to Switzerland!" My head is spinning. This man has seen me naked and still wants to jump into a tub with me. I don't even want to jump into a tub with me.

Contemplating Gar's obvious, albeit crazy devotion to me, I was interested when I saw an article mentioning ways to know if you married the right person. Can we tell? Apparently since Gar doesn't mind my chubby cheeks, I must have married the right guy, though one who's a little on the loony side too. How else do you explain his unconditional love? We know I'm a nut, but every once in awhile his goofy side appears too.

Last week I made his favorite dessert, cherry cream cheese pie, but I had to adjust it due to being out of cream cheese. The original recipe contains cherry pie filling, cream cheese, condensed milk, vanilla and 1/3 cup of lemon juice. Making it the same, except without cream cheese, I used sour cream and Greek yogurt, and only 1/4 cup of lemon juice. Without telling him what I'd done, I gave him a spoon and asked if

he noticed any difference in how it usually tastes? He took two bites, nodded and said, "Ya, there's lemon juice in this." Oh duh.

I know I married the right guy, but did Gar marry correctly? It's doubtful, and hopefully he'll never figure it out. He's kind and generous and has told me more than once he likes my big thighs, so there's that and he includes me in his plans for the future. I know this because last summer when we left the house, I asked if he wanted me to drive, but he said he would. Then at the end of the meadow he said, "When we get to the gate, you can leave it open, we'll be right back." See how that worked? What a planner, and he was thinking of me. So great.

The article felt that if a man loves how you look, even on your bad days, he's a good man. What if he can't tell? I mean, what if he's grown so used to the sticky-up hair that he just assumes that's as good as she's going to get so he's got to be in it for the long haul?

Following through on promises is very important and Gar absolutely would do that I think, but I don't often give him the chance. If I say the garbage smells, and wait, I'll be waiting awhile. If I bring the trash to the door, he always says he'll take it out. And he would, but not in my time frame, so rather than get divorced over trash hauling, I usually take it away.

He does keep promises though. When he says he's going to buy more ammo, it's a done deal.

We know a man should really care about us and our needs and I think mine does. A few weeks ago, Gar and I were both sick with the cold and flu, coughing, congested and with an overall feeling of unwellness. One evening, feeling chilly, I threw an extra down comforter on our bed and we snuggled in. Sometime in the dark, wee hours of the morning I was awakened by Gar giving me two rather hard pats to my midsection. Figuring I'd been snoring and he was trying to get me to stop, I rolled over on my side and forgave him. Though it woke me from sound slumber, due to cold medicine I was groggy enough to be able to eventually fall back to sleep. At breakfast that morning, I apologized for snoring and asked if I'd done it all night? He looked at me quizzically, shook his head and said he hadn't heard me snore at all. I frowned and somewhat crankily told him, "You smacked me across the stomach sometime this morning so I thought you were trying to subtly tell me that I was keeping you awake." He chortled, "Oh, ha-ha, no, I couldn't see you under all the covers so I was checking to see if you'd gotten up." I married the right guy, but I might have to kill him.

Trena Eiden trenaid@hotmail.com

2023 fishery issues



LOCAL COMMENTARY
MIKE KAUL

Annotating my calendar for a new year prompts me to start thinking about the fishing prospects for the upcoming season. As usual, fishing-water projections will dominate my thoughts for the next several weeks, but there are a few other issues that may materialize this year, which could impact fishing that I will outline below.

The current snowpack data show promise for a decent water year. The average for the Green River basin is hovering around the mid-90 percent of normal mark, with some areas looking better than others. There is still plenty of time to accumulate more moisture. Establishing a good snowpack early in the winter has benefits in that the snow has a chance to drift and compress over the course of the winter so it thaws slower during the spring melt. We will have to see what we look like in March.

I have mentioned many times that we are very fortunate to live at the headwaters of many fishing streams emanating from the Wind River Mountains and the Wyoming Range. Despite the varying amounts of snow collected in these mountains we always have some fishable water available for the recreational fisher. The Intermountain West has experienced drought conditions in the past several years, which forced some regions to limit recreational fishing on their waterways. We have been able to avoid restrictive actions due in part to the fact fishing pressure on our waterways has been relatively moderate compared to high-density usage in bordering states.

However, a couple of events that occurred in the recent past have changed the volume of recreational visitors to our area in a big way. We had a huge influx of first-time visitors to our area during the eclipse, who decided this was a great venue and they came back to the area later to recreate. During the outset of the covid epidemic many folks cooped up in metropolitan locales took a look at where there was outdoor space with low covid exposures and decided Wyoming was

the place for an escape. We got our share of these folks, which increased the density of fishers on local waterways.

This is great for our overall local economy, but may present some challenges in maintaining the quality of our fisheries.

Even before the eclipse and covid, those of us in the commercial fishing industry noticed an increase in the volume of fishing traffic on many local waterways and found the same phenomenon was occurring in other parts of the state. Many residents also voiced concerns about what impact the increased volume of fishers might have on the quality of fisheries in their areas. Commercial guides and outfitters were unable to coalesce around a plan to deal with this situation, so by default state legislators were called upon to address the issue. As much as many of us abhor the idea of government regulation, this may soon become an agenda item in the State Legislature.

I encourage sport fishers to be on the lookout for any legislation involving this issue and voice their opinions to their legislative representatives.

I have had the opportunity to review two draft bills on the above issue, both tasking the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission (WGFC) with regulating commercial boat access to Wyoming waterways and developing a licensing program for commercial fishing guides and outfitters operating in Wyoming.

My initial concern with the draft bills is they have no mechanism for allowing input from the commercial guide and outfitter community. I feel the licensing requirements and certification should be done by bona fide fishing outfitters. I would recommend WGFC establish a fishery board comprised of fishing outfitters from each of the major drainages in the state. This board would be charged with developing a licensing program and making recommendations to the WGFC on regulating usage of state

waterways. I believe a guide and outfitter-licensing program would receive support from the commercial fishing industry and would add credibility to the state's overall recreation marketing program. Regulating access to waterways is a complex and emotional issue. The fishery board's input and public hearings would provide a good cross section of views on waterway regulation, if required.

Contemplating a "state act" on the above issue, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) and its Commission, which has the mission of maintaining a quality fishery throughout the state, should be required to provide input to any legislation. The WGFD should be able to help determine the extent of the problem by providing information on the quality of fishery in selected high-volume fishing areas. If the data produced by the WGFD indicate an increase of fishing volume is having an adverse impact on a selected fishery, they should provide this information to the fishing outfitter board. The board in turn would develop options for dealing with the issue and pass them to the WGFC. The WGFC would be responsible for soliciting public input on the recommendations and implement a regulatory program for the selected waterways.

I envision there will be a lot of discussion this next fishing season about the current status of the state's fisheries. The WGFC and WGFD will be forced to look at developing strategies for maintaining wild trout fisheries in specified areas, expanding fish planting in other areas and if required, implementing regulatory programs for certain waterways. Obviously, these state actions will trigger budgetary discussions. If the state is going to continue to promote tourism as a key economic driver for state revenue, then maintaining a quality fishery program must be funded. We all need to be aware of these issues and provide input to the state agencies involved.

Remember, there is no bad fishin'!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sublette County Commissioners
P. O. Box 250
Pinedale, WY 82941

Gentlemen,

I write this letter after listening to the County Planning and Zoning meeting on Feb. 15. The board passed, 3-2, what they believed would mitigate the impact of the Jackson Fork CUP application requested and approved by the previous board of commissioners. What was decided at that time will forever alter the Hoback Basin and the lives of those of us living there. The door has been opened. Other investors will use this ruling to access our beautiful, pristine area, to develop, rape and use the land for profit in the name of recreation. It will be, I am sure, Mr. Joe Rickett's dream come true of transforming the Hoback Basin into what will be known as "Little Jackson Hole." His dream will be realized, and our nightmare will begin. Those of us who have lived, loved, worked and attempted

to preserve this land will be left to deal with the traffic, impact of humanity and infringement on wildlife in what has always been a quiet and pristine area.

Mr. Ricketts indicated, when first he purchased land on the Upper Hoback River, that he intended to keep the ranch agricultural in nature. He then approached the Bondurant residents to change the name from Bondurant to Jackson Fork, which was soundly rejected by the locals. He then applied for a CUP application to build a resort on his Upper Hoback property, the reason given "that he needed the ranch to be self-sufficient so he could leave it to his grandkids!" Certainly, we all know that if he wanted to keep the ranch funded for his grandkids and their children all he had to do was to put the ranch in a trust so they would never have to worry about supporting it. I suppose leaving a working Wyoming ranch as a legacy is not as impressive as leaving an entire recreation complex in your name.

I would pose these questions to the Sublette County commissioners.

1. Why, when outside investors want to purchase large tracts of land, the county does not ask the purpose of the purchase and to suggest that they check the zoning BEFORE the purchase? Why, are they not told they should not expect to buy the land, and then attempt to change or get around the zoning after the purchase?

2. Why, are the opinions of the residents of the area so disregarded? Why, when the letters, calls and attendance at the meeting are 95 percent or better against the proposal, are these opinions ignored? The room is full of dissenters and yet three members of the board vote in favor of the issue!

3. Why, have previous board members not realized the value of this land as a historical treasure and pursued other ways of illustrating the history and culture of the area? Examples: lectures on the history of Indians, fur traders, mountain men, explorers, immigrants, homesteaders, ranchers etc. etc.; day excursions showing REAL ranch

See 'LETTERS' on page A5

COMMENTARY



The Intrepid Explorer — Living – Life – Large

Chronologies, excerpts, fragments and reflections, words from the artistic journals of Dan Abernathy

It has been proclaimed by the ruling class, that we are the free people. We live in a free world that allows freethinking and freewill. This is the illusion that we have accepted, as we have allowed ourselves to be conditioned and enslaved.

This institution of rule controls us from a system that recognizes human beings as property. This is the most effective system. The assemblage of correlated members that allows just enough independence to give the illusion of freedom while keeping the public in a perpetual state of indentured servitude.

President Joe Biden made a surprise trip to Ukraine's capital of Kyiv and announced \$500 million in a new round of aid. What about the death toll here in the United States? What about the suicide rate? Would that \$500 million have been better spent here on Americans?

We need to look up and see what is not is what we are being told. Take a moment and perceive the meaning of this. Civilian casualties in Ukraine in 2022 were over 7,000 killed. Gun violence casualties in the U.S., including suicide in 2022, were over 20,000.

We spend our time with the illusion of empathy waving a Ukraine flag or posting a Ukraine border around your profile picture on social media platforms. Then you become part of the followers and march down the street in protest against Russia while stepping over the dead bodies of our own. I'm not siding with Russia and I do have great compassion for the Ukraine. What is happening there is horrendous, but my greatest thoughts are cleaning our own house first.

We react to what we are told to react to, not always for what is. We can follow the masses, have the flags, burn the candles and blame it on the tool used to kill, while at the same time not looking at the conditioned source of the problem. We are the subdued manipulated people that have allowed rights to depart from the victims and land on the perpetrator. Nothing is being

done to fix the prob-lem.

We briefly count the growing numbers and shake our heads, thinking we are free of falseness and filled with empathy. It's like counting cracks in the sidewalk. Counting cracks in the sidewalk may be harmless fun, but when a person constantly feels compelled to do so it may develop a neurosis.

Freud's two-stage account of neurosis is a mental condition that is not caused by organic disease, involving symptoms of stress but not a radical loss of touch with reality. But, that was then, Freud died in 1939, and this is now, so I question the validity with the "touch of reality" from Freud's hypotheses. We have counted too many numbers and stepped away from what is.

Because sensational headlines get more attention, major media outlets often focus on disaster re-orting and rarely any covering of positive news. Consuming too much news of tragedy, whether actively or passively, can be very toxic, and will impact your mood.

It has been studied and verified to be damaging to constantly be absorbing the news because constant exposure to negative information can impact our brain. Consuming the news can activate the sympathetic nervous system, which causes your body to release stress hormones. Then, when a crisis is happening, and we are experiencing this stress response more frequently, physical symp-toms may arise.

This emotional toll and negative effect on the psyche was



demonstrated in a study that found peo-ple who watched negative material, as compared to those who watched positive material, showed an increase in depressed moods after only 14 minutes of viewing.

In addition to an increase in depressed moods, researchers also found the results to be consistent with the theories of worry that implicate negative mood as a causal factor in facilitating worrisome thought.

Studies also have shown that negative news is more likely to be perceived as truthful. Since nega-tive information draws greater attention, it also may be seen as having greater validity.

Negativity bias is our tendency not only to register negative stimuli more readily but also to dwell on them. This negativity bias means that we feel the sting of a rebuke more powerfully than we feel the elation of joy.

Eyes are useless when the mind is closed. When your mind turns on you, you may need to throw it out and start again. When you feel like no matter what you do will not be good enough, when you know that you are exceptionally able, but doubt your abilities, when nothing you do seems worth-while, you need to throw out your mind.

When you come to a point and begin to question what it is about you that really makes you, your whole foundation becomes unstable, as you are no longer supported with the masses. This is the first step in positive freedom.

Instead of finding new worries, imagining new problems and forgetting about your untouchable pristine self, give yourself a fresh start everyday. That is why, every day, you need to throw out your mind and greet the day with a fresh mind and see where "your" mind will take you. Perhaps you will journey to independent freedom.

- dbA

You can find more of the unfiltered insight and the Art of Dan Abernathy at www.contributechaos.com.

LETTERS

Continued from A4

life; the life of the range riders; a day in the hay field etc.; geological features and the history of mining, drilling, industry from the exploration of fossil fuels. This area could have been developed into a real historical lesson of our county, our way of life and the tenacity of the people who made it.

4. Why, has the leadership of this county not seen the value of allowing private individuals the ability to have a family business from their home, selling goods that they have either made or grown? This would allow ranchers and others to supplement their income that we realize can be either boom or bust.

5. Why, allow our land to be industrialized by outsiders who are seeking profit by any means? An upscale resort does NOT belong on the Upper Hoback River!!

I urge you to stop what you can at this point, to listen to the residents living in the area, and to not allow any further requests such as this resort to be approved in the future. Enough damage has been done. Think out of the box and explore other avenues of helping the residents keep their life and families here in Sublette County.

Yours truly,

D. J. Kominsky
Bondurant, WY

Dear editor,

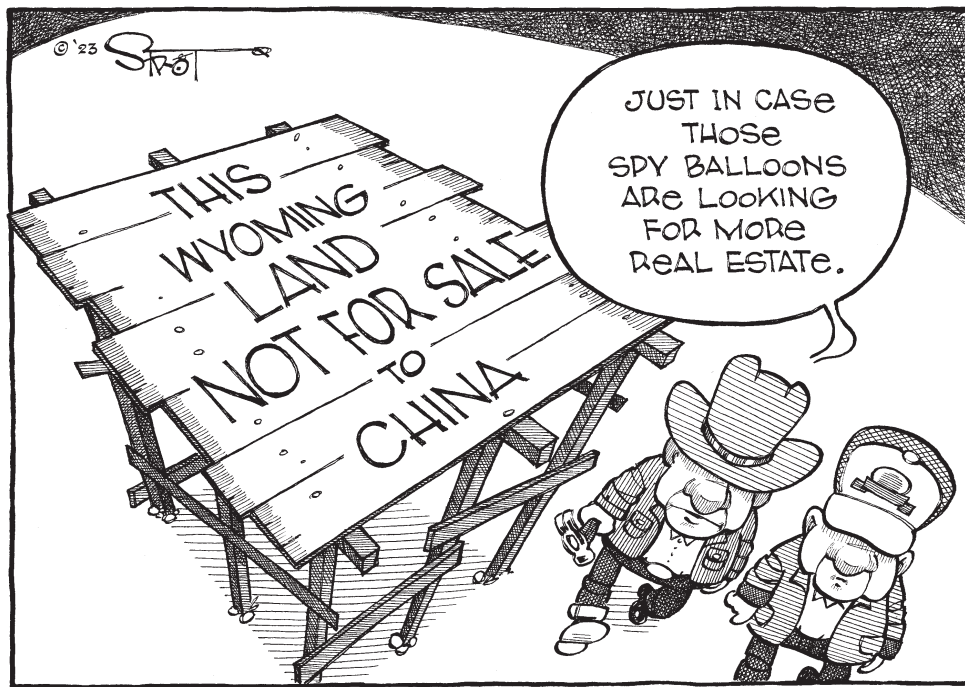
In recent years the Sublette County Commission has approved, with a vote of 3-to-2, significant building permits to investors purchasing property in previously zoned agricultural areas. These approvals have passed despite not being approved by the Planning and Zoning Board and with a large contingent of residents being against the permit. The meetings have been well attended and respectful, despite being characterized by one member as being raucous and intimidating. They have been held when many summer residents have been unable to attend the meetings, and those opposed being allowed a minimum amount of time to express their opinions, the majority time being given to those seeking the change.

On Tuesday, March 7, there will be a County Commission Meeting discussing the conditional use permit (CUP) of the Jackson Fork Ranch involving more of the land owned by the ranch. I urge all to mark the date, time and plan to attend if you are able. Of course, always be respectful but let your opinions be known! And make note of which commissioners vote with their constituents and which do not.

I am including a letter I have written to the members of the commission that I would like published with my letter.

Very sincerely yours,

D. J. Kominsky
Bondurant, WY



The opinions expressed on the editorial pages are not necessarily those of the Pinedale Roundup. Letters will be run and edited at the discretion of the Pinedale Roundup. Letters to the editor should be limited to 350 words, be signed, state the town/city you live in and include a phone number for verification. Letters are due Tuesdays by noon. No thank yous. Write to: P.O. Box 100, Pinedale, WY, 82941 or email: cohare@pinedaleroundup.com. Published weekly, at 41 S. Lake Ave., Pinedale, Sublette County, Wyoming, 82941 by Wyoming Newspapers, Inc.

Pinedale Roundup

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OBITUARIES

Alvin McCreery

April 19, 1948 - Feb. 9, 2023

Al, 74, passed away on Feb. 9, 2023, at Mesa Valley Estates in Mesquite, Nevada. He was born April 19, 1948, in Worland, Wyo., to Leo Lorn McCreery and Lois Riddle McCreery Mulholland. Al was married to Karen Elizabeth Paisley on Aug. 22, 1970, in Cody, Wyo.

Al was born into a big pioneering family who had settled in the Ten Sleep, Wyo., area in the 1890s. This early exposure playing with his numerous cousins inspired him to be a cowboy and adventurer at heart who loved the outdoors. He graduated from Pinedale High School with honors and was a tremendous athlete who played football, basketball and loved to ski. Al earned a scholarship to play football at Westminster College in Salt Lake City before transferring to the University of Wyoming.

During his time at UW, he met the love of his life, Karen, at a dance in Cody. For the rest of their lives they shared their joy of dancing and wherever they were people were amazed with their moves on the dance floor. As Al was an artist, when he would write letters to Karen he would always draw cartoons and other images to express his love for her. Within a couple of years they were married in Cody and moved to Laramie, where Al graduated with a business degree.

After traveling and living in different

parts of the country and having lucrative opportunities, he decided to return to Wyoming to raise his family as he didn't want them growing up in large cities. His son Scott was born in Thermopolis, Wyo., in August 1971 and his daughter Catherine, "Kathy," was born in Worland, Wyo., in June 1973.

Throughout his life, Al was known for his integrity, kindness and hard work. For 10 years he worked for Hughes Tool Company, winning the outstanding salesman award for the Rocky Mountain region in 1980. Later, he became the owner and president of Rocky Mountain Dry Drilling for 20 years and was part owner of a real estate company in Cody. Al was also a lifetime member of the Cody Elks Club and a member of the Lions Club.

Al was an avid outdoorsman who spent



two to three weeks every year at a hunting camp in the Crandall area near Yellowstone Park with his hunting buddies. He was a masterful marksman and never failed to fill a freezer full of elk to feed his family for the year. Al also loved to be on the water fishing and water skiing and bought a boat that ended up creating decades of memories. He was always fascinated with flying and over the course of seven and half years he built his own airplane, an RV6. During this time, Al was also a flight instructor and guided many people to earn a pilot's license.

In his youth, Al rode bareback in the rodeo. His love of the cowboy life inspired him to be on the Cody Stampede Board for 23 years, serving in many different roles, including president. During his time on the board, Cody Stampede won the PRCA

Large Outdoor Rodeo Committee of the Year for 1998 and 1999. Even towards the end when he was slowing down, he was still out in the arena helping in every way.

In his retirement years during the winter, Al bought a home in Beaver Dam, Ariz., and traveled hundreds of miles in his Razz with his "compound" buddies. He always loved the heat and was happy to escape the cold Cody winters. He was loved by everyone and had so much fun.

Al was preceded in death by his brother, Glen McCreery, mother, Lois, stepfather, Wayne Mulholland, father, Pete, stepmothers, Jean and Iris, sister, Lana Marie Mulholland, and many aunts, uncles, cousins and in-laws.

Al is survived by his wife of 52 years, Karen McCreery, his two children, Scott McCreery and Kathy (Tim) Mahieu, sisters, Trula Hefley, Donna (Gary) Dunaway, Debra (Pat) Jensen, grandchildren, Grace and Gus Mahieu and Nick McCreery, and numerous beloved family members and friends.

A celebration of life memorial service will be held in the summer of 2023 in Cody, Wyo. Detailed information will be forthcoming. Condolences can be sent to Karen McCreery at 2901 Fuelie Ave., Cody, WY 82414.

Church DIRECTORY

Pinedale Community United Church of Christ
113 South Maybell Ave.
Pastoral Leadership:
Jono Majhanovich
Worship is 10:00 am every Sunday morning
To contact the pastor or for current updates,
call: 307-264-0418
Email: communitychurchpinedale@gmail.com
"We are seeking to love and welcome all people in worship, song, and community service"

First Baptist Church
Pastor Ted York
SUNDAY SERVICE
Sunday school.....9:45 a.m.
Morning worship 11 a.m.
646 N. Tyler Street • 307-367-4567

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Bible study..... 7:45 a.m.
Sunday Service..... 9 a.m.

Pastor Kevin Rose
307-367-2612
512 N. Tyler, Pinedale

Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church

112 S. Sublette Ave

Mass Schedule
Saturday: 5:30 p.m.
Sunday: 8 a.m.
Holy Day of Obligation: 7 a.m. & 7 p.m.
Monday: 9 a.m. at Church
Tuesday: 5:30 p.m. at Church
Wednesday-Friday: 7 a.m. at Church

Church of the Resurrection

Hope that in God ALL things are possible

PO Bx 2144, Pinedale WY 82941

Join us for Sunday Morning Services at

10 a.m. at 41 S. Lake Ave.
Sunday School is available for children.

"Come to Me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest."
-Jesus Christ

Pinedale Bible Church

Sunday School Service
9 a.m. to 10 a.m.
Sunday Worship Service
10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Livestream of worship service
10:30 a.m.

Come visit us at
219 Industrial Site Rd. • 367-4168
Pastor Jim Silvey

David Allan Reed May 3, 1956 - Feb. 4, 2023

David Allan Reed, age 66, died Feb. 4, 2023. He was born May 3, 1956, in Riverside, California, to Faith Hope and Allan Kenneth Reed. He was 9 years old when they moved to Pinedale, Wyo. He attended Pinedale High School, graduating in 1974. A talented football player, David was selected to the first Shrine Bowl game in 1974. He graduated from Idaho State University in 1981. He was married to Wendy West in 1984. Together they had two boys, Kenneth and Ryan. Most of his adult life was spent working for his father at Reed's Ready Mix in Pinedale.

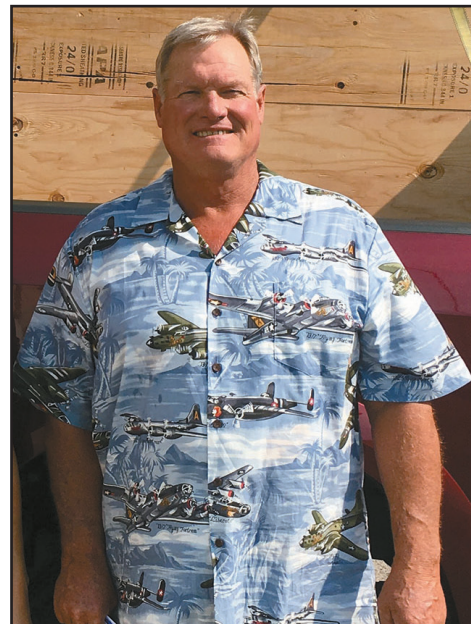
He was preceded in death by his parents, Allan and Faith Reed.

He is survived by his wife, Wendy Reed, sons Ryan and Kenny (Lexi) Reed, sister Renne Reed, and brother Neil (Lori) Reed.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Please share and memories or photos by sending them to dreed@reedsreadymix.com.

In lieu of flowers, the family would like



any donations to go to Lake Havasu Search and Rescue Sheriff - Posse Inc., P.O. Box 54, Lake Havasu City, AZ 86405-0054.

Joan Gilbert Crossley February 18, 2023

Joan Gilbert Crossley, age 92, of Pinedale, died Feb. 18, 2023. Joan was a loving and devoted wife, mother and grandmother. She was a passionate animal lover, including cats, dogs, raccoons, birds, deer, sandhill cranes and moose. Joan was an excellent homemaker who enjoyed cooking and caring for her husband, children and pets. She was a former member of Pinedale Fine Arts Council and the League of Women Voters, as well as volunteering in her community as an election judge, census taker and hospital volunteer.

Joan was preceded in death by her parents, James Gilbert and Marion Electa Buffum Gilbert.

She is survived by her husband of 70 years, Robert Jerome Crossley; children, Robert James Crossley, William Allen Crossley and Judith Crossley Mueller; grandchildren, Nathan Crossley, Colin Crossley and wife Swathi, Hannah Crossley, Austin Crossley, Eric Mueller and Kyle Mueller. No public services will be held. Click Funeral Home,



109 Walnut Street, Lenoir City, TN, is serving the Crossley family.

Email obituaries to editor@pinedaleroundup.com
307-367-2123

HOSPITAL

Continued from A1

By the time the commissioners convened on Feb. 21, the Sublette County Health Foundation had received \$15,000 in cash donations and \$65,000 in ongoing pledges from community members, said Tonia Hoffman, SCHD Board of Trustees chairwoman.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the federal agency awarding the SCHD's \$32-million rural development loan, gave its "blessing" for the hospital district to place an additional \$1.5 million in cash reserves toward the project, Hoffman told commissioners on Feb. 21.

The SCHD team made the "difficult decision" to temporarily shelve completion of a "surgical shell" for a proposed surgical suite, Hoffman remarked, resulting in a further reduction of \$1.3 million in costs.

Hoffman stressed the district's desire to pursue funds to add the surgical shell back into plans for the hospital at a later point to capture future revenue.

The \$5.4-million grant from the county will allow the SCHD to close on its \$32-million USDA loan. The funds will also enable Layton Construction, the SCHD's general contractor and construction manager, to determine a gross maximum price for the project. Once the gross maximum price is established, subcontractors are contractually bound to operate within the budget provided in their original bids.

Hours after the commissioners adjourned, Hoffman expressed deep gratitude to the county at the SCHD Board of Trustees' meeting in Marbleton on the evening of Feb. 21.

A case of need

Layton Construction put the health-care campus project out to bid in July 2022. Approximately 130 subcontractors submitted bids for various aspects of construction by August, totaling \$80.2 million, a significant increase from a pre-pandemic estimate released in February 2020 of \$54 million for the project.

In spring 2020, COVID-19 disrupted the global economy, international supply chains and labor market. Inflation peaked in September 2022.

A robust commercial construction market stretched subcontractors thin after the pandemic, causing severe worker shortages in certain trades and industries, compounding spiraling costs.

An aggressive round of value-added engineering shaved \$5.4 million from the project cost in August 2020. In December 2022, the Wyoming State Loan and Investment Board awarded the SCHD a \$10-million grant in federal American Recovery Plan Act dollars for health-care infrastructure.

By Feb. 7, the SCHD raised \$66 million, or 88 percent of the total project costs, through loans, grants, a \$20-million pledge from the county for a new Sublette Center and \$2 million of the SCHD's own cash reserves.

The SCHD is under pressure to begin construction this spring. Delaying the project for a year could force the district to rebid the entire project, putting it at the mercy of unstable prices and labor markets.

The SCHD submitted an application for additional loans from the USDA to cover inflation. The application was pending and remained an "unpredictable" option, said Dave Doorn, SCHD administrator, on Feb. 21.

Additional loans could also negatively impact the district's debt-service ratio, Hoffman added.

Hoffman reiterated the district's long-term goal to become self sufficient from tax revenue and merge health care in the county under a single umbrella.

"Bringing the (Sublette Center and SCHD) together maximizes our revenues and will make us stronger," she added.

Mike Hunsaker, chief operating officer for the SCHD and its management partner, Star Valley Health, emphasized the crucial role the critical access designation will play in boosting the district's income through Medicaid reimbursement.

Federal legislation passed in 1999 allowed critical access hospitals with fewer than 25 beds to take advantage of better Medicaid reimbursement rates, Hunsaker said. He projected a 22-percent increase in revenue from Medicaid reimbursement once the SCHD transitions from a clinic to a hospital.

Commissioners speak against SCHD's request

Vickrey stated that he was an "advocate" for "everybody in this county" rather than a "single entity," and that he spoke for "the 2,143 people who said 'no thank you'" to the ballot initiative establishing the SCHD on Nov. 6, 2020.

Voters in Sublette County approved the formation of the SCHD, granting it the ability to levy property tax to build a hospital and long-term care facility, by a 60-percent margin on Nov. 6, 2020. According to unofficial election results posted by the Sublette County clerk, 2,856 votes were cast in favor of the ballot initiative, with 1,895 against.

Vickrey faulted the SCHD for failing to exhaust all its financial options.

"The hospital district brought this project forward, and it's their responsibility (to fund the project), not the commissioners," he said. "They have their own elected board and their own revenue stream. They have not, in my opinion, taxed everything they could to get the monies they are needing. They have not asked for a bond issue, they have not asked for a mill levy."

The SCHD currently levies 3 mills. State statute prohibits the hospital district from raising taxes to the maximum of 6 mills without voter approval in an election.

Granting the SCHD the funds would only encourage the district to return to the county with new financial requests, Vickrey argued.

"If you give money for this project, down the road, it's going to be an ongoing thing," he said. "It's just the way government entities work – they continue to ask."

Vickrey questioned the "sustainability" of the critical access hospital as "small rural hospitals shut down" across America.

The county had a "fiduciary responsibility" to protect taxpayer dollars, Vickrey said. The county's \$20-million investment in the Sublette Center was "adequate," and he remained unwilling to "commit any more."

The Sublette Center's future was a concern for Vickrey. According to Vickrey, when small hospitals become financially insolvent, the "nursing home" unit is typically the first casualty when cuts are made.

People understood the risks of moving to Sublette County, Vickrey added. New residents arrived "for the right reasons," seeking a community free of crime and big-box stores.

See 'HOSPITAL' on page A8

TOWN OF PINEDALE

The Town of Pinedale is hosting a Transportation Master Plan public workshop in the Lovatt Room of the Sublette County Library on Wednesday, March 1, 2023, from 5 - 7 p.m. See what Pine Street traffic and growth is projected to look like over the course of the next 20 years and how it will impact our community. The Jorgensen team will be sharing multiple alternatives, including Pine Street modifications and additional streets in the Pinedale vicinity to improve connectivity. Please join us to learn and share your thoughts about transportation in Pinedale. For additional project information, go to <https://www.townofpinedale.us/pinedalemobility>.

Box 709 • 69 S. County Rd 123. (take South Tyler)
Pinedale, Wyoming 82941 • www.townofpinedale.us
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FEBRUARY IS HEART MONTH - FREE EKG CLINIC



February 21st

Pinedale EMS Classroom

10:00 am - 6:00 pm

307-367-2315

February 23rd

Marbleton EMS Classroom

2:00-6:00 pm

307-276-3032

Please schedule an appointment.

Spots are limited!

What is a baseline EKG? It provides a "first look" at your heart's activity by which to compare future EKGs prompted by suspected heart complications.

Who benefits from these? Any healthy individual of any age, especially those who have not had a baseline EKG in the past 6 months. It's recommended to take your results to your next regular medical appointment.

EKG's performed and read by: Sublette County EMS & Dr. Buck Wallace



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MEETING NOTICE

**SUBLETTE COUNTY
REPUBLICAN PARTY**

TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2023

@ 6 PM

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SUBLETTE COUNTY LIBRARY
PINEDALE, WY**

Kickin' Cancer in Sublette County

Annual Fundraiser

June 10, 2023

Sublette County Ice Arena in Pinedale

We're preparing for our annual fundraiser
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**Drop off your donations at the Daniel Junction, Bank of Jackson Hole,
and Pinedale Properties or call Sheila Boyce at 307-367-2299.**

We're also looking for volunteers in Pinedale and Big Piney to help collect donations and with the fundraiser. For more information please call **Sheila Boyce at 307-367-2299.**