

LOCAL

Daniel Old Timers Picnic pics

See **A3**

LOCAL

Public comment sought on elk feedgrounds

See **A4**

Pinedale Roundup

Newspaper of the Upper Green River Valley, Est. 1904

August 3, 2023

One Dollar

Expanded clinic hours planned in south county

By Robert Galbreath
rgalbreath@pinedaleroundup.com

MARBLETON – Staff and providers at the Marbleton-Big Piney Clinic put their heads together to develop a blueprint to expand hours at the facility, announced Dr. David Burnett, Sublette County Hospital District (SCHD) medical director, at the July 26 board of trustees' meeting.

Preliminary plans are underfoot to keep the clinic open for an additional hour – until 6 p.m. – on Mondays and Thursdays, Burnett said. Burnett stressed that the extra hours would not constitute urgent care at this point, but will allow providers to see patients for two more hours each week.

Employees at the Marbleton-Big Piney Clinic require approximately 60 days to reorganize schedules and other logistics to make the plan work, with a rollout expected in September, Burnett told trustees. The 60-day set-up period will also allow the district to bring in new providers and get them credentialed, Burnett added (see recruitment below).

Once the additional hours for patient care are up and running, the clinic will enter a 90-

See 'CLINIC' on page **A9**



JOAN MITCHELL PHOTO

23 and Proud! Father-and-son team Colter and Jace Soll race to beat the clock during the team branding event in the Ag Center at the Sublette County Fairgrounds. Team branding took place on Saturday, July 22, and was one of the first events at the week-long 2023 Sublette County Fair. For results and photos, please see pages A12-14.

Pick me! Governor, G&F, SGIT want to shape larger sage-grouse policy

By Joy Ufford
jufford@pinedaleroundup.com

SUBLETTE COUNTY – In a concerted effort to maintain state control of greater sage-grouse policies and prevent its federal listing as endangered, Wyoming's governor and the Sage-Grouse Implementation Team are working furiously to write a foolproof conservation plan.

The goal is to write such a good plan – for both Wyoming's private and public lands – that the Bureau of Land Management will accept it as an option in its upcoming environmental impact statement to protect sage-grouse populations and habitats across the West.

At the July 18 public meeting in the Lovatt Room, Bob Budd of the Wyoming Wildlife Natural Resource Trust and Angi Bruce, assistant director of Wyoming Game and Fish, represented the SGIT and its work to expand and map out Gov. Mark Gordon's executive order. Landowners and developers in Sublette County have awaited a more detailed statewide policy, unsure of what to expect.

Local sage-grouse working groups – including Sublette County's – worked with SGIT on core habitat maps, looking at smaller landscapes and development realities to fine-tune the

map's many layers. However, maps have been fairly general for those without online access to interactive maps.

The reason for all of this – a 2021 federal court decision ordered the Bureau of Land Management to reassess its 2019 sage-grouse management strategies and come up with a "strict conservation alternative," Budd explained.

In 2021, the BLM issued a notice of its intent to develop new regulations range-wide.

Wyoming and other western states committed to keep declining greater sage-grouse populations from an Endangered Species Act listing. The Wyoming Sage-Grouse Conservation Strategy has two main goals, Budd said – to preclude a federal "endangered" listing and maintain the state's economic component.

"We want core habitat areas (mapped) where they will have the most effect," Budd said. "We've invested millions in enhancing habitats."

Private landowners in newly designated core habitat will be called on for extra stewardship efforts with Gov. Gordon's soon-to-be completed executive order.

Bruce said the state and SGIT's strategy is to enact regulatory mechanisms that avoid harming the birds, minimize threats to the species' biological base and mitigate for potential

harm, such as building an access road on the other side a ridge or situating a well slightly differently.

"Our strategy has already been set," she said.

The core area strategy was to draw a 5-mile circle around leks and overlap breeding, nesting and rearing habitats with winter connectivity. "Then we went back and looked at valid and existing rights and uses within the context of likely and credible development potential."

Local working groups could pinpoint pieces to carve off these circles "and highlight core areas for the most opportunity for high productivity."

Bruce explained "metrics" are more relevant than actual bird numbers. "Populations go up and down all the time. Numbers are meaningless because it depends on 'are there birds there.'" She said GPS-collared sage-grouse are tracked to show every move generally within the 5 miles but she couldn't show anyone's private property status in public.

"If a listing occurred it would apply to all of the leks on that map (including private property)," she said. "The Endangered Species Act is more restrictive than Wyoming."

Once listed, all environmental actions would go through

See 'SAGE-GROUSE' on page **A7**

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THE ROUNDUP, ROUNDED UP

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Earth is moving

Hospital, Sublette Center construction fully underway

By Robert Galbreath
rgalbreath@pinedaleroundup.com

PINEDALE – Excavators, backhoe loaders, dump trucks, rollers and construction crews are busy transforming the hilltop near the Pinedale Clinic to make way for the new critical access hospital and long-term care facility.

Karl Lueschow of Lueschow Property Management, the owner's representative for the Sublette County Hospital District, congratulated the SCHD board on the commencement of construction for the health-care campus – a historical milestone for the community.

"Ninety-eight years later, we have finally started to build," said Lueschow.

Lueschow provided a summary of all the work carried out so far as the building project entered its second week. Crews are beginning to grade the building pad, Lueschow told trustees.

"Monster piles" of dirt loom above the site, Lueschow noted, housing all of the soil removed from the construction zone.

Excavators are digging a route along Hennick Street to link the health-care campus's water-main line to the Town of Pinedale's pipeline system, said Lueschow. As trenchwork continues, Hennick Street will experience temporary closures with traffic rerouted, he added.

The digging is proceeding smoothly with the exception of the discovery of an unknown box housing fiber, Lueschow reported. The SCHD's construction team is working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Century Link to come up with a "cost-effective" solution to the presence of the fiber box, Lueschow added.

Crews are also hooking the construction site up to temporary power and relocating gas lines, Lueschow said.

Workers relocated the helipad to a new site and are applying the final coats of paint, Lueschow announced. Test flights to the helipad are expected to be carried out this week, he continued.

The next big construction step involves high-impact compaction to level the site, Lueschow noted. Residents living in the area can expect "shaking and pounding" during the day beginning on Aug. 8, Lueschow told trustees.

Local company Telectractors, Inc., a subcontractor to Layton Construction on this project, is performing the excavation work and doing an "outstanding job" and "plowing forward" with its tasks, said Lueschow.

Lueschow also praised the management team from Layton who arrived in Pinedale several weeks ago to supervise the project. The administrators bring "top-notch experience" and knowledge of health-care construction to the table, Lueschow noted.

Trustee Ashli Tatro asked Lueschow for a progress report on the conditions listed by the Town of Pinedale in its building permit granted in June.

Jorgensen Associates completed a design to address one of the outstanding conditions related to storm-water runoff, Lueschow replied. He felt "confident" the town would approve Jorgensen's blueprint.

Fellow trustee Dave Bell inquired whether Layton workers found housing in the Pinedale area. Only three full-time workers from Layton are on site, said Lueschow, and he added that there was "no indication of anyone" experiencing problems with housing so far.

Sublette County Health Foundation
The Sublette County Health Foundation received a \$1-million donation from Dan and Kim Huish, said foundation director Kari DeWitt.

"We are thankful for the incredibly generous donation from the Huish family," DeWitt said.

DeWitt reported on a successful campaign during the statewide WyoGives fundraiser on July 12. The Sublette County Health Foundation raised \$21,870 over the course of 24 hours, DeWitt said. Even though the Sublette County Health Foundation is a new organization, it ranked 24th in the state for contributions received, DeWitt added.

Merger update
Progress continues in the merger between the SCHD and Sublette Center, formally commenced in December 2022 when boards from both organizations signed a membership substitution agreement.

A workshop is scheduled on Sept. 6 between the Sublette Center II Board and its attorneys to iron out legalities for the change of ownership that will happen between the two entities this winter, SCHD board chairwoman Tonia Hoffman announced to trustees.

The Sublette Center II Board contains representatives from both the Sublette Center and SCHD boards and is the administrative body for the Sublette Center for the duration of the transition period and before the change of ownership takes place.

The change of ownership will trigger the final transfer of assets from the Sublette Center to the SCHD, ending the Sublette Center's existence as an independent nonprofit.

A public meeting to formalize the change of ownership will follow the Sept. 6 workshop at a date to be announced in the future, Hoffman told the Roundup.

The change of ownership is expected to take place on schedule before the end of 2023, said Hoffman.

The SCHD is working closely with the Sublette Center's staff and administration to "gently pull the two organizations together," Hoffman said to the Roundup. Sublette Center employees are involved in each of the SCHD's committees, from the building committee to quality committee, and are "looped in on everything" as far as the merger and construction process, Hoffman added.

Hoffman pledged that there will be no "significant" changes for Sublette Center workers once the change of ownership occurs, beyond receiving their paychecks from the hospital district rather than the Sublette Center.

"We want this transition to be as seamless as possible," Hoffman said.

Strong finances and employee housing task force

The SCHD experienced a "tremendous year" in terms of mill-levy revenue, primarily from the oil and gas industry, Bell reported to the board.

The district received \$12,356,561 in mill-levy tax revenue for the fiscal year ending on June 30, said Bell. In June, the district obtained a significant tax payment of \$2,771,845, allowing it to post a \$2,049,505 profit for the month, Bell added.

"We can only wish for that in the future," Bell said. "It was a great month and a good year."

Healthy tax revenues created an opportunity for the district to set aside \$4 million in its reserve accounts over the course of the previous fiscal year, Bell told trustees. The district's cash on hand currently sits at 345 days, the highest figure since March 2020 and considerably better than the SCHD's strategic goal of 225 days cash on hand, said Bell.

"We are well-positioned for challenges that will come our way over the coming months," Bell told trustees.

Bell also announced the formation of an employee housing task force to coordinate efforts between the SCHD board and staff to "come up with creative ideas to solve employee housing needs" in the county.



Weekly Weather Forecast

Pinedale, Wyoming • August 3-8

Today

Sunrise: 6:12 a.m. **Sunset:** 8:37 p.m.

High: **64°** Low: **49°**

RealFeel® 65° 53°

Day: Cloudy with thunderstorms.

Night: Partly cloudy.



Friday

Partly sunny and nice.

High: **70°**
Low: **45°**



Saturday

Partly cloudy with afternoon t-storms.

High: **69°**
Low: **41°**



Sunday

Cool with times of sun and clouds.

High: **64°**
Low: **46°**



Monday

Cool with a blend of sun and clouds.

High: **64°**
Low: **46°**



Tuesday

Times of clouds and sun with a t-storm.

High: **74°**
Low: **45°**



Daniel Old Timers (and new) enjoy annual picnic



Rollie Sparrowe dishes up from potluck offerings.

SUBLETTE COUNTY – What's great about community traditions like the Daniel Old Timers Picnic is that so many generations show up each summer. This year's picnic took place on Sunday, July 16, at the Daniel Community Center.



Matt David escorts his mother Merlin David to the beautiful desserts.



A line of the county's 'old timers' gathers outside the historic Daniel Schoolhouse.



From left, Lonnie Johnson, Garlie Swain, Steve James and Alan Call discuss the meaning of life.



Bob Beard, center, visits with Katie and Shawn Robertson.

Street Talk

By Terry Allen

What's the best thing about being you?



My ability to make enough money to buy more personality all the time.

*Lanky,
Texas*



I make lots of friends.

*Jada Rogerson,
Pinedale*



I can do whatever I want. I'm headed to Texas with this fair.

*Megan Fischer,
Gillette*



I make up jokes without a punchline. 'A hypnotist, a magician and a clown walk into a bar.'

Keith Pryor, Gillette



Ranching. My steer and I understand each other.

*Ryker Cummings,
Big Piney*

AG NEWS

Game and Fish tackles feedground changes

By Joy Ufford
jufford@pinedaleroundup.com

SUBLETTE COUNTY – With the fatal, infectious and perhaps uncontrollable Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) creeping west to afflict wildlife, especially mule deer and elk, Wyoming Game and Fish began considering its winter elk feedground program.

On July 26, at the public meeting about the plan at the Pinedale Library, a half-dozen Jackson and Pinedale regional biologists and state wildlife experts, as part of a Game and Fish working-group, explained how the draft plan was designed.

Jackson Regional Wildlife Supervisor Brad Hovinga explained while Game and Fish was updating its CWD surveillance and management plan, it became obvious that winter elk feedgrounds was its own huge topic that needed a focus. Feedgrounds are historically a way to keep elk unable to migrate to winter ranges from raiding private haystacks.

Elk on feedgrounds generally have higher disease transmission.

Game and Fish operates 22 feedgrounds in western Wyoming, in Sublette, Teton and Lincoln counties. Two longtime employees, Gary Hornberger and Dave Hyde, oversee feedground operations and contracted feeders, often ranchers living nearby.

Pinedale Wildlife Supervisor John Lund said the goal is to reduce elk reliance on winter feedgrounds. "It is not a feedground closure plan."

Some local ranchers had voiced concerns



Facilitator Tara Kuipers, left, introduces Wyoming Game and Fish's elk feedground management draft plan as wildlife biologists (right along wall) wait to discuss each section. Comments will be taken through Sept. 10.

after the draft's release that if not fed in winter, elk would commingle with their livestock and transmit brucellosis, which is monitored in western Wyoming to keep elk away from cattle and domestic bison herds, Lund said.

"We got a lot of concern over this one," Lund said. "This is not a plan to put livestock producers out of business. That will be made clearer."

The elk feedground draft plan calls for individualized feedground management action plans (FMAPs) that once in place, Game and Fish employees, elk feeders and stakeholders can reinforce a longterm local management plan.

"Feedgrounds are a major source of wildlife diseases," said Infectious disease biologist Sam Allen of Cheyenne. CWD is paramount and so far, "impossible to eradicate." Neither wildlife nor livestock can be vaccinated or cured for CWD.

Pinedale Wildlife Coordinator Brandon Scurlock reviewed elk feedgrounds' century of management, relating the socioeconomic aspects of buying hay, hunting elk and contracting local elk feeders. He advocated habitat improvement as a main goal to provide winter forage away from feedgrounds so elk grow less reliant on them.

"We have not always been on the same page to managing elk," Hovinga said. This plan would create "overarching direction for our employees" and "unified goals" for decades to come.

Public understanding and strong support of Game and Fish's management goals are necessary, he said, while maintaining population objectives for elk while weighing in mule deer, pronghorn and moose "also trying to survive winter."

Some solutions might be "big ticket items" that the public, hunters and Game and Fish will need to understand and support, he added.

Facilitator Tara Kuipers provided the timeline. On Aug. 30, stakeholders will meet in Pinedale for a "wrap-up meeting." Public comments are due Sept. 10 and can be submitted online. The regional feedground working group will review those comments and finish revisions for a solid proposal. That is slated to go before the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission for a vote at its Nov. 14-15 meeting in Gillette.

The revised draft will be available in the commissioners' packets before the meeting for the public to review, Kuipers said. Also, the July 25 Zoom meeting is posted for the public to watch.

Q & A

The current draft plan shows the "quota" for each feedground's wintering elk, which in nearly every case, is much lower than actual winter counts. Hovinga said these quotas haven't changed since the 1980s and will be updated; methods to reduce elk populations as needed would be locally discussed.

Allen was asked about CWD prevalence in a herd or region. She said CWD is detected in five elk feedgrounds – "The only thing that changes is the disease prevalence."

Hovinga said increased sampling by hunters and biologists would not necessarily mean increased elk infections. When 10 percent or higher prevalence is detected for three or more years, Game and Fish would evaluate a feedground's options for closure.

Former Game and Fish Commissioner Mike Schmidt asked if a feedground's CWD prevalence is that high, "what happens; do you annihilate the elk herd?"

Lund said Game and Fish would be required to follow its FMAP with commission approval.

"If we get 10-percent prevalence on an elk feedground, you're going to see the impacts (of the fatal disease)," Hovinga said. "The public will see it – we may have broader

options if that happens."

Rancher and House Rep. Albert Sommers asked about the prevalence in eastern Wyoming, with no elk feedgrounds. Allen said it ranges from 5 to 10 percent in free-ranging Laramie Mountain elk herds.

Hovinga pointed out eastern Wyoming elk have a doubled calf production compared to feedground elk and don't have wolves as predators. Sommers asked how those elk were affected by CWD; Allen called the comparison "apples and oranges."

Rancher Joel Bousman asked for assurances that CWD management actions wouldn't affect the state's brucellosis prevalence.

"Good comment," Hovinga said. "Something we need to make clear is we don't want to sacrifice one for the other."

Jackson Wildlife Management Coordinator Cheyenne Stewart stated "assurances" would be clarified in the revised plan's sideboards.

Rancher Mike Vickrey returned to potentially brucellosis transmission between cattle and elk that are encouraged to rely less on winter feedgrounds.

"With these diseases, brucellosis could break out on any ranch in Sublette County," Vickrey said. "If you try to manage around a feedground, it may not affect the industry as a whole but there is someone out there it could break."

Schmidt posed the concept of convincing elk to begin migrating again to the Red Desert – "There's enough room there."

Lund was taken with the idea as "a great opportunity" to collaborate with agencies, landowners and interest groups to provide passage, habitat and forage along the way.

"It would be really neat to do that," Lund said. "What kinds of issues and problems it would have..."

It means finding "specific solutions to those obstacles," Hovinga said. "A lot of times it comes down to money, for making changes. In the FMAP process, you figure out a solution and then how to get there."

Read and comment by Sept. 10 on the draft Wyoming Elk Feedground Management Plan at <https://wgf.d.wyo.gov/get-involved>.



Aug. 4 - Aug. 10



Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem
PG-13

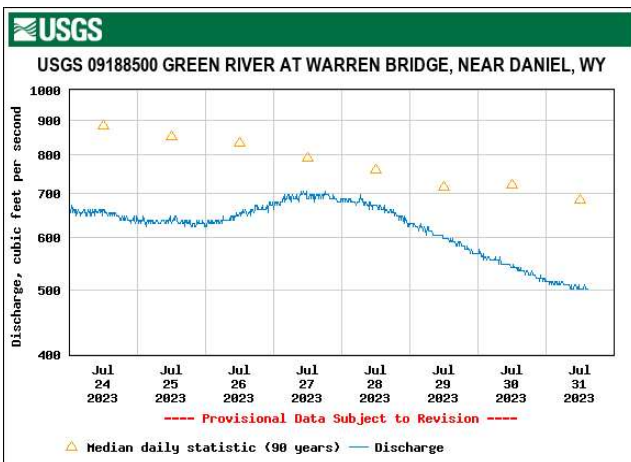


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COMMENTARY



The Intrepid Explorer — Living – Life – Large

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

As the launch of the Big Gulp line coincided with the onset of the obesity epidemic in the United States, it also was a steppingstone for complete control over consumers to include what they could think. The Big Gulp represents the point where something changed in a radical way. American drink sizes and overall manipulation have been so huge for so long that hardly anyone can recall a time when restraint was the rule.

Our mythical Big Gulp society is possessed by the frenzy to produce more and consume more and has gained the ability to transform all things into visible and tangible objects of consumption, even if they are not.

We were told to follow the Super Size modus operandi without restraint, so we did. As the information we receive is funneled into us, we are told what to think and what to believe, and we do.

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These top six companies control 90 percent of the media in the United States.

The Big Six's net worth of over \$430 billion with approximately 232 media executives calling the shots for the vast majority of the information we are presented with. In short, these are the people that are telling us what to think, feel and believe.

We can also add to our information smorgasbord or diet, depending on what you choose to feast on, the Big Tech companies like Facebook or Google. These digital souschefs have been stirring the pot with their

See 'ABERNATHY' on page A6

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Three critical items need to be done as soon as possible to preserve Sublette County's big game migration corridors and our elected officials need the motivation to do them.

1. Parcel #194 of the Wyoming Office of State Lands needs to be "not available" for development because it is a bottleneck in the Sublette Pronghorn migration corridor. Its offering in the recent State O&G lease auction was an error, and however embarrassing to admit the mistake, the offering must be canceled in order to preserve Sublette pronghorn corridor functionality. The Wyoming Board of Land Commissioners can do this. They will decide this Thursday morning, Aug. 3.

2. The Sublette pronghorn migration corridor must be officially designated by Gov. Gordon. In 2018 the Wyoming Game and Fish proposed this corridor, but it has been on hold ever since, subject to the new complicated rules of Gov. Gordon's migration corridor Executive Order. If the Sublette pronghorn corridor were already officially designated, item one (offering a bottleneck at lease auction) would not have happened. The governor can make the Sublette pronghorn corridor designation happen.

Dear Editor,

Once again Sublette County is the home of a bottleneck for the migration of the Sublette Pronghorn. This "Path of the Pronghorn" is the longest migration of ungulates in the lower 48 states. Decades ago, Trappers Point was recognized as a critical point of passing for hundreds of pronghorn who migrate annually from the Red Desert all the way to Teton County and into Yellowstone. Agencies, conservation groups and individuals banded together to keep the Trappers Point bottleneck open to this ancient Sublette pronghorn migration.

The state of Wyoming, in a gas and oil lease auction in July, included a state parcel (#194)

despite the requests to exclude it based on this important fact: It is the main New Fork River crossing for pronghorn traveling from Trappers Point across the Mesa. It is critical that development not take place on this lease. Given the tragic loss of up to 75 percent of the pronghorn that use this path (Wyofile, May 23, 2023), we should do everything possible to help this iconic herd survive and thrive.

This one lease should be removed despite the fact that it was auctioned. The State Board of Land Commissioners makes the final decisions on these state leases.

Urge these elected individuals to withdraw this parcel or not certify the lease. Also, urge them to

3. Governor Gordon's migration corridor executive order needs to be amended to streamline it and strengthen wildlife protection. Obviously getting a corridor designated is far too cumbersome. (See item two, the Sublette pronghorn who have been on hold for five years.) And right now the governor's executive order provides only two main protections for designated corridors: a) no development in bottlenecks (see item 1), and b) no construction in the corridor during migration periods. (The order recommends more protections, but they are all coupled with the word "should," so the main thing that actually results is only the construction period restriction). Allowing the migration corridors to fill up with developments in the off-season, of course, does not meet the governor's goals and does not preserve migration corridors. The governor can fix this by amending his executive order.

If you support big game migration in Sublette County, please contact the governor or other wildlife-related officials and let them know. Time is of the essence.

Carmel Kail,
Pinedale

support an immediate designation for the "Path of the Pronghorn."

The board includes:
Gov. Mark Gordon, 307-777-7434

Secretary of State Chuck Grey,
Chuck.Gray@wyo.gov
Auditor Kristi Racines,
SAOAdmin@wyo.gov
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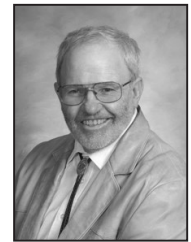
Let's hold our state responsible for protecting what's left of one of its most valuable assets.

Sincerely,
Jana Weber
Pinedale

Legislative Update

From House Rep. Albert Sommers, District No. 20

Hello Sublette County and LaBarge, this is Albert Sommers reporting from interim work of the 67th Legislature. The Mental Health and Vulnerable Adult Taskforce met on May 12 in Cheyenne and July 18-19 in Lander. This taskforce includes legislators, Wyoming Department of Health, Wyoming Department of Family Services, Wyoming Corrections and the Wyoming Supreme Court.



Mental health challenges have become increasingly prevalent in our courts, schools and society in general.

In 2021, Wyoming had the highest suicide rate in the nation, and has retained one of the worst suicide rates for several years. I advocated for the creation of this taskforce, and I am a member.

At the May meeting in Cheyenne, the Taskforce decided it would concentrate on four main issues – diversion, vulnerable adults, K12 mental health services and adolescents with high behavioral needs. These four issues seem to create the greatest challenges and needs in Wyoming. As a result of this meeting, subcommittees were created to dig deeper into each of these topics.

In Lander on July 18-19, the Taskforce listened to testimony and ideas from each of the four subcommittees. Earlier in the year a delegation of Wyoming legislators, department personnel and members of the court system toured a diversion program in Miami-Dade County, Fla. The Miami-Dade Mental Health Project was established in 2000 to divert individuals with serious mental illnesses away from the criminal justice system and into comprehensive community-based treatment and support services. Individuals in this successful program had serious mental illness and reoccurring histories in the court system prior to implementation of the program.

The subcommittee on diversion reported that the Three Branch Mental Health Diversion Pilot Project had been created in Campbell County to test the Miami-Dade model. Will this pilot project reduce the cost of repeat offenders, while improving their lives through better mental health services? Time will tell.

The subcommittee on vulnerable adults met and reported back to the Taskforce with the following: A vulnerable adult by law is, any person 18 years of age or older who is unable to manage and take care of himself or his money, assets or property without assistance as a result of advanced age or physical or mental disability.

See 'SOMMERS' on page A6

Pinedale Roundup

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COURTESY PHOTO

Although Cooper and LeeAnn Shelton started their gardening adventures in Sublette County only a year ago, they have sparked the curiosity of many travelers going to Jackson with the glowing green lights emanating from their large greenhouse near the Rim Station on Highway 191 in the dark of winter. A large group of Sage and Snow Garden Club members took a field trip to the greenhouse last week and honored the new gardeners with its prestigious Garden of Beauty Award. The 42- by 120-foot greenhouse may be the largest in Sublette County, and although it is fully automated with its computer-controlled lighting, heating, irrigating and fertilizing systems, it is a full-time job for Cooper and LeeAnn to plant, monitor and harvest the hundreds of plants growing indoors. Salad greens and herbs are grown hydroponically in rock wool fiber pods nested in pop-out rails with a circulating water/fertilizer solution. But, many other plants are grown in pots with Pro Mix potting mixture and carefully controlled fertilizer and water applications. Tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, cantaloupes, watermelons, Albion strawberries, kohlrabi, Brussels sprouts, summer and winter squash, ginger, turmeric, horseradish, wasabi and nasturtiums fill the giant space with their trailing tendrils carefully bound and trellised to make the best use of the indoor space. Bees, parasitic wasps, orius and lacewings are added to balance the insect population, and extra pollen is used to encourage their presence and activity. Cooper and LeeAnn are anxious to share their bountiful garden with others and welcome walk in customers on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. They also accept call-in orders at 919-340-3023. Although Cooper and LeeAnn don't technically own the greenhouse, it is definitely a labor of love for them, and their willingness to share their expertise and food with others is a wonderful way of getting to know their new community.

SCSD1 trustees talk school lunch options

By Robert Galbreath
rgalbreath@pinedaleroundup.com

PINEDALE – Discussions centered around school lunches for a considerable portion of the Sublette County School District No. 1 (SCSD1) Board of Trustees' meeting on July 19. Trustees touched on different alternatives to provide meals to students, including the possibility of withdrawing from the federal U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National School Lunch Program.

Trustees took no action regarding school meals on July 19, although the topic may come up again for discussion at later board meetings.

SCSD1 Superintendent Shannon Harris emphasized that a decision to pull out of the National School Lunch Program would be difficult, involving "significant" costs and months of information gathering to thoroughly examine each possibility. The final choice ultimately falls under the board's authority, Harris added.

In light of the discussion on July 19, the district

plans to submit a survey to families this fall asking for feedback about SCSD1's lunch program, said Harris. Anticipated questions may include what parents and students like about the current lunch plan, any improvements that families would like to see to the plan and what their favorite foods and meals are, Harris explained.

The district also intends to ask parents how much they would be willing to pay for school breakfasts and lunches if recommended improvements are made or if the district chooses to end its participation in the National School Lunch Program, Harris continued.

Dialogue on school lunches began during the administrative report section of the July 19 meeting. Trustee Marie McGuire asked for information on what would happen if the district remained in the National School Lunch Program or pursued other options in preparation for future discussions on how to "provide better lunches" for students.

The district could withdraw from the National

See 'LUNCH' on page A9

SAGE-GROUSE

Continued from A1

the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) or U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) NEPA processes. After five years, the FWS could review the listing.

It would be ideal for all landowners to implement the state's core area strategy, she and Budd said. Bruce said they were told in March to have a plan done by July and "we didn't do a good job of letting people know."

The BLM wants to publish its environmental impact statement next summer and Wyoming wants to have its final version no later than December, Bruce said.

SGIT captures 85 percent of the state's sage-grouse, mainly in this county, and SGIT hopes to reach 90 percent.

Several landowners asked: What if their private property includes core habitat?

Budd said they could do "de minimus" on ag lands – anything basic to ranch and farm. It would not affect building a new structure, he said.

Rancher and Rep. Albert Sommers asked about private landowners needing a Game and Fish consultation if any state permit is requested in sage-grouse habitat.

"You would be asked to consult with Game and Fish," Budd said. "You wouldn't be denied a permit. ... We don't want to preclude landowners from doing de minimus."

A subdivision's stormwater plan might fall under state "small project" review. It's standard; it happens all the time," Budd said.

Budd said the governor won't want to change the map in five years and wrote his executive order so it won't change every time the governor changes.

"It's really all about maintaining control of the sage-grouse," Bruce said. "How to keep Wyoming in control. We use science to change the map and strategy as needed. Coming up with a product that is defensible. We probably have the best sage-grouse data in the

West."

Bruce added, "We are trying to continuously influence what the BLM is doing with the plan, using our science."

The BLM can't include private lands in the EIS so Gov. Gordon will offer the final version to the BLM for consideration. "At the end of the day, we want to be the one that's chosen," Bruce said.

A woman asked about the interactive map and learned it's on the Sublette County official GIS map as well.

"If it's on the map in red, what does that mean?" "We have to be able to show we are managing for long-term management of the species," Budd said.

Sommers said he was "tired of the state chasing the federal government's bouncing ball – you're never going to catch it."

"We want to get ahead of it," Bruce said, "to keep it in state management. I hear doubt in his voice. ... I'm starting to hear a little doubt in my voice as well."

Budd reiterated, "Sublette County has more birds than anywhere. ... The other beauty in this county, anything that benefits sage-grouse also benefits mule deer too."

Asked why the BLM was dealing with private land and wildlife, Budd said, "Because they were ordered to, the nexus of public and private."

Finally, Randall Luthi advised the audience they "will continue to have the ability to use the land you have for development; we want to be able to show we have both."

Questions arose about carbon credits, hunting ravens, migration corridors, disturbance percentages and reclamation on private and public lands.

"In 30 years the healthiest habitat is going to be the skeletons of the Pinedale Anticline and Jonah Field," said Michael Koran.

Budd said the team is talking to restoration and reclamation experts and a white paper is due to SGIT regarding abandoned mine lands.

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SUBLETTE COUNTY

Sheriff's report

The Sublette County Sheriff's Office reported 220 calls and incidents from July 24 through July 30, including an assault, 11 medical emergencies, three fires, 12 vehicle collisions, two search and rescues, 23 suspicious or accidental 911 calls, a missing person, a suicidal person, seven animal problems, 25 urinalyses and 36 vehicle identification number inspections.

July 24
At 4:30 a.m., a deputy helped a person who fell.

At 9:15 a.m., a Lincoln County 911 call was transferred.

At 12:33 p.m., two vehicles collided; no one was injured.

At 12:44 p.m., a deputy helped with traffic control.

At 2:27 p.m., a medical emergency took place in Lincoln County.

At 3:07 p.m., a deputy checked out and cleared a suspicious incident.

At 4:30 p.m., a Teton County deputy reported a one-car crash on his way to work.

At 9:48 p.m., a deputy didn't find an outside fire.

At 10:34 p.m., a crash was reported.

At 11:22 p.m., an outside fire call was cleared.

July 25
At 3:54 a.m., a deputy found a small corgi and toy Australian shepherd running down a road.

At 8:55 a.m., a deputy cleared a suspicious incident.

At 8:57 a.m., two officers transferred a federal inmate to Sweetwater County.

At 10:03 a.m., injuries were reported.

At 11:06 a.m., a woman said a large sheep dog attacked her in Pinedale.

At 12:11 p.m., an officer looked into a suspicious incident.

At 1:12 p.m., a woman through she was

being scammed.

At 3:56 p.m., a man told a deputy about a suspicious incident.

At 5:20 p.m., a man found a lost phone's owner.

At 6:28 p.m., an officer learned of a suspicious person.

At 8:24 p.m., a game warden put down an antelope.

At 8:58 p.m., a woman found and brought in a Fit watch.

At 9:14 p.m., a deputy checked on a horse in a trailer.

At 9:48 p.m., a deputy responded to a citizen dispute over a truck.

July 26
At 12:15 a.m., a NOLS student was found and taken by helicopter to the Pinedale Clinic.

At 5:22 a.m., a deputy checked out a moose vs. vehicle collision on Highway 191.

At 7:05 a.m., two deputies helped Sublette EMS with a patient.

At 7:13 a.m., a deputy cleared a 911 call about a suspicious incident.

At 8:39 a.m., a deputy responded to an animal problem.

At 10:28 a.m., a collision was reported.

At 10:56 a.m., a caller asked about drone legalities.

At 11:18 a.m., a woman couldn't provide a urine sample because no female deputy was available to help collect it.

At 11:54 a.m., a deputy helped with a patient.

At 12:27 p.m., a jail officer transported two inmates from Bondurant to Farson.

At 1:13 p.m., a man said his new passport was mailed and he never received it.

At 1:24 p.m., a deputy did not find a fire.

At 3:06 p.m., a deputy gathered information after a collision.

At 4:16 p.m., a detective responded to a

SUBLETTE COUNTY

Circuit Court

These new charges were filed in Sublette County Circuit Court from July 24 to July 30.

Donald B. Dabel: Falsely reporting a crime.
Justin E. Simpson: Animal running at large, first offense.

Corey A. Johnson: Criminal contempt.
Steven Bond: Load on vehicle, prevent from falling.

Kendall Hoehn: Possession of marijuana, misdemeanor.
The following fines were imposed in Circuit Court from July 24 to July 30.

Lynn M. Reno, Pinedale: Domestic assault, first offense, jail 180 days with 177 suspended, six months unsupervised probation, fines \$320.

Kade M. Williams, Boulder: Superintendent's speed zone, fine \$105; driving in a single lane, fine \$90.

Scott V. Cheeney, Pinedale: Exceeding 70 mph on a highway, fine \$115.

call about a suspicious driver.

At 6:50 p.m., a deputy responded to check out multiple events in the area.

At 7:25 p.m., horses were back in their corral.

At 10:09 p.m., security alarms went off in several vehicles.

July 27
At 4:53 a.m., hazardous tarps were removed from the road.

At 7:26 a.m., a deputy helped with a cattle drive south of Pinedale.

At 2:01 p.m., a woman reported an aggressive dog.

At 2:16 p.m., a crash was reported.

At 2:21 p.m., a deputy's answers helped a situation resolve itself.

At 3:54 p.m., a property management company reported trespassing.

At 3:59 p.m., a black Chevy Tahoe was weaving all over the road.

At 4:02 p.m., an animal problem was transferred to animal control.

At 4:17 p.m., a man asked a deputy to check on someone's welfare.

At 4:25 p.m., something hit a woman's windshield so hard it shattered.

At 4:44 p.m., a detective removed a carcass from the road.

At 5:52 p.m., a deputy helped a patient with breathing problems.

At 6:18 p.m., a person had convulsions.

At 10:52 p.m., a vehicle hit a moose near Bondurant.

At 11:57 p.m., a woman reported a suspicious incident.

July 28
At 1:30 a.m., a deputy checked on a person's welfare.

At 5:02 a.m., an accident was investigated.

At 8:46 a.m., a woman reported a livestock problem.

At 9:13 a.m., a detective asked to use the drone to check on someone's welfare.

At 9:27 a.m., a person was held in contempt of court.

At 10:09 a.m., deputies responded to an Onstar emergency alert.

At 11:07 a.m., a woman reported a suspicious person.

At 11:49 a.m., a person was suicidal.

At 2:25 p.m., a deputy helped Sublette EMS with an unconscious patient.

At 3:04 p.m., a deputy checked on someone's welfare.

At 3:25 p.m., a deputy helped EMS with patients.

At 5 p.m., a deputy checked on a person's welfare.

At 9:27 p.m., a woman reported hitting a moose on Highway 189.

At 9:46 p.m., a deputy responded to a medical emergency.

July 29
At 12:12 a.m., a suspicious incident was reported.

At 3:22 a.m., a deputy responded to a suspicious incident.

At 3:26 a.m., a deputy drove a stroke patient in the ambulance to the clinic.

At 6:56 a.m., a deputy helped someone get into a locked car.

At 11:39 a.m., an inmate was transported.

At 12:49 p.m., Tip Top helped a woman with a dislocated shoulder.

At 3:59 p.m., a detective looked into a suspicious incident.

At 4:51 p.m., a juvenile was involved with an animal attack.

At 5:37 p.m., a man reported an abandoned trailer and 55-gallon barrel.

At 5:46 p.m., a GPS alert said AAA would respond to a call for assistance.

At 5:57 p.m., a call was out of SCSO's jurisdiction.

At 6:17 p.m., a person had breathing problems.

At 6:28 p.m., a detective received information.

At 6:31 p.m., a medical emergency was reported.

At 7:44 p.m., a transportation collision was reported.

At 7:52 p.m., a suspicious incident had juvenile involvement.

At 9:03 p.m., a detective responded to a medical emergency.

At 9:14 p.m., a person was arrested for assault.

At 9:52 p.m., a detective helped a person get private property from a back deck.

At 10:08 p.m., a tenant complained that the past two nights a vehicle's alarm went off every 10 minutes.

At 11:37 p.m., a deputy looked into a suspicious incident.

At 11:52 p.m., a deputy looked for a certain problem juvenile.

July 30
At 7:34 a.m., a medical emergency was reported.

At 10:44 a.m., a deputy checked out a suspicious incident.

At 11:33 a.m., an officer responded to a medical emergency.

At 11:55 a.m., another medical

See 'SHERIFFS' on page A9

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PINEDALE ROUNDUP

DEATH NOTICE

Lewis Carl Atkinson

Dec. 19, 1935 — July 29, 2023

Lewis Carl Atkinson finally retired on July 29, in Rock Springs, Wyo. Lewis was born on Dec. 19, 1935.

A viewing will be held from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Aug. 5, at Fox Funeral Home, 2800 Commercial Way, Rock Springs, WY

82901.

Gravestone services and interment will follow at the Rock Springs Municipal Cemetery.

Condolences for the family can be left at www.foxfh.com.

County abandons Doyle Gravel Pit plans, 5-0

P.S. Crossfire Arena no longer on the market

By Joy Ufford

jufford@pinedaleroundup.com

SUBLETTE COUNTY – A year ago, three of five Sublette County commissioners approved the \$1-million purchase of the Doyle family’s ranch acres to expand the gravel pit permit and install a hot-mix asphalt plant, in the middle of many residences on the south end of Pinedale.

The county’s plan to use all 60 acres to excavate, crush and store gravel immediately drew criticism, from neighbors and others who questioned the commissioners’ majority vote by Tom Noble, Sam White and Joel Bousman. Commissioners Doug Vickrey and Dave Stephens – who requested an appraisal that was shot down – voted against the purchase.

Not only the gravel pit plans infuriated local residents; the county’s lack of public discussion and transparency about the purchase completed before the next commissioners’ meeting rubbed many the wrong way, as did apparent errors in the permit application.

Sublette County Road & Bridge’s Billy Pape had filed a Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality air-quality application to expand the small gravel pit and the DEQ held a public hearing in Pinedale. Air Quality Division Supervisor Nancy Vehr attended and the application’s status was put on hold pending review.

A citizen committee opposed to the expanded gravel pit and hot-mix plant organized with the help of nearby landowner Dan Jones and rancher Dean Boundy to find

See ‘GRAVEL PIT’ on page A10

LUNCH

Continued from A7

School Lunch Program, said Jeryl Fluckiger, SCSD1 director of operations. Fluckiger cautioned the trustees about the substantial costs the district might incur if the board decided to leave the federal lunch program.

SCSD1 would lose federal subsidies and reimbursements for school meals, along with access to certain commodities through the USDA and favorable shipping rates, Fluckiger explained.

“Right now, we don’t break even with current prices (for lunches),” Fluckiger told trustees.

Pulling out of the federal lunch program could also negatively affect wages for food service workers and the labor hours and logistics needed to prepare meals for students, Fluckiger added.

Harris raised concerns about students receiving free and reduced lunches through federal reimbursement to the district. If SCSD1 opted out of the National School Lunch Program, it would be forced to pay for subsidized meals out of its own pockets and come up with new criteria for free and reduced lunches, Harris remarked.

“Leaving kids to go hungry is the worst thing we could do to the kids we are supposed to help,” Harris said.

CLINIC

Continued from A1

day trial period to determine if the later opening times are actually benefiting the community, Burnett said.

“We want to extend services in Marbleton-Big Piney, but we want people to use these services,” Burnett continued.

Burnett emphasized that the plans for extended hours came entirely from the bottom up rather than the top down. The effort was initiated by staff and providers to find a “reasonable” solution to begin expanding hours and improve care for patients while also preventing burnout and respecting the fact that all workers at the clinic are stepping up to fill in gaps, sometimes with limited resources, Burnett explained.

The cost for the SCHD to extend hours is “minimal,” Burnett said. Three physician assistants – Cori Anderson, Jason Ray and Jonathan Said – volunteered to remain an additional hour on Mondays and Thursdays for no additional pay, Burnett noted.

Front desk employees will receive overtime to cover the later opening times, Burnett added. Medical technicians in the laboratory and X-ray technicians will remain on call for the two extra hours per week, but will not be required to stay at the clinics and work for those hours, Burnett remarked.

At the end of the 3-month trial period this fall, staff and providers at the Marbleton-Big Piney Clinic will reassess the extended hours. If the community is using the services and benefiting from them, the clinic will look at ways to offer more hours, said Burnett.

“This is a good starting point,” Burnett added. “Everyone cooperated and stepped up to the plate to share ideas for solutions to move forward.”

SCHD board chairwoman Tonia Hoffman requested district administration present actionable items to “improve access to health care” in Big Piney and Marbleton at the June 28 board meeting. On July 26, Hoffman thanked Burnett and Marbleton-Big Piney Clinic employees for drawing up the plan for extended hours.

“This is a great step,” Hoffman said. “I appreciate the approach taken by staff and their willingness to step up.”

Recruitment update

Efforts to enhance care in Marbleton and Big Piney hinge on recruiting more providers to staff the emergency room in Pinedale and both clinics. Once additional practitioners are in place, the goal is to free up mid-level providers so they can return to offering primary care at the Marbleton-Big Piney Clinic, Burnett said.

Burnett introduced a new board-certified physician in family practice, Dr. Andras Eder. Dr. Eder served as hospital

corpsman in the U.S. Navy, attended medical school at the American University of the Caribbean on St. Maarten and completed his residency at the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Peoria.

Dr. Eder began seeing patients at the Pinedale and Marbleton-Big Piney clinics on July 10.

“Dr. Eder is already working out really well and we appreciate his enthusiasm,” said Dr. Burnett.

Dr. Eder stated that he is “glad to be here and contribute to the future of health care in Sublette County.”

A board-certified doctor in family practice recently gave verbal agreement to join the team at the SCHD, Burnett reported to trustees. The physician is expected to begin in January and will arrive with more than three decades of medical practice experience in rural communities across the Rocky Mountain region, Burnett added.

Talks are also ongoing with a “promising” physician assistant candidate with a background in emergency medicine who might be ready to start as early as October, Burnett said.

SCHD administration is also ramping up efforts to attract more visiting specialists to the Marbleton-Big Piney Clinic, Burnett remarked. A practitioner specializing in gynecology will take appointments once a month at both the Pinedale and Marbleton-Big Piney Clinic, Burnett added.

SHERIFF'S

Continued from A5

emergency was reported.

At 12:11 p.m., a deputy looked into a suspicious incident.

At 12:55 p.m., there was juvenile involvement in a collision.

At 1:31 p.m., the Lincoln County Sheriff’s Office reported a missing person.

At 2:04 p.m., animal control looked into an animal problem.

At 5:26 p.m., a medical emergency was reported.

At 5:35 p.m., a deputy removed a deer from the highway.

At 6:34 p.m., a detective on a patrol shift looked into dead deer and unsafe driving in Hoback Canyon.

At 10:54 p.m., a detective looked for wildlife and cleared the call.

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