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SCHD expresses gratitude to Boman

By Robert Galbreath, rgalbreath@subletteexaminer.com

MARBLETON – Sublette County Hospital District (SCHD) Trustee Wendy Boman will not seek reelection on the board of trustees and attended her last meeting on Oct. 26.



Wendy Boman

Boman served for six years on both the Sublette County Rural Health Care District (RHCD) and SCHD boards of trustees.

SCHD Board Chairwoman Tonia Hoffman thanked Boman for her role in bringing the hospital district and critical access hospital to fruition and work on the SCHD's quality committee.

"We will miss you immensely," Hoffman added.

SCHD administrator Dave Doorn expressed gratitude to Boman for providing leadership as a trustee on the SCHD and RHCD boards.

Dr. David Burnett, SCHD medical director, praised Boman for the six years she gave to the community.

Boman and her fellow trustees "took on a big project in a very admirable way," Burnett said.

Additional gratitude came from Mike Hunsaker, chief operating officer for the SCHD and its management partner, Star Valley Health.

"We wouldn't be where we are today with out you and the board guiding us and leading us," he said. "We couldn't ask for better partners."

Boman described the past six years as a "rollercoaster ride" with difficult transitions and "bumps in the road."

"We are in such a good place now," she said.

Boman credited SCHD providers and staff for their work in making the hospital project a reality. She singled out Doorn for "walking into a hornets nest" and bringing about positive change.

Boman also thanked Dr. Burnett, Kari DeWitt, SCHD public relations director and grant writer, Dawn Walker, administrator at the Sublette Center, and her colleagues on the board.

Each trustee – Dave Bell, Kenda Tanner and Jamison Ziegler – thanked Boman for her service.

Hospital district prepares for building demolition

By Robert Galbreath, rgalbreath@subletteexaminer.com

MARBLETON – Demolition of the Public Health building on the hill across from the Pinedale Cemetery is planned to begin in mid-November, the Sublette County Hospital District (SCHD) reported at its Oct. 26 meeting in Marbleton.

Removing the Public Health building, built in 1978, to provide space for the new critical access hospital and long-term care facility, is the first step in the construction process.

The SCHD Board of Trustees unanimously passed a motion to release \$310,000 allowing Layton Construction, the district's construction manager and general contractor, to carry out asbestos abatement in the Public Health building, tear the building down and relocate an irrigation ditch on the site.

The \$110,000 for the ditch relocation and asbestos abatement is the responsibility of the SCHD while the \$200,000 for the demolition will be reimbursed through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) loan to the district, confirmed Kari Dewitt, SCHD public relations director and grant writer.

The SCHD is hosting a walk-through of the old Public Health building on Nov. 2. Community members are invited to bid on items remaining in the facility, said Dave Doorn, SCHD administrator.

Individuals and companies do not need to make an appointment to attend the walk-through, said DeWitt. SCHD administration will be on site with forms to make bids and answer questions.

Asbestos abatement in the Public Health building is scheduled for Nov. 8 and Layton will shut off all utilities on Nov. 14, DeWitt told the Examiner. Demolition is expected to follow in mid-November, she added.

Dr. David Burnett, SCHD medical director, asked the board whether the demolition timeline conflicted with the Town of Pinedale's ordinances and no-dig period.

Members of the SCHD board and administration met with town staff in July and the various permits needed to begin the process were "taken care of," responded Tonia Hoffman, SCHD board chairwoman.

See **District demolition** on page 7

Dentist survives grizzly attack

By Cali O'Hare, cohare@subletteexaminer.com

SALT LAKE CITY — The Wyoming hunter who shot himself in the leg while fighting off a grizzly bear was discharged from the University of Utah Hospital on Oct. 25, according to KSL-TV in Salt Lake City. In an interview with the station from his hospital bed, Lee Francis, 65, estimated the bear was 8 feet tall and weighed 700 pounds.

Francis told the news outlet that the bear charged him from less than 10 feet away, adding, "I think I put my foot up to stop him from grabbing me and just defensively shot my leg."

Francis, an Evanston dentist and avid outdoorsman, thought some of the rounds he fired also struck the bear.

Wyoming Game and Fish Pinedale Regional Supervisor John Lund told the Sublette Examiner that wildlife officials "did not find any indication that the bear was wounded or killed."

See **Grizzly attack** on page 3

Leyva adds 'mental illness' to not guilty pleas

Faces second-degree attempted murder charge, more counts

By Joy Ufford, jufford@subletteexaminer.com

SUBLETTE COUNTY – Because the judge did not clearly explain to Nicolas A. Leyva at his Oct. 6 arraignment that he could pair his not-guilty pleas with reasons of mental illness or deficiency, Leyva was allowed to do so at his Oct. 28 hearing.

At the end, 9th District Judge Marv Tyler immediately suspended the court proceedings and ordered a Wyoming State Hospital evaluation.

His attorney Alex Freeburg told Judge Tyler that Leyva had wanted to make those pleas initially but didn't understand the process.

The judge said, "It's the defendant's right to determine what sort of defense he may want to present. I want to make sure any change of plea or additional plea is the defendant's choice."

Leyva is charged with felonies of second-degree attempted murder, two counts of aggravated assault and battery and strangulation of a household member, plus misdemeanors of domestic battery, property and breach of peace.

He was arrested Aug. 31 after he and

his husband Dr. Buck Wallace talked amicably about divorce and Leyva allegedly destroyed his phone, attacked Wallace and tried to strangle him, according to earlier testimony by Sublette County Detective Travis Lanning.

Freeburg referred to Lanning's testimony at Leyva's preliminary hearing that Leyva might have consumed Seroquel, a powerful antipsychotic prescribed to Wallace.

"My client was taking Seroquel at the advice of the alleged victim," Freeburg said, and was "incompetent at the time of the (Aug. 31) incident" but Leyva is competent now.

Sublette County Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Clayton Melinkovich objected to Freeburg's references to Seroquel on Oct. 6 and Oct. 28.

Judge Tyler said he needed a "showing of good cause" and would allow Freeburg to try to establish it "but I don't know if I can rely on testimony in the preliminary hearing."

Freeburg said Leyva was disappointed after his arraignment. Judge Tyler said he outlined plea options separately – "I did not expressly say he could do both."

"The defendant intended to make the plea but for reasons not disclosed he did not," the judge said. "I believe good cause has been shown."



JOY UFFORD PHOTO

Gloria Denava, mother of Nicholas A. Leyva, believes his husband gave him unprescribed medication that allegedly 'poisoned' Leyva.

After Leyva pleaded not guilty by reason of mental illness to each charge, Judge Tyler immediately suspended the case and trial proceedings and ordered Leyva to undergo a mental evaluation. It would be up to Wyoming State Hospital staff to determine when, where and how, he added.

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