



# News Letter Journal

Weston County

January 19, 2023

Newcastle, Wyoming

Year 137

Week 3

## School board considers four-day week

Alexis Barker  
NLJ News Editor

Weston County School District No. 1 leadership has prepared three different calendars for the 2023-24 school

year, and the board of trustees is seeking public comment as they decide which one of them to approve.

“It is that time of the year. The sooner it is set the better. It helps with planning and staff

development. I know from a curriculum standpoint, they would like to have it three months ago,” Superintendent Brad LaCroix said before presenting the calendar options at the board’s January 11 meeting.

Option one is the now traditional calendar with early-release Fridays, option two is an alternative schedule with a four-day school week, and the third calendar is a hybrid of the two.

The traditional calendar features a 185-day school year with 175 of those being student days. The other 10 are designated for staff development, according to LaCroix. In the four-day school week

calendar, student days drop to 150, with the work days remaining at 185 for staff. The modified calendar, LaCroix said, includes 163 student days,

— See **Schools**, Page 7

## Lawsuit offer rejected

Alexis Barker  
NLJ News Editor

The Board of Weston County Commissioners has again rejected a settlement proposed by a group that has sought legal action over the manner in which a vacancy in the Wyoming House of Representatives was filled.

Bruce Moats is representing the News Letter Journal, Kari Drost, Patricia Bauman and Raymond Norris, and he informed them last week that their most recent settlement offer had been rejected. They are suing the commissioners over the secret-ballot vote used to appoint a person to fill the unexpired term of former Wyoming Rep. Hans Hunt in October 2022 after he resigned to take a job in Washington, D.C.

During an executive session at a special meeting on Tuesday Jan. 10, the board discussed the proposed settlement with

— See **Lawsuit**, Page 6

## Up for the match



Photo by Alexis Barker/NLJ

Mia Rhoades attempts a reversal on Thatcher Benson during their match on Saturday, during the Newcastle Fall Guys wrestling club’s meet at Newcastle High School and Middle School. Youngsters from pre-kindergarten to middle school compete with the club. See more photos on Page 6.



## Ag issues on agenda

Alexis Barker  
NLJ News Editor

The 67th Wyoming Legislature kicked off its second week of the 2023 General Session on Monday, Jan. 16, and local legislators stated that Northeast Wyoming residents should pay particular attention to agriculture issues addressed in various bills up for consideration.

The House Agriculture Committee considered two bills dealing with state lands this past Thursday, according to a press release from Rep. Allen Slagle, R-Newcastle. Both bills — HB16, State land leasing-improvements, and HB17, State lands-grazing of non-owned livestock, had minor amendments made in the ag committee, Slagle said.

The bills, according to majority floor leader Rep. Chip Neiman, R-Hulett, were up for second reading by the House Committee of the Whole on Monday. He noted that there were no dissenting votes on either bill.

According to Neiman, HB16 would increase the amount of money individuals

— See **Legislature**, Page 6

## NHS students place well at the Nile

Preslee Fitzwater  
FFA Correspondent

The Newcastle High School FFA chapter took a road trip to Montana in October, as members from every grade level went to judge livestock and horses. For many of the members, it was one of their first judging trips, but that did not stop any member from reaching high — and winning even higher! The livestock team competed with a senior team consisting of Tell Tavegie, JJ Lipp, Reagan Redding and Jayde Harrington and a junior team consisting of Preslee Fitzwater, Aidan Butler and Tyler Stith.

The senior team placed as follows: Tavegie, 49th individually; Redding, 120th; Harrington, 70th; and in a fantastic win for NHS, Lipp placed fifth overall out of 283 contestants.

The junior team’s individual placings were as follows: Fitzwater, 54th; Butler, 142nd; and Stith, 128th, out of 214 contestants.

This group of high-schoolers included livestock showmen that competed with their animals, experienced judges and first-time judges. The two members who competed in the showing part of the Nile (Northern International Livestock Expo) were Lipp and Jace Rich. Rich, a freshman at NHS, has shown for a very long time and won big titles with many different

steers, and his job at the Nile was described as “the guy that prepared show calves.”

Rich spent most of his time washing, fitting and clipping calves to better prepare them for the show, and then spent hours working throughout the show to make sure all of the daily chores — such as feeding, watering and preparation — were completed.

That left little room for making memories, but Rich says that the shows are all about making new friends and meeting many different people. His favorite memory from the trip was “being a part of a team, as well as seeing my college friends, who I consider brothers to me.”

JJ Lipp competed in showing in addition to judging. He has found a love and passion for the showing and judging livestock world, and spends much time at judging camps and traveling to different shows. Lipp’s role at the Nile looked similar to that of Rich’s. Lipp is the livestock judging captain, so he got everyone ready and calmed nerves. When showing, Lipp made sure the animals were fed, watered and fitted for the shows. In both experiences, Lipp said, showing was the most stressful part, as well as the responsibility of the team. He also shared how both roles aren’t really that different. Because of showing, he said, he wouldn’t be the livestock judge he is today.



Photo courtesy of Jill Pischke

The Horse Judging Team, from left, are Avery Doyle, Kaitlyn Blumenthal, Brook Martell, Bailey Griffin, Canyon Farnsworth, Brooklyn Benschhof, and Callie Christensen.

First-time livestock judge Aidan Butler said that his experience was good and that he performed better than he anticipated. He felt good going into the contest and expected that it was going to be fun. He also was confident in his team’s performance because of what practices were looking like. Butler had great success but also shared his biggest

struggle: judging goat classes. He said the whole team could work harder on learning that skill.

During their debriefing, the team said some classes need more practice. With the team’s success, they decided on the motto “Winning is the only option.”

— See **Students**, Page 2

### WEATHER FORECAST

Thursday  
Mostly Sunny  
Hi 37, Lo 22



Friday  
Partly Cloudy  
Hi 33, Lo 20



Saturday  
Partly Cloudy  
Hi 36, Lo 22



Sunday  
Cloudy  
Hi 32, Lo 19



Monday  
Cloudy  
Hi 27, Lo 16



Tuesday  
Partly Cloudy  
Hi 31, Lo 20



Wednesday  
Mostly Cloudy  
Hi 32, Lo 14



### INSIDE

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## Excited about awards



Photo by Kim Dean/NLJ

Sheriff Bryan Colvard and Newcastle Police Chief Charles Bowles announced the second quarter Sheriff and Chief's Club Good Citizenship Awards at Newcastle Middle School's excellence award assembly on Jan. 12 in Crouch Auditorium. Pictured above are Sheriff Colvard, eighth-graders Josie Smith, Sean Paul (not pictured), seventh-graders Will Ertman, Addison Fitzwater, and sixth-graders Olivia Watt (also below), Owen Evenson (also below), and Chief Bowles. Nominations are sent to law enforcement by teachers and coaches, then a boy and girl from each of the three grades is selected to receive the quarterly award, mainly based on character with an emphasis on being an overall good person with passing grades. Many students received sports recognitions, academic, and perfect attendance awards at the assembly and the coveted spirit stick was awarded to the sixth-grade class, pictured celebrating in bottom photo.

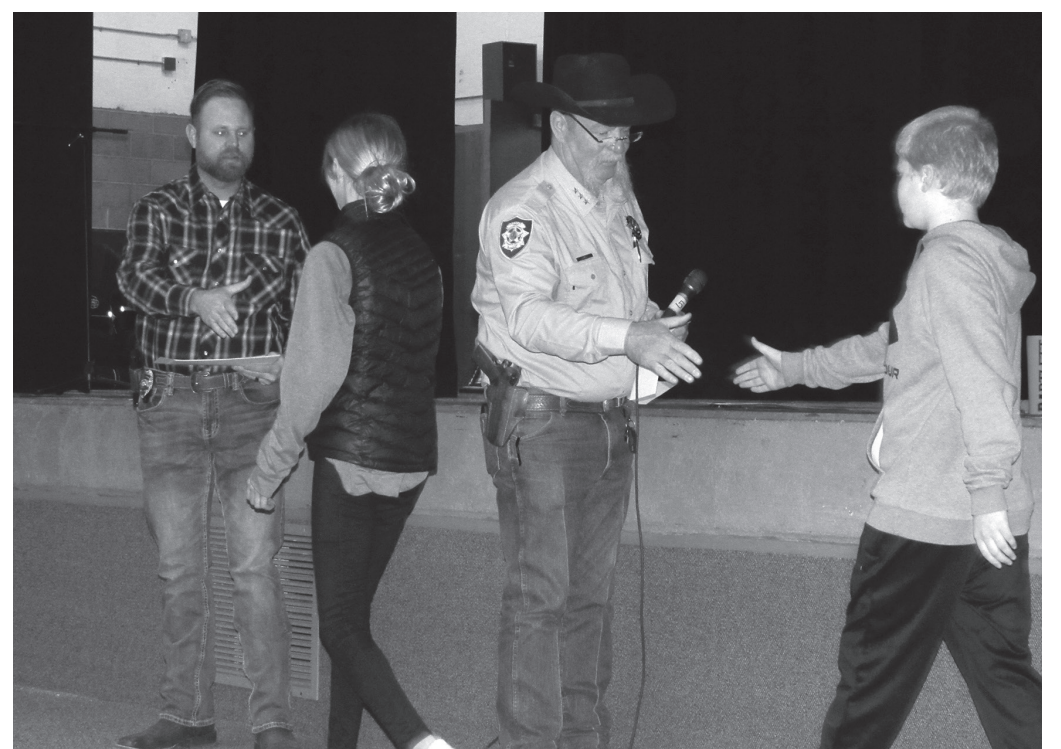


Photo courtesy of Jill Pischke

The Livestock Judging Team, from left, are Preslee Fitzwater, Reagan Redding, Jayde Harrington, JJ Lipp, Tell Tavegie, Aidan Butler, and Tyler Stith.

## Students from Page 1 .....

The teams will travel to the Black Hills Stock Show to compete again in February.

The chapter also competed well in horse judging, with a senior team of Brook Martell, Canyon Farnsworth, Avery Doyle and Bailey Griffin and a junior team of Kaitlyn Blumenthal, Brooklyn Benshoof, Callie Christensen and Brynne Kilby. The teams placed their chapter in the top seats of the competition. In horse judging, sophomore Griffin has been around horses for almost her whole life. She shared what she enjoys, how she prepares and some of her challenges going into the competition.

Griffin says that her biggest challenge is talking reasons, because of filler words and stumbling. Realizing her weakness, Bailey prepared to help her succeed the day of competition. She often prepares, she said, by looking up to her role models, who are skilled in this area, and by applying qualities she has learned from them, as well as helping her team apply the same qualities. This preparation set her up for great success and an even greater time. Griffin said that she enjoyed the experience of being in agriculture and learning all there was to learn at practice and competition.

2021 NNAF Better Newspaper Editorial Contest Award-winning newspaper



# nlj IDEAS

News Letter Journal: WPA and NNA Award Winner

## Our View

### Board right to revisit standards

Late last year, the governor's Reimagining and Innovating the Delivery of Education advisory group delivered its final recommendations to Gov. Mark Gordon. Its recommendations aren't policies or prescriptions, but guiding principles for elevating the state's K-12 education system.

Those recommendations came on the heels of the release of the state's draft "Profile of a Graduate" — seven "competencies" drafted by the State Board of Education and meant to address what parents, educators and communities believe Wyoming students need to know to be ready for life after high school. The profile includes academic, career, community and life goals for Wyoming graduates.

In addition to the RIDE recommendations and Profile of a Graduate, the state has adopted content and performance standards in each of the following 10 content areas: reading/language arts; social studies; mathematics; science; fine arts and performing arts; physical education, health and safety; humanities; career/vocational education; foreign cultures and languages; government and civics including state and federal constitutions; and computer science.

And by all accounts, the standards are broad and deep. The state's science standards number more than 250 pages. Wyoming has more than 1,800 K-12 content standards across subject areas, according to a news release from the State Board of Education.

But rather than having the desired effect of providing clear direction to districts and educators, teachers and administrators increasingly say that the many different boxes they must tick has become onerous — forcing teachers to pick and choose what content to cover or to

cover material in a cursory manner rather than engaging and exploring content deeply. And it's created an unwieldy amount of paperwork that takes teachers away from actually teaching.

In October, the State Board of Education registered those concerns, voting to address the concerns "raised by educators, citizens and policymakers regarding the instructional and learning load of the current Wyoming Content and Performance Standards."

The intent of the resolution is to reduce the load of state standards to provide time for classroom innovation and meaningful learning experiences, a need heard through both Gordon's RIDE Advisory Group and the Profile of a Graduate listening sessions.

"In anticipation of the establishment of Wyoming graduation standards and the implementation of the Profile of a Graduate, we recognize the need for schools to have greater flexibility and time to pursue innovation and community collaboration in response to the voices of Wyoming stakeholders," the resolution stated. "We resolve to reduce the standards load by adopting performance standards as the state standards and to embark on the rule promulgation no later than February 2023."

The review marks the first step as the board attempts to convert the profile of the graduate into action — to map those seven core competencies onto the standards teachers are supposed to be teaching.

It also marks the recognition that some of the present standards amount to burdensome red-tape and micromanagement. More isn't always better. In this case, the educational community has spoken — teachers need time to teach.

#### Guest Editorial

Buffalo Bulletin  
January 11, 2023

## POLL of the WEEK

QUESTION:  
Should Weston County School District No.1 go to a four-day school week?

- Yes
- No

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

RESULTS:  
Should the Weston County Commissioners meet in the evening?

- Yes.....70% (21 votes)
- No.....30% (9 votes)

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## WHO



Rob Hicks  
Owner



Stephanie Bonnar  
Owner



Bob Bonnar  
Publisher



Kim Dean  
Managing Editor



Alexis Barker  
News Editor



Nicole McFarland  
Sports Photographer



Sonja Karp  
Sports Editor



Don Botkin  
Reporter/Sales



Walter Sprague  
Arts and Culture Reporter

Office Manager: Siri Karr  
Graphic Designer: Amy Menerey  
Circulation: Ann Cottrell  
NLJ Correspondents: Avery Chick, Hannah Gross and Katelynn Slaamot  
Photographer: Tyler Sage

## WHAT

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

## WHERE

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## WHEN

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## WHY

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

## Buried in snow and freezing temps so far this winter

Buried in snow, and enduring freezing temperatures

Between hurricanes and blizzards, this has been a winter to remember for retirees Jerry and Cassie Venters of Lander.

Normally, they head to their condo on Sanibel Island off the Florida coast and never worry about cold weather or even winter-style clothes.

But Hurricane Ian pretty much destroyed Sanibel, and the Venters found themselves spending winter in Lander for the first time in years.

No problem. Winters over the past three years have been warm and open. No snow. No harsh freezes.

But this year? Yikes. "Thank God for Walmart and thrift stores," Cassie said, as she and her husband had to outfit themselves in a hurry. Because they expected to be gone every winter, they had donated all their winter clothes and other

cold-weather gear.

But first, let's go back to September.

Hurricane Ian was the deadliest hurricane in Florida since 1935, killing 146 people in the Sunshine State this year. It was Category 4 and moved slowly wreaking incredible havoc. In its way was the beautiful Sanibel Island, home of the Venters' annual winter retreat. The condo was damaged so badly there was no way they could spend their



Bill Sniffin  
My Wyoming

winter there.

Thus, it was time to "cowboy up," and for the Venters to spend their first winter in Wyoming.

"Originally, pre-Hurricane Ian, we would have gone to Florida sometime early November and stayed at our condo on Sanibel," Cassie said. "Florida winter weather can be beautiful 50s and 60s with low humidity, in December/January, but

quickly starts warming up in February and with the warmth comes humidity.

We love the dry Wyoming summers here and are finding the dry winters don't feel as cold as the humid winters of Missouri, where we used to live."

Lander is unique in Wyoming because it gets so little wind. Back in the 1960s, it was ranked one of the 10 least windy places in the United States. But with the lack of wind comes snow — lots of snow. And cold — bitter cold.

Our first decade in Wyoming saw the brutal winters of 1972-73 when 216 inches of snow fell, and 1978-79 when the mercury spent most of winter below zero — really! In recent years, those kinds of winters have gone away. Global warming or not, residents have appreciated the dry winters and the warm temperatures.

But not this year. Just before Christmas the mercury dipped to -39, which was the coldest in 20 years.

This was on top of a snowfall that was between 14 and 18 inches, depending on what side of town you lived on.

Then just before New Year's most of Wyoming got hit with a big winter storm. But Lander got 27 inches. Yes, more than two feet. And then it just snowed another six inches this past week.

It is a winter wonderland. It is white as far as the eye can see in all directions. And some folks are worried about spring flooding, since normally most of our snow comes in March and April.

The reason Lander gets so little wind is that it sits below the towering Wind River Mountains. There are more than 44 places in Fremont County over 13,000 feet. All that wind just blows over the town.

As a small plane pilot for 30 years, I can personally tell horror stories of trying to land an airplane where you are tossed around like a leaf until you get about 500 feet above town, and, suddenly, everything is just fine.

So now that Cassie and

Jerry have been enduring their first legitimate Lander winter, what other observations can they make?

They love the images of the black Angus cattle against all that snow. But they do not like the fact that pellets for their stove were being rationed.

Driving the streets can be a challenge because of the ruts. The Lander Street Department does a pretty good job clearing snow, but it is still awful because of the Chinook winds that came and melted a bunch of it after Christmas before the next big blizzard.

So that summarized what we have endured in Lander. How about other parts of the state?

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

### Deadline for Letters to the Editor is noon on Friday

## Some thank yous and reminders as we kick off 2023

Hi, friends and neighbors, I hope you all had a fantastic holiday season.

Now that the clamor and glitz has fallen into the rear-view, it is time to settle back into a normal, or seminormal, routine. Back to reality, so to speak. Nose to the grindstone ... so we can get right back into the whirlwind in 11 months or so.

First off, I want to take a moment for a couple of thank you shouts:

To Bob (Bonnar), thank you for giving me the opportunity to do this. It has been very entertaining. Thanks also to you, the readers. Without you, all of this means nothing. I hope you all have gotten a smile or thoughtful moment from something I have scribed.

You may know that 2022

was a very challenging year for me, as I went through a medical nightmare that has profoundly affected my daily life. In November 2021, I suffered a severe foot injury.

The foot bones on my left side sheared away from the ankle bone. The pain was worse than any I have ever felt. In December of that year — two days after Christmas — I had the first reconstruction surgery done. Ultimately, in June 2022, after several surgeries to remove or add hardware, I opted for a below-knee amputation. The bones had just taken too much abuse.

I do not regret the decision. I would do it over and over, given the same choice. While I am working toward a pros-

thesis, I am currently living day to day in a wheelchair.

Having shared that, I want to also share things I wish people understood more about their friends or acquaintances with handicaps.

One of the big things for me is I don't want sympathy. I don't need someone to say, "I am so sorry this happened to you." Empathy is better. Understanding the changes and understanding that I am no less of a person is very important.

Another thing to remember is, we are not dead. We still have a life to live and things to do. It may be that we are not able to do all of the same things, or have a different way we have learned to do things — not that we can't. Yes, I know I cannot do a 5K or go rock climbing right now. I get that, but being excluded from activities or functions hurts a bit. So at least make the invite. If we

can't do it, we will say so and thank you for the offer.

Offering help is great, but if you are told, "No, I got this," leave it at that, and don't keep pushing it. Focus and mental preparedness is huge. For example, when I go to stand up from my wheelchair — be it to get in my car or bed — if something breaks my focus, it feels like I have a 500-pound sack on my shoulders and it pushes me right back down.

In those situations, just let us do our thing. Unless you see that a person is going to fall, do not reach out and grab them because you may break their concentration. Then they may actually fall!

If you want to know what happened, just ask. If it is too traumatic, the answer might be, "I don't want to talk about it," and leave it at that. Don't assume or succumb to rumors.

Lastly, just treat us as

humans. We are not fragile glass. We just want to live as normally as we can.

Be kind. OK, I am off of my soapbox. Again, thank you all for coming on this ride with me. I look forward to this new year and new opportunities to astound and amaze. If you have topics you would like to see someone else take on, let me know. I enjoy the challenge of researching thoughts and ideas. Until next time, stay safe and try to smile.

(Ed. Note: Dustin would like to hear what you're thinking about these days. If you have any thoughts, concerns or observations about our community or the world as a whole, please share them with him at [dustinb@midco.net](mailto:dustinb@midco.net). You can also drop him a line to let him know what you thought about his column...or just to say "Hi!")



Dustin Bergstrom  
Dusty Mind



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**Obituaries**

**WANDA LUCILLE FOOTE**  
**Jan. 20, 1935–Jan. 14, 2023**

Wanda Lucille Foote, 87, passed away, at the long-term care unit in Sundance, Wyo., Jan. 14, 2023, just seven days before her 88th birthday; her sweet body was just plum wore out.

Wanda was born Jan. 20, 1935, to Earl and Beulah Moore, in Guernsey, Wyo. She was one of three children. She loved growing up in the Guernsey area, and absolutely loved becoming an aunt. Her nieces and nephews adore her and sing her praises whenever they talk of her. She is lovingly called Auntie Wanda to this day.

She met and fell in love with Rodney Lloyd Foote, and they got married June 4, 1955. Please note, not all of this happened on the same day. To this union they added Peggy, Cindy and last but not least Roger, who came along and surprised them almost a decade after Cindy.

Wanda, had a green thumb and she loved to garden. She also loved to cook, and that came in handy when her husband Rodney went to work on the ranch.



**Wanda Foote**

When word got out that she was cooking, people showed up just to get a taste of her cooking, and a piece of her famous pies.

She was sweet, kind, and she would crochet beautiful things for you, but if you ever crossed one of her loved ones, she could give you an earful! She was known to have taken the National Guard on a time or two when their war games got a little too close for comfort on the ranch.

She became a grandma to Melissa in 1979, and she loved being a grandma. When her son saw how good of a grandma she was, he thought his mom needed a few more grandchildren. So, starting in 1997, and ending in 2018, Roger and his wife Tanya-Marie blessed Wanda with 10 more grandbabies. Now, even though Wanda was surprised with each birth announcement, she loved each and every one of the new little ones and would grab Peggy for a road trip just to see the new little one. She got to see new country when she visited her son, from Idaho to New Mexico, Grandma Foote was sure to be there. And all of her grandchildren loved her. In 1998, Melissa made Wanda a great-grandma. Now Wanda's grandson Rodney and his new wife will add one more to the number of her great-grandchildren, this coming June.

After her husband passed away in 1994, Wanda retired from ranch work and moved to Lusk. That is where she perfected her puzzle and gaming skills. She loved Bingo and wouldn't miss it for anything. She loved playing cards and Dominoes and would take on her grandkids whenever possible.

She decided that her son was too far

away, so she moved to Newcastle so she could see her son and grandkids more often. Unfortunately, after a few years she had a mini stroke and at the same time her back went weak, she couldn't live by herself anymore. She attempted to stay at her son's place, but unfortunately it was a little bit too crowded and noisy for her taste. So she requested to go to long-term care, where she has lived for the last seven years.

She quickly became a part of the family up there, and the nurses and staff all fell in love with her, and her with them. She got lots of company from everyone who loved her. She was the president of the residents' council for many years and made sure that the staff knew what the residents wanted and needed. She made sure the food was up to par, and if it fell below her standard she let them know and they would up their game.

She lived a very full life; she was loved by all who knew her.

She is survived by her sister, Bonnie J. Allen (husband Sam); daughter, Peggy Foote; son, Roger Foote (wife Tanya-Marie); granddaughters, Melissa Gross, Tabitha-Marie (Foote) Quinones (her husband Joseph), Hannah Anne Foote, Elizabeth Foote, Sarah Foote; grandsons, Rodney Foote (wife Hannah Danielle expecting a future Foote), Nathan Foote, Benjamin Foote, Daniel Foote, Jonathan Foote; and great-granddaughter, Megan Gross.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Earl and Beulah Moore; her husband, Rodney Foote; her brother, Franklin Moore; her daughter, Cindy Gross, and her granddaughter, Rachel Foote.

Graveside services will be at 1 p.m. on Jan. 20 at the Prairie Rest Cemetery in Guernsey, with a larger Celebration of Life when the weather is warmer.

Arrangements are under the care of Fidler-Roberts & Isburg Funeral Chapel of Sundance. Online condolences may be written at [fidler-isburgfuneralchapels.com](http://fidler-isburgfuneralchapels.com).

**LILANI 'LONI' STUMPPFF**  
**Nov. 12, 1953–Jan. 9, 2023**

Lilani "Loni" Stumpff, lifelong resident of Logan County, Colo., 69, was called home to her Lord and Savior on Jan. 9, 2023, in Newcastle, Wyo., at home, due to complications from lung disease.

Graveside services were held on Jan. 16 at 2 p.m. at Greenwood Cemetery in Newcastle. A reception followed at Greg and DeeDee's home.

Loni was born Nov. 12, 1953, to Wesley and Bessie (Elliott) Grauberger in Sterling, Colo. She attended Sterling High School and graduated in 1972; in 1974 she graduated from Licensed Practical Nursing school at Northeastern Junior College with a certificate.

Loni met the love of her life, Bill Stumpff, in 1967 at his Grandma Effie's house where Bill lived, and Loni delivered meals to

Effie. They were married on Dec. 29, 1971. From this marriage were born two amazing men! Greg and Kevin! Bill and Loni were married 49 wonderful years before Bill was called home first.

Loni worked as an LPN at Logan County Hospital, then at various doctor offices, until an injury sidelined her career. She then became a secretary and worked several jobs before starting work at the City of Sterling as an account technician doing payroll. She retired in 2010.

Loni's greatest pleasure was spending time with her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. In her spare time, she also enjoyed cooking and baking for her family and friends. Loni was an avid Bronco fan. Rarely a game day passed that she was not in front of the TV. Loni also loved this country! Loni enjoyed volunteering and helping her community. She was a president and secretary of the former Sterling Quota Club, secretary/treasurer of District Nine, and she was a Disaster Action Team member for the American Red Cross. In 2012 she joined the Sterling Lions Club, attaining the office of president, secretary and district secretary for 6NE. Loni also recently received the honor of the Melvin Jones Fellow award from the Lions Club for dedicated humanitarian services. Loni was Queen Mum for the Red Raspberry Tarts Red Hat Club.

Loni is survived by her two sons, Wm. Greg (DeeDee) of Newcastle, and Kevin Ray (Dana) Stumpff of Sterling; three grandchildren, Connagher (Cheyanna) Stumpff, Scottsbluff, Neb., Tanner (Laci) James, and Lyndi; and three great-grandchildren, Remi, Ryker and Riggs of Sterling. She is also survived by sisters, Ila Scott and Dorothy King (Mike); brother, Willy (Willard) Grauberger; brothers-in-law, Rob (Sandy), Ken (Grace), Dan (Lindy) Stumpff, and Marv Juedus; and many nieces, nephews, many great and great-great nieces, and nephews, many cousins, family and friends.

Loni is preceded in death by husband, Bill Stumpff; her parents, Wesley and Bessie Grauberger; sisters, Crystal Dagley and Jane (Grauberger) Schaffer; brothers, Jennings Grauberger and Joel Grauberger; niece, Tammy Grauberger; nephew, Jeff Grauberger; great-niece, Kayla Grauberger; great-great-nephew, Kevin Sprague; sister-in-law, Elva Juedus; and brothers-in-law, Keith, Roger, and Ray Stumpff.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be given to The Sterling Lions Club P.O. Box 567 Sterling, CO 80751.

Arrangements are under the care of Fidler-Roberts & Isburg Funeral Chapel of Sundance. Online condolences may be written at [fidler-isburgfuneralchapels.com](http://fidler-isburgfuneralchapels.com).



**Lilani Stumpff**

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**faith & values**

**Daily Devotional Reading**

January 20 Exodus 14-16	January 24 Exodus 28-30
January 21 Exodus 17-20	January 25 Exodus 31-34
January 22 Exodus 21-23	January 26 Exodus 35-37
January 23 Exodus 24-27	<i>Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society</i>

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

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

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**25 Years Ago**  
**Jan. 22, 1998**

Weston County Commissioner Walt Soper's comment that the proposed Dakota, Minnesota and Eastern (DM&E) rail route through Weston County might cut through prairie dog towns brought a few chuckles Tuesday. The idea was that the prairie dogs would be displaced. Sympathy for prairie dogs was absent.

"Prairie dogs don't pay taxes," said Commissioner Mark McCoy. But the railroad's impact on the county's taxpaying agricultural and community as well as the increased tax revenues a rail line could bring to the county were on everyone's minds.

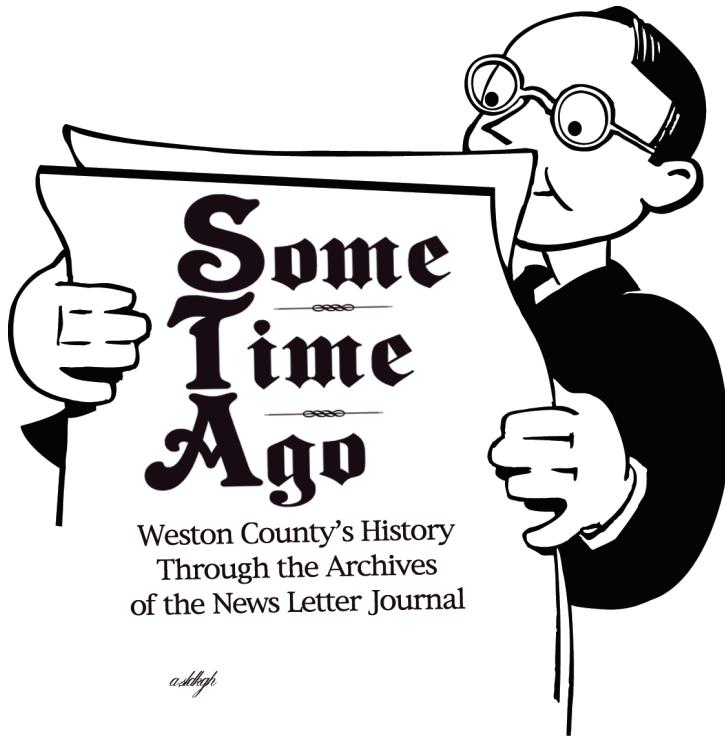
The News Letter Journal brought home more awards than any other newspaper in the state from the Wyoming Press Association's annual convention this weekend. The entire staff was credited for winning the Special Merit Award for their coverage of the Weston County Hospital.

The Newcastle Systems Change Team met with 423 area youngsters Jan. 13 and 14 at the Weston County Children's Center and at Gertrude Burns Elementary School introducing area youngsters to local individuals with disabilities and demonstrated assistive technology.

A Super Bowl conversion? Not as far as Ed and Margie Wagoner are concerned. The diehard Kansas City Chiefs fans came home Monday to find their previously neutral snowmen decked in full Denver Bronco regalia. Ed figured he knew who the culprits were — neighbors and friends with whom the Wagoners will watch Sunday's Super Bowl game between the Denver Broncos and the Green Bay Packers.

**50 Years Ago**  
**Jan. 18, 1973**

A flare-up of LP gas at the Tesoro Refinery burning pit Monday evening resulted in a fire alarm being sounded in Newcastle. A pressure release valve had allowed the LP gas to go to the burning pit as a safety measure, and the flare-up in the pit apparently caused someone to turn on the alarm. The Newcastle Volunteer Fire Department answered the alarm but returned to the fire station after learning the cause of the



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

alarm.

Russ Arnold of Newcastle was elected president of the Weston County Historical Society at the annual meeting Jan. 13. Arnold is Wyoming history and language arts instructor at Newcastle Junior High School.

The Newcastle Jaycees are observing the 53rd anniversary of the United States Jaycees this week. The week's activities will be highlighted on Saturday evening at the annual Bosses' Night banquet. Other activities this week included a mayor's prayer breakfast last Sunday.

Weston County law enforcement officials issued a warning this week that a group apparently operating with WATTS telephone lines out of Texas have been contacting Wyoming

businesses. The group is giving the false impression that they represent the state organization (Wyoming Peace Officers) and are promising to send "Sheriff's Stars" to paste on vehicles implying this will make them immune to arrest.

Susan Kennedy was one of 30 4-H'ers, leaders and chaperones attending the National Western 4-H Roundup in Denver this week. Susan won the trip for her prize winning home economics demonstration at the Wyoming state fair last August.

**100 Years Ago**  
**Jan. 18, 1923**

The editor was a guest at the luncheon of the Lions Club of Newcastle last Friday, and has been congratulating himself ever since. It was the most

delightful hour we have spent for many a day, and the good-fellowship resulting from such occasions can not but help proving of great benefit to the community.

Owing to the fact that one of the most stringent regulations of the Post Office Department is being flagrantly violated every day, the Postal Authorities have threatened to close the lobby of Newcastle Post Office at 6 o'clock in the evening. The regulation, the violation of which is rousing the ire of the officials, is the one prohibiting the use of post office lobbies as loafing or loitering places, at any time.

That this rule is ignored entirely by most people is a well-known fact. Another event in connection with this matter is the custom of school children coming in droves to the post office at all times of the day.

The dance given by Mr. and Mrs. Theo. Grigsby at the LAK ranch last Saturday night was a decided success. Music by the LAK orchestra was unusually good.

During the past six days 3,000 bushels of wheat have been received at the Newcastle Roller Mills, coming from various points of the county. The grain is up to a high quality, hard and smooth.

The chest of Community silverware, valued at \$185.00, given away by McCarthy Pharmacy, was opened Monday afternoon by J.N. Jackman of Osage who held the lucky key.

**DVD Class on The Federalist Papers**

**Location:**  
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**1525 S. Summit, Newcastle**  
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From the vault ...



Photo Courtesy of WC Historical Society

Pictured is a class photo and school house from the early days of Weston County.

**WESTON COUNTY MEETINGS & EVENTS CALENDAR**

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**LET US KNOW WHAT'S UP!**

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

<b>Fri. Jan. 20</b>	9AM 1PM	Caramel Rolls Bridge	W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center
<b>Sun. Jan. 22</b>	3:30PM	DVD Class on Federalist Papers	Foursquare Lighthouse Church
<b>Mon. Jan. 23</b>	9AM 1PM 7PM	Exercise Class Computer Clinic Alcoholics Anonymous	W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center
<b>Tues. Jan. 24</b>	1PM 3:30PM	Bridge & Dominoes Alzheimers/Dementia Support	W.C. Senior Center Zoom
<b>Wed. Jan. 25</b>	9AM-1PM 7PM 9AM	Gigi's Closet LEPC Informational Mtg. Exercise Class	First United Methodist Church Newcastle Fire Hall W.C. Senior Center
<b>Thurs. Jan. 26</b>	7AM NOON 1PM 7PM	T.O.P.S. #218 WCHS Foundation Meeting Crafts & Bridge Alcoholics Anonymous	W.C. Senior Center WCHS Board Room W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center
<b>Fri. Jan. 27</b>	9AM 11:30AM 1PM 7PM	Caramel Rolls WC Library System Board Mtg. Bridge Dance	W.C. Senior Center WC Library Meeting Rm. W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center
<b>Mon. Jan. 30</b>	9AM 1PM 7PM	Exercise Class Computer Clinic Alcoholics Anonymous	W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center W.C. Senior Center
<b>Tues. Jan. 31</b>	1PM	Bridge & Dominoes	W.C. Senior Center

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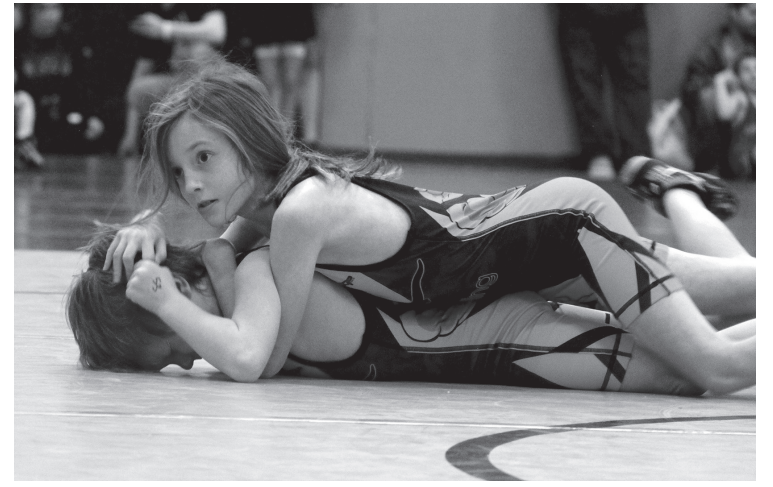
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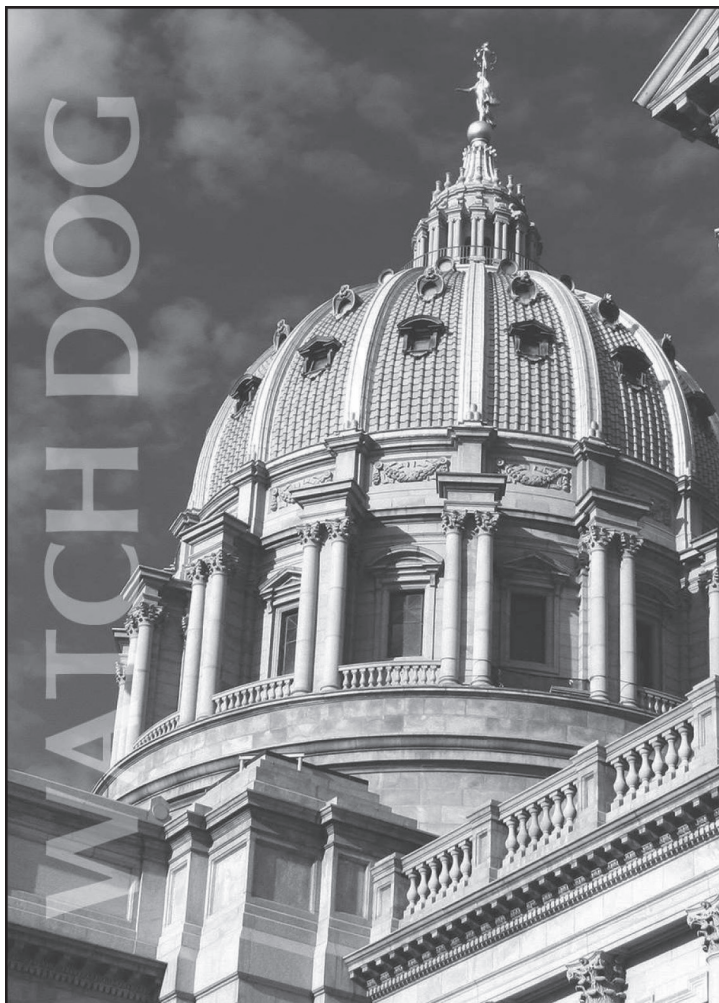
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**or The American Legion, 307-941-1396**



Photos by Alexis Barker/NLJ

### Looking to pin

Bryce Stanton, upper left, helps pack Mia Rhoades' nose after it started to bleed during one of her matches on Saturday at Newcastle High School and Middle School. Rhoades competes with the Newcastle Fall Guys wrestling club. Above, Valarie Sandness works to pin Caleb Diaz. At left, Remington Walden closely watches Upton referee Caden Vrana as he waits for the pin.



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## Lawsuit from Page 1

its attorney, Tucker Ruby, who serves as the Johnson County attorney. Ruby is representing the commissioners in the lawsuit because of a claimed conflict of interest by Weston County Attorney Michael Stulken.

According to the information provided by Moats, the settlement offer included an independent transparency review of county government by outside parties. The proposed settlement would also require disclosure of the full set of the rules governing the appointment process for the House District 2 seat and an agreement to a consent decree specifying the secret ballots constituted a violation of the Public Meetings Act. The updated offer from the News Letter Journal and its co-plaintiffs also asked for full disclosure of all group text messages sent by the commissioners for the past two years as an acknowledgement that they are public records and/or that the recently discovered group texts constitute virtual meetings.

“We are asking for the same kind of review undertaken in Gillette when inspection of emails revealed abuse of power and public trust by members of the City Council there. We’ve already uncovered similar abuses in the Weston County government since we began this legal action — most notably the frequent use of group text messages by the commissioners to circumvent the open meeting laws of Wyoming and keep the people of Weston County in the dark. The people of Weston County deserve to know what other wrong-doings have been taking place,” News Letter Journal publisher Bob Bonnar said.

The settlement was rejected on Wednesday, Jan. 11, according to Moats.

“We are very disappointed that our settlement offer has been rejected again. We had hoped that the arrival of new commissioners would result in a willingness to come clean about the transgressions of past commissioners, but we ended up with the same result,” Bonnar said.

“If they won’t voluntarily submit to an external review, I guess we will have to conduct that review through depositions and testimony in court. We have come too far to turn back now, and they owe the people of Weston County some answers.”

— Bob Bonnar, News Letter Journal Publisher

At the time the lawsuit was filed, both former commissioners Marty Ertman and Tony Barton were serving on the board. Since then, two new commissioners, Vera Huber and Garrett Borton, have joined the board.

“Like everything else they have done since the House District 2 seat became vacant, this decision was made behind closed doors. Unfortunately, that means we can’t know for sure which commissioners want to keep dragging this out in court,”

Bonnar continued, regarding the vote on the settlement offer. “Since there are now only two of the five current commissioners (Commissioners Nathan Todd and Ed Wagoner) who were in support of using the secret ballot, we can safely assume that one of the newly elected commissioners is choosing to help them hide these secrets.”

According to Bonnar, the commissioners are standing by their supposed right to vote by secret ballot. He noted that the email thread between Moats and Ruby did include a very unsatisfying counteroffer proposed by the county in which they claim that elected officials can use a secret ballot to make decisions as long as they disclose at some later point what their votes were. This is something he said the News Letter Journal and co-plaintiffs refuse to accept.

“They waited a year — and for an election to pass — before they revealed their votes for the House seat, and it is ridiculous for them to claim that is all right,” Bonnar said. “Their actions were illegal when they took the secret ballot, and they are still illegal. Period.”

Ruby also reported to Moats that another reason for the rejection of the settlement offer was that the county does not have the funds to undertake an external review. This claim of a lack of funds, Bonnar stated, comes despite the commission’s payment of \$20,000 to have its own “hand-picked deputy county attorney conduct a supposed review and provide training to assure the public trust isn’t violated again.”

“Since then, however, we have uncovered their continued use of a secret group text thread,

so they clearly weren’t really interested in correcting their mistakes or coming clean, and now it appears the new commission wants to hold that line,” Bonnar said. “If they won’t voluntarily submit to an external review, I guess we will have to conduct that review through depositions and testimony in court. We have come too far to turn back now, and they owe the people of Weston County some answers.”

Because of the lack of a satisfying settlement, he said, it is likely that the lawsuit will proceed with depositions and a court hearing.

“We were informed last week by Johnson County Attorney Tucker Ruby that the Weston County commissioners have rejected our settlement offer again, so the News Letter Journal and our co-plaintiffs are moving forward with our lawsuit against the commission,” Bonnar said. “We will start setting up depositions of the defendants and other potential witnesses through the court.”

Bonnar added that the lawsuit will be amended to include the text messages that were of continual use by the commissioners despite the trainers telling the commission that group text messages are a clear violation of the law, as reported by the News Letter Journal in October. However, despite the lack of settlement, Moats reported that Ruby indicated last week that the defendants were willing to concede that point and that the News Letter Journal and the other plaintiffs would be receiving the group text messages for review but access to the texts had not been provided prior to press time.

## Legislature from Page 1

could spend to make improvements on state land from \$1,000 to \$4,000.

“This way if a water pump goes down on a leased property and a pipe needs fixed, they can just do so,” he said. “Before, they would have to contact the state while the cattle were standing there without water.”

He noted that the increase is due in part to recent inflation.

The second bill, HB17, would allow for a surface leaseholder to run other people’s cattle on the land as long as the leaseholder is also the person managing the cattle. Neiman explained that currently the leaseholder would have to acquire additional permitting to graze cattle they do not own on the leased land.

“There are several more state land bills coming, as well as the Omnibus Water bill with projects all over the state, including Goshen ID Tunnel Rehabilitation,” Slagle said in the release.

The Senate is also considering various agriculture bills, according to a press release from Sen. Cheri Steinmetz, R-Lingle. The veteran senator is chairwoman of the senate’s ag committee, which was one of the first committees to begin taking up Senate files this session. The committee has already passed out Senate files relating to partition fences around subdivisions, brucellosis updates and slow-moving vehicle amendments.

“As Wyoming sees an increase in population, the legislature will grapple with the

issues caused by growth and the change in land use,” she said in the release. “Subdivisions not only affect land, but many times fences, rights of way and water rights depending on the location.”

In addition to agriculture issues, Steinmetz noted that other issues addressed in various bills include property tax relief, school choice, budget transparency and respect for the life of the unborn. These bills are being filed and scheduled for debate in standing committees before they will be seen by either the House or Senate.

According to Neiman, 135 bills have been read into the House so far, with a large number of those being referred to the appropriations committee.

Money will be a major topic this session, Senate President Ogden Driskill said in his weekly update, with nearly \$2 billion in surplus needing to be allocated.

“That is a significant pivot from two years ago, when the Legislature and Governor’s office were considering some of the most severe budget cuts in our state’s history,” he said. “While it might be easy to read the numbers as a shift in our economy, the truth is that it is a one-time bump that owes to a combination of improved energy production, federal stimulus and smart investing over years.”

Senate leadership, according to Driskill, is focused on directing a significant position — between 25% and 30% — of this wealth into short, mid- and long-term investments

that will benefit the state for future generations.

“As Governor Gordon said in his address to the Legislature, Wyoming’s economy is more diverse than it has been in 50 years. That owes to smart policy making that has fostered investment and created a business climate that is attracting new industry,” Driskill said in his update.

As lawmakers move forward this session, he said, they will continue to build on that framework by streamlining efficiencies, removing obstacles in the way of small and family-owned businesses and providing relief to the state’s most vulnerable citizens.

“Inflation is a factor that is creating major challenges for hardworking Wyoming families,” Driskill said. “Across Wyoming, many residents are grappling with skyrocketing property tax. This rapidly emerging crisis is falling heaviest on those who can least afford it: retirees, critical workers, low-income earners and renters, whose rates are escalating as the bill gets passed along.”

According to Driskill, the state has begun to address this issue by fully funding the Property Tax Refund Program at \$5 million in the supplemental budget. These funds will relieve the state’s most vulnerable population, those who are facing down financial hardships due to inflation.

As the session continues, the Wyoming Legislature’s website, wyoleg.gov, will be updated with bill information, amendments and voting records.

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# Schools from Page 1

with 185 days for staff.

He noted before opening the topic for board discussion that he was not expecting a vote that evening, and that the principals would also seek comment from staff to bring back to the board before they are asked to make a decision.

“For the future, if we are really going to go down the alternative route, we need a little bit more time,” LaCroix said, suggesting that the board may want to work through the option and not implement the four-day school week next school year.

“One of the biggest concerns I have with the alternative calendar is the unknown impact on student learning, programming and hourly employees,” he said, noting that the hourly employees oppose the alternate schedule because it reduces the number of hours they work each week. Hourly employees include food, janitorial, technology, paraprofessionals and maintenance staff.

“For me, in a nutshell — I’m not going to lie, it is above my head — but in the end many school districts are doing four-day weeks and I’m sure they had the same concerns,” trustee Jason Jenkins said. “... What are our concerns that are not answered by other districts that are holding us back?”

According to LaCroix, these concerns include the block schedule used at Newcastle High School, as well as dual enrollment and concurrent classes offered through Eastern Wyoming College at the high school. He noted that these are programs offered in Newcastle that other school districts of similar size do not offer.

Trustee Dana Mann-Tavegia further questioned the minimum professional development requirements for the state, noting that each of the calendars features a different number of days staff are required to be in the schools when students are not.

“The teachers have talked about the need to work on classroom stuff instead of professional development,” she said. “What is the minimum to keep them up to date?”

LaCroix said he believes that the requirement is 10 staff development days. Curriculum director Sonya

“It still comes down to, if the student isn’t in the classroom learning from teachers, then what are they doing. What does this really do for the education of students? How does this benefit our students, not our staff? We are big ladies and gentlemen. We can work through that (staff concerns).”

— John Riesland, Weston County School District No. 1 Board Chairman

Tysdal added that the 10 staff development days is for the traditional calendar, noting that the alternative calendar rules are different.

“You can add as many as you want in any format that you want,” she said, noting that some of the days can be used for professional development and others can be used for teachers to work on lesson plans and other classroom work.

Mann-Tavegia said that she feels the district is overdoing it with the large number of days scheduled for staff development on the alternative schedule. She added that she would like some of those days designated for class preparation.

“What you are misunderstanding is that these are not all professional development days. We heard loud and clear that the consensus is that what is being done in the evenings and on weekends should be made part of the five-day week, giving them Friday to do that,” said Tyler Bartlett, Newcastle Middle School principal.

He noted that there will still be professional development but that all staff days will not be used for that purpose.

“It falls on the administration to use that for the students and staff if that is the direction you choose to go,” Bartlett said.

In addition to the staff’s concerns, trustee Sean Crabtree asked what the

impact of one less school day per week would have on the challenged kids in the community.

“From what I feel, our schools are full of challenged kids. Which draft would help those kids out the most?” he questioned.

According to LaCroix, whether the kid is challenged or not, he always questions where the best place is for young people to be educated and he believes that is in the classroom.

“I lean more towards the traditional. ... I like the idea of them (students) being here,” he said. “That is probably an old-fashioned stance.”

Chairman John Riesland echoed LaCroix’s thoughts, stating that teachers being in front of the students will get the best response from said students. He noted that he would vote in favor of a traditional schedule over the alternative one because he doesn’t understand how the shortened school week would benefit kids.

“It still comes down to, if the student isn’t in the classroom learning from teachers, then what are they doing,” he said. “What does this really do for the education of students? How does this benefit our students, not our staff? We are big ladies and gentlemen. We can work through that (staff concerns).”

Other concerns mentioned by various people in attendance included the extended length of the school day in the alternate schedule and its impact on students, practices and other extracurricular activities, the impact one less school day would have on low-income students who eat at the schools, shared staff needs, the effects on different programs offered at the schools and the increased need for child care on Fridays.

Jenkins suggested that while he doesn’t disagree with Riesland’s statements, he thinks that the board should leave the decision up to the teachers.

“Tell me what would work best for them and the schools. It is safe to say they have those students in mind,” Jenkins said.

Newcastle High School student body president Gabby McVay said that students see pros and cons to both schedules.

“Teachers are the ones in the school doing it. They are human as well,”

she said, noting that if the teachers are reaping the benefits, it will have a positive impact on students.

“Take that into consideration, understand what is going on in the classroom,” McVay said. “Do they have enough time to plan for class? Take that into consideration when making the new schedule.”

Tysdal said that when the schedules are developed, input is received and the very first consideration is always what is best for students and their learning. She noted that there is and never will be consensus on which option is preferred among staff.

“Not all buildings agree. Different buildings (schools) have different needs,” she said, adding that students are put first and then they consider what will help teachers out before the proposals are brought to the board.

“It really is a difficult thing,” LaCroix said. “There is a learning curve between kindergarten and senior

Wyoming Department of Education, which considers the applications during its June meeting.

“Moving forward, let’s continue to research more as a board,” Riesland said, noting that the four-day week is not likely something the district could implement for the upcoming 2023-24 school year.

In an email to the News Letter Journal, Bartlett clarified that the district could apply to begin the four-day school week in the 2023-24 school year, but that it would be “somewhat scary” waiting until June 2023 to have an official school calendar.

“If this is something the community and district wants to pursue, it may be prudent to start with the 24-25 calendar, which the State Board of Education could also approve at the same June meeting, given the other requirements have been met,” he said in the email.

These requirements, according to a checklist from the state education department, includes education objectives, a description of the schedule and a copy of the calendar, evidence of meeting the required hours — 900 for elementary school, 950 for middle school and 1,000 for high school — the method of evaluating how student learning has improved, evidence of at least two public meetings held prior to submission of the proposal and a copy of public comment records.

The board agreed to continue to discuss the topic and engage parents in the decision-making process.

Anyone wishing to comment on their preferred schedule and the four-day school week can contact Newcastle Elementary School Principal Brandy Holmes at holmesb@wcsd1.org, Bartlett at bartlett@wcsd1.org, Newcastle High School Principal Bryce Hoffman at hoffmanb@wcsd1.org, Tysdal at tysdals@wcsd1.org, LaCroix at lacroixb@wcsd1.org or board secretary Celo Dickey at dickeyc@wcsd1.org.

(To view this discussion go to the News Letter Journal’s YouTube Channel and watch the Weston County School District #1 Board of Trustees Meeting January 11, 2023 video posted there.)

“What you are misunderstanding is that these are not all professional development days. We heard loud and clear that the consensus is that what is being done in the evenings and on weekends should be made part of the five-day week, giving them Friday to do that.”

— Tyler Bartlett, Newcastle Middle School Principal.

needs.”

While staff opinion is always sought, trustee Paul Bau asked whether parent input has been sought as well.

LaCroix said that would be part of the process required to implement a four-day week. In addition to addressing all the concerns brought forward, the district is required to hold two public hearings. Bartlett noted that application for an alternative schedule must be made with the

# INSURANCE

## NEW YEAR, NEW INSURANCE RATE?

As we begin the New Year, one thing that could be going up in price is your insurance premium. Insurers are facing several different challenges in order to keep insurance affordable. Things such as inflation, supply chain issues and lumber prices can have an effect on insurance pricing. The Wyoming Department of Insurance (DOI) wants you to be aware of these cost drivers and offers some tips on how to keep your rates down.

Although some automobile insurance companies implemented rate holidays, reductions or additional discounts during the COVID-19 pandemic, many are now raising rates. Consumers are now driving more and the cost to replace or repair a vehicle has dramatically increased over the past two years. Supply chain disruptions have caused vehicles to stay longer at the repair shop forcing owners to drive rental vehicles paid partially by their insurance company. The pandemic isn’t the only thing to have an effect on auto insurance rates driving behavior, age, gender, vehicle type, location, driving infractions and claims activity, medical costs and the amount a person is driving all can have an impact on how much insurance costs.

Property insurers are also feeling the pressure due to the natural disaster losses that continue to climb. Hurricanes, wildfires, tornadoes, hail, drought and extreme cold have been major factors impacting home insurance rates across the country. Regardless if these disasters have affected your area or not, insurance companies are still looking to reduce



these types of risk and future claims in the areas where they offer coverage. Many insurers spread their risk and cover properties throughout the country and may cover properties in these affected areas. This could have an impact on your rates due to large dollar claims. Other things that might impact your home insurance rates are: location, type of coverage, amount of coverage, deductible, claims history, property age and condition and any custom or specific items you may have on your property such as a pellet stove or swimming pool.

Here are some ideas to save money on your insurance.

First and foremost, it is always a good idea to have a conversation with

your insurance agent to make sure the coverage you have is appropriate and to see if you are eligible for any discounts. Some possible discounts to discuss with your insurance agent might be a bundling discount for combining your home and auto insurance, security or safety related discounts, loyalty discounts for being with a specific company or having insurance for a certain amount of time, loss mitigation discounts, roofing type discounts, payment method discounts and more. Some of these discounts may not be offered by every insurer so it’s important to discuss what is available with your insurance agent. When discussing your options with your insurance agent he or she may suggest increas-

ing your deductible or eliminating unnecessary coverages as ways to reduce your premium. It’s important to discuss the implications of policy changes with your agent to ensure your coverage is adequate and correct.

An obvious way to save on your automobile insurance is to be a good driver and avoid risky driving behavior and accidents.

Another option might be to compare your insurance coverage with different companies. Insurance companies don’t all raise rates at the same time so it’s important for consumers to compare products to ensure they are getting the best rate. Although the Wyoming Department of Insurance is happy to assist consumers with their insurance issues and questions, the DOI does not have rate authority over home and auto insurance. Home and auto rates are dictated by the market and the risks associated.

There are several reasons why insurance companies are struggling to keep their rates competitive such as: supply chain issues, inflation, lumber costs, medical cost increases, vehicle costs, severe weather, wildfires and labor cost increases just to name a few. Most of these factors have had significant impacts in a small amount of time, leaving insurers with no choice but to make changes. Insurance companies throughout the country are raising rates, reducing coverage and adjusting coverage areas. It is important that consumers are aware of these market changes and communicate with their agent or insurance company about their coverage.



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# Riesland's rules

## Chairman and board clash over public comment at first meeting of 2023

I am not trying to stifle anyone's communication; there is no intent of that. It should be an open and flowing session. I just want it to be transparent, for everyone to know what we are talking about, and we will stick to that so there is no confusion down the road."

— John Riesland, Weston County School District No. 1 Board Chairman

**Alexis Barker**  
NLJ News Editor

John Riesland, the recently elected chairman of the Weston County School District No. 1 board of trustees, laid down the law during the board's first meeting of 2023. The longtime board member presented a list of rules and expectations for meetings that were met with some objection from trustees.

To begin the Jan. 11 meeting, Riesland said that he had changed the board's agenda and that he had several rules and guidelines for meetings moving forward, most notably a requirement for individuals to identify themselves to attend the meetings — either in person or online.

"If you sign in as 'iPhone' (over Zoom), you will be kicked out. I want you to sign in with your name. We want to know who you are. There is also a sign-in sheet by the door," Riesland said. "That way we know who is at our meetings."

In addition to requiring members of the public to sign in, Riesland also explained that comments during the public comment portion of the meeting will be limited to what is on the agenda.

"If it is not on the agenda, I am not going to entertain your comments," Riesland said. "Just know that."

According to Riesland, sticking to items on the agenda fosters trans-

parency and openness. "That way there are no surprises to the public or the board. Everyone knows what is going to be discussed," he said, noting that this rule could change in emergency situations.

Riesland then said that parents or other members of the public who want to address the board on a specific topic that is not on the agenda will need to get themselves put on the agenda under "future discussion items."

Additionally, he said that patrons wanting to address issues or concerns with the board will need to go through the "chain of command" before the board will entertain the discussion.

This chain of command, Riesland said, includes addressing the teacher, bus driver or other staff member first before going to administration and finally Superintendent Brad LaCroix. Once those avenues are exhausted, the individual can be put on the agenda to address the board as a whole.

"If you don't go through the chain of command, you probably won't get on the agenda," he said, noting that the process will allow for everyone to do their job before involving the board.

"I am not trying to stifle anyone's communication; there is no intent of that. It should be an open and flowing session," Riesland said. "I just want it to be transparent, for everyone to know what we are talking about, and we will stick to that so there is no confusion down the road."

In response, Trustee Jason Jenkins stated that several parents had reached out to him with concerns and had planned to attend the next board meeting. He said that he would contact those individuals and inform them of the new process.

Riesland acknowledged that the changes are a work in process, encouraging the board to share any concerns or suggestions with him.

"I work for you guys. I want to make that very plain," Riesland said.

Following his opening statements, trustee Dana Mann-Tavegia said that some board policies may need to be

adjusted to fit Riesland's new rules. He agreed that the board could look at those policy concerns during the next meeting.

"My question would be ... If we are violating some kind of policy, should we be looking at that policy first before we change how we are doing the meeting?" Jenkins asked.

"I am not changing how we do the meeting. I am just changing how the agenda is set up. If we have to make adjustments to policy, that is fine," Riesland said, adding that for the time being he was overruling any policy or policies that were of concern.

He again stressed that the changes he was making were to promote openness and transparency, which he said was a point of concern during the 2022 election.

Directly after the opening discussion, Riesland opened the meeting to public comment. Stanley Jasinski — a member of the public who frequently attends meetings in-person — attempted to address the board, but Riesland quickly stopped the comments. Jasinski claimed his comments were in relation to something that was noted in the minutes of the board's December meeting, and asked Riesland to allow him to speak because approval of those minutes was on the agenda. Riesland upheld his denial, but noted that the board had the ability to overrule his decision and allow Jasinski to speak.

"I ask for the overrule or objection considering this is the first time it is being brought up (the new rules). Anyone who would like to say something today should be allowed to speak," Jenkins said.

"From today on, it should be what was presented," he concluded, in deference to the newly announced rules.

The board voted to overrule Riesland's decision with only trustee Dana Gordon voting to support the denial of Jasinski's wish to comment. Trustee Billy Fitzwater voted to allow Jasinski to speak, but also noted that he was comfortable with the expectations laid out by the chairman moving forward.

Several policies regarding board operation will be discussed on Jan. 25 during the board's next meeting, at the request of Mann-Tavegia.

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Children Are Our Business

## Doing good deeds

Submitted by Lilly Parsons, Elk Mountain Outlaws Reporter

The Elk Mountain Outlaws met on Dec. 11. This year the club decided to focus their meetings on one of the four parts of the 4-H pledge. At the meeting it was also their annual Christmas gift exchange, so they wanted to spread some Christmas cheer by making a donation. For December the members voted to focus on "I pledge my hands to larger service." They voted to give a \$250 donation to the BREAD Office.

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January 19, 2023 — 9

# Sports

News Letter Journal

## SPORTS SCHEDULE

### NEWCASTLE HIGH SCHOOL

Wrestling			
1/19/23	VJ	Quad in Moorcroft	A TBA
1/20-21/23	VJ	Moorcroft Invitational	A NOON
1/26/23	VJ	Wright Jr/Sr HS	A 5PM
1/27-28/23	VJ	Belle Fourche Invite	A NOON
1/27-28/23	VJ	Ron Thon Invitational	A NOON

Men's Swimming			
1/19/23	VJ	Newcastle Triangular	H 4PM
1/20/23	VJ	Douglas	H TBA
1/27/23	VJ	Gillette Invite	A 4PM
1/28/23	VJ	Gillette Invite	A 10AM

Ladies' Basketball			
1/20/23	V9	Moorcroft HS	H 4PM
1/21/23	V9	Buffalo HS	A NOON
1/27/23	V9	Glenrock HS	A 4PM
1/28/23	V9	Wheatland HS	H 1PM

Men's Basketball			
1/20/23	V9	Moorcroft HS	H 3PM
1/21/23	V9	Buffalo HS	A NOON
1/24/23	9	Wright Jr/Sr HS	H 6PM
1/27/23	V9	Glenrock HS	A 4PM
1/28/23	V9	Wheatland HS	H 1PM

## Never say die

If you've ever played, coached or watched sports, you have experienced a moment when an individual or a team seemed to have passed the point of no return, and there was little hope that they would be able to right their sinking ship to come out with a win.

And then they do.

One of the first examples that comes to mind of an amazing come-from-behind win, for Dogie fans at least, was the infamous 1990 state basketball championship when the Dogies rallied from a 20-point deficit in the fourth quarter to snatch the title away from the Torrington Trailblazers.

For a small 3A school, that is a memory that lives on, even for those who were not around to witness that amazing game.

It was accomplished because a squad of teenagers and their coaches had the never-say-die attitude.

Last weekend, we saw another come-from-behind victory, this time on the national stage, as the Jacksonville Jaguars made up a 27-point deficit against the LA Chargers to steal the game, with a one-point margin of victory on a

— See **Karpe**, Page 10



Sonja Karp  
Karpe Dogie

# Dogies dunk the Bearcats

Sonja Karp  
NLJ Sports Editor

After being dry-docked for five weeks from competition, the Dogie swim team made a splash as they got back into action by defeating the Douglas Bearcats in back-to-back events last week. First, head coach Doug Scribner's squad bested the Converse County team 51-31 at the Buffalo Triangular on Thursday, then they won the Douglas Invitational on Saturday, edging out the Bearcats by 2 and Natrona by 49 points.

"We won a dual against Campbell County last year or the year before, but this is the first time we've won an invitational," Scribner said, grinning. "And it was also great to beat Douglas two times in one week, and it was the first time we've beat Natrona."

Not only was Saturday the first time the boys won the Douglas Invitational, they did so against bigger teams. The Dogies were down a man, so they only had seven members competing, but they were still able to get the better of teams with 9 and 10 members each.

The squad won five of the seven individual events and two of the three relays on their way to scoring their 113 points.

"It was also encouraging that both Douglas and Natrona were bigger teams, but we still were able to beat them," Scribner described. "I was actually kind of worried last week, because we hadn't had a meet in five weeks and practice over the Christmas break was kind of sporadic."

— See **Swimmers**, Page 10



Photo courtesy of Doug Scribner

Archer Ohnstad swims the breaststroke leg of the 200 IM at the Douglas Invitational Swim Meet Saturday. His third-place finish in the race helped his team to edge out the Bearcats for the team win on the day.

# Wrestlers compete well at home invite

Sonja Karp  
NLJ Sports Editor

On Friday the 13th, the Newcastle/Upton wrestling team hosted the 13th Annual Newcastle Dogie Invitational, and it was a day full of action with a house full of wrestlers. There were 13 boys teams participating, which added up to 250 varsity wrestlers, and there were also 12 girls teams represented with 70 total grapplers.

Head coach Lee McCoy's boys finished sixth out of 13

teams, and all but one of those who scored more points were 4A squads. The girls ended up in ninth place out of 12 teams, despite the fact that there were only two girls representing the Dogies/Bobcats.

"The tournament went really well, and I was very happy with our kids," began McCoy. "We wrestled well and we competed hard, so that was great to see."

There were two individual champions on the day as Haven Vrana won in the 106-pound weight class and Kyah

Miller at 120.

Vrana pinned his way into the finals match by sticking his first three opponents in 11 seconds, 24 seconds and 16 seconds, respectively. His Natrona County adversary put up a bit more of a fight in the title round by making Vrana work 1:49 before he got the pin.

"Haven only spent a total of 2:30 minutes on the mat for the duration of the tournament," McCoy said. "He is just a sophomore with only one loss on his record, which

was against a top ranked 4A kid."

Miller only had two matches on the day. She pinned her first opponent from Sheridan in 2:21, then made quick work of her Thunder Basin opponent by pinning her in 40 seconds for the title.

"Kyah is on a roll and remains undefeated in the girls division," McCoy said.

"The first ever girls rankings came out last week and she is ranked second behind a Natrona wrestler, so I'm excited to see her continue to

dominate."

In addition to the champions, the Dogies/Bobcats had a couple of wrestlers place second, including Landon Norman at 113 and Jackson East at 120. Jacob Prell finished third at 182, Trey Schneider (126) and Casey Matthews (132) placed fifth, while Heath Henkle finished sixth at 285.

Courtney Matthews also placed by finishing fifth in the girls division when she

— See **Wrestling**, Page 16

## WINTER Savings

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# Lady Dogies continue their winning streak

**Sonja Karp**  
NLJ Sports Editor

The Lady Dogies played two dominant road basketball games last week as they defeated the Wright Lady Panthers at their house on Thursday 60-25, then bested the Lady Ranchers of Harding County in the Sacred Hoops Classic Tournament at Rapid City Christian High School on Saturday by a score of 57-35.

"It was good to have two games pretty much back to back to try to get things flowing a little bit," stated head coach Chad Ostenson. "We played pretty well, but we also found some things we need to work on, so hopefully these games will get us ready to get quadrant play started this week."

It took the Lady Dogies a little bit to get going in their contest against Wright on Thursday. The rims in the Lady Panther's gym were a little tight for Newcastle, giving them only a 12-6 lead at the end of the first quarter.

However, the squad blew things open in the second quarter by going on a 17-0 run to finish the half up 29-6.

"It just seemed like we were a little off, so we threw our 1-3-1 on them a couple of times just to get the girls going," Ostenson explained. "When we play defense like we are capable of

playing, we are pretty tough. Not only did we keep them from scoring, but we turned that defense into offense."

The Lady Dogies put on another offensive clinic in the third quarter, out-scoring Wright 24-8, and by doing so pulled ahead by 40 points, instituting the mercy rule with about two minutes to play in the third.

With a dominant lead and a running clock, the starters took a seat for the fourth quarter and the JV finished out the 60-25 win.

Newcastle ended the contest with three players in double figures. Jaylen Ostenson led the team with 22 points, Hunter McFarland had 12, while Shelby Tidyman was close behind with 11 points. Sydney Pederson added 7 points, MacKenzie Conzelman 4 and Oakley Checketts and Jayde Harrington each pitched in 2 points apiece.

On Saturday, the squad headed to Rapid City Christian High School to take on the Harding County Lady Ranchers in the Sacred Hoops Classic Tournament.

Once again, Newcastle held their opponent to only 6 points in the first quarter, but the Lady Dogies had a much better start to their game than they did on Thursday as they poured in 19 points to end the first up 19-6. In

the second quarter, they out-scored the Lady Ranchers 20-5 to take the 39-11 lead into the locker room.

"We shot really well against Harding County and we were longer, taller, bigger and much more experienced than they were," Ostenson described. "However, they were scrappy and physical so that was good, especially heading into a week where we play Buffalo, who are going to be physical."

Dogie fans also got to see the welcome return of Mack the Gun, as MacKenzie Conzelman returned to her impressive three-point shooting ways, draining 5-9 attempts from beyond the arc, including three in a row in the third quarter.

"It was fun to see Mack back on her game. She was thinking too much, but a shooter's gotta shoot," Ostenson said. "She just relaxed and let her muscle memory take over, and good things happened."

Halfway through the third quarter, Newcastle led by 30, which is the mercy rule in South Dakota, so a running clock was instituted for the remainder of the game. Once again, starters chilled out on the bench during the fourth quarter and the Lady Ranchers went on a 15-0 run to finish the contest.

"Everyone got plenty of time on the

floor in both of our games last week," Ostenson said. "It was great for our younger kids to get that time on the court in a real game situation."

Like on Thursday, the Lady Dogies had three players in double figures. Conzelman was the leading scorer, finishing with 19 points, Jaylen Ostenson put up a double-double dropping in 17 points and pulling down 11 rebounds, and Tidyman threw in 12 points. Harrington added 5 while McFarland and Checketts chipped in 2 points each.

Another big positive from the week was that shooting was back where the Lady Dogies usually hang over both games. The team shot 39 and 40 percent from three and were at 57 and 58 percent efficiency against Wright and Harding County, respectively.

This week will be a huge test for the No. 4-ranked Lady Dogies as they open up quadrant play against Moorcroft and Buffalo.

"I think Buffalo is one of the best teams in the state, and they are currently ranked number two behind Douglas who narrowly defeated them last week by 8 points," Ostenson acknowledged. "We will have to play every possession this week, especially against Buffalo. They are tough and athletic as usual, and bring back

**NHS Ladies' Basketball**

**Newcastle @ Wright 1/12/23: 60-25**  
 Jaylen Ostenson: 22 points, 3 rebounds, 5 assists, 4 steals  
 Hunter McFarland: 12 points, 3 rebounds, 1 assist, 6 steals  
 Shelby Tidyman: 11 points, 2 assists  
 MacKenzie Conzelman: 4 points, 4 assists, 5 steals  
 Oakley Checketts: 2 points, 1 rebound  
 Jayde Harrington: 2 points, 6 rebounds, 2 steals, 1 block  
 Hailey Beasstrom: 4 rebounds, 1 steal  
 Sydney Pederson: 7 points, 1 steal  
 Emi Lichtenberger: 1 steal  
 Brooklyn Benschopf: 1 rebound, 1 assist

**Newcastle @ Harding County 1/14/23: 57-35**  
 Jaylen Ostenson: 17 points, 11 rebounds, 3 assists, 2 steals  
 Shelby Tidyman: 12 points, 4 rebounds, 5 assists, 6 steals  
 Hunter McFarland: 2 points, 2 rebounds, 2 assists, 1 steal  
 MacKenzie Conzelman: 19 points, 2 rebounds, 2 assists, 1 steal  
 Oakley Checketts: 2 points, 1 steal  
 Jayde Harrington: 5 points, 4 rebounds, 1 steal  
 Hailey Beasstrom: 2 rebounds  
 Sydney Pederson: 2 rebounds, 2 assists  
 Emi Lichtenberger: 1 rebound

a lot of talent from last season. But if we play like we're capable, I like our chances."

Newcastle varsity will tip off against the Lady Wolves in the Dogie Dome on Friday at 5:30, then will travel to Buffalo to take on the Lady Bison at 1:30 on Saturday.

## Swimmers

from Page 9

We had to cancel five meets and I knew that would impact where we were at — I just didn't know how."

Five weeks of no competition in a season that only lasts 11 weeks seems like a lot, however, as Scribner looked at how his

team swam in Buffalo, there were a couple of improvements, but some were a little slower. Then, in Douglas, there were

a couple more improvements or his swimmers were back on their times, so that was a relief for everyone.

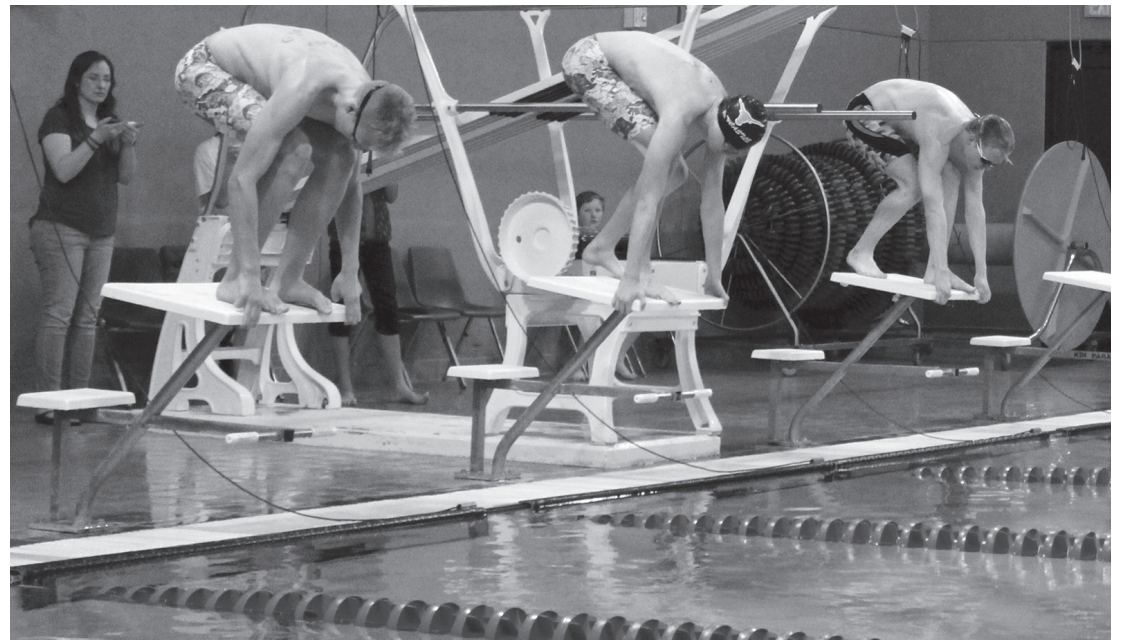
Harrison Gross had a standout meet at Douglas by posting personal best times in the 50 Freestyle and also in the 400 Freestyle where he finished just two seconds shy of a qualifying time.

"His swim in the 400 was amazing. About halfway through it, I asked Ramsey [Gross] if he thought he could hold the pace and he admitted that he didn't know," Scribner said. "The kid he swam against was seeded ahead of him but he stayed right with him for the first 150, and after 200 meters were done he just kept going and beat him by half a pool's length."

Logan Olson also posted a personal best in the 200 IM where he finished first with a meter time of 3:10.14, which translates to 2:51.30 in yards.

In addition to Olson's win in the 200 IM, Ramsey Gross took first in the 50 Freestyle and the 100 Breaststroke, Nate Strickland was first to the wall in the 100 Freestyle, while Harrison Gross was the champion in the 400 Freestyle.

The team of Olson, Samuel



Photos courtesy of Doug Scribner

From left, Archer Ohnstad and Logan Olson are poised to dive into the 200 IM at the Douglas Invitational meet Saturday. Olson won the race while Ohnstad finished in third place. Below, Samuel Scribner finished second place just 1 second behind Ramsey Gross in the Breaststroke at the Douglas Invite on Saturday. Both swimmers were just a couple of seconds off of swimming a qualifying time.

Scribner, Ramsey Gross and Strickland also won the 200 Medley Relay and the 200 Freestyle team consisting of Ramsey Gross, Strickland, Olson and Harrison Gross won that event.

Two days prior, the Dogies split at the Buffalo Triangular, defeating Douglas by 20 points and losing to Buffalo 34-63.

"Buffalo is fast and they have some of the best sprinters in the state," Scribner explained. "They did beat us, but we stayed with them pretty well. They didn't crush us and there were some good races against them."

Ramsey Gross added another event to his rapidly filling state slate on Thursday when he finished third in the 100 Butterfly in 1:07.39, two seconds under the 3A qualifying time.

Gross has now qualified in everything he has swam so far with the exception of the breaststroke and the 200



Freestyle where he finished just .80 seconds away from qualifying.

"We had two good meets last week and it was also just really good to get back to school and back into a routine after the chaos of Christmas break," Scribner said. "We are doing the same thing as we did with the girls as far as changing our practice strategy, and the boys are getting faster and they seem to like it."

Currently, the Dogies have

six swimmers under 30 seconds in the 50 Freestyle, two guys are under a minute in the 100 Freestyle, while three more are within two to three seconds of a minute in the 100 Freestyle — which bodes well for the team as they get closer to the post-season.

This week the team is home on both Thursday and Friday. The Dogies will host a triangular against Douglas and Buffalo on Thursday and a dual against Douglas on Friday.

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## Karpe

from Page 9

36-yard field goal — which just barely made it through the uprights.

The feat is the third largest comeback in post-season play in NFL history.

Things didn't look good for the Jags in the first half. In fact, it was downright ugly. Quarterback Trevor Lawrence had a dismal start to the game, throwing a gut-wrenching four interceptions and completing only 12-18 passes during the first two quarters of play.

The dreadful offensive display by Jacksonville had them down 27-0 before they were able to right the ship.

As captain of the proverbial ship, it fell on Lawrence to pull himself up by his bootstraps to turn things around.

I don't care who you are, how much money you're being paid, or how good of an athlete you are, he was in a precarious position. After the two quarters he had just played, anyone would understand if Lawrence's confidence had been shaken to the point of no return by halftime.

But he proved that it wasn't.

He followed those four interceptions with four touchdown passes on four straight possessions. He also directed the winning drive, which included a 25-yard gain by running back Travis Etienne on fourth and one. That conversion would ultimately set up Riley Patterson's go-ahead field goal.

I guess that's why Lawrence gets paid the big bucks.

After the game, Lawrence said, "You couldn't write a crazier script ... We were never out of the fight ... I'm kind of speechless, honestly, just to see what belief can do and to see when a team believes in each other what you can accomplish."

He spoke volumes with those few words, because that sums up the never-say-die attitude that champions embody.

Whether you're on the gridiron, the hardwood, the pool, the mat, the pitch, or the track or the field, it's not over until it's over as long as everyone believes it's possible to succeed.



Left to right: Andrew Hicks, Archer Ohnstad, Harrison Gross, Aaron Schantle, Ramsey Gross, Samuel Scribner, Logan Olson, Nate Strickland and coach Doug Scribner.

*Photo by Emily Hartinger/Skull Creek Photography*

**#GoDogies                      #HornsUp                      #DogieSwim                      #JoinTheRide**

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# Weather Vane

	DATE	HI	LO
S-08	43	16	
M-09	43	19	
T-10	43	27	
W-11	37	23	
T-12	37	18	
F-13	45	19	
S-14	48	30	

## Legal Notice

### NOTICE OF PROPOSED BANK MERGER

First Northern Bank of Wyoming, 141 South Main Street, Buffalo, Johnson County, Wyoming 82834, intends to apply to the Wyoming Division of Banking for permission to merge with First State Bank of Newcastle and establish a branch at the location of First State Bank of Newcastle, 24 North Sumner Avenue, Newcastle, Weston County, Wyoming 82701 (the "Merger"). The Merger is anticipated to occur on March 24, 2023, subject to receipt of all regulatory approvals.

The Merger will have the effects set forth in Section 13-4-111 of the Wyoming Statutes. At the effective time of the Merger (the "Effective Time"), First Northern Bank of Wyoming will continue as the bank resulting from the Merger (the "Resulting Bank"), and the separate corpo-

rate existence of First State Bank of Newcastle will cease. At the Effective Time, all outstanding shares of First State Bank of Newcastle and First Northern Bank of Wyoming will, by virtue of the Merger, be converted into shares of common stock of the Resulting Bank. At the Effective Time, all rights, title and interests to all real estate and other property owned by each of First State Bank of Newcastle and First Northern Bank of Wyoming will be allocated to and vested in the Resulting Bank without reversion or impairment, without further act or deed, and without any transfer or assignment having occurred, but subject to any existing liens or encumbrances thereon. At the Effective Time, all liabilities and obligations of First State Bank of Newcastle and First Northern Bank of Wyoming will be allocated to the Resulting Bank.

(Publish January 5, 12 and 19, 2023)

## Legal Notice

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Wyoming Administrative Procedure Act and the Wyoming Public Service Commission's (Commission) Rules, notice is hereby given of the Application of Black Hills Wyoming Gas, LLC d/b/a Black Hills Energy (BHWG or the Company), for authority to revise its established distribution areas and Wobbe Indices.

1. BHWG is a public utility subject to the Commission's jurisdiction. (Wyo. Stat. §§ 37-1-101(a)(vi)(D) and 37-2-112.)
2. On December 2, 2022, BHWG submitted its Application requesting authority to revise its established distribution areas and Wobbe Indices. The Company states that many of the Wobbe Indices in effect were established in the 1980s, and are outdated due to changes in the natural gas supply, and that several of the locations used to test the supply are redundant. BHWG states that its proposed measurement points and methods will better represent a more constant and accurate measurement of gas quality delivered to customers than previously available.

3. This is not a complete description of the Application. BHWG's Application is available for inspection at the Commission's offices in Cheyenne, Wyoming, or online at: <https://dms.wyo.gov/external/publicusers.aspx> (Enter Record No. 17209).

4. Anyone desiring to file a statement, intervention petition, protest, or request for a hearing must file with the Commission in writing, on or before February 3, 2023. A proposed intervention or request for hearing shall set forth the grounds, and the position and interest of the petitioner in this proceeding.

5. If you wish to participate in this matter and you require reasonable accommodation for a disability, please contact the Commission at (307) 777-7427, or 2515 Warren Avenue, Suite 300, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002. Communications-impaired persons may also contact the Commission by accessing Wyoming Relay at 711. Please mention Docket No. 30026-69-GA-22 in your communications.

Dated: January 5, 2023.

(Publish January 12 and 19, 2023)

## Legal Notice

### NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY FOR TAX DEED

Cummings, Rebekah A  
PO Box 137  
Osage, Wyo. 82723

To all owners, possessors or occupants of the real property described as Lots 5, 6 & 7, Block 15, Nefsy Addition Osage, Weston County, Wyoming.

Be advised that; Steven A. Martens purchased the above described property at a tax sale on the 18th day of August 2018 in Newcastle, Wyoming from the Weston County Treasurers and is in possession of certificate of purchase No. 5035. The property was taxed or assessed in the name/names of Cummings Rebekah A.

For the year 2018 at this time there are no special assessments for local or public improvements on this property and the owner cannot be found in Weston County, Wyoming.

In accordance with Wyoming law, the property may be redeemed by the legal owner after the date of sale but before a valid tax deed application has been filed and accepted by the county treasurer. Take note that Steven A. Martens will apply for a tax deed on or after the 27th day of August 2022.

Any persons holding an interests in this property or otherwise interested in application for tax deed may contact the applicant Steven A. Martens 320 Green Mtn. Road Sundance, Wyoming 82729 or contact the Weston County Treasurer, 1 West Main, Newcastle, Wyoming 82701. Regarding the petitions intent to apply or a tax deed.

Dated this 9th day of January 2023

Steven A. Martens  
320 Green Mtn. Road  
Sundance, Wyoming 82729

(Publish January 12, 19 and 26, 2023)

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UNDER THE 'NOTICES' TAB

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### THE GRAMMYS

#### ACROSS

1. Spencer of Hollywood's Golden Age
6. Eyeball, e.g.
9. "Tosca" song, e.g.
13. Theater passage
14. Bovine call
15. "\_\_\_\_\_ came a spider..."
16. \*Univision's \_\_\_\_\_ Grammy Awards
17. Barley bristle
18. Turning token taker
19. \*President with a Grammy
21. Diabolical
23. Sold at the pump
24. Russian monarch
25. Back of a boat
28. \*\*"Shallow," 2018 recipient from "A \_\_\_\_\_ is Born" movie
30. \*Camila Cabello and Ed Sheeran's nominated song
35. College dwelling
37. Footnote note
39. Shade of violet
40. Huron's neighbor
41. Head of the abbey
43. Done in a pot
44. City in Bolivia
46. Not manual
47. Mend, healthwise
48. Eye cover

#### DOWN

1. Bath powder
2. Iranian coin
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Spumante
4. Be needy
5. Gossipy ones
6. Arabian Peninsula country
7. Column's counterpart
8. Holiday surprise for employee
9. Palo \_\_\_\_\_, CA
10. Agitate
11. Inwardly
12. \*1970 two-time winner "The \_\_\_\_\_ of Aquarius"
15. Hindu retreat
20. Ancient Rome's neighbor
22. Nail a criminal
24. Popular newspaper name
25. \*\*"30" performer
26. Pillage
27. Beef \_\_\_\_\_, dim sum choice
29. \*\*"Don't Shut Me Down" group
31. Alan Alda's classic TV show
32. Type of hawk
33. Type of flu
34. Multi-colored dog coat
36. One of three square ones
38. Shower with affection
42. Human trunk
45. Sliding fastener
49. Part of "I"
51. Past-life experience? (2 words)
54. Capital of Bulgaria
56. Airbnb option
57. Chanel of fashion
58. German industrial valley
59. Big Bang's original matter
60. Disc, alt. sp.
61. Popular dieter's foe
62. Between ports
63. Chris Hemsworth's superhero
64. \*Award-winning Bon Jovi's lead singer
66. \*Coldplay's collaborators

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

### Last week's answers

N	A	D	I	R	A	B	A	T	O	M	E		
A	S	I	D	E	F	A	D	M	O	P	E	Y	
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5	9	1	7	8	6	2	3	4
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2	7	6	8	3	9	1	4	5
1	8	9	5	6	4	7	2	3
9	6	2	4	1	7	3	5	8
8	4	7	9	5	3	6	1	2
3	1	5	6	2	8	4	7	9

### Gwamma by JaNel M. Farnsworth



FIND THE SOLUTIONS IN NEXT WEEK'S PAPER

Legal Notice

NOTICE OF PROPOSED BANK MERGER

First Northern Bank of Wyoming, 141 South Main Street, Buffalo, Johnson County, Wyoming 82834, intends to apply to the Federal Reserve Board for permission to merge with First State Bank of Newcastle and establish a branch at the location of First State Bank of Newcastle, 24 North Sumner Avenue, Newcastle, Weston County, Wyoming 82701. The Federal Reserve considers a number of factors in deciding whether to approve the application, including the record of performance of applicant banks in helping to meet local credit needs.

You are invited to submit comments in writing on this application to the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, One Memorial Drive, Kansas

City, MO 64198. The comment period will not end before February 9, 2023. The Board's procedures for processing applications may be found at 12 C.F.R. Part 262. Procedures for processing protested applications may be found at 12 C.F.R. 262.25. To obtain a copy of the Federal Reserve Board's procedures, or if you need more information about how to submit your comments on the application, contact Jeffrey Imgarten, Assistant Vice President, at (816) 881-2073. The Federal Reserve will consider your comments and any request for a public meeting or formal hearing on the application if they are received in writing by the Reserve Bank on or before the last day of the comment period.

(Publish January 5, 19 and February 9, 2023)

Cowboy State Look-In

Courtesy of the Wyoming News Exchange



Two arrested for fentanyl

GILLETTE (WNE) — A man and a woman were arrested on numerous drug possession charges Friday evening after police officers found meth and 121 fentanyl pills in a car.

Police received a report of a man smoking fentanyl in a white Ford Escape that was parked at the Ramada Inn.

When they arrived, there was no one in the car, but officers could see three fentanyl pills inside the vehicle, said Police Sgt. Steve Dillard.

As officers were looking inside the car, a 33-year-old man, Andrew Richwine, and a 28-year-old woman, Tori Shepard, came around the corner and unlocked the car before they saw the officers.

A search of the Ford Escape found 121

fentanyl pills, weighing a total of 13 grams, along with 6 grams of crystal meth, 0.1 grams of liquid meth, 3.5 grams of marijuana and one Xanax pill, Dillard said.

Both Richwine and Shepard showed signs of being under the influence of a controlled substance. Officers learned the woman had recently used meth intravenously and the man had smoked fentanyl, Dillard said.

Richwine and Shepard were each arrested for felony possession of fentanyl and felony possession of meth, along with misdemeanor counts of possession of liquid meth, marijuana and a controlled substance in pill form and use of a controlled substance.

This story was published on Jan. 16, 2023.

ERAP funds still available

CHEYENNE (WNE) — Housing assistance still is available to previous Emergency Rental Assistance Program applicants and those who never applied.

ERAP has set aside \$8.6 million for housing stability services available to ERAP recipients and households that have not previously received funding. That funding is scheduled to be available until June.

Below are the housing stability services that are available.

Need help with the first

month's rent and deposit or other costs related to obtaining or keeping safe housing? ERAP has given funding to local community-based organizations that will determine funding on a case-by-case basis.

Households needing legal assistance: If facing eviction, visit Legal Aid of Wyoming at lawyoming.org or call 1-877-432-9955.

Seniors and individuals with disabilities: The Wyoming Department of Health's Aging Division provides specialized services to support their

ability to obtain and maintain safe housing.

Survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking: The Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault provides specialized services to support their ability to obtain and maintain safe housing.

For more information, call 1-877-WYOERAP, visit dfs.wyo.gov/erap or email RentalAssistance@wyo.gov.

This story was published on Jan. 14, 2023.

Final notice for brand renewal

PINEDALE (WNE) — Attention, livestock brand owners: The Wyoming Livestock Board is sending out final notices for brand owners whose brands are scheduled for renewal.

Those who are not sure of when their brand is scheduled for renewal or are not sure if the Wyoming Livestock Board has their current address should

contact the Wyoming Livestock Board via phone, mail, email or fax at following address: Wyoming Livestock Board 1934 Wyatt Drive, Cheyenne, WY 82002-0051 Office phone 307-777-7515 Fax 307-777-6561 or brands@wyo.gov.

This story was published on Jan. 10, 2023.

Average gas prices increase 10 cents

CHEYENNE (WNE) — Average gasoline prices in Wyoming have risen 10.1 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.01 per gallon Monday, according to GasBuddy.com's survey of 494 stations in Wyoming.

Prices in Wyoming are 6.6 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 21.9 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national

average price of diesel has fallen 2.1 cents in the last week, and stands at \$4.64 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the lowest price in the state Sunday was \$2.43 per gallon, while the highest was \$3.78, a difference of \$1.35.

The national average price of gasoline has risen 8.2 cents per gallon in the last week,

averaging \$3.25 per gallon Monday. The national average is unchanged from a month ago, and stands 3.6 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data.

The data is compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 U.S. gas stations.

This story was published on Jan. 11, 2023.

Food Freedom Act changes proposed

LANDER (WNE) — A Food Freedom Act amendment proposed by a local legislator this session aims to ensure that the state of Wyoming cannot hold producers of farm-raised eggs and dairy products to a higher standard than any other inspection criteria set by the United States Department of Agriculture.

According to the co-sponsor of the bill, Sen. Tim Salazar, R-Riverton, "This will help producers in Fremont County sell the products locally and provide needed guidance to state agencies."

Salazar said state inspectors, working with the Department of Agriculture, have long worked without a standard to allow local producers to sell their products like eggs and dairy on the open market due to concerns about handling and marketing standards. The amendments to this bill will allow the sale of these products with

a simple disclosure that conveys that they are locally produced.

The bill currently addresses only eggs and dairy, but Salazar said future amendments could be necessary to add products as the "farm to table" movement gains momentum in the state.

The Fremont Local Market in Riverton is a new business dedicated to the secondary selling of local produce and other farm products from residents and small businesses in Fremont County. It has recently faced challenges with selling dairy products from local providers, prompting senators and state representatives to act on their behalf.

The measure, SF 102, was introduced and referred to the Agriculture, State and Public Lands & Water Resources committee.

This story was published on Jan. 14, 2023.

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News Letter Journal

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## BLAST FROM THE PAST

## Spot the differences!



Here is a photo from the News Letter Journal's archives. Subjects unknown. Email staff@newsjl.com to share any information about this photo or event.

# Newcastle drops two games on the road

**Sonja Karp**  
NLJ Sports Editor

The Dogies were on the road for their two contests last week in Wright and Rapid City. They faced tough competition on Thursday against the Panthers, and again on Saturday against Rapid City Christian, but despite losing 21-63 and 21-76, respectively, head coach Allen Von Eye saw some progress from his team.

“We are getting better each and every game,” Von Eye reported. “The guys are starting to put things together and games like we had last week against good non-conference teams really help us improve.”

Against Wright, coach Von Eye changed up the starting line-up a bit in order to utilize the height that rookie junior Will Beastron brings to the team with his 6-foot, 8-inch frame.

“Will is new to basketball so we are working with him to get him in a good position and to set him up to succeed,” Von Eye began. “Our five-out offense isn’t a good fit for him, so we also adjusted our offense to a four-out, one-in to keep

## NHS Men’s Basketball

**Newcastle @ Wright 1/12/23: 21-63**  
Quint Perino: 4 points, 1 rebound, 1 steal, 1 block  
Zander White: 5 points, 5 rebounds, 1 assist  
Wyatt Cole: 1 rebound, 3 steals  
JJ Lipp: 2 points, 3 rebounds, 1 assist  
Will Beastron: 9 points, 14 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal, 1 block  
Pate Tavegie: 1 point, 1 rebound

**Newcastle @ Rapid City Christian 1/14/23: 21-76**  
Quint Perino: 10 points, 4 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal  
Zander White: 4 points, 1 rebound, 2 assists, 1 steal  
Wyatt Cole: 2 points, 2 rebounds, 1 charge taken  
JJ Lipp: 4 rebounds, 1 assist  
Will Beastron: 5 points, 4 rebounds  
Thatcher Troffgruben: 1 rebound, 1 assist  
Pate Tavegie: 1 rebound, 1 steal

with being out-rebounded, the Dogies found themselves in a hole early as the first quarter ended with Newcastle in a 9-18 deficit. The Panthers put together an offensive charge in the second quarter to out-score the Dogies 24-3 so took a dominating 43-11 lead into the locker room.

“We hustled really well but we gave up far too many rebounds,” Von Eye admitted. “We gave up 24 offensive rebounds to them, so that’s 24 extra opportunities for them to score, and you can’t do that at this level. When you’re not making buckets and not making free-throws, it makes it tough and puts so much more pressure on the defense.”

Unfortunately, the deeper the hole, the harder it is to dig out of, and the Dogies found themselves in a 40-point deficit in the third quarter, resulting in a running clock for the final frame of play.

“It was a rough game, but we really did some good things,” Von Eye said. “We will keep growing and learning from each game.”

The Dogies’ biggest improvement from previous contests

was that they were able to limit their turnovers somewhat, finishing the game with only 20.

Beastron had his best game of the season, ending with 9 points and 14 rebounds. Zander White added 5 points, Quint Perino put in 4, JJ Lipp contributed 2 points and Pate Tavegie chipped in with 1 point to round out the scoring for the team.

Going into the game against Rapid City Christian on Saturday, Von Eye and his crew were aware that this was a good team. They were 7-0 coming into the contest and were coming off of winning the [Lakota Nation Invitational] Tournament.

“They returned everyone from last year, and really have all the pieces you could ever need,” Von Eye said. “They are also good athletes, and all of that made things difficult for us, but we definitely did some really good things against them.”

The Comets applied a great deal of defensive pressure to the Dogies, but Newcastle was able to deal much better with it than they had previously in the season, and according to Von Eye when his squad slowed

down, they were able to do some good things offensively. Unfortunately, the more experienced Rapid City Christian team was able to speed things up quite often which didn’t bode well for Newcastle.

The shot clock also brought in another wrinkle for the Dogies. Most of the players have little experience dealing with that, so it added another pressure point for the offense to address.

“We only ran up against it a couple of times, but it was enough to make things a little difficult,” Von Eye explained. “But, we fought right up until the end and we never gave up, which is great. Quint made some hustle plays that the casual watcher might not notice, but there are five plays that he made that come to mind that were pretty pivotal.”

“We would make a mistake on offense and let a run out happen, and even though he was the farthest player away, he slowed them down or stopped them,” he continued. “You have to have that. We also did much better with helping on defense and on closeouts.”

The Comets pulled out to

a 52-10 lead by the end of the first half, so there was a running clock for the entire second half of play. Despite that, Newcastle was able to add 11 points to the scoreboard in those final 16 minutes.

Perino ended the day as the team’s leading scorer with 10 points, Beastron added 5, White had 4 and Wyatt Cole rounded out the scoring with 2 points.

“These types of games are the best practices we can get because we can’t simulate that kind of situation in practice,” Von Eye said. “And they also lead us into this week and the opening of quadrant match-ups against Moorcroft and Buffalo.”

The Wolves are in a similar situation, so Von Eye is focused on discipline as they prepare for the Friday night contest at home. Buffalo is a talented and athletic team again this year, so will present another challenge to the Dogies on Saturday.

Tip-off for varsity on Friday in the Dome is scheduled for 7 p.m., and in Buffalo on Saturday the boys game will follow the girls’ varsity contest, so it will begin at approximately 3 p.m.

## Wrestling

from Page 9

defeated a Sheridan wrestler in the consolation championship match.

“Landon lost to a pretty tough Sheridan kid in the finals, and, to be fair, it was a lot closer than the 7-2 score indicated,” said McCoy. “Jackson lost to returning 2A State Champ Nathan Fish from Lusk in the championship match. Jackson has three losses this season, and all of them are to Fish. It was a close match, 5-2, and was pretty exciting.”

Matthews, who is new to Newcastle High School this season, has been coming on for the Dogies, and according to McCoy seemed to really start to hit his stride at the tournament.

“Casey had a great tournament, and 132 is definitely one of the toughest weights in the state,” McCoy reported. “He has been struggling to find his groove in the last few weeks, but boy, he had a couple really good quality

wins this weekend. He’s finding the right mix of intensity by pacing himself to stay in control, and I was really happy with what I saw out of him.”

“He’s a great kid and is one that any coach feels lucky to have on his team,” he continued. “He’s got a great attitude and has a great work ethic. It’s great to have a junior for the younger kids to look up to and to provide good leadership.”

Prell lost his only match of the day in the semi-finals in a close 2-0 decision against a Sheridan wrestler. He then went on to pin a Wright opponent in 4:33 for third place.

Schneider lost only one match on the day, but it happened to be in the quarter-final round, which knocked him into the consolation bracket.

“Trey should have been in the finals. He was beating his kid pretty handily in the quarter-finals, but then got caught in a crazy move and gave up the pin,” McCoy explained. “He came through the wrestle backs to place fifth, so we were really happy about that.”

As a team, the boys won 25 of their 40 matches and several of the wins came about as a result of quick pins.

“It’s nice to see some of our kids be so dominant, but it also worries me a little bit,” McCoy admitted. “We’ve got to get our kids into condition and we need to get them into the third period sometimes. If they don’t get that experience, it’ll get tough when they go up against tougher kids and the match gets into the third period.”

In an attempt to provide the opportunity to build their stamina, McCoy explained that the coaches started making the wrestlers who finished their matches quickly do some sprints afterward to get an extra workout in.

This week is a busy one for the Dogies/Bobcats. They got things started with a quad in Newcastle on Tuesday, then they will go to Moorcroft for a quad on Thursday and back to



Photo by Breekle Loeb/For NLJ

Landon Norman was in a bit of a pickle in this match at the Dogie Invitational Friday. Norman went 2-1 in the 113-pound weight class to finish second at the tournament.

Moorcroft on Friday and Saturday for an invitational tournament.

“We only have two days of practice and then we will spend the rest of the week ‘practicing’ in competition,” McCoy said. “But that is great because we need mat time. Our kids are starting to pick things up a little better so it will be great to get on the mat and keep sharpening their tools.”

Photo by Walter Sprague/NLJ

Trey Schneider made just one mistake at the Dogie Invite Friday. That one mistake put him in the consolation bracket where he won out to take fifth place in the 126-pound weight class.



### NHS/UHS Wrestling

**Newcastle/Upton @ Dogie/Bobcat Invite 1/13/23**  
**Varsity Team Results:**  
1. Sturgis 280  
2. Thunder Basin 231  
3. Natrona 230  
4. Lingle-Ft. Laramie/Southeast 168.5  
5. Sheridan 156  
6. Newcastle/Upton 143  
7. Lusk 124  
8. Tongue River 109  
9. Wright 98  
10. Newell, SD 75.5  
11. Kelly Walsh 63  
12. Sundance 60  
13. Hulett 38

**Individual Varsity Results:**  
106: Caden Vrana DNP 0-2  
106: Haven Vrana 1st Place 4-0  
113: Landon Norman  
2nd Place 2-1  
120: Jackson East 2nd Place 3-1  
126: Scott Larson DNP 1-2  
126: Trey Schneider 5th Place 4-1  
132: Casey Matthews

**5th Place 4-1**  
138: Thomas Prell DNP 2-2  
170: Braden Hill DNP 1-2  
182: Jacob Prell 3rd Place 3-1  
182: Nathan White DNP 0-2  
285: Heath Henkle 6th Place 1-2

**Women’s Team Results:**  
1. Kelly Walsh 120  
2. Sheridan 84  
3. Thunder Basin 79  
4. Wright 62  
5. Natrona 37  
6. Sturgis 30  
7. Lingle-Ft. Laramie/Southeast 24  
8. Lusk 19  
9. Newcastle/Upton 16  
10. Sundance 3  
11. Hulett 0  
11. Tongue River 0

**Individual Women’s Results:**  
115: Courtney Matthews: 5th Place 1-2  
120: Kyah Miller 1st Place 2-0

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