

Gillette News Record

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THE SHOW MUST GO ON

Former Powder River Playhouse members ready for 'Hello, Dolly!' performance, **B1**

PARKING LOT PITFALLS City sends letters to address problem potholes **A10**

No park designation for Centennial Section

Campbell County Commission stops short of agreeing with request to turn parcel into park

By **JONATHAN GALLARDO**
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Although Campbell County has no plans of turning the Centennial Section, home of the Red Rock Trails system, into a park, the area still open

for people to use.

Campbell County Commissioners were receptive last week to a suggestion of designating the Red Rock Trails a recreational use area.

During a Parks and Recreation board meeting, Parks and Recreation Director Rick Mansur said that after talking with

his staff about the large piece of land, "We'd like to see it stay as recreational use for the community."

The Centennial Section would still be open for people to go hiking, running and biking, but they would do so at their own risk. Informational signs would be posted at both entrances to make people aware of it. That means if they're hurt, the county can't be held liable.

Mansur said it is similar to pieces of land in Sheridan and Billings, Montana.

Parks employees would take care

of the trash pickup at the two entrances, but other than that, the department would leave the area alone.

The county commissioners supported the idea.

"It's cool they're going to let people continue to go out there," said David Bauer, who, with the help of volunteers, put in 12 miles of trails at the property. "I guess I'm happy for that, but it's kind of a bummer that it turned out the way it did."

Since 2019, Bauer and his group,

Energy Addicts, have worked to build trails on the 640-acre Centennial Section, a parcel of land north of Gillette that the county bought in 2012 for \$1.63 million.

The county had leased the land to Energy Addicts. But in early May, Bauer ended the agreement because his group didn't have enough money to cover the insurance. Energy Addicts does not plan on adding more trails in the future.

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City to make Boxelder Road repairs next year

Residents have been reporting potholes

By **GREGORY HASMAN**
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When road construction season rolls around every year, Gillette city staff can count on people asking why some streets may be prioritized above others.

For example, the Gillette City Council will consider allocating \$3.5 million in its fiscal year 2021-22 budget for the Foothills Boulevard alignment and drainage project next year. That work could consist of straightening out a steep and curvy stretch of Foothills between Ridgewood Drive and Highway 14-16.

But for some residents, there are other problem areas the city should address first, such as repairing pothole-filled parts of Boxelder Road.

The reality is, however, those decisions aren't that simple.

"The city has, and will continue basing (its) project schedules on, priority and available funding," said City Engineer Joe Schoen. "If there is a decrease in funding, then some projects may be rescheduled for a later time."

The Boxelder dilemma

A drive down Boxelder Road between 4J Road and Highway 59 reveals stretches that are riddled with potholes and ruts, signs of a busy, well-used stretch of road.

A 2018 Wyoming Department of Transportation traffic count study showed that 14,048 vehicles traveled in each direction on Boxelder and 4J per day.

Down the street to the east, that number goes up. All westbound and eastbound traffic on both sides of Highway 59 at Boxelder Road saw 54,941 vehicles a day combined, according to the traffic count.

The amount of traffic likely skyrocketed this spring with the Lakeway Road Project, which has encouraged many people to drive on other east-west streets, including Boxelder, to get to their destinations. As a result, Boxelder is being used more daily, which will continue until the Lakeway work is completed in the fall.

But there is some form of relief coming.

The city has plans to do some repairs on Boxelder Road, especially between Highway 59 and 4J in the not-too-distant future to reduce some of the poor conditions and extend the life of the route by 10-15 years.

Schoen said that the Boxelder repairs, like the work on Foothills Boulevard, will be done next fiscal year, which begins July 1, and it's considered to be a "high priority" project.

The city could not do the Lakeway Road project at the same time as Boxelder Road this year "due to having two major east-west collector streets in the same area under construction at the same time," he said.

Construction work on Boxelder is

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News Record Photos/Mike Moore

Jackson Simons places an oral swab in his mouth during an early morning visit to the Campbell County Sheriff's Office 24/7 Sobriety Program on Friday. The local program began as an alternative to monitor alcohol offenses and has expanded to include testing for drugs. It's being recognized as an example for the rest of the state.

Control group

Campbell County's 24/7 Sobriety Program an example for rest of state

By **JONATHAN GALLARDO** * NEWS RECORD WRITER
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24/7 Program by the numbers

- * **120:** Campbell County Jail's population Friday morning
- * **115:** Current enrollment in the 24/7 program as of Friday afternoon
- * **36:** Participants on the drug patch
- * **38:** Participants on the portable breath test (PBT)
- * **41:** Participants on the oral swab
- * **894:** Total enrollments in the 24/7 program since it began in 2017
- * **8,283:** Number of PBTs given to program participants (since September 2017)
- * **240:** Number of positive PBTs
- * **2,096:** Drug patches attached (since January 2019)
- * **3,107:** Oral swab tests given (since October 2019)
- * **139:** Positive oral swab tests
- * **\$291,194:** Money that the program has brought in
- * **\$90,000:** Expected revenues from the 24/7 program fees in fiscal year 2021-2022

Zack Bissett paced back and forth in the lobby of the Campbell County Sheriff's Office waiting for the results of his oral swab drug test to come back.

A participant in the 24/7 Sobriety Program, the oral swab has become part of his daily morning routine. He has to come in every morning, stick the swab in his mouth for three minutes, then wait about 10 minutes for the results to come back.

He's been in the program for about three months and has to continue it until he's accepted into residential treatment.

"It's been all right," he said of the constant monitoring. "For the most part, it keeps me grounded."

Besides keeping him sober, the program also has made Bissett better learn how to manage his money so that he can pay for the daily testing, which costs \$10 each time.

"I just wish it was a little cheaper. It's kind of pricey," he said. "At the same time, the money they're charging for us to do these mouth swabs is money that we potentially could use to get drugs."

In September 2017, Campbell County started the 24/7 Sobriety Program as a way to reduce the number of people in the local jail as

well as keep people in the community by targeting repeat drunken driving offenders. It has since expanded to include

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A timer counts down as an Oral Fluid Drug Test Cube works to detect a list of potential substances in a 24/7 Program participant's sample.