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## Is Big Horn football heading for 1A?

BY MIKE DUNN  
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**BIG HORN** — Big Horn High School football may be heading to 1A.

At the Wyoming High School Activities Association's winter board meeting early this week, board members discussed the possibility of realigning classifications for football in 2017. While the final decision won't be made until April, there is a chance that due to the school's enrollment numbers, Big Horn will drop down from 2A to 1A in football.

SEE **BH FOOTBALL**, PAGE 3

## Beer bill brewing in Wyoming Senate

BY ZACH SPADT  
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**SHERIDAN** — A home brewing bill crafted by Sen. Dave Kinskey, R-Sheridan, passed for introduction Wednesday.

Senate File 62 lessens regulations on home brewers who wish to enter their beers into brew fests. Currently, home brewers may not enter their drinks into festivals that charge a fee.

Kinskey compared the rule to entering a pie in the state fair. While large-scale alcohol production should be regulated, regulating home brewers is government overreach, Kinskey said.

SEE **BEER BILL**, PAGE 3

# WONDERS OF SCIENCE



JUSTIN SHEELY | THE SHERIDAN PRESS

Sheridan College chemistry teacher Robert Milne ignites methane gas for a demonstration to students during the Northeast Regional Science Fair Wednesday in the Thorne-Rider Campus Center at Sheridan College. The students waited in the building as their science fair entries were judged.

# Senate committee endorses student privacy bill

**CHEYENNE (AP)** — A state Senate committee has endorsed a proposed bill that would prohibit K-12 teachers and school officials from prying into students' private personal social media accounts.



Rothfuss

The unanimous action Wednesday by the Senate Education Committee sends Senate File 14 to the full Senate for further consideration.

Committee member Sen. Chris Rothfuss,

D-Laramie, said nothing in Wyoming caused lawmakers to propose the legislation, but other states had been dealing with the issue. "We've heard of some problems in other states," Rothfuss said.

The goal of the proposal is to give school districts clear rules on how to handle student social media accounts, he said.

Under the proposal, school district employees could not require or ask a student to provide his or her login information for access to private emails, text messages or other

social media belonging to the student.

Social media accounts created in association with school business would be precluded from the privacy protections. Officials would still be allowed to access a student's public account, and the bill would not inhibit law enforcement investigations related to information on students' online accounts.

SEE **PRIVACY**, PAGE 8

# Local business award recipients named

BY PHOEBE TOLLEFSON  
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**SHERIDAN** — The Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce and the Sheridan Jaycees announced the winners of their annual business awards at the Chamber's luncheon Wednesday at the Best Western Sheridan Center.

Dixie Johnson, CEO at the Chamber, said the annual awards provide an opportunity to show appreciation for members' work.

"It's great for us to be able to, as a Chamber of Commerce, to be able to recognize and give back some acknowledgement and recognition to those businesses and business people in the community," she said.

Johnson added that in past years, the board of directors

chose winners from a list of member-generated nominees, but this year, for the first time, members chose the award recipients through a vote.

"All of them are very well deserving any of them could be named the winner in their category," she said of the nominees, in a phone call before the event.

The Sheridan Jaycees, or Junior Chamber of Commerce members, also announced the recipients of the Outstanding Young Sheridanite award at the luncheon.

"What do Bill Clinton, Elvis Presley and Wayne Newton have in common?" Lacey Johnsen, president of the Sheridan Jaycees, asked the crowd Wednesday before announcing the winners. "They are all past recipients of the United States Junior Chamber's Ten

Outstanding Young Americans award."

The Outstanding Young Sheridanite award, she explained, is a local version of the national award.

## SHERIDAN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AWARDS

**Key service award:** Sheridan Senior Center

This award honors a Chamber member nonprofit organization that has made a significant impact in Sheridan County. Established by a volunteer group in 1973, the Senior Center has grown since then and is working to expand programs and services.

SEE **AWARDS**, PAGE 8



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**Winners of the 2015 Awards of Excellence stand for pictures with Sheridan County Chamber Board President Richard Garber, center, during the monthly Chamber luncheon Wednesday at the Best Western Sheridan Center. Pictured, from left, are Aaron Sopko of Advanced Communications Technology, for the Large Business of the Year Award; Callie Drell of the Sheridan Senior for the Key Service Award; Stormy Redman of the Historic Sheridan Inn, for the Small Business of the Year award and Bruce Garber for Business Person of the Year. Not pictured are Farmers Co-op representatives for the Strength of Sheridan Award and Mike Nickel for the Spirit of Sheridan Award.**



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Today's edition is published for:  
**Jim Lawson  
of Sheridan**

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# AWARDS: Chamber, Jaycees honors

FROM 1

## Strength of Sheridan award: Farmers Co-op

This award honors a Chamber member business or organization that has a long and distinguished tenure in the community (20+) years. Established in 1943, the Farmers Co-op has since provided Sheridan County with propane, bulk fuels, work equipment, fertilizer, fencing, animal care and livestock feeds.



West

## Spirit of Sheridan award: Mike Nickel

This award honors a business or individual who volunteers countless hours for the betterment of the Chamber and Sheridan County. Mike Nickel is a fourth generation Sheridan County resident who served six years in the U.S. Navy and worked for 27 years as a business owner and electrician with Ultimate Electric. Nickel serves on Sheridan's Board of County Commissioners.



Puettman

## Small business award (fewer than 25 full-time employees): Historic Sheridan Inn

This award honors a Chamber member small business that serves the Sheridan area with excellence. Opened in 1893, the inn was home to Buffalo Bill Cody for eight years and, after many ups and downs, the historic site was purchased by Bob and

Dana Townsend in 2013, with restaurant and hotel services reopening in 2015.

## Large business award (25 or more full-time employees): Advanced Communications Technology (ACT)

This award honors a Chamber member large business that serves the Sheridan area with excellence. ACT opened in 1997 under a parent company and has provided communications technologies, including broadband Internet, optical Ethernet. ACT sponsors the Best of the West BBQ Fest and the Spuds 'n' Spurs Brewfest.

## Business person of the year award: Bruce Garber

This award honors a Chamber member business person who shows outstanding business acumen and strong leadership in business and community efforts. Bruce Garber grew up in Big Horn and has worked in real estate since 1989. He owns Century 21 BHJ Realty and has been active in securing commercial flight service for Sheridan.

### SHERIDAN JAYCEES AWARDS

## Personal improvements and/or accomplishments: Wendy Bruso

Since late 2014, Bruso has worked with the Prevention Management Organization of Wyoming. As the point person for Sheridan County, Bruso helps facilitate suicide and substance abuse awareness and evidence-based prevention activities.



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Michelle Edwards of the Sheridan Jaycees, left, presents the Outstanding Young Sheridanite award to Wendy Bruso for the personal improvements and accomplishments category during the monthly Chamber luncheon Wednesday at the Best Western Sheridan Center.

## Humanitarian and/or voluntary leadership: Rindy West

West is the development director at the Sheridan Senior Center. Her primary focus is raising funds that allow the Senior Center to continue providing services. West is active in the Sheridan County 4-H and youth livestock judging with her three children.

## Contribution to children: Joey Puettman

Puettman started Joey's Foundation in 2007. The goal of Joey's Foundation is to build relationships between children and qualified mentors, with an emphasis on serving youth dealing with substance abuse, problems at school or other challenges. Puettman is an avid fly-fisher and the organization is well known for its fly-fishing and rod-building programs.

# House backs bill to require EPA notification in lead cases

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House on Wednesday approved legislation to clarify the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to notify the public about danger from lead in their drinking water — the first action by Congress to respond to the water crisis in Flint, Michigan.

The bill, approved 416-2, would direct the EPA to notify residents and health departments if the amount of lead found in a public water system requires action, in the absence of notification by the state.

Flint stopped using treated water from Detroit and switched to the Flint River in 2014 to save money. Regulators failed to ensure the water was treated properly

and lead from aging pipes leached into the water supply, contributing to a spike in child lead exposure.

The EPA did not notify the public for months after learning that state officials were not treating Flint's water.

Rep. Dan Kildee, D-Mich., said the notification bill would not have prevented the crisis in his hometown, but he called it a necessary first step to prevent a similar crisis in other cities.

Kildee urged lawmakers to consider comprehensive legislation he has introduced in addition to spending \$765 million to help solve the water crisis in Flint. The bill would help Flint fix and replace lead-contaminated pipes and provide health and educational support for children poisoned by lead-contaminated water. Federal spending would be matched dollar-for-dollar by the state of Michigan under Kildee's bill and a similar, less costly measure being considered in the Senate.

Kildee and other House Democrats said White House budget director Shaun Donovan signaled support for the emergency request at a closed-door meeting Wednesday. Donovan "likes the direction" of the bill "but has some suggestions" on how it could be improved, Kildee said.

Money for Flint may be included in a \$1.8 billion spending request Obama has made to combat the Zika virus, but no decisions have been made, Kildee and other lawmakers

said.

Rep. Fred Upton, R-Mich., said government at all levels let down the people of Flint.

"Government officials knew there was serious cause for concern and failed to inform the people," Upton said.

State officials in Michigan did not tell the EPA's Midwest regional everything they knew about Flint, and the regional office did not share everything it knew with EPA headquarters in Washington, Upton said. "That must be fixed and it must be fixed now," he said.

The EPA has acknowledged that state officials notified the agency last April that Flint was not treating the river water with additives to prevent corrosion from pipes.

Susan Hedman, the EPA's former regional chief, voiced concern to state and city officials over the next few months. But it wasn't until Oct. 16 that EPA established a task force to provide technical help — the day Flint switched back to the Detroit water system.

Hedman resigned Feb. 1. The state's top environmental regulator and other high-ranking officials also have resigned in response to the crisis.

Rep. Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., called the Flint crisis an example of environmental injustice. Flint is majority African-American and more than 40 percent of its residents live in poverty.

# PRIVACY: Concerns it's too restrictive on school officials

FROM 1

In addition, school officials could ask a student's parents or guardian to see the social media information.

Brian Farmer, executive director of the Wyoming School Boards Association, said he had concerns about the bill being too restrictive on school officials, especially if there is imminent risk of danger to the student or others. "The timeliness becomes an important issue," Farmer said.

But Rothfuss said dangerous situations should involve police, who must adhere to separate laws regarding priva-

cy. "The teachers, the administrators in schools are not law enforcement," he said.

The bill also directs the state Department of Education to help develop guidelines on the collection, access, security and use of student data by districts and standards for protecting information in data that might identify individual students.

Separately, the state House on Wednesday gave preliminary approval to a bill regarding the private emails of K-12 and college students. The bill would declare such correspondence as not being a public record that must be made available to anyone who requests to see it.



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