

HELPING LOVED ONES STAY HOME

Council approves city bonuses, budget transfers

BY ASHLEIGH FOX
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SHERIDAN — The city of Sheridan recorded its annual budget transfers, this year totaling \$20,200,475. Interim treasurer Todd Watkins said all adjustments not coming in as revenue have been accounted for and will not come out of reserves.

City administrator Mark Collins said the public adjustments show three things: allocations for projects that span beyond one fiscal year; rollover revenues and expenditures; and shows the aggressiveness of the city in working for grant resources for capital projects.

Councilor Thayer Shafer assured the audience this practice takes place annually and serves as a normal aspect of bookkeeping for the city of Sheridan.

SEE COUNCIL, PAGE 3

SCSD2 board elects officers, celebrates district achievements

BY RYAN PATTERSON
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SHERIDAN — A packed crowd filled the room at the beginning of the Sheridan County School District 2 board of trustees meeting Monday night in recognition of district educators and fall sports teams.

Several members from the girls swimming and football teams were in attendance. SCSD2 superintendent Craig Dougherty commended Sheridan High School football head coach Don Julian for winning coach of the year and also complimented the students present, calling them “phenomenal student-athletes and phenomenal human beings.”

Sheridan Junior High School librarian Julie Weitz received a 2017 digital innovations award.

SEE SCSD2, PAGE 2



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Community members surround Janis Jordan, second from right, while visiting her home Monday. Jordan receives at-home services through The Hub on Smith's Help at Home program, as well as home-delivered meals. Pictured, from left, are Cloud Peak Energy Spring Creek general manager David Schwend, home-delivered meals volunteer Forrest Asmus, homecare provider Dayna Gates, Janis Jordan and Help at Home director Lois Bell.

Help at Home sustains, not steals, elderly independence

BY ASHLEIGH FOX
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SHERIDAN — Janis Jordan started losing her mobility as her age crept toward 85 years old. In moments of pushing for her independence, her daughter, Lydia Yentes, served as an advocate for her mother to sustain that independence while also receiving at-home aid.

The Help at Home program “filled the void” for Jordan, who now delights in visits from her 23-year-old home care provider, Dayna Gates.

The social interaction paired with a helping hand around the house keeps Jordan living in the comforts of her home and allowed for Yentes to move to Nebraska to help take

care of her elderly in-laws.

The Hub on Smith, formerly the Sheridan Senior Center, started Help at Home in the early 1970s. While not a new program in the community, Jordan still sees a gap for her neighbors who remain unfamiliar with the service.

“I try to share and tell them, but I don't know that they get it,” Jordan said. “They say, ‘We can still do this and we can still do that,’ but somehow the PR needs to maybe improve.”

Jordan sees a clear refusal for services from her younger sister and brother-in-law, who she said need services at home despite still running a business in their 80s and 90s.

SEE HOME, PAGE 2



Janis Jordan, center, and Help at Home director Lois Bell, right, listen as Help at Home care provider Dayna Gates tells a story in Jordan's home Monday.

Early childhood liaison aims to improve kindergarten readiness

BY RYAN PATTERSON
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SHERIDAN — As long as she can remember, Jeriann Jacobson loved working with kids. From her time as an elementary school teacher in Nebraska to working for the Center for a Vital Community in Sheridan, she eagerly helped children grow. Fitting, then, that Jacobson now holds the position of early childhood liaison at Sheridan College.

The early childhood liaison program began this year and is a collaborative

effort between the college, Sheridan County School District 2 and community members to improve kindergarten readiness for students. It falls under the Next Level umbrella, the name for several different programs to help increase SCSD2 high school graduation rates.

Whitney Benefits funded the three-year pilot program. The grant from Whitney provides money for Jacobson's position and other supplemental resources needed.

SEE KIDS, PAGE 3



JUSTIN SHEELY | THE SHERIDAN PRESS

Teacher Ashley Tiffany speaks to her kindergarten readiness class Friday at First Light Early Education Center.



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Today's edition is published for:
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OPINION	4	BUSINESS	8
PEOPLE	5	SPORTS	B1
PAGE SIX	6	COMICS	B3
ALMANAC	7	CLASSIFIEDS	B4

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HOME: Have fear of losing independence

FROM 1

While she sees the need and their deterrence of a program like Help at Home, pinpointing specific reasons remains difficult.

"I really haven't been able to identify the barriers, but whatever they are, they're huge to where people will not reach out even though they're desperate," Jordan said.

Jordan said if her sister and brother-in-law would consider the consequences of not having the service, maybe that would change their minds.

"Why wait until you get completely desperate or fall or (are) completely dependent?" Jordan said. "Why not do some things to prevent it?"

Help at Home director Lois Bell said people in the elderly community fear losing their independence.

"I think a little bit of it could possibly be that they're giving up independence, when in reality, they're enhancing independence," Bell said. "That takes a little bit of wrapping your brain around that, redirecting your thinking that you've had for a while."

Gates serves not only as a helper, but also as a source of motivation and education for Jordan. Daily tasks include household cleaning, shopping and running errands for Jordan specifically, but she also completes laundry and household duties for other clients she serves through the program.

"I like that we can mix generations," Jordan said. "Like I said, I'm almost 85 and Dayna tells me she's 23, so she keeps me on my toes, and I can learn things



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Dayna Gates vacuums during her Help at Home visit with Janis Jordan. Gates finds joy in her services as a homcare provider through The Hub on Smith.

from her and hopefully she can learn some things from me."

Jordan also receives home-delivered meals, set up and funded again by her daughter. This helps Jordan relieve the burden of transportation or cooking for herself.

State and federal funding supplemented by required community input sustains Help at Home. The Hub's development director, Rindy West, said contributions from companies like

Cloud Peak in the last year help sustain the service. The program serves more than 200 elderly residents of Sheridan, including veterans through a contract with the Sheridan Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

A waiting list exists for those seeking participation in Help at Home.

Jordan hopes the program will continue reaching elderly folks in need of a hand up to preserve their independence of living at home.

Mueller details millions in cost of early months of probe

BY MARY CLARE JALONICK AND CHAD DAY
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP) — Special counsel Robert Mueller's office spent \$3.2 million during the first few months of his investigation into Russian election interference and possible coordination with associates of President Donald Trump.

In addition, the Justice Department has spent \$3.5 million to support the investigation, though the special counsel's office says that money would have been spent anyway if Mueller had not been appointed. Mueller incorporated several ongoing investigations within the Justice Department including those of Trump campaign contacts with Russia, former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort's business activities and former national security adviser Michael Flynn. The details of the expenditures related

to Mueller's investigation were laid out in a copy of the report obtained by The Associated Press, which was subsequently released publicly by the special counsel's office. T

he report covers from May 17, the date of Mueller's appointment, through Sept. 30, the end of the federal fiscal year.

Mueller's office says in the report that about \$1.7 million was for salary and benefits, and more than \$223,000 was spent on travel-related expenses. Despite the international focus of Mueller's probe, only about \$2,800 was spent on actual travel costs.

The rest was spent on the relocation of Justice Department employees temporarily assigned to the expanding investigation, the report shows.

So far, the special counsel has charged four people as part of the investigation including Manafort and Flynn.

SCSD2: Several buildings need fixes

FROM 1

SCSD2 assistant superintendent Mitch Craft said Weitz is one of technology's biggest champions and called the SJHS library the school's "nerve center for learning."

Dougherty and assistant superintendent Scott Stults talked about professional learning communities and the district's ongoing principal academy with schools in Casper, Cody and Worland. Stults said they traveled to the schools and had honest conversations with administrators and teachers about how to improve teacher collaboration.

"Those individuals could not be more in awe of what we do, quite frankly," Stults said.

Wilson complimented the

administrators for their diligence and also commented that the average person doesn't understand what teacher collaboration actually entails.

"It means the teachers are not going to their room and shutting the door anymore," Wilson said.

As it does every December, the board elected officers from its members. Ann Perkins was unanimously approved as chair for another term.

Trustee Sue Wilson will be the new vice chair. Trustee Craig Achord was voted the new treasurer and trustee Shane Rader will be the new clerk.

Facilities director Mathers Heuck gave a capital construction update. Highland Park Elementary has a leak above its gym

that needs to be fixed. The district bus barn roof and drainage issues will likely be fixed in early spring. For the renovation of the SHS auditorium, the goal is to have a master plan by June.

The board unanimously approved the sale of two district school buses, one for \$1,500 and one for \$900. It also approved the donation of a coffee card from Java Moon to each district employee.

Ten policies were unanimously approved on second reading, including ones on student data security, acceptable use of technology and retirement benefits. Eleven policies were also approved on first reading, mostly to update language. They included wellness, staff hiring and staff complaints and grievances.



RYAN PATTERSON | THE SHERIDAN PRESS

Sheridan County School District 2 board members, from left, chairman Ann Perkins, treasurer Wayne Schatz and trustee Molly Steel ponder discussion topics at Monday's board meeting.

APNewsBreak: Border arrests plunge, deportation arrests soar

BY ELLIOT SPAGAT AND JILL COLVIN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP) — Border crossings plunged to a 45-year low while arrests by deportation officers soared during President Donald Trump's first months in office, as his efforts to overhaul the nation's immigration system went into effect.

The Border Patrol made 310,531 arrests during the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, a decline of 25 percent from 415,816 a year earlier and the lowest level since 1971. Despite the significant decline, border arrests increased every month since May — largely families and unaccompanied children.

"ICE will no longer exempt any class of removable alien from potential enforcement activity," Thomas Homan, the acting director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, told reporters during a briefing Tuesday. "In other words, officers are empowered to do their sworn duty to enforce the law as it was written."

ICE, whose officers pick up people for deportation, made 143,470 arrests, an increase of 25 percent from 114,434 a year earlier. After Trump took office, ICE arrests surged 40 percent from the same period a year earlier.

The numbers released Tuesday provide the most complete statistical snapshot of immigration enforcement under Trump. And they show that deportation officers are taking

Trump's call for an immigration crackdown to heart, even without the funding increase that the president has sought from Congress for more hiring.

In February, then-Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly scrapped the previous administration's instructions to limit deportations to public safety threats, convicted criminals and recent border crossers, effectively making anyone in the country illegally vulnerable.

"We have clearly seen the successful results of the president's commitment to supporting the frontline officers and agents of (the Department of Homeland Security) as they enforce the law and secure our borders," acting secretary Elaine Duke said in a statement.

ICE said that deportations totaled 226,119, a decline of 6 percent from the previous year, but that number masks a seismic shift away from the border. ICE often takes custody of people at the border before deporting them; the sharp drop in Border Patrol arrests means fewer people to remove.

ICE said "interior removals" — people deported after being arrested away from the border — jumped 25 percent to 81,603 from 65,332 the previous year. They rose 37 percent since Trump's inauguration compared to the same period a year earlier.

Reasons for the precipitous drop in border arrests are unclear but Trump's election may have deterred people from trying. Trump

has yet to get funding for the first installment of his proposed border wall with Mexico and the number of Border Patrol agents has declined as the government's struggles to fill vacancies continues under his presidency.

But officials stressed that they still believe the border wall is necessary nonetheless.

About 58 percent of Border Patrol arrests were people from countries other than Mexico — up from 54 percent a year earlier — largely from Central America. Starting around 2011, large numbers from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras began entering the country in South Texas, which replaced Arizona as the busiest corridor for illegal crossings.

Ronald Vitiello, Customs and Border Protection's acting deputy commissioner, said he was "very concerned" about increases in families and children crossing in recent months. During the fiscal year, which included the President Barack Obama administration's final months, border authorities stopped people traveling as families 104,997 times on the Mexican border and unaccompanied children 48,681 times.

CBP also said inspectors at land crossings, airports and seaports denied entry 216,370 times during the fiscal year, a decline of 24 percent from 2016. Border Patrol arrests occur outside of those official points of entry.

WH budget meeting planned with Trump, congressional leaders

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump and congressional leaders have scheduled a summit to begin sorting out their budget differences.

That's from top lawmakers and the White House.

And a clash that could produce a partial

government shutdown by the weekend hangs in the balance.

The meeting, set for Thursday at the White House, comes just a day before federal spending expires that's needed to keep agencies functioning beyond midnight Friday night.

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Join us, as you have in years past, by donating to the Goodfellow Fund. The campaign began Thanksgiving and will run through Dec. 31. You can drop your check off at The Sheridan Press office, 144 Grinnell St.

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