



Extravaganzas set

Annual July 4th blast in Big Horn

From staff reports

The Big Horn Equestrian Center will again host the annual Fireworks Extravaganza, scheduled for about 10 p.m. Saturday.

Gates will open at 4 p.m.

Like previous years, the fireworks show will be choreographed to music that can be listened to on the radio.

The 2009 Fireworks Extravaganza is

sponsored by Bruce Burns at no charge to the public. The Big Horn Lions Club will be at the gate accepting suggested donations of \$10 per car for the Big Horn Scholarship Fund.

This year the Pickin' Chicks and the Teka Brock Band will entertain at the clubhouse preceding the fireworks.

Attendees are encouraged to bring their own picnic or take advantage of concessions available on the grounds.



The Sheridan Press/Michael Sullivan

The grand finale from the 2008 fireworks show at the Big Horn Equestrian Center

28th annual event in Ucross

From staff reports

The Ucross Foundation will host its 28th annual Fireworks Extravaganza to celebrate Independence Day on Saturday.

Admission is \$2 per car. Festivities begin at 5 p.m. culminating with fireworks just after 9:30 p.m.

The celebration opens with an exhibition in the Art Gallery featuring "The Full Terrain: Paintings by Karen Kitchel and Don Stinson."

Steak sandwiches, ice cream, lemonade and much more will be available from the Buffalo FFA and Webber Concessions.

Master of ceremonies Sue Bond of the Ucross Foundation staff will keep visitors

posted on the events.

The evening will also include music by nationally acclaimed violinist Tracy Silverman.

Note: Personal fireworks are not allowed and will be confiscated. And for safety, please leave your pets at home.

Details about the day's festivities:

- 5-7 p.m. — tours of the historic Big Red Ranch House, built in 1882 and listed on the National Historic Register. Billie Little, chair of the Sheridan County Historic Preservation Commission, will share her knowledge of Big Red in the 19th century with visitors.

Please see **Ucross, Page 2**

Barrasso co-sponsors health bills

CHEYENNE (AP) — Sen. John Barrasso says he's got ideas for lowering health care costs in rural areas and helping make sure rural clinics remain viable.

In an interview Wednesday with The Associated Press, Barrasso said he's taking a bipartisan approach to health care by co-sponsoring with Democrats two pieces of rural health care legislation.

Barrasso said he'd like the measures to be part of any health care reform that gets passed this year.

"People are happy with the quality of care that they're getting in Wyoming, but we need to make sure it's available in our communities," he said.

One bill would increase the average per-patient Medicare payment to rural health clinics by 20 percent, from an average of \$76 to \$92.

The bill also would set up a demonstration program to see if doctors in five states would be more willing to practice in rural areas if clinics subsidized part of their medical liability insurance premiums. Barrasso, an orthopedic surgeon, introduced the bill last week with Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore.

The other bill would boost Medicare payments to rural health care providers so they can provide critical services without incurring shortfalls. The legislation was co-sponsored by Barrasso's predecessor, the late Sen. Craig Thomas, R-Wyo., and is called the Craig Thomas Rural Hospital and Providers Equity Act.

Right now, Barrasso said, Medicare reimburses rural hospitals at a rate lower than urban ones. That's despite how rural hospitals often have difficulty covering the costs of essential medical equipment because they treat fewer patients and therefore have fewer billing opportunities to pay for the equipment, he said.

"Our hospitals around the state of Wyoming, they have to be fully prepared for a number of different emergencies, with high-tech and expensive equipment they don't use that often," Barrasso said. "If you go to a big city, they have the same equipment, but they use it more frequently."



John Barrasso
U.S. Senator, R-Wyo.

Trolley schedule changing for 4th, Rodeo Week

From staff reports

The Sheridan Trolley will change its regular schedule over the July Fourth weekend and Rodeo Week July 6-12 as follows (shuttle service from the high school parking lot to the fairgrounds arena is available for each WYO Rodeo performance):

Saturday — no trolley service.

Monday — no evening service.

Thursday, July 9 — no evening service (shuttle service to WYO Rodeo performance only).

Friday, July 10 — no morning or evening service due to Rodeo Parade and WYO Rodeo performance. Trolley will operate at 1 and 2 p.m. only, providing a one-hour tour of Sheridan.

Saturday, July 11 — no evening service (shuttle service to WYO Rodeo performance only).

The Sheridan Trolley's regular summer daytime schedule is Monday through Saturday at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., noon, 1 p.m., and 2 p.m. for a one-hour narrated tour of Sheridan. The trolley departs the Fifth Street Information Center on the hour.

The regular evening schedule (providing transportation between hotels/motels and the downtown area) begins at 5 p.m. at the Wingate Inn on East Fifth Street with the last run at 8 p.m. for return drop-offs.

During the Third Thursday Street Festival on July 16 and Aug. 20, the evening trolley will run an extra hour.

Anyone is welcome to ride the trolley. The cost is \$1 per person.

For more information, call the Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce at 672-2485.

Casper could be state's largest city in 2019

CHEYENNE (AP) — Casper could overtake Cheyenne as Wyoming's largest city in a decade.

The Wyoming Economic Analysis Division says Casper has grown by about 8.7 percent since 2000, while Cheyenne has grown by about 6.7 percent.

Wenlin Liu of the state Department of Administration and Information says those growth rates will probably hold over the long run. If they do, Casper would overtake Cheyenne in 2019.

Estimates from the Economic Analysis Division put Cheyenne's current population at just under 57,000 and Casper's at a little over 54,000.

Those figures are for population inside the city limits and don't include outlying areas.

Liu says both cities are expected to see annual growth of about 1 percent, with slightly faster growth in Casper.

Comedy at the Carriage House



The Sheridan Press/Michael Sullivan

Cast members (from left) Patrick Garber, Jordan Coffey, Shelby Garstad and Laura Peterson rehearse the comedy "Blithe Spirit" on Thursday night at the Carriage House Theater, where the play opens tonight at 7. It is being produced and performed by We Just Are Productions, a group of Sheridan High School students and recent SHS graduates. Additional performances are 2 p.m. July 5 and 19 and 7 p.m. July 16-18. Tickets are available through local merchants.

Obama tells Putin Cold War is history

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama said former Russian President Vladimir Putin and his handpicked successor should expect an in-person reminder the Cold War is over when the U.S. leader makes his first trip to a Moscow summit.

Days before he departs for Russia, Obama said Thursday that Putin "still has a lot of sway" in his nation as its nominal prime minister. "I think that it's important that even as we move forward with President Medvedev that Putin understand that the old Cold War approaches to U.S.-Russian relations is outdated," he said. "Putin has one foot in the old ways of doing business and one foot in the new."

In an interview with The Associated Press, Obama discussed a wide range of topics:

—The president said he could see abandoning his own proposal to indefinitely hold some terror detainees — "it gives me great pause" — and that he would not be comfortable ordering such a disposition for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, prisoners without congressional action.

—In light of recent Supreme Court cases dealing with highly charged questions about the nation's racial progress, Obama said the high court was "moving the ball" away from affirmative action. Yet he also noted that the justices had not foreclosed the continued use of racial preferences in hiring and college admissions, which he said he sup-

ports in some circumstances. In any case he said affirmative action is neither the panacea — nor the problem — that it's often made out to be.

—With most experts in agreement that there's a good chance Iran could have a usable nuclear bomb sometime during his presidency, Obama said, "I'm not reconciled with that."

—Asked about Michael Jackson's death, an event that has transfixed many, Obama said he didn't see any controversy in the fact that he did not issue a formal public statement about the pop star and knew of no dissatisfaction among blacks about that. He called Jackson a brilliant performer whose talents were

paired with a tragic, sad personal life.

The 24-minute interview, with Obama nearly six months into his job and his approval ratings still high, ranged from the serious to the silly. Asked to let Americans in on a secret about White House life, the president chose the pastry chef and raved that "the best pie I have ever tasted" is a challenge to the first couple's self-discipline and waistlines.

Asked to choose between basketball greats Kobe Bryant and Michael Jordan, Obama — a committed hoops player and fan of Jordan's Chicago Bulls — didn't pause for even a second. "Michael," he said, picking the retired superstar.



Barack Obama
United States President

Wyo. research effort could help fuel West

CHEYENNE (AP) — A public-private effort to research cleaner ways of using Wyoming coal could be key in addressing the growing energy needs of the West, a coal-gasification industry official said.

Wyoming is teaming up with General Electric Co. to build a \$100 million coal gasification research plant in Cheyenne. The plant is scheduled to be operating in late 2012.

"What it means is it will open up a very large coal resource in a growing area of the country to

gasify coal to produce not just electricity but motor fuels, fertilizer, substitute natural gas," said Jim Childress, executive director of Gasification Technologies Council, based in Arlington, Va.

Wyoming is the nation's leading producer of coal, most of which is shipped around the country to fuel electric generating plants. However, the concern over global warming has spurred a movement to reduce reliance on coal because of the carbon dioxide emitted when coal is burned.

The goal of the new research plant, which will

be owned by Wyoming and operated by GE, is to find efficient and cost-effective ways of turning Wyoming coal into a synthetic gas that can then be processed into various clean fuels and products.

"It's going to help us drive costs down, performance up, emissions in the direction that we need them to go," GE Energy General Manager Monte Atwell said. "So it's a big deal."

Please see **Coal, Page 2**

Please see **Obama, Page 2**