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ORDELL BUILDING FUTURE IN SHERIDAN SPORTS - BI

Gov. Gordon proclaims special session

BY ANDREW GRAHAM
WYOFILE.COM
VIA WYOMING NEWS EXCHANGE

CHEYENNE — Gov. Mark Gordon Thursday signed a proclamation convening the Wyoming Legislature for a special session on May 15 to distribute federal stimulus money to Wyoming businesses, health care facilities and workers.

Through four draft bills, lawmakers will likely deliberate distributing \$500 million of the \$1.25 billion the state received through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, which the U.S. Congress passed in March. Lawmakers are eyeing new programs that would provide loans to businesses, recompense landlords for lost rent to halt evictions and help fund health care facilities, among other needs.

Lawmakers will gather both online and in the State Capitol, which will be open to those legislators who wish to go there, according to an internal letter to lawmakers obtained by WyoFile. Even those lawmakers in the capitol will debate over internet conferences that will be livestreamed to the public, according to the letter from Speaker of the House Steve Harshman and Senate President Drew Perkins, both R-Casper. Harshman and Perkins will be present to sign bills, the speaker said.

But the people's house will be closed to the public, according to the proposed rules. Journalists will also be kept out, Harshman told WyoFile Wednesday.

SEE GORDON, PAGE 11

Piney Island plants available May 15



BY ALLAYANA DARROW
ALLAYANA.DARROW@THESHERIDANPRESS.COM

SHERIDAN — Alisha Bretzman is the “poster child” for what the Wyoming Technology Business Center aims to accomplish through the new business incubator, Director Scot Rendall said.

While somewhat shy and reserved ostensibly, Bretzman's passion for native plants was clear from the outset, he said. She willed an idea into a successful business model.

Not all startup clients make it past the

initial hurdles and thrive, Rendall said. National small business trends indicate 20% of small businesses fail by their second year and just over half make it to year four. Most small businesses fail because of a lack of market necessity. Still, according to a 2016 study by the Wyoming Business Council, Wyoming is consistently ranked as one of the top five states to start a business due to a favorable tax structure and high rate of entrepreneurship compared to businesses closed.

Alisha Bretzman, owner of Piney Island Native Plants, has successfully propagated Wyoming Big Sagebrush, riparian species and perennial wildflowers at her greenhouse on the Sheridan College campus Friday, May 8, 2020.

SEE PLANTS, PAGE 2

MATTHEW GASTON | THE SHERIDAN PRESS

FLIGHT SIMULATOR

Aviation enthusiasts encourage community involvement

BY CARRIE HADERLIE
NEWS@THESHERIDANPRESS.COM

SHERIDAN — Many dream of being airborne but worry about the barriers. Flying seems so expensive, and how would you find an instructor if you are a beginner?

Since 2010, the Sheridan County Pilots' Association has focused on making aviation accessible to the community through fly-ins, airshows and, this spring, through the arrival of a new Federal Aviation Administration certified Redbird simulator to use alongside the SPA's desktop simulator.

“My 4-year-old granddaughter Reagan had a blast playing on the simulators,” said Jonna Gunsolley,



who recently visited the Sheridan County Airport's simulator room in the terminal building. Reagan Dees' mission was to fly over a Disneyland castle.

SEE FLIGHT, PAGE 12

Above: J.T. Grainger and 4-year-old Reagan Dees train on a flight simulator at the Sheridan County Airport, Dees trained to fly over Elsa's castle on the Sheridan Pilots' Association simulators. Right: Anne McMurray, left, and Brittany Pittman train on a flight simulator at the Sheridan County Airport.

COURTESY PHOTOS

New equipment, mild winter leads to improved grounds at Kendrick



BY JOEL MOLINE
JOEL.MOLINE@THESHERIDANPRESS.COM

SHERIDAN — Sheridan County experienced a harsh winter a year ago, leaving Kendrick Municipal Golf Course in rough playing condition. After a mild winter and equipment investment approved by Sheridan City Council, Kendrick golf course is currently in good playing condition.

PGA professional and course manager Brian James said it takes a lot of work, money and skill to properly maintain the condition of the course.

The main goal for maintenance crews

every spring is to get the golf course in playing condition as soon as possible, complete the verification process and maintain the course condition on a consistent basis. The mild winter allowed Kendrick to quickly return to playing conditions, and the new greenskeeper Justin Bishop did a fine job preparing the course, James said.

Investment from the city council aided in efforts to properly maintain the course. There was \$400,000 dollars worth of equipment purchased by the city to be used by course staff.

SEE KENDRICK, PAGE 3

Wyatt Mirich mows the ninth hole's fairway at Kendrick Municipal Golf Course Friday, May 8, 2020.

JOEL MOLINE | THE SHERIDAN PRESS



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Today's edition is published for:
Byron Donahue
of Sheridan

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An insider's guide to northern Wyoming in the palm of your hand.

Arts and culture, outdoor adventures, restaurants and bars, family activities, and much, much more.






FLIGHT: Overall mission of SPA is to give access to airspace to anyone interested

FROM 1

"Reagan had a successful mission, as her goal was to find Elsa's castle," Gunsolley said. "She was a natural and loved the throttle."

Jeff Baum, president of the Sheridan Pilots' Association, said that the organization was re-established in 2010 with the mission of promoting local aviation and aviation in general, promoting the Sheridan County Airport and encouraging anyone interested in participating in aviation, either as a pilot or enthusiast.

With the support of Airport Manager John Stopka, the SPA has run the Airport Open House and Fly Ins(s) and the Airshow of the Bighorns, Baum said.

The newest flight simulator is a wonderful tool for both training and maintaining proficiency, Baum said. It's considered by the FAA to be an advanced aviation training device, and time spent on the simulator can be used as flight instruction toward specific pilot certificates and ratings.

"This not only allows for a better training experience, but it saves the student money. It's a wonderful tool for the pilots who fly multi-engine aircraft," Baum said.

The simulator even offers emergency training, such as engine and system failures, where such situations can be safely practiced and evaluated.

"We have already had several advanced students and pilots wishing to main-



A man works on the Redbird LD flight simulator at the Sheridan County Airport. Last winter, Sheridan Pilots' Association J.T. Grainger surveyed 100 residents about access to aviation in Sheridan. Twenty-five percent of the respondents said one of the major issues is access to an aircraft for training, as a result, the SPA purchased the Federal Aviation Administration certified Redbird simulator.

tain proficiency using the AATD. I've instructed people in the AATD for both instrument flying and multi-engine proficiency, and all have had high praise for the system," he said.

Last winter, SPA member J.T. Grainger surveyed 100 residents about access to aviation in Sheridan. Twenty-five percent of the respondents said one of the major issues is access to an aircraft for training. As a result, the SPA purchased the FAA certified Redbird simulator.

"There's so much cost

associated with flight training that a lot of people just say, no, we can't do that," Grainger said. "But our simulator — we are set up as a nonprofit, so when you are in there training for an hour, and we're charging \$50 for that, all those funds are going to the nonprofit so we can hold open houses and pancake breakfasts and potentially scholarships for kids down the road."

The overall mission of the SPA is to give access to airspace to anyone interested.

"We're trying to remove as much of the cost barrier

as we can," Grainger said. "This community has so much going for it, and we want people to understand what it has to offer."

The cost to run the simulator is minimal, compared to actual aircraft, with no maintenance, insurance or fuel required. As a result, cost for training is reduced by at least 50%. The other SPA desktop simulator is great for youth, because it features real-time graphics, a yoke, rudder pedals and throttle controls, Grainger said.

Before the COVID-19 pan-

demic, the aviation industry was already on the brink of a significant pilot shortage, Grainger said. Commercial and corporate aviation was growing significantly, but an aging pilot workforce was starting to retire. Younger pilots were in high demand.

"While thousands of pilots are currently being furloughed and demand to travel is low now during the pandemic, these times will pass and aviation will come back stronger," Grainger said. "We need to be able to recruit and train new

pilots to fill the upcoming demand."

Baum said that the SPA is open to anyone interested.

"There's no requirement to be a pilot," he said. "The only requirements are that they enjoy aircraft and pilots and are willing to support the efforts of those volunteering during events."

During the airport open houses, the SPA has provided hundreds of free flights for local children.

"We're more of an aviation community organization, bringing people with a passion for aviation together," Baum said.

Commercial Flight Instructor Gabe Mahoney, who trains on the simulator with students, said he was drawn to the organization as a flight instructor in Sheridan.

"I've been using the simulator for a couple students, expanding their knowledge of aviation," Mahoney said. "It's nice equipment that usually isn't found in cities the size of Sheridan. It is great for beginners and advanced pilots alike — just a really great learning tool."

And there are so many lessons to be learned from flying, Grainger said.

"It takes hard work to solo in an aircraft then go on to achieve a license. You have to be able to be organized, plan ahead, multitask managing the controls and cautious of the weather. If conditions are not ideal, you have to have the self-discipline to not fly and wait until the right time," Grainger said. "But flying offers a freedom that is really unparalleled."



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Multigenerational families already had many health precautions in place pre-coronavirus

BY NIKI KOTTMANN
WYOMING TRIBUNE EAGLE
VIA WYOMING NEWS EXCHANGE

CHEYENNE — Strong families stick together, no matter what. That's why, when COVID-19 hit Wyoming, Misty Savage and her family already had a system in place to keep her mother as healthy as possible.

Savage's mom, Julie Hunt, was diagnosed with a lung condition in 2014 that doctors in her then-home of Texas said would give her only another year to live — unless she got a bilateral double lung transplant.

"I said, 'I can't take care of you there, and we want to be with you,' so she sold her house, quit her job and moved here," Savage said. "She got the transplant here in 2015, barely survived that, was in the ICU for six months, and in the process her kidneys failed. So she's on dialysis three days a week now, and is on a kidney transplant list that's been on hold because of COVID-19."

The living situation was originally meant to be short-term, but when it became clear she was going to have a hard time living on her own long term, Savage and her husband built a completely new home to share with Hunt. They've been under one roof, along with Savage's two daughters, ever since, but Hunt has her own "suite" and deck where she's been mostly isolating since 2015 because her immune system isn't as strong as it used to be.

When the pandemic reached Laramie County, not much changed for Hunt, who already spends most of her day — even meals — in her own room. But everyone in her three-generation household has ramped up their personal sanitation practices to ensure that she's as safe as possible. Amy Phillips also lives in a multigenerational home in Cheyenne that found themselves well-prepared for



The Savage family has been living together under one roof since 2014.

the pandemic, particularly because they've always needed to take additional health-related precautions.

Phillips and her husband live with their daughter and their two 18-month-old granddaughters — a living situation that has always put them at a higher risk of getting sick because Phillips works at Cheyenne Regional Medical Center's Wyoming PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) clinic, and her daughter works in a medical lab.

Phillips' husband also drives to and from Platteville, Colorado, every day for work, so there are many ways in which a disease such as COVID-19 could infiltrate their home.

"He's just very adamant about his handwashing, wears a mask, comes home and changes his clothes right away," Phillips said. "(My daughter) does the same thing — she wipes off her shoes and puts her clothes in a trash bag and keeps them outside the house."

Her husband is typically the only one from the house who they'll send to the grocery store, and other than not going out to dinner or on other public outings, she said those have been

the only major changes they've had to make to their everyday life. They already had the kinds of sanitation routines in place you need when living with higher-risk individuals during a pandemic, but Phillips said she does find herself wiping down more surfaces more often.

"The family was already close-knit, she added, and they've continued to do most indoor activities together, including all meals. But concerns related to COVID-19 are still always in the back of her mind."

"With the little kids, sometimes things happen and you don't always have those practices in place," she said. "Like sharing cups, they don't know — you can't explain to them that you can't drink out of their cups and whatnot."

"They're humans, and she recognizes there's no sure-fire way to keep everyone in the house 100% safe from coronavirus. She copes by remembering this is not a time to panic, but to continue following basic procedures like thorough handwashing everyone normally should do every day."

As for Savage's family, life continues as normal as possible, but those same worries still linger.