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'Warriors' find calm in hunt

By Marilee Johnson
News Editor

Several times a year - for the last couple years - Curt Pilkington of rural Sterling has been hosting Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans for goose and duck hunts in Logan County.

Pilkington said he has made many lasting friendships, while the hunting groups have harvested lots of birds and even more great memories.

"I read about the Warriors Outdoors in a story in the Sentinel in 2009," he noted. "I contacted those guys, we set up a dove hunt and they started sending guys out to hunt."

Warriors Outdoors is a re-



Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans (left to right) Jose Cruz and Tom Zuck and Jose's wife Shantel recently took part in a guided hunt in Logan County hosted by Curt Pilkington of rural Sterling as part of the Warriors Outdoors program for wounded veterans. (Courtesy Photo.)

source for organizing outdoor hunting season.

The group was hosted by Carl Werner, a machinist in Sterling and a Vietnam-era Air Force veteran, who also had a desire to help injured soldiers.

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Council delays action

By Marilee Johnson
News Editor

While there were few waiting in line to comment on the City of Sterling's 2012 budget, citizens will have one more chance to provide input before the financial plan is put in place.

A public hearing for the proposed 2012 budget was held last night as part of the Sterling City Council's regular meeting agenda. After some discussion, the public hearing was continued to Council's next meeting in two weeks on Nov. 8, due to the absence of two members - Mayor Larry Fetzer and Councilman Rocky Joy.

Discussion included a request for funding by the Sterling Miracle

Players and the IOOF Hall, Olive Branch Rebekah Lodge. The Rebekah Lodge has offered the Sterling Miracle Players the use of their hall for the Players' community productions.

The two groups were before Council to request funding for the Players to be able to pay the Rebekah Lodge for the use of their building.

The Sterling Miracle Players is a volunteer based community theater organization that started in the summer of 2004. The organization recently got its non-profit 501(C)(3) status.

According to the organization's mission, "Proceeds that are raised through theater will

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Commissioners okay funding

By Marilee Johnson
News Editor

After tabling action last week, Logan County Commissioners Jim Edwards and Dave Donaldson gave their approval Tuesday for a Logan County Lodging Tax Board-funded project.

Receiving additional information, the two commissioners (Chairman Debbie Zwirn was absent) both gave their approval

yesterday for the project proposed by the Logan County Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber was seeking funding of \$13,000 in lodging tax funds for the construction of a billboard outside of Sterling to promote tourism in Logan County.

Last week, Donaldson asked to see a prototype of the proposed billboard as well as three bids for the project.

Yesterday, Lodging Tax Board Treasurer Dave Conley presented those documents to the commissioners. Bids were requested from Sterling Signs and Graphics, TJ Designs and Personal Graphics.

Bids were received from Sterling Signs and Graphics for \$16,505 and TJ Designs for \$15,530. Personal Graphics declined to bid. Conley recom-

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Northeastern Junior College (NJC) volleyball freshman Arika Muller (left), Jena Monheiser (center) and Jenna Vandembark assisted numerous other NJC student/athletes in serving food to the 500 people who attended the Plainsmen Athletic Group (PAG) Cajun Boil held Saturday in the Bank of Colorado Event Center. Changes this year included Alaskan King Crab on the menu and live music provided by Dennis Fuller and Richard Ontiveros. According to Bryan Shepherd of the PAG, "The event was very successful again this year. We would like to thank Jason Santomaso for doing the live auction and everyone who made donations and the community for attending the event." Totals are pending, but money raised from the event will benefit NJC athletics. (SPS Photo By Ken McDowell.)

Majority of county spending goes to one vendor

By Delinda Korrey
Editor

Since Jim Edwards became a commissioner, purchases from New Age Electronics - of which he is the majority owner - has increased to about 55% of the county's spending budget on items available to purchase from New Age, Kentec Communica-

tions, Journal Office, Rodine Communications or Sterling Computer Center.

Prior to his election, four of the above referenced businesses shared about an equal percentage of Logan County's business.

Edwards was elected by voters as the Logan County Commissioner from District 1 in No-

ember 2008, assuming office in January 2009. Edward's brother George originally won the Logan County Republican nomination for the slot, but died in September of that year and the GOP vacancy committee then appointed Jim Edwards to fulfill the nomination.

From vendor payments at

Logan County and from legal bills published in the "Journal-Advocate," between January-August 2011, the county has spent approximately \$49,082 with New Age Electronics, or 65% of the about \$75,001 it has spent in purchases made to Journal Office, Kentec, Rodine, Sterling Computer Center or New Age

Electronics.

In the first 8 months of the year, Logan County has spent (in approximates) \$17,174 (23%) to Journal Office; \$4,227 (6%) to Kentec; \$2,243 (3%) to Rodine and \$2,274 (3%) to Sterling Computer.

2010 totals - again in approximates
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Logan County Citizens' Oversight Committee

City responds to earlier questions

The Logan County Citizens' Oversight Committee has recently formed for the purpose of "conveying important information to the county populous pertaining how local government works and how the people's money is spent."

Part of that process will include a question and answer column for public officials printed periodically in the "South Platte Sentinel" allowing elected officials and government representatives to clearly and concisely answer questions and address concerns in an effort to stop innuendoes and rumors.

The Oversight Committee has submitted the following questions to the Sterling City Council earlier this month to address:

Q) With Fall Clean-Up Week starting soon, everyone should be encouraged to take advantage of free disposal of junk and debris. There are a few properties in our neighborhoods that present an eyesore. What is the City's process in dealing with this issue and do the same rules apply for private neighborhoods and businesses? We don't want to cause trouble but we would like to see the junk and trash go away.

A) The City's Nuisance Procedures regarding vegetation is:

1) Violations are issued from routine patrol of the City, phone calls or by personal visits in the office.

2) Property owner is issued a Nuisance Notice Letter to comply within 10 days to correct the violation.

3) Inspect property in violation after 10 days of dated notice to comply.

4) Violation not corrected to standards of the City Code - Property is posted and pictures of the property are taken.

5) Email supervisor of the posted property address. Supervisor emails the vendor to the property address for maintenance. Vendor will take before and after pictures of the property for billing purposes to the property owner.

6) Follow up inspections after a property has received the first notice to comply letter, if the violations continue or recur during the next 180 days, the City may take the necessary action and charge the property owner for the work.

Q) Why is there so much water on Main Street?

A) The water on West Main Street, in the 1100 block, was a minor fracture in the water main.

Q) What are the City's plans, if any, to resurface West Main Street?

A) West Main is a state highway. From information obtained from the Colorado Department of Transportation, the preliminary design for the reconstruction of Highway 14 from South 8th Avenue to County Road 35 is underway.

Q) Why is the City spending so much on resurfacing streets when the underlying water distribution in-

frastructure is so old, falling apart and collapsing? What would it take to rebuild the old water / sewer infrastructure?

A) In 1997, a study was completed by staff as to the replacement cost of the water distribution system and sewer system in the City. In 1997

County in violation?

A few weeks ago, we asked three questions of the Logan County Commissioners with the assistance of the South Platte Sentinel.

The Commissioners refused to give a written response, and suggested the questions could be answered by direct inquiry. LCCOC members proceeded to talk to the Commissioners' finance office personnel, their secretary, Commissioners Edwards and Donaldson, and the County Attorney. We also re-read the Colorado Statutes concerning County Governments and referenced the internet records of the Morgan County Commissioners.

On the basis of this research, the committee has concluded that the following facts are correct:

The county bills published periodically in the Sterling Journal-Advocate by the Commissioners are not in compliance with state law, as the publications omit two vital pieces of information: (1) the fund upon which the check was drawn; and, (2) a description of the services or materials that were furnished to the County. At last week's Work Session, the Logan County Commissioners pointed out that publishing bills and salaries according to State Statutes would cost a lot more, as much as five times more. Although we do not know exactly what this would cost, we think it would be in the best interest of the community if the Commissioners complied with the law.

What newspapers can charge for these required publications is determined by State Statutes. Whatever the cost of publishing bills and sala-

dollars, the replacement of the water system was \$12,474,225. The replacement of the sanitary sewer was \$8,985,310. The replacement of the storm sewer was \$7,274,515. These replacement costs were for systems replaced with like kind and size and did not upgrade or enlarge facilities.

ries might be, should be considered the cost of doing the public's business with total transparency.

It appears our neighbors in Morgan County are in compliance. If our Commissioners would like to see how Morgan County does it, LCCOC is willing to provide a copy of Morgan County's publication of expenses; or, the Commissioners can visit the Morgan County website.

It is also apparent that Logan County's bidding resolution is defective in that it doesn't cover the statutorily-required annual publication for bids for "any books, stationery, records, printing, lithographing, or other supplies of any kind for use in" the office of any county officer.

The Commissioners indicated they were unaware of this law and said they might ask our State Representative and / or State Senator to seek repeal of this provision of the law when the Legislature meets again. In the meantime, the Commissioners are not in compliance.

LCCOC recommends the Commissioners conduct business according to current laws and regulations until such time as the law is changed. It is our understanding that previous attempts to repeal this law in the State Legislature have failed.

Again, it appears our neighbors in Morgan County are indeed in compliance. When LCCOC checked with the Morgan County Commissioners' office, we were informed that Morgan County does require bidding on its printing; and, pursuant to the above-described state law, piggybacks with the State purchasing office for office supplies.

Wounded Warriors

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According to Strachan, it is a mission of Warriors Outdoors to "support our warriors with recreational activities in the outdoors."

Strachan began the program after volunteering to help with a pheasant hunt with soldiers sponsored by a group called "Wounded Warriors."

"Each of these young men sustained wounds during battle while defending our freedom," he shared. "These young men were truly inspirational to me, and the results from the hunt were much greater than the birds that were harvested. The best results were the smiles and memories that will last a lifetime."

"We owe them no less than the best that we can do," Strachan said.

And that's exactly what drew Pilkington into the group's mission.

"I wanted to get involved because of what they (the veterans) did for us and the sacrifices these guys have made," Curt said. "Some of these guys have some significant injuries, some mental issues. One of the guys, Tom Zuck, has shrapnel in his hips and around his kidney. Here's a kid in his first year of college and 9-1-1 happens and he drops out of college and he's one of the first out to Afghanistan."

"These guys have made some tremendous sacrifices," he added.

Pilkington normally takes about four 'bunches' of veterans a year, the most recent was two weeks ago with Zuck and Jose Cruz and his wife Shantel.

Cruz has injuries from shrapnel and earned four purple hearts. He is still serving in the military.

Zuck - or "Hoot" as he is called - also has residual injuries from shrapnel and has two purple hearts and he won a medal of honor. As a sniper, he did two tours overseas.

Both men are Army veterans.

Pilkington said he usually takes two or three hunters at a time, mostly hunting ducks, geese and snow geese, "from here to Julesburg."

"We have to hunt where the birds want to be, so we go look around and

then call the landowners for permission to hunt their property," Curt said. "The response from the landowners has been fabulous, I think they are also happy to help out these guys."

"I really appreciate these landowners - the Zinks, Lufts, Vandemoers, Guenzis, Mike Mays, Harriman, Mari, Sittner, Steve Kaiser, Dinsdale, Mitchek, Stieb," he noted. "The landowners are very accommodating, without them it's not possible. They have been very generous."

Pilkington provides the hunters with decoys, blinds, "We also do the scouting, we feed them, sometimes arrange room and board. Some of the hunts are just for a few hours and then we send them on their way."

"They can also go bass fishing on our pond," he added. "The quality of the experience is very important. These aren't guys who could afford to take a guided hunt. When we take them their success is very good. There's a sense of success and that's part of the deal."

"They help set things up," Curt explained. "They help us put out decoys and camouflage the blinds. So when they get to harvest some birds they get a real sense of success."

"To be out and watch the sunrise and see all the wildlife, it's quite an experience," he said. "That's also a big thing for them, taking part in nature. I think they really enjoy the peace and tranquility and no traffic."

"And no noise!" he added. "When you're out there sitting in a blind you don't hear anything but nature. And it's pretty hard to beat our sunrises or sunsets."

"It's really a great opportunity to give these wounded warriors something else to focus on," Curt said, "to think about something besides the issues that they have."

Pilkington encourages others who have good knowledge of hunting to get involved and support the outdoor activities for veterans. More information is available at www.warriorsoutdoors.com.

From The Families Of WILLIAM "BILL" BUSIG

We would like to express our deepest appreciation & heartfelt thanks to all who sent cards, prayers, flowers and contributed to the memorial in Bill's name. A special thank you goes to Dr. Adam Mackintosh & Terri Carwin for the exceptional care given to Bill. We were truly blessed. Thank you also to the Sterling Fire Department, Morgan County Ambulance, Logan County Sheriff's Department & the Sterling Regional MedCenter Emergency Room staff for their caring & professional service. A special thank you to the Rev. Ed Bigler for your comforting service & to the ladies of the Christ United Methodist Church for the wonderful dinner. To Mike Reager & the staff of Chaney-Reager Funeral Home, a big thank you for your caring & professional service.

We love you all.

Jean Busig
Barbara & Lonny Haas
Kent & Heather Busig
Jeff Haas

Emma, Maddie & Jonathan Busig
Naomi Busig
June Davis



Pancake Supper

Fri., Oct. 28, 5-7 p.m.

\$6
Per Person
EVERYONE
Is Welcome!



Includes
Scrambled Eggs
& Sausage



American Legion
1602 W. Highway 6