



WYOMING AGRICULTURE

Agriculture....Keeping Wyoming Strong



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Legislative review-highlights and lowlights

By Brett Moline

The 2021 legislative session was as weird as finding a wild walrus in Wyoming in the winter. The first 8 days were all virtual then we were back face to face, then we had a two-day shutdown because of a snowstorm, then we wrapped up on April 7. And we are looking at a special session to deal with the additional federal funding coming to the state. Given the overall circumstances, the session went well, with some lowlights and some highlights.

Some Highlights

Several bills were drafted that would have increased taxes or would have implemented new taxes. None of these bills passed. So, in the near future we will not have an income tax, fuel taxes will not increase, unearned income will not be taxed by Wyoming, and tax exemptions will not change, for now.

Voters will have to show identification in upcoming elections. The forms of ID are wide and varied, including driver's license and other state-issued IDs, Medicare and Medicaid cards, etc. Essentially, almost any government issued ID will work.

Money has been set aside to assist meat packing. The pandemic has dramatically increased the number of people wanting to buy local meat, and the current amount of slaughter capacity in Wyoming is not enough to satisfy demand. Hopefully, the capacity can increase and Wyoming farmers and ranchers can capitalize on the demand for local meat.

A new law was passed to allow local weed and pest boards to use the second mill to work on more than one pest. This law will allow local weed and pest boards to work to control invasive species in their area.

Another bill will allow irrigation and water control districts to obtain loans from the State Land and Investment Board to maintain and repair infrastructure. This law does not affect the work done by the Water Development Commission. The new source of money is designed to work on large projects such as the tunnels used by the Goshen Irrigation District, and other large projects needed by other districts. This source is not for new projects.

A law was passed that establishes

fossils and artifacts belong to the surface owner and are not part of the mineral estate. There have been some disputes on the ownership so this law

should remove those disputes.

The Legislature also worked on clarifying and updating animal abuse

See 'Legislative review' page 16

Legislative interim topics for 2021

By Brett Moline

The legislature set the topics the committees will cover for the 2021 interim. The committees will study these subjects and may have draft legislation for the next session. Listed are topics of particular interest to WyFB members.

Agriculture:

This committee will review the Wyoming Agriculture Authority bill from the last session. This bill died on third reading in the second house. The idea is to pattern the Ag Authority after the Oil and Gas Authority to develop more processing of agricultural commodities to add

value to Wyoming's agricultural industry. The only costs to the State are start up costs; there will be no on-going expenses.

This committee will also take a comprehensive look at predator management to determine what is the best way to improve/maintain predator control in Wyoming.

This committee will also review existing statutes concerning trespass by feral, wild, and stray horses and see if any changes are needed.

This committee will also study the history of federal lands in Wyoming and consider state rights with

See 'Legislative interim topics' page 16



Springtime agriculture in Wyoming

The signs of spring are abundant on Wyoming farms and ranches even if the Wyoming weather patterns don't say spring all the time. This baby lamb was the first lamb for the newly formed Werner Sheep Company in Converse County. Werner siblings Loganne Otto and John Werner in Converse County started their company last June. *Connie Werner photo.*



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Rural Infrastructure Doesn't Make the Grade

By Zippy Duvall, American Farm Bureau Federation President

Living in rural America is a blessing. Many of us can sit on our porches and look out over beautiful fields, forests, hills and prairies. We live in beautiful and historic small towns where we support local businesses. And connecting us all are the roads and bridges we travel as we start busy days tending to livestock, nurturing our crops, attending our children's or grandchildren's sporting events and visiting friends and family. Trucks and trains filled with the fruits of farmers' and ranchers' hard work crisscross the landscape as barges move up and down rivers.

But the networks we rely on for all of this are in a severe state of disrepair.

Each year, the American Society of Civil Engineer's (ASCE) gives a grade to America's infrastructure, and this year, we got a C-. If my kids came home from school with a C-, we would have had an earnest conversation about how we could work together and put a plan in place to do better. As Americans, we need to develop a plan to fix the dismal state of our nation's infrastructure and make sure rural America isn't left in the dust.

The ASCE report found 42% of our bridges are at least 50 years old and that 7.5% are structurally defi-

cient. To put that into perspective, over 178 million trips are made across structurally deficient bridges in America every day. That is plain dangerous and unacceptable.



Zippy Duvall

Along our rivers and streams, nearly 40,000 miles of levees protect our communities and farmland. In the spring of 2019, a major levee breach along the Missouri River in Iowa, Nebraska and Missouri destroyed hundreds of homes, flooded fields and devastated multiple rural communities. Our rivers should be life-giving to our communities. These waterways are also essential to moving agriculture products to major ports. One barge down the Missouri can carry as much as 70 semi-loads worth of goods. The ASCE gave our inland waterways a D+, estimating nearly \$7 billion in backlogged projects.

Then there are the pathways that bring us together virtually. Broadband access in rural communities continues to lag far behind the speeds in urban and suburban communities, with 20% of school children lacking a high-speed connection. We have sounded the alarm on this growing digital divide for years and the pandemic has demonstrated more clearly why we must get high-speed internet throughout rural America.

See 'Rural Infrastructure' page 3

30 by 30 Initiative has grave implications

By Ken Hamilton, Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Executive Vice President

President Biden signed several executive orders soon after he took office. One of those which has generated a lot of concern and controversy is his "30 by 30" order. In a press release from the Department of Interior on January 27, it said the action would outline steps to achieve the President's commitment to conserve at least

30% each of our lands and waters by the year 2030. The release goes on to say the Biden Administration will work to achieve this goal by supporting local, state, private, and tribally led nature conservation and restoration efforts that are underway across America.



Ken Hamilton

Since the executive order was signed, there have been a lot of questions See '30 by 30 Initiative' page 5

Farm Bureau amplifies your voice for agriculture

By Todd Fornstrom, Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation President

In the world of cell phones, video meetings, and isolation the American farmer and rancher is still going to work every day and producing the food, fiber and fuel needed to keep this country moving. They are still feeding the pigs, plowing the fields, milking the cows and harvesting their produce for the

public. Like every person in this day and age, busier and busier is a common theme. The need for an in-house lobbyist, spokesperson and attorney seems to be more and more important. Fortunately, agriculture has all three wrapped up into one great organization. As our population becomes more and more concentrated into urban



Todd Fornstrom

areas the link from consumer to the See 'Farm Bureau amplifies your voice' page 3

Calendar of Events

- May**
4-5WyFB YF&R Committee Meeting—Lander
18-19.Joint Transportation, Highways & Military Affairs Legislative Committee--Casper
- June**
1.....WyFB Membership Committee Meeting—Casper
1.....WyFB Board Meeting--Casper
- July**
9.....Washakie County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting—Washakie County Fairgrounds
- November**
11-13 .WyFB Annual Meeting--Cody



Visit wyfb.org for calendar updates

WYOMING AGRICULTURE

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Marijuana legislation failed during the 2021 Legislature

By Morgan Spiro, WyFB Intern

During the March 12 hearing of the Wyoming House Judiciary Committee, HB0209 “Regulation of Marijuana” and HB0082 “Implementation Requirements for Medical Marijuana” were discussed. HB0209 passed committee with a 6-3 vote but died in Committee of the Whole. HB0082 was not moved off the floor.

Brett Moline, WyFB’s Director of Public and Governmental Affairs, testified on the bill on behalf of the Federation. “The general policy of my members is wide and varied, I am sitting in opposition to this bill,” said Moline, “We do not believe that [marijuana] should be legalized in Wyoming.” WyFB has long standing policy against the legalization of marijuana. This policy was adopted in 1970 and reaffirmed in 2012 and 2017.

The main sponsor of House Bill 0209, Representative Jared Olsen of Laramie County, made it very clear in his testimony that he is not a marijuana advocate, and is simply looking out for the future sovereignty of Wyoming. According to Representative Olsen’s testimony, his fear is that it will be rescheduled or de-

scheduled from its Schedule 1 status at the Federal level, and without any state regulation that may become an issue for Wyoming.

Another one of the concerns he mentioned is that a ballot initiative could be brought by the people. A ballot initiative could impose loose and underdeveloped policy. Olsen drafted the bill after a bill regulating marijuana recently passed in the state of Virginia. The Virginia bill is not effective until 2024.

HB0209 would have done many things in the way of marijuana regulation in the state. First and foremost, the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) would have become the main regulating body for all marijuana production and regulation in the state. The WDA currently tests and regulates all hemp produced in the state.

During their testimony, the WDA did express a need for increased testing capacity. There would have been a stamp from the WDA on every retail product, ensuring its seed-to-sale safety program and regulation.

HB0209 would have allowed the legal retail purchase and use age to be 21 and allow for limited home

cultivation for personal use. The bill would have required that all retail stores be 1000 feet from any government entity, place of worship, or educational institution. There would have also been a prohibition on use inside of any retail store. This would have prevented marijuana retail locations to operate as “bars”.

The bill would have prevented any kind of packaging that was purposefully made attractive to persons under the age of 21. Medical use of marijuana would not be regulated by a doctor, it would simply be recreational use if it followed the guidelines set forth in the bill.

The bill would have implemented a 30-percent excise tax on all retail marijuana products in support of the Wyoming School Foundation Accounts, and local governments. According to Olsen, this would have generated an estimated \$50 million per year.

The discussion over the regulation of marijuana was expansive. Many leaders in the legislature were supportive of the bill, and many even signed on as co-sponsors. However, many were still skeptical of full legalization of marijuana.

“We can’t let the genie too far out of the jar,” testified Representative Bill Fortner of Campbell County.

Colorado resident Luke Niforatos testified against the bill. Niforatos explained that the black market only expands when marijuana becomes available in a taxed, retail setting. He also expressed concerns relating to hospital capacity and the increased dependence on poison control services. Niforatos remarked about the excessive allowance of home growth in the bill. He testified that 12 plants were an excessive and unnecessary amount for personal consumption.

Wyoming is one of only six states in the Union to have not regulated marijuana in any way. In December of 2020, a University of Wyoming poll found that 54 percent of Wyoming residents support the legalization of marijuana for recreational use in adults. In this survey, 85 percent of all Wyoming residents were found to support the legalization of medical marijuana, and 75 percent support the elimination of jail time for possession related crimes. This is the first bill heard with an attempt to regulate marijuana in four years.

Rural Infrastructure

From page 2

In early April, President Biden laid out the framework for an infrastructure package with many of the right pieces. The proposal seeks to expand rural broadband across America, promises to rebuild roads, bridges, ports, waterways and supports investment in agriculture research. While these are critical infrastructure priorities, we are closely watching how the administration and Congress will pay for this package and whether it will include mandates that could harm our communities.

President Biden’s proposal is just the first step in what will likely be a many months-long process to create and pass a final bill through Congress. The American Farm Bureau will work closely with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to ensure we responsibly and efficiently upgrade our infrastructure. Our rural communities and food suppliers deserve more than a barely passing grade when it comes to the framework foundational to our health, safety and future success.

Farm Bureau amplifies your voice

From page 2

profession of farming or ranching gets more disconnected. The importance of agriculture’s voice becomes exponentially important. Farm Bureau is that voice.

Local Farm Bureaus are the grassroots effort where actual farmers and ranchers work together developing policy. The local members are volunteers working for the betterment of all of agriculture. They work to make sure the message of agriculture is being told from the source. Members work with local regulators on local issues that affect them immediately. The first line of defense for private property rights typically includes your local Farm Bureau. The zoning and other land use regulations affect our farms and ranches to a high degree and who better to help develop the regulations than the original stewards of the land.

As our population becomes more and more urban the message of what good farming and ranching practices look like are more important than ever. These local members work to make sure the voice of agriculture is accurate. Taking care of our land and the environment are of the utmost importance, we work hard to make sure that the land is there for tomorrow.

The Farm Bureau’s membership comes together and works for a common goal. Sometimes that common goal is defending the membership consensus on policy issues within the court system. Recently Farm Bureau has fought to protect property and privacy rights, access to biotechnology and regulatory overreach.

Membership in the Farm Bureau, as you can see, has many benefits. Farmers and ranchers work hard to produce safe, abundant and responsibly produced food, fiber and fuel. Farm Bureau works hard to make sure farmers and ranchers can achieve their goals.

Joint Agriculture Legislative Chairs Video Meeting

Thank you to Senator Brian Boner, Senate Agriculture Committee Chair, and Representative John Eklund, House Agriculture Committee Chair, for speaking to Farm Bureau members on April 1 via video conference. They addressed issues covered by their committees during the Legislature as well as possible interim topics Farm Bureau members were also able to ask questions.



Young Farmer and Rancher News



Passion for agriculture drives involvement

By Aletta Ziehl, WyFB YF&R Committee Member

Hello! I am Aletta Ziehl. I was born and raised in Casper, Wyoming. I am the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmer and Rancher Committee Secretary. Although I have

been involved in agriculture my entire life, this is my first year being actively involved with Farm Bureau at the state level. I help my dad, Chad, and my grandparents on our family farm. We raise market hogs, put up alfalfa hay, and make custom feeds. Our cus-

tom feed work helps our swine operation because we use our feed products to provide for our hogs. On the farm's alfalfa side, we run a side roll on one hayfield, and we run irrigation pipe on the other field. I have learned the importance of teamwork through our operation because man does irrigation pipe take a lot of people and a lot of communication! I enjoy the time that we spend together because it takes the whole family's help.

Some of my other agriculture experience came through a childhood full of 4-H and a high school career filled with FFA. Now, I get to mentor others. I enjoy helping young showmen with their hogs and their calves. I enjoy this aspect because I get to see the spark of agriculture and the passion for livestock be ignited in someone else. It is all about "Ag"-vocating!

Another thing I do as a YF&R committee member is to also serve on the Agriculture Promotions subcommittee. We work as a group to choose and distribute the Ag Books for Kids Program. I love this program because it puts agriculture into school libraries where children can learn more about agriculture's importance. Getting to work on the committee that selects the books and the activities and then getting to go into the schools creates a full circle for me, and I encourage all readers to look into their county Farm Bureau about helping with this program. I live in one of Wyoming's biggest cities, so I know that kids here may not have learned how food is grown. I find this lack of knowledge disappointing, so I enjoy getting to play a role in putting this knowledge into their hands.



Aletta Ziehl

Plus, the kiddos are the cutest!

My favorite part of YF&R and the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation is that I get to meet so many people and build relationships outside of my community. Everyone has their own story to tell, and I love that the most common thing we share is our unique Agriculture roles. Our local Farm & Ranch Bureau does a huge annual meeting and banquet for our county, and I have a blast helping the officers decorate and make all of the event coordination to ensure that it runs smoothly. I know that people gather over food and fellowship, and that's precisely what we enjoy doing! Farm Bureau is not possible without the active county federations.

I hope that my words find you well and that they encourage you to get involved, even if it is just at the county or local level. You might discover a passion for agriculture or meet a new friend.

Wyoming FFA Career Fair

We Believe in the Future of Agriculture! Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Intern Morgan Spiro represented WyFB at the Wyoming FFA Career Fair held March 22 in Douglas. Spiro is also the chair of the Collegiate Farm Bureau at the University of Wyoming.

Hundreds of FFA students visited the Career Fair and were able to learn more about the leadership opportunities available through the WyFB YF&R program. The WyFB YF&R program is a great stepping stone for agricultural leadership when FFA students complete their FFA careers. FFA to YF&R!



UW Collegiate Farm Bureau elects officers

In March, the Collegiate Farm Bureau on the University of Wyoming campus elected their new officer team:

Morgan Spiro, Chairman
Sophia Fahleson, Vice Chairman/ Secretary
Braidyn Bristow, Reporter

The pandemic has proved challenging to many Student Organizations on campus. The team is excited for the opportunities and blessings that a new school year brings. If you know any students at UW who are interested in being a part of the Collegiate Farm Bureau, please have them contact Morgan Spiro at mspiرو@uwyo.edu.



UW Collegiate Farm Bureau Officers: Braidyn Bristow, Morgan Spiro, Sophia Fahleson

30 by 30 Initiative

From page 2

raised about what the President really is seeking to accomplish.

In recent conversations with United States Department of Agriculture Secretary Vilsack, state Farm Bureau presidents have repeatedly asked for details on the 30 by 30 proposal. In addition, President Duvall has also asked the Secretary for information on this initiative.

The Secretary of Interior is leading this effort and if her voting record in the House is any indication, it does not bode well for many of us in agriculture. Several questions have been raised about what exactly “conserve” would look like with this initiative. Farmers and ranchers are the biggest group of landowners in the U.S. Naturally, people who have private lands are concerned as to what this could mean to them. Would conserve mean conservation easements? If so, what would be allowed under conservation easements to accomplish the 30 by 30 goal? There are some sup-

porters of the President who have raised concerns about the impact agriculture has had on nature. If conserve in this initiative means we will need to revert the landscape to what it might have looked like prior to when Europeans came to this continent, then a lot of farmers and ranchers will have to stop farming and ranching.

It has not escaped our notice that Congress permanently funded the Land & Water Conservation program after holding the line on this for a long time. One of the things that those funds can be used for is to purchase private lands.

We in the West, however, are not ignorant to the fact that between the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service, the two agencies manage about 30% of the land mass in the United States. When it comes to implementing policies, naturally asking your own land managers to implement an executive order is a lot easier than trying to come up

with a program to do the same on private lands. Of course, again, we must wonder what this “conserve” term would mean on federal lands. If the idea is to try and manage all the rest of federal lands like they do wilderness areas or parks, then the ability to utilize the 48% of the federal surface area in Wyoming for economic activity will be significantly limited. While Congress must designate lands as “wilderness” we have seen where Congress doesn’t have to act to designate these lands. By not acting the federal agencies must manage those identified lands as wilderness until Congress acts on the recommendation.

Even then there are federal laws on how these lands should be managed. WyFB policy has long supported utilizing federal lands as multiple use lands and Congress has agreed. So how does the Administration accomplish the goal of 30 by 30 if they concentrate on federal lands? First, they would review areas where lands with wil-

derness characteristics have been identified and try to expand those areas. Then managers could seek to place unrealistic requirements on federal land users which, in the case of grazing, simply would make the continuation of using federal lands uneconomical.

If there are some stubborn folks out there who can hang on to their grazing permits, the federal land management agencies can one-by-one seek to find enough violations by those permittees to then cancel their permits. This will be time consuming of course, but one thing we know about a bureaucracy is that it can be patient and persistent.

The other part of the 30 by 30 plan is to conserve 30% of the water too. This has a lot of implications also. Too many to go into in this column.

All told whether the goal is to utilize private lands or public lands to accomplish the goal, we in agriculture will be on the front lines.

Barrasso introduces legislation to promote resilient rangelands & effective grazing management

April 21, 2021, WASHINGTON, D.C. —On April 21, U.S. Senator John Barrasso (R-WY), ranking member of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources (ENR), introduced the Resiliency for Ranching and Natural Conservation Health (RANCH) Act. This legislation will promote resilient and healthy rangelands and effective grazing management across the West.

“In Wyoming, ranchers’ livelihoods depend on preserving the health of our multiple-use public lands. Livestock grazing plays a critical role in maintaining these lands,” said Barrasso. “The RANCH Act will help ranchers and rural communities as they work with Washington. It will assist ranchers during natural disasters, so they can keep working. The bill also extends grazing permits by up to 20 years and in-

vests in better land management. The RANCH Act promotes robust rangelands for Wyoming’s livestock and healthy habitat for Wyoming’s wildlife.”

The RANCH Act will:

- Allow temporary utilization of vacant grazing allotments during extreme events/disasters;
- Allocate funding for rangeland health and resiliency projects and public access agreements to land-locked public lands for co-benefits to hunting and recreation;
- Extend the period of grazing permits/leases for up to 20-years, when certain conditions are met; and
- Provide responsive and nimble management through the use of a categorical exclusion for renewal of certain grazing permits/leases and for certain actions during extreme events/disasters.

NEW!

Wyoming Wool Growers Association

Premier Ewe Sale

September 13, 2021
Douglas, WY

Live and Video Sale

(Live sale features lots under 20 head –
Video sale for lots greater than 20 head)

Contact WWGA for more information

Call 307-265-5250 or
email amy@wyowool.com

Farm Bureau Gold, Silver and Century Club Member Recognition

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation is a grassroots membership organization that cares about your future. We believe constitutional government, the competitive enterprise system, property rights and individual freedom are necessary components for a strong agriculture, a strong Wyoming and a strong America.

Farm Bureau is organized, controlled and financed by members who pay annual dues. Each voice added to the united Farm Bureau voice helps keep

agriculture strong. Gold Club, Silver Club, and Century Club memberships are available to Farm Bureau Federation members, associate and regular, who want to increase their level of support. In addition to the standard member benefits, members in these three tiers receive a weekly legislative update during the Wyoming Legislature and annual recognition in *Wyoming Agriculture*.

We thank all Farm Bureau members for supporting the work of the Federation.

GOLD CLUB MEMBERSHIP

You feel agriculture is one of the economic keystones for Wyoming and you want to help support the farmers and ranchers who help keep our state strong. By becoming a Gold Club Member for only \$1.37 per day you show the greatest level of membership support for your county, state and national Farm Bureau Federation as well as your Wyoming neighbors who work the land.

SILVER CLUB MEMBERSHIP

The two percent of our population that grow food for the rest of us face

daunting issues. Issues affecting agriculture include regulatory pressures, private property rights and access to important tools to keep growing food for our country. Your contribution of only 69¢ per day supports an organization that supports you and works to keep agriculture strong in Wyoming.

CENTURY CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Increase your level of support for this centennial organization by joining or upgrading to a Century Club membership. Your contribution of only 27¢ per day supports an organization that supports you and works to keep agriculture strong in Wyoming.

GOLD, SILVER & CENTURY CLUB MEMBERS

GOLD CLUB MEMBERS

Denise & Kevin Baars, Lusk; Todd Fornstrom/ Premium Hay Products, LLC, Pine Bluffs; Kathy & Ken Hamilton, Laramie; Melissa & Matthew Stroh, Newcastle

SILVER CLUB MEMBERS

Stephen Jones, Meeteetse

CENTURY CLUB MEMBERS ALBANY

Holly & Steve Beumee/ Bear Creek Cattle Co, Rock River; Barbara Bourret, Cheyenne; William & Sharleen Castle, Bosler; John Dougherty, Laramie; Laurie & Randy Dunn/ Bath Brothers Ranch, Laramie; Ronda & Ron Harding, Laramie; Patricia & Zachary Jacobsen, Laramie; Leanne Roehl & Donny Kaneshiro, Laramie; Judy & Brett Moline, Laramie; Suzy Noecker, Laramie; Alice & Carl Shaffer, Rock River; David Speiser/Biddick Ranch, Laramie; Jamie & Robert Terry, Laramie; First Interstate Bank, Laramie

BIG HORN

Tim Beck, Lovell; Lydia & Douglas Cauffman, Basin; Marylou & Lin Doyle/ Doyle Ranches Inc, Hyattville; David Flitner/Flitner Ranch LP, Boca Raton; Eleanor Hamilton/ Hamilton Ranch Inc, Hyattville; Patricia & Jeffery Ingram, Greybull; Todd Jones, Hyattville; Frank Kelly/ Kelly Brothers, Greybull; Dorlene & Walter Mayland, Basin; Karen & J Gordon Preis, Emblem; Melanie & Kavin Stockert, Greybull; David Tate, Hyattville; Paul & Troy Wambeke, Cowley

CAMPBELL

Diann & G Matthew Avery, Rozet; James & Kyle Bell/ Riata Ranch LLC, Gillette; Brian Collins/ Collins Ranch, Gillette; Renee & Tom Davis/ Davis Land & Livestock, Gillette; Leroy Dike, Gillette; Colleen & Elgin Faber, Rozet; Beryl & Darel Geer, Gillette; Robert Geer, Gillette; Amanda & Lexington Geer, Gillette; Gwendolyn & Gerald Geis, Gillette; Kevin Geis/ 4G Land LLC, Gillette; Stephanie & Kerry Hayden, Gillette; Mary & Donald Joslyn, Gillette; Patricia Litton/ Litton Isenberger PL, Gillette; Joel Ohman, Gillette; Becky & Cody Pearson, Gillette; Audrey & Matthew Reno, Gillette; Jeanie & Ronald Schlautmann, Gillette; Mary & Marion Scott, Gillette; Julie & Michael Smith, Gillette; Merna Swanson, Gillette; Toni Swartz, Gillette; Mary & Troy Swartz, Gillette; Ohman's Incorporated, Gillette

CARBON

Stacy & Kyle Berger, Saratoga; Fred & Leanne Correll, Saratoga; John Espy/ Blake Sheep Co Inc, Savery; Joyce & James Gould, Melba; Betsy & Thomas Grainger, Saratoga; Robert Hones/ Peterson Livestock LLC, Rawlins; Carol & Rick Hughes, Saratoga; Lua Kelly, Medicine Bow; Chelsey Kortas, Hanna; Kimberly & Gerald Kortas, Hanna; Tammy & Troy Mortensen, Rawlins; Jerry Paxton, Encampment

CONVERSE

Nicole & Dan Bleak, Laramie; Linda & Jay Butler, Douglas; Francie & David Claus, Douglas; Aaron Clausen, Douglas; Charlotte & Michael Davies, Glenrock; Leslie & Frank Eathorne, Douglas; Rachel & William Grant, Glenrock; Freida & Artie Joss, Douglas; Steven Meredith, Douglas; Sarah & Max Miller, Douglas; Frankie Addington & William Moore/ W-I Moore Ranch Co Inc.; Elaine & Frank Moore, Douglas; Dawn & Tim Pexton, Douglas; Juanita & Dwayne Philo, Douglas; Jewell Reed, Douglas; Karen & Steve Smith/ Smith Sheep Co, Douglas; Max Smylie/ Smylie Animal Clinic, Douglas; Doris & Jerry Sober/ El Shaddai, Douglas; John Sullivan, Douglas; Lucile & Dennis Taylor/ D & L Livestock, Douglas; Alice Vollman, Douglas; Robert Vollman, Douglas; Brady Vollman, Douglas; Connie & John Werner/ JP Werner & Sons Inc, Douglas; Loganne Werner, Douglas; Boner Bros Partnership, Douglas, Wagonhound L&L, Douglas

CROOK

Bagley Genell, Auburn; Diana & Jeffrey Burian, Moorcroft; Raenell Edsall-Taylor & Josh Taylor, Hulett; Terry & Larry Fowlkes, Aladdin; Rachael & Zachery Fross, Cheyenne; Arthur Hauber, Hulett; Della & Frank Hawken, Sundance; Sharon & Richard Kirksey, Aladdin; Perry Livingston, Sundance; Sally & James Neiman, Hulett; Thea Nuckolls, Hulett; Laura & Will Nuckolls, Hulett; Andrea & Royce Robinson, Moorcroft; Jeanette & Nels Smith, Sundance; Annette & Jeff Suloff, Laramie; Pam & Hugh Thompson, Aladdin; Minnie Williams, Moorcroft

FREMONT

Mildred & Tom Abernathy, Lander; Vicky & Larry Allen, Lysite; Rita Campbell/ Campbell Livestock LLC, Shoshoni; Jennifer & Jason Cole, Riverton; Maria & Troy Corbett, Pavilion; Tim Corbett, Pavillion; Barney Cosner, Riverton; Braxton Crofts, Lander; Andrea & Thad Dockery, Lander; Joyce & Hearly Dockham, Pavillion; Kathleen Finch, Rochester; Elizabeth & Tyler Foxworthy, Riverton; Claudine Gardener, Shoshoni; Barbara & Greg Gardner/ Gardner Livestock, Lysite; Lois Herbst/ Herbst Lazy TY Ranch LLP, Shoshoni; Pat & Stanley Horton, Riverton; Dennis Horton/ Horton Farms, Riverton; Greg Jarvis/ Flying M Ranch Inc, Shoshoni; Malissa & Bill Jennings, Riverton; Sherry & Johnny Key; Garrison; Steven Kutzer, Riverton; Shelly & Justin Martin, Crowheart; Rosanne & Tim McKinney/ McKinney Ranch, Lander; Peggy & Milton Miller/ Wonderful Wyoming Honey, Crowheart; Vickie & Jerry Overy/ Overy Ranch, Willcox; Janet Philip, Thermopolis; Brian Romine, Lander; Patricia & WN Spratt/ RW Spratt & Sons Inc, Lysite

GOSHEN

Tena & Elden Baldwin, Torrington; Wilma Baldwin, Torrington; Diane & Shawn Booth/ Cherry Creek Ranch, Veteran; Kaitlin & Jake Buckhaults, Hawk Springs; Annie & Joe Campbell, Jay Em; Kerin & Jake Clark, Yoder; Debbie Curry, Torrington; Loretta & Art Davis/ Davis Livestock Inc, Torrington; Patricia & John Ellis, Torrington; Barb & Wayne Erickson, Torrington; Brandy

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See 'CENTURY CLUB MEMBERS' page 7

CENTURY CLUB MEMBERS continued from page 6

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Beum named Regional Forester of the Rocky Mountain Region

March 18, 2021, Washington, D.C.--Frank Beum has been selected to serve as Regional Forester of the Rocky Mountain Region

in Lakewood, Colorado. He began this new assignment April 12. Beum had been serving as Deputy Regional Forester for Natural Re-

sources for the Southern Region in Atlanta, Georgia. He transitions in behind Tammy Angel who has been the Acting Regional Forester since January 2021.

Beum started his career with the USDA Forest Service 40 years ago. As regional forester, he will oversee the management of more than 22 million acres of national forests and grasslands, across five states with over 2,000 permanent and seasonal employees.

“In his role as regional forester, Beum will provide the essential leadership carrying out agency and regional goals including restoration work across landscapes to regain ecological function and reduce the risks of damage to forests and surrounding communities from wildfire, insects and disease, and a changing climate,” said Victoria Christiansen, Chief of the United States Forest Service. “His work will support national priorities such as containing the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring racial justice and equity, rebuilding the rural economy, and addressing the impacts of

climate change.”

Beum began his Forest Service career in 1981 as a seasonal forestry technician in the Rocky Mountain Region, spending six summers on the Rio Grande, San Juan, and Shoshone National Forests. Since that time, his assignments include Acting Regional Forester in the Intermountain Region, Acting Associate Deputy Chief of the National Forest System in Washington D.C., and Director of Forest Management for the Southern Region in Atlanta. He also served as acting national Director of Forest Management in Washington D.C., legislative specialist in both the Washington Office and the Southern Region, Forest Supervisor on the Daniel Boone National Forest in Kentucky, and District Ranger on the New Castle Ranger District of the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests in Virginia. He holds a bachelor’s degree in forestry from Ohio State University in Columbus, and a master’s degree in recreation resource management from Colorado State University in Fort Collins.

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Opinion: Whatever happened to simple, slow food in the climate debate?

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By Blake Hurst

“Don’t eat anything your great grandmother wouldn’t recognize as food.” So said Michael Pollan in a widely quoted and rarely followed bit of advice. “Eat local” says, well, almost everybody. Food should be simple, unprocessed, and eaten close to where it was produced. Everybody from the National Institute of Health to the nation’s editorial pages have waged a full scale assault on processed food for a generation. Listen to academia on the subject:

“You’re introducing ingredients that shouldn’t be there in the first place, that don’t naturally exist in food and instead are brought in purely by human preparation,” says Qi Sun, MD, ScD, an associate professor of nutrition at Harvard University. “You basically destroy the structure of the food and reorganize

it -- introducing a new food matrix.”

Anyone following these issues could be forgiven for believing that original sin occurred in some food scientist’s lab, where mad scientists in the employ of heartless corporations industrially prepared concoctions perfectly designed to trip our taste buds and cause us to become addicted to potato chips like they were oxycontin, plus salt. It was not that long ago that the only way to avoid sickness and obesity was to eat only lightly washed carrots grown in our own garden.

We are told again and again that the crops grown in most of the Midwest aren’t really food at all. Nothing is more evil than corn, because it isn’t normally eaten directly from the field, Soybeans are almost as bad. Corn is the epitome of industrial, used only for producing junk food, corn syrup, and ersatz gasoline. Or as the Scientific American puts it: Only a tiny fraction of corn grown in the U.S. directly feeds the nation’s people, and much of that is from high-fructose corn syrup.”

By this accounting, grain grown for livestock feed doesn’t produce food, or at least food that any responsible person would eat. The food system that demands ingredients like corn and soybeans is by its very nature evil, because it’s complicated. We should never use arable ground to produce anything but foodstuffs that can be directly consumed with a minimum of processing.

That was how we were supposed to think about food until..... about yesterday. Now, according to a recent editorial in the New York Times, we should celebrate the discovery of a rare fungus in Yellowstone Park, which, after fermentation and processing, results in something that can substitute for hamburgers. The company developing the fungi has raised 160 million dollars.

Writing in the Wall Street Journal, Bee Wilson has discovered the glories of mushrooms, substituting them for ground beef and fooling her carnivorous 12-year-old son. She is striking a blow for the planet with this bit of harmless legermain,

quoting Mark Bittman, whose mind is made up regarding animal husbandry: “an ecological and moral mess, nearly as degrading to human souls as it is to animal life.”

Simple is out, and the more cutting edge the food science that appears on our plate, the better. Nothing is more simple than raising beef, which involves a cow, a bull, some grass, a couple of years for the resulting calf to eat the grass, and a method of processing that hasn’t changed in its essence for centuries. Talk about your Slow Food!

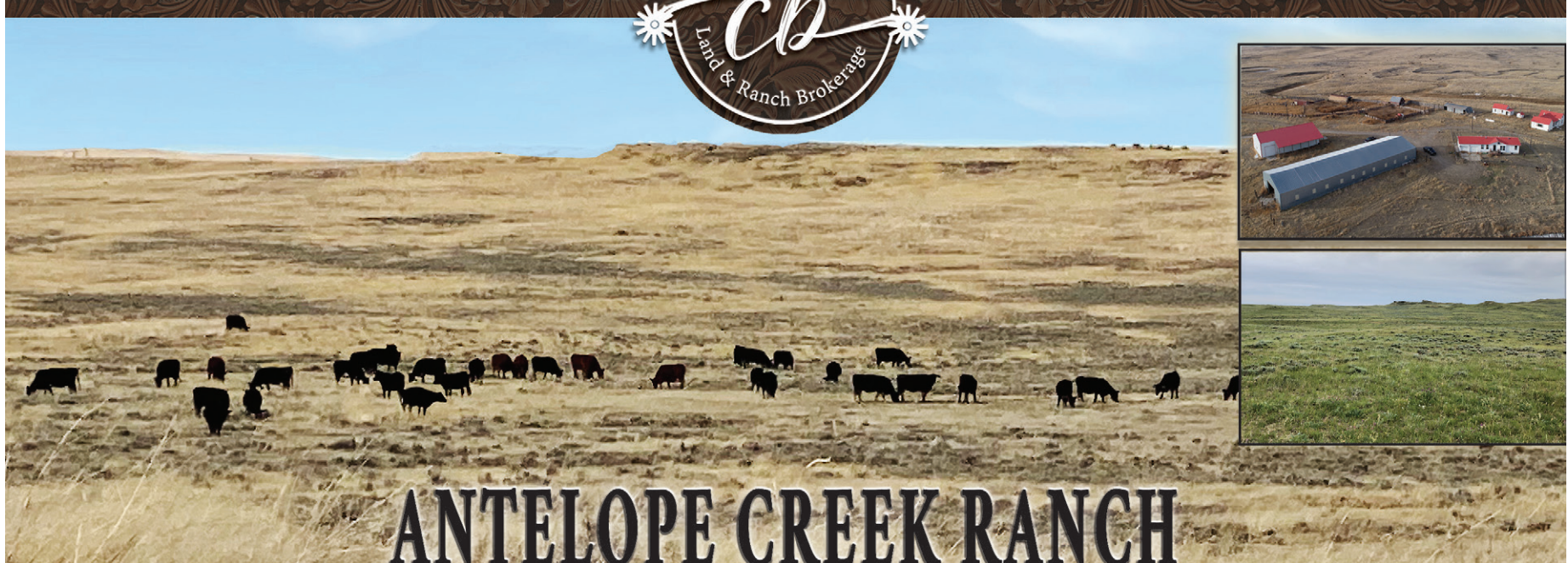
But that kind of simplicity is no longer the ideal since the consumption of beef is the cause of so much global warming and degrading of souls. Even local cows, raised on nothing but grass, are evil in a way that mankind can no longer abide, causing global warming and eventually leading to the end of the world as we know it as the Pacific ocean heads towards the middle of the country. Simplicity, tradition, and great-grandma have been tossed over the side of the fungus powered

See ‘Simple, slow food’ page 9

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Simple, slow food From page 8

lifeboat that is all that stands between us and extinction.

It is amusing to hear people who were just yesterday preaching the joys of simplicity and local now pumping for the latest startup that aims to grow a beef substitute with stem cells and giant vats in sterile laboratories. It's hilarious to think about the quandary faced by those who realize that the earliest participants in this very industrial and quite artificial meat substitute market use genetically modified ingredients. This abrupt reversal of field has passed without notice, as processed food takes its unexpected role as the solution rather than the problem. If it tastes like bacon, it must be ok.

None of this is to argue that climate change isn't a real and pressing concern, or that the consumption of meat isn't a source of carbon emissions. Farmers and agriculture scientists are quick to point out that beef production in the U.S. is responsible for only about 3.3% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, compared to well

over 50% for transportation, and that the carbon emission per unit of production of all agricultural production has decreased 24% over the past 30 years. Farmers have much work to do in learning how to produce with a smaller carbon footprint, but the good news is that many of the farming practices that sequester carbon have other environmental benefits as well.

This won't matter to food experts like Ms. Wilson, who tells us that "our current levels of meat consumption can't continue." Because, I guess, Mark Bittman says so. It has never been clear to me why meat, and particularly beef, is the bull's eye in the fight against global warming. Each of us chooses what we consume, and in what amounts. Everything we buy in a modern economy has a carbon footprint, from Facebook to private jets. We are unlikely to return to a subsistence economy. Not only that, but beef producers are more than willing to grow their animals in ways

that are responsive to consumers who are uncomfortable with intensive animal production methods.

To make matters even more complicated, intensive agricultural production is more efficient, using less of everything, including carbon. To substitute highly processed food for beef may decrease your carbon footprint, but substantially increase your consumption of every other resource. The reason U.S. cowboys are always careful to talk about the carbon footprint of U.S. beef production is that meat production in the rest of the world produces much more carbon per unit of meat production than the U.S. It's a given that critics of U.S. meat consumption will always use global figures for meat based carbon emissions, even though we import almost no meat.

I'll gladly give up any future opportunity I might have to fly on a Lear jet for beef, and goodness knows both my diet and my mental health would be improved if I spent less time and electricity on social media and more preparing a good steak. Society may need to increase the costs of carbon consumption, but individuals ought to have the freedom to decide how we deal with those increased costs. Let's leave the poor cow alone. After all, she's turning the grass and forages that we can't consume into nutritious and delicious food. And, by the way, many of those mushrooms are grown in what she leaves behind.

For more news, go to: www.agri-pulse.com.

Blake Hurst is a farmer and greenhouse grower in Northwest Missouri.



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See more from the Wyoming Beef Council annual report at wybeef.com.



SOURCE: ALLRECIPES.COM

Sloppy Joes

This is a great recipe for weeknight dinners or large gatherings.

Ingredients

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/4 cup onion, diced
- 1/2 cup green bell pepper, diced
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon prepared yellow mustard
- 3/4 cup ketchup
- 3 teaspoons brown sugar
- salt and pepper to taste
- hamburger buns or bread

Directions

- In a large skillet brown ground beef with onion and green pepper. Drain liquids
- Stir in garlic powder, mustard, ketchup, and brown sugar
- Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes
- Season with salt and pepper
- Serve on buns or bread

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Study Shows Repealing Stepped-Up Basis Would Damage the Economy

April 20, 2021--A new report released April 20 by EY finds that repealing the step-up in basis tax provision would damage the gross domestic product (GDP) and significantly decrease job creation. The study was conducted for the Family Business Estate Tax Coalition, which includes almost 60 organizations representing family-owned businesses.

The EY study found middle-class, family-owned businesses would be particularly hard hit by the repeal. Currently, when someone inherits assets, they aren't taxed on the appreciation that happened before they inherited them. If family-owned farms, small businesses or manufacturers are forced to pay capital gains accrued by the prior owner, they would likely face large tax bills that put the future of their business at risk.

According to the study's findings, repealing the step-up in basis would result in:

- 80,000 fewer jobs in each of the first ten years;

- 100,000 fewer jobs each year thereafter; and

- A \$32 reduction in workers' wages for every \$100 raised by taxing capital gains at death.

It would also reduce GDP relative to the U.S. economy in 2021, by approximately:

- \$10 billion annually;
- \$100 billion over 10 years.

"Repealing stepped-up basis is not a free lunch for those looking to generate tax revenue and would have significant consequences in the multifamily marketplace," said Doug Bibby, President of the National Multifamily Housing Council. "Absent stepped-up basis, heirs could inherit an apartment property with a small amount basis and possibly sizeable debt. If they are taxed immediately, the resulting depreciation recapture and capital gains taxes could exceed their ability to pay without selling the asset. Even if funds to pay tax are available, heirs may have little left over to invest in and maintain the property, which could negatively impact the avail-

able affordable housing stock."

"Farmers and ranchers have been able to pass their farms on to the next generation thanks to the stepped-up basis tax provision," said American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall. "The value of many farms is tied up in land and equipment and most farmers don't have large amounts of money on-hand to pay capital gains taxes. They could be forced to sell the farm or take out costly loans just to pay capital gains taxes. Eliminating the stepped-up basis isn't a tax on the rich - it's a tax on the middle class. We urge President Biden to remain true to his word that he won't increase taxes on hardworking, middle-class Americans."

Chris Netram, Vice President of

Tax & Domestic Economic Policy, National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) said, "Stepped-up basis protects family-owned manufacturers from significant tax bills when businesses are passed on to the next generation. As this report shows, repealing step-up could have a dramatic impact on small manufacturers across the country, potentially requiring families to liquidate businesses, leverage assets, or lay off employees to cover the tax hit. The NAM encourages Congress and the administration to keep in place this important policy for families across the country rather than increasing taxes on their job creating businesses."

The full report with executive summary can be found at fb.org.

WyFB comments on USFS Manual and Handbook

By Kerin Clark

"Having practical and economical requirements from the United States Forest Service (USFS) to manage grazing on their lands protects the economic viability of the farmers and ranchers who rely on the forage," wrote Ken Hamilton, Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Executive Vice President, in recent comments to the USFS. "This also helps protect the resources on both private and Forest Service lands."

WyFB submitted comments to the USFS regarding the proposed update. See 'WyFB comments on USFS Manual and Handbook' page 15

dates to the rangeland management directives in the USFS Manual and Handbook. The current directives have been in place for approximately 30 years. According to the USFS website, the rangeland management directives serve as the primary basis for the internal management and control of the rangeland management program. The website summary continues: "They are the primary source of administrative direction to Forest Service employees relative to the rangeland management program."

"We appreciate the process the

Obituary

William Richard "Bill" Vollman August 5, 1921 - April 21, 2021

A funeral service was held for William Richard "Bill" Vollman, 99, Thursday, April 29, 2021 at the Upper Ag Building on the Wyoming State Fairground in Douglas, Wyoming with Pastor Bill Williamson of the First Baptist Church officiating. Interment is in the Douglas Park Cemetery with military honor accorded by the Samuel Mares American Legion Post #8 and the United States Navy Funeral Honors.

Bill Vollman died at his home



William Richard Vollman

in Douglas on Wednesday, April 21, 2021 surrounded by his loving family. A memorial to the Wyoming Pioneer Association, P.O. Box 1545, Douglas, Wyoming 82633 would be appreciated by the family.

The Gorman Funeral Homes - Converse Chapel of Douglas, Wyoming is in charge of the arrangements.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.gormanfh.com



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Obituaries

Rozlynn Stone Pirtz

February 6, 2020 - March 28, 2021

Rozlynn Stone Pirtz, 13 months, went gently into the arms of our Lord at her grandparents' home in Fromberg, Montana, on March 28, 2021.

Graveside funeral service was held April 6 at the Hall Ranch family cemetery located about 28 miles north of Gillette off Collins Road.

Proud parents Toni Swartz and Tyler Pirtz of Gillette welcomed their perfect baby girl into their arms Feb. 6, 2020. She joined two loving brothers, Dylan and Bo Pirtz.

During her almost 14 months here she touched many lives and was loved deeply by all. Rozlynn laughed and smiled through her short time here on Earth, bringing joy and happiness to everyone she touched.

Her eyes held a spark that everyone was drawn to. Rozlynn loved to dance and sing along to music, chase the dogs and cats around and read her favorite books.

She lived a very big life. Going on brand calls with her mother, she met many wonderful people of the community and experienced all different types of animals. She loved camping in the mountains with her father and playing in the streams. Her brothers and cousins were a constant presence in her life, and she



Rozlynn Stone Pirtz

loved to follow them anywhere!

Her paternal grandparents are Mathew Pirtz of Billings, Montana, and Teresa Pirtz (Greg Le-Tourneau) of Fromberg; maternal grandparents are Troy (Mary) Swartz of Gillette and Pamela Swartz (Stephen Culmer) of Fort Myers Beach, Florida. She is eternally loved by many aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents and friends.

Memorials and condolences may be sent in care of Gillette Memorial Chapel, 210 W. Fifth St., Gillette, WY 82716.

Condolences also may be expressed at gillettememorialchapel.com.

Lyda Garland

July 7, 1936 - April 4, 2021

A Memorial service for Lyda Mae (Powers) Garland, 84, was held Friday, April 9, 2021 at Davis Funeral Home with Pastor Matt White of the Pavilion Community Methodist Church officiating. Memorials may be made to the Pavillion Community Methodist Church in care of Davis Funeral Home, 2203 West Main, Riverton, WY 82501.

Lyda passed away on the holiest of days, Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021 at home, surrounded by her family.

She was born on July 7, 1936 in Palma, Kentucky, daughter of Andrew D. and Helen E. (Coursey) Powers. Lyda grew up and attended schools there in Palma, KY.

On July 10, 1956, Lyda married Bill Garland in Paducah, KY. Soon after, the couple left Kentucky due to Bill's service in the Army. Bill and Lyda moved frequently from then on due to Bill's Corporate job. In 1975, Bill's work brought them to Wyoming, where they remained. Lyda began a career as an office manager for State Farm in Green River for 10 years, as well as, in Lander for around 12 years. When Bill and Lyda retired to Pavilion, they began building the family farm and ranch, Ring Tail R Cattle Co, LLC. Her hard work and thumb on the finances ensured its growth and success.



Lyda Garland

When Lyda was busy raising her three kids, she enjoyed crocheting, needlepoint, sewing and was an avid reader. Mrs. Garland was an active member and served as the Treasurer of the Pavillion Community Methodist Church. Lyda had a knack of turning each new house into a home. Lyda was well known for her flowers and able to grow things shouldn't grow.

Each place they lived was blessed by Lyda's personal touch. Lyda was the definitely the Matriarch of the family and her holiday family dinners were an event to attend. Family was the center of her world and she welcomed everyone into her family with open arms.

Survivors include her husband, Bill Garland of Riverton, WY; daughters, Debbie (Mark) Mosier of Sargent, NE and Laura (Jon) Walker of Lander, WY; son, Steve (Jennie Lou) Garland of Jeffrey City, WY; sister, Doris (Powers) Stanley of Moreland, GA; brother in law Reverend Gary (Nancy) Garland; grandchildren, Stephanie, Kari, Ryan, Jamie, Amanda, Jessica, Cooper, and Mattie; Plus 10 great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

On-line condolences for the family may be made at the DavisFuneralHome.com.

George Aldon Thornton

August 2, 1943 – April 7, 2021

George "Butch" Aldon Thornton Medicine Bow where they made their home before briefly living in Casper, WY and Flagstaff, AZ. Later, Butch and Linda would move to Saratoga, Wyoming where they raised their three children; Betsy, Tracey, and Matthew and he worked as a superintendent for Arch Mineral.



George Aldon Thornton

Butch was born on August 2, 1943 in Hanna, Wyoming to Aldon and Virginia (Wilkes) Thornton. He attended Wentworth Military Academy, Lander High School and graduated from Medicine Bow High School. After graduation, he attended the University of Wyoming where he played football. He married Linda Tollefson on July 13, 1963 at

Medicine Bow where they made their home before briefly living in Casper, WY and Flagstaff, AZ. Later, Butch and Linda would move to Saratoga, Wyoming where they raised their three children; Betsy, Tracey, and Matthew and he worked as a superintendent for Arch Mineral.

In 1988, Butch and Linda moved to Laramie, Wyoming where he contracted with Mountain West as an insurance agent with Farm Bureau and had a successful career spanning 22 years. Butch and Lin-

da moved to Scottsbluff, Nebraska upon retirement to be close to their children and grandchildren.

Butch was an avid outdoorsman, enjoying hunting, fishing, floating the river and camping. He was a member of the Cowboy Joe Club and took great pride in supporting and following Cowboy athletics. Most recently, you could find Butch enjoying his grandchildren's activities, participating in a family golf game or spending time playing with his canine companion, Ollie.

Butch will be loved and missed by his surviving wife, Linda; daughters, Betsy Skelcher and Tracey McMackin (Jerry); son,

Matthew Thornton (April); granddaughters, Wynne Burg and Brooke McMackin; grandsons, Alec Burg (Mickayla), Ryan McMackin, Koltan McMackin, Reece Thornton, and Nicholas Thornton; step granddaughter, Shannon Skelcher (Justin Earnshaw); great grandsons, Quinten Burg, Caspen Burg, and Brecken Weigel; sister, Virginia Gregory; brother and sister in-law Margie Groom (Stan) and Jim Tollefson (Vicky) and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; in-laws, Norman and Alyce Tollefson; sister, Vivian Tully Yenne; and son in-law, Shelldon Skelcher.

“OUTSTANDING IN THEIR FIELD”

News from the County Farm Bureau Federations



Johnson County Farm Bureau Federation awarded six scholarships

--Four continuing college students received them

Submitted by Carmen Rodriguez, Johnson County Farm Bureau Federation

Kamryn Kozisek from Kaycee who attends Chadron State College majoring in Rangeland Management. She is the daughter of Dana George and Paul Kozisek.

Marc Wodahl, son of Mr. & Mrs. Scott Wodahl from Buffalo, is majoring in Computer science at the University of Wyoming.

Masen Jensen, son of Mr. & Mrs. Cory Jensen from Buffalo, is majoring in Pre-dentistry at Black Hills State.

Ashlynn Fennema, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Jim Fennema, is ma-

joring in Elementary Education and Animal Science at Casper College.

One graduating from Buffalo High School in May received a scholarship.

Calvin Rule, son of Mr. & Mrs. Travis Rule from Buffalo. He will study Fire Science & Agriculture Business at Casper College.

One graduating from Kaycee High School in May also received a scholarship.

Mary Cleveland, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Randy Cleveland from Kaycee. She will study Dental Hygiene at Sheridan College.



Big Horn County Farm Bureau Federation Board Meeting



WyFB Young Farmer & Rancher Committee Member Kelli Hamilton visiting with board members after the Big Horn County Farm Bureau Federation Board Meeting in April. (l to r): Hamilton, Scott Brown, Keith Hamilton, and Tim Beck.

MarketIntel

For the Latest Agricultural Market Intelligence

 AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION® www.fb.org/marketintel

Market Intel, produced by the Farm Bureau economic analysis team, provides market and policy insight and analysis for our farmer and rancher members nationwide, as well as policymakers on Capitol Hill. Visit fb.org/market-intel to view the market and policy analysis and policy insight published frequently.

Here is an excerpt of a recent Market Intel article:

Elimination of Stepped-up Basis Poses Hazards to Family Farms

Potential Capital Gains Taxes Are Significantly Larger than Cash Rental Rates

April 7, 2021--Capital gains taxes are based on the change in the value of an asset, such as farmland, livestock or timber, when that asset is sold. Currently, the top capital gains tax rate is 20%. To reduce the capital gains tax, farmers and ranchers use stepped-up basis, which provides a reset for the basis during intergenerational transfers. In effect, upon the transfer of assets following a death, the basis is reset to the market value at the date of death. Following the adjustment, taxes can be levied only on gains realized by the individual during his or her ownership, not on gains realized prior to the step up in basis.

Any change in capital gains tax policy that eliminates or scales back stepped-up basis could result in a massive tax burden on the agricultural sector. The magnitude of the burden depends on the change in the asset value, but it would likely significantly exceed the annual income generated by the assets. In fact, it could take years of returns to equal the amount of the tax.

To read the rest of the article: visit fb.org/market-intel

WyFB comments on USFS Manual and Handbook

From page 12

USFS initiated for amending their grazing manual and handbook,” Hamilton wrote. “We encourage the Agency to continue to keep these documents timely and updated to account for changing rules and/or laws.”

WyFB comments encourage the USFS to utilize the Categorical Exclusion provision of NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act). “NEPA compliance has stretched the manpower resources of the USFS,” Hamilton wrote. “The Categorical Exclusion provision of NEPA will enable the agency to accomplish their NEPA requirements while providing for timely reauthorization of grazing permits.”

WyFB comments ask the USFS to work with the permittees to utilize the expertise of the livestock operator on management decisions on issues such as controlling weeds, structural rangeland improvements, and other issues. In many cases the livestock operator has a decade or more of experience on the land. “Cooperation with permittees is critical and outlining the steps the USFS will take to enhance this cooperation is very helpful in rangeland management,” Hamilton wrote.

The transfer of a ranching business from one generation to the next is an important topic in keeping the ranch economically viable. “We support efforts to provide flexibility for operators who are transitioning from one generation to another,” Hamilton wrote. “The recognition by the USFS of some of these processes can facilitate the ability for one generation to pass along the operation to another generation.”

Concern was expressed about what happens when an active allotment is moved to a vacant allotment. “This change can have the same practical consequences as closing the allotment,” Hamilton wrote. “There is inequity regarding the administrative decision to move an active allotment into a vacant allotment without any need for environmental analysis, but in order to move an allotment back to active use, environmental analysis must

be performed.”

“We suggest that moving an allotment from one level and back again should be accomplished without an environmental analysis unless there is a significant increase in livestock numbers,” he continued.

WyFB’s formal comments were 12 pages covering a myriad of subjects in the manual and handbook proposal which numbered 597 pages. “We support the USFS effort to update their manual and handbook on grazing and provide these comments to the Agency

to hopefully offer improvements to the documents,” Hamilton stated.

“WyFB represents more than 2,500 farmers and ranchers throughout Wyoming,” Hamilton concluded. “Many of our members rely on Forest Service grazing for their ranching operations.”

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Legislative review

From page 1

statutes. An important aspect was bonding. Under this new law, a bond will have to be posted to help ensure local animal control entities will not be stuck with large bills should animals be impounded for long terms. Perhaps the most important aspect of the new law is a hearing will have to

be held within 72 hours to determine if animal abuse charges will be filed.

Another highlight is the passage of a private property rights law, which restricts cities from placing deed restrictions for affordable housing as a condition of hooking up to a city's sewer system.

Lowlights

A bill establishing an Agricultural Authority did not pass. This bill would have established an authority much like the energy authority. This authority would have looked at adding value to Wyoming agricultural products by further processing these commodi-

ties. The only cost to the state would have been establishing the authority, after that the authority would be self-supporting. This topic will be further worked during the 2021 interim.

A bill which would have established run-off elections in the primary where a candidate did not receive a majority

of votes cast died. This topic will also be an interim topic.

All bills worked in the 2021 session can be viewed at <https://www.wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2021>

By in large, the 2021 session was a success. It did have a happy ending; everybody was glad it was over.

Legislative interim topics

From page 1

an emphasis on water issues.

Revenue:

The Revenue Committee will examine Medicaid expansion to determine benefits and costs to the state. This committee will look at ways to increase state revenue, including tax exemptions, energy and utility taxes, and corporate income/gross receipts taxes. This committee will also look at sales amounts needed to be classified as agricultural land for tax valuation.

Transportation:

This committee will look at issues affecting the Department of Transportation, including revenues such as fees and taxes.

Select Water:

This committee will look at construction and planning projects for the next year. This committee will also look at whether the Water Development Commission appointments need to be split by party affiliation. This committee will also examine orphan water rights issues.

Corporations:

This committee will deal with legislative redistricting, which is done every ten years. This committee will consider topics dealing with elections, including if run-offs are needed for primary elections.



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