

LOCAL BRIEFS

Corrections

POLICY: If there is a mistake in a previous paper, it is the Laramie Boomerang's policy to run a correction. If you find an error, call Joel Funk at 755-3328 or email news@laramieboomerang.com by 4 p.m. and the correction will appear on the next publication date.

Small Business Saturday dedicated to local business

Laramie is invited to shop small this Saturday in support of the small "mom and pop" shops that make the community unique.

More than 60 local businesses and a dozen pop-up vendors are offering promotions from 9 a.m.-7 p.m. to encourage shopping local this holiday season.

Shoppers can find a shopping guide and free breakfast from 9 a.m.-noon Saturday at First Interstate Bank and enjoy free wagon rides from the First Street Plaza from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Be sure to stop by the pop-up shop at 412 S. Second St. to shop with local vendors selling coffee, crafts and clothing. Customers can also pick up additional bags and visit with event coordinators at this location.

Small Business Saturday is hosted by Laramie Main Street, the Laramie Chamber Business Alliance, Hits106 and the Wyoming Small Business Development Center and is expected to be the biggest shopping day of the year for locally owned businesses. For a list of promotions, go to www.shopsmallaramie.com. For more information, contact Trey Sherwood at downtownlaramie@gmail.com or 760-3355.

Wreaths Across American deadline coming up Monday

This year's Wreaths Across America ordering deadline is Monday. The Jacques Laramie Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution and the Laramie Valley Civil Air Patrol Composite Squadron have joined together with Wreaths Across America to raise money and order and place wreaths on veterans graves at Laramie's Greenhill Cemetery. A ceremony will be hosted at 11 a.m. Dec. 15 at the cemetery, followed by the placement of wreaths.

Wreaths Across America began in 1992, when Worcester Wreath was left with a surplus of wreaths at the end of the holiday season. Arrangements were made for the wreaths to be placed at Arlington National Cemetery. From this beginning, the project has grown and now more than 1,000,000 wreaths are placed at more than 1200 locations nationwide. Wreaths cost \$15, and you can order online by going to www.wreathscrossamerica.org, and selecting Greenhill Cemetery in Laramie and the fundraising partner you wish to support (DAR or CAP). You can also learn more about Wreaths Across America and their motto of Remember, Honor Teach. To find out more about ordering wreaths or volunteering for local efforts, email waa-dar@charter.net.

County office to close for Thanksgiving

All Albany County offices will be closed today-Friday in observation of Thanksgiving Day. Regular work hours will resume Monday.

Community Thanksgiving Dinner planned for today

The 21st annual Community Thanksgiving dinner is slated for 11 a.m.-1 p.m. today at the Eppson Center for Seniors, 1560 N. Third St. The meal is open to community members or all ages to enjoy a meal together.

Donations for next year's feast will be accepted, but they are not required. Make check payable to Thanksgiving Community Dinner.

Call Janice at 399-1269 for a home-delivered meal or more information.

St. Matthew's to offer Thanksgiving Day service

The public is invited to join St. Matthew's Episcopal Cathedral for a Thanksgiving Service of Holy Communion at 10 a.m. today at the church, 104 S. Fourth St.

Call 742-6608, email stmattsdan@gmail.com or go to www.stmatthews.diow.org for more information.

Vedauwoo Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary Christmas Tree Sale starts Friday

Christmas trees and wreaths will be sold again this year by the Vedauwoo Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary. All proceeds benefit the auxiliary and its efforts to support fire and emergency services in the Vedauwoo/Buford areas. Concolor fir trees ranging in height from 6-10 feet are available for \$49-\$89. Fraser fir wreaths in 22-inch and 28-inch diameter are available from \$27-\$42.

The tree sale starts Friday and runs until items sold out at the southwest corner of Snowy Range Road and Colorado Avenue. Saturday and Sunday hours are from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Wednesdays-Fridays are from 1-6 p.m. Donations to VVFDA are accepted and are tax deductible. Email treasurer.vvfa@gmail.com for more information.

How to submit to Local Briefs

If you have a Local Brief you'd like to submit, send it to news@laramieboomerang.com, bring it to the office at 320 Grand Ave. or fax it to 721-2973. Include who, what, when, where, why and how in the brief, as well as the cost and where to go for more information, if applicable. Word limit for briefs is 125 words. Submitting information for briefs does not preclude us from possibly writing a story on it. All submissions will be edited for grammar, style, spelling, libel and length. The deadline is 4 p.m. for the next day's publication. Contact Joel Funk at 755-3328 or jfunk@laramieboomerang.com for more information.

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COMMUNITY

'There's a lot of need in town'



COURTESY PHOTO

Volunteers with LASSO Events gather during Freedom Has A Birthday on July 4. The new organization aims to connect volunteers with groups that need help.

New group aims to connect volunteers with service

By EVE NEWMAN
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When Laramie Main Street Alliance needed volunteers last summer to collect trash after the Downtown Farmer's Market, a new organization called LASSO Events stepped in to help.

When Whitewater Christian Church needs extra hands to help a Laramie resident with a move, its leaders call LASSO Events.

When Interfaith-Good Samaritan needed assistance with a canned food drive earlier this month, executive director Mike Vercauteren also called LASSO Events.

One of Laramie's newest non-profits has been one of its busiest during the last few months as it connects organizations that rely on volunteer help with groups of volunteers looking for work to do.

LASSO Events was started by Tim Snowbarger, a transplanted Denverite who moved to Laramie in February. Snowbarger is hoping to eventually start a church affiliated with the Church of the Nazarene denomination, but in the meantime he's keeping busy with a different mission.

Soon after he moved to town and began getting to know Laramie's civic landscape, he saw a way to streamline the process of connecting volunteers with non-profits that need help.

"It became evident that there were a lot of organizations in town that could use additional help that a lot of people didn't know about," he said. "Or, there are a lot of organizations that have hours to give and don't always know where to go."

Snowbarger works with a trio of University of Wyoming students to connect with non-profits, government entities and businesses that can use volunteer help, to find out what their needs are.

Then, they find organizations that want to serve. A website includes a calendar of upcoming opportunities, and LASSO has a roster of about 20 student groups, businesses, families, UW club sports teams, Greek organizations and churches that it turns to.

Grant money allowed LASSO to purchase a resource trailer, which is



AT A GLANCE

LASSO Events is a new non-profit organization that aims to connect volunteers with groups that need assistance. For more information, go to www.lassoevents.com.

filled with tools such as rakes and shovels, as well as equipment for hosting events, like tables, chairs and a grill.

"LASSO itself doesn't have its own community projects, nor does it have its own set of people looking to be involved," Snowbarger said. "It's the middleman to get the groups talking and working together."

Earlier in November, Snowbarger heard from Interfaith-Good Samaritan that it would need extra hands for a canned food drive, which it was conducting in advance of its Thanksgiving food basket distribution. LASSO then put out a call to round up help.

"When there's a need, he's like a magnet," said Interfaith executive director Mike Vercauteren. "He's one of our go-to people here at Interfaith."

Vercauteren said LASSO has been especially helpful when the organization needs to haul heavy objects, whether that's a donated freezer or 175 frozen turkeys.

"It all comes from the heart, pure as gold," Vercauteren said.

Trey Sherwood, executive director of Laramie Main Street Alliance, said her organization often needs big groups of people to help with one-time needs.

"Tim has been really great about checking us out, figuring out what Main Street is about and needs, and then rallying volunteers and community members to assist us with

everything from trash removal at the Farmer's Market to feeding students during the Big Event," she said. "He's game to do it all."

Sherwood said LASSO even helped a new downtown restaurant with cleaning in advance of its grand opening.

"It's awesome," she said. "I would encourage other people who need assistance to reach out and introduce themselves to Tim and take advantage of his services."

Craig Johnson, associate pastor of Whitewater Christian Church, said the church has collaborated with LASSO to the benefit of both organizations.

"Tim's organization exists for the purpose of assisting and meeting real needs in the community, which is a similar perspective as our church," Johnson said. "We together pool our resources to accomplish whatever needs to get done in town."

Johnson said LASSO volunteers are willing to do all kinds of work. For example, the group has helped Whitewater with household moves, assisting low-income residents or single parents who need help with heavy lifting.

"The need in our community for volunteers to serve is pretty much inexhaustible, and yet with LASSO Events coming to town, we've got a whole group of folks who are committed to meeting those needs," Johnson said.

Snowbarger said he's hoping to open the new church in 2019, and he doesn't hide the faith-based foundation that motivates LASSO. Jesus modeled service done out of love for one's community, he said.

"Our intent is to lead with service," he said. "I'd rather people encounter the gospel through actions."

At the same time, LASSO will remain its own entity with a specific focus.

"There's a lot of need in town, and it doesn't take much to help meet those needs," he said.

Snowbarger said he'd love to partner with businesses that could provide meals for volunteers. He's also hoping to enlist more partners that need volunteer help.

Johnson encouraged anyone with a need for help or an itch to serve to check out LASSO.

"That's what they live for," he said.

Listening to memories

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