

## Dwayne Sells

Three months have passed since an incident at the Outlaw Saloon left Cheyenne ABATE president Dwayne Sells dead from injuries suffered in an altercation with two other patrons.

The Cheyenne Herald has become the newspaper of record on this unfortunate tragedy and will attempt to inform its readers of the current legal situation - until either criminal charges are brought or a decision is made not to do so.

Until that outcome is known, friends and supporters of Dwayne Sells need to continue to demonstrate a patience they thought would not be required.

When asked the status of the case by the Cheyenne Herald, Laramie County District Attorney Jon Forwood told the Herald that the investigation nears completion - by both the police department and his office - and that he has asked the coroner to convene a coroner's inquest.

Specific provisions for a coroner's inquest are spelled out in W.S. § 7-4-201.

Briefly: An inquest is part of a coroner's investigation which can be used to determine cause of death. The coroner has the authority to require three citizens of the county to act as jurors. These three citizens will act as jurors and are sworn to perform a duty of determining "the time and date of death, and by what means and manner the death ... was caused, according to your knowledge and the evidence given ..." and he (the coroner) can compel witnesses to testify under oath. He can issue subpoenas and compel witnesses to attend. He can force attendance and punish for contempt. The county pays all authorized costs, including jurors, witness expenses, a court reporter, etc.

After hearing testimony and making necessary inquiries, "the jurors shall return to the coroner their signed inquisition stating the name of the person and when, how and by what means, if known, he came to his death." (W.S. § 7-4-205.)

The coroner shall "return to the district court the inquisition, the written evidence and a list of witnesses providing material testimony." (W.S. § 7-4-207.)

The Cheyenne Herald has been assured by a knowledgeable source that the police department is making (or have made) a thorough and complete investigation into the circumstances and nature of the incident that night of April 22-23, 2005.

Jon Forwood has told the Herald that he expected action would commence on the coroner's inquest by approximately August 10th. How long an inquest may take is uncertain and would be determined by number of witnesses, etc.

The only evidence of official indifference in this matter is the unwillingness to interview the person with Sells that night. More will be reported in the next Cheyenne Herald, August 15, 2005.

(More on page 8)

## "Less clutter!"

Radio stations, maybe just those owned by Clear Channel Communications here and in the Colorado markets, have taken to making on-air claims that they are deliberately airing fewer commercials so as to provide their audiences with more music. Sure. And pigs fly.

"Less clutter," they brag.

Do they really think listeners are dumb enough to believe that the number of commercials is dictated by anyone other than the Federal Trade Commission? Do they think listeners, whatever the music format, don't know that the only other reason to limit commercials is they can't sell more?

Newspapers, to get a cheaper postage rate for the subscriptions they mail to customers, are limited to about two-thirds advertising, one-third news content. Papers, like radio and television, only limit their advertising where they are required to - not because they want to treat their customers to more words, entertainment or tunes.

Subscriptions for the Cheyenne Herald are mailed first-class mail so this paper could be cover to cover advertising - if we had time to solicit and sell that much.

We don't - and can't - but would never insult readers intelligence by claiming to them that the reason we limit our advertising is we want "less clutter." Clutter, in that vernacular, is what makes the world go round. What pays the bills.

So, what these stations need to do is start telling listeners that advertising sales is soft and that softness provides more time to play songs or talk. It's not a favor to listeners - it's reality.

## Peter Knieval

Wednesday, July 20th, a couple hundred people in attendance at the Cheyenne Civic Center were witnesses to the greatest anticipation met with the greatest disappointment since Evel Knieval hoodwinked the nation with his rocket launch attempt to clear the Snake River Canyon in Idaho.

Expecting to see presentations on both sides of the dispute about whether Cheyenne Frontier Days exercises sexual discrimination in its practice to have only men chair committees and whether the City of Cheyenne would be exposed to legal claims if one were brought against CFD for that behavior.

Actually, the charge is that they will not allow a woman to chair a committee - not that only men can.

It is a distinction without a difference.

The position of the Cheyenne Herald has been stated previously: While it seems an opportunistic opening to come down in favor of equal rights for women, we have said that until a victim surfaces, there is really no side to take. Common sense may suggest that any group that does not, after 108 years in existence, choose to spread the wealth among all ethnicities, religions and the two sexes, may be guilty of a little more than bad judgment.

Those expecting to see the fireworks which would attach itself to the emotional arguments on both sides of this inflammatory accusation - that CFD has practiced sexual discrimination - were to be greatly disappointed.

In spite of the local television station telling its 10 pm audience that the Civic Center was packed, then showing only a small

crowd in attention, turnout was not small. Small from the standpoint that a bit of grandstanding took place by moving the meeting from the city council chambers to the much larger Civic Center but even 200 in attendance is a very large crowd for such an event. But not in the cavernous Civic Center.

It was obvious that the City had asked, encouraged, or cajoled, employees to be there to show support for CFD. Department heads and employees were there.

*The Herald seldom attends this type of meeting (but did this one briefly) because they are nonproductive uses of time and this one proved no exception.*

Patrick Collins, president of the city council, welcomed people (they did not even recite the Pledge of Allegiance for some reason), and immediately announced that the sponsor of the planned resolution, Pete Laybourn, had sent him a letter earlier that same day, saying that the resolution would be withdrawn after discussion.

It became a non-issue less than one minute into the meeting. Pete, like a defeated wrestler, had tapped out. The Herald tape recorder was turned off. Adios.

One of the last things heard - other than audience members asking each other why they were there - was an invitation extended to attendees to speak on the issue and then Patrick seeking out Ken McCann, the general chairman of CFD, to speak first. Usually, the prosecution speaks first, then the defense follows. But, this was a staged event and the script called for CFD to draw first blood. Without sitting through however long it took to decide that nothing would be done, this jump was also aborted. Snake River.

## Readers of the Cheyenne Herald

The Cheyenne Herald has spent three and a half years establishing itself, as described by the Wyoming Tribune-Eagle, as "the local advocacy journal."

We have established our credibility, our readership, our standing as an optional source of information, our investigative abilities, and our accuracy in reporting on local issues and controversies.

We ask readers, devotees and supporters of the Cheyenne Herald to help insure our future. We have set an ongoing goal for new subscribers each month and for the level of new financial support. Your role is an important one. We will keep doing what we've done for the past forty-two months. But we do need to forge a financial partnership with our readers. Please consider one of the following levels of support. Thank you.

*/s/ Dave Featherly, Publisher/Editor*

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# The Laramie County Fair

Since its beginning in 1923, the Laramie County Fair has survived in the shadow of Cheyenne Frontier Days. For several years, the Fair was held in Burns or Pine Bluffs, but Cheyenne has been its home since the 1940s. For the time being, the Fair shares the grounds with CFD. That will change in the near future as the County Fair will relocate to the new Archer property, east of the city, sometime in the next 4-5 years.

Now held for eight days, beginning the Saturday after the conclusion of Frontier Days, the Fair offers opportunities for the youth of Laramie County to participate in a variety of events.

The Fair also offers a family-like atmosphere in which parents and children can attend for the purpose of enjoyment and socializing.

A poster, prepared by the Fair Board and Staff, and put up around Laramie County, best describes what goes on at the Fair:

- Livestock Shows**
- WRCA Ranch Rodeo**
- Mountain States Jr. Kids Rodeo**
- Guinea Pig Show**
- Needlework**
- Floriculture**
- Culinary**
- Crafts**
- Artwork**
- Photography**
- "Lovable Mutt" Contest**
- Fruit Pie / Chocolate Cake Contest**
- Fashion Review**
- Livestock Sale**
- Mutton Bustin'**
- and, the Bellamy Brothers Concert, which is FREE, FREE, FREE!!**

There is little likelihood that profanity will make it uncomfortable for husbands, fathers and grandfathers to take their families to the park. And there is even less likelihood that intoxication will enter into the behavior of anyone attending because there are no beer sales allowed on the grounds.

Family, family, family.

That is the message the County Fair folks want to impart. There is something for everybody and attendance can be educational, information, entertaining, humorous, enlightening, rewarding and enjoyable. And it encourages our youth.

There is no charge for parking. There is no charge for admission. Refreshments and snacks are available on the grounds. Those you do have to pay for.

This year, the Fair Board has extended their effort to "give back" to county residents for support, via taxes, of the Fair. A music concert by a nationally-known duo will be held on Monday night, August 8th, at 7 pm - in the same place night shows are being held during Frontier Days.

The Bellamy Brothers concert is free but does require a ticket which can be picked up at various businesses (or the Fair office) in the county.

City slickers as well as the county kids participate in the Fair. Raising animals in the city limits isn't possible, but the many other events like cooking, growing, sewing, pinning, shooting (photography), drawing, painting, etc., can be done in town as well as in the country.

And townies can try to hold onto the neck of a running sheep just like their friends and relatives from Albin, Carpenter, Hillsdale, Burns, Egbert and Pine Bluffs.

like the children's home in Torrington, etc.

Like all activities at the County Fair, there is no fee for toddlers to drive and enter the drawing. A car will be given away daily.

Other categories, like crafts, culinary and photography, have open age limits. 4H starts at eight years until high school graduation or 18. FFA (Future Farmers of America) ages begin in 7th grade and continue into college.

Livestock entries are mostly for 4H and FFA members - except there is an open class in sheep showing.

Awards to winners can include ribbons, plaques, denim jackets, and cash.

For the past five years, the Laramie County Fair has had 11,000 to 13,000 entries. The same person can enter multiple times but the Fair seems to be holding its own in terms of entries.

Once again, there is no fee to enter.

Judges are hired in all categories and are not allowed to judge in areas where they have an interest - children entered, etc. In the interest of fairness, judges from Wheatland, Torrington, and other nearby cities, who have experience and a reputation for fairness are hired by the Laramie County Fair.

A number of local businesses and individuals buy the livestock from the young producers - sometimes donating the animal to a charity or worthy cause like Meals on Wheels. Every year has seen an increase in the money taken in from the sale of these animals.

None of the proceeds from the livestock sale is taken by the Fair, it all goes to the kids who raised the animals.

All of the revenue provided to the Laramie County Fair comes from a half mill property tax. Again, there are no parking fees, no admission fees, no fees to wander around the grounds and observe.

There is room for 30 booths in the exhibition hall. There is no booth rental charge - it is on a first-come, first-serve basis. If the vendor sells products, they must have insurance to protect the Fair.

Public attendance is growing and publicity for the event will help it grow further. Frontier Park is a place to be after Frontier Days to see what free now means.

## add ... Dwayne Sells

After the Cheyenne Herald had inquired of Laramie County District Attorney Jon Forwood as to the status of the Sells' case, the daily newspapers in Cheyenne and Casper both were also provided with the announcement that a coroner's inquest would be convened.

The purpose of this inquiry is to ascertain answers, as described elsewhere in this Herald. But both dailies had conclusions stated by an officer of the Cheyenne police department. It doesn't seem that it could do the case any good for one (not an investigator) officer to offer his opinions as to what happened. But he has.

Once again, the Cheyenne Herald made telephone contact (July 23rd) with the single witness that accompanied Dwayne Sells to the Outlaw Saloon that night. As told before, he now lives in Tennessee.

It is mind-boggling to this paper that no police investigator has even attempted to take his formal statement. Wanting to have his side of the incident on record, the young man called the Cheyenne PD investigator handling the case - at least in part. It was the same officer who he said told him the following day that such an event should have been expected for someone "out on a Friday night." He called from Tennessee. On his nickel. The officer asked, "what do you want?" he told the Herald. His (the officer's) abruptness, rudeness and indifference resulted in the young man hanging up. He is of the opinion that the Cheyenne PD does not want to hear what he has to say. He knew about the coroner's inquest and is prepared to return to Cheyenne to testify. The investigation is not complete without his statement. When will it be taken?

## Zen's Bistro

It is educational just to ask questions about what happens at this county fair and get them answered.

The goal is to get kids who live in Laramie County - city and county - involved in some aspect of the Fair.

This year, 14 pedal cars will be acquired and a road course will be set up for toddlers two to four years of age. After completion of the drive, each child will be given a "license" and they will be entered into a drawing for a dozen of the cars which will be given away. The other two will go to deserving places -

**BACK-TO-SCHOOL**

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