



# Caribou County

Soda Springs, Caribou County, Idaho 83276

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Thursday, February 18, 2010



WELCOME SNOW Saturday gave residents a couple of inches of snow to remove by shovel, snowblower, or plow.



THREE DEER gave the residents of Spring Creek Manor an entertaining morning they bedded down under the Russian olive trees behind the manor.

## Lava Fire Station Plans Ribbon Cutting for Solar Energy System

Community leaders, emergency volunteers, citizens, and Rocky Mountain Power will gather at the Lava Hot Springs Fire Station on Thursday, Feb. 18, at 10 a.m. for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to commemorate the installation of a new solar energy system. The system is a first for the Lava Hot Springs community and it will provide renewable energy to help power the town's fire station.

For years the approximately 1,000 residents of the Lava Hot Springs area have enjoyed the peace of mind that comes from the quick response of the town's 16 volunteer firefighters and 13 volunteer emergency medical technicians. Now the community will enjoy bottom-line benefits by harnessing the sun's energy using two high-efficiency solar modules installed at the fire station.

"We wanted a system that could not only provide cost benefits to the city, but one that could be monitored and serve as an educational tool for Lava Hot Springs residents, other

communities, and Idaho State University," explained Mayor Marshall Burgin.

The solar project is estimated to generate about 2,920 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year. The installation of the solar panels is the culmination of a project funded jointly by the city of Lava Hot Springs and Rocky Mountain Power's Blue Sky renewable energy program.

Blue Sky provides an easy way for Rocky Mountain Power's residential and business customers to support renewable energy in the region and in local communities. Rocky Mountain Power's Blue Sky renewable energy is sold in 100 kilowatt-hour block increments for as little as \$1.95 per month. About 31,700 Rocky Mountain Power customers in Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming currently buy Blue Sky renewable energy.

"It's so gratifying when a community like Lava Hot Springs and our Blue Sky customers can come together to help make a local renew-

able energy project like this possible and benefit the environment," Glen Pond, customer and community manager for Rocky Mountain Power said.

"This solar-powered fire station is the type of tangible, renewable power project that our customers who participate in the Blue Sky program want to support. More than three percent of our customers in Lava Hot Springs currently buy Blue Sky renewable energy, well above the average participation rate in Idaho."

The firehouse's 2.58-kilowatt solar photovoltaic system was designed by Keller Associates of Pocatello. The solar modules and a bi-directional meter were installed by Creative Energies, LLC of Lander, WY. The system is connected to the power grid through a net metering agreement with Rocky Mountain Power, allowing the fire station to lower its annual electric bill and receive credit for any excess power produced.

## Some \$200,000 in Restitution Ordered

## Former City Clerk on 14 Years Probation

A former Bancroft City Clerk was sentenced Friday to 14 years probation and ordered to pay at least \$1,200 a month in restitution to the City of Bancroft, or risk serving up to 10 years in prison.

District Judge Mitchell Brown handed down the sentence to JoEll Thompson at a sentencing hearing Friday at the Caribou County Courthouse. She previously pled guilty to one count of grand theft embezzlement, related to her job as city clerk in Bancroft.

Defense attorney Ron Tyler Bird reviewed the oral plea agreement reached before the sentencing in which Thompson agreed to plead guilty to one count of grand theft and the second count would be dismissed.

She would also agree to pay full restitution for diverting public funds from the city into a business she was involved with. The county prosecu-

wanted an aggressive repayment schedule for restitution.

The city's insurance carrier has paid the city \$118,000 and will be expected to be paid under restitution.

"There needs to be a substantial message sent and accountability and need to honor that trust and act with lives of integrity," he told the court.

He also asked for interest for the city. "I have every belief the money was taken from the city and put into the business and would ask for interest."

Haney suggested four to five years prison sentence fixed, with another two to four years indeterminate to be underlying the probation in case those probation terms and restitution were not met. Fourteen years is the maximum for the felony.

"I met with the city council and mayor. They want the money to be paid back first and foremost and

saying your interest

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