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Cheney plans to vote in favor of replacing health care law

CHEYENNE (AP) — U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney said she supports the Republican-sponsored health care bill because it would give flexibility to states and individuals that would make insurance more affordable for consumers.

“The overall process is one that I feel very good about,” Cheney said. “I think it does exactly what we need to do in terms of replacing Obamacare with a system that really puts people back in charge.”
 The bill, which would repeal major parts

of President Barack Obama’s health law, is scheduled for a Thursday vote in the House.

Cheney, a Republican serving her first-term in Congress, said she likes the plan allowing states to convert Medicaid pay-

ments into block grants.

The block grant would allow Wyoming the flexibility to distribute funding as it sees fit, she said.

SEE HEALTH CARE, PAGE 8

SCSD2 uses incentives to boost attendance

BY MIKE DUNN
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SHERIDAN — While it may seem like a simple concept, making sure students show up to class can be challenging for local schools.

Sheridan County School District 2 schools have started a cultural shift in maintaining attendance — providing incentives for students instead of only punitive measures to minimize excessive absences.

Through a program called Next Level, the district has enhanced its efforts in recent years to increase graduation rates, attendance and overall student success. Since the program launched, school officials have been encouraged to develop ways to reduce chronic absences.

Kevin Charlson, a counselor at Woodland Park Elementary School, along with principal Paige Sanders, said they developed a culture in which students value coming to school by changing the way students view attendance. The shift included implementing awards, competition and games. So far, they said, the shift has worked.

In February of the 2015-16 school year, 20.1 percent of the student population had seven or more absences; 6.5 percent had 10 or more and 3.9 percent of students had 12 or more absences.

This school year, officials said the numbers for February dropped to 16.7, 4.1 and 1.7 percent of the student population, respectively.

“It’s absolutely working,”



First-grader Alexis Evans puts a letter up for the attendance word “Wranglers” Wednesday at Woodland Park Elementary School. The school has an incentive system for encouraging student attendance. Every classroom puts up a new letter each morning when there is perfect attendance. Once the class completes the word, its students receive a prize.

JUSTIN SHEELY | THE SHERIDAN PRESS

Charlson said.

School officials began the process by educating students and parents about the importance of coming to school and then implemented various strategies to keep school attendance a priority

for students.

At Woodland Park, every class has a purple laminated logo of a Wrangler (the school’s mascot) in the room, and every day that every student in that class is in attendance, the class earns a let-

ter. Once a classroom spells out the word “Wrangler,” the class earns a reward.

Grade levels also compete against each other.

SEE ATTENDANCE, PAGE 2

Firefighter union seeking adequate pay for extra duties

BY ASHLEIGH FOX
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SHERIDAN — Sheridan Fire-Rescue employs one chief, three captains and 12 firefighters. Back in 2013, two additional positions existed — fire marshal and division chief.

The civil service commission and the city chose to leave the positions vacant, and five years later, International Association of Fire Fighters Local 276 has asked the city to help the employees picking up extra duties.

“Our position is that we can bargain for wages, benefits and working conditions,” said George Neeson, the IAFF Local 276 president. “When the working conditions change, like added duties, we can come in and bargain for added wages for those duties or the removal of other duties to change the working conditions.”

The fire marshal position served as a division-level chief officer, covering prevention duties including code

enforcement and public education. The division chief controlled operations, trainings and state certifications, oversaw the safety committee and took care of medical equipment.

The union cannot bargain to have the positions rehired, so it is asking for increased wages for those picking up duties once covered by the fire marshal and division chief.

“No. 1, I don’t see us agreeing on a set amount and No. 2, I don’t see us agreeing to give it to the firefighters if we can’t give it to everyone that’s a city employee that deserves it,” Councilman Thayer Shafer said Monday about the wage increases.

The Sheridan Police Department, which also works with a civil service commission for its hiring process, created the corporal position when Rich Adriaens came on as SPD’s chief. Those positions helped add promotion opportunities for the department.

SEE MARSHAL, PAGE 3



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Demo Day at SC

Welding students, from left, Ethan Hines and Jaden Paddock perform a shielded metal arc weld on a pipe during the Industrial Technology Programs Demo Day Wednesday in the Technical Center at Sheridan College.

eZe 5 finalists named in Start-Up Challenge

FROM STAFF REPORTS

SHERIDAN — Then there were five.

Sheridan’s Wyoming Technology Business Center director John Dick announced the finalists for the WTBC’s Sheridan Start-up Challenge Wednesday.

Dick said nearly 70 submissions were received for the challenge that gives entrepreneurs an opportunity to access seed money and work with mentors.

SEE BUSINESS, PAGE 8

A tale of starting up to scaling up

FROM STAFF REPORTS

SHERIDAN — Imagine starting a technology company. To start, it’s just four guys working out of basement in Colorado. Then, something happens, and seven years later you employ approximately 230 people across the globe.

For Travis Todd, co-founder of software-as-a-service company FullContact, that plot line didn’t come from a movie. It really happened.

Clients of Denver-based FullContact include the NFL, Fossil and Southwest Airlines.

SEE SCALE, PAGE 8



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OPINION	4	SPORTS	B1
PEOPLE	5	COMICS	B4
PAGE SIX	6	CLASSIFIEDS	B5
ALMANAC	7	HOME & GARDEN	B8



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