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TETON VALLEY'S LOCAL NEWS SOURCE



Mamas, don't let your babies grow up to be cowboys. But if they are cowboys, you'd better hope they are heroes like Dave Ellis. Together with a handful of other cowboys and girls, Ellis was instrumental in the rescue of a litter of Great Pyrenees pups that would most likely have perished as their mama tended to a herd of sheep miles away. Many of these pups might be available for adoption by as early as next week.

Some schools slip on state report card

While other public schools improve
By Jeannette Boner

Teton School District saw some bright spots on their annual state report card this year, while some of the local public schools slid in their ratings from year over year. Although none of the six public schools in the district scored a five star rating this year, two schools, Teton High School and Teton Elementary School earned four-star ratings up from a three star rating last year. Victor Elementary School, who earned a five star rating last year, fell to a three star rating this year, while the Teton Middle School earned a three star rating again and Rendezvous Upper Elementary School and Driggs Elementary Schools remained steady at a two-star rating. "It can be frustrating rating an entire school based on one test given on one day of the year," said Superintendent Monte Woolstenhulme. "The data is important, but it's not the only measure of how well a school is doing." Woolstenhulme said principals and administrators will be reporting the state findings to school board members over the next few months and looking for ways to improve test scores. But in the meantime, Woolstenhulme added, Teton School District continues to make every effort to support each student in the public school system. This, he said, also translates to the greater community who vote for tax levies that tend support directly to classrooms. "This is important information," he said of the state report, "but there are a lot of pieces about the culture and the climate in a school that goes into teaching. These scores are an open invitation for the public to come and see first hand what's going on inside our schools." In its second year, the new accountability system, known as Idaho's Five-Star Rating System, is in response to the state moving away from the restrictions of the federal No Child Left Behind law. Under the Five-Star Rating System, the state uses multiple measures, including

Schools continued on A15

Community art
Jackson will host one of its biggest weekends for art, but Teton Valley may be a hidden gem in the art world.
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Planner debut
The City of Victor is excited to welcome a new face to the neighborhood as well as to the city staff.
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Lucky litter
A pretty ordinary Wyoming cattle drive ended up with the discovery of Great Pyrenees pups that lived in a root wad for weeks.
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Fire
The little slice of Teton Valley that's in Wyoming will get fire protection from Idaho, but EMS contracts with Wyoming have raised a few questions.
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Citizen photo/Hope Strong

Susan and Jay Kment were denied access to Yellowstone National Park last week, so they ran a local 50-mile race together, pretty much on a whim.

The accidental ultra runner

A vacation spoiled by park closure ends in victory

By Hope Strong

After running the Jackson Hole Marathon last fall, Jay and Susan Kment did some sightseeing in the region. They enjoyed great offseason rates at the Teton Valley Cabins east of Driggs, but they were a little frustrated with smoke from area fires.

They vowed to return this year, and a trip to Yellowstone was booked six months ago.

But due to the government shutdown, the couple from eastern Nebraska didn't relax in Old Faithful Lodge, people-watching and socializing with other travelers. Instead, they ran 50 miles from Mesa Falls to Driggs. Susan served as crew for her husband, and Jay won the men's division.

"We'd been to Yellowstone before, but that's not the point," Jay Kment said this week. "Before we even got here, I knew the national parks were going to close. I called senators and congressmen, the governor of Wyoming and Nebraska. Not that it mattered; a little voice like us, they don't care."

Wanting to enjoy the crisp fall weather in the Rocky Mountains, the Kments trekked across two states and nestled into the Teton Valley Cabins again this year. They stopped by the Teton Basin Ranger District office to pick up maps and get information about local hikes, but they found it shuttered as well.

Both avid runners, the Kments got wind of a local race hosted by Dreamchasers, the YT100. Though 100 miles seemed a little excessive, Susan told her husband he'd always regret it if he didn't give the 50-mile race a shot.

"I could run a marathon a week if I could afford it," Jay Kment said. "But if I'd driven this course before I ran it, I'd have probably chicken out."

"It didn't matter," his wife added. "Yellowstone was closed anyway."

Without the option of staying in any of the national parks, the Kments commenced to register the day before the 50-mile race. Susan would provide support for her husband, and he'd run the longest race of his life on a whim.

"I'd run a 50K before, but that's only 32 miles," Kment said. "And running a race in the Bohemian Alps of Nebraska is nothing compared to the hills on this local course. It's so much harder here."

Susan packed Gatorade, muffins,

apples, chocolate and other snacks packed with calories for her husband's run. They awoke early Saturday morning and headed out to Mesa Falls where the starting line marked the beginning of the 50-mile race. Crewing for her husband, Susan drove ahead on the course and set up at the aid stations providing support.

"I visited with the nicest people along the way," she said. "It was a really great experience."

What the Kments missed out on by not being able to lounge at Old Faithful Inn with other travelers, they gained tenfold by being a part of this endurance race with other ultra runners and their

"We had wanted to go to Yellowstone, but there's nothing wrong with Driggs. We could even move here."

Susan Kment

support teams. In different ways, Jay and Susan saw the countryside just outside the southwestern boundary of Yellowstone. They didn't see any bears, though some were reported along the route. And then Jay took second overall and first in the men's division with a time of nine hours and one minute.

"Jay Batchen gave me a tip before the race," Kment said. "He suggested I walk the hills, and that made all the difference."

Throughout the race, Jay was somewhat of a novelty; he was the guy that signed up to run the day before, not knowing or training for it beforehand. He finished his race, showered, went to Tony's Pizza and Pasta for dinner and then had to see the 100-mile finishers. It was reported that course records were going to be shattered by world-class runners. After only 15 and a half hours, Oswaldo Lopez crossed the finish line only 12 seconds ahead of second place finisher Nelson Armstrong, and Kment was there to witness it.

"I'm nothing compared to dogs like them," he said reverently.

Though Kment told his wife that he'd never run another 50-mile race again, she's not convinced.

"It's like childbirth," she said. "Of course you don't want to do it again right after, but we might be back. We had wanted to go to Yellowstone, but there's nothing wrong with Driggs. We could even move here."

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