

# The WFP Underground

A Quarterly Publication by the Wyoming Frontier Prison

## Welcome to the Underground

Historically, the original Wyoming State Penitentiary, now known as the Wyoming Frontier Prison, had a newsletter for many years which was written and produced solely by the inmates. The earliest example we have of this type of publication is dated July 1916 and includes stories, poems, advertisements for inmate made items and services such as leather work, and even inmate obituaries. It is in this small, string-bound book that we have found the inspiration for this modern day newsletter—the publication, titled “J-a-b-s” (meaning unknown), includes a section stating that following issue would be presented with a new name—“The Underworld”.

With a great deal of consideration, we opted to pay tribute to the past, while still moving forward with a fresh start and clean slate. This publication is intended to be both informative and entertaining. Suggestions for content are welcome; please send correspondence to [wfp@tribcsp.com](mailto:wfp@tribcsp.com).

## Quarterly Con-versation: Halloween

Halloween is the biggest fund-raiser and a year long process here at the Wyoming Frontier Prison. Last year was a big success and we’ve already been hard at work conceptualizing our haunted tours for 2010. Last year’s theme, The Inmates Return with a Vengeance, took several months to plan, over 60 volunteers to execute (pun intended), and ultimately more than 800 people attended. Revenues exceeded those made during each of the last 5 years, and earned 23% of the total Halloween profits over the last 5 years as a whole. One of the most successful years in the history of the event, all the stories featured were true tales of escape attempts, executions, and the genuine poor treatment of the inmates that was the standard operational procedure of the penitentiary.



**Want more pictures? Look us up on Facebook and become a fan!**

## Totally Random Prison Fact

One of the most familiar parts of the Old Pen wasn’t built until after the prison was in operation.

Construction began on the walls surrounding the prison grounds in 1912 after a mass escape of nearly 30 inmates through the original wooden stockade. The walls were constructed by the inmates and were completed in 1915.

## Old Pen Joint Powers Board

Glenna Kaupillia-Chairman  
Mary Pat Whitfield-Secretary  
Dennis Carpenter-Treasurer  
Leigh Nation  
David Michie III  
Bob Pixler  
Gary Hansen

Friends of the Old Pen  
President-Position Vacant  
Vice President-Geoff Hiatt  
Treasurer-Kathy Hiatt  
Secretary-Tina Hill

The Friends of the Old Pen meet at Hoot&Howl, the first Wednesday of every month, at noon.

For membership information, please contact the Old Pen at (307)324-4422 or [wfp@tribcsp.com](mailto:wfp@tribcsp.com).

## Friends of the Old Pen: Christmas Bazaar

Kathy Hiatt-Friends of the Old Pen

For the 18th year the Friends of the Old Pen held their annual Christmas bazaar in the warmer climes of the Jeffrey Center. With \$1240.00 in booth rentals, more than any of the past 6 years, the many crafters set up their wares for all to see. The Friends readied the food for Le Café Prison, hot dogs and potato chips, nachos, chili (donated by Su Casa Café in Sinclair), donuts (donated by West Wind Bakery), coffee, cocoa, and sodas (donated by Pepsi). The food sales, after paying for those non-donated items, netted the Friends \$390.79.

Employing some temporary help for the setting up and taking down of the tables cost some money, but saved the volunteers sore muscles and smashed fingers. Saturday arrived, the doors opened up and our patrons began their shopping. Items from scented waxes to worked wood pieces, knitted scarves & fun hats to chandeliers made from deer antlers, jewelry to Christmas ornaments, were all there for the choosing.

Since no admission was charged for the crafters & a helper, or for children under 4, the exact number of shoppers is difficult to find, but at least 382 folks paid the \$0.75 admission fee. Someone must have dropped in some extra change as we came up with \$0.60 extra in the count of the gate. Despite a hurting economy the majority of the crafters reported fairly good sales and while most agreed that the Old Pen's ambiance is missed, the warmth and light of the Jeffrey Center lent itself to a more enjoyable day.

This year's fund raiser bazaar brought in close to \$2,000.00 to the Friends of the Old Pen, enabling them to assist the Old Pen in various ways that would otherwise go undone. We thank everyone for their assistance in this year's bazaar, whether you donated your time or your goods, shopped for Christmas with our crafters or ate at our lunch counter, you helped our group and our cause, the Wyoming Frontier Prison Historic Site.

We look forward to next year's event, and we'll see you there!!

## Maintenance Report

Brian Hegg- WFP Maintenance

The Wyoming Frontier Prison grounds are immense; luckily we have a very handy guy on staff, Brian Hegg, that has been able to keep up with all the different repairs around our historic site. Brian has also supervised and utilized the time of several community service workers, who have served almost 60 hours at the Old Pen since the beginning of January. Brian runs a tight ship, and if the prison could say 'thank you', we're pretty sure it would. The following statement was prepared by Brian.

When I was hired for this position on August 21st, I had a little idea of what I was in for. Well one of the first things I needed to do was clean and organize two messy workshops, inventory what tools the Prison had, and to do a walk around to see what needed to be done; I put together a pretty extensive list of repairs.

I started with boarding up all broken windows before winter, this took several weeks to complete. Then proceeded with clearing the yard of all debris with the help of community service workers.

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## Maintenance Report [continued from pg.2]

Setting up for and cleaning up after Halloween tours was a big project that basically dominated October. Shortly after Halloween was finally finished, we had to immediately move on to the Christmas Bazaar, and our holiday light display. I used 28 electric and battery operated candles, 6 strings of lights and ultimately used 120 AA batteries. Then after New Years was over, I took everything down; The Rawlins Public Works Department assisted us with hanging and taking down our large wreath. In between all these major projects that we had going on, I worked on organizing both workshops; after all, how can you fix anything when you can't find the tools and/or materials to do the job? Also, during a spurt of relatively warm weather, I spent six days shoveling out 6-8 wheel borrow loads of pigeon excrement out of the Guards' Quarters, which was one smelly job!

We've had a pretty productive winter, but unfortunately a lot of repairs simply require warm weather; as conditions improve, I'll be able to do more and more to help preserve the grounds of the Wyoming Frontier Prison.

## Reports from the Warden: New Computers

Tina Hill-WFP Historic Site Director

Thanks to the generous support of the Carbon County Commissioners, the Wyoming Frontier Prison has joined this century! In the 2009-2010 budget, the Commissioners awarded the Old Pen \$2,500.00 to purchase a desktop and laptop computer. With careful shopping, we were able to purchase two desktops, a laptop and a monitor.

Tina and Sarah each have a Dell Inspiron with 4GB of memory, 500 GB of hard drive, Windows 7, and a 20" widescreen monitor.

Kathie inherited Tina's former, reformatted computer, a Dell Dimension 4550, and a new 20" widescreen monitor. Kathie has made the greatest leap into this century, because she was deeper in the dark ages than the rest of us. Her old computer used Windows 98, ran only floppy disks, did not have any USB ports, and had a 13.5" monitor!

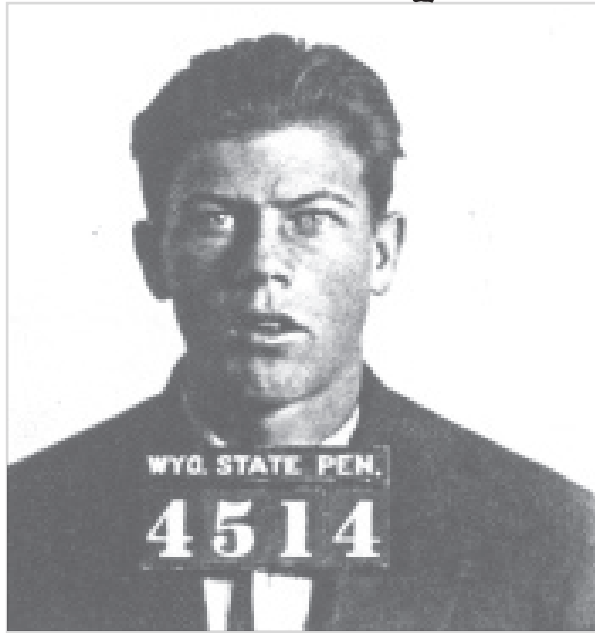
The lap top will be used this summer to catalogue the artifacts in our museum. This way we won't have to carry individual pieces of our collection across the parking lot and into the office building. It will make our work easier and it will help protect the important pieces of our history.

All in all, the upgrade in technology has allowed the Old Pen Staff to be more productive; although if someone can tell me where to find "auto-complete" in Word 2007, I would be very grateful!

If you have any questions or comments regarding the Wyoming Frontier Prison, please feel free to drop me an email at [wfp@tribcsp.com](mailto:wfp@tribcsp.com).

Have a great spring,  
Tina Hill  
Site Director

# Inmate Snapshot



Name: Frank Gimlin  
Age: 16  
Number: 4514  
Date of sentence: September 18, 1931  
Length of sentence: 4-7 years  
Crime: Grand Larceny  
Details: Arrested in Laramie, August 24th, 1931 for stealing a car. Attempted to escape from jail on September 17th, 1931 while awaiting trial. After being convicted of the crime and being confined to the Wyoming State Penitentiary, he committed suicide January 24th, 1932.

# Wish List

As a non-profit organization, we're always finding ourselves in need of different things, and even the smallest donation is an immense help to us! These are some of the things that we're looking for these days...

- A new external hard drive
- A new USB card reader
- legal pads
- paper clips
- scotch tape
- post-it notes
- map pins (to keep track of our visitors)
- Kleenex
- Duct tape
- Heavy duty, outdoor extension cords
- Acid free photo albums
- photo paper (gloss or semi-gloss)
- Laptop case (for a 15.6" screen)

## Other Stuff...

**We open for our full tour season  
Memorial Day weekend, May 29th!  
Keep your eyes peeled for special night tours  
and other events!**

**Join us for the Great Divide Music  
Festival, July 3rd!**

## Questions, comments or concerns?

Contact us  
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