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Burgess Bridge dedicated

• Whitney Benefits donated \$270,000 to connect walking trails in Kendrick Park and Whitney Commons

By Sophie L. Swecker
Staff reporter

More than 100 people gathered in Kendrick Park this morning to celebrate the dedication and grand opening of the Henry A. Burgess Bridge, which will connect the walking trails through Kendrick Park and Whitney Commons Park on Jefferson Street.

"I think he'd be pleased," said Mary Burgess of her late husband. "I think it's monumental, particularly for Sheridan County."

Burgess was present at the ceremony to accept a plaque from Whitney Benefits and to cut the ribbon on the bridge.

Funds for the \$270,000 bridge



Henry A. Burgess

were donated by Whitney Benefits, and through a Wyoming Department of Transportation grant, the city will use an equal amount of money to add to its trails system.

"This honors Henry on the work that he did with Whitney, and it's a tribute to all of the trustees that worked with him," said Whitney Benefits President Tom Kinnison.

The bridge was constructed by Fry Construction in Sheridan and features an 8-foot sidewalk, decorative lighting, planters, and statue bases.

"He would be very pleased that Whitney Benefits has the funding to do all the good works for Sheridan and the county," said Burgess' son, Jamie, of Cora.

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Above: Mary Burgess listens to former Whitney Benefits President Dorothy King read a biography of her late husband, Henry Burgess, with her son Jamie at today's dedication of the bridge honoring her husband.



Burgess

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At the ceremony, former Whitney Benefits President Dorothy King read a short biography of Burgess, who was a Whitney Benefits trustee for 31 years, that included his Harvard Law School education, his service in the Wyoming National Guard during World War II, and the \$64 million settlement he helped win from the U.S. Department of the Interior for Whitney Benefits over a tract of unmineable coal in the 1970s.

The lawsuit over the land, which Whitney Benefits owned the mineral rights to, began in 1973 when Whitney's mining permit was rejected.

Burgess took the case through district court, Wyoming Supreme Court, federal court, U.S. Court of Claims, U.S. Court of Appeals and back to the U.S. Court of Claims before the U.S. Court of Appeals finally ruled in Whitney's favor in 1995.

"He was a very visionary, hard-working person who did a tremendous amount for this community," Kinnison said.