

NEWSLETTER

"WEDA's mission is to provide leadership, support and foster economic development in Wyoming."



WYOMING ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
ASSOCIATION

August 2006

W E D A

President's notes

Q: How many conservative economists does it take to change a light bulb?

A1: None. The darkness will cause the light bulb to change by itself.

A2: None. If it really needed changing, market forces would have caused it to happen.

A3: None. If the government would just leave it alone, it would screw itself in.

A4: None. There is no need to change the light bulb. All the conditions for illumination are in place.

My point in sharing this stupid light bulb joke is that it raises questions about how Wyoming is spending its state revenues. How should we handle the current boom? Will we continue to use surplus funds to invest in our future, to minimize or even avoid the otherwise unavoidable bust cycle to follow? Will we save money now for the rainy days to come?

Truth be told, Wyoming has invested HUGELY in our future and has been able to save a considerable sum of money. Funding for public infrastructure is at an all time high. Education has become a top priority. Most workers - public and private industry - are getting paid more than ever before. And the permanent mineral trust fund is growing quite rapidly.

Yet we need to be careful that funding decisions do not hurt the very industries that have helped Wyoming reach its enviable position. Public funds should not be used to directly compete with private enterprise. However, there are very legitimate and positive uses of public funds that are currently being used to stimulate the economy in ways that "the market" would/could never handle, so we need to restrain our natural knee jerk reaction against spending.

I encourage you to talk to your local economic development organization, elected leaders, public and private utilities, and hometown businesses. There are a variety of opinions out there, and somehow we need to find a balance that addresses real needs without causing major offense, to move Wyoming forward.

Let's get the job done and change the light bulb, so that our kids can see in the future.

Joe Coyne
WEDA President

Workforce housing shortage in spotlight

Across Wyoming, the economic good times make it seem as though the sky's the limit. But there is a very real curb to Wyoming industry's growth: the labor pool. Workers are in such short supply that some communities are actively importing machinists from Michigan and other states. Once workers arrive, they need a place to live - and the lack of housing within a working family's price range is a hidden barrier to growth.

Workforce housing is not the same as affordable housing. Affordable housing is aimed at lower income people, many of whom are first-time homeowners. Workforce housing refers to housing within the price range of working people. The workforce housing shortage exists all over Wyoming, but is especially acute in areas in the midst of the energy boom.

In Campbell County, a BLM study of the minerals industry predicts that the county population will double by 2020. "If we can't get the workforce, or we can't house them, that could back things up a little bit," worries Ruth Benson of the Campbell County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC). "Housing is a huge barrier for our employers right now ... We feel we need about 500 units a year to keep up with our growth - we're doing 350-400." She added, "Rentals are just not to be had here. Gone are the times where you drove into town and just picked up an apartment. As of last month, Gillette had a zero percent vacancy rate for apartments."

The shortage has led to some novel coping mechanisms, including CCEDC's special email newsletter just on housing issues. Called "Dwelling on Solutions" the newsletter details

any rentals, developments, subdivisions, or senior housing and gives CCEDC investors an edge in finding housing for their employees. "We've had a really good reaction to it," Benson said.

In booming Rock Springs housing is in such short supply that the hotel occupancy rate this May exceeded that of Jackson Hole, said Pat Robbins, the executive director of the Sweetwater Economic Development Agency. Although the construction of new homes in Rock Springs is moving at a frantic pace, most new construction starts at \$200,000, beyond the reach of many workers - including construction workers. "If I bring in a developer to build a house, he's gotta bring a crew in - and there is no place for his crew to stay," Robbins explained.

Robbins says that local realtors estimate that housing prices are increasing at 2.5% a month, for an annual increase of 30%. This April, the average price of a single-family home in Rock Springs was \$194,000; by May the price had jumped to \$238,000. "A lot of service and industrial job holders don't qualify for the high end housing," Robbins explains. "We're seeing highway patrolmen and teachers move into the area, but they can't afford housing here. There is a void in the real estate market for homes for working people, in the \$135,000-\$185,000 range."

As a result, there are a lot of people living in hotels and fifth-wheel trailers. "Local dealers will tell you that trailers don't stay on the lot," Robbins said. "Some companies are advertising

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Manufacturing a Hidden Success

The manufacturing industry in Wyoming is a quiet success story. While the extremes of the energy boom hog the headlines, and the retail and hospitality industries woo the public, manufacturing just sticks to business.

"Ask the average person in Wyoming to name a local manufacturer - it's likely they can't," said Larry Stewart, head of Manufacturing-Works, a non-profit partnership between National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the Wyoming Business Council (WBC), and the University of Wyoming (UW).

Manufacturing-Works (formerly part of MAMTC) just

celebrated its first birthday as a Wyoming-centered entity, offering a more service-oriented approach as well as closer ties with in-state economic development agencies. There is a complete list of the expanded array of services and support for manufacturers on their website:

www.manufacturing-works.com/home.htm.

"Manufacturers are sometimes transparent to the society they exist in," Stewart continued. "The impact on society is minimal, and yet the economic impact is significant." Despite the low profile, manufacturing is the second leading industry in the state, after energy. The

state's traditional economic engine, agriculture, contributed just half the gross state product that manufacturing did.

Another significant contribution that manufacturing makes is its steadying influence on Wyoming's economy by adding economic diversity to the mix. The extractive industries traditionally suffer through boom-bust cycles, while agriculture is at the mercy of the weather and other natural factors (such as brucellosis).

A good example of this steadying influence can be found in Riverton. Founded as an agricultural town, Riverton rode its first boom when uranium was king.

After that boom busted, the town encouraged manufacturers to set up shop. Today, Riverton has more manufacturing per capita than any other town in Wyoming, with StarTech Corporation, Pertech Resources, Brunton, and Legacy Molding making Riverton their home. "All offer better than average salaries, and are not effected by the uranium boom-bust cycle," Stewart said. "In many communities we're lucky to have one anchor business. In Riverton, they have four."

While Riverton's manufacturers are not 'booming' they do enjoy steady, sustainable growth. Pertech

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Mark
Your
Calendar

2006 September 13-15, WEDA/WCCE Fall Conference, Evanston
2007 February 5, WCCE Meeting & Leadership Dinner, Hitching Post Inn
February 6, Business Day at the Legislature and WEDA/WCCE Legislative Reception, Hitching Post Inn
February 7, WEDA Conference, Hitching Post Inn
May 9-11, WEDA/MEDA/EDA Conference, Holiday Inn, Cody

Community Facilities Get Facelift

While some may have second thoughts about sending their children to a gymnastics class in a water treatment plant, the citizens of Lovell will gladly watch their young do hand-springs where treatment wells once sat. The community was granted \$1.3 million under the Community Facilities Program (CFP) administered by the Wyoming Business Council (WBC) for its community center, which should be ready for use next summer. Lovell's grant will help facilitate the remodeling of the city's old water treatment plant into a community center, which will feature space for everything from youth gymnastics to wedding receptions and conventions.

"Lovell thought outside the box with this project because they had an old building that would likely be vacant for life," said Community Facilities Program Manager Shannon Stanfill. "The space the city needed for a community center was very comparable to the space available in the old plant."

Because the CFP is a state program, there is an official explanation of the program as well as something a little simpler. First, the official version: The grant and loan activities may include the expansion, renovation or remodeling of an existing surplus government facility or the expansion, renovation, conversion or purchase of an interest in a local enhancement to a school building or facility. Any community with a demonstrated need for a community facility, including a city, town, county, joint powers board or other local government entity may apply. The facilities can be used to provide space for community gatherings, swimming, athletic facilities for community members, particularly youth.

In layman's terms it means if your town, county or district owns a surplus building (school, old city building, etc.) and could make use of a community center (somewhere for people to meet, a recreation center for the kids, etc.) you may be eligible for CFP funds to help your community build just such a project. Lovell is an excellent example of the program's flexibility, demonstrating that communities can look beyond decommissioned school buildings. "There is a misconception that CFP funds are for 'old schools' only," Stanfill said. "There is more; for example, Lovell looked at this program and wondered if their former water treatment plant would qualify and it did."

The program can also be used to add on to school facilities that provide space and recreation for community gatherings, such as swimming and

other athletic facilities, especially for youth. Saratoga took its old middle school and is using it to address needs of the youth as well as the population as a whole. Their new Platte Valley Community Center will feature a performing arts theatre, a business incubator component (thanks in part to a grant through the Business Ready Community Program) and the school district will use the gym for school youth activities.

"Time, patience and a lot of planning paid off for the Saratoga community," Stanfill said. "The need for a community center had been identified in the past so the community formed a joint powers board which then initiated an extensive public involvement effort and topped that with a power punch fundraising endeavor. What the community created was a plan for a financially feasible multi-purpose center."

Projects that receive CFP funding must be related to local economic or quality of life plans such as the community assessment process. One other important rule holds that the facility cannot compete with local government or business and is otherwise not provided in the community.

The money from the state is not the only source of cash communities will need to fulfill their projects. CFP monies should be the last funding needed to complete a project - in other words any communities looking for a CFP grant should have their project costs and other funds which are being donated or paid for by the community towards the project put down on paper. The match requirements are 10-15% depending on the amount of the grant request. One distinct advantage to the CFP match is the use of in-kind donations. Such things as labor do count towards the community's match. The labor rate is determined by the community.

One other cost that must be revealed is the cost of operations and maintenance for the facility over the next four years. Stanfill said one place that communities are helping themselves in this process is to make the facilities more energy efficient. "Maintenance costs related to older buildings can add up quickly," Stanfill said. "That is why most applicants are thinking first of efficiency renovations, which can lower annual costs after the project is up and running."

For more information see www.wyomingbusiness.org under the community development link or call Stanfill at 307-777-2841. Applications for the next grant period need to be postmarked by December 15, 2006.

itability was up 100%. We had a banner year," said Brunton CEO John Smith Baker. The company added about seven full time jobs last year, and is expected to add more after its move into a new headquarters building in September. In addition they've entered into new product categories, like two way radios and headlamps, introducing 75 new products last year and 55 this year.

In Converse County, manufacturing

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Public Workforce Surveys a Success

The Governor's Office, the Wyoming Workforce Development Council and the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (DWS) have kicked-off the Wyoming Workforce Analysis for Future Investment, a comprehensive study of Wyoming's workforce that will help form solutions to meet the ever-changing demands of Wyoming businesses.

Governor Dave Freudenthal included the \$200,000 study as part of his 2007-2008 biennium budget request for the DWS. "Wyoming's workforce shortage is one of the most pressing issues facing small and large businesses today. We need to begin looking for solutions to address the vacancy and skill gaps Wyoming businesses are facing in order to grow our local economies. This study is the first step in identifying these critical needs," Freudenthal said.

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for people with trailers or a spare bedroom to rent." Over at the Sweetwater County Special Events Center, the trailer lot is full of pipeline workers' rigs. The county fair is in a few weeks, and local ranchers are complaining that there will be no place for them to stay during the fair.

Robbins notes that just a few developers are taking aim at the workforce housing market. Some solutions are quite creative. Take the example of the developer who bought an entire company town: the old CIG community at Table Rock. He's trucking whole houses 30 miles west on I-80 to Rock Springs. Other developers for this price range are "ready to start moving dirt," which Robbins expects to help considerably.

The shortage is not limited to energy boomtowns. Over in Converse County, Joe Coyne of CANDO notes that growth in Douglas and the surrounding area depends on non-energy industries including manufacturing, "the only industry in 2006 that has exceeded its monthly average for sales in every month of this year," Coyne said. The result is a 400% increase in building permits compared to two years ago. The situation in Campbell County differs from Sweetwater County in that the houses being built "are in the \$140-180,000 price range - right where it's needed," Coyne said. "The bigger issue for us hasn't been the price of land per se, but rather the cost of infrastructure. The underlying problem is that our local governments do not have the resources to be building for growth — they are absolutely focused on maintaining the infrastructure they have. We either need to fund local government much more strongly, or we can go down the path of funding specific infrastructure that can help housing."

State government may help development of workforce housing

Working families who are first time home-buyers can find help through programs offered by the Wyoming Community Development Authority, explained Cheryl Gillum, WCDA Director of Housing Programs. The WCDA offers below-market rate mortgages and down payment assistance for families who qualify. This April the WCDA's Standard Program was expanded to include homes costing as much as \$285,000 for families of three with a total income of up to \$94,000 (in Teton

County.) The Home Run Program has a little lower income limit, and lower purchase price limit. "The purpose of the Home Run Program is to get new homes built in lower price range, to increase housing stock for first time home buyers," Gillum said.

House Bill 128, which was introduced during the last legislative session, was intended to help make more homes available for working families, whether or not they've already owned a house. This bill was similar to the Business Ready Community grants in that it provided a grant program for municipalities to put in infrastructure - except that HB128 allowed the infrastructure to be used for subdivisions. Such a grant program could take the price of homes down \$20-28,000 so more people can afford to buy them.

HB 128 passed through the house almost unanimously, passed the senate committee, but was not brought up for debate. "Essentially, the clock ran out," explained the bill's sponsor and chairman of the House Minerals Committee, Rep. Tom Lockhart (R-Casper). "Given that there was this broad interest and support, the management council assigned it to the minerals committee for interim study. The bill will be reformatted, [renamed] and presented as a committee bill - which will have a better chance of survival. Also, general session bills do better than budget session bills."

Lockhart added that workforce housing was named the number one issue by Wyoming Realtors, "and there's a lot of general support for it ... A world of data suggests that every community in Wyoming has a need for housing that a family earning \$35-40,000 can get into."

Support for workforce housing extends into the executive branch. "It essentially comes down to a difference between housing, often with outside help, that is made available for low-income folks and housing that is simply available," notes Governor Dave Freudenthal. "That would be the entry-level housing that someone joining the Wyoming workforce, who often wouldn't qualify for low-income housing, would need to be able to raise their family and be part of their community. Government's role is really in infrastructure, helping to build the streets and curbs and sewers that clear paths to development for communities that want it."

Manufacturing from page 1

Resources, which manufactures and designs dot matrix impact and direct thermal printers, has increased sales over the past 2.5 years by 15% per annum. Pertech Resources COO, Kevin Kershnik notes that the company has a goal of organic growth of 15% for the next year as well.

Brunton, which manufactures a variety of outdoor equipment from compasses to binoculars finished last year with a 14% gain in total sales. "Prof-

Now that you're Business Ready: Get set & go!

Many communities are now at the point that infrastructure is in the ground and lots are ready for business development. In many respects, the infrastructure is the easy part. The more difficult part is either waiting for the businesses to come (it is normal for business parks to take years to be fully occupied), or the more enviable headache of dealing with multiple businesses vying for the limited space. Your Wyoming Business Council Regional Director can help at each stage.

Protect your investment. Even before your property is Business Ready, it is advisable to develop covenants. Covenants help maintain an orderly, operational, and attractive space. Covenants will also provide business prospects with a sense that their investment will be protected from depreciating

property values. Second, to know how much of an investment you actually have, it is important to have an appraisal of the property.

Market your investment. In addition to marketing your community, you should be marketing your Business Ready property. Like any marketing campaign, you first need to know who is your target and how you are going to reach them. At a minimum, develop a fact sheet that provides a map of the Business Ready property and pertinent information such as: acreage, zoning, utilities, taxes, transportation, and a local contact. Make sure the property is registered with the Wyoming Business Council's Available Sites & Buildings Database on the www.whywyoming.org web site. It is also advisable to invest in quality signs at the

business park entrance.

Being selective. Many Business Ready Communities are opting to be very selective in their choice of who will occupy lots. Instead of operating on a first-come-first-serve basis, these communities are holding out for the businesses that best meet the community's industrial target, complement (but not compete) with existing businesses, and offer the best jobs. One practice has been to issue a Request for Proposals to businesses. This mini "Business Committed" process involves soliciting letters of interest, business plans, and timelines from businesses. The community then reviews the plans against the community's own goals and available space. Once a business is paired with a lot, then the negotiation process begins.

Even if this process isn't used for the entire business park, you might consider it to match the most visible and attractive lot to a strong "anchor" tenant.

Negotiations. As a result of increased business activity in Wyoming, local governments are increasingly in the position of being "dealmakers." These deals include more than providing infrastructure. Deals involve negotiating the lease or purchase of property. Ultimately local governments must balance public benefit and private gain. The goal is to neither "sell the farm" nor scare businesses away with unrealistic expectations and demands. There are two things to consider: first, know what your Business Ready property is worth. An appraisal is a necessary investment; second, know what the business is going to return to the community and if the business has the wherewithal to make it happen. The business plan and your Regional Director are the two tools for this evaluation. (Remember, governments must keep business information confidential--there are exceptions to public records laws which require confidentiality). It is advisable to involve the town or county attorney in these negotiations, as there are constitutional issues involved.

Selling public property. Once a price has been negotiated, municipalities must follow state statute to "dispose" (sell) public property. Generally a city or town must put any property valued at over \$500 out to bid with the sale going to the highest bidder. However, advertising and bids are not necessary if the governing body determines that the sale of the property will benefit the economic development of the municipality. If that determination is made (preferably by resolution), then the city must advertise a public hearing once a week for three consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the city or town is located. That notice must include the appraised value and the proposed terms of the sale. There are no clear statutes for counties or joint powers boards; however, it is advisable that those governmental entities follow the same processes as municipalities.

For Information: Contact your Wyoming Business Council Regional Director or Shawn Reese, Business Ready Community Program Manager, at 307.777.2813 or email shawn.reese@wybusiness.org. They can provide examples, specific statutory references, and other assistance.

Wyoming Economic Development Association • Wyoming Chamber of Commerce Executives

WEDA / WCCE Fall Conference

Sept. 13-15, 2006, Best Western Dunmar, Evanston, WY

Registration:

Cost to attend the full program is \$175. To register, please use the online registration form at www.wyomingeda.org/training.htm or call WEDA at 307-332-5546.

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

- 1:00-3:00 WEDA Legislative Discussion
- 3:00-4:30 WEDA & WCCE membership meetings
- 6:00 p.m. Networking Reception, Dinner & Entertainment

Thursday Sept. 14, 2006

- 8:00-9:30 Speaker: Futurist Ed Barlow, "Preparing Wyoming and Our Local Communities for a 21st Century Economy"
- 9:45-11:15 State-Wide Collaboration - Small Group Discussions
"Preparing Wyoming and Our Local Communities for a 21st Century Economy"
- 11:15-11:45 State-Wide Collaboration - Small Group Reports
- 11:45-12:00 Summary of Morning Session, Ed Barlow
- 12:00-1:45 Working Lunch-Local Collaboration - Small Group Discussions
- 1:45-2:15 Local Collaboration - Small Group Reports
- 2:30-3:00 Summary of Afternoon Session and Next Steps, Ed Barlow
- 3:00-5:30 Local Tours: Quality of Life and Community Enhancements - The impact on development and communities
- 6:30 p.m. Reception and Dinner

Friday Sept. 15, 2006

- 7:45-9:15 a.m. Breakfast with gubernatorial candidates
- 9:15 -10:00 Reports from the offices of Cubin, Enzi and Thomas
- 10:00-11:00 "Quality Childcare in your Communities" - Glenna Campagnaro, Pamela Downing, DWS
- 11:00-11:30 WEDA/WCCE Legislative Agenda - Margaret Spearman, Kim Capron & Legislative Committees



Ed Barlow

"Preparing Wyoming and Our Local Communities for a 21st Century Economy"

You will want to be at the table of this most forward-looking, action-oriented strategic planning session to chart Wyoming's next economy.

The urgency... "The impact of globalization, changing demographics, and new technologies upon future prosperity are significant. This must be understood and addressed at the local level!" - Ed Barlow, Creating The Future, Inc.

Join futurist Ed Barlow as he...

- takes us on a journey through the uncharted territory of the 21st century
- facilitates the development of an "action agenda" to better anticipate and prepare for what is ahead

- explores the structural changes which are occurring, and their implications for individuals, organizations and communities

- explains the unique, yet interconnected responsibilities which business, government, education, healthcare and non-profit organizations have and must take to the next level

Who should attend

Economic and workforce developers, chambers of commerce, elected officials, business owners, technology industry, university and college leaders, community leaders, board of directors, Governor's staff, etc.



BIO:

Ed Barlow is an internationally known and respected futurist. His insights and experience are incorporated into keynote, think-tank and strategic planning activities. He has participated in over 250 community economic development summits. Ed's client list includes the Federal Reserve Bank System, Six Sigma Academy of Europe, European Union, Cargill, Marriott International, General Electric, Hewlett Packard, Travel Industry Association of America, American Hospital Association and the U.S. Departments of Agriculture-Commerce-Defense-Labor-Education-Health and Human Services. More info at www.creatingthefuture.com.

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is the only industry in 2006 that has exceeded its monthly average for sales in every month of this year. "That never happens!" exclaims Joe Coyne of CANDU. "That is a little different from the typical boom and bust cycle we see in the energy industries."

Wyoming's manufacturing sector is free of the supply chain worries many other manufacturers go through, Stewart adds. "In the Midwest, a lot of folks were equipment manufacturers to a bigger business - they were part of the supply chain. In Wyoming we manufacture mostly end products, so we're not affected by fluctuations in the automobile or airline manufacturing businesses."

The result is that, as the nation lost significant manufacturing jobs in the last ten years, Wyoming manufacturers bucked the trend and added staff instead.

WEDA Member News:

Cheyenne Provides Micro-Enterprise Funding

Cheyenne LEADS and five community partners recently unveiled its LEADS M.E. Fund, a micro-enterprise line of credit. The LEADS M.E. Fund will provide a line of credit program unlike any in the state. The LEADS M.E. Fund focuses on funding opportunities for the creation and expansion of "micro" businesses within Laramie County. The LEADS M.E. program will also provide networking mentoring, education, technical assistance, training, and marketing opportunities through its various partners. The fund serves any resident of Wyoming doing business in Laramie County, but targets low to moderate income individuals.

The LEADS M.E. Fund has been established to provide lines of credit to start-up or expanding small businesses located within Laramie County that are unable to obtain financing through traditional means.

The LEADS M.E. Fund is funded by five separate community partners: the Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce, Cheyenne/Laramie County Economic Development Joint Powers Board, Cheyenne LEADS, the Wyoming Women's Business Center and the Wyoming Small Business Development Center.

For more information contact Andrea Presse, Director of Microlending, at 307-778-3908.

Laramie and Cheyenne Team Up to Attend BIXPO

Laramie Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) and Cheyenne LEADS are teaming up to attend and exhibit at the 2nd Annual BIXPO Conference in Loveland, Colorado, September 13 - 14.

LEDC and LEADS both attended the 1st Annual BIXPO in 2005 in collaboration with the Wyoming Business Council. Due to the success of that event, both organizations have teamed up to increase the visibility of Southeastern Wyoming to our Northern neighbors by having a separate presence from the Wyoming Business Council. "Having five different local and state economic development organizations represented in four booths insures that Wyoming and our communities will be extremely visible at BIXPO. Partnering with LEDC makes good sense to make the region more visible to expanding and relocating Colorado companies- a goal of both organizations," stated Randy Bruns, CEO of Cheyenne LEADS.

"BIXPO is the largest, most comprehensive business and technology conference and exposition in Northern Colorado," according to the Northern Colorado Business Report.

Lander Business Park Underway

Construction is underway at the Lander Business Park, located on Main Street at the site of the former Lander Valley High School. The construction, which involves installing utilities and building streets and sidewalks, should be completed by October 1, 2006.

The Tiger Joint Powers Board, formed in an agreement between the City of

Lander and Fremont County School District #1, has been charged with developing the Lander downtown business park.

Construction of the business park is being funded through a \$1.5 million Community Readiness Grant from the Wyoming Business Council. The purpose of the grant program is to promote local economic development to improve economic health and a stronger state economy. Any businesses interested in the park should contact RaJean Strube Fossen at 307-332-3539.

Housing issues focus of consumer conference at UW

A conference on the University of Wyoming campus September 28, 2006 will arm consumers with information to help them obtain and afford one of life's basic necessities - shelter. Housing issues, lending information, state legislators, and a push for consumer activism are part of Home on the Range, the 2006 Consumer Issues Conference held in the Wyoming Union. It is open to the public. The conference is geared toward the average person and not the professionals.

Keynote speaker will be Allen J. Fishbein, director of housing and credit policy for the Consumer Federation of America (CFA).

Featured speaker Bill Thomas, 2005 AARP Visiting Scholar will present on long-term care options.

To register, contact the UW Conference Office about the Consumer Issues Conference at 1-877-733-3618, ext. 2, or 307-766-5249. A conference schedule is available at www.uwo.edu/consumer-conference.

Housing Newsletter Is Developed For Campbell County EDC Investors

The strong economy in Campbell County has forced local employers to find solutions to housing shortages. As a service to Campbell County EDC's Investors, an e-mail newsletter, "Dwelling on Solutions," has been developed to report on how Campbell County, the City of Gillette, the Town of Wright, businesses and private citizens are working to house employees. According to CCEDC Marketing Director Susan Jerke, "Response to "Dwelling on Solutions" has been very positive. We will continue to share information and recommend potential solutions." If you would like to receive back-issues, please contact CCEDC at 307-686-2603.

Workforce Recruitment Is A High Priority Goal For Wyoming

Wyoming has the nation's second-lowest jobless rate and is desperately seeking workers to fill thousands of jobs created by the thriving, energy-based economy. The Campbell County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) joined forces with other economic development entities in Wyoming to recruit skilled workers and professionals.

After extensive research, CCEDC, Casper EDA and the Sweetwater EDA embarked on a comprehensive, statewide workforce recruitment campaign targeting three cities in Michigan in

late January. These same partners, plus the Carbon County ED, hosted three more job fairs in Michigan in early May.

More Workforce Recruiting Opportunities

Plans are underway for a third trip to Michigan in October 2006. CCEDC and state workforce recruitment partners will host a job fair in Flint on October 12th. They will then take part in an Employment Expo in Grand Rapids on October 14th.

Why Michigan?

Michigan is experiencing high unemployment (7%) with large layoffs in the automobile industry. Many of the occupational skills are transferable to our industries. In addition, their climate is similar to Wyoming with many Michigan residents enjoying outdoor activities popular in our state.

- Two major goals were achieved from the Michigan trips.

(1) CCEDC was successful in recruiting people from Michigan to work in Campbell County and Wyoming.

(2) Wyoming received national media recognition concerning employment opportunities.

Results of the Michigan trips include:

- 2,100 attended the Michigan job fairs

- 1,518 new registrations on Department of Workforce Services Job Network (internet website)

- 900 resumes brought back from Michigan

- 49+ Michigan recruits working in Campbell County

Wyoming Main Street To Host Design Session

The Wyoming Main Street Program will host a Design Planning and Revitalization Training Session in all of our Pilot Communities: Dubois on July 31- August 1, Green River on August 1 - 2, Rawlins on August 2 - 3, and Laramie on August 3 - 4. The training sessions feature Scott Day, an urban development and design consultant.

Mr. Day specializes in design management and retail economics for commercial revitalization.

These consulting sessions are being offered free of charge and are funded by Wyoming Main Street. This Design Planning and Revitalization Training is part of the state program's mission to support Wyoming communities with technical assistance and expertise in community revitalization and economic development.

Development Starts on Wyoming's Quality Child Care System

During the 2006 legislative session, the Wyoming legislature passed the Wyoming Quality Child Care Initiative. This initiative is housed in the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, and calls for the development of a system that increases the availability of quality child care for working families as well as enhances the quality of early care and education. Both goals are critical to the economic growth of Wyoming communities and to the future of Wyoming's children.

The DWS is currently conducting a

Quality Child Care Assessment that will provide a baseline on the state's child care programs. This assessment will be completed by Fall 2006. The results of this study will be heavily relied upon as the development phase continues.

The DWS has developed a website for the Quality Child Care Initiative at www.wyoqualitychildcare.org.

For more information contact Donna Merrill at (970) 416-9985 or email to donnasmerrill@msn.com or visit the website at www.wyoqualitychildcare.org.

On the job

Federal Economic Development District Appoints New Director

Terry Wolf, President of the Big Horn Mountain Country Coalition (BHMCC) has announced the appointment of Patricia A. Ullery, Kaycee, as Executive Director effective July 1, 2006. BHMCC is an economic development district (EDD) representing four counties (Johnson, Sheridan, Washakie and Big Horn) under the direction of the Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the Department of Commerce. The four-county coalition works to enhance economic activities and provide leadership, coordination and cooperation between local, state and federal entities. The four counties include 20 incorporated cities and towns who make up the governing board of directors (county commissioners, economic development professionals, municipal officials and private sector lodging/tourism representatives).

The district was recently awarded a federal grant from the Denver regional office of EDA to staff the office and support long range planning and outreach to local communities.

Ullery will be based out of Kaycee, but will spend regularly scheduled time each month in all four counties, working with local chambers of commerce, economic development groups, and city and county governments. Contact Patricia at BHMCC, ullery@rtconnect.net

Personnel Changes At Campbell County EDC

After a nationwide search, Ruth Benson has been appointed as Campbell County Economic Development Corporation's executive director. She replaces Susan Bigelow who resigned in February after ten years with CCEDC. Benson, serving as interim director, had been the organization's marketing director.

Susan Jerke, formerly CCEDC's project director, has moved into the marketing director's position. Jerke has been with CCEDC since November 2005 and brings a strong marketing background to the organization.

The project director position is now open! The person who will fill the job will ideally be a critical thinker, possessing excellent people skills and be highly organized. Applicants are encouraged to contact CCEDC for a job description.