

# NEWSLETTER

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



**WYOMING** ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
ASSOCIATION

**W E D A**

September 2008

## "Building the Wyoming We Want" Efforts are Growing

By Joe Randall

This past January, Governor Dave Freudenthal asked state residents and communities to come together to plan for Wyoming's future. The response was overwhelming as an overflow crowd of more than 500 people attended the "Building the Wyoming We Want" conference held at Casper College. The Governor noted that discussions at that conference "focused on how to preserve the Wyoming that state residents love while also preparing for the changes associated with growth and development." But what's happened in the seven months since? In a word, much.

On August 11th, the governor announced the hiring of Torrington native Jeff Fuller, who now lives in Sheridan, to lead a new statewide non-profit organization that will follow-up on the ideas and recommendations developed at the January conference. This organization will be similar to the "Envision Utah" smart-growth effort that has made significant strides in Utah. The governor said it took some time to find the right person with the right understanding and the right attitude for the job, and he said that person is Jeff Fuller.

"This is about a conversation about the state, it is not about the state imposing some kind of a plan from the state

level," Freudenthal said. "It is about empowering the local communities and the local citizens to understand how to utilize the tools that are at their disposal and to make them aware of those tools. It is not at the end of the day a planning exercise - it is at the end of the day an exercise about the implementation and the employment of foresight."

The CEO of Forward Sheridan, Sheridan's local economic development organization, could not have been happier with the news. Philippe Chino noted that Fuller served on Forward Sheridan's Board of Directors and he said that Fuller understands how important the conversation will be.

"Jeff helped me go through a 12 month-long process of creating a economic development strategic planning process with 500 citizens here," Chino said. "Jeff mentioned what we had done in Sheridan and how that could impact other communities statewide. If every community in Wyoming had a five-year strategic plan, then the state could then create a statewide strategic plan."

Chino said the economic development process for a community should not just be about recruiting new businesses, and retention and expansion of present businesses, but also "designing what kind of a community people want to have, and that's exactly what

the Governor wants us to do."

Chino said the kind of process he conducted in Sheridan is different than a typical community assessment. "It's much more comprehensive and identifies not only strengths and weaknesses of a community, but identifies what that community wants to be. The process results in the development of action plans and recruits people to work on implementing those plans."

*If every community in Wyoming had a five-year strategic plan, then the state could then create a statewide strategic plan.*

*Philippe Chino, Forward Sheridan CEO*

Governor Freudenthal's initiative has also helped to encourage Converse County and its municipalities to further strengthen growth planning efforts there. "We are faced with very strong growth driven by the uranium, wind, gas and oil industries," said Joe Coyne, Executive Director of Converse Area New Development Organization (CANDO). "We also have a very unique opportunity right now because all of our municipalities and the county

are working together to develop a coordinated growth management plan."

Coyne said that the local governments are sharing the cost of hiring a consulting firm, Clarion Associates, to help them develop the new plan. "Clarion is using some great tools to solicit public input, which will help us to better define the community's values. Those values will then become the central goals of the plan," he said.

"Land use planning does not necessarily mean zoning," said Coyne. "In fact, the Sonoran Institute has done a great job identifying many other 'tools' that are in the toolbox for any community to protect its core values." Since many Converse County residents are opposed to zoning, Coyne expects that many of those other tools can get the job done. The Converse County process is expected to be completed in late 2009.

Similarly, the City of Gillette is about to embark on a comprehensive planning process for an estimated \$200-million plus water development project. Mayor Duane Evenson said the city has hired a North Dakota consulting firm to assist the city with the planning and financing for the massive project, which basically involves creating a redundant and expanded water delivery system to serve Northeast Wyoming.

*See Building, WEDA-3*

## Business Ready Communities Program revenue recapture helps communities reinvest

Revenue recapture may not be a well-known feature of the Wyoming Business Council's Business Ready Community (BRC) Grant and Loan Program at the moment, but it is an economic development tool that several communities have begun to use. Revenue generated through BRC funded infrastructure projects is recaptured by the community at a rate resulting in a return on investment. The revenue recapture plan helps ensure that BRC funding will remain in the area fostering community and economic development activities.

Some communities, like Thermopolis and Lander, have successfully used this aspect of the BRC program. In

2005, the town of Thermopolis used a \$414,000 BRC grant to buy and upgrade a building, which was leased to CAPTEL. With the success of recruiting CAPTEL under its belt, the Thermopolis-Hot Springs County Economic Development Company used revenue generated by CAPTEL's lease payments to pay off the town's revolving loan fund and secure property that helped attract a Pamida store.

Lander, on the other hand, used their recaptured revenue in a slightly different manner. In 2004, the Tiger Joint Powers Board in Lander used a \$1.5 million BRC grant to develop a portion of a 17-acre business park. With revenue from the sale of three lots, the

board reinvested the recaptured funds into business park infrastructure and community match dollars for its January 2008 application for an additional BRC grant.

The recapture plan for revenue generating projects anticipates revenue streams and prioritizes which economic development initiatives will be paid for with the revenue while allowing the community flexibility to respond to opportunities. Examples of eligible uses for recaptured funds include: revolving loan fund, downtown development, beautification, marketing, matching funds for future grants, public infrastructure improvements encouraging economic development,

trainings and seminars, economic development feasibility studies and plans, and programs supporting entrepreneurship.

Under its revenue recapture plan, IDEA, Inc in Riverton is using funds generated from lease payments to implement the community's strategic plan. Additionally, they have developed a savings account to fund local economic development projects without having to apply for supplementary grant dollars.

*For more information, contact Molly Davies, Wyoming Business Council, Business Ready Community Program Manager at 307-777-2811 or e-mail at molly.davies@wybusiness.org.*

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*Mark  
Your  
Calendar*

|      |                   |   |
|------|-------------------|---|
| 2008 | Sept. 23-24       | WEDA Fall Conference, Holiday Inn, Laramie                        |
|      | Oct. 9-10         | Business-to-Business Idea Expo, Little America, Cheyenne          |
| 2009 | February 9, 2009  | WCCE Winter Conference & Leadership Dinner                        |
|      | February 10, 2009 | Business Day at the Legislature & WEDA/WCCE Legislative Reception |
|      | February 11, 2009 | WEDA Winter Conference  |

## Wyoming Business Council transitions to new Regional Office system

A realignment of the Wyoming Business Council's Regional Offices became effective July 1; however, the Business Council is taking time to make the transition to ensure a smooth changeover for communities and projects currently underway.

Steve Elledge, Wyoming Business Council director of Field Operations and East Central regional director, said the transition could take until the rest of the year to ensure no projects suffer.

"Our first priority is to maintain effective working relationships and the efficient and comprehensive delivery of the expertise, services and programs of the Wyoming Business Council to the communities, entrepreneurs and businesses," Elledge added. "We believe these changes will assist us in those efforts."

The Regional Offices are generally the first points of contact for communities with the Wyoming Business Council. The offices work with local economic development organizations, city and county entities, and divisions of the Business Council and the Wyoming business community to assist retention, expansion, recruitment and community development efforts.

In the absence of active groups or individuals or expertise, regional directors may act on behalf of the relevant entity on economic and community development projects. The Business Council has offices in Casper, Riverton, Powell, Cheyenne, Gillette, Kemmerer and Rock Springs.

The realignment includes the following changes:

- The Southwest Region will cover Lincoln, Sublette and Uinta counties with the office located in Kemmerer. The region used to include Sweetwater County and two offices, one in Kemmerer and one in Rock Springs.

- The South Central Region has been created to cover Sweetwater and Carbon counties with the office located in Rock Springs.

- The Southeast Region will cover Laramie, Platte, Albany and Goshen counties with the office located in Cheyenne. Carbon County used to be part of this region and Platte County used to be part of the East Central Region.

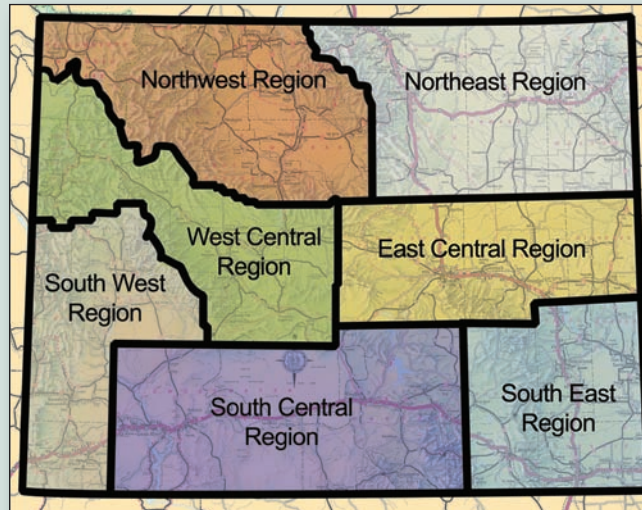
- The East Central Region will include Natrona, Converse and Niobrara counties. This region used to include Platte County.

While the realignment creates an additional region, no new positions or offices have been created. The following staffing changes have been made:

- Ray Sarcletti retired in July after serving Sweetwater, Lincoln, Uinta and Sublette counties over the last seven years as the Southwest Regional Director.

- Elaina Zempel has been promoted from Southwest Deputy Director to the Southwest Regional Director.

- Patricia Robbins is the South Central Regional Director, serving Sweetwater and Carbon counties. She has worked in economic development for the past 18 years, first as the executive director of the Green River Chamber of Commerce and, most recently, as the director of the Sweetwater Economic Development Association.



**Southeast Regional Office**  
**Tom Johnson**  
 Counties: Laramie, Platte, Albany, Goshen  
 1400 College Drive, Room 203;  
 Cheyenne, WY 82007  
 Phone: (307) 635-7735

### East Central Regional Office

**Steve Elledge**  
 Counties: Natrona, Converse, Niobrara  
 300 S. Wolcott, Suite 300; Casper, WY 82601  
 Phone: (307) 577-6012  
 steve.elledge@wybusiness.org

tom.johnson@wybusiness.org

### South Central Regional Office

**Pat Robbins**  
 Counties: Sweetwater, Carbon  
 1400 Dewar Drive, Suite 208A;  
 Rock Springs, WY 82901  
 Phone: (307) 382-3163  
 pat.robbins@wybusiness.org

### Northeast Regional Office

**Dave Spencer**  
 Counties: Campbell, Sheridan, Johnson, Crook, Weston  
 201 West Lakeway, Suite 1004;  
 Gillette, WY 82718  
 Phone: (307) 689-1320  
 dave.spencer@wybusiness.org

### Southwest Regional Office

**Elaina Zempel**  
 Counties: Lincoln, Sublette, Uinta  
 Quality Plaza; 1100 Pine Avenue, Suite 3F; Kemmerer, WY 83101  
 Phone: (307) 877-2203  
 elaina.zempel@wybusiness.org

### Northwest Regional Office

**Leah Brusino**  
 Counties: Park, Big Horn, Hot Springs, Washakie  
 143 S. Bent, Suite B; Powell, WY 82435  
 Phone: (307) 754-5785  
 leah.brusino@wybusiness.org

### West Central Regional Office

**Roger Bower**  
 Counties: Fremont, Teton  
 213 W. Main, Suite B; Riverton, WY 82501  
 Phone: (307) 857-1155  
 roger.bower@wybusiness.org

## WEDA Briefs:

### Wage Data by Age, Gender and County Available Online

Research & Planning, a division of the Wyoming Department of Employment, recently posted wage data by age, gender and county on its website: <http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/earnings/toc.htm>.

These tables include average wages for 2000 and 2006 by county of residence and county of employment. The data can be used to examine commuting patterns, wage differences by age and gender, and wage changes in recent years.

For example, in 2000 there were 627 women age 55-64 (9.1% of total women) who lived in Albany County and worked somewhere in Wyoming, including Albany County. Those women earned an average of \$22,563 during the year. In 2006, there were 922 (13.7% of total women) who lived in Albany County and worked in the state. They earned an average of \$30,673. The number of women in the age group increased by 47.0% while the wages increased by 35.9%.

Research & Planning is a state statistical agency that collects and analyzes data, both to administer federal programs and to conduct research for various state

and local agencies. For more information, visit <http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI> or call (307) 473-3807.

### Workforce Services LIFT Program Looking for Mentors

The Department of Workforce Services' LIFT (Life Improvement for Today) Mentoring Program is recruiting mature and retired individuals looking for a way to keep active by making a positive impact in their community and wanting to supplement their retirement income. LIFT will be launched in September, 2008 in Casper and Cheyenne. The program's aim is to help individuals who are currently receiving financial assistance through TANF, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, by providing them with a mature, retired mentor to offer advice and guidance. The final goal is for the TANF recipients to be successful enough to support themselves without government assistance.

Brad Westby, the Special Projects Program Manager for the Department, said, "Mentors should have the ability to actively listen, be a sounding board, ask challenging questions, provide feedback, be accessible, share experiences and be able to give sound advice." Individuals who are 50 years or older, want to work a flexible schedule while supplementing their income, and would like to share their

work and life experiences can apply at [www.wyomingworkforce.org/lift/](http://www.wyomingworkforce.org/lift/)

For more information about the LIFT Program or about the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, visit [www.wyomingworkforce.org](http://www.wyomingworkforce.org) or call 877-WORK-WYO.

### Manufacturing-Works Introduces SAFETY WORKS for OSHA Outreach Training

Manufacturing-Works recognizes the fact that employee safety and compliance with federal and state regulations are extremely important. To assist with providing a safer and more productive environment, Manufacturing-Works is introducing a new program, SAFETY WORKS, offering Safety and OSHA compliance training classes to Wyoming businesses, manufacturers, oil & gas services, utilities, municipalities and first responders.

SAFETY WORKS offers a comprehensive range of educational and critical training courses designed to meet the challenges imposed by federal and state regulatory agencies. By offering a complete array of risk analysis and management services, SAFETY WORKS helps employers identify and mitigate workplace hazards and risks while reducing injuries, accidents, and liability claims.

Through a customized training program, SAFETY WORKS offers the

choice of on-site training or can provide an off-site classroom setting. Manufacturing-Works will work with management, floor supervisors, and employees to identify and correct hazards. A workplace assessment will include a walk-through of the facility, written report and recommendations for cost savings measures.

For more information call 307-760-2505 or visit their web site at [www.manufacturing-works.com/safety/](http://www.manufacturing-works.com/safety/).

### Lander Noted in Top 50 Great Towns

National Geographic Adventure Magazine recently named Lander in the September 2008 issue as one of the "50 Next Great Towns to Live and Play." The article expounds about Lander's wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities, unique location next to the Wind River Range, and eclectic population of ranch hands and "NOLSies." The National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), one of the top outdoor wilderness education schools in the country, has its international headquarters based in Lander. It's also one of Lander's largest employers.

For more information visit the National Geographic Adventure Magazine website: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/adventure>. To learn more about what the Lander area offers, go to <http://www.landerchamber.org> or call Gary Michaud, City of Lander, at 307-332-3892.

Sponsored by WEDA and the Wyoming Business Council

## WEDA Economic Development Fall Conference

September 23-24, 2008  
Laramie Holiday Inn, Laramie Wyoming

### Registration:

To register, go to <http://www.wyomingeda.org/training.htm>  
or contact WEDA at 307-332-5546, [info@wyomingeda.org](mailto:info@wyomingeda.org)

### Conference AGENDA

#### Sept. 23, Tuesday:

1:00-3:15 **Best Practices for Site Selection Proposals**  
Moderator Sean Stevens, WBC

3:30-5:00 **Annie's got her gun; and it has a laser sight! How to Target Your Best Markets** by Robert Barnes-Casper Area EDA, Randy Bruns-Cheyenne LEADS & Philippe Chino-Forward Sheridan

5:30 p.m. **The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City Economic Forum**  
Reception and Hosted Dinner, Presenters George Kahn & Chad Wilkerson

#### Sept. 24, Wednesday:

8:30-10:00 **WEDA Annual Membership Meeting & Elections**

10:30-11:45 **UW School of Energy Resources & UW School of Business Update**  
Mark A. Northam, Director & Brent Hathaway, Dean

12:00-1:30 **Luncheon - Welcome address by UW President Tom Buchanan**  
Linda Hewitt Memorial Community Development Scholarship Award

1:30-3:30 **UW/WBC Economic Development Outreach - What's New?**  
Bill Gern, Vice-President

4:00-4:30 **Tour of UW Technology Incubator** with Jon Benson

### Feature Training Program:

**"Annie's got her gun; and it has a laser sight!" How to Target Your Best Markets**

Panel Presentation by Robert Barnes-Casper Area EDA, Randy Bruns-Cheyenne LEADS, Philippe Chino-Forward Sheridan

Three Wyoming economic development professionals will share their method of Targeted Industry Analysis for their communities. Topics to be covered include:

- What is TIA?
- Methods for determining your community's TIA
- Do you need TIA?
- What happens after you conclude the TIA process?

### Forum Speakers:

The Federal Reserve Bank of

Kansas City's Economic Forum is a discussion with Federal Reserve policy advisors about key regional economic issues and national trends as well as an update on monetary policy objectives and concerns. The Forum also provides area leaders an opportunity to share their views with the Federal Reserve Bank.

**George Kahn** is a Vice President and Economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. In this capacity, he serves as an advisor to the Bank's president and board of directors on monetary policy issues and conducts basic and applied research on issues of relevance to the Federal Reserve System. He received a B.A. degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1978 and a Ph.D. degree in economics from Northwestern University in 1983. Mr. Kahn has taught economics at the University of British

Columbia and has published articles on inflation and unemployment, potential economic growth and monetary policy.

**Chad Wilkerson** is an Assistant Vice President and serves as the Bank's regional economist and representative in the state of Oklahoma, recruits and works closely with the branch's board of directors and is responsible for briefing the Kansas City Fed's president – a member of the Federal Open Market Committee – on economic and business activity in the state. Wilkerson holds a master's degree from the University of Chicago and a bachelor's degree from William Jewell College in Liberty, MO. He also studied economics for a year at Oxford University in England. His research focuses on the Tenth District's regional economy, particularly its industrial structure and labor markets.

### Building from WEDA-1

"We want to drill five to 10 more wells into the Madison formation and then build a parallel water pipeline from our well field near Moorcroft to Gillette," Evenson said. "But the new pipeline will be expanded from the present 30 inch diameter line to a 36 or 40 inch diameter line to accommodate future growth."

The mayor said the planning also includes a new water treatment plant and that the new redundant system would be built to accommodate future water users between and including Moorcroft to Gillette.

Looking ahead to growth models, which forecast Gillette's population to soar over 40,000 by 2020, the mayor said the community must be ready to accommodate that kind of growth. "Governor Freudenthal sees the need here, and he wants this project to be a model for this new process," Evenson said. "We'll begin by refining plans with the engineers and getting the public involved so we can have as many people as possible to talk about present and future needs and what they want to see."

At the Sonoran Institute's new Wyoming office in Cheyenne, director Jim Whalen is set to put his three decades of state government service to work on an "Envision Wyoming" project. "The Sonoran Institute is established across the West to assist communities and organizations to deal with growth and environmental issues and changes," Whalen said. "With all the new growth in Wyoming, we saw an opportunity to open an office here."

Whalen said he is presently moving forward with a research project on planning and land use statutes around the state, and planning a development workshop in Sheridan County to address those issues. "I think there is real momentum in Wyoming now for this conversation," Whalen said. "People are interested in planning for the future and building a vision for the kind of state they want. I'm optimistic that with some new tools and with education, people are going to understand how important it is and what it means to the future of the state." He also noted that more people are beginning to understand that "land use planning and zoning isn't necessarily a restriction on private property rights, but more of a protection for private property rights."

Fuller said he looks forward to getting started. "We are all blessed to live in Wyoming and I think this organization has incredible potential to work with the people of this state to blend their visions of the Wyoming they desire for their grandchildren with the best science available today." Joanne Garnett of Pinedale will join Fuller as assistant director of the public-private partnership, and two other staff members will be added soon for administrative support and public relations.

Starting this month, Fuller and Garnett will begin a series of small gatherings across the state with local and state staff, private individuals and elected officials to discuss how citizens think the state can welcome growth and prosperity while still protecting the things and places that make Wyoming special.

### Conference Bulletin Board

#### 2nd Annual Business-to-Business Idea Expo

hosted by the Wyoming Business Council and its partners at the University of Wyoming. Oct. 9-10 at Little America, Cheyenne

Registration: [www.wyomingideaexpo.com](http://www.wyomingideaexpo.com) or call Brandon Marshall at 307.777.2820. Booth space for trade show: [www.wyomingideaexpo.com](http://www.wyomingideaexpo.com) or contact Annie Wood at 307.777.2844.

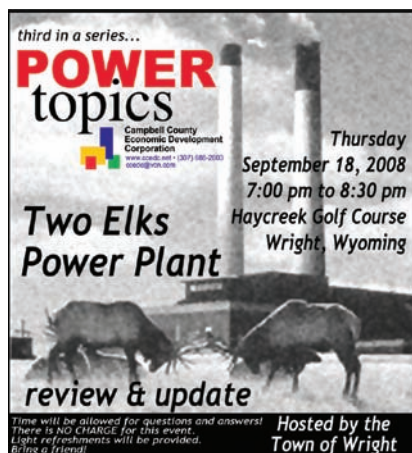
#### Managing "Generation Y" Employees Boot Camp

With speaker Eric Chester, America's leading expert on employing teens and young adults. September 23, 2008, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Laramie County Community College, Room: TC120/121, Cheyenne, WY  
Registration: Call Laramie County Community College at 307.778.4381



# WEDA Member News:



## Campbell County Economic Development Corp. (CCEDC)

### ■ Two Elk Power Plant update

CCEDC initiated new formats to invigorate their monthly economic development board meetings, including the addition of quarterly "POWER Topics," topic-driven forums designed to address current issues that are important to Campbell County. The first two forums, "Wind Energy Resources" and "Communication Technology for Dummies," were well received.

The third POWER Topics forum, hosted by the Town of Wright, will feature an update from Brad Enzi on the Two Elk Power Plant project. It will be held Thursday, September 18, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at the Haycreek Golf Course in Wright.

"According to North American Power Group, LTD's website, [www.napag-ltd.com/](http://www.napag-ltd.com/), the Two Elk project is a proposed series of highly efficient waste coal and coal-fired power generation facilities strategically located in Campbell County, Wyoming, approximately 45 miles southeast of Gillette, Wyoming and adjacent to the nation's largest coal mines which produce low sulfur coal for electric supply. With a mine-mouth location, Two Elk plans to be among the lowest cost electric producers in the western U.S. Construction of the first phase is anticipated to be completed in 2010 with construction employing nearly 600 professional and craft personnel at its peak. Power will be exported to long term energy and capacity contract buyers using transmission services and newly expanded capabilities from PacifiCorp."

### ■ CCEDC retail recruitment

The retail market offers promising opportunities for Campbell County. The International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) Conference, held in May, was beneficial for CCEDC and Campbell County. CCEDC attended the conference several years ago, but this was a new experience for Executive Director Ruth Benson, Marketing Director Susan Jerke and Board Member Traci Conklin. Several appointments were made with developers to visit one-on-one, but time was also spent observing to understand the "deal-making" process. Over 50,000 people were in attendance, with the serious goals of making solid connections and firm deals with retailers and developers.

Many retailers are regionally-based, focusing on the East Coast, West Coast, Mid-West, South, and Mountain States. CCEDC narrowed the discussions to retailers who are looking in our region, and found that Gillette and Campbell County are very much on their "radar." If they knew where Wyoming was, they knew all about Gillette's positive economy.

There is a great deal of interest in Gillette, particularly "mid-level" retail,

including restaurants and department stores. Developers are investigating available locations, studying traffic counts, property taxes and demographics. Each retailer has specific demographic formulas that a potential community must meet. For example, Baskin Robbins requires a residential population of 15,000 residents within a 3-minute drive time, median household income of \$40,000 minimum, and 35% of the households with children.

## Lovell Inc. News

### ■ Lovell Inc. Hires Director

The Board of Directors of newly-formed Lovell Inc. announced the opening of an economic development office in downtown Lovell and the hiring of a full-time director. The director, Sue Taylor, relocated to Lovell from Montana in April and has been working with existing business owners, developing a recruitment program, and launching initial projects. Startup funding for the organization came from an appropriation from the Town of Lovell and will provide operating funds for the first several years.

Contact information: Sue Taylor, Director, Lovell Inc.; 436 Nevada Avenue, Lovell, WY 82431; 307-548-6707 [www.lovellinc.org](http://www.lovellinc.org) [lovellinc@tctwest.net](mailto:lovellinc@tctwest.net)

### ■ Lovell Inc. Economic Development Rapid Response Program

To establish contact with as many potential business owners as possible, Lovell Inc. has established a Rapid Response Program. The mission of the Rapid Response Economic Development Team is to deliver accurate and essential information in a timely manner to help new and existing business ventures in the Lovell area. Realtors, bankers, the local newspaper, local telephone/telecommunications office, and Town of Lovell staff were identified as Key Members of the Response Team. When a Key Member encounters a prospective or current business owner with questions regarding a commercial venture, the Key Member asks that prospect if they can provide contact information to the economic development office. Once the Lovell Inc. office is given the information from a Key Member, the prospect is called for follow-up action within 48 hours. This new program represents a pro-active approach to business development with the goal of handling each prospect quickly and effectively.

## News from Laramie Economic Development Corporation (LEDC)

### ■ New Faces at LEDC

LEDC's new CEO began in May. Gaye Stockman comes to LEDC from Loveland, Colorado where she was the President of the Loveland Chamber of Commerce. Previously she also worked with the Wyoming Business Council in Retention and Expansion before moving to Northern Colorado where she worked as V-P for the Northern Colorado EDC. She earned her CECD (Certified Economic Developer) certification through the International Economic Development Council which is the gold standard for economic development. She also is also certified as an EDFP (Economic Development Financial Professional) through the National Development Council.

Karen Gibbons, previously the Interim President at LEDC, has accepted the position of V-P of Business Development.

Adam Vernati, previously in the military for 15 years, has returned to LEDC as Project Manager after a brief sabbatical to earn his degree in Business Administration.

### ■ Laramie Technology Building



A Certificate of Occupancy is almost ready for the Laramie Technology Building, formerly known as the Welldog Building. This building is a great asset to the business community in Laramie and to South-eastern Wyoming. This facility was built with a Business Ready Community (BRC) Grant through the Wyoming Business Council. LEDC used the land (valued at over \$400,000) as a match for the BRC grant, with the building project totaling \$2.58 million. The building has high-tech features and is over 17,000 sq. ' with office, research labs and production space. The building is being shown to potential tenants from around Laramie and from outside the U.S. There is considerable activity from several different businesses who are interested in locating in the building.

## Hot Springs County Red Rock Business Park Update

In March, 2007, Hot Springs County received a Wyoming Business Council Business Ready Communities Grant to develop 22 acres south of Thermopolis into a business park that will be divided into 14 business-ready lots. The land is owned by the Thermopolis - Hot Springs County Economic Development Company. The grant is divided into two phases and funding for each phase is \$1,500,000 for a total grant of \$3,000,000.

Phase I consisted of all on site improvements including streets, sidewalk, curb and gutter, water lines, sewer lines, street lights, and landscaping. Phase II consists of extending the main sewer line 3,000 feet to the business park boundary. Phase II is scheduled for completion mid-August.

The Thermopolis-Hot Springs County Economic Development Company has fielded several inquires about the property. For more information, contact Lorraine Quarberg, Thermopolis-Hot Springs County Economic Development Company, 307-864-2348, [lquarberg@rtconnect.net](mailto:lquarberg@rtconnect.net), [www.thermopedc.com](http://www.thermopedc.com).

## Dubois Volunteers Incorporated Completes Business Building



The town of Dubois continues a campaign to recruit tenants for its DVI Corner Building. The 1680 sq. ' building, funded by the Wyoming Business Council's Business Ready Communities grant, can be used by one business or divided into two equal spaces with separate entrances and exterior signage visible from the highway/main street. The just-completed building fits into the distinctive western look of Dubois, and is surrounded by a pedestrian park with native plantings. For more information call 307-455-2041, or 307-455-3468.

## Airports and Their Role in the Local Economy

### By Jennifer Scott, CAEDA

While many communities are losing air service, Casper is fortunate to have a strong local airport that continues to expand flight options for Wyoming's residents. Recently Allegiant Air announced it will begin flying from Casper to Las Vegas in September. "As others are reducing, Allegiant is expanding...and we are very excited to have them here," said airport manager Glenn Januska. "The convenience of flying out of Casper and having direct service to one of our most popular destinations is going to be great for Wyoming." In June, United also added direct flights from Casper/Natrona County International Airport (C/NCIA) to Chicago. Daily flights to Denver, Salt Lake and Minneapolis are also offered from C/NCIA.

Passenger air service is often difficult to secure for smaller cities such as Casper, but is important for a healthy local economy. Travel options contribute to a greater quality of life for both individuals and businesses.

The economic significance of local airports is often overlooked. Civil aviation contributes more than \$900 billion and 11.3 million jobs to the U.S. economy every year - over 9% of the GDP! Rather than recreational facilities, airports are valuable economic hubs that provide benefits to citizens and expand trade opportunities.

While passenger air service is the most visible element, probably the greatest economic strength of airports is the advantages they bring to local businesses. Airports provide jobs, shipping services, and tie into other important industries such as manufacturing. In fact, many non-aviation firms intentionally locate near an airport to take advantages of air services. Companies throughout the greater Casper area depend on FedEx and other cargo carriers for timely shipments and access to wider markets. Air cargo operations at C/NCIA increased 9.5 % last year. In today's global economy, air cargo services help businesses stay profitable.

Many other industries utilize airports as well. Medical flights provide critical care for thousands every year. Energy companies use aircraft to monitor facilities, such as pipelines, as well as for survey work. Other sectors that rely heavily on aviation include agriculture, forestry, real estate, construction, banking and finance, charitable organizations and government.

Airports also bring in funding to the local economy from the state and federal governments. Currently \$3 million in state funds are appropriated for air service enhancements in Wyoming. Grants from the Federal Aviation Administration bring in critical dollars for maintenance of facilities and equipment. Local airports also serve as important training facilities. Today 90% of pilots train at private civilian flight schools, rather than in the military. There are more than 3,400 flight schools across the country and the majority are small local businesses.

In Wyoming, airports are an especially important part of the state's infrastructure, interconnecting with highways and providing access to isolated communities. The state has 33 public use airports; Jackson Hole Airport is the busiest in the state, followed by Casper in terms of both passengers and dollars brought into the local economy.

Airports are an important part of a local economy and provide a wide range of benefits to the communities they serve.