In this economic environment good economic news has been hard to come by, that is until now. The University of Wyoming and General Electric announced on Friday, May 9 that the partnership they had formed to research making Wyoming coal viable for decades will be located in Cheyenne. A $100,000,000 - $120,000,000 coal gasification research center has the potential to open up new markets and provide a cleaner burning process. In other words, Wyoming had the foresight to invest in its own future.

Cheyenne has been selected as the site for this research facility that will provide 300 jobs during construction, 15 full time plant operators and a base of researchers and potential customers. Cheyenne was selected as the primary location with a site in the Cheyenne Business Parkway and negotiations on specific items have begun. This project, along with several others including the NCAR/UW super computer center (NWSC), place Cheyenne into a whole new and beneficial economic climate. High tech and higher paying positions help to diversify the local economy, making it the best method possible. As the research continues on coal gasification, the entire research base in Laramie County increases making other research entities more likely to consider Cheyenne. Exposing Cheyenne to General Electric and other customers could easily invigorate a new focus for economic development activities.

Cheyenne has been investing in itself at a remarkable rate for many years and the assets available are significant. Cheyenne was one of the only three sites available in the state that met the demands of the University of Wyoming and General Electric for the coal gasification research facility. This is fairly remarkable given the fact that...
With the 2009 LEADS Board of Directors now in full swing, we would like to welcome our three newest elected officials and introduce them to our entire membership. On March 13, 2009 the membership voted Randy Ford of Brewster Miller Financial Group, Catherine Rogers of Rogers and Rogers, P.C. and Robert Womack of Spradley Barr Motors, Inc. to the Board to serve a three year term, 2009-2011.

**Randy Ford** joins the LEADS Board of Directors as a very active community leader and supporter. For over 30 years Randy Ford has assisted individuals and corporations in all aspects of their finances. He started his career in the financial services industry in 1979 after completing his BS in Agriculture Business from Colorado State University. Focusing on retirement, estate and business succession planning, he has been able to help his clients reach their financial goals and objectives and save on their taxes. As a principal of Brewster Miller Financial Group he continues the values and traditions that began more than 75 years ago when the business first became a part of the Cheyenne community.

Randy is a Certified Financial Planner® and is on the CFP® Registry. His other designations include Certified Life Underwriter and Chartered Financial Consultant, earned from the American College. As a member of the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors and the Wyoming Estate Planning Council, he knows the issues and develops comprehensive financial plans that draw on the latest strategies and tax saving solutions.

Randy became a career agent with MassMutual in April of 1989. His twenty years with a company that knows the importance of long-term financial and investment results serves him well and enhances the distinguished reputation he has earned in Wyoming, Colorado and Nebraska. He has received many awards and accolades including multiple years as a Million Dollar Round Table qualifier and MassMutual Leadership Conferences.

Randy is an active community leader and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Cheyenne-Laramie County Economic Development Joint Powers Board, Cheyenne, United Way of Laramie County funding committee, Cheyenne Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, Wyoming Stock Growers and is a former board trustee for the Cheyenne Regional Medical Center Foundation. Randy enjoys the Rocky Mountains and the outdoor activities they offer both summer and winter. He and his wife Sue have two adult sons.

**Catherine R. Rogers** wears many hats, and now will be able to add one more. Catherine R. Rogers practices elder law, estate planning and estate administration from her office in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Catherine earned her B.A. from Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT in 1991 and her J.D. from the University of Wyoming College of Law in 1997. She is a member of the Laramie County (President, 2004-2005) and American Bar Associations; Wyoming State Bar; National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys; and S.E. Wyoming Estate...
Planning Council (Board Member 2003 - present). Catherine also serves as a Laramie County Circuit Court Magistrate.

Catherine is a graduate of Leadership Cheyenne (Class of 2000 – 2001), and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Wyoming Guardianship Corporation; the Board of Directors of Wyoming Addiction Alternatives (foundation to support Laramie County Drug Court); the Institutional Review Board for Cheyenne Regional Medical Center; and Cheyenne Animal Shelter/Services (Assistant Treasurer, July 2007 – present). Catherine has also served as a Mentor for the HOSTS (Help Our Students to Succeed) program at Baggs Elementary and as a member of the Board of Trustees for Cheyenne Interfaith Hospitality Network, the Board of Directors of Patrons of the Dance and the Board of Directors for the St. Mark’s Episcopal Church Centennial Foundation.

Catherine and her husband, Kevin Ohlson, dote on their two dogs, Tucker and Canyon, and also serve as Foster Parents for the Laramie County Field Office of the Wyoming Department of Family Services.

Robert Womack will continue to give back to his community as he joins the LEADS Board of Directors. Robert “Bob” Womack is the managing partner and Vice President for Spradley Barr Motors dealership in Cheyenne. Since the age of 14, Bob has worked in dealerships. In 1993, Bob entered into a partnership to purchase his first dealership in Casper, Wyoming. Then in 1998 Bob had the opportunity to partner with the Spradley Barr Corporation which lead to the purchase of Fassett-Nickels Ford and Toyota in Cheyenne. Bob’s efforts throughout the years lead to the expansion of the dealership to present car lines of Hyundai, Lincoln, Mercury and Mazda of Cheyenne and the addition of Ford, Lincoln and Mercury in Greeley, Colorado.

Bob is a firm believer in giving back to your community through service. He currently serves on the United Way Board, is current president of the Wyoming Automotive Dealers’ Association, Meals on Wheels Foundation, the Rotary Board and is past president of the Rotary Club of Cheyenne. Bob sees value in supporting the community by way of service organizations and has encouraged his employees to join service and community organizations such as Military Affairs Committee, United Way, Rotary and the Chamber of Commerce.

Bob’s family includes his wife of 31 years, Karen, and two children, Rachel, 23 and Robert, 20. Bob and Karen also served as host parents to seven exchange students and hosts to numerous Rotarian guests from Russia and South America.

We welcome them all to the Board and look forward to their three years of service of helping Cheyenne and Laramie County grow.
Manufacturing-Works™ Receives National Recognition for Work in Wyoming

Manufacturing-Works™ employees achieved national recognition for their commitment to helping Wyoming companies grow at this year’s Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) National Conference in Orlando, Florida.

Manufacturing-Works Center Director Larry Stewart swept up the MEP Champion of the Year award while Center Manager Nancy Fallas received the Unsung Hero award. There were 18 other nominees for each of the two categories from a pool of approximately 1,800 possible people who could have been nominated.

Manufacturing-Works™ is one of 59 MEP centers in the nation and is a partnership with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the Wyoming Business Council, and the University of Wyoming. MEP centers provide manufacturers with an array of services that focus on growth, productivity, and efficiency. In the past year, Manufacturing-Works has had 488 contacts resulting in 138 unique clients.

In his letter of support for Stewart’s nomination, William Gern, vice president for research and development at the University of Wyoming, wrote, “With the challenges in today’s economy it is important to have people like Larry Stewart who believe in working with clients to develop innovative processes in order to stay competitive in today’s market.”

Business Council CEO Bob Jensen called Stewart a “true champion of manufacturing businesses in the state,” noting his years of helping provide superior customer service. “The Business Council values Larry greatly as an important partner in helping us accomplish our mission.”

The MEP Champion of the Year recognizes those who are outstanding advocates for the manufacturing extension mission and have demonstrated an overwhelming commitment to the business growth and transformation of the U.S.-based manufacturers through their continued support of the MEP system. The Unsung Hero of the Year Award recognizes individuals from marketing, reporting, administrative, human resources and other support roles whose special efforts behind the scenes have allowed their centers to excel in the eyes of the customer.

For more information on Manufacturing-Works go to www.manufacturing-works.com.
Thank You for Your Continued Support!

We have almost done it, thanks to our members and their continually strong support. After only a few months, we have almost recovered our budgetary deficit in new one-time funds. Last year, as we began the process of developing our budget for the next fiscal year, we quickly realized that if we were going to accomplish the goals and objectives established by our membership and board we were going to have a budget short fall. Further analysis pointed out that we have not changed our membership dues structure since 1986, the year of LEADS inception. We recognized that we need to develop more appropriate dues structure carefully and thoughtfully and that will happen over the course of this year.

We would like to take a moment and thank all those businesses and individuals that have made additional contributions this year to support the future growth and prosperity of Cheyenne and Laramie County.

A.G. Andrikopoulos Resources
Aamco Transmissions
Albany Restaurant
American National Bank
Brewster Miller Financial Group
Cheyenne Light Fuel Power
Cheyenne Pet Clinic
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Wallick and Volk
Walter Urbigkit
Wayne & Pat Johnson
WinHealth
Woodard & White
Attendees Enjoyed the Value-Added to this Year’s Banquet

The setting, elegant; the food, fantastic; and the speaker, enlightening, are all descriptions of the 2009 LEADS Annual Membership Meeting and Banquet. With just over 375 in attendance on March 13 at the Holiday Inn, it wasn’t the largest banquet, but it was one that many are glad they didn’t miss!

Tom Reilly, the value-added selling expert and keynote speaker for the event, provided insight and laughter to the crowd. He explained how every business can be successful if it can become a value-added peak competitor, which is basically being the best that it can be. The keys to the value-added peak competitor are a passion for excellence, a customer value focus and adding value with people. Intertwining these rules with stories and jokes, Tom kept the audience interested and excited about what else he had to say. To wrap-up he went into how all companies can stay strong competitors even in tough times with the three O’s, Open, Optimistic, and Opportunistic. Tom Reilly also provided a half-day seminar the following Saturday on the Value-Added Organization which attendees felt was well worth their Saturday morning.

With another successful banquet under our belts, we would like to thank our sponsors of the event one more time. Thanks to Manufacturing-Works for their sponsorship of Tom Reilly and thanks to our general sponsors of the event, AVI Engineering, P.C., Cheyenne Regional Medical Center, First American Title Company, Hirst Applegate, P.C. and McGee, Hearne & Paiz, LLP.
Cheyenne is about as far away as you can get from coal fields in Wyoming.

Cheyenne LEADS, due completely to member and government support has two industrial parks with land that is shovel ready. Because of the member support, LEADS can be very flexible in the price structure of the land for the right type of company. The electric, gas, water and sewer infrastructure in place can accommodate almost any type of facility. The telecommunications fiber in the park could easily handle almost any need. The roads are built to handle the heaviest legal loads.

The gasification research facility will be next door to one of the newest, most advanced research buildings in Wyoming, of which Cheyenne LEADS will be a part owner. One of the neighbors of the gasification plant will be a fire training center to provide an extra degree of safety. The industrial support for this facility is already in place due to Frontier Refinery and Dyno Nobel. The housing market in Cheyenne is still healthy without extreme swings. Labor availability has been somewhat tight, but consistent. The decision to include Cheyenne into the final three sites best suited in the state, and ultimately as the chosen site, came as a surprise to many other areas, but not to us at Cheyenne LEADS. Cheyenne was ready for this project and will continue to be ready for future projects.

In this instance the most important factor for Cheyenne to make the final cut was the Cheyenne LEADS Board of Directors, made up of local business people and ex officio members that include the Mayor and a County Commissioner. The Board, after a serious and productive debate, weighed the merits of the project and decided on a course of action that proved effective. Cheyenne’s ability and willingness to invest in itself, over and over again, has allowed Cheyenne to compete very well with the best in the region, making it not only an area that attracts new growth, but encouraging existing business to expand. In the very near future, especially as the recession recedes, these strengths and investments should produce even more good news.
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