

# WCCE News

## Wyoming Chamber of Commerce Executives

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Candy Wright, Director  
PO Box 301, Wheatland, Wyoming 82201  
Phone/Fax: 307-322-3977  
[wcce@wyomingwireless.com](mailto:wcce@wyomingwireless.com)  
[www.wyomingchambers.com](http://www.wyomingchambers.com)

October 2006  
Newsletter

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### From WCCE's President

*Lori Becker, Casper Area Chamber of Commerce*

Hello WCCE Members,

I'd like to start my first letter as president with a sincere *thank you* to Peggy Rounds for her good work this past year as president. Notice I'm not saying goodbye to Peggy? That's because she's still on the board as past president and also because I fully intend to call her for help and for her expertise! Kudos! to Peggy and the Evanston community for hosting a successful Fall Conference in Evanston in September. It was a great conference and as always, provided the Chamber execs across the state the opportunity to network and share ideas.

With all of the activities and visitors that summer brings, I'm always thankful when we've managed to not only survive, but also, that we've managed to keep our sanity! Sometime we tend to get so caught up in the activities and events that we forget what we really need to provide to our members. Sometimes we just need to slow down and take some time to review our programs and practices. It's not written in stone anywhere that Chambers can't change what they focus on and consider new programs and processes. We ended our summer season with a Board Retreat. I can't tell you how helpful this was for me, my board and ultimately, our membership. We now have three main goals that we have already begun working on and a list of goals to work on for the rest of the year. The board, the staff and myself are all working for the same results, with the same expectations and it's exciting to know that we are improving our services and our relevancy to our members. If it's been a while since you've sat down with your board and had a retreat or a strategic planning session, I'd encourage you to schedule the time. It breathes new life into you as the leader and into your staff and board members. It's definitely worth the time and effort!

Planning has now begun for Business Day at the Legislature. The two panels this year will address Quality Childcare and Immigration. It is extremely important to have an educated and active membership. Please distribute the brochures that Candy will be offering and encourage your members to attend. Both of these topics are huge challenges for our business members and we are looking forward to providing more information to businesses throughout the state. The date for Business Day is February 6<sup>th</sup> at the Hitching Post in conjunction with the Winter Conference, which begins on the 5<sup>th</sup> of February. I look forward to seeing you there.

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### *WELCOME....New Directors!!*

Kim Andrews, Sublette County Chamber of Commerce 307-367-2242

Kim Capron, Powell Valley Chamber of Commerce 307-754-3494

Adrienne Doyle, Wright Area Chamber of Commerce 307-464-1321

Tim O'Donoghue, Jackson Chamber of Commerce 307-733-3316

Anya Petersen-Frey, Riverton Chamber of Commerce 307-856-4801

## **From the Wyoming Business Council** **Brandon Marshall, Business Retention and Entrepreneurship**

### **Why on earth would my company want to be in your town?**

Recently you may have noticed several leads coming through from the Wyoming Business Council asking you to send proposals for various companies possibly interested in locating in Wyoming. While not always a chamber of commerce role, responding to leads can be one of the most important things you can do for your community, especially when your role is that of chamber and economic developer.

Carter Burgess, a site selection company located in Fort Worth Texas, recently published an article with some instruction on what companies and site selectors are looking for from a community when they request information. I thought it was appropriate to commit a little bit of plagiarism and let you know just what it is that they want from you.

The article lists 5 major aspects of your community that are of the most importance to them. They are: Do you have the right demographics? Is land available? Do you offer incentives? Is it easy to locate in your community? What can you offer for quality of life?

**(End Plagiarism, Begin Original Thought)**

#### **1. Do you have the right demographics?**

It's really no accident that demographics are listed first in the article. A company will use demographics to make their initial eliminations because there are a few factors, such as available workforce (that's fun in Wyoming, right?) that will make or break a project.

It doesn't matter how nice your community is, if a company can't hire their workers there. A good place to look for hints to find as to exactly what a company is looking for in demographics is our site selector site through the WBC; [www.whywyoming.org](http://www.whywyoming.org). There are recently updated demographics listed for most places in the state that we would be flattered to have you plagiarize. Certainly it's a good thing to have everyone using the same information anyway. There can be serious credibility problems when we all have different numbers.

#### **2. Is land available?**

Once you've passed the demographics hurdle, it's important to be able to show a company available land or facilities that fit their needs. I'm assuming that you all know this but, an empty lot on the outskirts of town doesn't necessarily mean available land in this context. Site selectors and companies are looking for developed land, complete with all utilities and roads. This is the specific purpose of the WBC's Business Ready Communities Program, so use it.

#### **3. Do you offer incentives?**

Many times site selection incentives are what break a tie between two competing communities. Be sure to be specific on incentives offered when you are responding to a company's requests. While there are not a lot available in Wyoming, be sure to mention all programs that are available that your community is ready to pursue on behalf of any potential company. At the WBC we often mention our tax environment as an incentive. While many states can offer tax abatements as incentives, we simply don't tax to begin with.

#### **4. Is it easy to locate in your community?**

Beyond offering incentives to a company, it's important the company knows it won't have to go to the edge of insanity to get help from the local officials, and your community is going to be easy to locate in.

Nothing can kill a deal like unhelpful local officials. Assuring you elect and appoint local leaders that are business friendly and development minded is highly important. Initial meetings can quickly answer the question about how easy it is to locate in your community. Local officials should be offering things like sped up licensing and permitting processes, and assistance in accessing any state programs designed to benefit a company. You may also want to address the general sentiment of the population of your community toward business development. Make sure that a company knows that they are truly wanted in your community.

#### **5. What can you offer for quality of life?**

Finally, a company wants to know that your community offers a quality of life that will fit the needs of their employees. Everyone thinks their community offers the best quality of life anywhere, but you have to show a company exactly why you are better than any other community. Quality of life isn't just parks and nicely manicured main streets (although those are both important). The entire feel of your community speaks to quality of life. Discuss local events, the local schools, cultural events and things that define your community.

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## **Fall Conference – Evanston, Wyoming:**

Fall Conference in Evanston was great!! The Machine Shop was beautiful. Thank you to Peggy Rounds, Jim Davis and Rick Lunsford for welcoming WCCE, WEDA and the Wyoming Business Council to their beautiful town.

When conference participants were asked “What single item from the WCCE/WEDA Fall Conference program had the most impact for you” comments were:

*Networking with other chamber directors both in sessions and on free time between meeting sessions.*

*Understanding and confirming what interests, concerns, challenges, and issues we share in Wyoming.*

*Small group discussions allows similar and unique concerns from different organizations throughout the state.*

*Ed Barlow was very controversial yet he was very knowledgeable and an excellent speaker and facilitator.*

*Work sessions on Thursday.*

*Networking with chamber director’s from around the state. No better way to improve yourself as a director.*

*Ed Barlow, networking, meeting as a region – may have been the first time the northeast region met as a group.*

*Evanston is a great community – a long drive but worth the effort – Good job – too bad there were not more people here.*

*Planning for the future & Ed Barlow.*

*Impressed with seeing what Evanston had done in their community.*

*Networking and connections.*

*How we need to change as a state to keep up with the times and succeed in today’s business world.*

*Congratulations to Gene Bryan on receiving the Spirit of Excellence Award. Way to go Gene!!*

*The frankness about our future issues really struck a chord with me.*

*Networking, networking, networking...need I say more.*

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**Please return the 2006 Wage Survey to the WCCE office as soon as possible. If you do not have a copy e-mail Candy at [wcce@wyomingwireless.com](mailto:wcce@wyomingwireless.com) and she will make sure you receive a copy as soon as possible.**

**Congratulations Gene Bryan (Cody Country Chamber of Commerce) on your retirement!!  
We will miss you!!**

### **Object and Purpose of WCCE**

*The organization shall be organized to advance Chamber of Commerce management in all areas; to advance standards of ethical and efficient operation; to provide assistance to members in the conduct of their responsibilities; to coordinate information on all matters relating to Chambers of Commerce and similar organizations; to be a clearinghouse for interchange of ideas and information among Chambers which may provide a basis for action on matters of statewide importance; and to provide a medium for effective cooperation with organizations performing specialized functions related to Chamber of Commerce.*

### **WCCE Reminders:**

- Send your newsletter to WCCE and to other Wyoming chambers. We can all learn by what others are doing!!
- Please e-mail, to WCCE, your membership databases.
- Upcoming WCCE Conferences:
  - February 5, 2007 – WCCE Winter Conference/Training & Leadership Dinner  
Hitching Post Inn - Cheyenne, WY
  - February 6, 2007 – Business Day at the Legislature & WCCE/WEDA Legislative Reception  
Hitching Post Inn – Cheyenne, WY
  - February 7, 2007 – WEDA Winter Conference/Training  
Hitching Post Inn – Cheyenne, WY

## **WCCE Board of Directors 2006-2007**

### **Lori Becker, President**

Casper Area Chamber of Commerce  
PO Box 399  
Casper, WY 82602  
307-234-5311  
Fax 307-265-2643  
[lorib@casperwyoming.org](mailto:lorib@casperwyoming.org)

### **Rolinda Sample (2008)**

Greater Cheyenne Chamber  
One Depot Square  
121 West 15<sup>th</sup> Street Suite 204  
Cheyenne, WY 82001  
307-638-3388  
Fax 307-778-1407  
[rolindas@cheyennechamber.org](mailto:rolindas@cheyennechamber.org)

### **Peggy Rounds, Past President**

Evanston Chamber of Commerce  
PO Box 365  
Evanston, WY 82930  
307-783-0370 or 307-783-0374  
Fax 307-789-4807  
[director@etownchamber.com](mailto:director@etownchamber.com)

### **Jackie Bredthauer (2008)**

Niobrara Chamber of Commerce  
PO Box 457  
Lusk, WY 82225  
307-334-2950  
Fax 307-334-2950  
[luskchamberofcommerce@yahoo.com](mailto:luskchamberofcommerce@yahoo.com)

### **Mike Willard, President-Elect**

Worland/Tensleep Chamber  
120 N 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Worland, WY 82401  
307-347-3226  
Fax 307-347-3025  
[wtschamber@rtconnect.net](mailto:wtschamber@rtconnect.net)

### **Karen Haderlie, Secretary/Treasurer (2007)**

Star Valley Chamber of Commerce  
PO Box 1171  
Thayne, WY 83127  
307-883-2759  
Fax 307-883-2758  
[svccom@silverstar.com](mailto:svccom@silverstar.com)

WCCE Board Conference Calls are on the third Tuesday of every month at 10 a.m. – if you are interested in being on these calls you must let the WCCE office know so you will receive call-in information.

All members are welcome on the call. WCCE appreciates your participation.