

January/February 2019

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Bring Me The Horizon: Beautiful and barren, the road home always feels the longest. Southbound between Lander and Rawlins.

WAMConnection

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UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

February 20-22
WAM Winter Conference.
Little America Resort,
Cheyenne

MARCH

March 14-15
Wyoming Community Gas,
Casper

March 27-28
WAM-JPIC Board Meeting,
Cheyenne

APRIL

Throughout April
WAM Regional Meetings,
Sites and Times TBD

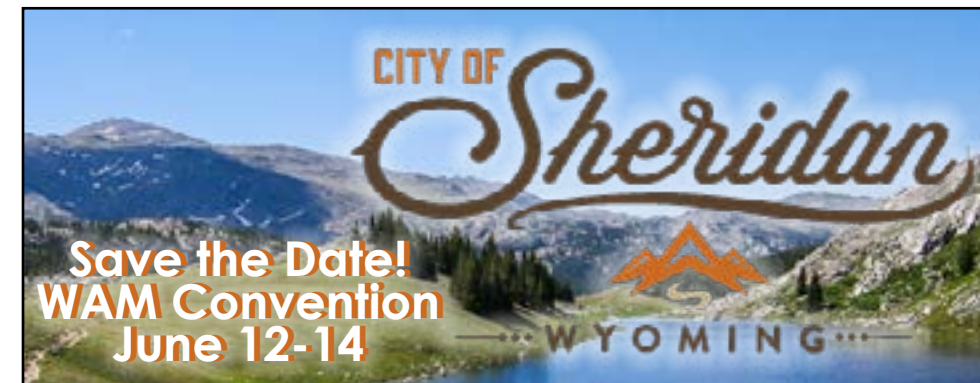
April 3-5
WAMCAT Spring
Conference, Casper
College

MAY

May 19-22
IIMC Annual Conference,
Birmingham, AL

JUNE

June 12-14 WAM Summer
Convention, Sheridan



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Newly Electeds

THANKS FOR YOUR SERVICE!

Election years are always exciting times of change and reorganization. Fresh faces and new perspectives are critical to keeping our communities growing and evolving with the times, and WAM welcomes all of you newly elected officials who might be picking up a copy of WAM Connection for the first time. WAM is YOUR association, and we sincerely hope you’ll choose to be actively involved. We’re here to support you in any way possible as you grow into your new role and strive to be the best public servant that you can be. We’re also here to advocate for your community, and your input is crucial to that end.

Of course as one door opens, another one closes. With gratitude we say goodbye to those leaving office, as they exit service of their communities, and in turn, active participation in our association. WAM wishes to sincerely thank all those leaders for their service and wish them well in all of their future endeavors.

Newly Elected Municipal Leadership

Mayor	J.C. Inskeep	Afton
Council Member	Will Wikes	Afton
Council Member	Abby Johnson	Afton
Mayor	C.J. Duncan	Basin
Council Member	Joe Keele	Basin
Council Member	Brian Stokes	Bear River
Mayor	Shane Schrader	Buffalo
Mayor	Gerald (Jerry) George	Burlington
Council Member	Gary Grunko	Burlington
Mayor	Pam Hopkinson	Byron
Council Member	Brandon Hessenthaler	Byron
Council Member	Breck Martineau	Byron
Mayor	Charlie Powell	Casper
Council Member	Mike Huber	Casper
Council Member	Khrystyn Lutz	Casper
Council Member	Steve Freel	Casper
Council Member	Kenneth Bates	Casper
Council Member	Ken Esquibel	Cheyenne
Council Member	Kelly Cronk	Chugwater
Council Member	Joe Schirmer	Chugwater
Council Member	Justin Baily	Cody
Council Member	Diane Ballard	Cody
Council Member	Heidi Rasmussen	Cody
Mayor	Rose Arndt	Cokeville
Council Member	Taylor Allred	Cokeville
Council Member	Dennis Wagner	Dayton
Council Member	Ward Cotton	Dayton
Mayor	Charles “Mark” Langley	Diamondville
Council Member	Eric Backman	Diamondville
Mayor	Medodie Seilaff	Dixon
Mayor	Rene Kemper	Douglas
Council Member	Kim Pexton	Douglas
Mayor	John Meyer	Dubois
Mayor	Merle Moore	East Thermopolis
Council Member	Debra Lackey	East Thermopolis
Council Member	Charles Aars	Edgerton
Council Member	Bryson Kennedy	Elk Mountain
Council Member	Craig Mustard	Elk Mountain

Council Member	Shannon Fagon	Encampment
Council Member	Mikal Welling	Evanston
Council Member	Tib Ottley	Evanston
Mayor	Jennifer Sorenson	Evansville
Council Member	Chad Edwards	Evansville
Council Member	Kelly Loveland	Fort Laramie
Council Member	Garret Frescoln	Frannie
Mayor	Bruce Roumell	Glenrock
Council Member	AnnaBelle Faunce	Glenrock
Council Member	Roy Kincaid	Glenrock
Mayor	Bradley McCollum	Granger
Council Member	Travis Ames	Granger
Council Member	Jim Zimmerman	Green River
Council Member	Michael Shutran	Green River
Council Member	Kaitlyn Johnson	Greybull
Mayor	Nicholas Paustian	Guernsey
Council Member	Kellie Augustryn	Guernsey
Mayor	Lois Buchanan	Hanna
Council Member	Sam Sikes	Hanna
Council Member	Tracy Fowler	Hanna
Council Member	Zeke Bonella	Hudson
Council Member	Mary Anne Robeson	Hudson
Council Member	Arne Jorgensen	Jackson
Council Member	Jonathan Schechter	Jackson
Council Member	Vance Chamberlain	Kemmerer
Council Member	Mark Quinn	Kemmerer
Mayor	Sam Mead	Kirby
Council Member	Cory Walk	Kirby
Council Member	Zack Key	LaBarge
Mayor	Monte Richardson	Lander
Council Member	Chris Hulme	Lander
Council Member	Missy White	Lander
Mayor	Joe Shumway	Laramie
Council Member	Erin O’Doherty	Laramie
Council Member	Brian Harrington	Laramie
Council Member	Paul Weaver	Laramie
Mayor	Kevin Jones	Lovell
Council Member	Bob Magnus	Lovell
Council Member	Dan Anderson	Lovell
Council Member	Tansey Shelton	Lyman
Mayor	Dennis Chambers	Manderson
Council Member	Ralph Stone	Manderson
Council Member	Karla Denzin	Medicine Bow
Council Member	Eric Scott	Meeteetse
Council Member	Dale Peterson	Moorcroft
Council Member	Pamela Gualtieri	Newcastle
Council Member	Ann McColley	Newcastle
Council Member	John McKnight III	Opal
Council Member	Michale Beehler	Opal
Council Member	John McKnight IV	Opal

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Council Member	Susan Kisling	Pavillion	Council Member	Amber Dye	Town of Shoshoni
Mayor	Bill Cunningham	Pine Haven	Mayor	Asa Meeks	Town of Sinclair
Council Member	Kristy Speed	Pine Haven	Council Member	Cullen Meeks	Town of Sinclair
Council Member	Steven Lensegrav	Powell	Council Member	Lee Hansen	Star Valley Ranch
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Council Member	Jacquelin Wells	City of Rawlins	Council Member	Ted Kinney	City of Torrington
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Council Member	Clinton Beaver	City of Sheridan	Council Member	Melissa Rivera	City of Worland
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Council Member	Beau Weaver	Town of Shoshoni	Council Member	Michael Phipps	Town of Wright

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Carol Intlekofer

After 34 Years Serving the City of Cheyenne, Intlekofer Retires as One of the State’s Most Respected Municipal Clerks

It is no mistake that if you google “City Clerk in Wyoming” you’ll see retired Cheyenne Clerk Carol Intlekofer’s face right at the top of the page, smiling back at you as she leans up against a giant cowboy boot in front of city hall. In 34 years of service to the people of Cheyenne, Intlekofer established herself as a go-to expert in all facets of the job. Her knowledge of state statute is legendary, and she takes pride in the fact that she became a lifeline for clerks across the state who found themselves stumped and frustrated. Like so many in municipal government, Intlekofer didn’t spend her youth back in Iowa dreaming of the day she’d fulfill her dream of becoming the Clerk of Wyoming’s Capital City (she dreamed of traveling the world as an airline stewardess by the way), but in retrospect it’s hard to imagine her having done anything else. Intlekofer was kind enough to sit down with me just a few weeks before her retirement to reflect on her career, how Wyoming became home, and where she sees things heading now that she’s ready to pass the baton to the next generation.

WAM: You started your professional life as a Journalist. What lead to the transition?

Intlekofer: “I actually started in high school, under the DECA program, like the work/business type program that they had in my small hometown. I got a job with the local newspaper because I was a fast typist back on the old electric manual typewriters. So, the newspaper hired me to be one of their production typists where we’d type galleys

and galleys of type and then sit there and proofread it with the editor. That’s where I also learned to read very fast. Then I worked my way up through production, the classifieds and the obituaries, and then into features articles. Then my husband at the time and I relocated to Wyoming where he had some family. It was kind of bust time in Iowa, and so we were going to come out here for just a few years and make some money and then go back home. It was booming in Rawlins, so we moved to Rawlins. I applied for a job with the newspaper there through the mail and got a call from the publisher and he hired me over the phone. I started in the classifieds and the obituaries and then moved on to advertising and then photojournalist type of stuff. I won a few awards from the (Wyoming) Press Association and the Wyoming Women’s Press Association at that time. Around that time my marriage went south, and I wound up applying for a job with the Justice of the Peace Court in Rawlins to get some health benefits for my two sons and I.”

WAM: What then lead you to Cheyenne?

Intlekofer: “I stayed (in Rawlins) for a few years and worked my way up. When I left there, I was the Clerk of County Court for Carbon County. Through a judge I was working for there, I met my current husband who lived in Cheyenne after the judge’s wife set us up on a blind date. That worked out and I started looking around for a job in Cheyenne. So I applied for the Deputy City Clerk position that was going to be vacant soon in Cheyenne. I went for the interview and they hired me at the end

of the interview, and I’ve been there ever since.”

WAM: So, it wasn’t a career that you would have originally envisioned yourself in?

Intlekofer: “I tell people that the high school counselors who tried to line you up with a career you’d be really good at and give you all these aptitude tests told me I should have gone to school to be a court reporter because of my typing skills. That didn’t really interest me. I was more interested in being a stewardess. I wanted to travel. I wanted to see the world. It wasn’t a job that they promote in high school. It’s not like, ‘when I grow up, I want to be City Clerk for the Capital City of Wyoming,’ but it has been a career and not just a job. It’s been very satisfying.”

WAM: What would you tell a young person to encourage them to pursue a career like this?

Intlekofer: “If you’re looking for something that is highly self-motivated, that you have to take it upon yourself to absorb information and learn all you can. If you want to do something and learn something different every day, and that stays challenging and never gets routine, then it’s a perfect fit.”

WAM: Do you consider yourself a leader, even though you were never elected, because you have helped lead the city for so many years?

Intlekofer: “Yeah, I consider myself a leader. Not just in the management capacity of being able to supervise staff, but you bring ideas to the table that you can present to those elected officials. You get the support and the backing of those leadership officials when you want to move forward, but part of that leadership job that I think I’ve played a role in is bringing those ideas and making changes that you think should be done. Then if they tell you to proceed then you go full steam ahead.”

WAM: Did you ever consider running for office?

Intlekofer: “I’ve never wanted to be an elected official. I’ve never had it in my blood to run for elected office, but I’m interested in the topics that they deal with. It’s a tough job. It’s a very tough job being an elected official.”

WAM: You’ve been in your role with Cheyenne through several mayors and many council members, what is that like after an election when you have new faces to work with?

Intlekofer: “One of the benefits the clerks have is that they have to apply to run for election through the clerk’s office. So, you are able to meet and greet them basically from the time they officially decide to come in and run for office, and you get



Above: Twila Blakeman, former Mayor of Dubois shares a laugh with Del McOmie former Mayor of Lander as McOmie's assistant Ralean Strube Fossen looks on.



Left: Then Treasurer, now Governor, Mark Gordon gave a presentation on the financial state of the state.



Above: Beckie Hatcher of Pavillion, Kelley Millar of Upton, Twila Blakeman of Dubois, and Evan Byrd of Star Valley Ranch listen to a presentation.



Left: Val Lewkowski from the Office of State Lands and Investments talks about the state's new capital construction loan program.

wam

Fall Workshop 2018

October 31st through November 2nd WAM welcomed more than 30 members to Lander for the annual Fall Workshop for Finance Directors, City Managers and Administrators. The event featured two days of presentations to keep municipalities on strong financial footing and out of regulatory trouble.

WAM Blockchain Video Aims to Decode Wyoming's Stake in Growing, Largely Misunderstood Technology

Blockchain has been a well discussed topic in Wyoming over the last several years, and this year's legislative session will feature even more bills aimed at making the state a uniquely friendly business environment for entities working with this emerging technology. In an effort to keep Wyoming municipal leaders and officials current on this new technology, WAM enlisted the help of attorney Matthew Kaufman. Kaufman is a member of the Governor's Blockchain Task Force, as well as a sitting member on the ENDOW Council. He was kind enough to share his time and expertise on the subject for the purposes of informing our membership exactly what the technology is, how it is currently being used, how it might be utilized in the future, and where Wyoming as a state is legislatively in embracing this industry. This video along with the rest of the WAM video training series can be found on the association web page at www.wyomuni.org and was produced for educational purposes only as WAM has chosen to neither support or oppose Blockchain legislation.



Attorney Matthew Kaufman gives a brief introduction of blockchain technology, what Wyoming has already done to embrace it, and where we go from here.

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the opportunity to introduce yourself and tell them who you are. You are kind of the first person at City Hall that they have any official interaction with."

WAM: After watching this community grow and evolve for so many years, what is one thing you can say has changed for the better in Cheyenne?

Intlekofer: "This community is one of the most supportive in helping other people that I know of. There are very few cliques. If a family has suffered a severe loss through their home burning down, or they want to build a splashpad on The Depot, this community digs it heals in and works its way through. Everything from recovering from a tornado to a flood. It's a bonding community, and it makes me proud to be a part of it."

WAM: Is there anything that's changed for the worse?

Intlekofer: "I wouldn't say it's for the worse, but it's just change, and that's the social structure of the community due to the internet. Due to the cell phones and the computers, it's changed to, 'I want information at my fingertips.' The information on the city website is a good example. No matter how much information gets put on there it's still never enough. That's been the biggest change I've seen community wide, not just in Cheyenne, but everywhere."

WAM: What do you think about the overall direction of Cheyenne moving forward?

Intlekofer: "I think we've very vibrant. I think we're starting to get our place on the map for some of our technology industries that we've started here, with Microsoft and NCAR. It's pretty exciting, and I think everything that's planned for growth on the west edge and south Cheyenne is a good move. Some people don't want things to change, they want it to remain the same, but you kind of grow with it and adapt or you eventually get left behind."

WAM: It's well known that over the years you've become a resource for other clerks across the state when they have a question or need help navigating a situation. Why has it been important for you to share your knowledge?

Intlekofer: "That's how you help other people grow. That's how you help them learn, and what's wrong with sharing what you know? Especially when it's your staff, or your co-workers or the groups you belong to like WAMCAT and WAM. I like to share."

WAM: Why do you think organizations like WAM are important?

Intlekofer: "It's a voice. You provide a voice on a statewide basis. Sometimes the voice isn't unanimous approved by all the members, but at least every member has the opportunity to provide their input and give you direction from a majority of them. I also think it helps bring people together with similar problems, similar successes and similar dilemmas, and because there's always change in those elected officials, it's kind of the glue that keeps it all together." - words and photos by Justin Schilling

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Few questions have vexed state officials over the last couple of decades quite as thoroughly as how to go about stifling the tsunami of talented young people out of Wyoming. It's a riddle with no easy answer.

Our public schools have been relatively well funded. According to the 2016 U.S. Census Bureau Survey of School System Finances, only six states spent more dollars per pupil than Wyoming, at just over \$16,000 per student. We invest heavily in building new schools, filling them with state-of-the-art technology, amenities and staffing them with teachers who make more than educators in 35 other states according to National Education Association rankings. We reward our best and brightest high school graduates with Hathaway Scholarships to attend UW, or any of the state's seven community colleges. It's a program which was intended to keep talented young people here at home that ironically gives many of them wings they promptly spread to fly away out of state. I think we all love the fact that Wyoming prioritizes education, invests in beautiful schools, spends enough to attract and retain talented teachers, and finally goes all-in to pay for the university or college education of so many. I also think, though, that we can agree that creating an enviable public education system hasn't been a cure-all for our youth exodus issues.

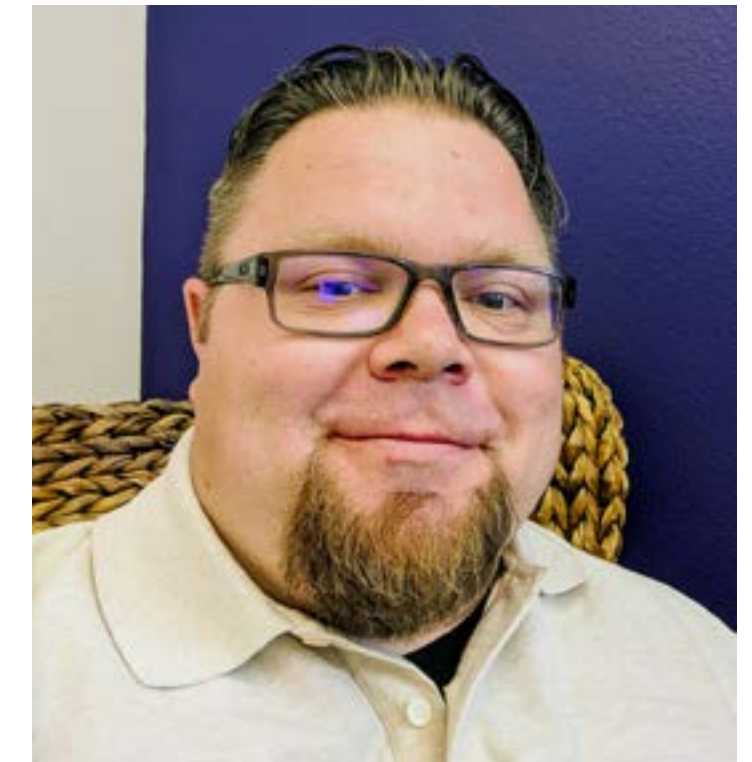
So, the focus moves then to investing in career opportunity and industrial diversification with the thought that young talent simply can't find good jobs here in Wyoming. While attempts have been made to diversify the economy almost as long as the state has ridden the boom and bust roller coaster of mineral extraction, Governor Mead made it a priority. In creating ENDOW (Economically Needed Diversity Options for Wyoming), Governor Mead hopefully set wheels of change in motion that won't be so easily idled if, and when, the price of coal, crude and natural gas fully rebounds. More and better jobs in a wider variety of fields can't help but be a positive to retention of young professionals. After decades of neglect however, this garden is going to take a while before it bears fruit. Nor will a more robust job market alone be the answer to keeping our children here at home.

That last word there, though, might be one of the most powerful tools we have to keep Wyoming kids in Wyoming. It's also one that almost no one seems to talk about or believe in investing in. Home, or perhaps more precisely, the idea of a beloved hometown has a gravity that calls its natives back.

When the teenagers from your community answer the question "where you from?", are they enthusiastic when they give the answer? Would they have something to readily brag about, or instead would they only be able to come up with a list of flaws and grievances? If it's the latter, how much of chance do you think you have to lure them back after they've gone away to get an education and realized the world is suddenly their oyster?

I know the siren's call home is powerful stuff. I've witnessed it first hand with my wife, and it led us to settling in Cheyenne nearly six years ago. She had followed opportunity to Colorado after graduation from UW and built an amazing career in the Denver suburbs. In the back of her head though, Cheyenne kept calling. She missed the familiarity of the place, the connections, Frontier Days, the Christmas Parade and all the other countless warm memories of people and places she had from growing up here. This yearning only focused more after we started our family. She wanted our daughters to have the chance to grow up in the same environment she did. So, when the opportunity presented itself to move back home, we jumped at it. Her love for her hometown couldn't be denied, and it brought her, her education, and her talent back to Wyoming.

A Schilling's Worth by Justin Schilling



The point? While quantifying how beloved a place is or bottling the exact formula for making a place that way isn't possible, I think it's safe to say we can identify things that will ensure that a place isn't. Crumbling municipal infrastructure isn't on most teenager's radar, but my two teens would certainly notice if water service was routinely interrupted, the tap water smelled a little off, or they were told they couldn't flush the toilet. They'd remember the time the monster pothole in main street bent the wheel on their first car, or if the city ran out of money to keep maintaining the neighborhood park. If a place feels like it's on life support, like so many small municipalities in our state do surviving hand-to-mouth on direct distribution, it's hard for young people to imagine a future for themselves there. Eventually, self-preservation instinct kicks in and the need to seek greener pastures overcomes any want to stay.

While it's incredibly important that the legislature continues their strong support of education in the state, and furthers investment in creating diverse economic opportunity, I'd urge them to start looking at municipalities in a similar light. Rather than perceiving them as a burden that must be funded and managed at a life support level, they should recognize their investment in Wyoming's cities and towns as the effective tool that it could be to retain homegrown talent. Or to say it another way, you can have the best water and fertilizer in the world, but if you never give a seed a proper pot to put down roots in, then it's probably going to blow away somewhere else just as fast as the Wyoming wind can carry it.

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