

No new Menards in Wyoming in 2011

Receiving those flyers in every Sunday paper is puzzling. With their nearest retail store at Scottsbluff, Nebraska, it doesn't make sense to troll for customers so far away. But they continue to do so and have for a long time.

When I contact them about any future expansion they may have for Cheyenne, the guy is cautiously evasive, not wanting to say anything that might alienate local residents in any way.

When I contacted the home office in Eau Claire, Wisconsin in late July of 2009, I was first told they had no interest in Cheyenne but a follow-up message quickly changed that to having no specific location in mind in this market.

After sixteen months had passed, I thought it was time to make a new request for information. I sent an e-mail to the same Paul Abbott at Menard, Inc., who had responded to my 2009 inquiry.

On November 18, this e-mail was sent to Menard, Inc. home office in Wisconsin:

Jeff;

"Over a year has passed since our last communications and I continue to see Menards flyers in every Sunday paper and even a logo ad on the Cheyenne daily newspaper's home page. So, I

will update my inquiry: Does Menard have specific plans and/or a specific location for placement of a store in Cheyenne?"

Even though sent at the end of the business day, Jeff Abbott responded to me the same date.

"Nothing to report in Cheyenne at this time. We are opening many stores in 2011 and I'm not seeing any new stores in Wyoming. Keep in touch (no snow!)."

Jeff Abbott
Promotions Manager / Spokesman
Menard, Inc.

With Home Depot and Lowe's having major stores here and Sutherland's, Capital Lumber, Bloehorn Lumber and Mead Lumber offering other alternatives, it doesn't seem like this market could support another store of that type. It is almost certain that if Menards opened in Cheyenne or south of town in the new State/McMurry industrial park, others would fail.

One of the nation's largest privately-owned companies, Menards has 286 stores in 13 states including Wyoming. Because the company is privately-held, it does not release sales figures but estimates place annual sales at \$8 billion.

Hammon. Still getting gifts?

On the Saturday afternoon before this issue went to press, at 3:24 pm, I was forwarded a copy of an e-mail (others later) put out by the LCCC Public Relations Department. Ty Stockton was named as the contact. The e-mail subject was "LCCC Board to meet Nov. 29." It read:

The Laramie County Community College Board of Trustees is holding a special business meeting Monday, Nov. 29, at 5 p.m. in the Administration Building's Peterson Board Room to consider the college president's contract.

I read the message just minutes before I left to attend the Christmas Parade. A couple hours later, I began to give serious thought as to what the Board could be meeting for to discuss any contract when two new Trustees would be sworn in within hours. Calling a "special" meeting at that late date was suspect. Even if the intentions were good, it just seemed wrong to be even considering doing critical college business with two recently rejected members in and two new ones out.

What couldn't wait another day or so?

It seems to me that the Board is now split 4-3 with the two defeated Trustees in the minority with John Kaiser. And, I wouldn't think any of the four in the majority would be devious or politically suicidal enough to ask for such a meeting. That being the case, the meeting had to have been at the request of one of the old men - Bauman, McIlvaine or Kaiser.

Running the possible reasons through my mind, I dismissed an attempt to get a contract extension for the disgraced president, Darrel Hammon. It is inconceivable that the four would ever agree to such a thing. All seven should have been able to read the tea leaves from the recent Trustee election. Those openly siding with Hammon were rejected. Voters want change, not a continuation of the problems existing at the college now.

Obviously, none of the three old fellas would want a meeting to fire Hammon. They love him. He is their traveling companion and lunch partner.

So, what could they want?

I could come up with only one thing. I believe a proposal will be made that allows Darrel Hammon to resign his position with a letter of recommendation and a financial buyout package will be given him. I believe Hammon approached one or all of the three men with this buyout-for-resignation plan. Hammon knows his days are numbered under the new board and he also knows that the disclosures in the Cheyenne Herald will continue to mount. In his mind, it is now or never. He should have been, and could still be, fired for cause, in my opinion. If he can resign with money, he will jump at the chance. He is nearly unemployable. He wants to salvage a "I was forced out" story - "the Cheyenne Herald and a handful of individuals were out to get me - a religious vendetta. I'm a victim."

Now, there's an optimist!

"I'll be back out there on Monday and placing 'help wanted' ads so we can hire 500 people and get this show on the road."

Not exactly those words but those sentiments.

It's no wonder the former mayor and sycophants on the city council at the time loved this guy. Talk about being able to sell refrigerators to the Eskimos or sand to the Arabs, Michael Spitzauer wins over the most resistant.

The Port of Pasco had leased space to him so he could pursue his fantasy of converting municipal trash into diesel but they had recently shut him down. Evicted him. Little matters of paying rent, getting the necessary permits, having insurance, bouncing employee checks, etc., etc.

Mikey Boy just received a ruling that one of the permits involving incineration do not apply to his process so he thought he was back on his way to Easy Street.

I mean, if he could convince the ever-diligence governing body in Cheyenne, Wyoming that he really "made" diesel fuel that morning at the transfer station, how hard would it be to get Kim Jung Mentally III or whoever now rules North Korea that The Spitz had a solution to all their energy problems and had signed contracts coming out of his ears? No group could be more watchful that Cheyenne's, could they? And that group agreed to a trash to

diesel contract with him. Until the Cheyenne Herald (with minimal piggybacking by the WTE) blew the lid off who he was really was. You know, prison terms and all that stuff that should lead one to worry about the guy's honesty and credibility.

But, he's baaaaaacccccckkkkkk!

Soon he'll have the 500 employees he promised the equally gullible group at Washington's Tri-Cities, including Pasco. He has won a victory about needing a permit - one of the issues that led Pasco to finally pull the plug on him.

Spitzauer claimed he has \$2.8 billion in signed contracts and several places overseas were just awaiting the machinery to begin to convert municipal trash to diesel fuel - at about 75 cents a gallon. He couldn't name even one such buyer or produce even one legitimate signed contract. Like Cheyenne, they just had to take his word for it.

"A Pasco biomass company says it plans to reopen this week and soon hire up to 500 workers despite the financial and legal troubles of the business and its owner," the Tri-City Herald reported.

Just a matter of grabbing the keys from Pasco's city manager and swinging open the gate at the Port. Probably just a misunderstanding that he was evicted in the first place. Jack Spiker, Georgia Broyles and others here would vouch for the guy.

Also in that Herald: "The company and Spitzauer face lawsuits totaling more than \$18 million in Franklin, Benton and King counties. \$18 mil. There also have been numerous claims filed with the Department of Labor and Industries for workers who were paid with checks that bounced and others who went unpaid." And, "Some of the lawsuits are tax warrants for not paying unemployment insurance contributions to the state and failing to pay industrial insurance taxes."

He has probably mended fences with everyone - former employees, public agencies, landlord, etc. 'Cause on the Friday this story appeared, he promised to be back in Pasco on Monday and reopen the plant at once.

Not so fast, pilgrim. Pasco, having been burned once and made a fool of, isn't just handing him the padlock keys. Unlike Cheyenne, they try not to look like fools

too often. The article went on: "Although Spitzauer said he was opening Monday, he hadn't signed a [new] lease or paid deposits at the Port of Pasco by late Friday afternoon. The Port isn't taking any chances. They will take 'cash only' and will charge an extra month's rent as part of the deposit." And he hasn't delivered proof of insurance. "He isn't moving in until the lease is signed and the balance of the deposit is paid," the Port's executive director said.

His home is set for "trustee sale" on January 27, 2011. A "fully refundable security deposit" of \$2 million was not held in a trust account as required and was not returned when demanded. He is accused by those investors of running a "Ponzi scheme" and that trial is set for March. Another investor is demanding \$2.2 million be returned. Spitz agreed to do that but never has. There is no indication that the City of Cheyenne invested with him.

801 W. 7th St. -- Adorable ranch style home located in a very quiet neighborhood. Lots of original in the home. Great sunroom with 4 skylights, 220 amp hookups and large enough for a hot tub if desired or just extra living space. Kitchen is bright and has lots of counter space and cupboards. Large main bath with claw foot tub and stained glass window. Home has a handicapped commode and has potential for a 3rd bedroom on main floor. \$99,500.

Also home has all new wiring and blown insulation in attic. Large corner lot is completely fenced, landscaped with lots of mature trees and flowers. Utility shed in back and only one block from Cole Elementary School.

wesellcheyennehomes.com

802 E. Lincolnway -- 634-2997
Cheyenne, Wyoming



Assist 2 Sell
"Full Service with Savings!"

