

Anything two people know is not a secret

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They didn't even wait until all the trees were mulched before announcing the joke was on us!

American Eagle -- regardless of what the portly Chamber guy or the clueless LEADS guy say, one flight a day is all there will be. By the way, is the subsidy check in the mail to the Fallen Eagle?

Can you say "thumb in the eye?"

I thought you could.

Talk about exposing Cheyenne's doofuses for doofuses, American Eagle didn't even wait until all the trees were chewed before they confirmed what the Cheyenne Herald has said all along - that they are shorttimers and, when the subsidy is gone, so will they be. Gone.

To show their level of disdain for this market and the people who are speaking for them here, they won't even bother to "back up" the insiders' lies perpetrated in Cheyenne.

We've come to expect that little said by a Chamber representative or anyone from the LEADS non-economic development group should be believed. But at least you'd think they could get the third party they lie about to back up their lie(s).

The contract entered into between American Eagle Airlines and someone in Cheyenne - no one who should know seems to know or does not want to admit knowing - is harder to locate than the Holy Grail. Nobody has a copy of it in spite of Wyoming taxpayers ponying up \$1.4 million plus landing fees to secure this one destination temporary airline.

American Eagle is no Great Lakes Airlines. The first is for real, has been for real, and will remain for real. The latter not so much so. Great Lakes was insolvent when the State of Wyoming, City of Cheyenne and Laramie County bought their services - services that, remarkably, are still in existence. The problem with American Eagle is not that they are on the brink. They are very solid. The problem is that Cheyenne is of no account to them - we are a non-factor market.

When American Eagle was approached by someone other than the mayor or governor, they knew that they were dealing with an ad hoc group, not the real McCoy. They have dealt with enough desperate markets to recognize another one when they see it and that described Cheyenne to a "T." They knew these guys could be taken - they were ripe for the plucking. A new Chamber director, a kid airport manager with less experience in his field than Bart Simpson, and a self-titled group called "Greater Cheyenne Coalition" who assumed authority to spend State funds without oversight. The American Eagle folks salivated.

What has happened in the past year has not changed their opinion of Cheyenne. That opinion was that Cheyenne is a market undeserving of commercial airline service other than daily commuter flights to Denver. The market just will not support "real" airplanes flying frequently to "real" hubs. Even the public groups that fly leave from DIA. When the LCCC group made the infamous Costa Rica trip in 2008, they took a college bus to DIA and departed from there. If there ever was a time you'd expect public funds to be squandered to support Cheyenne's little airport and little airline (Great Lakes), you'd think it would be when public money was being spent. Not so.

Even Casper couldn't support a "real" size airplane from a "real" airline with a flight to/from Minneapolis. And Casper is as remote as almost anywhere south of Nome. They should have been able to attract customers from a huge region. They couldn't. And another flight (to Salt Lake City) is being discontinued up there now.

Many people choose to live in these Wyoming cities because of the dearth

of denizens. You can't have it both ways. With a paucity of patrons comes a scarcity of services. Reality 101, folks. Economics

But, when what appeared to be a representative of a small city less than 100 miles from Denver came with cash in hand, offering gold for pitiable service, who could resist? Who would resist? Certainly not American Eagle, the largest regional commuter airline in the country.

The United States would no more send a congressional page to enter into agreements with Egypt right now than Cheyenne should have sent a new Chamber director to negotiate a deal with a large regional commuter airline for service to and from Dallas / Fort Worth. Oh, wait. That's exactly what the self-titled group did. They pretended to represent Cheyenne when the mayor or governor should have been at the bargaining table. Now, the mayor claims lack of knowledge - hell, let's call it what it is, ignorance - about what went down down there. He tells citizens that he wasn't involved in the recruitment, has no idea what the deal is, and has never seen the contract let alone have a copy of it.

Legislators, you're still in town. Listen up. This is the situation in the state's largest city - a municipality that you're genuflecting at the altar of - wanting to give them increased funding. Funds the mayor may not know how will be spent.

It is ludicrous that legislators have so much more concern about goes on between two consenting adults than what happens to the money in the State coffers. Who okays this use of money? Someone must have authorized the treasurer's office to cut checks to American Eagle. Who?

As anyone with sight could see, the load factors during what should have been sell-out periods like Frontier Days, Thanksgiving and Christmas, were not. With months of selling tickets in advance of the first flight, air travelers from Cheyenne just did not flock to the new airline. I personally counted passengers deplaning and boarding the AE flights during the Summer and Fall and the numbers just were not there. Even with only one flight a day, they can't fill the planes. The counts being provided are similar to the "announced" attendance at the UW men's basketball games. You can use any number you want, any number that will make you feel good about yourself, any number that will help you save face, but if there aren't cheeks in the seats, people will notice.

When the service began, there were to be two flights a day - each way. Then, when demand stunk, it was announced service would be cut in half - to one flight a day. The talking toadies said that was in the plans all along - that, on November 15, American Eagle would fly but once a day each way. That became the "Big Lie." Those like the Chamber dude count on locals not noticing or not caring. He is generally right about that. It takes more than a million four of wasted State funds to get the folks around here riled up. Maybe reduce the available elk licenses or give Colorado residents preference in the state parks - short of that, it takes a lot to stoke their anger.

Now, the AE spokeswoman told another media that the reduction to one flight was the result of lack of customers. Which is it - lack of customers or in the contract all along? Someone is lying. Not misinformed. Lying. Who? On our end or on their end? They don't care enough to lie.

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