

## Campaign ads in other media

There are three ads in other print and broadcast media that warrant comment.

First is the anti-Jim Brown ad in the Trader's issue of October 24th. The implied acts of wrongdoing or nefarious behavior on the part of incumbent city councilman Jim Brown are without bases or backup. A PAC formed the same day the ad was submitted to Trader's is hoping to use "guilt by insinuation" to damage Brown's chances. It is a PAC so individuals placing the ad can remain anonymous.

The unknown membership group used the grand name of "Taxpayers for Accountable Government," with an acronym of T.A.G. The Chairman of the new PAC is Edward Melko, who recently ran for city council in the same ward Jim Brown represents and did not survive the primary, and Mary Ann Archer. Ms. Archer's phone no. is used in the ad, possibly to distance the recently defeated city council candidate from being linked to the ad.

*I know Ed Melko and I considered him a good candidate. But to run an anonymous campaign ad without disclosure that you're behind it does not set well with me. Anyone with \$25 can form a PAC and hide behind it to run scurrilous ads.*

And, the receipts report for where the money came from to pay for this ad will not be filed until after this issue goes to press. The Cheyenne Herald will disclose on November 11 who put up the money.

The second ad is one on radio wherein Cynthia Lummis' campaign continues to perpetuate the lie that Gary Trauner would push for a national gun registry if he is elected to Congress. That is just untrue. And voters don't need my or anyone else's word for how Trauner stands on the issue of gun rights. The National Rifle Association has given Gary a grade of A- Cynthia herself received an A. Do not question for a second whether the Democrat favors gun registration. The NRA would have given him a grade of "F" if they even **SUSPECTED** that of him.

Finally, the issue of proper disclosure on print ads has long been a bone of contention here. The WT-E has provided discounted/free advertising for propositions facing the voters but it was not disclosed on the ads - only later in the filings. The chamber of commerce and others later disclosed the gift. In-kind contributions are never given to the opposing side.

Recently, countless four column/inch (\$50.00) ads for Jack Spiker have appeared in the WT-E with inadequate disclosure. "Supporters of Jack Spiker" is not a registered PAC in the Laramie County Clerk's office. Nor is "PAC" shown in the disclosure. The media accepting the advertising is responsible "to print or announce the name of [who is] paying for the advertising." Once again, that has not been done. The WT-E may be providing free advertising for Spiker for all we know. And the WT-E wouldn't want you to know.

## I support Amber Ash for city council in Ward 1

by  
Dave  
Featherly

Before I set up my reasons why I will support Amber Ash in the November 4th election, let me first say this is not a protest move. This is not a "throw the rascals out" effort. And, it is not anti-Pete Laybourn or anti-Jimmy Valdez.

The reasons I chose to support Amber, and to do it publicly in my paper, are positive. I support her candidacy for a number of reasons, which I will articulate here.

My wife and I live in Ward 1 and have for the past five years. We vote and we care who the candidates are, what they stand for and what potential they have for office. I have been actively involved in Cheyenne, Laramie County and Wyoming elections since 1996 (not to mention Wisconsin elections earlier). I am a registered Republican but vote for Democrats at times and I will in this election.

Amber Ash came to our door a few days before the recent primary election. We had never met and she told me later she was a bit hesitant to ring the doorbell because she knew it was my house. My car was in the driveway with a Winney for Congress magnetic door sign and I have personalized license plates.

I'm glad she decided to ring the bell.

We spoke very briefly. She was handing out campaign material and I took one. I had never seen Amber before that day and hadn't really paid any attention to any picture of her that may have been printed. I knew she had run for the state legislature in the past and I knew she was young. I guess I was surprised at just how young she looked. Of course, at my age, with adult daughters and grandchildren old enough to vote (I married very, very, very young) I'm not a good judge of how old the younger generation gals are.

After she left, I took time to read her hand-out. I was impressed. I voted for her. What I did with my other vote will not be disclosed - secret ballot, you know.

The night of the primary, I followed the returns quite closely as campaign manager of the Winney campaign. I noticed that Amber had done pretty well in Ward 1. She finished ahead of four other candidates and there were enough votes that did not go to the incumbents and would not have a home in the general election, I thought she might have a chance.

I contacted her a couple days after the primary election and offered to "coach" her or serve as a bit of a mentor if she could use my help. I did not offer to run her campaign or expect to tell her what to do. As readers of the Cheyenne Herald may have picked up on by now, while I am a conservative, I also believe the country as a whole should be embarrassed by the imbalance of office holders by gender. Wyoming is certainly no exception. Calling ourselves the Equality State is a stretch. At this point, we are certain of having only one woman in the

Wyoming Senate after the November 4th election. One, maybe two. Out of 30! The Cheyenne city council has two women at this point and you'd think we were the champions of gender diversity.

We're not and I am disappointed by the lack of women candidates and elected officials at all levels of Wyoming governments, including the city council.

Like many, I had concern whether Amber Ash had the credentials, qualifications and ability to serve on city council. As we got to know one another, I learned that she is more qualified, education-wise, than any member of the current council or candidates vying to get there.

She is 25 years old but she already has a bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Wyoming and is working toward her master's degree in Public Administration - also from UW. Five years ago, when she was 20, she was an Intern at the Wyoming Legislature for the 2003 Spring Session. She has been a national competitor in speech and contemporaneous speaking.

**AND**, she has been a national parliamentary procedures competitor. Can you imagine that - someone on city council who knows what parliamentary procedures are and how to open a Robert's Rules of Order volume and understand what it says? What a great addition to Cheyenne's city council that would be.

Amber works full-time at the Wyoming Department of Education as a projects analyst.

She also holds licenses or certifications from the State of Wyoming in real estate sales, substitute teaching, **AND** as a certified nurse assistant.

She is 25 years old!

Amber is a Wyoming native, having grown up and graduated from high school in Chugwater. She probably spent more time in Cheyenne in her youth than many of those her own age who were born here. The daily newspaper's website makes it look like she just got off the bus - that she's a recent resident. Not so. She has lived here far longer than Reed Eckhardt.

In fact, that's another good reason to like Amber Ash's candidacy. The Tribune-Eagle doesn't. Reed said she was too young but he has no grasp of her qualifications. If age were that important a criteria to hold office, no one under 50 should seek office. The WT-E also misrepresented Amber's answers in their interrogation session that is supposed to lead to endorsements. I've watched the tapes. She **DOES** know we have a county economic development group. And, she wasn't asked about the intricacies of financing for the library. Her answer was the same as the position taken repeatedly by the DDA - that the library was a downtown city project. And, Amber's

position on annexation was dead-on. Not only do I agree with what she said that day to Reed Eckhardt, the **WYOMING SUPREME COURT** agrees with both Amber and myself. In *Cox v. City of Cheyenne*, the Court ruled that county residents aggrieved by an annexation next to their property **do** have legal standing to bring action against that annexation.

Trust me on this one, my friends. There aren't more than a couple people getting their mail with Cheyenne zip codes who know more about annexation than I do. And Amber hit it out of the park, although Reed *still* doesn't understand the law.

She stood up to the newspaper. Unlike many, much older than Amber, who go before Reed and the Inquisitors and fold like a \$3 Pamida suitcase, Amber stood her ground. She didn't tell Reed and his Gang what they wanted to hear, she told them where she stood. Look at the tapes, you'd be proud of her. I am.

Amber Ash is pursuing an American dream. At least, to some it's still considered a dream. She is seeking elective public office. And she has prepared herself to serve. Now, she's preparing herself to also manage. Her master's degree in public administration will position her to become a city manager if that's where her career path one day takes her.

She has also achieved another part of the American dream. She owns two houses. One she lives in and the other she rents. Did I mention she's 25 years old?

She learns. I do not direct her campaign but I do provide her background on some of the issues she will face or that she wants the history of. She is eager to know and she retains what she's told. Further, she will research issues - for example, the annexation cases at the Supreme Court.

Voters may not have seen quite as much of Amber Ash as they have the other candidates for city council in Ward 1. It is an advantage in campaigning when you don't have a job to report to. Amber *has* a job. She is *also* a student - taking classes both at LCCC and in Laramie toward her master's degree. How will she find time to serve on city council? Many older people couldn't. But she says she can and, by God, if she says she can, she can.

Is her age a negative or a positive? I think it's a positive. At first blush, without looking into her qualifications or accomplishments, you might think she's too young to be on city council. I disagree. Amber will apply herself to the task at hand. Remember the age of those who have gotten us into the biggest messes - locally and nationally. It hasn't been 25 year-olds. Nor women.

I have no intention of being her Svengali, as I was accused of for Jack Spiker and Jimmy Valdez. I *will* vote for Amber Ash. I believe she can do the job and do it well. I'm *sure* she can do the job well. And will.