

FREE ... FREE ... FREE ... FREE ... FREE ... FREE

THE CHEYENNE HERALD

the local advocacy journal

In depth. Independent. Stories of Local Interest.

October 11, 2004 • Issue No. Sixty-one • Next issue October 25, 2004

City Council's Credit Cards Being Used for Improper, Illegal Purposes

Council's \$52,000/year Secretary Used City-Issued VISA Card for Multiple Orders from Companies Selling Cosmetics & Other "Personal" Items

by
Jim Mathewson
COPYRIGHT 2004

Tom Scherr was President of the City Council in 2003. He resigned earlier this year when his family moved away from Cheyenne.

One of Scherr's last acts as Council President was to unilaterally redefine the job classification of the Council's secretary, Maggie Carter. The secret reclassification had the effect of raising Ms. Carter's pay to \$50,000 per year. A subsequent mid-year adjustment raised her annual compensation to \$52,500. (Mayor Spiker's secretary also benefits from a similar "reclassification" and receives similar compensation.)

Last May, Council members Judy Case and Jimmy Valdez questioned how the reclassification and pay raise were handled. They were rewarded for their nosiness with letters of reprimand signed by fellow Council members Floyd Lopez, Patrick Collins, and Brent Beeman.

What Case and Valdez didn't know ... but probably now wish they had ... is that during the previous five months, Ms. Carter's City-issued VISA card had been used for a variety of highly-inappropriate personal purchases.

Those purchases were discovered only after an innocent written request was made to inspect the Council's monthly VISA bills. That request was sparked by numerous reports that some members of the City Council were using the VISA cards to purchase in-town meals for themselves, for other Council members, and for various department heads of the City.

No control, internal or otherwise

Each year, the City of Cheyenne's books are audited by an outside firm of Certified Public Accountants.

Mayor Jack Spiker was quick to point out last year that the City's auditors found

no significant deficiencies in the way the City manages its money. Perhaps those outside CPA's don't consider duplicate payments and repeated purchases which are never approved by the City Council as major deficiencies. They should.

Perhaps they'll take a closer look this year now that it's been shown that it was a lack of internal control which made it possible for Ms. Carter's VISA card to be misused on an ongoing basis over several months.

Internal Control is at the heart of any accounting system. The objective is to minimize the opportunities for employees or outsiders to scam the system for their own benefit.

The first major flaw is

Maggie Carter's City-issued VISA card was used to purchase \$248.90 worth of Top of the World products. The bill was paid by the City Treasurer using public funds from the City's bank account

that the Council's monthly VISA statements are sent, not to the City Treasurer's office, but to Maggie Carter at the City Council office. It is Ms. Carter who then decides how much detail, if any, to show the Treasurer's office before the VISA bill is approved and paid.

Unfortunately, the Treasurer's office puts entirely too much trust in some people. That misguided trust opened the door for the repeated misuse of Ms. Carter's VISA card.

Continued on page 6 ...

City funds were used to pay several of the City Council's VISA bills which showed purchases of SHEER COVER cosmetics using Maggie Carter's City-issued VISA

Maggie Carter has refused to provide copies of sales receipts for her numerous VISA purchases from Top Of The World Distributors and Guthy-Renker Corp, marketers of the Leeza Gibbons line of SHEER COVER cosmetics.

Here are some of the products sold by these two mailorder companies

Top of the World Distributors
1-800-325-4386

VIRILITY for WOMEN

A high-potency Ginseng Complex. Take 1 in the morning and 1 in the afternoon

100 tablets ... \$16.80



GREAT HAIR

As a dietary supplement, take 2 tablets with meals

30 tablets ... \$15.90

WRINKLE CREAM

This rich cream reduces facial lines and improves the skin's youthful appearance

1 pound jar ... \$22.95



SENSUAL LIPS

Will make you look sexy, young, and provocative just like runway models

Toner+Enhancer \$59.95

HORNY GOAT WEED

Great virility booster for men and women! Take 2-4 capsules one hour before physical activity

60 capsules ... \$9.90



SHEER COVER

1-800-506-6281

ONE MONTH SUPPLY \$29.95



Councilman Brent Beeman Used His City-Issued VISA for \$180 Cash Withdrawal

He Needed the Money for Seat on City-Paid Junket to Hawaii with Councilmen Pierson and Lopez

The National Guard is a fine organization. It deserves our respect and our support ... now more than ever before.

One of the ways members of the Cheyenne City Council can show their respect and support is to visit the men and women of the Guard out there where the training is being conducted.

Camp Guernsey, a ninety minute drive from Cheyenne, would seem to be a logical venue for such a respectful visit by members of the City Council, but it's unclear if any have ever made that daytrip.

A much less obvious ... but infinitely more popular ... visitation locale seems to be Hawaii. Current member Brent Beeman says he considers it "one of the perks" of being on the Council.

Aloha, Oy !!!

A year ago, Beeman, along with fellow Councilmen Floyd Lopez and Don Pierson, made the grueling trek to visit the troops in Hawaii.

The trip is called the "Civic Leaders Tour" by the National Guard and is similar to the occasional "Boss Lift" flights which the Guard undertakes. Invitees on such Boss Lifts include business owners or others nominated by employees who are members of the Guard or Reserve.

Those invited to travel to such training sites are expected to pay their own expenses once they arrive and to help pay for the cost of the flight aboard planes operated by the Wyoming Air Guard.

The airfare for the Hawaii trip was \$180 per "civic leader". Lopez and Pierson apparently wrote personal checks for the airfare, knowing when they did that the entire \$180 would be reimbursed to them by the City Treasurer after returning from their harrowing ordeal in the Aloha State.

Instead of simply writing a check to the National Guard as his fellow Council members had done, Brent Beeman used

Continued on page 7 ...



Continued from page 1

If you had asked City Treasurer Barb Dorr a few weeks ago if the City ever paid the same bill more than once, she'd probably told you it couldn't happen.

If you had asked her if items can be purchased but never approved by the City Council, she'd probably told you such a scenario wasn't possible.

The inappropriate purchases which were made on Maggie Carter's VISA card over several months earlier this year show that both can ... and did ... happen repeatedly under the current system.

Double payments

In 2002, an account was established at Tri-County Bank and \$150,000 was moved into it from American National Bank, the City's main bank for other accounts. (see insert box below)

The City Council's VISA bills are paid from that Tri-County account, which is then replenished each month to bring it back up to \$150,000.

Normally, the payments to Tri-County to cover the Council's VISA charges for the previous month are handled by means of an "automatic payment". The total amount due is paid in full.

Maggie Carter receives the statements, reviews the various charges, and tells the Treasurer's office how to allocate the charges among the Council's "travel", "in-town-meetings", and "office supplies" accounts. In doing so, Ms. Carter certifies under penalty of perjury that all the charges being allocated and paid are for legitimate City purchases.

QUESTION: Does anyone at the City Treasurer's office bother to look at the VISA bills before ... or even after ... they're paid ?

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|--|----------|
| APPLEBEE'S NEIGHBORHOOD CHEYENNE WY | 57.08 | CAPITOL TOURS & TRAVEL CHEYENNE WY | 40.00 |
| PATRICK COLLINS | | PAPA JOHNS 08223958 CHEYENNE WY | 82.62 |
| TOTAL | \$57.08 | SUPER 8 MOTELS CONCORDIA CONCORDIA KS | 54.52 |
| PAPA JOHNS 08223958 CHEYENNE WY | 42.30 | MAGGIE CARTER | |
| GRO'SHEER COVER 800-506-6281 | 29.95 | TOTAL | \$177.14 |
| PAPA JOHNS 08223958 CHEYENNE WY | 47.24 | | |
| MAGGIE CARTER | | | |
| TOTAL | \$119.49 | | |
| THE PLAINS HOTEL CHEYENNE WY | 4.99 | TOP OF THE WORLD DISTRIBUTORS 800-3254366 TN | 248.90 |
| THE PLAINS HOTEL CHEYENNE WY | 15.58 | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066078 CHEYENNE WY | 523.20 |
| THE EGG AND I RESTAURANT CHEYENNE WY | 24.27 | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066074 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| ALBANY RESTAURANT AND BAR CHEYENNE WY | 23.20 | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066075 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| BRENT BEEMAN | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066076 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| TOTAL | \$68.04 | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066077 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066078 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066079 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066080 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066081 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066082 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066083 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066084 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066085 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066086 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066087 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066088 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066089 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066090 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066091 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066092 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066093 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066094 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066095 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066096 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066097 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066098 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066099 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066100 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066101 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066102 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066103 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066104 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066105 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066106 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066107 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066108 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066109 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066110 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066111 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066112 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066113 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066114 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066115 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066116 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066117 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066118 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066119 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066120 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066121 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066122 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066123 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066124 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066125 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066126 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066127 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066128 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066129 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066130 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066131 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066132 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066133 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066134 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066135 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066136 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066137 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066138 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066139 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066140 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066141 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066142 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066143 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066144 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066145 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066146 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066147 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066148 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066149 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066150 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066151 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066152 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066153 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066154 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066155 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066156 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066157 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066158 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066159 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066160 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066161 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066162 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066163 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066164 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066165 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066166 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066167 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066168 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066169 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066170 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066171 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066172 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066173 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066174 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066175 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066176 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066177 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066178 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066179 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066180 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066181 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066182 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066183 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066184 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066185 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066186 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066187 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066188 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066189 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066190 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066191 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066192 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066193 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066194 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066195 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066196 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066197 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066198 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066199 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066200 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066201 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066202 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066203 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066204 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066205 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066206 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066207 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066208 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066209 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066210 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066211 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066212 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066213 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066214 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066215 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066216 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066217 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066218 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066219 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066220 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066221 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066222 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066223 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066224 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066225 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066226 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066227 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066228 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066229 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066230 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066231 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066232 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066233 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066234 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066235 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066236 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066237 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066238 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066239 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066240 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066241 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066242 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066243 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066244 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066245 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066246 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066247 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066248 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066249 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066250 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066251 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066252 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066253 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066254 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066255 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066256 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066257 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |
| | | FRONTIERAIR 4227588066258 CHEYENNE WY | 498.20 |

Listed here are some of the itemized in-town and travel-related charges appearing on the VISA bills for the City Council office ...

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------|----|
| Albany Restaurant & Bar | \$30.95 | PC |
| The Egg and I | 13.13 | JB |
| IHOP | 14.30 | JB |
| The Whole Enchilada | 17.21 | FL |
| Avanti's Restaurant | 15.25 | DP |
| Poor Richard's | 25.04 | PC |
| The Egg and I | 7.00 | JB |
| The Egg and I | 3.40 | JB |
| The Egg and I | 11.77 | JB |
| Applebee's | 29.96 | PC |
| IHOP | 13.54 | JB |
| The Egg and I | 11.49 | JB |
| Poor Richard's | 43.90 | PC |
| Little America Lounge | 21.02 | DP |
| Arby's | 10.04 | DP |
| The Whole Enchilada | 24.35 | FL |
| Plains Hotel | 6.58 | DP |
| Plains Hotel | 11.46 | DP |
| The Egg and I | 27.54 | JB |
| Hitching Post | 13.88 | DP |
| The Egg and I | 7.99 | JB |
| Hitching Post | 28.11 | DP |
| Applebee's | 65.92 | PC |
| The Egg and I | 12.17 | JB |
| Los Amigos Restaurant | 18.73 | FL |
| Plains Hotel | 21.20 | BB |
| The Egg and I | 38.45 | JB |
| Plains Hotel | 20.47 | DP |
| Plains Hotel | 21.00 | BB |
| The Egg and I | 15.25 | JB |
| Plains Hotel | 20.41 | BB |
| Hitching Post | 27.43 | DP |
| Plains Hotel | 12.32 | DP |
| The Egg and I | 15.51 | JB |
| Avanti's Restaurant | 24.47 | DP |
| Plains Hotel | 17.82 | FL |
| Plains Hotel | 5.61 | BB |
| Plains Hotel | 22.00 | BB |
| Plains Hotel | 21.93 | BB |
| The Egg and I | 15.25 | JB |
| The Egg and I | 28.01 | BB |
| Old Western Saloon | | |
| Glendo, Wyoming | 21.85 | TS |
| CASH ADVANCE | | |
| First Education | | |
| Federal Credit Union | 180.00 | BB |
| Poor Richard's | 26.68 | BB |
| Plains Hotel | 15.22 | BB |
| Plains Hotel | 35.38 | BB |
| Round Table Pizza | 16.32 | DP |
| Hilton Tropics Bar | | |
| Honolulu, Hawaii | 63.20 | BB |
| Plains Hotel | 40.47 | DP |
| The Egg and I | 22.00 | JB |
| Tortilla Factory | 16.78 | FL |
| Applebee's | 20.25 | DP |
| The Egg and I | 22.44 | JB |
| Sanford's Brewery | 22.30 | BB |
| CB & Potts Microbrew | 15.44 | BB |
| Plains Hotel | 20.11 | BB |
| Plains Hotel | 15.58 | BB |
| The Egg and I | 24.27 | BB |
| Albany Restaurant & Bar | 23.20 | BB |
| Applebee's | 57.08 | PC |
| Shari's Restaurant | 26.55 | JB |
| Albany Restaurant & Bar | 21.58 | FL |
| The Egg and I | 14.76 | DP |
| La Costa Restaurant | 27.42 | BB |
| Little America | 22.80 | DP |
| Perkins Restaurant | 20.99 | BB |
| Snake River Pub & Grill | 30.86 | BB |
| Cowboy Bar | | |
| Denver | 23.11 | BB |
| Snake River Pub & Grill | 27.37 | BB |
| The Egg and I | 13.98 | JB |
| Hitching Post | 35.39 | BB |
| Plains Hotel | 15.70 | BB |
| Tortilla Factory | 16.25 | FL |
| Hitching Post | 43.21 | BB |
| Poor Richard's | 23.14 | DP |
| Grand Avenue Pizza | 28.75 | BB |
| Whalen's Deli | 16.59 | BB |
| Tortilla Factory | 24.67 | FL |
| Albany Restaurant & Bar | 21.82 | BB |
| Poor Richard's | 20.92 | DP |

BB= Brent Beeman
 DP= Don Pierson
 FL= Floyd Lopez
 JB= Joe Bonds
 PC= Patrick Collins
 TS= Tom Scherr

City of Cheyenne has issued more than 170 VISA cards to employees and elected officials

The first credit cards for members of Cheyenne's City Council were issued in 1999. At that time, a number of restrictions were spelled out in the Council's resolution to guide members.

The use of the credit cards for personal purposes was strictly prohibited, as was the purchase of alcohol.

That resolution signed by Mayor Leo Pando also required members of the City Council to keep receipts for goods or services purchased with the credit cards and to submit copies of those receipts to the City Treasurer within ten days after a purchase is made using a Council-issued VISA card. In reality, very few of the Council's receipts ever find their way to the Treasurer's office where they can be reviewed.

8 + 163 + ???

The eight VISA cards being used by the City Council office are in addition to the ones issued to other City employees.

Recently, the City Treasurer's office provided a list of 163 current employees of the City of Cheyenne who've been issued such purchase cards. [The list does not include any employees of the Board

of Public Utilities which is considering implementing its own VISA program.] Most City employees are probably using the cards properly ... or perhaps not at all.

The list shows that some departments, such as Sanitation and the City Treasurer's office, get by with a single card controlled by the department head.

Some departments, however, seem to have gone a little overboard in getting cards into the hands of their employees. Does the City Cemetery really need five people with VISA cards?

Does the Municipal Pool really need four?

Unlike the Council's cards, the VISA cards for other City employees are administered through a bank in Kansas City which specializes in purchase cards for public employees.

The justification for the City's credit card program is efficiency. By issuing VISA cards to employees who travel or make frequent small purchases, much of the previous paperwork is eliminated at the Treasurer's office.

Each week, the City Council approves vouchers to be paid. The Treasurer then prints and mails the checks to vendors.

The Wyoming Statutes require that all such payments to vendors be published in a local paper so citizens can see for themselves where the money's going.

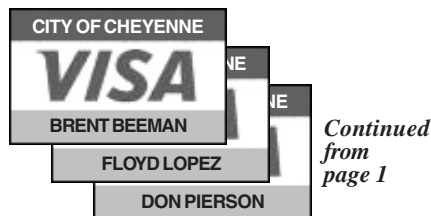
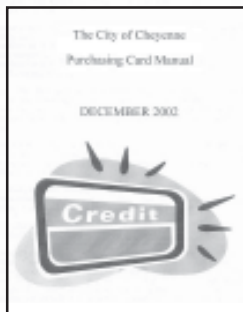
For most such expenditures, the rule serves its purpose. When it comes to VISA purchases, however, the citizens learn almost nothing ... only the total amount of the check to the bank, not what was actually purchased by the City employees.

A recent legal notice in the daily newspaper illustrates the problem. It shows merely a check to "VISA" for "charges" totalling \$6,532.97.

UNITED REPROGRAPHIC SUPPLY
 United Reprographic Supp.,
 paper/toner, \$451.23; US
 Welding, cylinder rental,
 \$25.98; Verizon, cell phone
 chgs., \$67.37; VISA, chgs.,
 \$6,532.97; W G Dale Elect.,
 phone/line/emerg. response
 lines, \$752.30; Wal-Mart,
 auto, \$477.34; Ward Labora-

It doesn't show 66 charges on the police department's VISA cards, 2 for the Botanic Gardens, 4 by the Sanitation Department, and 12 by employees at the Municipal Pool and the Cemetery.

If a citizen wants to know what was ACTUALLY purchased, it requires a trip into the bowels of the Treasurer's office to look at individual receipts. That can't be what the Legislature had in mind.



Continued from page 1

his City-issued VISA card to take a \$180 "cash advance" at a local credit union.

When asked why he thought using the VISA card for a cash advance would be proper, Beeman had two justifications ... all the other expenses for the trip (meals, hotel rooms, etc) would be charged on the three members' City-issued VISA cards and Maggie Carter had told him it would be perfectly appropriate.

Let's Do Lunch

Last year's three-day Hawaii trip for Councilmen Beeman, Lopez, and Pierson cost the City of Cheyenne about \$1,500.

The three fearless travelers ... together with fellow Councilmen Joe Bonds and Patrick Collins ... also enjoy using their City-issued VISA cards right here in Cheyenne, as the list to the left shows.

Although seeming to prefer establishments with "bar", "pub", or "brew" in the name, Beeman insists he's never used the City's VISA card to buy alcohol.

When asked why he thinks the City should pay for his lunches and dinners around Cheyenne, Beeman cites the many hours he spends on Council activities.

Beeman has said, for example, that if he and Council President Floyd Lopez want to talk, The Albany Restaurant and Bar (rather than the Council's own plush offices) is a good place to do so ... and if they talk about City business during the meal, then the City should pay for it.

Big spenders or opportunistic cheap-skates? You decide.

Commentary

The discovery of Maggie Carter's inappropriate spending occurred quite by accident. I wasn't even looking closely at the purchases made on her VISA card until I discovered what Top-of-the-World Distributors actually sells. Try as I might, I couldn't figure out why any of those fascinating products should be considered legitimate uses for public funds.

Fortunately, the structural and procedural problems which made Ms. Carter's inappropriate purchases with public funds possible can be easily cured at the City Treasurer's office. A few small changes, such as where the monthly statements are mailed and who looks closely at the receipts before payment is made, should prevent similar temptations in the future.

Last week, I sent an email to Mayor Jack Spiker. I asked what the City's policy is concerning theft and fraud by City employees. His answer ... apparently written by his Secretary, Judi Gore ... says simply: "The City's position is that theft or fraud by its employees is wrong."

That's not a policy statement. That's a values statement. Most real business owners and most mayors know the difference.

A policy statement is definite. It says something like: "If you steal from the City or its citizens, we're going to tie a can on your rear end and kick it out the door. No exceptions." (Exact words may vary from town to town.)

It will be interesting to see how Mayor Spiker and the City Council react in the days ahead. I know I'll be watching closely.

###

A final thought ... why are you reading about this problem and these thefts at City Hall in a free bi-weekly newspaper and not the local daily?

The answer is simple. The local daily newspaper has lost its journalistic soul and will not make any effort to expose the many, many screw-ups, financial problems, and conflicts of interest at Jack Spiker's City Hall. They know about many of them, but they'll never write about them.

That's sad and it's a disservice to the daily's loyal readers. It also disrespects the proud tradition of real journalists like Tracy & Bob McCracken. They must be spinning like turbines!

Jim Mathewson

Jim Mathewson is a resident of Cheyenne. His email address is jmat44691@yahoo.com