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LOCAL

Banker finds energy efficiency upgrades make sense

BY SUZIE ROMIG,
CLEER CORRESPONDENT
SPECIAL TO THE CITIZEN TELEGRAM



TODD PATRICK / TODD PATRICK PHOTOGRAPHY

As a successful community banker for 21 years, Alpine Bank's Jay Rickstrew has learned a thing or two about smart, conservative investing.

So when it came time to invest in his aging bank building on Fourth Street in downtown Rifle, he measured life-cycle costs for equipment options and considered long-term energy prices. The banker ran the numbers on an upgrade of the heating and cooling equipment in the building, originally constructed decades ago as First National Bank.

"What spurred it in the beginning was the HVAC is very old and very inefficient, and we would have to replace it anyway," Rickstrew said. "What I looked at was if we are going to replace it, let's do it the right way. Let's do it as energy efficient as possible, and let's offset some of the (energy) costs."

Rickstrew phased the cost of upgrades after tracking positive savings. The priorities were determined through a commercial energy audit completed in spring 2008 by Schmueser Gordon Meyer engineers in Glenwood Springs. The first step was to make the building envelope for the 8,800-square-foot bank as tight as

John Evans, Alpine Bank facilities officer, reviews work from a large insulation and air sealing project that improved the roof insulation factor from a leaky R-11 to a tight R-49.

possible so new heating and cooling units could be sized appropriately and run effectively.

In February the bank management invested \$20,500 in a large insulation and air sealing project completed by a regional vendor that improved the roof insulation factor from a leaky R-11 to a tight R-49. The project received a \$5,000 rebate through the Garfield Clean Energy Challenge for Business

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COVER PHOTOS
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT.

- Rifle High School Lady Bears head coach Stephanie Heald talks to the team at one of last season's 3A state playoff games. Heald coached the Bears to a 13-0 Western Slope League record last season. The team made it to the consolation semifinals.
- Blayne Schriener, 1, plays in the water park at Centennial Park during the Centennial Park Concert Series on July 3. The water park was a huge hit with families and kids to escape the summer heat.
- Lindsey O'Brien performs a sound check before her performance at the final Centennial Park Concert Series show in July. O'Brien's band, The Lindsey O'Brien Band, was the final performance in the widely popular inaugural season of the music series.
- Rifle junior Ryan Moeller runs the ball against Delta earlier this season. Moeller was the leading Class 3A runner, and achieved a career high of 320 yards rushing against Delta. The Bears shredded the Panthers 41-7, bringing their record to 7-0 for the season.
- Pictured is the Rifle High School track team's championship ring signifying its 2011 title.
- Former Rifle Mayor Keith Lambert is shown in the seat in Council Chambers at City Hall, which he kept for a decade. Lambert retired this year as mayor, but remains a city councillor.

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(USPS 466 040) is published every Thursday at 125 W. Fourth St., Suite 206, Rifle, CO 81650-2318. Periodicals postage is paid at Glenwood Springs and at other offices. Published by the Citizen Telegram, a division of Colorado Mountain News Media Company. POSTMASTER: Send change of address to The Citizen Telegram, 125 W. Fourth St., Suite 206, Rifle, CO 81650 Colorado Statutory Publication, CRS 24-70, et seq.

Publisher
Jenna Weathered

Editor
John Gardner
(384-9114)

Advertising Representative
Laurie Vagneur

Reporter
John Gardner

Photographers
Kelley Cox
John Gardner

Circulation
Melissa Boutwell
(384-9102)

Art Director
Louie J. Atencio

THE CITIZEN TELEGRAM
www.citizentelegram.com
125 W. Fourth St., Suite 206, Rifle, Colorado 81650 • (970) 625-3245 • FAX (970) 625-3628 • e-mail: mail@citizentelegram.com
Colorado Mountain News Media, Publisher

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(www.GarfieldCleanEnergy.org under the "Commercial" tab). The Challenge is a project of the Garfield Clean Energy, a countywide collaboration of nine local governments, with management and energy coaching provided by the nonprofit Clean Energy Economy for the Region (CLEER).

"The CLEER energy coaches proved very valuable," said John Evans, Alpine Bank's facilities officer. "They offered their considerable experience with energy upgrades and what areas to work on first."

Another key step was the installation of an Airius brand fan attached to the ceiling of the tall entrance area in the bank lobby. The powerful but quiet blower — technically known as a "thermal and humidity de-stratification fan" — forcefully moves air trapped near the high ceiling through-out the lobby. Bank employees such as Karrie Fletcher and Marcia Smith said the fan and insulation have made a noticeable difference in keeping the lobby and their offices more comfortable.

The upgrades lowered energy use and saved \$900 in utility costs in the eight months, Evans noted. Gas usage was reduced by 20 percent during the late winter months and electricity use was 10 percent lower during the summer compared to the

previous year.

Evans said energy use has been tracked at all Alpine Bank buildings since 2006 in the company's effort to reduce consumption by 20 percent by 2012.

Next steps planned at the downtown Rifle branch includes the installation of high efficiency, modern equipment including: 96 percent efficient hot water condensing boilers, 15.6 SEER roof-top air conditioners, an energy management system and new return air ducting instead of return air through a plenum space.

The bank president said the building's current boiler is "only 60 to 70 percent efficient and the size of a Volkswagen," but he is aiming higher to save energy.

"It doesn't cost you that much more to go from 80 percent efficient to 96 percent. If my numbers work, it's not going to cost me anything" to chose the highest efficiency boiler, Rickstrew said.

Evans said other upgrades in the past five years include efficient and motion-controlled lighting and a tankless hot water heater. All the upgrades had to measure up in a banker's calculations.

"The numbers don't lie for what we've already done," Rickstrew said. "I anticipate [the rest] will be worthwhile or I wouldn't be doing it."

<RHS FOOTBALL, PAGE 4

yards on 110 carries and 17 touchdowns.

Speed, strength and determination helped the Bears win their first 3A Western Slope League title since 2002. They made their way to the postseason for the first time since 2007.

The Bears achieved all of these milestones while suffering through tragedy all season long. The team dedicated the season to former Bears

wide-receiver, Austin Booth, who died Jan. 17, 2011 from complications from the flu. Booth was the player-of-the-week each week during the impressive season, on the Bears' MaxPreps.com page. The team attributed the successes it had on the field to Booth with a statement that read, "Austin lived his life embracing it to its fullest. We have been successful as a team following his lead."

<RE-2 MILL LEVY, PAGE 7

No decisions have been made, but Birdsey anticipates more difficult decisions as the district faces further state funding cuts next year.

Opponents of the tax increase argued that raising taxes may slow Colorado's economic recovery because people are already dealing with stagnant incomes, a weak housing market and rising gas and food prices. Opponents argued also that raising taxes now may result in less consumer spending and business investment, which may further weaken the economy.

District administrators and school board members were cautiously optimistic that the support would be there despite the tough economic climate.

A possible downfall of the proposal was that the mill levy didn't include a sunset date, unlike some tax proposals tied to funding specific projects for a specified time. However, some district officials argued that the school board could have rescinded the levy if, in the future, the state was able to restore its contribution to the district's budget.

<LAMBERT RETIRES, PAGE 3

continuing renovation of the Ute Theatre on Fourth Street, and the Brenden Theatres Rifle 7 at the old Valley Lumber site on West Second Street. However, one of the accomplishments that stood out in his opinion, he said,

was the 1 percent voter approved sales tax which passed in 2005. That tax helped fund parks and recreation projects like the construction of Centennial Park.

The city has also been somewhat a

pioneer on the alternative energy frontier having the largest municipal solar array in the state, which has garnered the city accolades from state officials, under his watch. It's also ironic considering the undeniable presence of

the natural gas industry in the area. Which just proves that Rifle, under Lambert's watch, was not afraid to swim against the current.

Despite stepping down as Mayor, Lambert remains on City Council.

January

AT VALLEY VIEW HOSPITAL

<div style="text-align: center;"> <h3>January Nutrition Classes</h3> </div> <p>Fridays, 10-11 am • Valley View Cardiac Rehab & Wellness Center</p> <p>Registered dietitians teach weekly sessions on eating for wellness. Free to Valley View's Cardiac Wellness members, \$7 for non-members. Preregister by calling 384-7006.</p> <p>December 30 Class cancelled</p> <p>January 6: Managing Your Weight and Fad Diets</p> <p>January 20: Reading Food Labels and a "Virtual" Grocery Store Tour</p> <p>January 27: What is the BEST Cardiac Diet?</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> <h3>HMR offers help with weight loss</h3> </div> <p>Losing weight is among the most common New Year's resolutions. The HMR weight management program at Valley View Hospital can help those resolutions become reality with a real lifestyle change and medically significant weight loss.</p> <p>There are program options to fit every lifestyle, both in-clinic and at home. From the decision-free medically supervised diet to self-directed diet kits, the HMR method has helped thousands to lose weight and gain health.</p> <p>To find out about HMR, the country's leading weight loss program, call 945-2324 or toll free</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> <h3>Tobacco Cessation Classes</h3> </div> <p>Create a personalized plan to stop smoking using the Quit Smart Program from Duke University. Small group classes are taught by Sandy Hyra, RN and Deb Meader BSN, CCRN. All three sessions must be attended. Individual classes available by request. Fee \$35.</p> <p>January 9, 23, 25, 5:30 pm</p> <p>Second floor classroom at Valley View Hospital. New class sessions begin on the first Tuesday of every odd-numbered month. For questions, contact Valley View Hospital Respiratory Therapy at 384-7695.</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> <h3>Genetic Counseling</h3> <p><i>for cancer patients and their families</i></p> </div> <p>Clinic held every fourth Thursday of the month at VVH</p> <p>Many people worry about being diagnosed with cancer, especially if a close relative had the disease. Determining if your family's cancer is related to an inherited gene is important in assessing your risk for cancer and its recurrence.</p> <p>An evaluation by the genetic counselor may clarify your personal risk of cancer or the risk for other family members. It can also help you and your physicians make more informed medical decisions about cancer surveillance and prevention strategies.</p> <p>Most patients who meet with a genetic counselor find reassurance, direction and empowerment. Genetic counseling and testing is covered by most insurance companies. For information or an appointment please call 970-384-7570.</p>
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