

CHEYENNE  
W Y O M I N G  
*Live the Legend™*

2012 ANNUAL REPORT

**VISIT CHEYENNE**  
The Convention & Visitors Bureau

# VISIT CHEYENNE OVERVIEW

**Visit Cheyenne** is the official tourism promotion organization for Laramie County. It is governed by the Laramie County Tourism Joint Powers Board which includes members appointed by Laramie County (3), Cheyenne (3), Pine Bluffs (1), Burns (1), and Albin (1).

The Laramie County lodging tax is the primary funding source for **Visit Cheyenne**. The tax is paid by visitors who stay in Laramie County lodging establishments, not Laramie County residents. Laramie County voters first approved the tax in 1987 and have renewed it every time since.

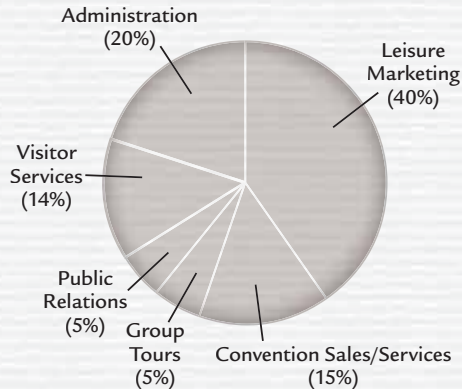
**Visit Cheyenne** promotes and develops the Cheyenne area through paid advertising, visitor guides and websites, social media, public relations, convention and bus tour solicitation, trolley tours, and the operation of two visitor centers.

## MISSION

*Visit Cheyenne provides leadership in developing, promoting, and protecting the Cheyenne area's travel industry.*

*Visit Cheyenne strives to attract visitors to the Cheyenne area by capitalizing on Cheyenne's legendary history and image, thereby increasing visitor spending in the county.*

## 2012 Visit Cheyenne Expenditures



## Visit Cheyenne Audited Financials – Fiscal Year 2012 (July 2011 - June 2012)



REVENUES	
Lodging Tax	\$1,357,753
Other Revenues*	\$1,567
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,359,320</b>

EXPENDITURES	
Leisure Marketing	\$551,991
Convention Sales/Services*	\$207,403
Group Tours	\$74,022
Public Relations	\$73,432
Visitor Services	\$194,057
Administration	\$274,811
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,375,716</b>

\*Does not include registration fees **Visit Cheyenne** collects and disperses for local conventions.

CHEYENNE STREET RAILWAY TROLLEY	
Revenues	\$79,191
Expenditures	\$73,731

Auditor: Auer Woodley & Ostlund CPA's LLC

## FULL TIME STAFF

**President & CEO**  
Darren Rudloff

**Director of Operations**  
Jill Pope

**Director of Convention Sales**  
Shantelle Dedicke

**Convention Services**  
Lisa Maney

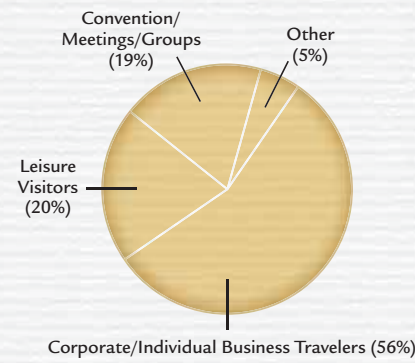
**Customer Service**  
Lisa Kindel  
Laura Levi

## Cheyenne Lodging Statistics

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Occupancy Rate	62.2%	65.3%	63.8%	55.3%	59.3%
Average Room Rate	\$77.75	\$75.64	\$71.95	\$71.65	\$74.21

Source: Smith Travel Research

## Cheyenne's Lodging Customer Mix

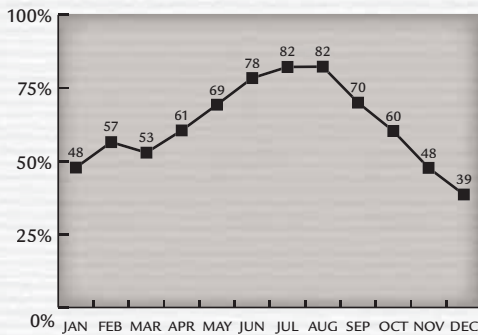


Source: Visit Cheyenne, 2011 Lodging Survey

If the travel industry were a single business, it would rank as the county's 3rd largest employer behind F.E. Warren Air Force Base and the State of Wyoming.

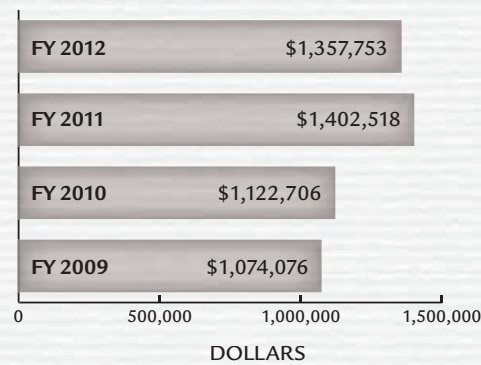
Visitors pay Laramie County and Wyoming taxes that support local schools, roads and other services. For instance, visitors pay 9.3% of the sales tax collected in Laramie County.

## Cheyenne Lodging Occupancy Rates, 2012

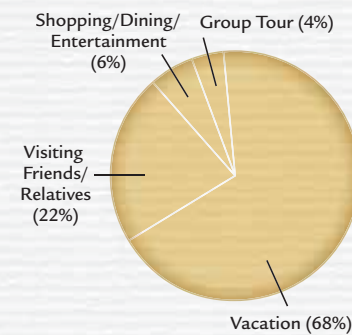


Source: Smith Travel Research

## Laramie County Lodging Tax Collections



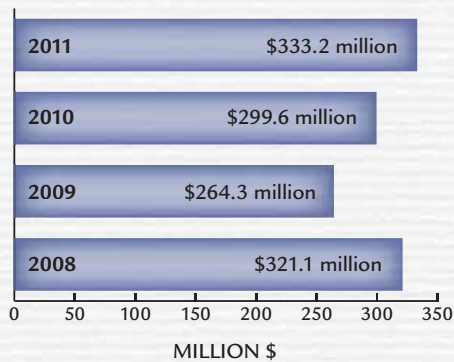
## Trip Purpose for LEISURE Visitors to Laramie County



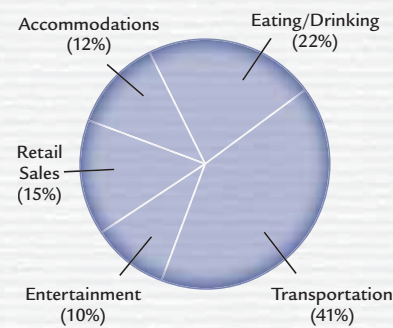
In 2012 Cheyenne Frontier Days™ received the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association "Large Outdoor Rodeo of the Year" award for the 9th straight year.

Laramie County has the 2nd highest level of traveler spending among all Wyoming counties, behind only Teton County.

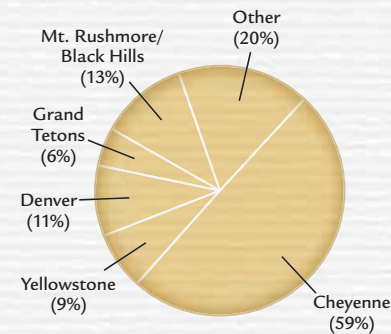
## Travel Spending in Laramie County



## Laramie County Travel Spending by Business Sector, 2011



## Primary Destination for Visitors to Laramie County

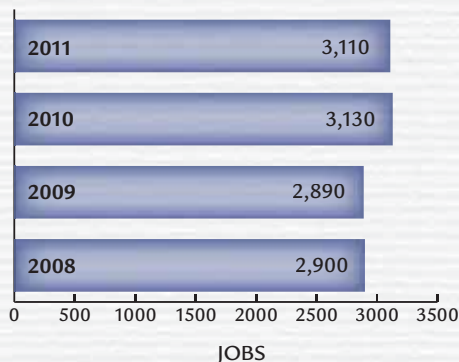


Includes multiple responses, so total exceeds 100%.

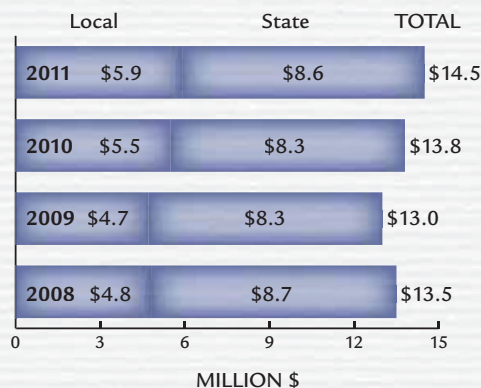
Visitors to Cheyenne Frontier Days spent approximately \$25 million in Laramie County during the 2012 event.

Cheyenne's year-round lodging occupancy rate is 62.2%, which means approximately 1,500 hotel rooms are booked every single night of the year.

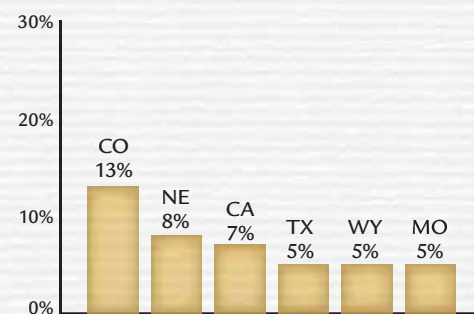
## Employment Generated by Tourism in Laramie County



## State and Local Tax Receipts Generated by Travel Spending



## Where Our LEISURE Visitors Come From (top states)



International visitors account for approximately 5% of Cheyenne's total visitation.

Without the tax contribution of tourists, each Laramie County household would pay an additional \$400 in taxes to maintain existing government services.

More than three-quarters (78%) of Frontier Days attendees traveled from outside of Laramie County to attend.

The Frontier Days pancake breakfast record of 16,897 people occurred on the Wednesday of the 1996 "Daddy of 'em All"®.

# VISIT CHEYENNE 2012 ACTIVITIES

## Leisure Travel Marketing & Public Relations

**Visit Cheyenne** placed paid advertising in numerous publications and websites (often in partnership with Frontier Days or the Wyoming Office of Tourism) and responded to 50,029 resulting travel inquiries in 2012 (+46% from 2011).

**Visit Cheyenne** produced and distributed its main Visitor Guide, the Cheyenne Museum Passport brochure, and a downtown discount brochure with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

**Visit Cheyenne's** website hosted 385,769 user sessions in 2012 (+23% from 2011) and booked 189 room nights (+5%) worth \$28,918 on the site. Traffic to **Visit Cheyenne's** mobile website on handheld devices increased drastically, up 202%.

**Visit Cheyenne** ran a major internet advertising campaign targeting consumers within approximately 500 miles of Laramie County. The campaign resulted in 7,290 Visitor Guide inquiries, 4,241 e-newsletter subscribers, and 8,865 new Facebook fans.

In addition to its year-round marketing efforts, **Visit Cheyenne** ran several summer promotions.

- TV ads in South Dakota, Nebraska, Colorado, & Wyoming, using new commercials,
- A direct mail promotion to 5,000 previous Cheyenne visitors, and
- Regional radio ads highlighting summer events.

**Visit Cheyenne** ran an integrated marketing campaign to attract winter weekend visitors. The campaign used radio advertising, social media, billboards, targeted emails, and web advertising to promote event-filled winter weekends. Area lodging properties offered special winter rates for the promotion.



**Visit Cheyenne** awarded marketing grants to: Sherman Hill Model Railroad Show, Art Design and Dine, Depot Summer Events, Cheyenne International Film Festival, ShootOut Cheyenne Filmmaking Contest, Hell on Wheels Shootout, Prairies to Peaks Plein Air Event, 17th Street Arts Festival, New Year's Eve Ball Drop, Frontier Days Hall of Fame Ceremony, and to Burns, Albin, Pine Bluffs, Cheyenne, and Laramie County.

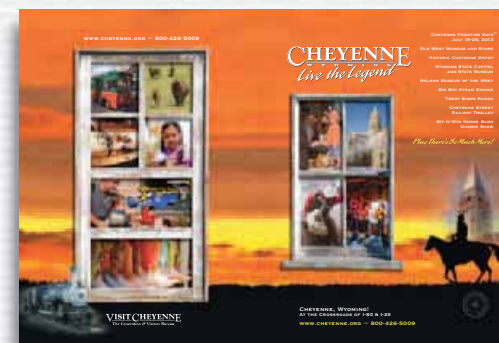
**Visit Cheyenne** managed a strong social media effort, providing updates on Laramie County attractions, events, and other news through Facebook (16,266 fans) and Twitter (2,111 followers).

**Visit Cheyenne** provided Cheyenne Visitor Guides and targeted emails to more than 100,000 visitors planning trips to Yellowstone National Park and Rocky Mountain National Park.

**Visit Cheyenne** advertised in various group tour publications and promoted the area at 4 group tour trade shows.

**Visit Cheyenne** hosted 13 travel writers hailing from Los Angeles, New York City (2), Council Bluffs (IA), Boulder (CO), Beaver Creek (OR), California, Japan, Korea, United Kingdom, Australia, Denmark, and Norway.

**Visit Cheyenne** responded to media inquiries for photos and information from both national/international media (115 contacts, +31% from 2011) and local media (75 contacts, -6% from 2011).



**Visit Cheyenne** added 2 billboards west of Laramie to its outdoor advertising campaign and leveraged this media buy to acquire 4 complimentary billboards in northern Colorado to promote seasonal events.



## KUDOS

\* **Visit Cheyenne** earned the top visitor bureau accreditation from Washington D.C.-based Destination Marketing Association International. **Visit Cheyenne** met 82 industry standards on governance, finance, management, marketing, sales, and more. Only 148 visitor bureaus worldwide have earned this accreditation, with **Visit Cheyenne** being the only Wyoming bureau.

\* **Visit Cheyenne** and its public relations firm Tucker & Associates earned the Adrian Bronze Award from Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International. The honor came for **Visit Cheyenne's** recruitment of *Salt Lake City Tribune* travel editor Tom Wharton who wrote a great Cheyenne article with a public relations value of \$252,000.

\* **Visit Cheyenne** was nominated by the readers of *Groups Today* magazine (a group tour publication) as one of the top 5 Visitor Bureaus in the entire western United States along with Dallas, Boise, Sacramento, and Central Oregon. Dallas eventually won this honor.

\* CEO Darren Rudloff was appointed to the Wyoming Office of Tourism Board of Directors by Governor Matt Mead.

\* Director of Convention Sales Shantelle Dedicke earned the Certified Meeting Planner designation – the top certification of the meeting's industry, sponsored by the Conventions Industry Council.

# PROUD MEMBER/ PARTNER

## Convention Marketing & Services

**Visit Cheyenne** provided 31 bids for new convention business to lodging partners (+29% from 2011). Winning bids included an estimated 3,967 room nights, \$846,000 in visitor spending, and \$67,000 in local taxes.

**Visit Cheyenne** continued providing extensive services to the organizers of two major conventions – the WY Governor’s Tourism Conference and WY Business Alliance Governor’s Fall Forum. These two conventions were responsible for an estimated 1,480 hotel room nights, \$394,000 in visitor spending, and \$31,000 in local taxes.

**Visit Cheyenne** added a colorful, branded registration desk to its convention services arsenal which already included online registration, onsite registration staffing, a mobile meeting website, convention materials, and welcome receptions.



**Visit Cheyenne** assisted 148 conventions with brochures, coupons, planning, and registration help (+1% from 2011).

**Visit Cheyenne** worked with industry partners to create new evening event options for convention groups and bus tours. The WY State Museum held a successful “Night at the Museum” event for a 2012 medical convention, and the Old West Museum’s new “Frontier Nights” event has three tentative bookings for 2013.

*“The **Round Up Your Knowledge Conference** was a huge success, bringing fire prevention professionals from across the United States to Wyoming for a one-of-a-kind fire prevention conference. Without the support and services provided by **Visit Cheyenne**, we would not have been able to hold such a successful event. It was a pleasure working with **Visit Cheyenne**.”*

Byron Mathews  
CHEYENNE FIRE AND RESCUE

\* Bob Harmon, Cheyenne hotelier and **Visit Cheyenne** Board member, was named 2012 Person of the Year by the Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce.

\* Darren Rudloff made a presentation on Visitor Industry Development at the annual convention of Destination Marketing Association International in Seattle in July.



## Community & Industry Efforts

**Visit Cheyenne** continued working in partnership with the City of Cheyenne and WY Department of Transportation to create a “quiet zone” for the South West Drive train crossing located near many of Cheyenne’s hotels. The project is expected to be complete in 2013.

**Visit Cheyenne** held a training session on new Americans with Disabilities Act rules affecting hoteliers and developed a “green lodging practices” guide for local hoteliers.

**Visit Cheyenne** provided its annual hospitality trolley tours to hotel staff so they are better prepared to recommend the trolley and area attractions to hotel guests.

**Visit Cheyenne** worked closely with Lights On! and other community partners to organize and promote the 2nd annual New Year’s Eve Ball Drop in the Depot Plaza, which included fireworks and a laser light show.

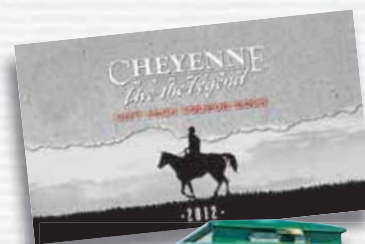
## Visitor Services

**Visit Cheyenne** operated year-round visitor centers in Pine Bluffs and the Cheyenne Depot. In partnership with the Cheyenne Depot Museum, **Visit Cheyenne** added two electronic kiosks in the Depot lobby to better direct people and provide information about area attractions and events.

**Visit Cheyenne** operated 3 Cheyenne Street Railway trolleys, providing summer historic tours, Halloween and Christmas specialty tours, and transportation for conventions and events like the WWII Veterans Honor Flights. More than 14,000 total passengers rode the trolleys in 2012.

**Visit Cheyenne** provided a coupon program at no cost to participating hospitality businesses, available via a coupon book and **Visit Cheyenne’s** websites.

**Visit Cheyenne** produced a daily/weekly fax of local events for area hoteliers to provide to their guests.



## WHY THE COWBOY in Visit Cheyenne advertising?

**Visit Cheyenne** research reveals that *Cheyenne* is a magical western name to people throughout the United States and world. *Cheyenne* conjures up classic western images of cowboys, Indians, steam engines, and big skies. This brand has been built by years of movies, TV shows, novels, comic books, and music. As a result, **Visit Cheyenne** showcases cowboy and train imagery in most of its advertising messages because it is what consumers are expecting to experience in a Cheyenne trip.

- Cheyenne LEADs
- Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Cheyenne Foundation
- Wyoming Travel Industry Coalition
- National Tour Association
- American Bus Association
- Destination Marketing Association International
- Meeting Planners International
- American Society of Association Executives (WY & CO chapters)
- Society of Governmental Meeting Professionals
- Professional Convention Managers Association
- Hospitality Services and Meetings Associations Industry



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THE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU  
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CHEYENNE, WYOMING 82001

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800-426-5009

[WWW.CHEYENNE.ORG](http://WWW.CHEYENNE.ORG)



PINE BLUFFS VISITORS CENTER  
I-80 AT PINE BLUFFS EXIT 401  
PINE BLUFFS, WYOMING 82082

307-245-3695  
307-245-3746



## Visit Cheyenne Board Members in 2012

Steve Farkas  
*University of Wyoming*

Rick Keslar  
*Wyoming Dept. of  
Transportation and  
Cheyenne Frontier Days*

Bob Nelson  
*Nelson Museum of the West*

Bob Harmon  
*Holiday Inn*

Judy Johnstone  
*Mayor of Burns*

Jim Brown (ex officio)  
*Cheyenne City Council*

René Baker  
*Town of Pine Bluffs*

Jim Osterfoss  
*Nagle Warren Mansion B&B*

Amiee Reese  
*Old West Museum*

Scott French  
*Little America Hotel & Resort*

Frank Harris  
*Little America Hotel & Resort*

Mike Godown  
*Texas Roadhouse*

Diane Humphrey (ex officio)  
*Laramie County Commissioner*

## Help Us Promote Cheyenne!

- *Invite* your friends and relatives to visit.
- *Ride* the Cheyenne Street Railway Trolley.
- *Host* a meeting or retreat in Cheyenne for organizations of which you are a member.
- *Subscribe* to our e-newsletter at [www.cheyenne.org](http://www.cheyenne.org).
- Help *spread good news* about the area.  
Follow us on [Facebook.com/VisitCheyenne](https://www.facebook.com/VisitCheyenne)  
or Twitter: @CheyenneWY

