

TUESDAY EVENING, MARCH 14, 2017 * 75¢ * GILLETTENEWSRECORD.COM



RIDING OFF

Broncos, Cowboys LB DeMarcus Ware retires from NFL, **B1**

CAMPBELL COUNTY 911 outage includes local agencies, no major impact reported **A8**

‘Highly likely’ coal plant coming to Gillette

Clean Coal Technologies Inc. begins application process for commercial plant, likes Gillette

By **GREG JOHNSON**
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A New York-based coal research firm is closer to locating its test plant and a commercial plant near Gillette after a recent visit to the area. Clean Coal Technologies Inc. had been testing its patented coal dehydration process on Powder River Basin

coal at a power plant in Oklahoma, and now is in the fast lane to not only test on coal from around the world, but to begin selling its enhanced product overseas. “It’s all coming together quickly now,” said Robin Eves, CEO. “We had an excellent trip to Wyoming and it was further boosted by more forceful interest from Washington, D.C., and two of the largest rail carriers in the

country.” After nine years of research and development, Eves said CCT has developed a way to dry out coal and have it remain stable. The process, which he equates to basically “refining” coal out of the ground, also leaves it dust-free and it produces significantly less harmful emissions. Besides weighing less, the heat output of coal treated through the company’s Pristine-M process increases by 30 percent or more, he said. In testing at the Oklahoma plant, PRB coal saw its Btu value increased from 8,000 Btu to 12,000 Btu.

The company announced last month its intentions to move its test plant to either Wyoming or Montana. While a choice hasn’t been announced, CCT’s trip to Gillette at the end of February was overwhelmingly positive, said Aiden Neary, chief financial officer for the company. “From a test plant perspective, we identified a location that has the infrastructure we need,” he said. “We think we found a location that will work.” The visit, along with continued support from the U.S. Department of Energy to develop its process, has prompted Clean Coal Technologies

to “commence the application process for obtaining permits necessary for a commercial plant in Wyoming,” according to a company press release. “While there, we also toured a very promising site with rail access where we may relocate and permanently move our test facility in order to commence testing our Pristine-M process on non-U.S. coal.” Because Gillette and the state are enthusiastic about seeing Clean Coal Technology’s process take off, the company is “very, very confident” in

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Mead signs compromise bill for K-12 education

Spending plan makes \$34.5M in cuts with no tax increases

FROM STAFF, WIRE REPORTS

Gov. Matt Mead has approved a compromise state K-12 education spending plan that cuts \$34.5 million from schools in 2017-18. The governor signed the legislation Monday. Lawmakers declined proposals that would have slightly increased taxes to raise new money for education, saying they supported cuts first. They also said the state’s school districts must bear some of the burden of cuts — just as the rest of the state government has — during this economic downturn. For the Campbell County School District, those cuts — including a 0.4 percent cut the Legislature enacted for the 2016-17 school year — will total about \$3.2 million. A report from the Legislative Services Office adds that by 2017-18, the cuts will total \$56 million, including the \$34 million enacted by the most recent general session and \$22 million, or 1 percent, from the 2016 budget session. That doesn’t include an estimated \$5.4 million the school district expects to lose within three years because of dramatic enrollment drops in the 2016-17 school year. Kirby Eisenhauer, the associate superintendent for instructional support, will speak about some of those challenges as he provides school trustees with a legislative update Tuesday night in its public meeting, which starts at 7 p.m. in the board room of the Educational Services Center, 1000 W. Eighth St. Campbell County’s lawmakers also will appear in a Legislative Wrap-up, sponsored by the Campbell County Chamber of Commerce at 7 a.m. March 21 at the Campbell County Senior Center, 701 Stocktrail Ave. The event is open to the public at a cost of \$35 for nonmembers and \$25 for members. Doors open at 6 a.m. Fixing an education funding shortfall that’s expected to top \$380 million a year starting in 2018-19 was one of Mead’s top priorities for the eight-week session that ended March 5. Mead is tentatively scheduled to travel to Gillette for his annual governor’s luncheon, also sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, at noon April 25 at Cam-plex Energy Hall. For more information on tickets, call the chamber at 307-682-3673. The state has lost millions in revenue because of the downturn in the coal, oil and natural gas extraction industries. Wyoming funds much of its public education from taxes and other sources of income derived from energy. The legislation creates a special committee to work this summer on a school funding model recalibration and provide recommendations of how to fund Wyoming schools in the future.

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Fits like a glove

With Little League Baseball tryouts underway, kids ages 9 and 10 flocked to the Cam-plex Central Pavilion on Monday evening. They lined up to show their potential coaches their hitting, fielding and throwing skills while the coaches took notes. Tuesday night, 11- and 12-year-olds will have their tryouts beginning at 5:30 and 7:30 p.m., respectively. Above, **Kurtis Fayle**, left, and **Spencer Clabaugh**, both 9, throw their gloves in the air and catch them as they wait for their numbers to be called during the tryouts. At left, **Larson Eischeid**, 9, throws a ball to **Tylen Kirkpatrick**. News Record Photos/Kelly Wenzel

Tight budgets could complicate how to fight crime

By **SADIE GURMAN**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Attorney General Jeff Sessions is promising his Justice Department will lead the charge in helping cities fight violent crime, and police chiefs are ready with their wish-lists. More technology to trace guns after shootings. More grant money. More intelligence ana-

lysts to help dismantle gangs. More protective gear and equipment. As the head of one police officers’ union put it, “We need more of everything.” But Sessions, who cut his teeth as a federal prosecutor in Mobile, Alabama, at the height of the drug war in the 1980s, has inherited a federal government that built itself to fight terrorism since 9/11 and, more recently, to combat cybercrime. Since taking office, Sessions has spoken repeatedly about a spike in murders. He and President Donald Trump ordered the creation of a crime-fighting task force, bringing together the heads of the major law enforcement agencies. And they seem to be counting on tighter border security to stop a flow of drugs and reduce crime. But they have yet to offer

new money for crime-fighting, especially in the face of Trump’s plan to slash nonmilitary budgets. More clarity could come Thursday when the administration unveils its budget proposal. Sessions also has not said how federal law enforcement will be able to juggle priorities. “He’ll find out very quickly that you can’t pull people off all these other things just to go do

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World in brief

US spent \$36 million in lawsuits over records

WASHINGTON — An Associated Press analysis of new U.S. data finds the Obama administration in its final year spent a record \$36.2 million on legal costs defending its refusal to turn over federal records under the Freedom of Information Act. The Obama administration also set a record — for a second consecutive year — for times federal employees told citizens, journalists and others that despite searching they couldn't find a single page of files that were requested.

And it set records for outright denying access to files and refusing to quickly consider requests described as especially newsworthy. The AP on Monday settled its 2015 lawsuit against the State Department for files about Hillary Clinton's time as secretary of state and received \$150,546 from the department to cover part of its legal fees.

CDC warns of Zika with sperm donation

NEW YORK — Men from three Florida counties shouldn't donate sperm because of a small risk of spreading Zika, U.S. health officials said Monday. The guidance had previously applied to Miami-Dade County, the only place in Florida where there's evidence the virus was spread by mosquitoes. But infections were reported in people in South Florida who couldn't clearly be linked to Miami-Dade. On Monday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the advice should extend to two counties north of Miami — Broward and Palm Beach. The recommendation applies to men who lived or traveled in those counties since June 15. Zika is mainly spread by mosquito bites but it can also be spread through sex. People can be infected without getting sick, and the virus can remain in semen for months. There is no evidence of a pregnant women being infected by Zika through a sperm donation, and such a risk is considered low, CDC officials said. Infection during pregnancy can lead to severe brain-related birth defects.

Kosovo seeks NATO support for new army

PRISTINA, Kosovo — Kosovo's president has called on NATO to support the transformation of its security force into a regular army with heavy weaponry. President Hashim Thaci sent a draft law to parliament last week seeking approval to form a regular army. The move was immediately denounced by Serbian leaders, who refuse to recognize the independence its former province declared in 2008. NATO and the United States have warned they could scale back cooperation with Kosovo's security services if the government goes ahead with plans to transform its lightly armed security force into an army without amending the country's Constitution. The Western military alliance has helped train Kosovo's security force. Thaci says securing the necessary parliamentary backing for constitutional amendments is not viable since lawmakers representing the country's ethnic Serb minority are boycotting Parliament.

Senate OKs Medicare and Medicaid pick

WASHINGTON — A divided Senate has confirmed President Donald Trump's pick to run the Medicare and Medicaid agency, the \$1 trillion organization overseeing health insurance programs for more than 130 million Americans. Indiana health care consultant Seema Verma is a protégé of Vice President Mike Pence. She was approved Monday by a 55-43 vote. Verma will head the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, which is slated for sweeping changes under the House Republican health care bill backed by Trump. That legislation would roll back key elements of former President Barack Obama's health care law and limit future federal financing for Medicaid, which serves more than 70 million low-income people. Verma has a background in public health, and says she wants government programs to improve health, not just pay bills.

— THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

911 outage includes Campbell County

FROM STAFF, WIRE REPORTS

Campbell County was one of six counties that temporarily lost 911 service Monday. Chris Petry of the Wyoming Public Service Commission said the outage Monday morning also affected Natrona, Fremont, Sheridan and Johnson counties. Campbell County seems to have escaped largely unscathed. Joey Williams, communications supervisor at the Campbell County

Sheriff's Office, said there was one disconnected call Monday, but he didn't know whether that was due to the outage or the caller hanging up. Other counties were not so lucky. Williams said his office has been taking some 911 calls from Sheridan and transferring them back on a regular phone line. But not everything was perfect for Campbell County, either. Williams said he dialed 911 on his own phone and the call came in on a regular line. "This was a problem because it

didn't come in on a 911 line," he said. "It rang as a regular line and didn't show any information" such as the phone number and address. It was a small inconvenience more than anything, Williams said. "It's nice to have that information, but that can always be asked," he said. "We try to verify that anyway, whether it's on the screen or not." The Gillette Police Department has not had any problems with taking calls, said city spokesman Geno Palazzari. He spoke to dispatchers

Monday and learned that "everything seemed to be as it should." "They were receiving calls and they never stopped," he said. Petry said CenturyLink has made temporary fixes to restore part of the service and is working on a permanent repair. The cause of the outage is unknown. Williams said he called CenturyLink on Tuesday morning and was told that everything was back to normal.



Photo Courtesy Clean Coal Technologies Inc.

This test plant at a coal-fired power plant in Oklahoma is the result of nine years of work and research by Clean Coal Technologies Inc. The company says it has developed a way to dehydrate coal that remains stable after it's refined.

Coal plant: Mayor excited over potential of process

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its future, Eves said. "Given that our technology works, given that the PRB is right behind it ... there are an awful lot of parts all moving here." While Eves and Neary are cautiously optimistic about Gillette hosting their test and commercial operations, Gillette Mayor Louise Carter-King is overtly excited about the prospect. She accompanied the CCT officials on their visit and was impressed with the potential of the coal treatment process. "I love it, and I love (showing people around Gillette) because this place sells itself," she said. "We are working on making this all happen. They want to get going quickly, and we need to work at the speed of business, not government. They are high on Wyoming and high on Gillette." Proving the value of CCT's process in creating an enhanced coal

that can sell for a premium price with the Powder River Basin producers would give the company added credibility in licensing its process globally. That seal of approval would be "massive," Eves said. Commercial focus Now that the process has been tested and proven stable and effective on Powder River Basin coal, the focus is to get a commercial plant up and running, Neary said. That's because the company already has the potential to sell about 20 million tons of its treated coal a year through export. Two of the largest rail carriers in the country are interested in carrying the coal, so ironing out transportation issues and getting their product to a western port is the next hurdle. Because its coal is proven to be dust-free, it should alleviate the environmental concerns some states have expressed about having

coal trains moving through. "We've been working with three major buyers who have a desire for up to 20 million tons of coal annually using this technology," Neary said. "And, one of the biggest problems the coal industry has over here is transportation." A recent study shows that about 1 pound of coal dust is lost per mile per car with traditional coal, he said. "Our processed coal is unique in that it is dust-free and should avoid a lot of those traditional issues." Ultimately, the potential between running its own commercial plant and licensing out its process to mines "could mean thousands of jobs in construction in Wyoming, more mining jobs to meet the demand, all those downstream benefits." While a final decision hasn't been made, Neary said it's "highly likely" Clean Coal Technologies Inc. is coming to Gillette.

Few clues on how a Gorsuch would vote on immigration

By HOLBROOK MOHR and SUDDHIN THANAWALA ASSOCIATED PRESS

If Neil Gorsuch wins confirmation to the Supreme Court, he could cast the deciding vote on President Donald Trump's travel ban against immigrants from certain countries. But it's far from certain how he would vote. According to an Associated Press review of Gorsuch's rulings, he has not written extensively about immigration policy during a decade on the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. And the few rulings he has been involved in do not reveal how he might decide if given the opportunity to consider an immigration ban. Many of the cases involved people challenging their prison sentences for returning to the U.S. illegally after having been deported. He has often been deferential to immigration authorities, but has also sided with immigrants. "His record on immigration is a mixed bag, so it's hard to predict how he would rule on any challenge to the executive order," says Melissa Crow, legal director for the American Immigration Council, which challenged Trump's original ban. That order, which would have banned, people from seven majority Muslim countries, was put on hold last month by a federal appeals court, but Trump signed a new version March 6. That one removed Iraq from the list and eliminated a provision to give priority to religious minorities in allowing immigrants in. The new order is to take effect Thursday, pending the outcome of legal challenges. It would not affect current visa holders but would bar new visas for people from Iran, Syria, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen and Libya.



NEIL GORSUCH

Tight budgets: Federal promise to help cities fight crime complicated by money

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that," said Robert Anderson, who was the FBI's most senior criminal investigator until his retirement in 2015. Anderson joined the bureau in the 1990s, when combating violence and drugs was its top challenge. "Now he's walking into a much different Justice Department and FBI." Kerry Sleeper, assistant director of the FBI office that works with local law enforcement, said that after decades of declines in violence, police chiefs are coming to grips with a new uptick and asking for federal help. What they'd like to see: * In Milwaukee, Police Chief Edward Flynn said he would like an expansion of the work done in that city by the Justice Department's Violence Reduction Network. It teams officers with deputy U.S. marshals and agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Drug Enforcement Administration to target high-crime areas. "It's encouraging to have an incoming administration take an interest in the spikes in violence in central cities," he said. * In Baltimore, which recorded 318 homicides last year, Police Commissioner Kevin Davis has said he would like federal agencies to double the number of agents assigned to cities experiencing spikes in violence. * In Chicago, singled out by the White House for its surge in shootings, Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson has said he would welcome more agents and money for mentorship and after-school programs to help kids in violent neighborhoods and, in turn, reduce crime. Other cities want help processing evidence, tracing guns and prosecuting drug traffickers and dealers as they combat heroin and opioid addiction. More chiefs are asking the FBI for its help with intelligence-gath-



AP Photo/Eric Risberg

Oakland police detectives and FBI agents work together in the offices of the Oakland Safe Streets Task Force in Oakland, Calif. Standing at left is Oakland homicide detective Jason Turner.

ering to thwart crime, said Stephen Richardson, assistant director for the FBI's criminal division. Making violent crime a priority is a departure for a Justice Department that has viewed as more urgent the prevention of cyberattacks from foreign criminals, counterterrorism and the threat of homegrown violent extremism. And while local police say they want more help fighting violence, such a plan could put new pressure on Justice Department agencies already strapped for resources. "Our budget's been eroding," Thomas Brandon, acting ATF director, told a congressional committee last week. The ranks of the agency's special agents hit an eight-year low in fiscal year 2013 and have not

grown dramatically since then. Sessions' focus fits his background. His career as a prosecutor began when there was bipartisan agreement in Washington that the best way to fight crime was with long, mandatory prison sentences. And he views today's relatively low crime rates as a sign that those policies worked. Just last week, he underscored his priority telling the nation's federal prosecutors they should use all available resources to take down the worst offenders. In contrast, the Obama administration's Justice Department focused its aid to local police on improving community relations. The federal government has long played a role in fighting crime through grants and partnerships.

Agents assigned to field offices work with local police to share intelligence on gangs and shootings, hunt fugitives and probe bank robberies. Constance Hester-Davis, special agent in charge of the ATF's field division in New Orleans, said her agents routinely work alongside local counterparts, even attending community meetings. "At the end of the day, crime is a state and local concern," said Chuck Wexler, executive director of the Police Executive Research Forum, a law enforcement think tank. "However, what police chiefs say is the federal government does have a responsibility, particularly when they prosecute." Such cooperation can work. Oakland, California, police saw killings fall from 126 in 2012 to 85 in 2016, two years after FBI agents were embedded in the homicide unit. Ten agents now share an office with Oakland detectives, offering help gathering evidence, collecting DNA, chasing leads and bringing federal prosecutions that carry longer sentences in far-away prisons. Detectives solved at least 60 percent of their cases last year, compared to about 30 percent in 2010, said Russell Nimmo, FBI supervisory special agent on the Oakland Safe Streets Task Force. "It's very complementary to what our mission is," Nimmo said. "We're a big organization. The challenge for our leadership is determining how many resources to allocate to each of those competing priorities." Richardson, who formed the first FBI task force in Louisiana to combat violent criminals, said the new focus will mean shifting resources in ways that are yet to be seen. The FBI is finalizing a strategy to "surge" resources, including agents, in certain cities this summer. "We won't be able to do all the cities we'd like to at once," Richardson said. "I firmly believe it will make a difference."