

Communication helped Billings firm stop drive

HELENA — Earlier this decade, some employees of a Billings mining company launched a union organizing campaign but dropped it after the management improved communications and kept them better informed.

Wyo-Ben Inc., a family-owned business, has its headquarters in Billings and three bentonite mines in Wyoming, said David Brown, president and chief executive officer. It has 100 employees and 40 contractors.

About eight years ago, three employees at its mine in Greybull, Wyo., talked to union officials about an organizing a union at Wyo-Ben.

"It came back to the workplace, and they talked to other employees," Brown said. "It sparked interest. There were per-



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David Brown is the president and chief executive officer of Wyo-Ben, based at the Transtech Center in Billings.

ceptions of some issues with our lining operations, not compensation but fairness issues."

Brown learned of this effort before receiving workers' formal petition for a union.

"I gathered all the employees

and asked what's going on," Brown said. "We had never been union and had been in business 52 years then. We're a family company. We have those kinds of family values.

Please see Effort, 12A

(Photo) Unionization Effort Fails

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