



From the Director's Desk - Guest Authors Tina Strang and Erin Fisher

*In a struggle of will, your limbic system will
win over your heart.*

On September 17th, Vintage, Garfield County, and Northwest Colorado Options for Long Term Care, welcomed Teepa Snow for the 13th Annual Caregiver Conference at the Keystone Conference Center. Teepa Snow is one of the world's leading advocates and educators for anyone living with dementia or other forms of brain change.

Teepa is known for her hands-on, engaging, and often humorous approach to teaching others about dementia and brain change. She usually pulls audience members on stage to help with acting out scenarios and demonstrating physical assists, but due to COVID, she asked Tina Strang, Vintage's LTC Ombudsman and RSVP Coordinator, to be her right-hand woman (aka guinea pig) for the duration of the day-long conference. Here's Tina's experience in her own words on stage with Teepa, acting out scenarios as both the caregiver and person with dementia:



Tina Strang

Excitement began to mount early on Friday as I knew I was going to meet a real-life superstar in the world of dementia, and personal hero of mine, Teepa Snow. Teepa brought the topic and challenges of dementia with competency and concern to the forefront of caregiving. Not only was I about to meet her, but I was going to have the opportunity to work with her one-on-one as an on-stage volunteer. I had watched several hours of training, read several of her articles, and had reviewed the GEMS State Model, so I had a little insight on how I thought this might go. I felt prepared, somewhat competent, and I even had on my new, branded Vintage shirt. Screech...put the brakes on, because I was definitely wrong.

The important piece missing for me that day was "practice." Although I had the knowledge of how to communicate with a person with dementia and how to physically assist them in a way that made them feel comfortable, I had no muscle memory for the movements or for the actions. I had no true day-in/day-out practice that allows the information to go from being hidden somewhere in my brain to automatic response. So, it was left up to my frontal cortex (high level executive function) to try and figure out where the information was stored and then was get it out, while my limbic system (fight or flight) was trying to take over.



Teepa and Tina onstage

Needless to say, the “poor performance award” would go to my brain. My heart showed up with excitement and gusto, but this little part of my brain that constantly scans for danger did not like being up on stage in front of cameras and an audience. Once I was up on the stage, I was frustrated because I didn’t think my brain showed up and gave me its best. I knew my brain had all the information - why couldn’t it pull up anything I had learned in the past?! Even the simplest of tasks seemed too momentous for my brain at the time. Teepa asked me for another word for “cup” and my brain refused to cooperate, even a little. No matter how much the heart wanted to be able to complete the task, the brain was not giving an ounce of output. Teepa acted out a scenario that many caregivers face, changing someone else’s clothes, and I had watched this on her training video numerous times. I knew what I was supposed to do. I knew how I was supposed to act. But instinctively my hand reached out to stop her demonstration and I never thought I would have

reacted this way.

Teepa continued teaching for the remainder of the day in her trademark interactive and funny way, but my brain was not able to upload any new data or acquire any new skills; I was just lost in a fog desperately trying not to mess up on stage. My limbic system had definitely turned off the frontal cortex part of my brain that would give me the ability to reason, think, and learn. It was busy scanning for threats and trying to survive what it had preserved as real-life threatening situations. Equipped with lots of cortisol and adrenaline, it was ready to fight, flight, or freeze.

So, what did I learn from this wonderful, glorious day?

- Practice, practice, and practice some more if it is something that is important for you to learn and be able to accomplish in a higher stress environment. Your body will need muscle memory and a superhighway etched out in your brain to be able to do even the simplest of tasks.
- Build the relationships and partnerships and practice those things that might not come naturally before you are in a stressful situation.
- Know that in a struggle of will, your limbic system will win over your heart in a stressful situation. All your best intentions may be hidden under the protective cover of your brain’s instinctive mechanisms of survival that were created long ago.
- Laugh, and when you make another mistake, laugh some more. Laughter is not only the best medicine, but it can also reassure your brain that it is safe.

Teepa’s presentation, *Best Practices in Dementia Care: Building Hands-On Skills for Communication and Interactions*, was recorded and you may watch it on the Vintage website at:

www.yourvintage.org/caregiver-support/annual-caregiver-conference/

More about Teepa and the Positive Approach to Care may be found on her website www.teepasnow.com

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Breckenridge Destination Management Plan (read STR) gets Existential

Trying to identify and pass a cap on the number of STRs in town has put the Town Council on the hot seat again and is testing the definition of community. A recent article in the [Colorado Sun](#) is entitled “[An end of unfettered growth for short term rentals in Colorado’s resort communities: Breckenridge and other mountain towns are trying to slow the growth of vacation rentals in an effort to ease housing and labor issues.](#)” (yes that is the title). It details the shared plight resort communities throughout

Colorado which are struggling with relative to the impacts of Short Term Rentals (STRs). The Summit County BOCC recently approved a 90-day moratorium on STRs, presumably to buy time to weigh similar considerations. The Sun reports that Grand County this month “backed off plans for a temporary suspension of new vacation rental permits but is increasing enforcement of its regulations as it prepares a countywide study of the impacts of vacation rentals.”

The article highlights pushback Breck is getting on the matter. It is probably the hottest hot potato in the housing crisis discussion right now.



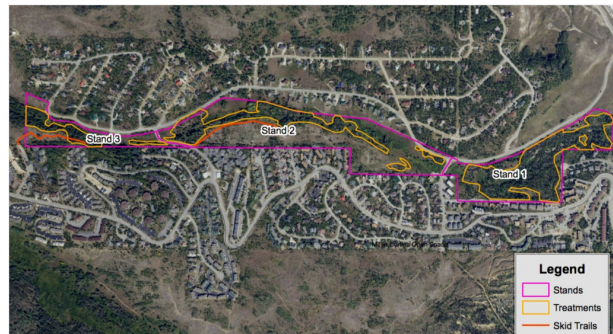
On one hand, the STR's bring in tourists, who bring in revenue and create the need for jobs, and on the other hand, the jobs that need employees are going unfilled due to lack of affordable housing creating real challenges for business owners who are unable to provide the quality services they have been previously known for. Some might blame the impacts of COVID-19 on the high unemployment, but the lack of affordable housing has been an issue long before the Pandemic. The debate has caused real angst in some communities pitting those who rely on STR's for generating income and the pride they feel adding economic drivers to the community and the long-time community members who yearn for the preservation of a “hometown feel with authentic character”. In a recent Breckenridge town council meeting the council reiterated their promise according to the [Destination Management Plan](#) to “fulfill an obligation to our community to fiercely protect the character of Breckenridge.” Therein lies the rub. Can you have a sense of community that protects the values of the whole, while also inviting an abundance of tourists?

When Breckenridge Town Council member Jeffery Bergeron said in the [Summit Daily News](#), “My fear is the Breckenridge product is diminished. I just don't think we're as good of a host as we could be, often because our work staff is overworked, businesses are understaffed, and the sense of being vested in the community is not what it used to be,” he's pointing to the eroding sense of community.

Which then begs the question - What is “Community”?

Attention Managers, Public Works Directors working on Mitigating the next Crisis—75% matches for capital projects

This opportunity could fall between the organizational cracks since it comes from Emergency Manager and Disaster Preparedness world, but is about funding infrastructure projects – public works/ road & bridge, capital improvements, community development that are the realm of engineers and public works departments. Amid all the opportunities swirling today, Mark Thompson who is the State Hazard Mitigation officer with CDPS asked NWCCOG to highlight this opportunity to get a leg up on the next Natural Hazard lurking out there. If you have your ducks in order and have taken the time to identify risks and intend to do projects to mitigate those risks, listen up. Fundable projects could be related to wildfire, floods, severe winter weather. The state has monies tied to last year's fires, COVID and annual FEMA programs that are positioned in the rare context of funding risk mitigation (rather than disaster response). According to Mark, “there is no practical upper or lower limit on project size or cost.” As long as it is an identified project, the lead jurisdiction (mostly Counties) or participating jurisdiction (mostly towns and special districts) with an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) may be eligible to fund that mitigation project identified in their HMP plan with a 75-90% federal cost share. First round of applications are due December 14th, with another round due July 7th 2022. Mark didn't say this, but conceivably, there is time to update the HMP and get a project on a Capital Funding budget for 2022 to position it to apply.



Mesa Cortina Wildfire Mitigation Plan Courtesy: Summit County Open Space & Trails

The full announcement is at <https://mars.colorado.gov/news-article/dhsem-announces-hazard-mitigation-grant-opportunities-for-2021-2022>. For more information, contact at mark.thompson@state.co.us if you have any questions. Matt Arsenault (matt.arsenault@state.co.us) leads the projects team and Julie Beyers (julie.beyers@state.co.us) (Summit County) and Debbie Goerlitz (debbie.goerlitz@state.co.us) (Eagle, Grand, Jackson, and Pitkin Counties) are the project specialists that will work directly with your

Both Leadville and Lake County are getting Professional Managers—Please Welcome them



The [Leadville Herald Democrat](#) reports September 23rd that Tim Bergman has been hired as Lake County Manager. Prior to the BOCC deciding to re-organize and hire for the position, which is being funded in the first three years through a DOLA program that exists for that purpose, Lake was one of only 8 counties of the 64 in Colorado without such a position (either County Administrator or County Manager). The position will take over day-to-day oversight of the 24 departments within the organization from the BOCC. Bergman grew up in Fraser, and comes to the position from the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF). He begins work November 15th. No contact information was provided in the article.

Buried in that article, the Herald Democrat notes that the Town of Leadville is “seeking to hire for a similar role through the same grant program.” Though both are outside the NWCCOG region, we challenge established local managers as well as Mayor/Manager groups in both Summit and Eagle Counties to welcome Bergman (and whomever is eventually hired in Leadville) and invite both to participate. The ties between counties are many. Recent discussions in a Summit County working group on housing had a number of ideas about partnering with Lake County from which many workers commute. Whether about transit, housing or other common issues, Lake County has often been just outside the influence circle in these places. This is probably an opportunity to change that.

Water Quality & Quantity Committee Updates

See revised MAY 2021 Newsletter (“Updates from Water Quality and Quantity Committee”) which incorporates staff updates including some corrections from the earlier document. [Click here for additional information.](#)

Feedback should be emailed to Torie Jarvis - QQWater@nwccog.org

Summary from September 15, 2021 QQ Meeting--

In addition to presentations by the Rocky Mountain Climate Organization and the River District, the following are among the highlights. For a full summary and links to the presentations and meeting [click here.](#)

- **Letter of Support for Melinda Kassen to WQCC:** QQ consultants and several members are recommending QQ submit a letter of support for Melinda Kassen to be named to the Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC).
- **River District Annual Seminar:** The River District is hosting its annual seminar next Friday, October 1st from 8:45 – 3 PM at Colorado Mesa State or virtually. The topic this year is “Wake Up Call on the Colorado River,” and the sessions will delve into some of the issues Andy Mueller touched on in our QQ Meeting. For more information: coloradoriverdistrict.org/2021-seminar/.
- **QQ Contract and Budget Affirmed.** QQ confirmed its annual contract with Sullivan, Green, Seavy, LLC (Barbara Green), Alpine Environmental Consultants (Ashley Bembenek), and Dynamic Planning + Science (Torie Jarvis). QQ also approved a 3% budget increase for 2022. Both of these are unchanged from the [QQ Meeting Packet](#). QQ will consider budget increases over the next 2-3 years on an annual basis. Entities received dues confirmations from NWCCOG last week. Please reach out if this budget increase is an issue for your jurisdiction—we can work with you!

Other tidbits....

OUTSIDE COLORADO -

Speaking of STR's and other housing issues, a September 21, 2021 article in Outside Magazine entitled [Ski Towns, Stop Catering to the Ultrarich - Across the West, resort towns are facing a livability crisis.](#) Luckily, advocates say, *this problem can be fixed* - (again a long title) gives a shout out to the NWCCOG for providing much needed data to prove a point. It is another take on how ski towns across the state are thinking about the fabric of their communities.

Preparing for the Worst: Eagle County Emergency Preparation

A pandemic that has raged for more than a year, annual wildland fires that are the new normal, and mudslides throughout the valley and in neighboring counties are a few of the emergency events Eagle County has confronted recently. Disasters are worse-case scenarios that no one wants to think about. However, an effectively run community must include people who think about and plan for the unthinkable – such as fires, disease, flooding, and mass casualty events.

Join Vail Valley Partnership and Vail Symposium for a webinar with key contributors to Eagle County's emergency planning and response. This panel discussion seeks to understand how much joint preparation takes place between local agencies and who takes lead. What disasters do local agencies prepare for? What are the county's primary vulnerabilities? And what can county residents do to prepare for the worst?

Jon Stavney - Moderator

[For more information and to register - click here.](#)

October 7 | 6:00pm - 7:00pm

REMINDER - 10-Digit Dialing starts October 24th

The FCC has adopted a new three digit code which will be used nationwide to connect to the National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Hotline. Beginning June 2022, people in crisis will be able to call 988 to be connected. To facilitate implementation, people across our area who may be used to dialing 7 digits to connect to their local restaurants or neighbors, will need to begin dialing the full 10 digits -- including area code.

Take a quick look at the contacts you've got stored in your lists and make sure they all have a 10 digit number, so when 10-24 rolls around, you'll be ready to make those calls.

We've Launched!

Our new website is up and running -- check it out. Get to know us better.

NWCCOG.ORG

Next Council Meeting - Thursday, October 28, 2021

Full Council Meeting

Location: Zoom Conference Call, On-site location TBD

Time: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Primary Agenda Items: Review DRAFT 2022 Budget