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## **Board Member Spotlight Suze M. Kanack**



Just about 1 year ago, Suze began working as the Town Clerk for the town of Walden, Colorado. One week later, she was appointed as a Trustee to the Board of the NWCCOG. Not only did she need to learn her new job, she also needed to learn about the NWCCOG! The speed with which it all happened left her with the impression that the NWCCOG moves fast and gets things done - a feeling she still has today.

While it may surprise some to learn that Suze grew up just three blocks from where she currently works, she'd been gone from Walden for a number of years. After graduating from high school there, she left to attend the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley. She jokingly says she was on the 10 year plan, but then mentions she was in a head-on collision between her

freshman and sophomore years. Her rehab was long and arduous, but she never gave up on getting her degree - it just came slower than planned.

After graduation, Suze ended up in Riverton, Wyoming, becoming involved with the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) as a traffic adviser, where she worked until she came back to her roots in Walden. Having inherited the family homestead, she currently lives in the home in which she grew up.

She sees similarities between working with PBS and working for the government, but she feels it's still a pretty steep learning curve. She's grateful for all the support she's gotten especially from a certain Public Works Supervisor who has been there for many years. (He knows who he is!)

Part of what she likes best about working with the NWCCOG is that she gets to learn what other municipalities are doing and how they solve problems. She feels fortunate that she can learn what works and what doesn't, which helps to reduce the learning curve mentioned earlier. She's also been impressed with the way the organization is able to take the dues collected from the member municipalities and leverage them to millions of dollars used to provide services to our communities.

She thinks people might be surprised to learn about the Elevator Inspection Program and all the work done by Weatherization in helping folks in the lower income brackets by making their homes more energy efficient - for free! She goes on to say, "The NWCCOG seeks to fill niche needs. They make well-considered plans for growth to satisfy the needs of the communities they serve."

In her spare time she likes to work with stained glass and hot glass. She also learned to hook rugs after her father broke his neck and she had time on her hands caring for him. It's not something she'll admit right away to any new acquaintance, but she is indeed, a "happy hooker" who is happy to be home.

## **Staff Member Spotlight**

### **Rachel Lunney**

#### **Director - Economic Development District**

Altogether, Rachel has worked for NWCCOG for 10 years. She joined NWCCOG in January 1999 as the Member Services Coordinator, then Member Services Director. She left in April 2002 for 6 years to deliver and raise twin boys.

Throughout that time, she stayed in touch with NWCCOG by doing some contract work. She then returned full-time to NWCCOG in April 2008, as a Research Project Manager, where her responsibilities included conducting community surveys and other research projects.

Soon after returning, the NWCCOG started pursuing Economic Development District Status through the Economic Development Administration. Her responsibilities turned towards developing the new ED program for NWCCOG, and shortly after, she was named to the Director position.

She currently manages the Economic development program which includes:

- managing all functions of the district,
- convening the working group and EDD board of directors,
- all communications functions for the program (website, resources bulletin, economic updates),
- partnering with other organizations to bring training and events to the region,



- working with member jurisdictions to build their capacity to undertake economic development programs and activities.

Twenty years ago, she and her husband moved to Summit County from Williamsville, New York. They had never been to Colorado before they packed up the car and headed west. But they'd heard about the sunshine, the mountains, the adventures, and more job opportunities. Their plan was to find their "real jobs" in Denver (they both have their MBA's from the University of Buffalo) and just play in the mountains on the weekends. But luck smiled on them and they both found "real jobs" in Summit County and have never looked back! Rachel worked briefly for Keystone, then worked with the Town of Silverthorne as the Assistant to the Town Manager - which is what started her public sector career.

The focus of her current assignment is to help the communities in this region with their economic development goals. She says about the job, "It's is very rewarding. I have an MBA, and I was never interested in working in the private sector (i.e., an organization whose mission was to make money). I needed a career that was meaningful to me - and this job is very meaningful to me every day."

Asked what might surprise people about what NWCCOG does for the community, she answered, "How much NWCCOG does! From feeding seniors at nutrition sites, to coordinating rides for those in need of transportation, to weatherizing homes (for free!), to providing small business loans, to working to bring better broadband to the region. All with a very small amount of dues, which is leveraged into millions of federal and state grant dollars to run these programs."

Her favorite activities include, "Riding my bike up mountains in the summer and skinning up mountains in the winter. And of course, spending time with my husband and twin boys, who are 13, and who love to raft, camp, hike, and play hockey."

## Happy Anniversary Mountain Ride!

The first anniversary of the Mountain Ride Transportation Resource Call Center was celebrated at the August 5th Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC) meeting. The Council turned out in full force with 20 attendees in person and 3 joining via phone. The successful launch of the Mountain Ride Transportation Call Center has become a model for others in our state.



The RTCC has focused efforts on getting the word out to veterans, senior citizens, people with disabilities, and low income riders who qualify for Medicaid.

RTCC's goal is to assist qualified individuals with getting a ride to critical medical appointments throughout our region and the state and serving residents of Eagle, Garfield, Grand, Jackson, Pitkin, Summit, and Routt Counties.

RTCC is happy to announce that advertising media is now available in Spanish.



## Opportunity to Help Out with Colorado Gives Day

There is a vital need for travel assistance to medical appointments for seniors, veterans, persons with disabilities and people of lower income in our mountain region. Those seeking assistance often do not qualify for state programs, and the cost of providing regional medical trips averages \$150. For many the cost of such travel can be overwhelming. The effort of the Mountain Ride Transportation Resource Center program with the assistance of the NWCCOG Foundation is to assist individuals in need with medical travel. Your contribution will go toward Buying-A-Ride for a veteran, a senior, a person with disabilities, or an individual of lower income from your community. Your contribution is tax deductible.

On December 8th, support your neighbors and community members on Colorado Gives Day 2015. You'll be able to visit our website at [MtnRide.com](http://MtnRide.com) to donate in support of this worthy cause. Watch for these graphics:



## Broadband Update!



## November 2015 Ballot SB 05-152 Exemption Roundup

Currently, Colorado municipalities cannot be involved in providing broadband services because Colorado Senate Bill 05-152 (also known as SB-152) takes away the ability of local government to engage in the provision of telecommunication services like broadband, including partnerships with private entities. SB-152 includes a provision allowing Colorado local government to exempt themselves from the law's provisions via a public vote. Many communities have put the exemption into the voter's hands and now have the ability to develop broadband services to meet their specific goals.



In the NWCCOG Broadband area, the following municipalities will have a SB 05-152 Exemption on their November 2015 ballot:

- Jackson County
- Moffat County - with additional resolution for Craig
- Pitkin County
- Routt County
- Summit County
- Town of Winter Park
- Town of Fraser - in consideration as of August 7

Municipalities where the issue has already been passed:

- Rio Blanco County
- Town of Red Cliff

Passage of this exemption is important to meet the broadband challenge. Businesses realize that broadband is critical for economic growth, job creation, and overall competitiveness. Additionally, it changes how we educate our children, deliver health care, manage energy, ensure public safety, and engage with our government. In short, it can change our way of life. Passage of the exemption allows municipalities to move forward with providing broadband capabilities.

**Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) Grants Awarded for  
NWCCOG Broadband Projects**

Based on the success of the regional broadband planning efforts, DOLA has awarded grants to support investment in middle-mile broadband infrastructure to help communities implement those strategies. This investment by local governments will create an opportunity for them to partner with the private sector in expanding broadband service to their communities.

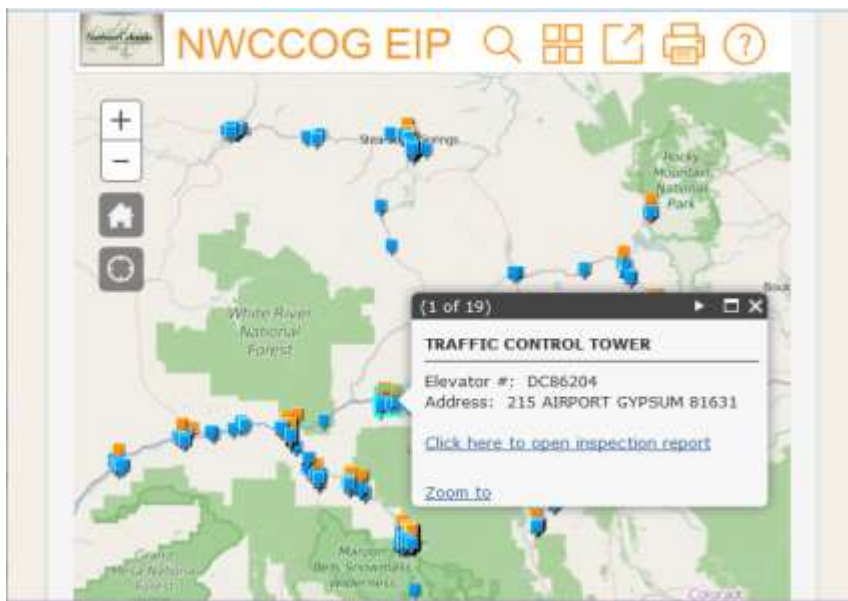
These dollars are directed toward broadband infrastructure that will enhance economic development, improve distance learning opportunities, promote inter-jurisdictional communication, improve health care delivery and meet citizens' requests for better access to the breadth of services available over broadband.

The following NWCCOG municipalities have been awarded DOLA grants:

- Pitkin for Broadband network engineering and network design.
- Rio Blanco County for buildout of middle-mile fiber-to-the-tower and tower enhancements for broadband, along with cellular and Public Safety Communications Networks.
- Routt County for the creation of a county-wide strategic broadband plan.
- Town of Red Cliff to construct towers and infrastructure to support Wireless ISPs, middle-mile providers and cell phone carriers delivering broadband and cellular services to the town.

Additionally - and very importantly - DOLA also awarded a grant to the NWCCOG to continue support of the NWCCOG Regional Broadband Coordinator and also provide for statewide broadband consulting services to the state of Colorado. Happily, Nate Walowitz will continue his position as the Regional Coordinator

## **State of the Art Geo-location for NWCCOG Elevators and Other Conveyances!**



One of the best kept secrets about the NWCCOG is our Elevator Inspection Program (EIP). It might be hard to believe, but last year our team of Elevator Inspectors certified 1723 elevators, escalators, and other devices. Our small team of inspectors work with manufacturers, municipalities, homeowners, and businesses to make sure the conveyances in our communities are safe and working properly. It's a big job

keeping track of the nearly 1800 certifications required each year.

Through the efforts of Jodi Flory, our Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Specialist, and Cora Winters, the EIP Administrator, the job of keeping track of locations, inspections, and certifications, just got a lot easier.

They worked to digitize information about every elevator and other device, so they are represented on an interactive map of our region, along with the name and address of the facility, and a link to the specific report for that device. You can see from the image above that hovering a mouse over any of the dots on the map provides information relative to that specific location. Having the ease of being able to check current reports online is a huge boon to inspectors, building owners, and manufacturers of the devices. It streamlines information sharing, and keeps inspections readily available to anyone who needs that information.

This technology has the potential to improve communications and ultimately to improve safety for all the elevators in the region. The project was a long time in the making, and it took some dedication and commitment on the part of two team-players! Thanks to Jodi and Cora.

## Newly Named Alpine Area RSVP Retired Senior Volunteer Program



The Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) in Eagle County began in 2000 with a group of 92 volunteers. In April of this year NWCCOG received the grant to take over the program from Eagle County Public Health. A re-branding campaign began in July and the program has been renamed Alpine Area RSVP.

To be a volunteer in the RSVP program each person is required to serve at least 4 hours per month as a volunteer for a nonprofit or government program. As part of that re-branding the program will begin recognizing

outstanding volunteers who have gone above and beyond the required hours in volunteer service to their community. At this time, we are recognizing 4 amazing volunteers and thanking them for their dedicated service:

- Dave and Sue Mott of Wolcott have been volunteering for 15 years. Sue has accumulated 9,313 volunteer hours working for Eagle Valley Community Fund, Wolcott-McCoy Seniors, Vilar Performing Arts Center, and several special events throughout the community. Dave has accumulated 3,884 hours working with Eagle Valley Community Fund, Habitat for Humanity, Wolcott-McCoy Seniors, Vilar Performing Arts Center, and several special events.
- Gwen Scalpello of Vail has also been a member since the beginning and has accumulated 3,603 volunteer hours working in a variety of positions for Betty Ford Alpine Gardens and Vilar Performing Arts Center.
- Linda Carr of Eagle, a member since 2000, has accumulated 3,228 volunteer hours working for the Golden Eagle Senior Center where she picks up groceries for the center and plays piano for the seniors in the Dining Room. She also crochets blankets for the nursery at Vail Valley Medical Center.

While these folks are certainly awesome role models, we also want to make sure we appreciate ALL volunteers. If you'd like to know more about the program, you can contact CJ Grove at [volunteers@nwccog.org](mailto:volunteers@nwccog.org).

## 2015 NWCCOG Meeting Schedule

### **Thursday, August 27, 2015**

Full Council & EDD Board Annual Planning Meeting

Location: Buffalo Mountain Room - Summit County Commons

Time: 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. **Note the time change -- we've got a lot to cover!**

### **Thursday, October 22, 2015**

Location: NWCCOG Office/Conference Call

Time: 10:00 a.m. - noon

### **Thursday, December 3, 2015**

Full Council & Foundation Board Meeting



Location: NWCCOG Office/Conference Call  
Time: 10:00 a.m. - noon

**Northwest Colorado Council of Governments**  
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