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From the Director's Desk....



I started as Executive Director November 1st, and it is abundantly clear what a dedicated staff and well-run organization I've inherited. I'm impressed at the complexity our directors face in managing programs with overlapping State & Federal reimbursement requirements. Whether working in our Mountain Ride Call Center to secure reimbursement to citizens who provide rides that qualify through Medicaid, purchasing equipment for emergency managers with Homeland Security funds, seeking access to Broadband to connect communities, or qualifying a low income residence for Department of Energy monies so our team of installers can weatherize a home, the NWCCOG team eagerly navigates multiple bureaucracies to deliver a spectrum of services across the region.

One opportunity I've enjoyed through our Economic Development District has been to assist Grand and Clear Creek counties in interviewing consulting firms who will provide an action and implementation plan for economic resiliency in anticipation of the Henderson Mine closure. I am also excited about the release of our updated Gap analysis for senior services.

I am personally excited to lead an organization with a mission of being adaptive to the needs of our members; like our current focus on expanding access to broadband or recently, the bark beetle initiative, our senior mobility program and the evolving advocacy work of QQ. To further that mission, I have begun an informal listening tour, meeting individually with managers and elected officials to identify emergent challenges and learn from their successes. As a past mayor, commissioner and town manager, I strongly believe in local town and county governments being incubators of innovation, yet so much acquired knowledge isn't shared, or recognized as a resource from which other jurisdictions could benefit. That is one area of potential where I see NWCCOG playing an active role as a connector within the region.

As I travel throughout the region and learn about the innovations being made by our members they will be highlighted in our newsletter under the heading **Member Innovations** – if you have something you'd like to share, please contact me.

In closing, I'd like to wish all of you a very happy Holiday Season and a healthy, prosperous New Year!

Jon Stavney, Executive Director
jstavney@nwccog.org



Member Innovations

The **Town of Kremmling** is adding Ambulatory and Helicopter Transport supplemental insurance as a benefit for its 10 employees at no cost to the employee. Acknowledging their remote location with a rural hospital, Mark Campbell who also works with the local fire district has seen his share of auto accidents requiring helicopter transport to Denver, or ambulance transfers to neighboring counties with more comprehensive hospital services. Under Anthem, their carrier through NWCCOG which Kremmling uses to insure employees, transport costs are capped to what might be expected in an urban setting. Flights from western Grand County can easily cost \$20,000 which would be out of pocket for someone already likely suffering major medical bill. The cost per employee is \$99/year. The contact person is Lynn Arenson who can be reached at larenson@masa.mts.com.



Jackson County also has a similar opportunity with MASA (Medical Air Services Association) for their employees who can purchase the supplemental insurance. Betsey Blecha, Jackson County Commissioner, notes that a number of other agencies and organizations in that remote part of Colorado offer the same. Moose rides are cheaper, but considerably slower and more difficult to schedule.

A shout out for collaboration to the **Town of Dillon** and the **Town of Silverthorne** for working together to extend employee health screening services provided by Health Promotion Management, Inc. helping to save costs for both entities. Lisa Bailey at Health Promotion Management, Inc. lisa@hpmi.us is the contact for that service.

Earlier this year in mid-July the **Town of Grand Lake** completed work on a micro-hydro energy recovery system (MHRS) inside the Town's water treatment plant. According to a press releases from Grand Lake the MHRS and water treatment plant, "now produces as much electricity as it consumes, or a little more." Grand Lake's Mayor, Jim Peterson, was pleased with the development, stating, "The clean energy generated by the micro-hydro energy recovery system will be fed into the Mountain Parks Electric grid, lowering the town's electricity costs."

Broadband Sound Bytes



Summit County has completed their broadband plan and has two Requests for Information (RFI) on the street. The RFIs are looking for partnerships for the deployment of *Fiber to the Premise* and *Partnerships* for the development of wireless broadband.

The **NWCCOG Broadband Steering Committee will be meeting in early January** to discuss how we move forward with the creation of an open access regional broadband transport data network to lower the cost and increase the reliability of broadband across the region. When created this network will be available to county, local and state governments, K-12 education, colleges,

healthcare facilities, public safety, broadband providers as well as large commercial and non-governmental entities. By lowering the cost of bringing broadband to the region, we anticipate that broadband providers will be able to cost effectively extend the reach of their broadband networks to more rural customers, lowering the prices customers pay for broadband across the region. More information will be coming in the next few months as we further develop the concept and formalize more details.

According to the Aspen Times "**Pitkin County has received a nearly \$900,000 grant** from the state of Colorado to build broadband infrastructure for rural areas of the county, an official said Thursday.

The grant from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs will be matched by an equal grant from the county, which will come from a mill levy-funded translator fund and other monies, said Kara Silbermagel, county management analyst.

The \$1.8 million will allow the county to rebuild three high-alpine translator sites, the first step toward providing broadband service to the Crystal River and Fryingpan River drainages, she said.

The effort also is part of the county's plans to introduce a new digital public safety radio system. Piggy-backing the broadband infrastructure on the new public safety radio system will save the county millions of dollars, County Manager Jon Peacock has said."

[Click Here to read the entire story.](#)

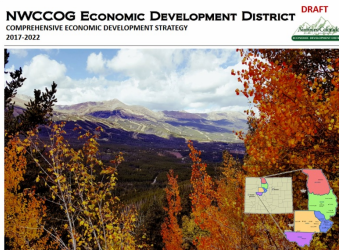
For additional NWCCOG Broadband information, contact Nate Walowitz at nwalowitz@nwccog.org.

Watch For....

The NWCCOG and Alpine Area Agency on Aging will soon release the updated senior services gap analysis for the region. The forthcoming report updates the 2011 gap analysis, of which the Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC) is a direct result.

One interesting trend in the data reveals a paradigm shift from Seniors utilizing community resources to Seniors being a resource for their communities, largely through their continued work and volunteer time. The executive summary and report will be available on the NWCCOG and AAAA websites in January. Stay tuned for presentations of the findings coming in 2017.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) update



The NWCCOG Region completed its first -ever Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in December 2011. Following the guidelines of the US Economic Development Administration (EDA), a region's CEDS must be updated every 5 years. This results of this study will help guide our mission for the next 5-year period through 2021.

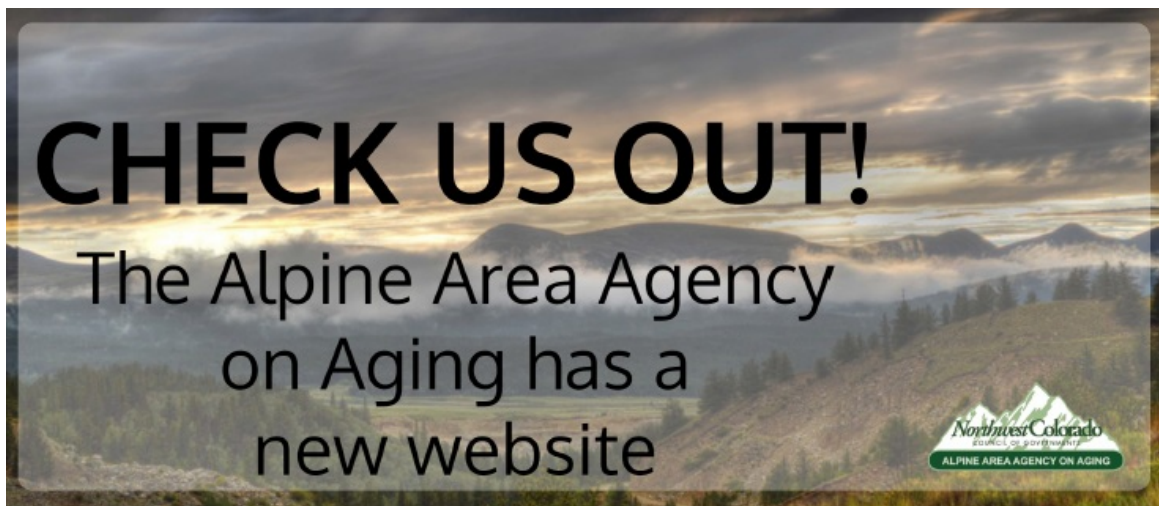
The process is a locally-based, regionally-driven economic study that is not only a cornerstone of EDA programs, but is an important step to engage community leaders, leverage the involvement of the private sector, and establish a strategic blueprint for regional collaboration.

Stakeholders from local governments, the business community, education providers, workforce groups, non-profits, and other community groups throughout Region 12 conducted a complete analysis of the economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats throughout the entire region to create a strategic plan that will drive economic development for the next 5 years.

A 30 day comment period on the strategy is currently underway through January 16, 2017. [The DRAFT can be found here](#)

Comments will be taken into consideration and incorporated into the CEDS as appropriate. The final CEDS will be reviewed by the NWCCOG Council and EDD Board of Directors, and will be approved at the January 26, 2017 Council Meeting. It will be submitted to the EDA on January 31, 2017.

Introducing...



www.AlpineAAA.org

We are proud to introduce our new website which gives you access to information on the programs and services that we provide to our community. All the information you will ever need for senior and caregiver services in your area is now in one convenient place.

You can find Information for:

- Seniors
- Caregivers
- Providers
- How to get involved
- News & Events

Along with a new look - more info...

The Alpine Area Agency on Aging's Holiday Edition of the ***Independent Living Times***

The Alpine Area Agency on Aging (AAAA) has produced the Holiday Edition of the ***Independent Living Times***. In this edition you'll find a wide variety of subjects to educate, involve, remind, and entertain. You'll find topics on Bath Safety, Games & Resources, Medicare Tips, Scams to be on the lookout for, our Volunteer Program and many other interesting and helpful subjects.

[You can read the complete magazine here.](#) We're always looking for suggestions for articles and additional resources to recommend. So if you've got ideas, please contact Amanda Rens-Moon, Program Specialist, AAAA, at 970-468-0295 x117 or noc12@nwccog.org.



Give the Gift of Time

Are you interested in helping a full-time family caregiver get a much needed break?

Volunteer to be a respite companion!

This FREE Respite Education & Support Tools (REST) training will give you the tools you need to be a trusted respite volunteer, and AlpineAAA will provide the volunteer support you need to feel comfortable and confident in the home.

Saturday, January 28, 2017 9:30am to 5:30pm
Grand County Senior Center
129 3rd Street in Granby

To volunteer or get registered for training call Amanda or CJ at 970-468-0295.

Be A Part of the National Dialogue

Alpine Area Agency on Aging (AAAA) and various aging resources throughout our region invite you to free screenings and community panel discussions of the PBS documentary "Being Mortal." You will be part of a national dialog taking place in our community that asks "Have you and your family had the tough conversations and planned ahead?"

"Being Mortal" delves into the wishes of patients and families facing terminal illness. The film investigates the practice of caring for the dying and explores the relationships between patients and their doctors. It follows a surgeon, Dr. Atul Gawande, as he shares stories from the people and families he encounters. When Dr. Gawande's own father gets cancer, his search for answers about how to best care for the dying becomes a personal quest.

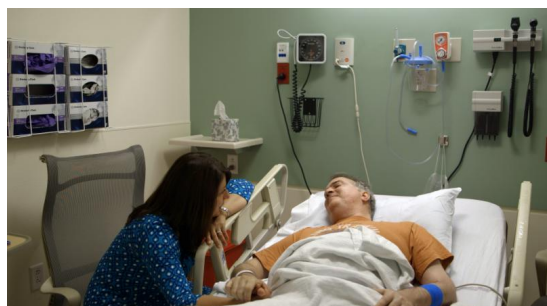


Photo credit: Frontline

Watch a short trailer here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRkr09ZMI3w>

After the screening, you can participate in a guided conversation on how to take concrete steps to identify and communicate wishes about end-of-life goals and preferences. See this moving documentary, join the conversation, and explore what matters to you. All are welcome. These free screenings are made possible by a grant from The John and Wauna Harman Foundation in partnership with the Hospice Foundation of America.

Dinner or refreshments will be provided at each screening. Please RSVP to Amanda at (970) 468-0295 x117 or noc12@nwccog.org or visit www.alpineaaa.org

Upcoming Screenings:

- **January 11th**, 2017 (5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.) Summit County Community & Senior Center, 0083 Nancy's Place, Frisco, 80443
- **January 12th**, 2017 (5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.) Granby Library Community Meeting Room, 55 Zero Street, Granby, 80446
- **January 14th**, 2017 (10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.) Gypsum Public Library, 47 Lundgren Blvd, Gypsum, 81637
- **January 17th**, 2017 (5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.) Colorado Mountain College (CMC), 150 Miller Ranch Road, Edwards, 81632
- **January 21st**, 2017 (2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.) Avon Public Library, 200 Benchmark Road, Avon, 81620
- **January 23rd**, 2017 (5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.) River Rock Cafe, 460 Main Street, Walden, 80480

Look for additional screenings in El Jebel and Aspen in March.

2017 NWCCOG COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

Thursday, January 26, 2017

Full Council, EDD Board & NLF Board Members

Location: Colorado Mountain College Vail Valley, Room #258, Edwards

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Primary Agenda Items: Introduction of new members/representatives; elect executive committee & officers; adopt 2017 meeting schedule; annual NLF Board meeting; EDD Board meeting & election of officers.

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

www.nwccog.org

970.468.0295

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN NWCCOG!