

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments eNews April 2018



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From the Director's desk...

The Circle of Leadership

In this newsletter, we thank long-time Council leaders Thomas Clark (election), and Jeff Shroll (promotion) for their decades of commitment to NWCCOG. Thomas' letter (below) reminds us how active participation creates value. The constant rotation of members from across the region insures that issues come to our attention while having some members in leadership for decades provides invaluable continuity to NWCCOG. Both empower us to tackle major challenges. Reading Mayor Clark's letter, I am proud, and eager for the talent that will inevitably emerge to meet the next challenge.

Who knows, both may come from the more than 60 folks attending NWCCOG's first Economic Summit at the Silverthorne Pavilion on May 4th. Rachel Lunney has assembled a great lineup. We are excited for participants to attend with others from their county to discuss, at various points in the program, how content relates to your local economic strategy. ([Register here](#))



There is some amazing local energy management work going on in the mountains around climate action, sustainability or just plain smart resource management. Many of you have asked for more information about renewable energy projects for municipal utilities. Just like that, Cary Weiner, Energy Specialist with Colorado State University Extension called to get input on a Local Government Energy Academy in the works for August in Eagle County. The event is intended to assist jurisdictions contemplating their first project, as well as, assist those seeking the next level with their energy reduction plans. I'm working with Cary on a survey requesting baseline information about energy management efforts in your jurisdictions. Watch your inbox.

For this month's profile in leadership, I was reminded of my favorite boss, Andy Beck, who would pull all of us from job-sites across the region each quarter to learn about electrical cord safety or best practices for waterproofing when installing windows. He would sometimes look across the room as if adding up our hourly wages and quip about how much the room cost him. The real point was that Beck Building Company valued professional development, safety and alignment.

That's what came to mind when Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz responded to the PR crisis that followed the ousting of two black men who refused to leave a Philadelphia store with complete ownership of the situation, and an announcement that 8,000 stores will close May 29th for company wide racial bias training. "It will cost millions of dollars, but I've always viewed this and things like this as not an expense, but an investment in our people and our company," Schultz said on CBS This Morning. Indeed.

In our 2017 strategic planning session, you underscored our commitment to promoting development opportunities for next level leadership. That focus is paying off with the CPM in the Mountains cohort through University of Colorado Denver School of Public Affairs in partnership with the Vail Centre that launched in March. Also, the first elected officials training with The Institute for Excellence in Government (IEG) is scheduled in Dillon this month - April 27 - 28th. ([more info here](#)). Stay tuned for the next workshop.

Last, but not least, I was honored to participate in the Family Leadership Training Institute hosted by Eagle County CSU Extension. It is "a family civics initiative." It was impressive with students of all ages and ethnicity who shared their community projects. Projects included seeking free local bus service in Eagle/Gypsum, dealing with workforce depression, coaching first generation Hispanic parents how to enroll their children in college, distracted driving, helping kids in schools deal with toxic stress, implementing a "wait till 8" campaign and many other highly relevant topics. As a panelist, my job was to give them insight as to how to approach local governments to get their projects accomplished. If approached by one of the FLTI students, please take time to help navigate our complex governance structures. You may just be mentoring your replacement to complete the circle of leadership.

Jon Stavney

jestavney@nwccog.org

COG Wrap-up **by Thomas Clark**



On April 3rd 2018, I was not reelected as the Mayor of Kremmling. I am retiring from public office on April 18th, 2018. I have accomplished much for the 16 years that I was in public office. Some of the most memorable highlights of this time is the work I did with the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG). The NWCCOG staff and the members I've worked with over time are some of the nicest and smartest people and together we have accomplished a great deal for the region as a whole.

I started in 2002, working on housing and learning water. The next project we worked on was the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for the I-70 corridor which eventually led to the I-70 coalition. The next big project we worked on was the Bark Beetle outbreak which led to the Colorado Bark Beetle Cooperative. We then

worked on Seniors In Our Mountain Community, Challenges and Opportunities which then led to the Regional Transportation Coordinating Council and the next big project was the Economic Development District which led to the Broadband initiative.

The greatest activity that I participated in was the water quality and quantity committee. In 2005, I lobbied with Shanna Koenig to get House Bill 05-1177 "Water for the 21st Century" passed, which established the nine Basin Round Tables (I was an at-large member on the Colorado Basin Round Table). Working together with other basin round tables eventually led to the Colorado Water Plan.

The common theme on all these accomplishments is cooperation and collaboration, together we can tackle seemingly impossible problems and find equitable solutions. This is all done with great leadership, great staff, and a great participatory board. I will continue part time work consulting and manning The Visitor Center for the Kremmling Area Chamber of Commerce and if acceptable to the board's I will continue as a member of the EDD and the RTCC. In Grand County I'm continuing work with the housing needs assessment and economic development with the wood clusters group.

In closing I want to say thank you to you all and I hope our paths continue to cross. My contact information is tcmnenqr1313@gmail.com, 970-724-3243, Box 694, Kremmling, Colorado 80459 - 0694. Thanks again, good luck and best wishes

Very Truly Yours,
Thomas Clark

It's all about safety....



The NWCCOG has been inspecting elevators both inside and outside the region for nearly 20 years. An agreement with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment - Division of Oil and Public Safety, in 2008 formalized the Elevator Inspection Program as the Authority Having Jurisdiction under the Elevator and Escalator Certification Act. As such, each of the 1800 +/- elevators and escalators in of the 10 counties we serve is inspected annually.

Over the years conveyances that were in violation of the standards were issued a "Void" certificate and the owners were expected to bring their conveyances into compliance. In many cases that worked. However in recent years, the number of conveyances outside compliance has grown to an untenable number. With the naming of David Harris as the Director of the Elevator Inspection Program, his team is beginning to institute strong new policies that will ultimately force compliance.

Starting in July, the team will begin to notify the owners of the elevators which are outside compliance. They will be given 90 days to correct the problem, if the problem has not been adequately addressed, they will be subject to fines and be given an additional 30

days to resolve the issue and pay all fines. At the end of that period of time, the conveyance will be shut down with additional fines assessed, and the conveyance will not return to service until all fines have been paid and the machinery is back within compliance.

The EIP team is working with Building Officials, Inspectors, Fire Marshals and others to communicate the procedures for enforcement and gain support among all essential parties.

Because elevators and other conveyances that are not in compliance can be safety hazards that may ultimately result in injury or even death, the urgency to solve this issue has never been greater. The goal of the team is to have 95% compliance before the end of the year.

While the team is working on cleaning up past non-compliance issues, they are also creating processes to use going forward that will be much stricter when elevators are not in compliance. The owners of the building will be expected to immediately address any violations and bring their equipment up to standards quickly or face serious and timely consequences.

While these new rules may upset some, Harris says, "This is about the safety of the individual and our obligation to enforce the rules. Once people get used to these new processes, we'll all breathe a little easier."

Questions should be directed to David Harris, email: elevator@nwccog.org.

Sue Hobrock, Administrative Assistant, has recently been hired to help implement the new processes and track compliance throughout the region. Sue is a long-time Summit County resident who spent almost 2 decades as office manager at Service Monkey, a well-known fireplace store and maintenance company in the community. After having retired from that position, she took a few months off before she was enticed to start a new chapter in her life with the NWCCOG.

Coming from the Twin Cities originally, Sue came to Summit County to ski in the winter, but when she visited one summer, the deal was sealed - she was hooked. She will be assisting Cora Winters with many of the administrative tasks that will be required as the EIP rolls out the new processes.



NWCCOG Energy Program begins installing solar



The Colorado Energy Office (CEO) has partnered with Xcel Energy in a pilot program to provide photovoltaic solar panels for qualified candidates enrolled in the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP). The WAP has done a wonderful job improving a home's efficiency by installing measures like attic insulation or reducing air leakage through the building shell. These measures will cut a client's heating utility bills significantly. There are not as many options for reducing their electric bills. Until recently, the only measures that were installed in a home that affected electrical usage were upgrading lighting by replacing incandescent light bulbs with LEDs and identifying inefficient refrigerators and replacing them with EnergyStar™ refrigerators. With this pilot program, focusing on a renewable energy solution, the electric portion of the utility bill can be significantly reduced.

The NWCCOG Energy Program is pleased to announce that it has begun its first solar pv installation. A client with particularly high electrical usage has been identified. Solar contractors have visited the site and a bid has been accepted. The home will receive a 3.5 kW solar array installed on their roof. The modeling for this array predicts that it will generate over 5000 kWh/year which translates into a savings of \$660/year for our client. This installation will provide a 35% reduction on their electric bill and because the estimated life span of the solar array is 20 years our client will realize a savings over the life of the measure of \$13,200.

Nate Speerstra, Energy Program Manager, says, "This is an exciting avenue for the WAP to explore and we look forward to helping more of our clients in the future with this sustainable solution for reducing electrical utility bills. We will provide an update once this inaugural project is completed."

For more information [visit our website here.](#)

Accurate Counting - Why it matters

by Jon



Note: This is an excerpt from an article in [Jon's Blog](#) on the NWCCOG website in which Jon discusses the impacts on the accuracy of census data by asking the "citizenship question", why it matters, and how those impacts will flow throughout the rural communities especially, but the country as a whole. The article is thought provoking and powerful about the effects of one small box to be checked yes or no.

".....The shift will also heavily impact Colorado. I also did not bring up the 2020 Census and

policy is especially disturbing. It threatens to strangle our economy.

The Commerce Department decision to insert a citizenship question is clearly political, reflecting how politics infects our institutions today. Accuracy was important to the Founding Fathers. It was enshrined in the U.S. Constitution as the framework for establishing Representation in Congress as well as state legislatures, county commissions, city councils and school board seats shaped by an accurate count of the "whole number of free persons."

Why does asking about citizenship in the Census matter? Ask instead, does accurate data matter? Governing on-line on March 28th published "A Census Citizenship Question Wouldn't Just Impact Blue States," noting "undercounts could yield drastic effects if some opt not to participate...there will be a substantial impact on rural communities."

Data should be non-political even if outcomes clearly have political consequences. The shifting demographics are real. Bloomberg Politics projects that Colorado, among other Western states will gain a representative based on the actual (including non-citizen) shift in population. Does another vote in Congress in Colorado rather than in a shrinking rust belt state matter whether it is D or R? A representative is a voice. It is power. [Read the complete article](#)

The Social Impact of Broadband - Red Cliff Case Study



In the fall of 2017, Nate Walowitz, Broadband Coordinator for NWCCOG, contacted The CU Faculty Director for [Interdisciplinary Telecom Projects](#), Dr. David Reed, to discuss having CU students working on their Capstone project review the social impacts of Broadband in the Town of Red Cliff.

At the time, Red Cliff had no cell phone service and no broadband. Residents who needed to use the internet drove into Vail or other nearby locations that had access. Communications from Red Cliff at the time were via land lines and snail mail.

The students, Mark Colwell, Ayman Shafka, and Alex Schuman organized the project with key objectives, a survey design to measure impacts, key topics, and conclusions. They visited Red Cliff during the construction phase of the current broadband capabilities, administered the survey and completed their final report which was distributed to the stakeholders this month.

Their key objectives were 1.) To understand the social impacts of Broadband; how residents "worked around" not having access, to measure the social impacts after broadband was introduced, to document how Red Cliff was able to gain access, and to document the lessons learned that might also apply to other rural communities seeking access to the internet. And 2.) Develop ways to improve the adoption and use of broadband through education and outreach.

After many interviews, community surveys, and long hours of gaining data and an overall understanding of the entire process, the team came up with the following conclusions.

- Red Cliff experienced significant positive social impact from broadband deployment, from having access to e-commerce, to being able to complete homework assignments, to video programming options
- Residents already possessed digital literacy skills, so impact was immediate
- The town faced many challenges from regulators in deploying broadband
 - Officials at every level of government should work together to address such challenges
- Matching grant programs proved immensely helpful to finance broadband deployment in Red Cliff
- Addressing broadband deployment challenges will help expand these positive social impacts to connect the over 24 million Americans who currently lack broadband access.

In an interview with the team, they unanimously agreed that a top priority for future success is to work toward simplifying the regulatory process and to continue to utilize and expand the grant process that enables communities to share expenses for construction.

[The full report is available here](#) (link), or you can contact Nate Walowitz at nwalowitz@nwccog.org or 970-455-1064



MARK COLWELL



ALEX SCHUMANN



AYMAN SHAKFA



Interdisciplinary Telecom Program
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER



SAVE THE DATE

10th Annual
**Caregiver
Conference**

June 1, 2018

Speakers • Free Lunch • Pampering • Vendors

9 AM - 3:30 PM

Glenwood Springs Community Center
100 Wulfsohn Road, Glenwood Springs

RSVP required by May 18th
www.2018ColoradoCaregiverConference.eventbrite.com
or (970) 665-0041

Garfield County Senior Programs, Alpine Area Agency on Aging &
Northwest Options for Long Term Care

Working to Stop Medicare Fraud

MEDICARE FRAUD



Tj Dufresne, SHIP Medicare coordinator for NWCCOG, is also our representative for the Senior Medicare Patrol. From time to time potential instances of Medicare Fraud come to her attention. Here, in her own words, she describes a prescription drug scam.

"Last week I received a call from a client who was seeking assistance with his Part D Prescription drug coverage. As a diabetic, he was looking for a way to reduce the skyrocketing costs of insulin. He is on a fixed income and the expenses were becoming prohibitive.

We talked about his situation and I realized he was not enrolled in a Medicare prescription drug plan. I helped him enter his drug list on Medicare.gov website to see what his costs would be with a drug plan. The client mentioned that he had paid \$159 for a prescription drug card that for some reason was not working. It sounded suspicious to me, and I confirmed he was not able to use the card as promised through his "membership." Furthermore, the pharmacy he was using was not able to reach anyone at the "membership" company.

I turned the information over to the SHIP/SMP Colorado Division of Insurance who is investigating the validity of the so-called prescription membership company. In the meantime, I helped our client apply for the Medicare Savings Program and Extra Help Program to assist him with lowering his costs. Next year during open enrollment, we'll be making sure he is has the appropriate, legitimate Part D prescription drug plan for 2019.

The \$159 our client paid for his "membership" plan is long gone. It could have been worse, but he's now back on track for getting his much needed drugs at a cost he can afford. If you or a loved one is buying a plan that might sound too good to be true -- it probably is. Be sure you give us a call first."



You can reach Tj at tjdufresne@nwccog.org or by calling 970-468-0295 x 120.

Are you prepared for the upcoming allergy season?



By: Martha Steffen, PA-C,

As you sit shivering in the cold weather, it's hard to believe that allergy season is around the corner. Being prepared ahead of the season will often help reduce the amount of discomfort you experience. Seasonal allergies can be quite frustrating, limiting your time to enjoy outdoor activities and causing poor sleep. Lets review avoidance and treatment measures for you

to think about this year.

AVOIDING ALLERGENS SOUNDS SO SIMPLE, BUT TAKES SOME EFFORT:

Got allergies?

[Read the complete article here.](#)

2018 NWCCOG COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

Thursday, May 24, 2018

Full Council & EDD Board Meeting

Location: US Forest Service Parks Ranger District Conference Rm, 100 Main St., Walden

Time: 10:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m.

Primary Agenda Items: Review/acceptance of the 2017 audit

Thursday, July 26, 2018

Full Council Meeting

Location: Winter Park Town Hall Conference Rm,50 Vasquez Rd.,Winter Park, CO

Time: 10:00 a.m. - noon

Primary Agenda Items: Approval of 2019 dues; approval of 2018 budget revisions; discussion re: Annual Planning Meeting Agenda

Thursday, August 16, 2018

Full Council & EDD Board Annual Planning Meeting

Location: Airport Operations Center (AOC) Conference Rm, 1001 Owl Creek Rd, Aspen

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Agenda Items: Strategic Planning for 2019

Thursday, October 25,2018

Full Council Meeting

Location: Community & Senior Center Fremont Rm, 83 Nancy's Place, Frisco, CO

Time: 10:00 a.m. - noon

Primary Agenda Items: Review of draft 2019 budget

Thursday, December 6, 2018

Full Council, EDD Board & Foundation Board Meeting

Location: Eagle County Government Garden Level Classroom, 500 Broadway St., Eagle

Time: 10:00 a.m. - noon

Primary Agenda Items: 2018 budget revisions; approve 2019 budget; adopt 2019 meeting schedule; annual NWCCOG Foundation Board meeting.

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

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970.468.0295

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN NWCCOG!

Northwest Colorado Council of
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