



How to Throw a Company Party



As 2025 winds to a close, NWCCOG wishes everyone a snowy and pleasant holiday season. We're also sharing three tips for throwing a truly great company party, along with a few shoutouts and some exciting job opportunities coming in early 2026. Yes—we are hiring.

This week, HBR shared the tip: *"Stop and Celebrate Your Wins."* While the message was timely, the suggestions focused almost entirely on self-care—*"make progress visible to yourself," "distinguish external pressures," "redefine what celebration looks like"*—the last even recommending quiet reflection and private rituals. All useful, but not exactly new.

And it missed something big.

The workplace has grown lonely—cubicles, email, video meetings, remote work. In times like these, shouldn't the emphasis be on *team celebration*, not just individual self-soothing? This year at NWCCOG, we redefined what celebration looks like—together.

Three Reasons Our December 9 Staff Holiday Celebration Worked

1. It Was Planned by a Committee, Not One Person

Our five-person Employee Wellness Committee planned the event, spreading out the workload and encouraging more investment from the team. People support what they help create.

Shoutout to our Wellness Committee for a breakout year that included:

- A behind-the-scenes tour of the Johnson Tunnel with CDOT
- A “skip the staff meeting” group hike at Lower Cataract Lake
- An all-staff afternoon mixer at the Glenwood Springs Adventure Park

While we have several one-person programs across NWCCOG, our staffed programs excel at building team culture—like Energy’s summer BBQ and Elevator’s “not bowling alone” event.

2. The Space Set the Tone

Transforming the Gypsum meeting room into a festive space—ugly sweaters, funny glasses, and holiday headpieces—shifted the entire mood of our December staff meeting. It felt like a return to a more relaxed, post-politically correct normal that many of us have been missing.

The meeting began with important updates on policy and operations, then moved into a gratitude share-out circle that flowed from the room to Zoom. The genuine appreciation, laughter, clapping, and good-natured ribbing created one of the most honest and meaningful expressions of team appreciation we’ve seen in years—made even more impressive during a week of performance evaluations.

We followed this with games and a spirited (some might say ruthless) round of White Elephant gifting.

3. It Was Midday—Not After Hours

Hosting the celebration midday meant:

- No pressure around attire
- No social anxiety around alcohol
- No late-night logistics
- No awkwardness that often comes with after-work events

It was simply *fun*, accessible, and low stress.

Celebrating Earned Wins

This year’s closing staff meeting felt meaningful because the praise was earned. We began 2025 with onboarding challenges and process gaps. The improvements we made were bold and risky—and could have gone poorly—but instead, we made major strides forward.

A special thank you to Finance Manager Becky Walter for a heroic effort implementing Paycom and guiding staff through payroll, onboarding, and talent management transitions.

To the Vintage team—Cici, Amanda, Jonnah, Tina, and Director Erin Fisher—thank you for navigating a year of uncertainty and personal adversity with grace and mutual support.

Upcoming Job Opportunities

• Economic Development District Director

Pending EDA funding for the next PPG cycle, we will begin recruitment for this position in February–March. This role has historically only been held by the exceptional **Rachel Tuyn**, who moved on to a new opportunity this fall. We’re grateful for her years of service.

• Deputy Loan Fund Director

The Northwest Loan Fund has determined that the Loan Fund Director needs a fully trained Deputy in 2026. This position will be posted mid-December, with interviews planned for January.

• Elevator Program – Office Manager

The Elevator Program recently promoted from within to fill a much-needed third administrative position. With huge thanks to Bryanne Busato and Nichole Bridgewater for their hard work throughout 2025 (including navigating two platform incidents), and with a customized Salesforce system on the horizon, we are now filling the Office Manager role. Job postings will be live no later than January 2.

• NWCCOG’s First HR Generalist

With as many as 60 employees in 2025—and even more expected in 2026—we are excited to announce that NWCCOG will be hiring our first HR Generalist early next year.

A Final Note

This time of year can be tough for many employees, and the transition into holiday downtime can even be disorienting. Our programs are diverse, our staff are dispersed, and like all workplaces, we have our share of tensions. And yet—our culture remains strong.

We have built a team of self-starters, innovators, and achievers without toxic internal competition, which is rare in any organization.

As shared with staff at the party: We are proud of who we are, grateful for each other, and excited to welcome the next rock stars who will join us in 2026.

Vintage End of Year Wrap Up



Have you seen the TikTok of the little girl on the teacup ride? The joke is “Life is a journey. My Journey:” and the gif is this sweet lil angel child screaming. Yeah, that feels like 2025.

This year asked a lot from the Vintage team, professionally and personally. And yet, I’m so proud and thankful of how our team showed up for one another, for our community, and for the older adults and caregivers who depend on us. We didn’t just keep the lights on; we are carrying the mission through uncertainty with grit, heart, and a fair share of laughter and a couple tears.

I am deeply grateful to every member of the Vintage team and their integrity, humor, creativity, patience, and ability to remain grounded when said ground feels very shaky. I’m equally grateful to our incredible providers, whose partnerships strengthens our work and expands the impact. It truly takes a village. Together, we’ll continue shaping programs and services that honor the dignity, independence, and quality of life of the folks we serve.

Here’s to a new year filled with solidity, collaboration, connection, and gratitude. And here’s to every person and organization who made this year possible. It’s been a wild ride!

Erin Fisher, Vintage Director

Finance Team Highlights and Gratitude

As we wrap up the year, I want to recognize the remarkable persistence and teamwork that carried the Finance team through one of our most demanding stretches yet. Between implementing Paycom, navigating relentless audits, untangling new contracts and compliance requirements, building endless Excel spreadsheets, and surviving more 9PM phone calls and marathon meetings than anyone cares to count, our team showed unwavering commitment to getting it right.



None of this year’s progress happened by accident. It happened because we kept leaning in - learning new systems, troubleshooting in real time, supporting one another, and staying focused on meeting program needs. The workload was intense, but the results speak for themselves: stronger processes, greater transparency, and continued value to the communities we serve.

Looking ahead to next year, our goals are ambitious, but so are we. With new roles coming onboard, refined systems, and a stronger foundation than ever, I fully expect our capacity - and our impact - to grow. The momentum we built this year sets us up for success in 2026.

I’m deeply grateful for the dedication, resilience, and good humor that Greg, Elaina and Kevin brought to the table this year. Thank you for making it possible to end 2025 stronger than we started!

Becky Walter, Finance Director

Advancing Regional Mobility Across Northwest Colorado

As 2025 comes to a close, NWCCOG’s Mobility Program celebrates a year marked by collaboration, long-range planning, and meaningful progress across Northwest Colorado.

A major milestone this year was the completion of the Intermountain Transportation Planning Region (IMTPR)’s 10-year Regional Transportation Plan in partnership with CDOT. This long-range plan identifies regional priorities—including safety, reliability, and multimodal improvements—and positions communities for future funding and project development. NWCCOG supported engagement efforts, facilitated discussions, and ensured the region’s transportation needs were fully reflected in the statewide planning process. This plan will guide regional transportation work for the next decade.



2025 was also a strong year for the Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC). Key achievements include:

- **Launch of the [Regional Mobility Resource Hub](#)**
- **Growth in Participation & Collaboration**
- The RTCC saw increased engagement from counties, community programs, and mobility advocates who are working to close transportation gaps for older adults, people with disabilities, veterans, and low-income residents.
- **Advocacy for NEMT Improvements**
- The group devoted significant time to discussing the impacts of SB 24-140, elevating provider concerns and working toward more reliable, equitable NEMT service across the region.
- **Expanded Resource Sharing**
- Members collaborated on trainings, grant strategies, and rider-support tools that strengthened transportation coordination and enhanced regional

mobility capacity.

The RTCC continues to serve as a critical voice for human-services transportation across the high country—and a connector between local needs and state-level decision-making.

Another highlight of 2025 was launching the Colorado Accelerated Mobility Program (CAMP) in Eagle and Summit Counties. This project provides private e-bikes to those living in low income, workforce, and multi-family housing across 6 neighborhoods. After several months of anticipation, partners convened to begin coordinated planning and early implementation.

I extend my deepest gratitude to RTCC members, IMTPR partners, local governments, transit providers, and community advocates. Your collaboration made this year’s achievements possible and strengthens the path forward.

Here’s to a connected, coordinated, and impactful 2026!

Dana Wood, Mobility Director

Energy Program: Growth, Impact, and Community Partnerships

The NWCCOG Energy Program had an extraordinary year in 2025, supporting our communities, expanding partnerships, and strengthening our internal capacity.

Over the past year, our team helped 405 households across the region by providing energy audits, building shell upgrades, health and safety improvements, and electrification support. These services not only reduce energy costs for residents but also enhance comfort, safety, and long-term sustainability.

We were proud to establish new partnerships in 2025 that broaden our reach and impact. We welcomed collaborations with Tri State Electric, Yampa Valley Electric Association, and YVSC, now known as the Western Resiliency Center (WRC). In recognition of our work together, the WRC honored NWCCOG Energy Program as their 2025 Partner of the Year — a testament to the strength and value of these regional partnerships.

In support of our expanding electric vehicle fleet and commitment to clean transportation, we completed the installation of the final electric charging station at our Silverthorne office in October. With this addition, the Energy Program now operates EV infrastructure at all three of our offices, enhancing both operational capacity and community access.

Supporting our team’s wellbeing has also been a priority. We recently completed a Mental Health First Aid training for all Energy Program staff — an important step in fostering resilience, compassion, and connection within our organization.

As we look ahead to 2026, we’re energized by our accomplishments in 2025 and grateful for the continued support of our community partners and residents. Together, we are building a more efficient, resilient, and sustainable future for Northwest Colorado.

Doug Jones, Energy Program Director

Celebrating Leadership and Legacy: Honoring Pitkin County Manager Jon Peacock

On December 11, colleagues, partners, and friends gathered to celebrate Pitkin County Manager Jon Peacock and the remarkable organization he and his team have cultivated over the years. The event

reflected not only Jon's leadership, but the deep respect and appreciation felt across the region for his steady guidance and collaborative spirit.

Among the many accomplishments highlighted was the County's pivotal purchase of a building in Basalt—best known for housing Stubbies, the beloved upstairs bar where countless leadership conversations, collaborations, and spirited debates among Roaring Fork's "not-quite-so-young Turks" have taken place. The moment drew laughter and nostalgia, reminding everyone of the relationships built and decisions shaped in that storied second-floor space.



Interim County Manager Kara Silbernagel presented Jon with a beautifully crafted 3D topographic map of the county, adorned with photos capturing people, places, and memories from his tenure. The gift served as a thoughtful tribute to Jon's service and the lasting imprint he leaves on the organization. Jon will soon be relocating to Grand County, where he has accepted the position of Town Manager for Winter Park, bringing him closer to his bride, Kate Peacock, who also serves as the DOLA Regional Manager. While his departure is bittersweet, regional partners are thrilled to see him take on this next chapter.

The celebration drew a crowd of both former and current Pitkin County Commissioners—including NWCCOG Vice Chair Patti Clapper—all eager to share stories and extend their gratitude. And, in true mountain-community fashion, the rumor mill was alive: whispers suggested that Jon's close friend Clint may be tempted to leave Snowmass to help incorporate Tabernash, a joking nod to how strong and far-reaching Jon's friendships have become during his time in Pitkin County.

As Jon embarks on his new role, the NWCCOG extends heartfelt congratulations and appreciation for his years of partnership, leadership, and dedication. Winter Park is gaining an exceptional leader, and our region will continue to benefit from the strong foundation he helped build.

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