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Board Member Spotlight Ben Raitano



Ben just can't seem to get enough of working with the NWCCOG! He originally served on the board in the mid 1990s for several years. Now in his second time working with the COG, he was appointed to the NWCCOG board at the same time he began serving as a Town of Dillon Town Council member. He currently serves NWCCOG as a member of the Executive Committee.

He says of the NWCCOG that, "it is good to be associated with an organization that is truly regional - sharing knowledge freely between communities is a great model." He enjoys getting information from others throughout the region and tends to learn from how others are handling similar issues.

When asked what he thought people might be surprised to learn about the NWCCOG, he replied, "I think others would be surprised by how much interaction there is between the municipalities and counties in the region. I think most people just don't know all the aspects of what we do." He cites the Elevator Inspection Programs and the Economic Development District as examples of some of the services being provided by NWCCOG that people just don't know about.

Originally from Cleveland Heights, Ohio, Ben had traveled to Colorado many times to go skiing. When his wife, Flo, got a job in a Veterinarian Clinic in Silverthorne, 33 years ago, they were both excited to make the move. Both are active in helping to build better communities.

When not working, Ben enjoys hiking and skiing.

Staff Member Spotlight Cora Winters

Another Ohio native, Cora moved to Summit County in June, 1998. She'd been to Colorado before and loved the mountain scenery and downhill skiing. Shortly after she arrived in Summit County, she began working for the NWCCOG as the Office Manager. She worked in that role from 2000 to 2007. In 2013, after having been contracted by NWCCOG as a bookkeeper, she decided to return as an employee when there was an opening as the Administrative Assistant in the Elevator Inspection Program.



In her current assignment, she's responsible for maintaining databases of over 1800 conveyances (more commonly known as elevators, lifts, escalators, etc.) that are inspected annually throughout the regions. She also mails out reports and invoices monthly. She is also working with a GIS Specialist to enable 'point and click' capabilities on an area map to find the location of each conveyance, and get a copy of the inspection report. Look for that feature on our website in the near future.

When asked what she likes most about working at NWCCOG, Cora replied, "I really enjoy the interaction with all of my co-workers." She thinks people might be surprised to learn the "diversity of our programs."

When she's not working, Cora can be found watching college football and basketball, as well as enjoying music. She's got a bass guitar that she plays only in the presence of family and friends in the privacy of her own home. I guess that means she's not going to do a gig for the Weatherization picnic anytime soon!

There's a New Ride in Town!

Welcome to Bustang, the new interregional Express Bus service from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), connecting commuters to Denver along the busy I-25 and I-70 corridors. Bustang now makes commuting as simple as saddling up to ride Colorado's big purple bus.

Bustang was created by CDOT to help alleviate congestion and offer more travel choices on our major corridors. A convenient, modern solution for longer-distance commuters, CDOT's Bustang leads the stampede on how to get to and from the Denver metro area.



This is no ordinary bus. In fact, each Bustang offers the latest in commuter amenities. Including:

- WiFi availability
- Bathrooms
- Bike racks
- 110V outlets and USB charging stations
- Reclining high-back seats
- 50-passenger capacity
- Wheelchair Accessible



Recently, Bustang stopped at the Frisco transit center for a photo op! From left to right: Jim Andrew, Director, Summit Stage; Susan Juergensmeier, Mobility Manager, NWCCOG; Tom Clark, Mayor, Kremmling; Mark Campbell, Town Manager Kremmling; Mark Imhoff, Director, CDOT Division of Transit and Rail; Dan Gibbs, Summit County Commissioner; Grace Gibbs (traveling companion); Karn Stiegelmeier Summit County Commissioner (in her usual style, she dressed specially for the occasion.)

For more information about Bustang visit <https://www.codot.gov/travel/bustang>

Annual Weatherization Day!

Once each year the entire Weatherization team converges on the Silverthorne HQ of NWCCOG for an entire day of education, communication, and sharing ideas. Oh yes -- and FOOD!

The Weatherization department gets together with the folks at the Colorado Energy Office and invites the entire NWCCOG organization to a BBQ lunch! It's a great way to get the whole gang together for lunch, fellowship, and dessert.

This year, as in the past, we were treated to delicious food, excellent weather, and some wonderful feedback from previous weatherization clients.



Weatherization Director Steve Getz (third from left) read a few of the many emails he'd received from homeowners who had been the recipients of weatherization efforts -- here's a small sample:

"My wife and I would like to express our thorough thanks for the work that was performed on our property. It appears as if our electric bills have decreased around 20% since the work was completed. It's wonderful that we can get our little girls out of the bath at night without having them get totally cold before they get dressed for bed. Being able to keep the house warm is a true blessing!"

" Since your team worked at the house this week, it's the first time since summer that I have not had to wear a down jacket at home in the mornings. And for the first time ever I'm able to see out of my living room window since it was not totally frosted over! The double pane windows have made an amazing difference."

" ...just a note to say your weatherization guys are masters of their craft. They were always on time, they were pleasant and caring, and cleaned up after their work was done every day before they left. We are elderly and disabled -- it is refreshing to see workers who take pride in their work and who are happy to do it. Thank you so much we are warm!:"

There were many more, but all had the same theme -- great workmanship, pleasant attitude, improved energy efficiency, happy clients! Cool!

New Faces at NWCCOG

Please help us welcome CJ Grove, the new Eagle County RSVP Director and the NWCCOG Volunteer Coordinator. Born in Kentucky, CJ spent the last 10 years in Bosque Farms, New Mexico where she gained extensive experience that uniquely qualifies her for her position.

As Eagle County's Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Coordinator and overall Volunteer Coordinator for the five counties in the Region 12 area, she's got a very full plate!

While in New Mexico, she spent time as a Research Assistant at the University of New Mexico, School of Public Administration, researching many topics. One of the more relevant topics for her new assignment was research on Volunteer Compassion, Satisfaction and Fatigue. She also worked with AmeriCorps National Preparedness and Response Corps assigned to the American Red Cross where she coordinated the *Ready When the Time Comes* program throughout the region, responding to over 40 national, regional and local disasters.

When asked what she's looking forward to most with her new assignment she replied, "I am looking forward to working with all of the volunteers and organizations to increase the volunteer base within the region and to help make the volunteer experience more satisfying for both the individual and the organizations that utilize them." Because so many of us are volunteers in our communities, it's refreshing to think someone will be working to help make the experience even more satisfying.

She loves art and has a collection of pieces from New Mexico including paintings, sketches, jewelry, pottery, and sculptures. She also enjoys going to museums, taking hikes and traveling. With her love of history and historical sites, she's appreciated the many well preserved areas in the Midwest and Southwest. She's excited to explore her new community in Summit County and beyond.





When you call us on the phone, you'll also be hearing a new voice; that of Amanda Rens-Moon, who is the new Administrative Assistant for NWCCOG.

A Colorado native and CU grad with a degree in English Literature, Amanda has spent most of her life around Rangely, Grand County, and now Summit County. Her early career found her as an Administrative Assistant and Income Maintenance Technician for Grand County Social Services where she determined the eligibility for family benefit programs including Medicaid, LEAP (Low-income Energy Assistance Program), and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program).

She also spent time as a Medical Billing and Record Clerk, and the Billing and Finance Coordinator for Grand County Public Health, Home Health, Senior Nutrition, and Home Care. In her last position, she handled the billing and

finances for four departments, helping ensure fiscal compliance with local, state, and federal rules and regulations.

When asked what she's looking forward to most with her new position she replied, "I'm excited to provide administrative support to all of the valuable, regional programs offered through NWCCOG. I love to help the people making our communities a better place to live. NWCCOG is changing lives, and I consider it an honor to be part of the team."

When not at work, she's a voracious reader, devouring books as fast as she can. She also enjoys crafting and crocheting. Exploring Summit County with her family is a new favorite pastime as they search out new hiking trails around the community.

Note: For those who know Alissa Hack (our previous administrator), she took a position with the Town of Leadville - where she can walk to work every day. We wish her the very best!

Happy 50th Anniversary!

The Older Americans Act (OAA) is celebrating its 50th Anniversary! The OAA was passed in 1965 as a part of Lyndon Johnson's **Great Society** reforms. It followed closely behind the **Civil Rights Act and the Economic Opportunity Act**. The OAA was a response to Congressional concerns about the lack of community social services for older adults. This act supports a range of home and community-based services, such as meals-on-wheels and other nutrition programs, in-home services, transportation, legal services, elder abuse prevention and caregivers support.



In recognition of the 50th Anniversary. NASUAD (National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities) will assemble a special Golden Jubilee booklet entitled **"50 Fabulous Older People, from 50 States, Celebrating 50 Years."**

The booklet will contain biographies and photos of one outstanding older adult from every state who has engaged with their community in unique and impactful ways.

The NWCCOG's Alpine Area Agency on Aging is our region's link to the services provided by the OAA. For more information, please call Jean Hammes at 970.468.0295 x107.

Too Much Sitting Got You Down?

Our Workplace Wellness Team is always coming up with ideas that we each can do, to help our bodies function better in spite of all the sitting we sometimes do.

Here's a [link to a quick video](#) with a great exercise if you have been struggling to stretch your hip

flexors or you have chronic low back pain. Try it -- you might like it!



2015 NWCCOG Meeting Schedule

Thursday, July 23, 2015

Full Council Meeting

Location: NWCCOG Office/Conference Call

Time: 10:00a.m.-noon

Thursday, August 27, 2015

Full Council & EDD Board Annual Planning Meeting

Location: Garden Level Classroom, Eagle County Administration Building, Eagle (tentative)

Time: 10:00 a.m.-3:00p.m.

Thursday, October 22, 2015

Location: NWCCOG Office/Conference Call

Time: 10:00a.m.-noon

Thursday, December 3, 2015

Full Council & Foundation Board Meeting

Location: NWCCOG Office/Conference Call

Time: 10:00a.m.-noon

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

www.nwccog.org

970.468.0295

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