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# Northern Colorado BUSINESS REPORT

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# Midtown study starts with Foothills

## Findings to be presented at March meeting

By **Kristen Tatti**  
[ktatti@ncbr.com](mailto:ktatti@ncbr.com)

FORT COLLINS — A team of consultants is edging toward a unified vision for Fort Collins'

commercial corridor, even as redevelopment flourishes in one of the area's northernmost shopping centers.

The Midtown Commercial Corridor, which encompasses College Avenue from Prospect to Harmony roads including the Foothills Mall, holds the dubious distinction of containing 83 percent of the total vacant retail space in the city — 655,000 square feet. Even so, it represents

more than half of all the retail sales in Fort Collins.

In October, the city hired a team to conduct a study of the feasibility of redevelopment in the corridor. The study is past the halfway point, and early indications are optimistic.

"The analysts tell me it's a glass-half-full or better situation," said Josh Birks, economic adviser for the city.

Birks pointed out that 84 per-

cent of the vacant space in the corridor is concentrated in a handful of big-box locations — the former JCPenny and Mervyn's locations at the mall and the free-standing Wal-Mart, Toys-R-Us, Circuit City, Linens 'n Things and Wild Oats.

There are 120 acres designated for redevelopment in the near-term — five to 10 years — within the corridor, but the study started

See MIDTOWN, 23

## Voters repeal EPURA financing by 61 percent vote

By **Steve Porter**  
[sporter@ncbr.com](mailto:sporter@ncbr.com)

ESTES PARK — Estes Park voters decided overwhelmingly last month that the town's urban renewal authority was no longer the financing vehicle needed to keep moving the town forward.

Formed in the aftermath of the devastating 1982 Lawn Lake Flood, the URA helped Estes Park rebuild its downtown where tourists flock each summer to spend the money that keeps the local economy thriving. But in a mail-in ballot, a record number of voters resoundingly said they wanted to end the Estes Park URA and that the creation of any future URA should require a public vote.

Town voters cast 61 percent of their ballots to repeal EPURA in the Jan. 12 special election.

Bill Van Horn, a local businessman and former town public works and planning director, helped lead a successful petition drive to put EPURA's repeal on

See ESTES PARK, 10



Steve Porter, Northern Colorado Business Report

**EPURA LEGACY** — The Estes Park Urban Renewal Authority, created in 1983 after a devastating flood inundated downtown, poured money into redevelopment and helped bring the town back from ruin. But voters in January overwhelmingly decided that EPURA had outlived its usefulness, and it will be formally dissolved in July.



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# 'Success comes to those in front of the inevitable'

Chad McWhinney talks about growth, future opportunities

By Kristen Tatti  
ktatti@ncbr.com

It's been a volatile year in commercial real estate, and Loveland-based McWhinney hasn't been immune. The company found a new president in John Shaw, saw the financial markets land the Promenade Shops in foreclosure, and expanded its geographic footprint with a Denver office, but CEO Chad McWhinney said it's really just business as usual. He sat down with the *Business Report* on Feb. 4 to discuss the company's strategy:

**NCBR:** Is the unsolicited sale of Rangeview Two out of the ordinary?

**McWhinney:** Over the years, we've probably sold three or four properties through unsolicited offers. Generally, we hold our real estate for the long-term, but from time-to-time, we'll sell strategic assets to reinvest in future opportunities.

**NCBR:** Is that linked to opening an office in Denver?

**McWhinney:** There is some exceptional talent that has become available as a direct result of the financial crisis. One



Krista Watzel, Northern Colorado Business Report

**TEAM MCWHINNEY** – Chad McWhinney, CEO and co-founder of Loveland-based real estate, development and investment firm McWhinney, left, with Douglas L. Hill, principal and chief operating officer, and John M. Shaw, newly hired president of the company.

of the gentlemen we brought on board, Marshall Burton, is very well respected in the greater Denver business community. By growing outside of Northern

Colorado, it allows us to, over time, attract additional talent. That will not only add value to what we've got going on outside of Northern Colorado, but it

will also allow us to add value to what's happening here in Northern Colorado.

See MCWHINNEY, 8

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# THE EYE

## Oprah knows: a happy wife is worth a fib

The Eye got a little misty at this early Valentine's Day saga, both romantic and a teachable moment in business ethics.

One recent Wednesday afternoon Mortgage Loan Officer **Brett DeWitt** sent his coworkers at The Group Real Estate a hastily composed e-mail explaining a "family emergency" would keep him out of the office until Friday.

True enough, if you define "family" as his wife of nearly 20 years, **Julie**, and "emergency" as scoring tickets to Thursday's "Oprah" taping in Chicago.

"My wife has had it on her bucket list to be in the Oprah audience," DeWitt told The Eye. "I had been trying to get tickets since last May. Then a concierge in Chicago called about 4 o'clock Wednesday with two tickets — but we had to be in line by 7 o'clock Thursday morning to get in. I had about 15 minutes to get out of the office, buy tickets on the last flight out of DIA, find a housesitter and get packed."

Definitely an emergency, but worth the whirlwind. The tickets were primo — right where Herself enters, close enough for Julie to shake Her hand. The seats were so sweet that the DeWitts were clearly visible as the camera panned the house.

Call it fate, but fellow Groupie **Karen Rowen** just so happened to have "Oprah" on while working at home Thursday, and just so happened to catch the crowd shot with DeWitt front and center.

That's why everyone in the Horsetooth office had 5-by-7 glossies of the screen shot for DeWitt to autograph at the Tuesday staff meeting — and a cautionary tale about why you should never fib. The Eye never sleeps.

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# Million delivers letters of interest

## Water districts write in support of Green River pipeline project

By **Steve Porter**  
*sporter@ncbr.com*

More than a dozen Front Range water providers have expressed interest in obtaining water through a proposed pipeline from the Flaming Gorge/Green River watershed in southwest Wyoming — if Fort Collins developer **Aaron Million** can pull it off.

Last month, Million delivered to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers letters of interest from water districts, municipalities, coun-

ties, ditch companies and others who said they could use some new water supplies. The letters were submitted in response to a request by the Corps to show evidence of need for the project.

The Corps is studying a proposal by Million to pipe water from the Flaming Gorge Reservoir in Wyoming along the Interstate 80 corridor and then bring it down to thirsty communities in southern Wyoming and along Colorado's Front Range.

Gary Herman, president of the Groundwater Management Subdistrict of the Central Colorado Water Conservancy District in Greeley, was one who submitted



**MILLION**

a letter of interest on behalf of the Million Conservation Resource Group.

"We are interested in acquiring additional water supplies," Herman wrote in a letter dated Jan. 13. "While we obviously cannot commit to acquire water from the MCRG Project absent agreement on price and all other terms, we can express an interest in exploring the acquisition of up to 50,000 acre-feet per year from the MCRG Project and in negotiating with you to explore such an arrangement."

Tom Cech, Central's manager, said the water would be used to replace agriculture water for shut-down irrigation wells along the South Platte River. Cech said thousands of wells have been shut down by court order since 2003 because well owners had no way to replace water they pumped out

See **MILLION, 9**

F O C U S

# Heli-One ready for jobs, work liftoff

## Local firm acquired by global helicopter maintenance outfit

By **Kristen Tatti**  
*ktatti@ncbr.com*

FORT COLLINS — After almost 30 years of steady business and organic growth, Fort Collins-based Heli-Support Inc. has become part of the world's largest independent helicopter support firm.

Heli-One of Delta, British Columbia, acquired Heli-Support in November after more than a year of courting. Fort Collins is now the only U.S. site for the company and plans include expanding local staff to handle existing clientele as well as a large new contract.

Wyoming-based Roberts Aircraft Co., founded in 1953, formed the Heli-Support subsidiary in 1981 with the goal of providing maintenance support for its sales and leasing operations. In its early days, Heli-Support boasted three employees and was working toward a number of Federal Aviation Administration certifications.

Today, the company employs 70, boasts a state-of-the-art engine test cell and, with the acquisition, is poised for growth. Kevin Shields, general manager of what is now called Heli-One Colorado, said that the site will immediately see a big jump in volume followed by jobs.

"They identified us and approached us at a trade show, casually at first," Shields said. He added that at the time, the Roberts family, which still owned the company, was not specifically seeking a sale. But the companies had a letter of intent in place by May and, following a due diligence period, the sale closed on Nov. 3.

### Global operation

Similar to Heli-Support, Heli-One was born out of necessity. The company is a subsidiary of CHC Helicopter Corp., which operates a fleet of helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft for transportation purposes. Heli-One was formed from CHC's



Chad Collins, Northern Colorado Business Report

**LIFTOFF** — Technicians service a variety of helicopters at the Heli-One facility in northeast Fort Collins. Heli-One purchased Heli-Support in November and plans to expand the customer and employment base.

maintenance division and set up to conduct third-party work, explained company spokesman Andrew Huige.

In addition to the Fort Collins and Delta facilities, Heli-One operates in Stavanger, Norway; a composites shop in Gander, Newfoundland; handles parts distribution from Amsterdam; and an additional site in Adelaide, Australia.

The company also used to operate shops in Texas and Aberdeen, Scotland. The Texas site was picked up by Heli-One in the 2006 acquisition of Heli-Dyne Systems Inc. Huige said that the facility was closed about a year ago due to a "sig-

nificantly decreased business volumes and a poor market outlook."

Recently, Heli-One landed the contract to provide maintenance and service to Addison, Texas-based Omniflight, the second largest provider of air medical services in the nation. The largest, Air Methods, is based out of Denver. The Fort Collins facility began work on the Omniflight contract even before the acquisition closed.

"Fort Collins was acquired mainly to support a contract with Omniflight," Huige said.

The contract, servicing the company's

See **HELI-ONE, 26**

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# New year bringing new staff to *NCBR*

FORT COLLINS — New staff members and new duties for some veterans are helping the *Northern Colorado Business Report* meet the challenges of 2010.

“With 2009 behind us, we have made some changes to best move forward in the new year,” said Jeff Nuttall, publisher of *NCBR*. “I’m excited to look ahead to what we can accomplish.”

The newspaper has added two new faces in the sales department. Angie Hauser and Patrick Bruce bring a wealth of experience in daily newspaper sales to *NCBR*, having both worked for the *Fort Collins Coloradoan* as well as the *Statesman Journal* in Salem, Ore. — not necessarily at the same time. Angie’s background also includes marketing and sales for high-end printers in Denver, and she will be responsible for custom publishing as well as handling retail, restaurant and catering accounts.



**HAUSER**



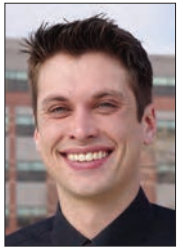
**BRUCE**

Patrick’s expertise is in the automotive industry, where he will be developing new accounts alongside his real estate and agriculture territories.

Account Executive Eric Kidd has expanded his responsibilities to spearhead *NCBR*’s social media marketing

efforts, as well as working with Circulation Manager Rhonda Doyle to increase paid and bulk subscriptions through a number of innovative strategies.

Noelle Maestas, formerly with the Northern Colorado Economic Development Corp., has been the Chief Researcher for *NCBR* since October. In that time, she has managed the transition to the latest version of the DataJoe database management software, as well as producing the 2010 Book of Lists. Noelle is working with Eric on e-commerce, providing customer service to companies and individuals interested in purchasing lead generation products from *NCBR*.



**KIDD**



**MAESTAS**

And Cindy Nosko has returned to Northern Colorado from our sister publication, the *Boulder County Business Report*, to assume a number of administrative duties. She is now responsible for all accounting and human resources functions for both newspapers as well as the *Wyoming Business Report*.



**NOSKO**

## C O R R E C T I O N S

A story in the Jan. 15 issue of the *Business Report* suggested that Marilyn Schock, new CEO of McKee Medical Center, was the first female to head a major hospital in Northern Colorado. However, that honor appears to have gone to Karna Schofer, M.D., interim CEO of Poudre Valley Hospital in 1991 who later served as permanent CEO from 1992-1996.

The *Business Report* will correct any errors that appear in its pages. To suggest a correction or clarification, please contact editor Kate Hawthorne at 970-221-5400, ext. 224, or e-mail her at khawthorne@ncbr.com.

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# Final real estate stats confirm 2009 not stellar year

Regional numbers all down, except for days on market

By Steve Porter  
sporter@ncbr.com

Northern Colorado real estate agents struggled to move houses between buyers and sellers in a year that was marked by down numbers across the board.

Loveland-based Information and Real Estate Services, a multiple-listings service that compiles real estate statistics for the region, recently released final stats for 2009 that showed the number of homes sold in all three main regional markets — Fort Collins, Loveland-Berthoud and Greeley-Evans — was down from 2008, with the Loveland-Berthoud market down most at 6.7 percent.

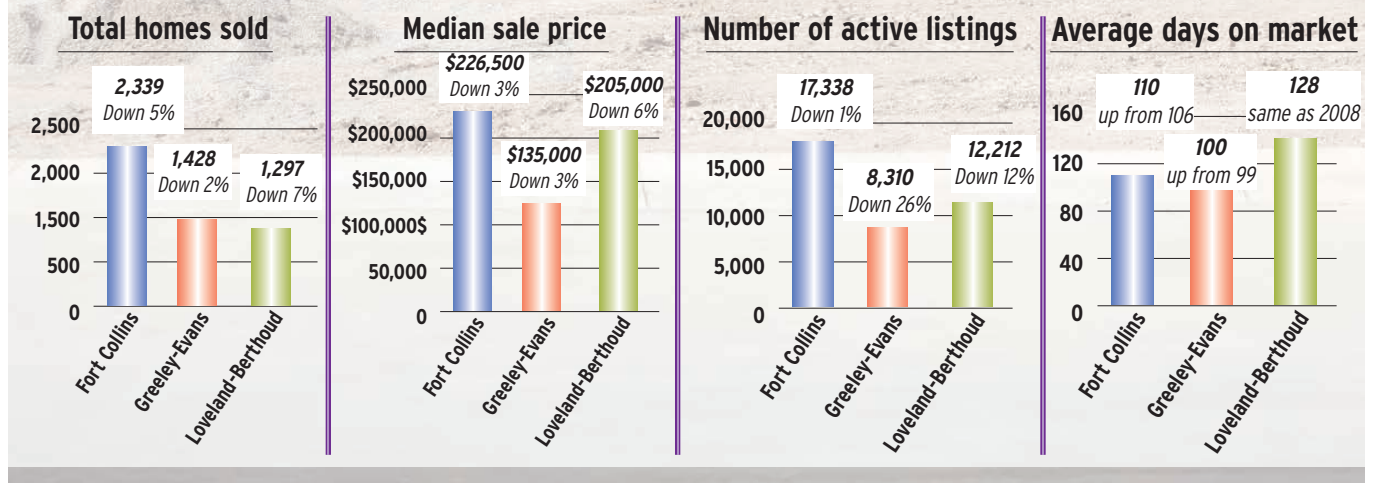
Fort Collins home sales were down 5.1 percent, while Greeley-Evans home sales were down only 2 percent. Sharon Taylor, a Keller-Williams agent and incoming president of the Greeley Area Realtor Association, said the year just ended wasn't all that bad, in her view.

"Actually, 2009 was a good year for me and for Greeley in general," she said. "I think we started to see things begin to

See RESIDENTIAL, 23



**Down year for residential**  
The graphs below show final figures for residential real estate activity in the major markets of Northern Colorado in 2009. The percent change is from 2008 year-end numbers.



SOURCE: IRES

Business Report file photo

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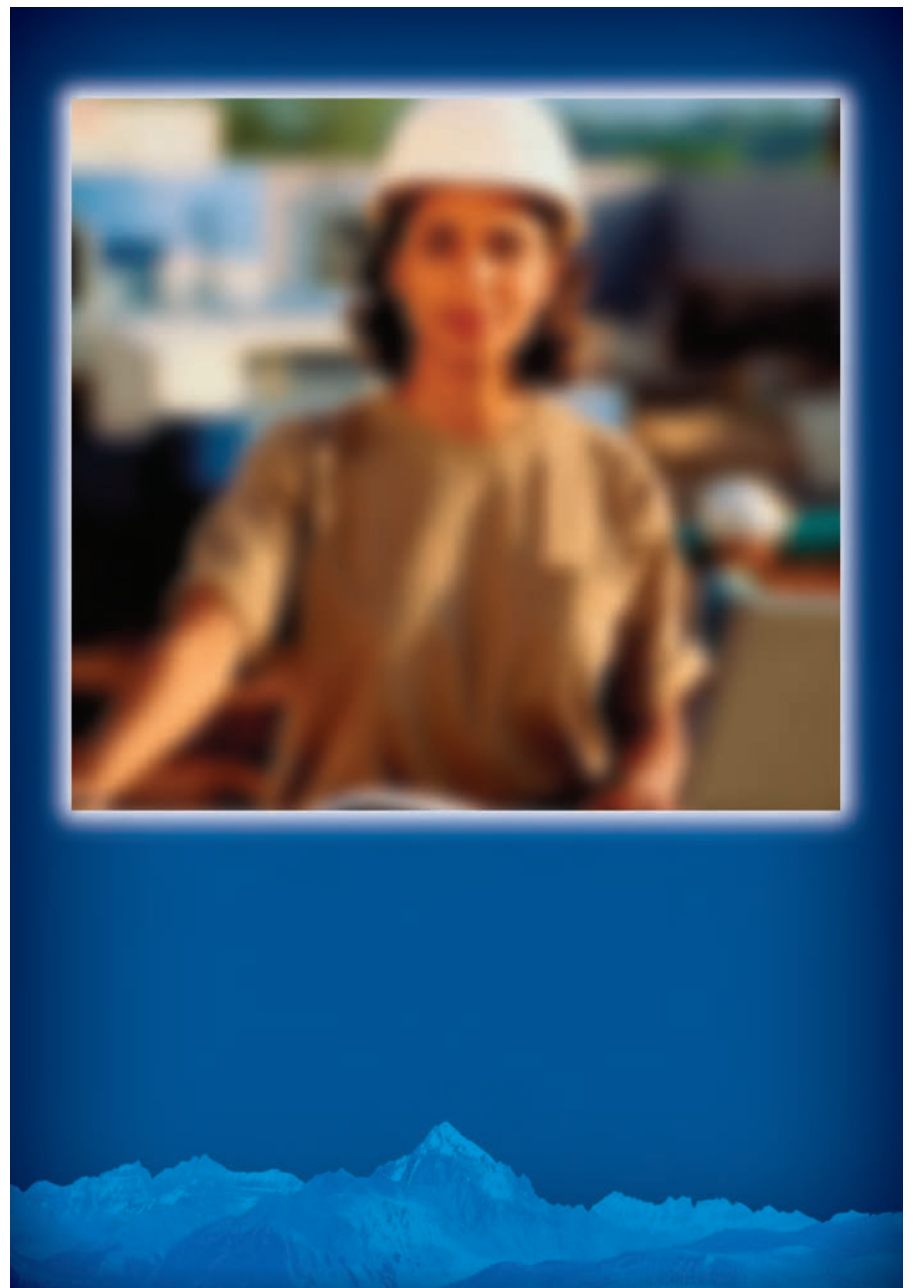
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# Marijuana dispenser contemplates regulation

## Wild West scene needs to be cleaned up with clear rules

FORT COLLINS — On a recent weekday afternoon, Shawna Stamm, owner of Green Acres Medicinal marijuana dispensary in Fort Collins, pauses to talk about her business that opened Jan. 23.

During the next 45 minutes, several walk-in clients enter seeking marijuana. All the while, her unanswered cell phone rings almost continuously.

“The demand is huge,” says Stamm, 39, who signed up about 50 new clients during a recent Saturday and has acquired about 150 clients in just a few weeks.

Stamm, a former dental assistant and cosmetic esthetician specializing in facials and chemical peels, said she decided to open a medical marijuana dispensary because of a desire to help those in need.

“I truly want to help people,” she said. “I take the term caregiver extremely seriously. This is not a free ride to

smoke weed. I try to treat people like a doctor would.”

Stamm, a tall, energetic woman with an open and friendly personality, said she wants to play by the rules and do everything on the up-and-up. She spent time researching the best place to have her dispensary — a commercial zone at 3509 S. Mason St. far away from schools and where kids might congregate — and has advertised her services in local publications.

Stamm said she worries that some less careful dispensaries in the area may harm the progress that’s been made so slowly since Colorado voters approved medicinal marijuana use in 2000.

“There are places in town that are scary,” she said. “They are truly doing things wrong and need to be shut down.”

Stamm said she knows of some dispensaries and physicians that are providing licenses to healthy college students “and that’s not where this is supposed to be going.”

“This is not Amsterdam,” she said. “A lot of people might want it to be, but it’s not.”

Stamm said she’s happy to see the Colorado Legislature finally taking up medical marijuana regulation.

“Nothing’s really set in stone, so everybody’s winging it right now,” she said.

Colorado lawmakers were zeroing in on possible new regulations for dispensaries at the time of this writing, including requiring doctors to review a person’s medical history and give them a



**HEALTH CARE**  
Steve Porter

## Northern Colorado going to pot – or not

Current status of medical marijuana dispensaries in the region:

**Fort Collins** – MMDs under a moratorium since Dec. 1; 108 sales tax licenses issued prior to moratorium; planning and zoning board will take up issue on Feb. 18.

**Loveland** – Eight-month moratorium adopted by city council on Nov. 17; 25 MMDs licensed before moratorium.

**Greeley** – City council voted Oct. 20 to ban MMDs in city limits.

**Evans** – Six-month moratorium began Jan. 19.

**Windsor** – Temporary moratorium began Dec. 16. Town Board work session to discuss regulating and licensing set for Feb. 15; voters will decide April 6 if MMDs should be prohibited within town limits. Two in operation before moratorium.

**Larimer County** – Lifted a moratorium on Jan. 4 when county commissioners adopted land-use code amendments; two MMDs working with county to conform to code.

**Weld County** – No moratorium; will consider through use by special review and zoning regulations. No applications submitted as of Feb. 2.

SOURCE: CITY AND COUNTY WEBSITES, LOCAL OFFICIALS



full exam before issuing a license to buy or grow marijuana.

Stamm said one thing she does not want to see the legislature do is try to limit how many patients one dispensary can serve. “I want them to set some rules in place, but I don’t want them to come in and run my business.”

Stamm said she understands that gaining respectability for a substance that’s been illegal in the United States for so long is going to take time and the best efforts of those who want to overcome society’s prejudice against its use.

“There are still people who really frown upon medical marijuana,” she said. “They can’t get over the fact that the government’s been against it for so many years. I will be the first to say it’s not for everybody. But people have been smoking it for thousands of years, and there’s so much scientific evidence that it really is beneficial for some people.”

Steve Porter covers health care for the Northern Colorado Business Report. He can be reached at 970-221-5400, ext. 225, or at [sporter@ncbr.com](mailto:sporter@ncbr.com).



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# Bank interest growing – acquisition interest, that is

## Stressed assets now prime targets for takeovers, mergers

After several years of quiet on the traditional merger and acquisition front, the banking industry might be poised for a flurry of activity.

Interest from inside and outside of the industry appears to be picking up — much of it driven by the stress banks are currently under. In a recent Grant Thornton survey of bank executives, 42 percent of

respondents said that their bank is interested in bidding for a failed bank's assets or deposits, but only 2 percent have actually made such an acquisition.

While bank-to-bank transactions are scarce, investor groups are creating banking dream teams to take advantage of bargain-basement prices. Denver-based Community Bank Partners formed late last year with an eye toward picking up distressed institutions and failed assets. In November, the group filed with the Federal Reserve Bank to become a bank holding company to



**BANKING**  
Kristen Tatti

close on its first deal: the purchase of The Palisades National Bank, currently owned by Greeley-based Bank of Choice Holding Co.

Palisades isn't exactly a distressed asset. While the \$50 million bank has its share of past-due loans, it reported higher return on assets and return on equity than banks of its size — under \$100 million in assets — in general. It also had a much lower ratio of net charge-offs to loans.

Bank of Choice started exploring options to raise capital early in 2009 and decided it could shed the small bank, because it was outside of its traditional market. The holding company picked up Palisades in the early stages of an expansion period in 2004.

Bank of Choice President and CEO Darrell McAllister said that the interest in Palisades was pretty good. The holding company tapped Denver's St. Charles Capital to broker a deal. One offer fell through on the buyer's side, but three additional offers came in.

McAllister doesn't anticipate that the deal will close until around April — about a year after discussions started — due to regulatory requirements.

"If it were a bank buying a bank, it would be closed by now," he said.

Banking regulators require more



**MCALLISTER**

**"There's been a lot more inquiries. It's a long and winding road."**

Paul Mendoza, consultant  
Kennedy & Coe LLC;  
financial institutions group

documentation and go into more depth on topics such as management for a newly formed holding company than an established one.

### Surge in interest

Companies such as consulting and accounting firm Kennedy & Coe LLC are seeing a surge in interest in acquisitions from clients on the banking and investing side.

"The activity seems to come in waves," said Paul Mendoza, a consultant in Kennedy & Coe's financial institutions group.

Mendoza explained the past few years have been virtually devoid of M&A activity because investors were worried about where the banking market would bottom out. At the same time, potential sellers were getting valuations well below what they thought their banks were worth or substantially less than a

valuation from a few years prior.

"At some point, the investors are going to be comfortable that it's hit bottom," he said, adding that sellers are also going to adjust to the reality of lower valuations.

Investors are getting into the early stages of acquisition, seeing what is available and trying to determine what its value might be. Even if the initial negotiation stage is successful, there is the regulatory process to prepare for. Because of the several-stage process, investors posturing now aren't necessarily likely to be making purchases soon.

"There's been a lot more inquiries," Mendoza said. "It's a long and winding road."

He points out that banks will also now be turning to acquisitions for growth, since growth from commercial and residential real estate development will not be picking up anytime soon. According to the Grant Thornton survey, about a quarter of bankers reporting they expect to grow plan to do so through acquisition in 2010. About 26 percent of respondents said they would not be growing in the coming year.

"In this industry and this marketplace, in the next five to 10 years we'll see a lot of bank growth coming from acquisitions," Mendoza said.

*Kristen Tatti covers the banking industry for the Business Report. She can be reached at 970-221-5400, ext. 219 or ktatti@ncbr.com.*

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## MCWHINNEY, from 2

**NCBR:** Do you feel that the competition has been pretty tough here in the past decade? Or are customers drawn to the developments?

**McWhinney:** I think both. In terms of it being competitive up here, there's a lot of land, it's a growing area, a great place to live. I will say that there are some excellent competitors up here. Many of the people we compete with, our associates and us, we are personal friends with them. At the end of the day, there's enough to go around for everyone.

A lot of people might perceive McWhinney as a development company, but we are a real estate company that focuses on development, management and investments. For the last 10-plus

years, there have been lots of opportunities in development, and up until a couple of years ago, in our opinion, acquisitions didn't make sense. We, in fact, sold a few assets in the '05, '06 and '07 time-frame to position ourselves financially to really be able to play offense when the inevitable correction was coming.

**NCBR:** Do you envision doing any projects that are outside of the scope of what the company has already done?

**McWhinney:** No, I think we'll continue doing what we're doing and continue to get better at it. We'll continue to focus on the markets that we want to do business in and that we believe in. For us, that's the Front Range of Colorado — Denver to Fort Collins — and also Southern California. We may look at other areas outside of that, but we do not have ambitious growth plans. At McWhinney, we focus on taking care of our customers,

providing fabled experiences, creating great places. But we're not like a public company where we're going to grow 30 percent per year for the next 30 years.

**NCBR:** The Grand Station development was put on hold. Now looking at the market, how do you feel about that project?

**McWhinney:** Well, I'm glad that all we did was spend some predevelopment dollars and didn't break ground on anything. Anytime you move forward with a project, you're going to put dollars at risk. McWhinney is very good about always protecting our downside. We tend to not build a lot of 100 percent spec development. We did a lot of predevelopment work and study on a product that, at the time, made sense. When the financial markets changed, it no longer made sense and we were able to put the project on hold. We're still committed to

a mixed-use village at Centerra, and when the market allows we will explore that opportunity. The vision behind a mixed-use center is walkability. That vision will not change, but how we execute, depending on when we move forward, will dictate what we do and when.

**NCBR:** Do you think the market will look different coming out of this downturn?

**McWhinney:** Real estate is a cyclical business. When I think about the real estate industry, clearly demand is slow right now, which is what is making acquisitions a great opportunity. We believe at McWhinney that success often comes to those that get out in front of the inevitable. The inevitable is that the U.S. population is going to substantially grow. Depending on which projections you want to read, basically over the next 20 to 30 years the U.S. is going to add 100-plus million people. That's a lot of apartments. That's a lot of homes. That's a lot of real estate that's needed. McWhinney assembled a lot of land in the early 1990s in part of the S&L crisis. That gave us a very low basis, and it allowed us to be patient. That's one of the reasons we did not acquire a lot of land after the year 2000 — it was just too expensive.

**NCBR:** In the short-term, how has the recession impacted the company?

**McWhinney:** It's allowed us to make some very good acquisitions. It's allowed us to attract some very good talent. And it's allowed us to work very closely with our public-private partnerships to continue attracting jobs, bringing in sales tax revenue and building regional improvements.

**NCBR:** Do changes in public sentiment and city councils have an impact on those partnerships?


**McWhinney:** Local politics can and will always affect how a public-private partnership is created. What we look for at all times is mutual gains. At McWhinney, we believe in collaborative negotiation where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. We believe in synergy, and synergy is made up of energy and alignment. When we put those two together, we can accomplish so much more than we can do on our own.

**NCBR:** Do you think there have been misperceptions about the public-private partnership with Loveland?

**McWhinney:** I believe that lack of clarity equals fear. Our public-private partnership at Centerra, specifically, is complex. It's just the way it is. Could we have done a better job in the past of making things more clear? Yes. Are we committed to doing that now? Yes. In anything you do, you're always going to have naysayers out there, but at the end of the day it's about results. We believe we are delivering, with Loveland, exceptional results to our community.

**NCBR:** Has the recession had an impact on the long-term vision for the company?


**McWhinney:** I think it does have an impact, and the impact is very positive. There's a real opportunity right now to buy certain assets below replacement costs — in other words, buy them cheaper than you can build them for — and buy land at attractive prices. Like everything else, the market will correct — demand will exceed supply and prices will rise again. But success often comes to those who get in front of the inevitable.

  
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## Million letters of interest

Aaron Million delivered letters of interest in his Green River pipeline project to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from:

- Central Colorado Water Conservancy District (up to 50,000 acre-feet)
- East Larimer County Water District (up to 5,000 a.f.)
- Fort Collins-Loveland Water District (up to 5,000 a.f.)
- Larimer and Weld Irrigation Co. (up to 20,000 a.f.)
- Windsor Reservoir and Canal Co. (up to 10,000 a.f.)
- Lower South Platte Water Conservancy District (up to 35,000 a.f.)
- Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District No. 1, Monument (up to 3,000 a.f.)
- North Sterling Irrigation District (up to 25,000 a.f.)
- Prewitt Operating Committee (representing Logan Irrigation District, Iliff Irrigation District and Morgan Prewitt Reservoir Co., Sterling) (up to 10,000 a.f.)
- T-Cross Ranches, Colorado Springs (20,000 a.f.)
- Penely Water Co. LLC, Douglas County (up to 25,000 a.f.)
- City of Brighton (up to 12,000 a.f.)
- Douglas County (up to 40,000 a.f.)
- Pioneer Canal-Lake Hattie Irrigation District, Wyoming (8,000 a.f.)
- Cheyenne Board of Utilities (3,500 to 5,500 a.f.)

SOURCE: AARON MILLION

## MILLION, from 3

of the river for their crops.

"There are still several thousand wells that have not pumped again," he said. "Any source of water would be helpful."

### Need exceeds project scope

Million was able to solicit letters of interest for far more than the minimum 165,000 acre-feet he's asking the Corps of Engineers to approve, which would be delivered through a pipeline of more than 400 miles with a price tag in the neighborhood of \$3 billion to \$4 billion.

"There's at least 275,000 acre-feet of interest out there," Million said. "The interest in the project underpins the benefits of the project overall."

An acre-foot is the amount of water it would take to fill a one-acre space with one foot of water. That amount, 325,851 gallons, is roughly the equivalent of water consumed by a family of four in a year.

Million said benefits of the project include supplying municipalities with drinking water, preventing ag-land dry-up and enhancing river flows. "We were very pleased with the diversity of interest from the potential users of this project," he said. "All these entities have different needs and interests, and I don't think there's ever been this amount of interest for a single project."

Million said his project is designed to help preserve Front Range agriculture and be as environmentally friendly as possible. Growing up on a ranch along the Green River gave him a special affinity for those who work the land and respect the environment, he said.

"Environmental issues have infused this project from Day One," he said. "Environmental protection is the cornerstone of what we've looked at first and foremost."

Million, a real estate entrepreneur, has been working on the pipeline project since 2003, when he noticed on a map that the Green River loops into Colorado, giving the state a stake in any excess capacity of the river.

Million has since lined up partners and investors in the project and submitted it to the Army Corps of Engineers for review, which is currently studying his Environmental Impact Statement.

Although he has spent years and millions of dollars getting the proposal to its

current status, Million said he will walk away if the Corps says it is not environmentally sound.

"We only have an interest in seeing this go forward if it meets the environmental goals, and if it doesn't, it shouldn't go forward," he said.

### State needs water

Eric Hecox, intrastate water management and development specialist for the Colorado Water Conservation Board, said the state could certainly use new sources of water.

"The work we've done shows over the next 40 to 50 years we'll face a significant need for additional water supplies," he said.

But some are nervous about the idea of a group of private investors getting control of such a large water supply. "I think that's a concern to a variety of people in the state," said Hecox, who added the Water Conservation Board has not yet taken an official position on Million's proposal.

But he noted that, throughout Colorado's history, groups of private investors have taken the lead in developing water supply projects and then transferred them to public ownership.

Cech said his Central District isn't worried about who owns the water. "The bottom line is we need water as soon as possible," he said. "If we can accomplish what (Million) says it would, it would be very beneficial to northeast Colorado."

Rena Brand, a spokeswoman for the Army Corps of Engineer's Denver office, said the letters submitted by Million may be a big step toward a ruling on his proposal.

"We're now working to review and verify the information submitted," she said. "Once we have verified and validated that information, the Corps will develop a Purpose and Need Statement. That's kind of a first step for any EIS. It builds a framework for how we review the entire proposal."

Brand said Million's proposal will be looked at in comparison with other possible alternatives "to satisfy those needs" expressed in the letters. "It may be that a Flaming Gorge is not the solution," she said. "We could end up looking at possibly hundreds of solutions."

Brand said a draft EIS of Million's proposal is tentatively set for public comment in 2012 with a possible final EIS ready by 2014.

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## ESTES PARK, from 1

the ballot. An attempt to get the measure on the November ballot failed, but Van Horn thinks that waiting until January to vote was actually better for the town.

"Looking at it in hindsight, it probably allowed for more debate on it than had it gone to the November ballot," he said.

The Town Board of Trustees had reauthorized EPURA for another 25 years in 2008, and approved a budget of \$20,400 for 2010, but Van Horn and others decided to take its continued existence to the voters. "All I wanted to do was have a full and open debate and let the people decide, because it's their tax money," he said.

EPURA's public improvement work was funded through property and sales taxes collected from within the district. Opponents of EPURA claimed it was

diverting money that could have gone to other entities, such as the school district, hospital and library.

### Argument resonated

That argument resonated with voters. The situation was compounded by some recent missteps by EPURA officials, in the view of Van Horn and other local business owners.

"I felt it was something that at least should be discussed before going forward for another 25 years," said Van Horn, who strongly supported EPURA's original creation. "URAs have very special powers intended to get into a dire situation and then get out."

EPURA had been criticized as nothing more than a fundraising tool for projects in areas that didn't meet the definition of blighted. One recent project involved the expansion of the grandstands in the town's fairgrounds, which

Van Horn said ended up costing three times its original estimate. Van Horn said EPURA had become "a puppet of the town board" because any project over \$100,000 needed board approval.

Wil Smith resigned as executive director of EPURA in October for personal reasons. Lowell Richardson, Estes Park deputy town administrator and interim executive director until it formally dissolves in July, said the authority provided more than \$18 million in downtown public improvements during its quarter-century run.

"It literally contributed to just about every piece of redevelopment down there," he said. Projects included streetscape improvements, new parking lots, acquisition of property, a new performance park and a conference center.

Another \$32 million was collected by EPURA that Richardson said was turned over to the town through a series of

**"It literally contributed to just about every piece of redevelopment down there."**

Lowell Richardson, interim director  
Estes Park Urban Renewal Authority

intergovernmental agreements to help fund the authority's operations, hire staff and purchase equipment and materials needed to maintain the funded improvements.

In October, a fire destroyed several shops in the historic and iconic Park Theatre Mall in downtown Estes Park. Rebuilding the area might have seemed to be a perfect opportunity to use EPURA, but owner Sharon Seeley said officials did not offer any assistance.

"They never approached me to offer me any help," Seeley said. "They didn't come to me at all."

Richardson said EPURA might have been able to offer some help to Seeley back then, three months before it was voted out of existence, but no longer. "What I believe is, without EPURA, that option no longer exists," he said. "EPURA, unlike the town, could have provided some financing."

Richardson said not having EPURA, which had the ability to form public-private partnerships, could slow down any effort to rebuild the fire-damaged area.

"The town of Estes Park certainly doesn't have those kinds of funds to put into the downtown area," he said.

### Poor management

Even some of EPURA's supporters admit it was becoming mismanaged prior to the repeal vote. "I found the enthusiasm and leadership within the EPURA board to be lacking," said Charley Dickey, owner of Rustic Mountain Charm, a store in downtown Estes Park. "The focus and direction (was) vague. EPURA had done a poor job of community involvement and education."

Given EPURA's accomplishments, Dickey said he believes another financing mechanism — such as a downtown development authority — will likely be needed to replace it. "The impact of the abolishment of EPURA will not be felt immediately," he said. "It will take years for the effects to be seen clearly. When a town stops growing it starts dying — just like any business. The progress must continue through other means now."

Rich Flanery, board president of the Estes Valley Partners for Commerce, said the economic development group did not take a position on the EPURA vote because "there were quite a variety of opinions."

But Flanery said the town is taking a hard look at what comes next.

"I think that's a very good question, and that's what we'll be focused on to see what community leaders establish in the future," he said. "Hopefully, they'll find a vehicle that will address what's needed."

"It's certainly an important issue, because we all want to see our community and our businesses do well," he added. "I think everyone's looking to the future and saying, 'Where do we go from here?'"

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**TIME OUT**  
Snapshots of life outside the office  
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## Android dreams of expanded apps

### ETC.

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### LISTS

**Region's largest**

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### There's an app for what?

By 2013, the number of mobile devices with Web access will overtake the number of PCs plugged into the Internet worldwide, according to IT research company Gartner Inc., based in Stamford, Conn. So, what will we all be doing with our handhelds then? Here are the top five consumer mobile applications Gartner predicts for 2012 – developers, take note.

**1. Money transfer** – Its lower costs, faster speed and convenience compared with traditional transfer services have strong appeal to users in developing markets, and most services have signed up several million users within their first year. However, challenges do exist in both regulatory and operational risks.

**2. Location-based services** – Part of context-aware services, the LBS user base will grow globally from 96 million in 2009 to more than 526 million in 2012. Its high user value results from its ability to meet needs from productivity and goal fulfillment to social networking and entertainment.

**3. Mobile search** – The ultimate purpose is to drive sales and marketing opportunities on the mobile phone, resulting in high impact on technology innovation and industry revenue. To achieve this, the industry first needs to improve the user experience.

**4. Mobile browsing** – Present on more than 60 percent of handsets shipped in 2009, a percentage Gartner expects to rise to approximately 80 percent in 2013. Mobile Web systems have the potential to offer a good return on investment. They involve much lower development costs, reuse many existing skills and tools, and can be delivered and updated quickly. The mobile Web will be a key part of most corporate business-to-consumer mobile strategies.

**5. Mobile health monitoring** – At an early stage of market maturity and implementation, rollouts have so far been limited to pilot projects. The industry will be able to monetize the service by offering mobile health-care monitoring products, services and solutions to care delivery organizations.

SOURCE: GARTNER INC. (WWW.GARTNER.COM)

Photo illustration by Business Report

### Open-source rewrites business model for all mobile computing

To borrow a line from the great Duke Ellington, the mantra of today's technophile might be, "It don't mean a thing if it ain't got a ring(tone)."

The mobile computing world has exploded over the past decade; objects that were nothing more than sci-fi fantasy are now reality. Show me a person who isn't using a mobile computing device and I will show you someone who is, quite literally, out of touch.

With the explosion in use of has come the explosion of products and devices, from Apple to Palm, Blackberry to ... Android? You know, the commercials with a top-secret military air



**GEEK CHIC**  
Michael D. Wailes

See **GEEK CHIC, 16**

## Building the empire one post at a time



**THE AUTHENTIC ENTREPRENEUR**  
Dawn Duncan

### Social recruiting opens the door to Gen Y talent pool

Now that I have read no fewer than 100 articles on social media (and also wrote one), perhaps the world has shifted and we're all in agreement that it works.

I have loved social media from the start, but do understand that there have been many reluctant participants out there and some who are still avoiding it. Like e-mail, it's a critical component of the way the world works today and now there is a new evolution happening: Social Recruiting.

The concept of social recruiting is not a new one for

me, since I have worked as a recruiter for several years. However, many business owners are still overlooking the jackpot of the Internet when it comes to hiring. Unlike job boards — which I have always found to be a waste of investment as you cast the net far and wide, but usually end up with quantity, not quality — social recruiting utilizes different types of social media to intentionally and strategically capture different demographics, professional backgrounds, and culturally aligned individuals who will fit well into your organization.

When I instruct companies on how to create a social recruiting program, the one thing that continues to surprise me is how little organizations concentrate on what they want; if it's unclear what you're hunting for, how can

See **ENTREPRENEUR, 26**

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# ON THE JOB

## FINANCE

**Russ Groshans** joined the staff of Colorado East Bank & Trust at Keenesburg as vice president, loan officer. Groshans has over 31 years' experience in all facets of banking and lending but specializes in agricultural loans.



**GROSHANS**

**Jim Hunter** was named president of Circle One Mortgage Corp., a division of First National Bank. Hunter has been in the mortgage business since 1989 and has been involved in commercial and real estate construction development.



**HUNTER**

## ACADEMICS

University of Northern Colorado Monfort College of Business Assistant Professor **Michael Martin** has been named the Bill Daniels Distinguished Professor of Business Ethics. The college is creating various elements of an ethics program and an ethics module for use in introductory freshmen classes, as well as ethics education for business people in the community.



**MARTIN**

**Kirk Alberts** has joined the Institute of Business and Medical Careers as the graphic artist for the institute's marketing department. **Thomas L. Goehring** has been promoted to director of technology and training. **Beverly Alles** is the new financial aid counselor who will work at both the Fort Collins and Greeley campuses.

## ACCOUNTING

**Rhonda Spreng**, a certified public accountant offering business valuation services located in Johnstown, has become a Certified Valuation Analyst and Certified Forensic Financial Analyst.

**Ingrid H.M. Bush** is the new office manager for Mueller & Associates CPA LLC in Loveland. Bush will oversee both the administrative and marketing areas for the firm. **Stesha Nichols** joins the firm as a tax intern specializing in tax return preparation for a variety of individuals and closely-held businesses.



**HIX**

**Bob Hix** has been named the director of development for the Poudre School District Foundation. Hix will work in coordination with **Mike Demma**, director, to secure private contributions from business partners and community individuals to implement classroom initiatives and support students throughout the Poudre School District.

## REAL ESTATE

**Leone Coryell**, broker associate/partner with The Group Inc. Real Estate, has completed the required coursework to earn the Certified Negotiation Expert designation. **Eric McCrery** has re-joined the firm as a broker associate/partner at the Harmony Road office.



**MCCRERY**

## CONSTRUCTION

**Steve Spanjer**, president of Spanjer Homes in

Fort Collins and one of the life-directors within the National Association of Home Builders representing the Home Builders Association of Northern Colorado, attended the International Builders Show in Las Vegas in January. During the show Spanjer spent four days in meetings, educational seminars, and observed product demonstrations and future products.



**SPANJER**

The Associated General Contractors of Colorado named Heath Construction President **Randy DeMario** of Fort Collins the 2010 AGC-Colorado board president.



**DEMARIO**

## ENGINEERING

Fort Collins-based Aqua Engineering Inc. appointed **Douglas Macdonald**, ASIC, LEED-AP, and **Darren Salvador**, PE, vice presidents of the firm. Additionally, **Richard Belt III**, PE, PH, was named principal of the firm. Aqua Engineering provides specialized irrigation engineering services to national and international clientele.



**MACDONALD**

## GOVERNMENT

**Laura Walker** has assumed the position of deputy director of Larimer County Department of Human Services. Walker replaces **Glen Rathgeber** who retired after 28 years with the county.



**SALVADOR**

## MISCELLANEOUS

The Loveland Chamber of Commerce named **Sean Macready** as its business development manager. As the chamber's first commission-based position, Macready is charged with driving sales opportunities related to chamber investments, sponsorships, advertisements and increasing the chamber's investor-base.



**BELT**

**Dean Caffee** has joined Business Fraud Prevention LLC in Loveland as director of sales and marketing for the Seminar Division. Caffee brings over 25 years of experience in management and accounting in Northern Colorado.



**WALKER**

**John O'Keefe** has joined the Longmont Humane Society as development director. O'Keefe brings over 20 years' sales and management experience with companies such as 3M and Wells Fargo.



**RATHGEBER**

If you have an item to share about a promotion, job change or career news of note, e-mail it to Noah Guillaume at [nguillaume@ncbr.com](mailto:nguillaume@ncbr.com), or mail it to On The Job at NCBR, 141 S. College Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80524.

# TIME OUT



**OPEN FOR BUSINESS – 1.** Sharon and David Neenan, left and right, of The Neenan Co., congratulate Heather and Dr. David Beard at the Jan. 29 open house for the new Orthopaedic & Spine Center of the Rockies in Loveland. **2.** Gary and Kathy Sutton, owners of Consider It There in Greeley, clink glasses at the Jan. 21 Evans Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours at Meadowview of Greeley Retirement Living. **3.** Romia Pritchett, left, owner of RC Auto and Carpet Cleaning; Rocky Gentry, owner of West Point Interiors; and Keith Gregory, right, president of operations and finance at Clean 'n' Green, enjoy the décor at the Jan. 13 Greeley Chamber of Commerce Business Before Hours at Cottonwood Florist. **4.** John Foster, left, consultant and coach at Maestro Group; and Doug Johnson, managing director of Catshot Group LLC, grab some coffee at the Emerge Breakfast on Jan. 12 at the Embassy Suites in Loveland.

photos by Business Report staff, Greeley Chamber of Commerce, Evans Chamber of Commerce

E-mail your event photos to Editor Kate Hawthorne, khawthorne@ncbr.com. Include complete identification of individuals.



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# BRIEFCASE

## Nonprofit notes

The **Front Range Community College Foundation** received a \$150,000 bequest from the estates of Kenneth and Dorothy Beil of Fort Collins. The bequest will endow the **Kenneth and Dorothy Beil Scholarship**. Proceeds from the endowment should fund at least two \$3,000 scholarships a year for students who attend any FRCC campus and who demonstrate financial need. At FRCC's resident tuition and fee rate, \$3,000 is a full scholarship. The first scholarships will be awarded for the fall 2010 semester.

The **Meals on Wheels** program in Fort Collins received a \$5,563 grant from **The Home Instead**

**Senior Care Foundation** to help the 40-year-old nonprofit agency continue its home-delivered meal service in Fort Collins and close-in areas of Larimer County. The program will provide services to approximately 350 seniors in need of assistance in meeting their nutritional needs, through hot meals delivered by volunteers five days a week.

**United Way of Larimer County** will provide \$15,000 to the **Hand Up Cooperative**, a collaborative effort created to help the homeless who need jobs. The mission is to match area businesses that have employment opportunities with pre-screened, qualified applicants from the homeless community who need a job. The funding for the Hand Up Cooperative will come from United Way's "Bridging the Gap Fund."

## KUDOS

**Apple Vacations** announced that **New Horizons Travel** is the 2010 Crystal Level Agency recipient. The award is given to the top revenue producer of the Rocky Mountain Region which includes Colorado, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming and western Kansas. New Horizons Travel has offices in Loveland, Greeley and Fort Collins.

## NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

**Education & Life Training Center** has added a 16-hour course to provide key written communication skills training for the workplace. Students will learn how to create clear and concise business communications including letters, e-mails, writing for the Web, PowerPoint presentations and marketing materials. This course is being offered on an

income-based sliding fee scale. Contact ELTC at 970-482-4357, or visit the website at [www.eltcenter.org](http://www.eltcenter.org) for more information.

## NEW LOCATION

Fort Collins area primary care physician Michael Towbin has opened **Connected Care**, a membership-based medical office practice in which medical providers agree to see a limited number of patients and provide enhanced care. For more information visit [www.connectedcarecolorado.com](http://www.connectedcarecolorado.com) or call 970-493-3500.

**Lamp, Ryneanson & Associates** is relocating its Northern Colorado office to the Harmony Street corridor in Fort Collins. The new office at 4715 Innovation Drive is more functional, will accommodate future growth, and will allow the firm to serve its clients throughout Northern Colorado. Lamp Ryneanson provides civil engineering, survey, land planning, oil and gas permitting services, and project leadership.

## DEALS

**Funding Partners** has partnered with Fort Collins **Community Affordable Residences Enterprise**. A \$532,500 loan was approved for CARE Housing to develop a 13.3-acre lot in south Fort Collins off Autumn Ridge Road. The project, known as **Provincetowne**, will provide CARE Housing with early stage financing and future construction of 85 affordable housing units, constructed as 11 one- and two-story buildings offering 2- and 3-bedroom units. The Provincetowne development will target Larimer County families earning \$22,560 to \$37,600 for a family of four.

## PROJECTS

Greeley-based **EnviroTech Services Inc.** and **Vaisala** have teamed up to install and launch the first Fixed Automated Spray Technology bridge deck system in the United Kingdom. Vaisala sensors will measure depth of moisture (water, snow, or ice) as well as grip or friction factors and air and pavement temperatures to determine if roadway treatment is required to ensure public safety. If the system deems treatment is necessary, 30 non-invasive spray nozzles apply liquid de-icer to the road at appropriate levels.

The **Loveland Housing Authority** selected Fort Collins-based **Drahota** to oversee the **Orchard Place** apartment renovation project. The project will entail an extensive renovation to the existing **Creekside Garden Apartments** in north Loveland, recently purchased by the authority. Drahota will manage the renovation of 50 two-and three-bedroom units, as well as exterior improvements and site work. The project is scheduled for completion this fall.

## MISCELLANEOUS

The **Greeley Historic Preservation Commission** designated the **Prisoner of War Camp 202 Stone Gateposts**, located approximately at the 10300th block on west 10th Street/U.S. Highway 34 Business Route, as the 80th property on the Greeley Historic Register. The Commission determined they were eligible for historical significance for reflecting the heritage and cultural development of Greeley, for their association with World War II and German POWs, for architectural significance as having visual or symbolic meaning for the community and for geographical significance as being a visual feature identifying the POW Camp site.



## Regional Spirit Honorees 1998-2009

- 2008-2009 ..... Colorado State University Office of Economic Development
- 2007 ..... Aims Community College
- 2006 ..... Upstate Colorado Economic Development Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation
- 2005 ..... New Belgium Brewing Company
- 2004 ..... Monfort Family Foundation
- 2003 ..... The Bohemian Foundation
- 2002 ..... Long's Peak Council of the Boy Scouts
- 2001 ..... State Farm Insurance
- 2000 ..... Greeley Independence Stampede
- 1999 ..... Eastman Kodak Company
- 1998 . Hewlett Packard Company - Fort Collins

Being recognized for "entrepreneurship" can have many connotations. To me it designates the capacity to create a positive energy that impacts people, places, products or projects. So when I accepted the Bravo Entrepreneurship Award for Aims in the category of Regional Spirit, it was with a sense that Aims creates that positive energy force for northern Colorado through its programs and services and people. I hope that we never lose that spirit.

— Dr. Marilynn 'Marsi' Liddell, President, Aims Community College

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# CALENDAR

**Feb. 15 - 28** - Art of Dining in Loveland, Participating Loveland restaurants. Cost: \$18.77. Contact: Ashlee Struble at 970-980-4664 or astruble@engaginglovelandinc.org.

**Feb. 16** - Johnstown-Milliken Chamber 2010 Annual Banquet, from 6 to 8:30 p.m., Candlelight Dinner Playhouse, 4747 Market Place Drive in Johnstown. Cost: \$30/person. Registration Deadline: Feb. 11. Contact: Johnstown-Milliken Chamber at 970-587-7042 or info@johnstownmillikenchamber.com.

**Feb. 16** - CyberChat Series: CyberSecurity - Are you Safe?, from 7:30 to 9 a.m., Loveland Chamber of Commerce, 5400 Stone Creek Circle in Loveland. Cost: Free to Loveland Chamber investors, \$10 to everyone else. Contact: Nicole Hegg at 970-744-4792 or nhegg@Loveland.org.

**Feb. 16** - International Pricing, Payment & Financing, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Denver World Trade Center, 1625 Broadway, Suite 680 in Denver. Cost: \$115. Contact: Justin Szymik at 303-592-5757 or wtcdenver@att.net.

**Feb. 18** - Building a Powerful and Positive Management Team: Managing Negativity, Lincoln Center - Columbine room, 417 W. Magnolia in Fort Collins. Cost: Free. Contact: Lori Zuccolin at 970-498-6606 or www.larimerworkforce.org/roundtables.

**Feb. 18** - Export Compliance - Obligations & Risk Mitigation, from 1 to 4:30 p.m., 1625 Broadway, Suite 680 in Denver. Contact: Justin Szymik at 303-592-5757 or wtcdenver@att.net.

**Feb. 18** - Johnstown-Milliken Chamber of Commerce Business Networking Luncheon, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Candlelight Dinner Playhouse, 4747 Market Place Drive in Johnstown. Cost: \$20. Contact: Johnstown-Milliken Chamber at 970-587-7042 or info@johnstownmillikenchamber.com.

**Feb. 18** - Workwell Occupational Medicine presents Alcohol & Drug Awareness in the Workplace, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Embassy Suites, 4705 Clydesdale Parkway in Loveland. Cost: free. Contact: Judy Doms at 303-506-1362 or judyd@workwellocmed.com.

**Feb. 18** - Greeley Chamber Annual Banquet, from 5:30 to 9 p.m., Island Grove Events Center, in Greeley. Contact: LeeAnn Sterling at 970-352-3566.

**Feb. 18** - Empty Bowls Fort Collins, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., Hilton Fort Collins, 425 W. Prospect Road in Fort Collins. Cost: \$50/person, \$95/couple. Contact: Food Bank for Larimer County at 970-493-4477 or info@foodbanklarimer.org.

**Feb. 18** - Employer Solutions Group presents Hiring and On-boarding, from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m., New York Life, 300 E. Harmony Road in Fort Collins. Contact: Employer Solutions Group at 970-612-2022 or sstolen@esghr.com.

**Feb. 18** - Co-Creating the New Economy in Northern Colorado, from 4 to 6 p.m., TST Engineering, 748 Whalers Way in Fort Collins. Contact: Trebuchet Group at 970-672-4749.

**Feb. 18** - Building a Powerful and Positive Team: Managing Negativity, from 8 to 9:30 a.m., Columbine Room of the Fort Collins Lincoln Center, 417 W. Magnolia St. in Fort Collins. Cost: free. Contact: Lori Zuccolin at 970-498-6606 or www.larimerworkforce.org/roundtables.

**Feb. 18** - Innovation After Hours - Applying Northern Colorado Technologies to Disaster Relief, from 4 to 6 p.m., Stonehouse Grille, 125 S. College Ave. in Fort Collins. Cost: free.

**Feb. 18** - Community Character Breakfast, from 6:45 to 8 a.m., The Moot House Restaurant, 2626 S. College Ave. in Fort Collins. Cost: FREE, donations accepted. Registration Deadline: Feb. 17. Contact: Meghan Coleman at 970-266-2671 or mcoleman@characterfortcollins.org.

**Feb. 18** - Community Character Lunch, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Cache Bank & Trust, 100 S. College Ave in Fort Collins. Cost: FREE, donations accepted. Registration Deadline: Feb. 17 by 12pm. Contact: Meghan Coleman at 970-266-2671 or mcoleman@characterfortcollins.org.

**Feb. 19** - Microsoft Excel - Intermediate, from 8 a.m.

to 5 p.m., Front Range Community College - BP152, 4616 S. Shields St. in Fort Collins. Cost: \$149 (includes textbook). Registration Deadline: Feb. 16. Contact: Laurie Rue at 970-204-8686 or laurie.rue@frontrange.edu.

**Feb. 20 - 21** - Estes Park Cup Dog Weight Pull, starting at 11:30 a.m., Estes Park Visitors Center, South Parking Lot in Estes Park. Contact: Suzy Blackhurst at 970-577-9900 or sblackhurst@estes.org.

**Feb. 21** - 23rd Annual Women's History Month Art Exhibit, starting at 1 p.m., Cultural Arts Council Gallery, 423 W. Elkhorn Ave. in Estes Park. Cost: Free. Contact: Suzy Blackhurst at 970-577-9900 or sblackhurst@estes.org.

**Feb. 21** - The Drowsy Chaperone, from 3 to 5 p.m., Union Colony Civic Center, 701 10th Ave. in Greeley. Cost: \$42 - \$33. Contact: Andy Segal at 970-350-9455 or andrew.segal@greeleygov.com.

**Feb. 23** - Introduction to Importing, from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m., 1625 Broadway, Suite 680 in Denver. Contact: Justin Szymik at 303-592-5757 or wtcdenver@att.net.

**Feb. 23** - Social Media - A Starting Point, from 4 to 5:30 p.m., SBDC office, 125 S. Howes St., Suite 150 (Key Bank Tower) in Fort Collins. Cost: \$25, \$35/day of. Contact: SBDC at 970-498-9295 or www.sbdc-larimer.com.

**Feb. 25** - Intermediate Importing, from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m., 1625 Broadway, Suite 680 in Denver. Contact: Justin Szymik at 303-592-5757 or wtcdenver@att.net.

**Feb. 25** - CCU's Adult and Graduate Studies Info Session, from 6 to 6 p.m., Northern Colorado Center, 1750 Foxtail Drive in Loveland. Contact: Marlene Seloover at 970-669-8700 or mseloover@ccu.edu.

**Feb. 26 - 28** - Soroptimist/AAUW Used Booksale, Foothills Mall, in Fort Collins. Contact: Lois Peltz

at 970-988-0563 or rmrpeltz@me.com.

**Feb. 26** - Microsoft Access 2007-Advanced, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Front Range Community College - BP152, 4616 S. Shields St. in Fort Collins. Cost: \$149 (includes textbook). Registration Deadline: Feb. 23. Contact: Laurie Rue at 970-204-8686 or laurie.rue@frontrange.edu.

**Feb. 26** - Using Social Networks for Job Search, from 7 to 9 p.m., Front Range Community College - BP119, 4616 S. Shields St. in Fort Collins. Cost: \$49 (includes materials). Registration Deadline: Feb. 23. Contact: Laurie Rue at 970-204-8686 or laurie.rue@frontrange.edu.

**Feb. 27** - KRFC's Birthday Bash, from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m., Lincoln Center - Canyon West Room, 417 W. Magnolia St. in Fort Collins. Contact: KRFC 88.9 FM at <http://www.krfcfm.org>.

Compiled by Noah Guillaume

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## GEEK CHIC, from 11

squadron dropping strange pod-like containers all over the country, frightening old men and dogs alike? There seemed to be a lot of mystery surrounding Android, and now that the first products are hitting the market, there still seems to be a dark cloak about — whatever it is.

Ask most people who have heard of Android and they are likely to tell you that it is just another smart phone. That's not completely accurate. In fact, it's not accurate at all.

Android is actually a lightweight operating system designed for deployment on handheld and low-processing-requirement devices. Smart phones are simply ideal deployment candidates. It won't be long before we see Android running on a plethora of devices: phones, netbooks, cameras and digital assistants, to name a few.

What makes Android so special? Well, that depends on who you ask and since you are reading this, I would say Android is special because it is built on the Linux Kernel. The whosit-whatsit?

Without delving too deeply into computer science, let's just say that the "kernel" is the central component of most operating systems. The kernel acts like a bridge between the applications and the actual data manipulation that occurs at the hardware and processor level. The Linux Kernel is considered to be Free and Open Source Software (FOSS), software that you, the user, are allowed to fiddle with to change, improve, or add functionality.

### iEconomics

To fully appreciate the benefits of the Android OS, let's first take a look at Apple's highly popular iPhone and iPod Touch.

Anyone with a rudimentary understanding of economics will appreciate the business model Apple has created. Apart from a few built-in applications, the bulk of the apps are conceived, designed and built by whoever has the inclination to do so. This makes apps — lots of apps — available for use on Apple's hardware with very little development cost to Apple. Next, Apple handles the distribution of these apps through the iTunes Store, which is great for software developers large and small, and even better for Apple, which gets a little cut out of all those 99-cent downloads.

There are a couple of caveats to this model. First, iPhone apps are strictly written in the not-quite-prolific Objective-C programming language. There aren't a whole bunch of developers out there that "sprechen that Deutsch" — yet — and fewer still who know enough to teach what they know.

Second, the development SDK (fancy word for "software that allows you to build software") is proprietary and can only be run on an Intel-based Mac. Don't have an Intel-based Mac? Not to worry, Apple will sell you one for approximately one-arm and three-quarters of a leg. And speaking of proprietary systems, don't forget that the apps you build can only run on the iPhone or iPod Touch.

### Tweaking the model

Now let's imagine a few little tweaks to improve upon that model.

**"Android will allow all of us choice of equipment, choice of application, choice of procurement — choices, choices, choices."**

For starters, what if application development wasn't limited to a specific platform? What if developers could build their applications on a Mac, Windows, Linux, or even an Android-based machine?

Statistics provided by wc3schools.com suggest that a mere 6 percent of computers in operation today use the Macintosh operating system. When you stop to consider that all iPhone apps are currently developed on Intel-based Macs, which is a smaller slice of that 6 percent, you begin to understand how small a community is actually developing applications for the iPhone, and, more importantly, how large a community isn't developing those apps.

Next, let's remove the programming language constraints and lean toward a more prolific language, something like Java. You would be hard pressed to find a developer who doesn't know at least a little Java, and even harder pressed to

find someone who can't teach it to you. Java is to computers as English is to the United Nations.

And then, how about allowing distribution in more than one location, possibly even on your own website or through a collaboration network? OK, so iTunes is pretty much everywhere, but hey, choice is really about having more than one option, isn't it? Allow the same app to install and behave exactly the same on distinctly different devices by different manufacturers, and you have achieved app nirvana.

It's exactly this tweaking of the current development model that the Android OS brings to the table. The end benefit to developers and consumers alike: choice. Android will allow all of us choice of equipment, choice of application, choice of procurement — choices, choices, choices.

However, I wouldn't look for the Android OS to become an overnight sensation; in fact, first impressions of devices utilizing it haven't been overly positive. But because Android is open source, it will be used to extend, expand and incorporate new technologies as they emerge.

Android will give developers the tools and foundation to bring some wonderful dreams and ideas into reality — it will act as a catalyst for innovation and will continue to evolve as the developer community works together.

*Michael D. Wailes is an Interactive Developer at Burns Marketing and Communications in Johnstown. If you have questions or would like to suggest a topic for a future Geek Chic column, e-mail him at news@ncbr.com.*

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# CONSTRUCTION & ENGINEERING

## Centerra feels the need, the need for high-speed

### FRII partnership makes McWhinney sites Web-ready

By Jessica Centers  
news@ncbr.com

LOVELAND — McWhinney Real Estate Services and Internet service provider FRII have partnered to create Northern Colorado's first commercial development with built-in, high-speed fiber optic access at Centerra.

"We expect this will be the model for commercial developers in the future," said Jay Hardy, McWhinney vice president and general manager of the 3,000-acre master-planned community in east Loveland. "Telecommunication services are rarely ready for tenants when they move into a new building."

The project was completed in late 2009 for 13 existing office buildings and installed underground in preparation for future buildings, at a cost to McWhinney of about \$500,000. FRII will be the operator of the network that tenants can choose to use or not. For many, it will be a redundant, secondary network in addition to their main Internet source,



Krista Watzel, Northern Colorado Business Report

**TOTALLY WIRED** — Chris Bissell, network architect for FRII, stands in the hub station that powers all of Centerra's surrounding building's wireless Internet. FRII and McWhinney Real Estate Services partnered to create built-in, high-speed fiber optic access for Centerra tenants.

designed to ensure data safety and boost productivity.

"The biggest thing that's unique about what we've done is to try to create

one more redundant utility for office clients," Hardy explained.

Like municipalities or hospital campuses commonly have backup power

and water, this project creates an Internet backup for office buildings. For heavy data users, redundant fiber is a

See **CENTERRA**, 19

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|------|-----------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 1    | 1         | <b>GREGORY ELECTRIC</b><br>3317 N. Lincoln Ave.<br>Loveland CO 80538<br>970-669-7609                           | 78<br>85                         | \$13,000,000<br>\$15,250,000   | Electrical contractor.   | rbryant@gregoryelectricinc.com<br>www.gregoryelectricinc.com | Rod Bryant<br>President<br>1988                        |
| 2    | 2         | <b>MERIT ELECTRIC INC.</b><br>2643 Midpoint Dr., Suite F<br>Fort Collins CO 80525<br>970-266-8100              | 63<br>67                         | \$11,076,000<br>\$13,478,256   | Electrical construction and services.  | merit@meritelec.com<br>www.meritelec.com                     | Royce Glader<br>CEO<br>1984                            |
| 3    | 3         | <b>INTERSTATES CONSTRUCTION SERVICES, INC.</b><br>2636 Midpoint Drive<br>Fort Collins CO 80525<br>970-221-1776 | 55<br>45                         | \$9,482,000<br>\$8,000,000     | Single source electrical engineering, construction, instrumentation and control systems services.  | doug.coltharp@interstates.com<br>www.interstates.com         | Doug Coltharp<br>Regional manager<br>1953              |
| 4    | 4         | <b>ECKSTINE ELECTRIC CO.</b><br>13739 Weld County Road 25 1/2<br>Platteville CO 80651<br>970-785-0601          | 37<br>45                         | \$9,000,000<br>\$11,300,000    | Electrical, commercial, institutional, industrial, farm, service, fire alarm.  | info@eckstineelectric.com<br>www.eckstineelectric.com        | Michael Eckstine<br>President<br>1954                  |
| 5    | 7         | <b>NEWCO INC.</b><br>619 Sixth Ave.<br>Greeley CO 80631<br>970-352-5024  | 30<br>33                         | N/A<br>N/A                     | Electrical wholesale company with branch locations in Cheyenne,WY, Loveland & Ft. Morgan.  | newcorwhite@qwestoffice.net<br>www.newco-inc.com             | Larry Richard<br>Vice president<br>1964                |
| 6    | NR        | <b>PRECISION SERVICE ELECTRIC INC.</b><br>1320 S.E. Eighth St.<br>Loveland CO 80537<br>970-593-3190            | 25<br>N/A                        | N/A<br>N/A                     | New construction electrical services, security system installation, home surveillance installation, home theater installation and home audio installation.   | bjohnson@psecolorado.com<br>N/A                              | Bryan Johnson<br>1994                                  |
| 7    | 11        | <b>H &amp; H ELECTRIC</b><br>128 Commerce Drive #1<br>Fort Collins CO 80524<br>970-493-2398                    | 21<br>18                         | \$2,004,000<br>\$2,802,000     | Electrical contractor; commercial & residential, new and remodel, service, solar panels, home automation, security.  | ray@aaenergyconcepts.com<br>aaenergyconcepts.com             | Ray Kline<br>Vice president<br>1986                    |
| 8    | 9         | <b>BRET'S ELECTRIC</b><br>9250 Bruin Blvd., Suite C<br>Frederick CO 80504<br>720-494-8944                      | 20<br>26                         | N/A<br>N/A                     | Bret's Electric is a full service electrical contractor in commercial, industrial, multi-family and custom residential projects, specializing in quality electrical design for all sized projects. | janet@bretselectric.com<br>www.bretselectric.com             | Janet Martin<br>Business manager<br>1993               |
| 9    | 12        | <b>AMERICAN SERVICES INC.</b><br>513-A N. Link Lane<br>Fort Collins CO 80524<br>970-482-8141                   | 10<br>12                         | \$1,210,000<br>\$1,650,000     | Electrical, plumbing, HVAC.  | asi@americanserve.com<br>www.americanserve.com               | Len Jones<br>Micah Jones<br>Owners<br>1985             |
| 10   | NR        | <b>NEWCO INC.</b><br>101 Lake St.<br>Fort Morgan CO 80701<br>970-867-8507                                      | 7<br>N/A                         | N/A<br>N/A                     | Electrical wholesale company.  | twilightmay@qwest.net<br>www.newco-inc.com/ftmorgan.htm      | Mark Daviet<br>Dave Daviet<br>Vice presidents<br>1976  |
| 11   | NR        | <b>A WIRED ELECTRIC CO.</b><br>5125 S. Shields St.<br>Fort Collins CO 80526<br>970-690-6410                    | 5<br>N/A                         | \$500,000<br>\$350,000         | Full service electrical contractor   | bail022@msn.com<br>N/A                                       | John Peterson<br>Owner<br>1973                         |
| 12   | NR        | <b>NEWCO INC.</b><br>1125 E. Colorado Highway 402<br>Loveland CO 80537<br>970-667-8903                         | 4<br>N/A                         | N/A<br>N/A                     | Electrical wholesale company.  | twilightmay@qwest.net<br>www.newco-inc.com/loveland.htm      | Larry Richard<br>Vice president<br>1978                |

Region surveyed is Brighton, Larimer and Weld counties. N/A-Not Available

Based upon responses to Business Report survey researched by Noelle Maestas. To be considered for future lists, e-mail research@ncbr.com

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# Largest HVAC Companies

## Ranked by no. of local employees



| RANK | PREV RANK | COMPANY ADDRESS   | EMPLOYEES 2010<br>EMPLOYEES 2009 | REVENUES 2009<br>REVENUES 2008 | PRODUCTS/SERVICES  | E-MAIL<br>WEB SITE  | PERSON IN CHARGE<br>TITLE OF PERSON IN CHARGE<br>YEAR FOUNDED          |
|------|-----------|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|--|
| 1    | 2         | <b>KUCK MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS</b><br>395 W. 67th St.<br>Loveland, CO 80539-0388<br>970-461-3553                    | 88<br>100                        | \$14,200,000<br>\$13,300,000   | Full mechanical-HVAC contracting installation, design/build, sheet-metal pre-fabrication, commercial, industrial construction, heat, ventilation & air conditioning (HVAC) remodel.                  | debra@kuckmechanical.com<br>www.kuckmechanical.com          | Ted Kuck<br>President<br>1999  |
| 2    | NR        | <b>ALLEN PLUMBING &amp; MECHANICAL INC.</b><br>101 S. Link Lane<br>Fort Collins, CO 80524<br>970-484-4848           | 70<br>75                         | \$8,200,000<br>\$9,100,000     | New construction, commercial, residential, remodel and 24/7 service division.  | allenph@allenph.com<br>www.allenph.com                      | Mike Allen<br>Jeff Allen<br>President<br>CEO<br>1962                   |
| 3    | 3         | <b>SIMPSON COMPANY</b><br>321 Basher Drive<br>Berthoud, CO 80513<br>970-282-0022                                    | 52<br>65                         | \$16,500,000<br>\$21,000,000   | Design, manufacture, install and service commercial HVAC systems.  | kentc@simpsonair.com<br>www.simpsonair.com                  | Tom Wasmer<br>Kent S. Campbell<br>Manager<br>Manager/Member<br>1947    |
| 4    | 4         | <b>NORTHERN COLORADO AIR INC.</b><br>812 Stockton Ave.<br>Fort Collins, CO 80524<br>970-223-8873                    | 25<br>30                         | \$3,200,000<br>\$3,725,000     | HVAC; service and planned maintenance 24/7; hydronics, indoor air quality products, light commercial, residential, remodel. Licensed and insured with over 40 years experience in the HVAC industry. | joyceg@ncagriff.com<br>www.ncagriff.com                     | R.R. "Griff" Griff<br>Elodie Vigneron<br>Diane Culver<br>Owner<br>1992 |
| 5    | 5         | <b>IMS HEATING &amp; AIR INC. 1</b><br>5213 Longs Peak Road, Unit A<br>Berthoud, CO 80513<br>970-532-0123           | 25<br>18                         | N/A<br>N/A                     | HVAC: maintenance, indoor-air quality, retrofit, new construction, commercial.   | ginny@imsheatingandair.com<br>www.imsheatingandair.com      | Daren Shawver<br>Jeff Mayer<br>Dwayne Shawver<br>Owners<br>2000        |
| 6    | NR        | <b>HIGH PLAINS MECHANICAL SERVICE INC.</b><br>2020 Airway Ave.<br>Fort Collins, CO 80524<br>970-221-5645            | 20<br>20                         | \$3,650,000<br>\$3,400,000     | HVAC.  | info@hpmervice.com<br>www.hpmervice.com                     | Paul Finger<br>Joyce Finger<br>Owners<br>1983                          |
| 7    | NR        | <b>BALANCE POINT HEATING &amp; AIR CONDITIONING</b><br>316 Commerce Drive<br>Fort Collins, CO 80524<br>970-484-4440 | 9<br>9                           | \$1,000,000<br>\$1,000,000     | Residential & commercial HVAC sales and service.   | info@BalancePointHeating.com<br>www.BalancePointHeating.com | Bill Kusmik<br>Owner<br>1998   |
| 8    | 8         | <b>PAUL'S PLUMBING &amp; HEATING</b><br>335 Eighth St. S.E.<br>Loveland, CO 80539<br>970-663-3493                   | 6<br>7                           | N/A<br>N/A                     | Plumbing, sewer and drains; excavating, septic systems, 24-hour emergency service. Also heating and cooling install and service.   | raeann@paulsplumbinginc.com<br>www.paulsplumbinginc.com     | Paul Kisselbach<br>Owner<br>1984                                       |

Region surveyed is Brighton, Larimer and Weld counties. N/A-Not Available  
 (1) IMS Heating and Air Inc. assumed the phone number of Gibson Heating and Air who is no longer in business since November 2008.

Based upon responses to Business Report survey researched by Noelle Maestas  
 To be considered for future lists, e-mail research@ncbr.com

## CENTERRA, from 17

necessity.

"As much as all of us rely on technology, it's critically important," Hardy said.

That's something McWhinney learned from potential clients. Businesses that did anything in the high-tech realm would not even consider locating at Centerra without secondary fiber or some kind of redundant technology.

"We didn't know that," Hardy said. "We had a handful of clients educate us on its importance."

For one of those clients, the technology was a requirement to stay and expand at Centerra. For at least two other clients, according to Hardy, it was the reason they even considered the location.

"Already, it's been a separating factor," he said.

### First partnership of its kind

Bill Ward, CEO of FRII, said this project is one of the first in Northern Colorado where a technology company has partnered with a developer.

"It's certainly unique in that the developer has taken the step to put in the infrastructure to serve their customers in a better form than each customer having to deal with it on their own," he said. "For the tenants, it offers a much more cost-effective Internet bandwidth connectivity. The cost of infrastructure is being borne by the McWhinney folks, so when we go in to sell Internet bandwidth, we'll be able to pass on a much larger cost savings. It offers choice on

having multiple different connections, one through fiber service."

Ward says developers often ignore these types of services until after construction is nearly complete, and by that time it's more costly to install the infrastructure.

"It's best to install prior, when the ground's dug up for utilities anyway," he said. "We still had to dig again. It cost them more to do this than had they done it during the development process. As they begin new developments, they will now go ahead and install ahead of time, which will save them a lot of money. They're looking at that as an investment for the long run. It's a big savings for the client. Obviously, McWhinney is getting the benefit of being able to lease more space and keep their space occupied."

Centerra's office tenants will have immediate Internet access up to gigabit speeds, off-site disaster recovery and inter-office connectivity. A gigabit is approximately 1 billion bits of information transferred each second. All Centerra buildings will also use the fiber network for remote and automated HVAC control and tamper-proof building security.

"McWhinney's choice to install fiber service throughout Centerra is a mutually beneficial and progressive move," Ward said. "They are allowing current and future tenants to have immediate access to high-speed broadband services, as well as all the benefits of being on FRII's network. Centerra businesses can easily take advantage of the fiber capabilities without experiencing the high capital costs of installing dedicated infrastructure."



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# Largest General Contractors

## Ranked by revenues



| RANK | PREV RANK | COMPANY ADDRESS   | REVENUES 2009<br>REVENUES 2008     | EMPLOYEES 2010<br>EMPLOYEES 2009 | AREAS OF SPECIALTY  | NOTABLE PROJECTS   | E-MAIL<br>WEB SITE  | PERSON IN<br>CHARGE W/ TITLE<br>YEAR FOUNDED                                       |
|------|-----------|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| 1    | 1         | <b>HENSEL PHELPS CONSTRUCTION CO.</b><br>420 Sixth Ave.<br>Greeley, CO 80632<br>970-352-6565                            | \$3,024,757,000<br>\$3,337,000,000 | 2,247<br>2,907                   | Commercial general contracting and LEED.  | Hazleton Federal Correctional Institute, Harbor Medical Center, 7th Special Forces, USMC Bachelor Enlisted Quarters  | mreitz@henselphelps.com<br>www.henselphelps.com                     | Jeffrey Wenaas, President & COO 1937   |
| 2    | 2         | <b>FCI CONSTRUCTORS INC.</b><br>4001 N. Valley Drive<br>Longmont, CO 80504<br>970-535-4725                              | \$328,000,000<br>\$380,000,000     | 94<br>94                         | Commercial general contractor and construction management.  | Anschutz Medical Center Building 500 remodel, CU-Institute for Behavioral Science, Wyoming Game and Fish   | sarmstrong@fciol.com<br>www.fciol.com                               | Ed Forsman, President 1978   |
| 3    | 3         | <b>GH PHIPPS CONSTRUCTION COS.</b><br>5285 McWhinney Blvd., Suite 100<br>Loveland, CO 80538<br>970-776-5500             | \$178,610,000<br>\$287,000,000     | 300<br>300                       | Hospitals and other medical facilities, higher education facilities, K-12, high-tech, office buildings, religious facilities.   | CSU Diagnostic Medicine Center - Veterinarian Hospital, The Children's Hospital (joint venture), Platte Valley Medical Center, Academy 20 Discovery Canyon School, United Power Headquarters.  | Lisa.Knight@ghphipps.com<br>www.ghphipps.com                        | Charlie Graft, CEO 1952  |
| 4    | 5         | <b>ROCHE CONSTRUCTORS INC.</b><br>361 71st Ave.<br>Greeley, CO 80634<br>970-356-3611                                    | \$166,570,000<br>\$143,998,345     | 100<br>110                       | Retail, office and banking, education, public works/corrections, and industrial and manufacturing.  | Aurora Processing Center Annex   | info@rocheconstructors.com<br>www.rocheconstructors.com             | Thomas J. Roche, President 1971  |
| 5    | 4         | <b>THE NEENAN CO.</b><br>2620 E. Prospect Road, Suite 100<br>Fort Collins, CO 80525<br>970-493-8747                     | \$119,000,000<br>\$179,445,000     | 201<br>201                       | Design-build firm specializing in education, health care, government and commercial buildings.  | New Belgium Brewery, Orthopaedic Center of the Rockies, The Mitchell Block (Old Town Fort Collins), YMCA of the Rockies  | info@neenan.com<br>www.neenan.com                                   | David G. Neenan, Founder<br>Randy Myers, CEO, President 1966                       |
| 6    | 6         | <b>ALLIANCE CONSTRUCTION SOLUTIONS LLC</b><br>2725 Rocky Mountain Ave., Suite 100<br>Loveland, CO 80538<br>970-663-9700 | \$51,000,000<br>\$79,000,000       | 32<br>55                         | LEED buildings and sustainable building practices, construction manager, general contractor, preconstruction and estimating services, design-build construction services, BIM, and development. | St Francis Cornerstone in Denver, Peloton Cycles in Fort Collins, Sister Mary Alice Murphy Center for Hope in Fort Collins, Nederland Community Center, Morgan Community College Nursing Sciences Addition in Fort Morgan, Laramie County Morgue - completed in Cheyenne, Wyo. | dmbalcerak@allianceconstruction.com<br>www.allianceconstruction.com | William H. Joyner, President<br>Brian F. Weinmaster, Executive Vice President 1982 |
| 7    | 9         | <b>MARK YOUNG CONSTRUCTION INC.</b><br>7200 Miller Place<br>Frederick, CO 80504-6609<br>303-776-1449                    | \$47,000,000<br>\$52,000,000       | 115<br>105                       | Retail grocery, office, municipal, schools and higher education construction.   | Terry St. Fire Station, Wal-Mart #4639, North Metro Fire Rescue Admin. Building, King Soopers #117 (New Store)   | N/A<br>www.markyoungconstruction.com                                | David Guida, President 1989  |
| 8    | 8         | <b>BRINKMAN PARTNERS</b><br>3003 E. Harmony Road, Suite 300<br>Fort Collins, CO 80528<br>970-267-0954                   | \$34,149,945<br>\$64,166,742       | 51<br>42                         | Integrated real estate services, construction, development, real estate brokerage, vacation properties.   | Flats at the Oval-Mixed Use in Fort Collins<br>Otterbox  | pete.meyer@brinkmanpartners.com<br>www.brinkmanpartners.com         | Paul E. Brinkman<br>Kevin Brinkman, Principals 2003                                |
| 9    | 7         | <b>DRAHOTA</b><br>4700 Innovation Drive, Bldg. C<br>Fort Collins, CO 80525<br>970-204-0100                              | \$30,000,000<br>\$68,000,000       | 36<br>50                         | Full-service construction; manager/general contractor staffed with LEED Accredited Professionals; experienced with LEED construction; Gold Partner with Climate Wise.                           | Poudre Fire Station No. 3 - Fort Collins; Cache Bank - Fort Collins; National Board of Chiropractic Examiners - Greeley; Mini Cooper Dealership - Loveland; Trailhead Lodge - Steamboat Springs.   | info@drahota.com<br>www.drahota.com                                 | Terry L. Drahota, President 1973   |
| 10   | 19        | <b>ARMSTEAD CONSTRUCTION INC.</b><br>5100 S. College Ave.<br>Fort Collins, CO 80525<br>970-472-1113                     | \$1,980,000<br>\$1,165,000         | 3<br>3                           | Custom homes, remodels, additions.  | N/A  | jeff@armsteadconstruction.com<br>www.armsteadconstruction.com       | Jeffrey J. Schneider, President 1990   |

Region surveyed is Brighton, Larimer and Weld counties.

N/A - Not Available

NR - Not Previously Ranked

Hall-Irwin Corp. & Affiliates, Krische Construction Inc., Coe Construction, and Sinnott Builders Inc. did not respond.

Heath Construction, Connell Resources Inc., Dohn Construction, G.L. Hoff Construction.

Growling Bear Co. Inc. declined to participate in the ranking.

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# Largest Plumbing Companies

## Ranked by no. of employees



| RANK | PREV RANK | COMPANY ADDRESS  | EMPLOYEES 2010<br>EMPLOYEES 2009 | REVENUES 2009<br>REVENUES 2008 | PRODUCTS/SERVICES  | WEB SITE<br>E-MAIL  | PERSON IN CHARGE, TITLE<br>YEAR FOUNDED                |
|------|-----------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|--|
| 1    | 1         | <b>U.S. ENGINEERING COMPANY</b><br>729 S.E. Eighth St.<br>Loveland, CO 80537<br>970-669-1666                 | 90<br>110                        | \$25,000,000<br>\$18,000,000   | Mechanical construction firm, HVAC, plumbing, piping and sheet-metal commercial construction.                  | www.usengineering.com<br>tclark@usengineering.com                         | Bob Brunson, Chief operations officer<br>1993          |
| 2    | NR        | <b>ALLEN PLUMBING &amp; MECHANICAL INC.</b><br>101 S. Link Lane<br>Fort Collins, CO 80524<br>970-484-4848    | 70<br>75                         | \$8,200,000<br>\$9,100,000     | New construction, commercial, residential, remodel and 24/7 service division.                                  | www.allenph.com<br>allenph@allenph.com                                    | Mike Allen, President<br>Jeff Allen, CEO<br>1962       |
| 3    | 2         | <b>FISHER MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS INC.</b><br>3900 Carson Ave.<br>Evans, CO 80620<br>970-356-8636             | 15<br>18                         | N/A<br>N/A                     | Plumbing and hot water heat installation and service, commercial and residential, new construction and repair. | N/A<br>fishermechanical@qwestoffice.net                                   | Ron Bernhardt, Owner, President<br>1982                |
| 4    | 5         | <b>AMERICAN SERVICES INC.</b><br>513-A N. Link Lane<br>Fort Collins, CO 80524<br>970-482-8141                | 10<br>12                         | \$1,210,000<br>\$1,650,000     | Electrical, plumbing, HVAC.  | www.americanserve.com<br>asi@americanserve.com                            | Len Jones<br>Micah Jones, Owners<br>1985               |
| 5    | 8         | <b>KAHAR PLUMBING &amp; HEATING INC.</b><br>6772 N. Franklin Ave.<br>Loveland, CO 80538<br>970-461-2412      | 10<br>10                         | N/A<br>N/A                     | New construction, residential, commercial, radiant heat, tankless water heater, radon systems, grey water.     | www.kahar-plumbing-heating.com<br>kaharplumbing@hotmail.com               | Jeff Gallagher, Vice president<br>1983                 |
| 6    | 6         | <b>BENJAMIN FRANKLIN PLUMBING</b><br>1833 E. Harmony Road, Suite 2<br>Fort Collins, CO 80528<br>970-669-8187 | 9<br>9                           | \$1,658,365<br>\$1,575,087     | Repair, replace, remodel plumbing and drain cleaning.  | www.benjaminfranklinplumbing.com<br>barton.palmer@benfranklinplumbing.com | Barton J. Palmer, Owner<br>2002                        |
| 7    | NR        | <b>HAHN PLUMBING &amp; HEATING INC.</b><br>130 Chestnut St.<br>Fort Collins, CO 80524<br>970-484-7668        | 7<br>12                          | N/A<br>N/A                     | Plumbing, heating and cooling.   | www.hahnplumbing.com<br>johnsr@hahnplumbing.com                           | John Hahn, Owner<br>1968                               |
| 8    | 12        | <b>SANCO PLUMBING &amp; HEATING INC.</b><br>1331 S. Garfield Ave.<br>Loveland, CO 80537<br>970-667-2281      | 6<br>6                           | N/A<br>\$700,000               | Plumbing, hydronic heat, new construction, service & remodels.   | www.sancoplumbing.com<br>judy@sancoplumbing.com                           | Bill Sandage, President<br>Judy Sandage, Owner<br>1986 |

Region surveyed is Brighton, Larimer and Weld counties. N/A-Not Available

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# Largest Landscape Architecture Firms

## Ranked by no. registered landscape architects



| RANK | COMPANY ADDRESS  | NO. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS 2010<br>EMPLOYEES 2009 | % TIME SPENT ON: ARCHITECTURE<br>% TIME SPENT ON: PLANNING | % BUSINESS: GOVERNMENT<br>% BUSINESS: COMMERCIAL<br>% BUSINESS: RESIDENTIAL | % BUSINESS IN REGION<br>% BUSINESS OUT OF REGION | E-MAIL<br>WEB SITE                                      | PERSON IN CHARGE<br>TITLE<br>YEAR FOUNDED   |
|------|--|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| 1    | <b>BHA DESIGN INC.</b><br>1603 Oakridge Drive, Unit 100<br>Fort Collins, CO 80525<br>970-223-7577            | 8<br>8<br>10                                    | 0%<br>15%  | 60%<br>35%<br>5%  | 70%<br>30%                                       | lrobbie@bhadesign.com<br>www.bhadesign.com              | Roger Sherman<br>Angela Milewski<br>1993  |
| 2    | <b>AECOM 1</b><br>240 E. Mountain Ave.<br>Fort Collins, CO 80524<br>970-484-6073                             | 7<br>40<br>40                                   | N/A<br>50%   | 90%<br>10%<br>N/A   | 25%<br>75%                                       | shara.pool@aecom.com<br>www.aecom.com                   | 1939  |
| 3    | <b>JIM SELL DESIGN INC.</b><br>153 W. Mountain Ave.<br>Fort Collins, CO 80524<br>970-484-1921                | 3<br>7<br>8                                     | N/A<br>N/A   | N/A<br>20%<br>60%   | 75%<br>N/A                                       | info@jimselldesign.com<br>www.jimselldesign.com         | Jim Sell<br>President<br>1975   |
| 4    | <b>VIGNETTE STUDIOS</b><br>PO Box 1889<br>Fort Collins, CO 80522<br>970-472-9125                             | 2<br>2<br>2                                     | 10%<br>50%   | N/A<br>60%<br>40%   | 60%<br>40%                                       | hoaglund@vignetestudios.com<br>www.vignetestudios.com   | Terence Hoaglund<br>Principal<br>1998   |
| 5    | <b>LINDGREN LANDSCAPE &amp; IRRIGATION INC.</b><br>P.O. Box 271273<br>Fort Collins, CO 80527<br>970-226-5677 | 2<br>N/A<br>27                                  | 0%<br>25%  | 0%<br>5%<br>95%   | 100%<br>N/A                                      | info@lindgrenlandscape.com<br>www.lindgrenlandscape.com | Tim Lindgren<br>President<br>1995   |
| 6    | <b>LANDMARK ENGINEERING LTD.</b><br>3521 W. Eisenhower Blvd.<br>Loveland, CO 80537<br>970-667-6286           | 1<br>18<br>25                                   | 0%<br>60%  | 40%<br>20%<br>40%   | 70%<br>30%                                       | merrittk@landmarkltd.com<br>www.landmarkltd.com         | Kenneth Merritt<br>Jeff Olhausen<br>CEO, President<br>Senior vice president<br>1969 |
| 7    | <b>BECK ARCHITECTS</b><br>170 S. Saint Vrain Ave.<br>Estes Park, CO 80517-0057<br>970-586-3913               | 1<br>3<br>3                                     | 60%<br>10%   | 5%<br>75%<br>20%  | 90%<br>10%                                       | thomas@twbeckarchitects.com<br>www.twbeckarchitects.com | Thomas Beck<br>AIA, NCARB<br>1998   |
| 8    | <b>THE FREDERICKSON GROUP</b><br>7711 Windsong Drive<br>Windsor, CO 80550<br>970-278-0240                    | 1<br>1<br>3                                     | N/A<br>75%   | N/A<br>N/A<br>N/A   | N/A<br>N/A                                       | deanne@tfgcolorado.com<br>www.TFGcolorado.com           | Deanne Frederickson<br>Manager, Owner<br>2000                                       |
| 9    | <b>FREEMAN ARCHITECTS P C</b><br>2024 Blue Mesa Court<br>Loveland, CO 80538<br>970-667-3939                  | 0<br>4<br>5                                     | 80%<br>20%   | 0%<br>75%<br>25%  | 95%<br>5%  | freemanarchts@aol.com<br>N/A                            | John Freeman<br>Owner<br>2003   |
| 10   | <b>WG ARCHITECTS</b><br>1449 Riverside Ave.<br>Fort Collins, CO 80524<br>970-493-2025                        | N/A<br>3<br>3                                   | 80%<br>10%   | N/A<br>98%<br>2%  | 90%<br>10%                                       | bobg@wgarchitects.com<br>www.wgarchitects.com           | Robert Gustafson<br>Principal<br>1969   |
| 11   | <b>DESIGNONE CONSULTANTS INC.</b><br>1919 65th Ave, Suite #6<br>Greeley, CO 80634<br>970-392-1616            | N/A<br>1<br>1                                   | 80%<br>20%   | N/A<br>60%<br>30%   | 100%<br>N/A                                      | ccross@dsl.com<br>www.dsl.com                           | Carl Cross<br>President<br>2001   |
| 12   | <b>DANA MCBRIDE HOMES INC.</b><br>1510 Hillside Drive<br>Fort Collins, CO 80525<br>970-222-7534              | N/A<br>N/A<br>1                                 | 35%<br>N/A   | N/A<br>0%<br>100%   | 50%<br>N/A                                       | dnhmcbride@comcast.net<br>www.danamcbridehomes.com      | Dana McBride<br>President<br>1992   |

N/A - Not Available Ranked first by no. of architects, then employees.  
(1) AECOM merged with EDAAW Inc. Nov. 2009

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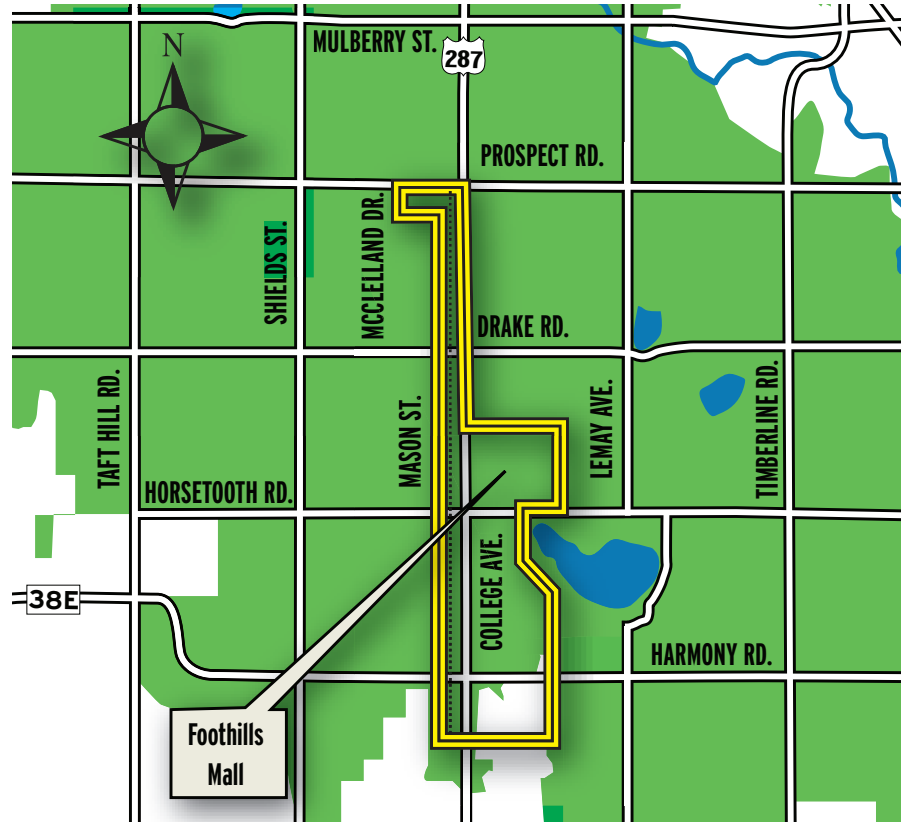


## Midtown team

The city of Fort Collins tapped a national consulting team to conduct the Midtown Commercial Corridor Study. The team, picked for its store of experience, includes:

- **ELS Architecture and Urban Design:** Based in Berkeley, Calif., ELS provided the physical analysis of redevelopment opportunities in the corridor;
- **Economic Planning Systems:** With offices in Berkeley, Sacramento and Denver, EPS conducted the economic analysis for the study;
- **Warren Wilson:** Now a consultant, Wilson worked as an executive in charge of new development for General Growth Properties up until last year. He consulted on community planning.

The team plans to present its preliminary findings at a public meeting on March 10 from 5 to 7 p.m. at a location still to be determined. The city will launch a website detailing the project at [www.fcgov.com/midtown](http://www.fcgov.com/midtown).



BUSINESS REPORT RESEARCH

**UNDER STUDY** – Preliminary findings from a feasibility study to redevelop Fort Collins' commercial corridor will be presented in March.

## MIDTOWN, from 1

with some detailed work on the Foothills Mall. The magnitude of the land holding and its central location make it unlike any other site in Fort Collins.

"There's more opportunity and strength there than weakness," Birks said, acknowledging that there is a narrow window to maintain the mall as a retail powerhouse. "If we do not start a turn-around process on the mall in the next 18 to 36 months, we could lose that opportunity."

### Scenes from the mall

The consulting team has had some

frank conversations with mall owner General Growth Properties Inc. According to Birks, the company has not committed to anything yet but is pleased with the team, which includes Warren Wilson, who served as senior vice president in charge of new development for GGP up until last year.

Wilson feels that by focusing the study on what's achievable and economically feasible, stakeholders such as GGP are more likely to participate in a unified redevelopment vision.

"The team is concluding that there are tenants that aren't represented at the

mall, and it's not living up to its potential," said Jamie Rusin, principal at ELS Architecture and Urban Design, a Berkeley, Calif.-based firm that serves as the prime contractual member of the team. ELS has worked on a number of projects that combine public and private interests, according to Rusin.

Overall, the consulting team feels that the mall property is well situated for redevelopment, with Rusin pointing to the fact that GGP has assembled parcels previously owned by anchors Mervyn's and JCPenny. Macy's and Sears still own their sites and must be on-board for any redevelopment. Discussions with the retailers so far have been positive, and they have told the team they are committed to Fort Collins and the mall.

"The Foothills Mall is a significant piece of the corridor, but it's not the only story to tell," Rusin said. "I think there's a broad consensus that the corridor is ripe for redevelopment. Locally, (stakeholders) are very aware of the perceived and very real decline in the corridor."

Rusin feels that the significant vacancies should be viewed as opportunities. The upside to having so many empty big-boxes is the large portions of land and building owned by relatively few.

"Many times, the difficulty is when there is small, fractured ownership," he said.

much ended. Now, to sell a house it has to be the best price, the best condition, or preferably both."

The year was tough on agents, with some leaving the profession at least until better conditions return.

"There definitely have been some Realtors leaving the buying and selling of real estate, but I'd say the bulk of them have been part-time or doing it for a hobby," Dougherty said.

Taylor agreed she's seen some local agents give up in 2009 — again mostly part-timers — but she also saw some new faces enter the field.

"We've actually had some new members in 2009, and we didn't have that in 2008," she said.

Whether 2010 ends up being better than 2009 is obviously an open question, but Taylor and Dougherty point to an expansion through April of the federal tax credits that helped revive last year's market, continuing low interest rates and some signs of new house construction in the region as indications that it could be an improvement.

"I believe we'll still see a year below our boom years," Dougherty said. "We're going to have to give it time. We're still a couple of years down the road from a full recovery."

"I see our market being strong through the first half of the year," added Taylor. "After that, I'm not sure. But we're starting to see light at the end of the tunnel. I think it's a good time to be a buyer and a seller."

## RESIDENTIAL, from 5

turn around in Greeley. We actually had a shortage of inventory in some price ranges, so people who had been holding off could put their houses on the market."

Taylor said those who had homes to sell in the Greeley area for under \$175,000 experienced "a seller's market" in 2009, with multiple offers from buyers.

Median prices dropped in all three markets, with homes in the Loveland-Berthoud area declining most with a 5.5 percent drop from \$217,000 in 2008 to \$205,000 in 2009. Fort Collins area median home prices slid by 2.8 percent from \$233,000 to \$226,500 while Greeley area prices were down only 1.5 percent, declining from \$137,000 to \$135,000.

Greeley-Evans experienced the biggest drop in active listings for the year, down 25.5 percent. Taylor said that reflected the tight inventories in the area, which has traditionally had the most affordable housing costs in the region.

Even though Fort Collins had the most homes sold at 2,239, Sean Dougherty, a Re/Max Alliance agent and president-elect of the Fort Collins Board of Realtors, said 2009 was an especially difficult year. "I would characterize it as the most challenging year in the last 10 years," he said. "But it's forced home sellers to figure out better ways to sell their property."

Dougherty said 2009 proved "the time of bloated house prices has pretty

## New life for University Mall

But even with several property owners, a unified vision can develop. Rusin looks to the South College Avenue shopping center anchored by Whole Foods, Wilbur's Total Beverage and Miramont Lifestyle Fitness as a bright spot.

"It appears to be doing quite well," he said. "There are a number of indications that there are vital things going on."

The center is now unrecognizable as the former University Mall, which underwent a massive redevelopment in the mid 1990s and new ownership in the early 2000s. Many of the aging pad sites are getting some attention now.

Developer Les Kaplan picked up the former Kelley-Moore Paint Co. at 2101 S. College Ave. last year. The 7,770-square-foot building on an acre-and-a-half lot was attractive to Kaplan as an investment, not only because of the nearby anchor stores but also because of soon-to-come amenities.

"With the Mason Corridor (transit project), there will be a bus stop, pedestrian overpass and an upgraded crossing for Spring Creek (bike trail)," he said.

With the help of Realtec brokers Aki Palmer and Nate Heckle, Kaplan set out to find a very specific tenant and found Full Cycle bike shop, located in downtown Fort Collins since March 2007.

"The most important element was the accessibility," said Tanja Wiant, owner of Full Cycle, about her move to Kaplan's property.

The bike shop is a destination, so it doesn't benefit much from the throngs of downtown window shoppers, she said, and hopes that the new spot will lead to more business.

The new location puts Full Cycle in a more central, highly visible spot with plentiful parking and twice as much space. The larger facility will allow the company to offer more amenities and services, such as a lounge and meeting space. Wiant added that the proximity to the Spring Creek trail and future Mason Corridor were also big draws.

Another newly remodeled pad site is now home to Radio Shack and will soon include a Floyd's 99 Barbershop. Several building owners have tapped the same architecture firm, Vaught-Frye, to craft a common design atmosphere.

Crafting a common vision is the point of the study. The city will be heavily involved in developing the Mason Corridor's multi-modal transportation service, which will likely compliment the uses along College Avenue. However, it will be necessary to engage the private sector to keep the ball rolling for Midtown.

"In a lot of ways, this study is the beginning of the beginning," Birks said.

# COMMENTARY

EDITORIAL

## True leadership demands ability to compromise

Colorado's government is broke.

Not only are we out of money, but our legislators seem to have forgotten why they spend the winter in Denver. They are supposed to work together for the benefit of all residents of our fair state. Instead, they've turned the Capitol into a rugby scrum, with each party more concerned with inflicting pre-primary damage on the other than finding real solutions to our most pressing problems.

Take the bruising debate over business tax exemptions. Gov. Bill Ritter, who gave up re-election to fight the hard budget battle, set Feb. 11 as the deadline for action on a package of bills removing or suspending tax breaks for a variety of industries. From online retailers to candymakers, there's some pain for everyone, and as modified through the legislative process, more suspensions than repeals.

We believe that tax breaks are a viable means to attract and encourage growth of specific industries, to create jobs for our citizens and wealth for our business owners. And robust business will be the engine that drives us out of the Great Recession.

But such stimulus measures should become neither permanent nor sacrosanct. In such economic times, everyone — business, government and individuals — has to give up something.

Witnesses testifying against the bills swore that paying 3 percent more in taxes for three to five years would be a "job-killer" for their particular industries. As if businesses throughout the state had not eliminated 100,000 jobs in the past year with the exemptions in place. They've reduced their individual payrolls, but their ex-workers are, for the most part, still residents of the state, still using basic services, and now in need of additional assistance — on the taxpayers' dime.

State Republicans have offered a counterproposal: Instead of using a scalpel throughout the budget, take a machete to all state payrolls, this year and next. While we strongly agree that spending cuts must be part of the budget-balancing process, the proposal offers no specifics on where or how to reduce salaries without reducing services.

In yet another exemption, teachers' pay would be spared the ax. But that could leave Colorado's two highest-paid employees untouched: College football coaches Steve Fairchild and Dan Hawkins, who haul down annual salaries of \$800,000 and \$1.1 million, respectively. Would cutting those paychecks be more of a job-killer than raising the price of a dollar candy bar to \$1.03? Really?

Let's start acting like we are all in this together.

## Fort Collins City Council scraps proposed trash districting plan.



## Cybersecurity too vital to turn into bureaucracy

The U.S. House of Representatives last week passed HR 4061, the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act. A solid Cybersecurity Enhancement Act might read, "Title I: Stop losing federal laptops."

That's too flip, but consider that there are cybersecurity risks to cybersecurity legislation.

Vulnerabilities in the government's information security policies and the need to "bring government into the 21st century" have long been noted. But given the constant temptation by politicians in both parties to meddle with cybersecurity policy by steering research and development in unnatural directions, any poor decisions made at this juncture could undermine both public and private information security.

Politicians, especially in frontier industries like information technology, often take the easy path of seeking massive sums to establish taxpayer-funded research grants for politically favored cybersecurity initiatives, set up redundant cybersecurity agencies, programs and subsidies. This is precisely what the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act will do, potentially steering cybersecurity research away from its natural, safer, course.

Vastly expanding federal grants, fleets of scholarships and government-induced PhDs in computer security is not the same as actually bolstering security, nor is there any reason the private sector cannot fund the training of its own such personnel or provide application-specific training as needed. Moreover, many serious security problems are not matters of new training but simply of embracing security "best practices" that already exist.

### Valuable industry

Online security is an immensely valuable industry today, and there is no shortage of private research incentive and potential profit.

Taxpayer-funded scholarships have already been extended to universities, and

incentives already abound for students to pursue technology careers. These new programs can easily grow beyond the proposed, already-generous bounds.

It's beyond doubt that online security problems exist. Yet the tendency of cybersecurity today to be seen as an increasingly government-spearheaded function is worrisome. Federal spending and intervention may encourage market distortion by skewing private investment decisions, or promoting one set of technologies or class of providers at the expense of others.

We need better digital equivalents of barbed wire and door locks, which private companies are constantly competing to improve. While government law enforcement agencies have a necessary role to play in investigating and punishing intrusions on private networks and infrastructure, government must coexist with, rather than crowd out, private sector security technologies. Otherwise we become less secure, not more.

### Enhance private sector practices

Improving private incentives for information sharing is at least as important as greater government coordination and investment to ensure security and critical infrastructure protection. That job will entail liberalizing critical infrastructure assets — like telecommunications and electricity networks — and relaxing antitrust constraints so firms can coordinate information security strategies and enhance reliability of critical infrastructure through the kind of "partial mergers" that are anathema to today's antitrust enforcers.

Like everything else in the market, security technologies — from biometric identifiers to firewalls to network monitoring to encrypted databases — benefit from competition. Private cybersecurity initiatives will also gradually move us toward thriving liability and insurance markets, to help address the lack of authentication and inability to exclude bad actors that are at the root of today's vulnerabilities.

Security is an industry unto itself. Let's not turn it into a bureaucracy.

Wayne Crews is vice president for policy for the Competitive Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C.



**GUEST COLUMN**  
Wayne Crews

## Northern Colorado BUSINESS REPORT

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Buying local is our job

With the economy and government in disarray, it becomes our job to make our own regional economies functional and create local jobs. That can only happen when money flows to local service providers and businesses.

We're all in this together and by becoming proactive we can protect jobs and stabilize incomes, thus preventing some foreclosures and bankruptcies. We can and must build a locally supportive and sustainable community.

Now is the time for those who are able to spend money for themselves and the community. Hire a local worker to repair or replace a roof. Invest in insulating window treatments. Employ help for the garden. Purchase long-delayed energy efficient appliances. Buy a membership-share in a local CSA farm. Patronize local entertainment venues — movies, plays, music, art galleries, museums. Repair, remodel, buy, or fix as needed. Such support of local businesses will stimulate local jobs.

It has been said that the only things certain are death and taxes. I would like to add inflation, the new certainty of these times. Your dollar spent today has more buying power than your dollar will have in three, five, or ten years. Spending locally can help keep us all above water and in motion. Now is the time.

*Nancy York  
Fort Collins*

## Fort Collins now a Distinctive Destination

*(Business Report Daily, Feb. 3, 2010)s*

Ya gotta love the energy in this town. There's no better place to live!

*Mary Ann Michels  
Fort Collins*

I live in Bastrop County, and my sister and her family live in Fort Collins. Both are great towns with room for growth and great people that live there.

*Cidneye Godkin  
Bastrop, Texas*

*Editor's note: Bastrop is one of the other towns in the dozen Distinctive Destinations. Vote for your favorite at www.preservationnation.org/ddd before Feb. 28.*

## Film shows many sides of renowned CSU professor

*(NCBR, Jan. 29, 2010)*

As my friend Ross says about Temple Grandin making animal slaughter more "humane": "Apart from that, Mrs. Lincoln, how did you like the play?"

*Tracy B. Ann  
Nashville, Tenn.*

## Fort Collins officials suggest sales tax needed to pace growth

*(Business Report Daily, Jan. 27, 2010)*

How about we have a ballot initiative to switch some Open Space dollars to the city's general fund? Or, sell the Soapstone Ranch and use that money for the general fund? How about we stop letting the Front Range Village developer collect their PIF dollars for their private coffers and collect that money instead for the city's general fund?

*Bob Tuttle  
Fort Collins*

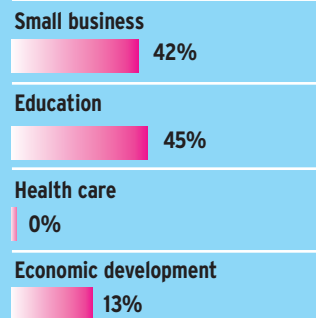
are very, very seldom necessary. But government officials can't seem to make the same hard choices that private companies must make whenever our revenues are reduced. And they always seem to fall back on the argument that our quality of life will suffer or it will now be necessary to cut basic services for fire protection and police protection, which is my opinion are the two most top heavy departments in any cities budget (I can almost hear the screams and howls already).

*Marty Rogers  
Fort Collins*

## BLOG COMMENTS

*Editor's note: Yes, we have blogs, and you can join the conversation at www.ncbr.com.*

## NCBR poll watch | Which sector should be spared cuts in the state budget?



These results reflect responses to the online poll at www.ncbr.com Jan. 25 through Feb. 8.

**Next question:**  
Will you use a professional tax preparer for this season?

Answer now at www.ncbr.com. Responses will be accepted through Feb. 22.

## Everybody sells

*(Lee Porter)*

Nice work Lee ... and so true! There has got to be a way to make sales relationships more positive and effective, and you are onto something. Looking forward to more.

*Jay Jacoby  
Fort Collins*

*Editor's note: Tell us what you really think by voting in our online poll then leaving detailed comments at www.ncbr.com*

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Tax increases are never reversed and

## ENTREPRENEUR, from 11

you find the right people? This goes well beyond a job description; social recruiting uses strategy, technology, intuition and cultural savvy to create a cocktail that is powerful, alluring and literally magical if it's done properly. Suddenly you are finding all the right people at just the right time and you're not spending thousands of dollars in postings and hundreds of hours of time in processing the wrong applicants.

Owning and growing a business involves many things but at the core of every successful organization is a great leader surrounded by exceptional talent. All of these people must fit with the organization and its ideals in order to sustain the vision and culture of the business. Social recruiting taps into this idea by aggressively announcing to a captive audience that you are interested in bringing people on board. From there, you can be as creative as you'd like, illustrating all of the wonderful

things about your company in terms of why people like working there, how much you've grown, and unique selling points about your organization.

### Be selective

One important thing to remember is you don't have to blast across every form of social media all at once. Be selective. Perhaps Twitter will never be the right thing for your type of hiring project; that's OK. There are plenty of others to choose from, including Facebook, MySpace, Plaxo, LinkedIn, and more. What demographic is represented on each site will be a determining factor in where to place emphasis. If you want to capture a very young demographic (high school through college aged individuals), MySpace is a great place to start. However, if you're looking for the 30-something college graduate/young professional, you'll find them on Facebook and LinkedIn, not so much on MySpace.

During a recent consulting project to set up a social recruiting program, the

business owner assumed that he needed to select a young person from his staff to work with me, as they would be "more likely to understand social media." Not necessarily true. Although his younger employees were all on social sites already, the person who was truly the right fit as the in-house social recruiting expert was actually a 50-something; she had advanced technical skills, was fast at crafting creative posts and responses online, and had also demonstrated exceptional organizational skills during past hiring projects. She had interviewed several people who had been hired into the company and retained for an extended time, so her understanding of the recruiting process was evident.

Capturing the Gen Y demographic is going to be extremely important as we move forward in business. The number one way to do this is online; this generation does not play by traditional rules and unless you capture their attention through skillful use of technology and online promotion, you will miss the largest demographic to ever grace our

planet thus far (there are more Gen Y'ers than baby boomers)!

Quick, concise, and captivating are the key words to keep in mind if you're going to successfully recruit younger applicants through social recruiting. If done correctly, this type of recruiting is not only effective, it's fun; you get to be creative with promoting your business rather than running the same dull ad or job posting you've been doing for years (and getting marginal results — if any — I might add).

The new wave of hiring is here, and it's no longer in the shape of the great abyss known as "the job board." Social recruiting is free for the taking; maximize your reach and your image by creative utilization and management of it and you will see the incredible expansion and quality of your talent pool.

*Dawn Duncan is the owner of Broadreach Recruiting & Consulting, a Fort Collins-based firm. Contact her at 970-221-3511 or [www.broadreachrecruiting.com](http://www.broadreachrecruiting.com).*

## HELI-ONE, from 3

100 aircraft based in 18 states, will represent a large increase in activity for the Fort Collins site.

"It's a big jump in volume," Shields said, estimating that service volume could triple over the next few years. "Employment will certainly grow by one-third or one-half."

Even with the air medical contract, much of the Fort Collins facility's work will still be related to the oil and gas industry. Traditionally, Heli-Support's main focus was on servicing helicopters

used in energy exploration. As part of Heli-One, that tradition will continue. Parent company CHC counts on the industry for about 69 percent of its revenue, with customers that include BP, ExxonMobil, Chevron, Unocal and others.

### Wait-and-see approach

Shields said that the facility will be able to support the volume of service needs for now. Any potential expansion would be on an as-needed basis, and the company will wait to see if it is necessary.

Also taking a wait-and-see approach to the acquisition will be another Fort Collins helicopter service center.

Century Helicopters operates a facility near the former Downtown Airpark.

"In the past, we've had a very complementary relationship," said Century General Manager Mike Hansen. "Now, we'd probably consider them more of a competitor."

Hansen explained that the companies previously had little overlap in the types of helicopters each serviced. He anticipates that the facility will expand its service offerings as part of Heli-One. Hansen said that the current economic conditions have led to a lot of consolidation in the market, to Century's advantage, but which also leads to fewer players.

"Just like every other part of the world, this has been a tough economic time for the industry," Shields agreed.

Being part of an international company can come with its perks. Heli-One Colorado will now have access to a global sales network for the first time ever, opening up the possibility of expanding its third party sales. It can also come with some growing pains, which the site is determined to work out.

"We were a small, family-owned business. Culturally, it's a big change," Shields said. "I think that Heli-Support had a good reputation in the industry, and we have to maintain that level of service."

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# Economy poised to change with positive signs visible

## Market correction at March should signal future heading

The biggest economic question on everyone's mind right now is: Are we at the bottom of the Great Recession yet? There are some positive signs, although the most important sign, increased employment, has not materialized.

On Jan. 29, the first estimate of 2009 fourth quarter U.S. GDP growth came in at 5.7 percent. My estimate had been something over 5 percent, and there will be two more corrections before we have a final figure. The *Wall Street Journal* says GDP growth would have been only 2.3 percent if inventory restocking were subtracted.

Just as inventory overstocking was a part of GDP growth in the past, inventory restocking must be now. We know that overstocking was a mistake because of the recession but we don't know yet about restocking. If consumer spending rebounds strongly and goods production picks up, restocking inventories will not have been a mistake. Stay tuned.

So, we can say the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is working. Economic activity occurred; jobs were saved or, in a few cases, added and inventories were drawn down to the point where they had to be replenished. Some of the stimulus money will be spent in 2010 (approximately 40 percent remains), so the economy is unlikely to fall back into recession until at least late in 2010, if then.

Technical analysis is saying that all three major stock market indices are poised for a major correction in the range of 15 percent to 25 percent. Technical analysis is not always correct, but we'll know by the end of March.

March is the month the Federal Reserve says it might start tightening up on the money supply and March is when government incentives to buy homes or refinance mortgages are scheduled to expire. So, the end of the first quarter will be a good time to take stock of where the U.S. economy is headed.

Stock market indices are good leading indicators, usually six to nine months ahead of turns in the economy. Sometimes they give false signals, but they hardly ever give strong negative signals when the economy doesn't at least pause and appear to weaken. The turnaround in the indices last March preceded the increases in GDP in the third and fourth quarters; a smaller increase in the third quarter and then, as economic momentum increased, a larger increase in the fourth quarter.

If the three major market indicators correct by 12 percent or more in the first half of 2010, the U.S. economy may dou-

ble-dip back into recession at the end of the year or early in 2011. If the indices don't correct by that amount, economic growth will stagger along into 2011. If the indices turn up, U.S. economic growth will continue strong into 2011.

We are at a turning point as we wait for the Federal Reserve to withdraw the enormous amount of liquidity in the financial system and for financial regulation to take shape.

### Local effects

What does this mean to Northern Colorado business planners and government budget balancers? If the outlook remains bright, businesses will make investments. Leprino Foods will finish construction of its plant in Greeley, begin hiring for permanent jobs — and the demand for milk will increase. Demand for Vestas blades will increase and layoffs will be reversed. Other businesses will be more confident of future sales and will make investment and hiring decisions.

Government budget officers will be more confident of future tax revenues and will stop cutting services and infrastructure maintenance. Education can look forward to smaller class sizes and expansion of reduced student programs.

Employment in Northern Colorado dropped lower than forecasts in December, indicating that the bottom forecasted in November has been breached. We are still losing jobs, down to 268,000 in December from a high of almost 290,000 in 2008. As a result, the unemployment rate jumped to 7.1 percent in December, well above the 6.4 percent forecasted.

The December value of construction put in place in Northern Colorado came in at \$40 million, well above the forecast of about \$15 million. I think we can attribute some of this to stimulus funds and the resultant infrastructure maintenance.

Total motor vehicle registrations in December were 40,000, well below the forecast of about 46,000. Vehicles are not being replaced as they wear out and registrations for extra vehicles are not being renewed. Consumers and businesses are still tightening their belts in this area.

December new and renewed sales tax accounts were 379, well above the forecast of about 280. Retail entrepreneurs are showing some confidence in future business conditions.

It appears the Obama Administration's Keynesian stimulation policies have at least temporarily halted the downturn. Because of the increasing size of the federal budget deficit, further stimulus spending will be hard to justify.

Thus, the next increase in economic activity will have to be consumer based. We have seen some mild pickup in consumer spending but it will have to be maintained and increased significantly if we are to continue to recover from the current recession.

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### ON THE ECONOMY

John W. Green, Ph.D.  
Regional Economist



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- 8 Million trees planted
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- Savings since 2000: 280,000,600 kWh, which is equivalent to the annual energy use of 25,400 homes
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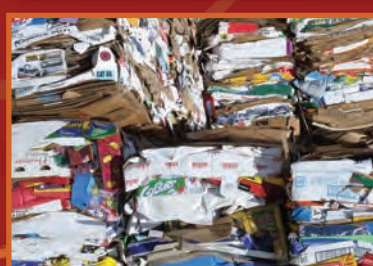
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