



Kevin Hougen
President & CEO

Happy New Year, we hope this finds all of our members in good health and good spirit entering into the new-year. The Chamber Board of Directors and the staff want to thank you for all the help and support we received this past year.

As we look forward to 2008, we know it will be an exciting and challenging year. Our committees have been busy reworking our white papers focusing on what is important to the business community, concentrating on education, transportation and healthcare. As a member of the Chamber, you can get a copy of our white papers by contacting George Peck at our office or better yet, we encourage you to attend one of the committee meetings we have each month on these important subjects. Let me remind you that our Government Affairs Committee has a

President’s Letter

breakfast on January 7th at the Community College of Aurora at 7:30am. This is a great opportunity to meet our legislators but also meet with our other city and county leadership members.

Be Thankful for 2008
I was fortunate the other day to meet a young teller at one of our retail stores the other day, it was a very hectic holiday shopping day and she had a very miserable, irate customer yelling at her. I apologized to the young lady, that not everyone is this miserable at Christmas, she looked up at me and without hesitating said, “Sir, I’m too blessed to be stressed”. In conclusion let me leave you with this at the end of 2007 and looking forward to 2008!

If you woke this morning you are more blessed than the million who won’t survive the week.

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture or the pangs of starvation, you are ahead of 20 million people around the world.

If you attend a church meeting without fear of harassment, arrest, torture, or death, you are more blessed than almost three billion people in the world.

If you have food in your refrigerator, clothes on your back, and a roof over your head and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top 8% of the worlds wealthy

If you can read this holiday message, you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world who cannot read at all.

We are all blessed in ways we may never know, let’s remember to count those ways as we celebrate a new year, may it be one to remember and cherish. I know I’m too blessed to be stressed! Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!!

Board of Directors

Chair of the Board
Bob Barké | BAR-K Insurance Solutions

Chair Elect
Jo Snell | E-470 Public Hwy. Authority

Secretary
Diane Garcia | 2G Associates

Treasurer
David Patterson | Rural/Metro Ambulance

Immediate Past Chair
Dr. Linda Bowman | Community College of Aurora

Past Chair Once Removed
Dale Mingilton | FirstBank Holding Company

Vice Chair-Business Development
Margo Jamison | Kaiser Permanente

Vice Chair-Community Services
Craig Ward | Padgett Business Services

Vice Chair-Public Affairs
Jim Suss | Suss Pontiac - GMC

Vice Chair-Member Services
Dr. Kathy Boyle | University of Colorado Denver
Health Sciences Center

Directors

Tom Allee | *Frontier Airlines*
Rich Allison | *Adolfson & Peterson Construction Company*
Bob Barké | *BAR-K Insurance Solutions*
Joe Barela | *Arapahoe/Douglas Works! Workforce Center*
Bill Becker | *Adams County Economic Development*
Judy Booth | *Fitzsimons Community Federal Credit Union*
Dr. Linda Bowman | *Community College of Aurora*
Dr. Kathy Boyle | *University of Colorado Hospital*
Harrison Cochran | *Aurora Sentinel & Daily Sun*
Peter L. Durante, MD, JD | *The Children’s Hospital*
Brigadier General Trulan Eyre | *140th Wing COANG*
Diane Garcia | *2G Associates, LLC*
Elyse Gellerman | *The Medical Center of Aurora*
Mark Guoin | *Wells Fargo Banks*
Kim Harrell | *East End Applied Arts*
Margo Jamieson | *Kaiser Permanente*
Todd Landgrave | *Northrop Grumman*
Kelly Leid | *Oakwood Homes*
Dale Mingilton | *FirstBank Holding Co.*
Wendy Mitchell | *Aurora Economic Development Council*
Mark Moses | *Outback Restaurants*
Alfonso Nunez | *La Cueva Restaurant*
David Patterson | *Rural/Metro Ambulance*
Alan Peppers | *Westerra Credit Union*
The Honorable Randy Pye | *Mayor, City of Centennial*
Katie Roche | *Raytheon*
Dan Sandos | *401(K) Advisors*
Jo Snell | *E-470 Public Hwy. Authority*
John Stanton | *Prudential Colorado Real Estate*
Jim Suss | *Suss Pontiac*
The Honorable Ed Tauer | *Mayor, City of Aurora*
Craig Ward | *Padgett Business Services*
Frank Weddig | *Commissioner, Arapahoe County*

Executive Staff

President & CEO
Kevin Hougen

Marketing & Visitors’ Advisory Board
Naomi Colwell

Leadership Director
Kimberly Curtis

Special Events
Debbie Lynch

Administrative Assistant/Receptionist
Trisha Rose

Membership Director
Marcie Maxwell

Administration Director
Stephanie McDonnell

Vice President, PA&O
George Peck

VP, Membership Development
Paul Rosenberg

Membership Services
Mary Beth Sharp

562 Sable Blvd., Suite 200
Aurora, CO 80011-0809
303-344-1500 • Fax 303-344-1564
website: www.aurorachamber.org

[continued from page 1]

opportunities to meet with political leaders including a special Corporate Breakfast with **U.S. Congressman Ed Perlmutter** and two Legislative Breakfasts sponsored by the **Community College of Aurora** and **The Medical Center of Aurora** that gave members the chance to meet their state legislators “up close and personal.”

Chamber businesses were honored on many fronts. The City of Aurora recognized **Tuscany Valley Restaurant, Lupita’s Restaurant, Adolfson & Peterson Construction, Padgett Business Services, Suss Buick Pontiac GMC, Gateway Mazda, La Cueva Restaurant,** and **Southlands** with special Business Recognition Awards. Nearly 40 Chamber members were named to the **Aurora Sentinel’s** “Hot Stuff” list. Board member Diane Garcia of **2G Associates** was named a “Woman of Distinction” by the Girl Scouts. Dave Mull was **Columbia College** Administrator of the Year, former **Arapahoe County** Commissioner Lynn Myers and **Community College of Aurora** President Dr. Linda Bowman were selected as Women Sculptors of the Community, and Gian Gondolfo of the **Hilton Garden Inn** was named the top General Manager in the Hilton chain.

Chamber members moved into high profile positions as well. **Carter & Burgess’** Carla Perez, Transportation Committee Vice Chair was named to the Governors Staff as a Transportation Finance advisor and Board member Mike Edwards with the **140th Wing** at Buckley was promoted to Major General and named as the new Adjutant General for the State of Colorado. Board member Dale Mingilton with **1st Bank** was selected by the Governor to serve on his Blue Ribbon Committee on Transportation.

At the gala Annual Awards Banquet the quality of Chamber members was driven home by the selected winners including Man of the Year Dale Mingilton with **1st Bank**, Woman of the Year Senator Suzanne Williams, Community Leadership winner, Dr. Jay Gershen (**UCHSC-Denver**), as well as Business Person of the Year, Kelly Leid with **Oakwood Homes** and Small Business Person of the year Frances Scott with **Sign-a-Rama**. Also recognized was Business of the Year, Advantage Security, Business for the Arts winner **Suss, Buick, Pontiac, GMC**, and Chamber Leadership Award winners Ken and Sandie Preuss with **E-Travel Unlimited**. They made everyone proud.

The Chamber’s impact throughout all aspects of the community could be seen when Chamber President Kevin Hougen was honored by the Asian-Indian Business Community, the International Cross Cultural Network, was selected to serve on the



Aurora Blue Ribbon Panel, the Mile High United Way Board and the Air Force Space Command’s Commander’s Advisory Group.

The year also saw all chamber committees grow as committee chairs raised the bar by providing greater insight into issues from defense and education, to the arts and transportation. A new committee was even added to the chamber when the Events Connection Committee was formed then organized the highly successful “Fun at Fitz” event this fall.

What had started as a special Chamber corridor meeting in 2003 to examine ways to improve

business along Havana grew and saw huge success with the formation of the Havana Business Improvement District. And the Fitzsimons Campus continued to grow with addition of **The Children’s Hospital** to the world class medical facilities there.

And there was much more that celebrated the synergy of the Chamber and its members in 2007 as a high performance board under Dr. Linda Bowman and Bob Barké ensured that each member would benefit from the access, advocacy and influence it had to offer.

The Chamber’s Mission

The mission of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce is to serve as a voice for the business community, acting as an advocate for its members on issues that affect their growth and long-term economic vitality.

The **IMPACT** is published monthly for the members of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce. Subscription rate to nonmembers: \$50/year. Advertisers: The Chamber members—use the **IMPACT** to advertise your products and services to over 1700 Aurora Chamber members. Advertising space only available to members. The IMPACT also accepts preprinted inserts. Contact The Chamber for details. Deadlines: the 10th of the month prior to publication.

Member News

Perlmutter appoints Rangeview Senior to AFA

U.S. Rep Ed Perlmutter announced Dec. 11 that he had appointed Aurora resident and Rangeview High School Senior, Timothy S. Janke, to the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs for the fall of 2008. Janke is the son of Susan and Kevin Janke. He is the first student to be awarded an Air Force Academy appointment from the 7th Congressional District by Rep. Perlmutter.

Congressman Perlmutter's office gets one appointment for each of the four service academies: U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Naval Academy, U.S. Military Academy and the Merchant Marine Academy.

Jamieson moves up at Kaiser

Chamber Board member Margo Jamieson has been selected to serve as a Senior Operations Director for Kaiser Permanente. A member of the Leadership Aurora Class of 2007-08, Jamieson serves as Vice Chair for Business Development with oversight of the Business for the Arts and Events Connection Committees.

Learning Source helps 18 become citizens

Eighteen adult students from **The Learning Source** became U.S. citizens earlier this fall in a special naturalization ceremony held at the Lakewood City Council Chambers. Congressman Ed Perlmutter attended the ceremony to present students with their citizenship certificate. "This is the second year that we have hosted the naturalization ceremony," explained Susan Lythgoe, executive director of The Learning Source. "The students, their friends and families, our staff and volunteers all say it's an emotional ceremony for them."

The students—originally from Afghanistan, El Salvador, Mexico and Morocco—took English language and citizenship classes at The Learning Source to prepare them for the citizenship exam.

New Space Warning Squadron Stands Up

Buckley Air Force Base's 460th Space Wing has designated a new space warning squadron that will reside at Schriever Air Force Base near Colorado Springs .

The unit formerly known as 460th Operations Group, Detachment 1, was formally "stood up" as the 11th Space Warning Squadron on Dec. 3.

A wing spokesperson said the reactivation of the 11 SWS represents another technological leap in the Air Force's ability to protect the United States.

Arapahoe County adopts \$369.2 million budget for 2008

The **Arapahoe County** Board of County Commissioners approved a balanced \$369.2 million 2008 budget in December.

The budget included funding for an expansion and remodel of the County Justice Center in Centennial and some \$5 million for road and infrastructure projects such as the Arapahoe Road-Parker Road interchange.

"This budget reflects a philosophy of maintaining a high level of service, keeping taxes low and being as efficient as possible with the taxpayers' money," said Commissioner Susan Beckman, who serves as Board Chair.

Arapahoe County's mill levy continues to remain one of the lowest county mill levies in the Denver-Aurora metro area.

Best Companies to Work For in Colorado competition set

Innovative Aurora Chamber member companies are encouraged to apply for the distinction of being the state's best workplace, in the third annual 'Best Companies to Work for in Colorado' competition. To be considered, companies must meet certain criteria and register by February 29, 2008. You can learn about eligibility requirements, fees and entry procedures by calling Best Companies Group at 877-455-2159 or visit www.coshrm.org.

Aurora is the #1 Most Digital City in America for 2007

Beating out cities like Miami, San Diego and Washington DC, Aurora captured the title of the most technology-advanced city in America, according to the Center for Digital Government. Aurora competed against cities with populations of 250,000 and over.

"This is a great honor for our Information Technology (IT) department and the city," said City Manager Ron Miller. "Digital technology connects citizens with their local government on a level never before achieved."

A city spokesperson said Aurora's City Council's vision and support have enabled the IT department to create top-notch E-Government services, as well as continue to find ways to evolve and streamline operations. "The technically-talented and experienced IT department has competed many times and has consistently been in the top-ten cities

nationwide, but this is the first time Aurora has been rated number one," she stated.

Precision Recruiting celebrates 10th Anniversary

Professional staffing services company **Precision Recruiting Inc.**, is celebrating their first decade according to company president and founder Tony Bengston. The company provides highly qualified and talented people to fill both contract and permanent positions Bengston said.

The award winning company started in 1997 when human resources and staffing professional Bengston left the corporate world to start his own company. Since his first contract with US West, **Precision Recruiting** has grown in both experience and size. The company won the 2003 Coors Corporate Gold award, as well as the 2003 Minority Enterprise Development Regional Service Firm Award.

Bengston, a published author and community activist, also founded the Colorado Technical Recruiters Network that currently has four chapters throughout Colorado.

You can get additional information about **Precision Recruiting** on the web at www.pri.jobs or by calling Bengston at 303-627-9189.

Full day kindergarten coming to APS

It's twice the learning, in just one day. **Aurora Public Schools** is moving forward with a plan to make all kindergarten classes in the district a full day affair, by 2010.

Thanks to the **APS Education Foundation**, Clyde Miller Elementary School is now offering full day kindergarten. **APSEF** provided funding to convert two kindergarten classes from half day to full day this year. The funding continues through the 2008-09 school year. Money donated by **APSEF** comes from individual and corporate donations. Full day kindergarten is also offered at 16 other schools.

"We are excited and proud to be able to provide this significant funding to an important program in **APS**," said APSEF Executive Director Angela Thompson. "We continue to fulfill our mission of assisting APS with resources that contribute to the achievement of our students."

Sheriff's Office Comm Center earns accreditation

The Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office Communications Center became the first Communications Center in the State of Colorado to achieve international

accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). In order to achieve CALEA accreditation, the Communications Center of the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office is required to demonstrate full compliance with 207 state-of-the-art performance standards.

Survey supports new BAH start time

A survey of members attending The Chamber's Business after Hours in September and October showed overwhelming support for the new 4:30 p.m. starting time for the popular monthly networking event.

More than 60 percent of those polled stated their preference for the earlier time, most often citing traffic and getting home earlier as the reasons they preferred the late afternoon start time.

"We don't get as enmeshed in rush hour traffic and can get home earlier," stated one surveyed member summing up most of the positive remarks.

Naomi Colwell, who sets up the events for The Chamber said she also found the business hosts did not have a problem with the earlier time. "If it means more exposure for them, they are all for it," she said.

Buckley to support DoD Wage Survey

The Buckley AFB Services Division needs your support.

According to Maj. Teresa Darrow, Director of the **460th Space Wing Services Division**, the Department of Defense Civilian Personnel Management Office will be conducting their annual Wage Survey from January 15th through January 25, 2008. "This wage survey, based on prevailing wage data collected from local employers, sets the pay for our non-appropriated fund (NAF) blue-collar workforce at Buckley Air Force Base and the VA Medical Center in Denver," Major Darrow said.

"Approximately 200 civilian employers in Denver and Arapahoe counties will be asked to participate in this event and we would truly appreciate your help in gathering this important data." Darrow said that once employers are selected, appointments will be made to collect the data and the data collectors will visit each employer during the 2-week period of the survey.

"Each survey only takes about 20 minutes and employers can get a copy of the survey if they so choose. Everyone will benefit from this wage survey," Major Darrow concluded. If you have further questions about the wage survey, contact Major Darrow at 720-847-6979.

Giving it a shot

The developers of a special program called "Shots for Tots" have put together a collaborative program aimed at immunizing children in the Aurora area against 12 vaccine preventable diseases. They were honored at a special ceremony at the **Aurora Fitzsimons Rotary Club**. Since 2002 over 3,000 children have been immunized. The recipients of the awards were: Diana Payne, **Aurora Gateway Rotary Club**; Daniel Wilcox, Aurora Fire Department; Mary Beth Sharp, **Aurora Gateway Rotary Club**; Amy Kuipper, Colorado Children's Immunization Coalition; Lynn Trefren and Christie Hage, Tri County Health Department; Melissa Spencer, Colorado Children's Immunization Coalition; and John Stanton, **Aurora Fitzsimons Rotary Club**. Also participating in the project was the **Rotary Club of Aurora**. The Shots for Tots clinic is held on the second

Saturday of the month, 11:00 to 1:00 at fire station #2 , 12600 E. Hoffman Blvd., Aurora. The cost is \$15.00 per shot. The fee can be waived when necessary.



Shot crew — The organizers of the Shots for Tots program include (l-r) Diana Payne, Daniel Wilcox, Mary Beth Sharp, Lynn Trefren, Amy Kuipper, Christie Hage, Melissa Spencer and John Stanton, president of the Aurora Fitzsimons Rotary Club.

Don't let your employees get caught in the cold this winter

Winter has found its inevitable way to Colorado. With its cold and often stormy weather, this season presents a variety of safety challenges at work. Pinnacol has some simple safety tips to help you and your company keep Old Man Winter at bay.

Prevent Winter Slips, Trips, and Falls

Slips, trips, and falls are the most common injuries sustained by workers during the winter because of snowy or icy conditions in and around the workplace. Here are some helpful hints from winter safety experts to reduce the risk of falling when slippery conditions exist:

- Wear boots or overshoes with non-slip soles. Avoid walking in shoes that have smooth surfaces, which increase the risk of slipping.
- Walk consciously. Be alert to the possibility that you could quickly slip on an unseen patch of ice. Avoid the temptation to run to catch a bus or beat traffic when crossing a street.
- Walk cautiously. Your arms help keep you balanced, so keep your hands out of your pockets and avoid carrying heavy loads that may cause you to lose your balance.

- Walk like a penguin! If you can't avoid walking on snow or ice, take short, shuffling steps and walk as flatfooted as possible.
- Don't walk too fast, run, quickly change direction or come to a sudden stop on icy or snowy surfaces.
- Avoid "horseplay" or other distractions.

Dress for Cold Weather

- When the days turn cold, the chances of suffering from hypothermia, frostbite, and other winter hazards increase for outdoor workers. Winter safety experts recommend that outdoor workers:
- Dress in layers and wear a hat to maintain body heat. Up to 40 percent of body heat can be lost when the head is exposed.
- Wear insulated, waterproof footwear.
- Keep hands covered; if practical, wear mittens instead of gloves.
- Protect your eyes and skin; sunlight reflects off snow.
- Drink warm beverages to help maintain body temperature.

To help your employees have a safe winter, order **Pinnacol's** new winter safety tips poster, Don't Get Caught in the Cold, by calling 1-800-873-7242.

CCA Grad Receives Secretary's Award For Valor

Army reservist and 1992 **Community College of Aurora** (CCA) graduate 1st Lt. David Tiedeman has been awarded the Secretary of Homeland Security's Award for Valor for his heroics in Iraq during a fierce firefight 25 miles east of Baghdad in April 2005.

Tiedeman, who received the military's Silver Star for his courage earlier this year, received this latest award from U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff at the Secretary's third annual awards ceremony, held December 5th at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium in Washington, D.C.

Tiedeman won the award when his unit was ambushed and he risked his life to save Sgt. Robert Betterton, a fellow soldier.

Tiedeman, whose wife Angie is **CCA's** Director of Student Life, received a standing ovation as he was presented with the award by Secretary Chertoff.

Davis honored by ICSA

The International Customer Service Association (ICSA) Colorado Chapter elected Jeannie Davis of Now Hear This, Inc. as president for 2008. An authority on telephone communication for customer service Davis has trained thousands of individuals to maximize the profit- and image-building power of their number one business communication tool. She is also a former member of the Chamber Board of Directors and award- winning author of *Beyond "Hello,"* and contributing author in *Real World Customer Service Strategies That Work*.



Ribbon Cuttings



Taking a big slice — David and Deborah Boyll, owners of **RedBrick Pizza**, show their team cutting skills as they celebrate the opening of their new restaurant in the Southlands area. **RedBrick**, according to General Manager David Ortiz (third from left) combines century old Italian tradition with new world technology to create what he calls, “the world’s finest, fresh fire-roasted gourmet pizzas.” The new pizzeria is located at 24107 E. Commons Avenue, Suite. 105. For more information – or to order a pizza call them at 303-400-3607. (Photo courtesy Brian Molitoris Photographer)



Printing, paper, scissors – Terry Remigio, owner of **Print Colorado Communications**, shows his ribbon cutting prowess as he and his employees join with Chamber President Kevin Hougen and the Chamber Ambassadors to celebrate their new name. Formerly Kwik Copy, **Print Colorado**, located at 15801 E. Centretch Circle, now offers a full line of printing and other related services. They can be reached at 303-261-1334.



Well tailored ribbon – **K & G Fashion Superstore** manager Carolyn Gerlach shows her delight at the success of the ribbon cutting at her store while Chamber President Kevin Hougen looks on. Gerlach was joined by her colleagues and Chamber Chair Bob Barké (far left), Hougen and a number of Chamber Ambassadors as they opened Aurora’s newest clothing retailer, **K&G Fashion Superstore** located on 13940 E. Mississippi Ave. (Mississippi and Abilene). Also pictured are **K&G** associates Tigist Yirgu, Daniel Osazuwa, Edison Tipan, Danielle White, Terrell Watts, Jonathan Bryant, Norman Drucker, Michael Hancock, Kathy Nelson, Teresa Riley, and Mary Zewdie. The store offers a full line of quality men’s and women’s apparel and accessories.

Ambassadors retreat to the hills

By Mary Beth Sharp

How does getting away on an overnight retreat in the Rocky Mountain National Park sound? Relaxing? Fun?

Well, that’s exactly what the Chamber Ambassador group did in October – they retreated to the wonderful **Y.M.C.A. of the Rockies** in Estes Park. The Friday-Saturday event included lots of teambuilding events that helped them get better acquainted, got them out of their comfort zones, and gave them opportunities to just have a great time of laughing and enjoying being with one another. We took time to honor our Ambassadors who do so much for the Chamber – and, especially honored our Ambassador of the Year, Ken Preuss with **E Travel Unlimited!** We thanked Cheryl Twesme with **ALMC Mortgage** for the past two years as co-chair of the group with Jerry Gray of **American National Insurance**, and welcomed Felicia Stanton with **Prudential Colorado Real Estate** as Jerry’s new co-chair. A great time was had by all!



Ken Preuss



Felicia Stanton

If you would like to learn more about The Chamber Ambassadors, please call Mary Beth Sharp or Marci Maxwell at 303-344-1500.



Winnin’ the big one – Howard Hall (center), plant manager of the Firestone Building Products Company in Aurora holds the OSHA Voluntary Protection Star Status he and his people won recently. VPP STAR status is difficult to achieve. It is only given to companies that have comprehensive safety and health programs with injury rates below the industry’s national average. As a STAR (Safety Through Accountability and Recognition) participant, the Aurora plant teammates have designed and implemented outstanding safety and health processes that exceed the strict safety standards of the Occupational Safety & Health Administration’s (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Program (VPP). The plant is located in the Majestic Commerce Center at 21250 E. 36th Drive. Pictured are (Front Row l-r) Norm Ninow (Operations Manager), Bob Glover (OSHA Assistant Regional Manager - Region 8), Hall, Brad Baptiste (VPP Manager, OSHA Region 8), and Asahiko “Duke” Nishiyama (Vice Chairman and President - Bridgestone Americas). In the back row (l-r) are Mike Gorey (CEO & President - Bridgestone Firestone Diversified Products), Arvis McKamie - Health, Safety and Environmental Director - Bridgestone Firestone Diversified Products), Greg Baxter (OSHA Regional Administrator - Region 8), Allen Garrett (Executive Director of Manufacturing - Firestone Building Products) and Bob Walker (Executive Director of Health, Safety & IH - Bridgestone Americas).

“In the Line of Fire” Leadership Aurora Police Session

by Julia Cowan

Spalding Rehabilitation Hospital



I did it! I actually hit the target! However, the community at large can rest assured I won’t be making a career change any time soon.

“In the Line of Fire” was a well organized day, jam packed with information. It provided us with a glimpse into the world of law enforcement. Dan Oates, Chief of Police, of the third largest city in Colorado shared with us his struggles to manage over 600 police officers, manage community expectations, and to make the fast growing city with a large geographic area and varied economic and cultural influences, safe. Not to mention the new technology available to assist in this task. Oh yea, all of this is accomplished with a limited budget. We were also introduced to a crime fighting technique focused on long term problem resolution. The technique involves gathering information and involving the community in implementing long term solutions instead of short term fixes. We were also exposed to gang culture and some of the challenges faced in fighting gang crime and violence. And all of this was before lunch!

After lunch, we were whisked off to the police training center. We were blessed with a gorgeous Colorado day and experienced many aspects of police duty in a “hands-on” fashion. We had the opportunity to shoot REAL guns, observe K-9 units in action, (some even getting to try on



Not exactly a recreational vehicle — An Aurora police officer shows office APD’s latest piece of crime fighting equipment, an armored vehicle called the Black Bear to Leadership Aurora class members during the police session in November.

the “bite suit” and be attacked by the dog) and got up close and personal with the SWAT team (and the Black Bear).

I left this session feeling confident that the Aurora Police department has what it takes to protect the citizens of Aurora, even beyond my expectations.