NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTION:
Don’t be left out — save these dates!

The Chamber’s Annual Awards Dinner

March 6, 2015 • 5-9 pm
Doubletree by Hilton Denver-Stapleton North
4040 Quebec St., Denver, CO 80216

You can register now for this evening of ultimate networking – and celebrating great business leaders of our Aurora and Eastern Metro communities.

ConocoPhillips
Title Sponsor

Women in Business Luncheon
Unsung Heroes Luncheon

February 13, 2015 • 11:30 am-1 pm
Doubletree by Hilton Denver-Aurora
13696 E. Iliff Pl., Aurora, CO 80014

This luncheon honors women in the community who are unsung heroes.

Keynote speaker
Shannon Block
CEO of the Denver Zoo
Welcome to 2015!

As we embark on a new year, it’s a great opportunity to reflect on The Chamber’s role in our past and future success - as investors of the organization. Many years ago, a Chamber of Commerce was known as the organization you could call for a restaurant recommendation — or that would promote good weather as a “Chamber of Commerce day.”

While Kevin and his dynamic team can certainly provide you with an abundant list of great Aurora restaurants, or wax philosophically about the 300-plus days of sunshine we have here, today’s Aurora Chamber of Commerce is a much more engaged and complex organization.

In fact, the Aurora Chamber of Commerce is the premier business liaison with officials for the City of Aurora, Arapahoe County, Adams County, and state government, advancing pro-business initiatives with a team of professional lobbyists. In addition, The Chamber is involved in day-to-day-of-life issues such as education, taxes, health, and community growth. The Chamber is leading the way in eastern metro community issues, including healthcare, transportation, defense, and energy. The Chamber’s business network and numerous B2B events are unrivaled.

In addition to our 300-plus days of sunshine, Aurora has many reasons to be a great place to live and do business. Did you know that Aurora’s still-growing medical sector already has a larger economic impact than the entire Colorado ski industry? If you earn a medical degree in Colorado, you go through Aurora. Closer to home, in a recent survey of Aurora residents, three-quarters of respondents gave positive marks to their neighborhood and the city as a place to live, and would recommend Aurora to others as a place to call home.

Feel free to give the fantastic Chamber staff a call on a beautiful “Chamber of Commerce day” and ask for a tip on where to get a great meal in Aurora. While you have them on the phone, take an extra minute to discuss some of these emerging public policy issues impacting the eastern metro community and learn how your Chamber is leading the way.

I hope to see you at one of the Chamber’s signature events in 2015. Thank you for your investment and individual contributions that ensure our Chamber is “Community First, Business Always.”

Sincerely,
David Patterson, Falck USA
Chairman of the Board,
Aurora Chamber of Commerce
This year’s Destination Health event on Nov. 13 was a whirlwind of presentations and information about a variety of healthcare topics pertaining to businesses. The information varied from the Affordable Care Act to mental health and from technology innovations in healthcare to employees caring for their aging parents. Worksite wellness and dealing with stress were also covered. And the day culminated in inspirational presentations about one man’s massive weight loss battle and a challenge for Aurora to become the healthiest city in the world!

The Chamber greatly appreciates the support of this year’s sponsors, Cigna, The Medical Center of Aurora, University of Colorado Health, Kaiser Permanente, Children’s Hospital Colorado, SOS Healthcare Staffing, Aurora Mental Health Center, Aurora Credit Union Alliance, AMR, InnovAge, Tri-County Health Department, The YMCA, Pinnacol Assurance, Falck, CollegeAmerica, Parker Adventist Hospital, Weigh and Win, Radisson Hotel Denver Southeast, Catch it in Time, and Colin Spencer Productions.

Because it really does take a dedicated group of people to make an event happen, a very special thank you goes out to those who served on the planning committee:

- Chad Breeden, New Business Development, SOS Healthcare Staffing
- Amy Campodonico, Conference Services Manager, Radisson Hotel Denver Southeast
- Gabrielle Cardwell, Community Liaison, InnovAge Greater Colorado PACE - Chambers Center
- Gary Duke, Branch President, Guaranty Bank and Trust
- Judy Emery, Director, Colorado Urban Workforce Alliance
- Mike Fisher, Faculty Member, Regis University
- Michele Haugh, Worksite Wellness Coordinator, Tri-County Health Department
- Jacquie Healy, CEO and Owner, Trilogy Benefits, Inc.
- Nathan Mizel, Director of Career and Student Services, CollegeAmerica
- Megan Patton, Director of Sales and Marketing, Springhill Suites Denver @ Anschutz Medical Campus
- Keith Singer, Co-Founder, Catch it in Time
- Terry Spencer, Owner and Executive Producer, Colin Spencer Productions, LLC
- Laura Stephens, AVP of Marketing and Business Development, The Medical Center of Aurora
- Dennis Stretar, Independent Insurance Broker, Business Insurance Specialists
- Jeff Thompson, Director of Government and Corporate Relations, University of Colorado Health
- Christen Turk, Event Catering Manager, Radisson Hotel Denver Southeast
- Amy Wood, Senior Community Relations Specialist, Kaiser Permanente

And thanks to those who completed the survey; providing feedback as well as suggestions for Destination Health 2015 - which will be November 19, 2015 at the Radisson Hotel Denver Southeast.

Music to our ears

The Chamber’s Business for the Arts committee was treated to the harmonic sounds of the Rangeview Choir at their December 2 holiday meeting. Led by Music Director James Laguana – who is also the director of the Aurora Singers — the group sang some traditional holiday tunes, along with a fun wintertime song titled “Hot Chocolate.” The setting was festive at the Aurora History Museum, with the annual wreaths displayed and ready for bidding. (Photo courtesy Brian Molitoris Photographer)
Chamber members honored with Aurora Business Recognition Awards

Three Chamber member organizations were honored at the 10th annual City of Aurora Business Recognition Awards ceremony on December 4, 2014.

The event, this year emceed by Cheryl Braunschweiger of ALMC Mortgage @ Nova Home Loans, celebrates Aurora Businesses that make a difference in the community.

Colorado Medical Waste is a woman owned, locally operated company, specializing in environmentally-friendly collection, transport, treatment, and disposal of biohazard waste. Using Ozone Medical Waste Processing technology, waste volume is reduced up to 90 percent and shredded to a consistency similar to confetti, with zero emissions. The process eliminates environmental contamination and HIPPA non-compliance, and conserves natural resources.

Colorado Medical Waste’s President Beverly Hanstrom is dedicated to keeping Colorado a place to live, work, play, and raise children who follow the footsteps of preserving and protecting its beauty and natural resources. FirstBank has been one of Colorado’s largest banking institutions since 1963 — but it’s the local branch office that’s making a big difference in the community. The FirstBank at Havana and Iliff Streets is a neighborhood bank that serves the local Aurora small business owner by going above and beyond its scope of work to be of service — providing loans and resources to help businesses succeed.

FirstBank Branch Manager Dave Mittan is highly involved in the welfare of the community and serves on several non-profit organizations and boards (including the Chamber’s Leadership Aurora Board) — and encourages his employees to do the same.

Comitis Crisis Center is the only homeless shelter located in Aurora, serving families and individuals of all ages. For more than 40 years, Comitis has been providing safe shelter for individuals who find themselves homeless. Recently, Comitis has made huge strides toward eliminating homelessness and helping homeless female veterans in Aurora. Comitis also works with the Aurora Police Department to provide 24/7 emergency shelter during extreme cold weather.

Comitis CEO Robert “Bob” Dorshimer and his staff are dedicated to providing the homeless with a place to go, and if needed, mental health substance abuse treatment.

DAVA celebrates top honor

DAVA Job Training student Boris Cochajil and Executive Director Susan Jenson shared the stage with First Lady Michelle Obama in November, as they accepted a 2014 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award (NAHYP Award) on behalf of DAVA.

Each year, the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award recognizes 12 of the country’s best creative youth development programs for using engagement in the arts and humanities to increase academic achievement, graduation rates, and college enrollment.

Chosen from a pool of more than 350 nominations and 50 finalists, DAVA is one of the 12 organizations being honored.

Specifically, DAVA received the award for its Job Training in the Arts program. Youth in this program learn art, design, and computer fundamentals in addition to life skills, such as teamwork, responsibility, critical thinking, and practical problem solving.

“You teach kids more than just skills in the arts and humanities — you light a fire in them; you help them grow emotionally and socially,” said Mrs. Obama at the award ceremony. “And as all of you know, that has an impact on our kids not just their success in the arts and in the humanities but on their success in school and in life.”

“We are so proud of the young people in our Job Training programs whose ideas make our programs sing,” remarked Susan, “we celebrate their creativity, their dreams, and their conviction that the arts are an indisputably positive force in the vitality of our communities.”

Kiewit-Turner recognizes local veterans; donates to Fisher House

Kiewit-Turner recently donated $20,000 to the Denver Fisher House Foundation as part of their commitment to supporting and promoting quality care for veterans. The donation was announced as part of Kiewit’s annual Veteran Recognition Lunch, which included the participation of more than 150 local veterans, and 1,600 employees and guests.

At Kiewit, veterans are a vital part of our workforce. They share our core values and ‘nobody gets hurt’ safety mindset that we value above all else,” said Joe Lempka, president at Kiewit Building Group. “We are grateful and humbled by their bravery, service and sacrifice.”

“We are honored to join Kiewit in celebrating our veterans,” said Dave Duffy, project executive at Turner Construction. “This is but a small gesture of our appreciation for the service of veterans past, present and future.”

According to Melanie Starkman, president of the Denver Fisher’s House Foundation, the donation by Kiewit-Turner will go a long way in providing temporary housing to families of veterans undergoing medical treatment or hospitalization.

Mike Kuhn receives award from AFCEA

Mike Kuhn with CA Technologies, recently received a 2014 Distinguished Young AFCEAN Award from the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA). Through its annual awards program, AFCEA International recognizes the outstanding contributions of individuals in the communications, electronics, intelligence, and information technologies disciplines. Kuhn is a 2014 Leadership Aurora graduate.

Movie Tavern renovation offers comfort and convenience

Movie Tavern, a pioneer of in-theater dining, introduced $3 million in renovated amenities at its Aurora, CO location in October 2014. New features include reclining loungers in every auditorium, all-reserved seating capability, and a newly renovated lobby and bar area.

“We are thrilled about the upgrades we’ve made to our Aurora location as our guests will enjoy an even better in-theater dining experience at the same great value,” said Danny DiGiacomo, Director of Marketing for Movie Tavern.

Movie Tavern Aurora will continue full-service, in-theater dining in every auditorium, offering casual dining with a wide-range of [continued on page 5]
food, signature cocktails, and beer and wine options. Additionally, Movie Tavern will continue to host its family friendly Breakfast and Flick on Saturday and Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. Guests under 16 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian age 21 or older.

The theater is located at 18605 E Hampden Ave. in Aurora, CO. For more information on Movie Tavern, visit www.movietavern.com.

H&M opens first store in Aurora

Southlands Shopping Center celebrated the grand opening of H&M, one of the world’s largest fashion retailers, in October 2014. The 21,000 square foot store features apparel as well as accessories, shoes and cosmetics.

Established in Sweden in 1947, H&M is one of the world’s largest fashion retailers with a mission to offer fashion and quality at the best price including its designer collaborations and quick-to-market versions of runway fashions.

Jeff Nemec, Southlands’ general manager noted, “The opening of H&M at Southlands is exciting - as we continue to recruit top retailers to complement our existing store mix and to better serve our customers and community at large.”

The GBSP gets national accreditation

The Global Business Solution Providers (The GBSP) in Aurora has been officially recognized as Nationally Accredited for Administration of Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs (NAADATP) by the Drug and Alcohol Testing Industry Association. This accreditation means that their facility, operations, and personnel meet the highest standards in areas such as regulatory compliance, client confidentiality, accountability, company service standards, operational practices, business ethics, and professional competency for drug and alcohol testing program management. A primary requirement of the NAADATP Program is that principal(s) of The Global Business Solution Providers management have passed an industry developed exam on these policies and procedures.

The GBSP provides drug and alcohol program management, drug testing, background screening, and mobile fingerprinting. Learn more at www.thegbsp.com.

SSFCU supports National Guard and Reserves

Security Service Federal Credit Union (SSFCU) is once again showing its support of military men and women. SSFCU President and CEO Jim Laffoon, recently joined representatives of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve and signed a Statement of Support for those serving in our National Guard and Reserve.

“Founded in 1956 as the credit union for Air Force members on Security Hill at Kelly Air Force Base, we have a long history with the brave men and women who serve in our armed forces,” said Laffoon. “We recognize the extraordinary values, leadership, and unique skills they bring as employees at Security Service, and want to send a clear message that we understand, support, and deeply appreciate their patriotic duties.”

The Statement of Support confirms Security Service’s commitment to:
• fully recognize, honor and enforce the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act (USERRA);
• provide managers and supervisors with the tools they need to effectively manage employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve;
• encourage opportunities to hire Guardsmen, Reservists and Veterans; and
• recognize and support our country’s service members and their families in peace, in crises, and in war.

Paty named Hoteller of the Year

Allen Paty has been named 2014 Hoteller of the Year by the Colorado Hotel & Lodging Association. Paty oversees the Doubletree Hotel by Hilton Denver Stapleton North and is the general manager of the Doubletree Hotel by Hilton Denver.

Parker Adventist Hospital opens new, patient-centered facilities at Southlands

Parker Adventist Hospital recently opened a freestanding Southlands Emergency Room and Southlands Neighborhood Health Center. Located at E-470 & Smoky Hill Road at Southlands Mall, the $20.5 million expansion was developed and designed to meet the community’s health needs and to provide solutions where identified gaps in health care services and resources exist.

Opening September 29, 2014, Centura Health Southlands, the Centura Health neighborhood health center, offers family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics and women's health. In addition, families have access to an array of ancillary services within the state-of-the-art facility, including physical therapy, outpatient lab and mammography.

On November 3, 2014, Southlands ER opened as a full-service, free-standing emergency room staffed by Parker Adventist Hospital physicians. The ER provides person-centric care, with improved patient flow, maximizing the amount of time staff spends at the bedside and reducing the amount of time patients spend in the ER.

For more information about the Parker Adventist Hospital freestanding ER and the Neighborhood Health Center visit www.parkerhospital.org/er and www.parkerhospital.org/southlands.

Correction: On page 8 of the November/December 2014 issue of the Chamber’s Impact newsletter, the Tips and Leads photo cutline should have included a photo credit:

Photo by Brian Molitoris Photographer.
It’s a first for Aurora! — Terrapin Care Station’s first Aurora store opened in October 2014, with Aurora City Council member Marsha Berzins and Mayor Steve Hogan helping Terrapin owner Chris Woods cut the ribbon. Since the passing of Amendment 64 in Colorado, those 21 years of age or older with a valid ID, can shop at retail recreational cannabis shops. The Terrapin Care Station at 11091 E. Mississippi Ave., Aurora, CO 80012 is open 8 am-10 pm daily. www.terrapincarestation.com 10/15/14 (Photo by Cannabis Camera.com)

A whole new vibe — Office Evolution Business Center Manager Eileen Proctor shows great enthusiasm after cutting the ribbon for the Southlands Mall location grand opening in November 2014. The Office Evolution at 6105 S. Main St., Suite 200, in Aurora, CO, is “a traditional office without the corporate vibe,” offering 22 executive suites, multiple conference rooms, a training center, an outdoor balcony, and free parking for tenants and guests. Amenities also include business mail service, 24/7 facility access, tech support, copiers, printers and fax, and phone answering service. www.officeevolution.com/aurora-co, 303-376-6323. 11/6/14

Know your own strength! — Daniel Floyd, General Manager of the Gold’s Gym at 15141 E. Mississippi Ave. in Aurora has some powerful help cutting the ribbon, including Gold’s Gym Aurora staff members, corporate representative Dell Lawhead, and Chamber Ambassadors. Gold’s Gym commitment to helping you “Know Your Own Strength” means more than just providing a great place to work out. It’s about community, it’s about people, and it’s about changing lives. Whether you’re a die-hard Gold’s Gym fan, an older adult wanting to stay in tip-top shape, or someone fighting diabetes, Gold’s Gym is committed to helping you be stronger. http://www.goldsgym.com/aurora/, 720-282-4435. 10/21/14.
Great food, great service any time you want it! — Hannah Kim, owner of two newly renovated Denny’s Restaurants, proudly cuts the ribbon and welcomes guests at each location to a complimentary Grand Slam Breakfast. Located at 14400 E. 6th Ave., Aurora, CO 80011 and 1505 S. Havana St., Aurora, CO 80012, Denny’s Restaurants have been known as America’s Diner for the past 60 years, where families are welcome to sit back, relax, and enjoy delicious, hearty meals 24/7, every day of the year! http://www.dennys.com. 12/3/14 and 12/10/14.

RIBBON CUTTINGS (con’t)

“The Aurora Chamber is the best in the State.”
— Lisa Buckley, CEO,
American Automation Building Solutions

Upcoming Events

Partners in Business
Jan. 26 | 11:45 am
Tips and Leads 2
Jan. 27 | 7:45 am
Women in Business
Jan. 27 | 12 pm
Chamber Board of Directors
Jan. 28 | 7:30 am
Member Orientation
Jan. 28 | 12 pm

February 2015

Business for the Arts
Feb. 3 | 8 am
Community College of Aurora Performing Arts Program
Tips and Leads 1
Feb. 3 | 11:45 am
Transportation
Feb. 4 | 7:30 am
Government Affairs
Feb. 5 | 7:30 am

Young Professionals
Feb. 6 | 12 pm
Dumping Debt
Partners in Business
Jan. 9 | 11:45 am
Tips and Leads 2
Feb. 10 | 7:45 am
Ambassador Team
Feb. 11 | 7:30 am
ChamberMaster Training
Feb. 11 | 12 pm
Leadership Aurora Board
Feb. 11 | 4 pm
Healthcare
Feb. 12 | 8 am
Healthcare Technology
Women Making a Difference “Unsung Hero” Luncheon
Feb. 13 | 11:30 am-1 pm
Doubletree Hotel by Hilton
Aurora-Denver
13696 E. Iliff Pl.
Aurora, CO 80014

President’s Day
Feb. 16
Chamber office closed
Tips and Leads 1
Feb. 17 | 11:45 am
Leadership Aurora
Feb. 19 | 7:30 am – 5 pm
Healthcare Session
Partners in Business
Feb. 23 | 11:45 am
Tips and Leads 2
Feb. 24 | 7:45 am
Chamber Board of Directors
Feb. 25 | 7:30 am
Defense Council
Feb. 26 | 7:15 am

Business After Hours
Feb. 26 | 5-7 pm
Beverage Distributors
14200 E. Montcrieff Pl., Suite E
Aurora, CO 80011
The Best Class Ever 2015, met bright and early at the Aurora Municipal Center for our November 2014 class. Greg Baker, City of Aurora Water and Leadership Aurora Board Member, served as the emcee to introduce the speakers, including Kevin Hougen, President of the Aurora Chamber; Skip Noe, Aurora City Manager, and Aurora Mayor Steve Hogan — who collectively told us more about our fair city than I would have imagined possible in such a short amount of time.

Mock City Council

Following the presentations, there was a “Mock City Council Meeting.” For this unique experience, we were assigned the issue of whether the Council should put before Aurora’s voters the decision to become a city/county. We split into five groups representing the City Council and Mayor, a group supporting the change, those against the change, representatives from Arapahoe and Adams Counties, and John Q. Public. We only had 10 minutes to prepare, but with City Council staff assistance, we were ready! Each group selected a spokesperson to present their 3-minute arguments to the Council. The City Council members, led by Mock-Mayor/Doctor Bobby Pace (Community College of Aurora) looked so regal and wise sitting up in the Council dais. Nikki Jackson (Sustainable Storytelling) presented a compelling “pro” argument around the public’s desire for ease and transparency; Pastor Gene Roncone (Highpoint Church) made an elegant, well-crafted, 5-point argument against conversion; Amanda Marosy (Aurora Mental Health Center) dazzled the Council members - frankly, all of us - with her well-researched statistics and documentation, and Kevin Q. Carlson/Public (Kevin Carlson Golf) removed his hat when asked to do so. While we had a little fun with this exercise – in fact, Mayor/Doctor Bobby had to call security to remove one rowdy audience member, but turned out the rowdy himself was a cop — which of course, complicated things a bit. It was an incredible learning experience.

Mayor Hogan, who critiqued our performance, thought we did a fine job. And the Council voted for the motion, to let the Aurora voters decide.

Wagner Equipment Tour

After lunch, we caravanned to Wagner Equipment. Mike Quirk, VP of Operations, offered a dynamic presentation about Wagner, located in Aurora since 1976, whose service area includes Colorado, New Mexico, West Texas, and Mongolia! We were all impressed and proud that Aurora is home to such a well-run, sophisticated, family company. And they give so much back to the community. For the past few years, Wagner had provided internships and good jobs to over 200 students from the Community College of Aurora.

Then we got to play with the big rigs! After donning orange vests and safety goggles, and getting a quick lesson on safety, we all got to actually use excavators! What an incredible opportunity.

Looking forward to Media Day in December.
New Chair for Healthcare

Keith Singer, Co-founder of Catch it in Time (CIIT), has taken on the leadership of the Chamber Healthcare committee, beginning December 2014. Keith has an extensive background in broadcasting and communications, and plans to use these skills to help member organizations navigate ‘the healthcare maze’ to benefit their businesses. He also has a passion for the promotion of cancer prevention and early detection awareness; hence the creation of CIIT in 2011 as a means to help spread the message that early detection must be part of everyday life.

The Chamber Healthcare committee held its first meeting in August 2011, following a series of discussion groups held to determine initial priorities for the new committee. Bob Barké, of BAR-K Insurance Solutions, led the discussion groups and served as chair of the committee 2011 through 2013.

The Healthcare committee served as the catalyst for Destination Health, which just completed its second successful year of sharing pertinent healthcare information with Chamber members and guests in a condensed, half-day format.

Much of The Aurora Chamber of Commerce’s success is due to members like Bob and Keith, who step forward to lead, offering their time and skills for the benefit of the membership and the community.

Successes and surprises at Aurora Chamber event

By Margarita Alarcon

What do business representatives, Miles the Broncos mascot, and scrambled eggs all have in common? They were some of the highlights at the Aurora Chamber of Commerce October Business Before Hours event held at the City of Aurora municipal building.

Xcel Energy sponsored the event hosted by the City of Aurora, which drew about 130 Chamber members, as part of the company’s Community Energy Efficiency Planning (CEEP) pilot program. CEEP is a community relationship-building program offering energy strategy planning and execution for communities like Aurora, that will be completed by January 2015.

When Miles wasn’t scene-stealing, Margarita Alarcon, CEEP Aurora program lead, alongside several DSM program managers, account managers and area managers, discussed key business, renewable and residential energy conservation programs. Participants brought their energy efficiency questions to the Xcel Energy team, creating lively exchanges and several on-the-spot energy analysis assessment sign-ups.

Two club-seat Broncos tickets were raffled to one lucky winner, drawn by Miles the Mascot — and that winner was Renee Leon, owner of Auto Pros. Others walked away with cash gift cards, a Broncos-branded jacket, and a hoodie.

“The event was a successful networking opportunity and a way to have a fun time engaging with our customers,” said Alarcon, senior product portfolio manager, DSM Marketing. “Our customers were happy to learn how to start their energy efficiency journey - as it can be a complex process. We’re here to make it easier for them to save energy.”

The general staff, along with the DSM and renewable energy product team representing Xcel Energy, included: Alarcon, Parker Cohn, Kevin Cray, Sam Domeier, Tom Henley, Kristin Leiker, Bob Macauley, Darryl Presley, Clayton Reed (CLEAResult) and Brian Tholl (Franklin Energy).

“We viewed the success of this event as three-fold in relationship building among Xcel Energy, Aurora businesses and the Broncos,” added Karen Hancock, planning supervisor with the City of Aurora. “We anticipate that the businesses that attended will apply some of the energy efficiency projects they learned about, and that will help meet our overall city goals to reduce and conserve energy.”

Join the Chamber community in wishing George a fun-filled and amazing retirement journey, after 15 incredibly-energetic years with the Chamber! We will celebrate the stories and the memories — as well as toast to his future.
An attitude of gratitude: Go for the threefold effect

Gratitude is one of the highest ranking emotions - right up there with love.

I am always amazed at how well-received a simple handwritten thank you card is. Think about it: When you go to the mail and spot an envelope different from the others, you usually want to open that one first to see if it is indeed a card and, if so, who it’s from. If you are anything like me, you become filled with anticipation and excitement, and if you are the mushy type, after opening and reading it you are left with a warm fuzzy feeling that touches your soul.

Tips for adding more gratitude in your life:
- Create a daily gratitude journal and jot down 5-10 things you are grateful for - preferably in the last 45 minutes of your day.
- Adopt a “send a thank you card a day” routine.
- Tell your friends, family, colleagues, and significant others what you appreciate about them on a regular basis and just watch the magic transform!

Teri Karjala is the owner of Creative Counseling Center, LLC, and is licensed in the State of Colorado as a Professional Counselor, as well as a Marriage and Family Counselor.