

Home
News Stories
Policies, Procedures & Forms
Vision & Key Initiatives
Associate Directory and New Hires
Stromberg Timekeeping
Events & Volunteer Opps.
Charities & Sponsorships
Assoc-Only Bulletin Board
Job Openings
Links
Pride in Product: Q&A
Tools & Tips
Ad Deadlines
Access Sales
Freedom Freebies
GTU
Kudos
Press Run Schedule

## Weathering the Storm-The Gazette pulls together during an early season blizzard

By Kate Jonuska, Special Sections

In the state of Colorado, residents have come to expect the unexpected in terms of weather. Storms appear from blue skies, record-breaking snowfall can melt within hours under a warm sun, and the weathermen do their best to keep up.

So when locals heard about the meteorologists' predictions for Thursday, Oct. 26, they naturally took the forecast with a grain of salt. Would there really be a blizzard? Would it actually be that severe?

Given the ever-changeable nature of Colorado Springs' weather, it is understandable that most residents doubted the forecast. But as the area's local source of news, The Gazette doesn't have the luxury of being unprepared. When the city awoke to heavily falling snow and powerful winds, Gazette associates were ready and willing to tackle the challenge of delivering the news despite this early season blizzard.

### On your doorstep...

Much to the surprise of many subscribers who settled in for the storm, with no intention of braving the weather, their local delivery service took no such holiday. "It was a great day to stay in, drink a cup of coffee and read the paper, and to my shock I was able to do just that," said Rich Bennett, a Gazette subscriber who lives near North Powers Boulevard and Austin Bluffs Parkway.

Bennett had a 2-foot snow drift against his garage that morning, amid which he found his Gazette, and offered kudos to his delivery person "for bracing the weather and delivering the paper... on this blizzard day."

Even farther outside the city, in areas harder hit by the blizzard, The Gazette's delivery service was still operational. Dan Dueber, The Gazette's interim publisher, resides in such an area. The mail did not arrive, his trash was not picked up, and the snowplow missed his street, but The Gazette was still on his driveway.

"As I left my driveway for work, it seemed like I was driving cross country through a glacial wasteland," Dueber said. "It was remarkable to me that the carrier was able to deliver in my neighborhood."

These deliveries were completed thanks to independent contractors, and associates like Ron Anderson, single copy district sales manager, who ran a single copy route when its regular carrier was unable and rescued another carrier stuck in the snow near Monument. "We could not have completed those routes without him," said Jay Casson, single copy operations manager.

It was a team effort to surmount the snow to deliver papers. According to Cory Arcarese, circulation vice president, "Our organization can be confident in knowing that our delivery team will go the extra mile to get the job done."

### Braving the journey...

And it wasn't just The Gazette's delivery associates and independent contractors — the men and women on the front lines — who braved the winter day. Some of the dedicated in-office staff went to amazing lengths in their devotion to not only print the paper, but to put out a quality product, too.

Brad Shaw, I.T. director, was surprised to see employee Eric Bank in the office bright and early at 7 a.m. that Thursday. "He was about the last person anyone expected to see that day," Shaw said, explaining that Bank lives on the other side of Pikes Peak.

Regardless of the distance, Bank had struggled his way into the office to check on the advertising servers and users who might need help. With the threat of losing power, he also completed a new

insert-scheduling server for the packaging center and confirmed it was connected to a reliable power source.

After completing everything that could not be done remotely, Bank tried to return home, only to meet road closures, white-out conditions and slow going. In fact, his own street was still impassible, forcing him to travel uphill on foot through a half-mile of waist-deep snow to his front door.

"Once home," Shaw said, "Eric continued to keep an eye on classified production (remotely) until everything was clear for the night."

Some dedicated associates, like Bank, found their way to 30 S. Prospect St. by car. Others braved the journey on foot. One such associate was Terri Guerrero, account specialist, who lives near the office, on the other side of Union Boulevard. Even though she was not considered essential personnel, she didn't receive a call telling her not to come in.

"I figured that I was so close. I was the easiest person to get in if no one else could get here," Guerrero said. Despite the blizzard conditions, she claimed, "The walking itself wasn't that bad. I have a great coat. Thank God for that." Instead, it was the wind on her face as she walked along East Pikes Peak Avenue that chilled her to the core. "It (the wind) threw back my hood. I walked into the office like a wet dog."

### A little help from friends...

Guerrero also sung the praises of The Gazette's maintenance staff, who worked hard to clear sidewalks and parking areas for associates. In fact, it was maintenance mechanic Kevin Mueller who saved her from making the same, cold trip home. "He saw me walking by the hospital when I came in. He was plowing. He said to let him know when I was ready to go home," she said, offering Mueller "a great big thanks" for helping her return home safe, sound and dry.

Despite the cold wind outside, the office was the scene of many warm feelings during the blizzard. The whole crew thanked Brandy Underwood, production administrator, and Vicki Cederholm, advertising operations director, for taking care of associates' stomachs while they took care of The Gazette. These two ladies dedicated themselves to providing both lunch and dinner for the onsite staff that day.

Irene Fronda, the senior customer service assistant who joined the feast, related, "I was touched that somebody thought enough about those that were here to feed them. Everything was closed down downtown, so we couldn't have even gone across the street for food." The lunch Fronda enjoyed was a large spread of pizza, sweet snacks, fruit and soda.

While the office may have been quiet, the atmosphere was definitely one of dedication to a shared job and to one another. "I was in awe of the camaraderie throughout the building," Fronda said. "Normally, lots of people don't work that close together, but everyone got together to make sure we had what we needed done."

### "You are our heroes..."

These few stories are only a selection of many more. Despite the fierce winds and slick roads, Gazette associates braved this October storm to continue to deliver the news in our trusted, reliable fashion. Some furthered that mission on the streets, physically delivering The Gazette. Others braved flickering power in the office, unsure of the conditions they would find on their way home. Even the associates who stayed off the roads, safe at home, did their part by dialing into e-mail, voicemail and ACCESS remotely.

"From the mailroom clerk who rode his bicycle from Powers Boulevard all the way to work, to all the pressroom, mailroom, operations, circulation, ad services, advertising, news, I.T., finance, and H.R. folks who literally risked their lives to get to work, we thank you," said interim publisher Dueber. "You are heroes of our newspaper."

On Thursday, Oct. 26, The Gazette staff proved that despite the unpredictability of Colorado's weather, there are a few things our subscribers can count on, including receiving quality news in a reliable fashion despite the obstacles thrown in the way. Though this particular storm arrived very early in the season, those subscribers can feel

confident that their local paper will continue to take care of them — and each other — no matter what the rest of the winter brings.

TOLL FREE  
Subscriber Services  
(866) 632-NEWS  
(6397)  
Classified  
Ad Placement  
(719) 444-SELL  
(7355)

Tip of the Day



Benefits  
Open  
Enrollment  
Nov. 13-27

You must  
re-enroll  
for  
benefits or  
you won't  
have any in  
2007!