



# Wellington

## AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

CHAMBER MEMBER BUSINESS OF THE MONTH: High Country Conservatory of Music and Dance



## Wellington's Premier Music & Dance Class / Instruction Studio

**Our Goal** at HCCD is to provide a professional studio where dancers can develop to their fullest potential the art of dance, as well as develop self-discipline, self-esteem, and confidence. HCCD also fosters a wholesome environment where students can have fun and make friends.

Whether you want to become a national competitor, performer, or dance strictly for fun and exercise, HCCD can take you all the way!! High Country Conservatory of Music and Dance (Fort Collins & Wellington, CO) is a nationally recognized dance school that is proud to provide premier dance classes and instruction to students of all ages and skill levels in Fort Collins, Wellington, Loveland and Northern Colorado.

High Country Conservatory of Music and Dance provides music and dance instruction in Fort Collins & Wellington, CO. Dance instruction include **Tap, Ballet, Jazz, Modern, Lyrical, Hip Hop** and **Clogging**. Professional dance classes are available for everyone from young to old, the inexperienced to professional dancers.

**About Us.** Originally formed in 1999 as a dance school, High Country Conservatory of Music & Dance has risen from its humble beginnings in a neighborhood garage to become a nationally recognized school known for its creativity, strong technique, choreography, power, precision, and amazing costumes. Over the years many of the school's members have toured nationally and internationally, sharing their talents with people from across the globe. As well as performing, many of the students have competed extensively in various venues around the country.

More recently, High Country has opened up a Music & Voice program with the same focus on excellence and training as its dance program. HCCD's Directors, Rick & Michelle Meehleis, were inducted into the NCHC "All Star Hall of Fame," and were honored in front of the "House of Representatives" for their contribution to the arts and the youth in their area!

**Summer Camps.** Enrich your child's summer & keep them active with one of HCCD's summer camps! Dance, not only teaches your child valuable skills, but it also provides a fun way to stay active and moving. A summer camp is the perfect way to try something new, enhance existing skills, and make new friends.

**Dance. What makes us different?** The Finest in Dance Instruction...High Country Conservatory of Dance is proud to provide premier dance instruction to students of all ages and skill levels in Northern Colorado. Formed in 1999, HCCD has brought together nationally accredited instructors and directors who have had years of experience in their respective dance regimes. The instructors at HCCD are carefully chosen for their expertise, style, and teaching abilities. It is true that although one can learn to dance well, that doesn't necessarily mean that one can teach well. HCCD instructors can do both. Each style of dance is taught by instructors who are specifically skilled in that art form. The classes combine strong technique (an item which is essential in a good dancer) with fun-filled classes. At HCCD we care about our students. Each is looked at individually and focused on. This factor helps create a wholesome and caring environment which we feel is so important to each student's development!

**More Performance Opportunities.** As dance is a "performing art," HCCD feels that performing is an essential part of a dancers training. Unlike many studios that have one big end of the year performance, HCCD has year-round performance opportunities.

**Conservatory versus Studio.** What is the difference between a "studio" and a "conservatory"? A conservatory is a "school." There are many dance studios that hold dance classes but do not have a set curriculum they follow. Thus, every teacher is free to teach whatever he, or she wants. HCCD has a levels program and a strict curriculum that is followed which keeps dancers on the right track. In conjunction with this program, regular evaluations and report cards are mailed home every other month to inform the parents/students of the progress made.

**Levels Program.** In his groundbreaking book, *The Game of Work*, Charles Coonradt says that scorekeeping stimulates us to create more of the positive outcomes we're keeping track of. It actually reinforces the behavior that created these outcomes in the first place (Jack Canfield, *The Success Principles*). High Country Conservatory of Dance offers premier level programs that do the "scorekeeping." These programs are designed to show a student's progress and award his/her achievements. At HCCD all dancers are focused on individually, using the levels and evaluation programs that are specifically geared for each style of dance. These special programs allow our instructors and

*continued on page 2*

**Saturdays: June-October 2017****WELLINGTON'S FARMERS MARKET**

9:30 am - 1:30 pm

Centennial Park, 3rd and Harrison, Wellington  
SNAP Benefits accepted.**Tuesday, June 6th (No meeting in July)****NETWORKING & EDUCATIONAL BREAKFAST**

7:30 am

Taco Johns - 7910 6th Street, Wellington

New meeting format allows more networking time to benefit you and your business!

**Thursday, June 8th****BUSINESS AFTER HOURS****HOSTED BY: FRONTIER INSURANCE & BUSINESS CARD FACTORY OF COLORADO**

5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Event held at Frontier Insurance

4012 Cleveland Avenue, Suite 4, Wellington

**Tuesday, June 14th****PROMOTIONAL CEREMONY: WELLINGTON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT 2017, STATION #1**

5:15pm

Station #1- 8130 3rd Street, Wellington

Formally recognizing Lieutenants Aaron Rudisill, Michael Evans, and Matthew Morris (Paramedic); Driver/Operators Randon Grimes (Paramedic), Max Maison, Robert Lawrenz; and Firefighters Amanda Berry, Nicholas Concialdi (Paramedic), Joshua Palmer, Jeffrey Jones, Jonathan Callahan, and Dustin Delfs.

**June 17th, July 15th and August 19th****WELLINGTON COLORADO MAIN STREETS 2017****SUMMER CONCERT SERIES:****FEATURED BY: TABBY ROAD ANIMAL HOSPITAL**

Centennial Park | 3815 Harrison Avenue

Saturdays 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

JUNE 17: My Blue Skye (A Tribute to the Allman Brothers)  
Mat Skinner Band (Americana Music)

JULY 15: Switchman Sleeping (A Tribute to the Grateful Dead), Goatz (Country / Americana Music)

AUGUST 19: Hey Lady (A Tribute to the B-52's)  
The Coteries (Folk Music)**Saturday, June 17th****APPRECIATION DAY: WELLINGTON VETERINARY HOSPITAL'S COMMUNITY APPRECIATION EVENT**

10:00 am to 1:00 pm

Wellington Veterinary Hospital | 7837 6th Street

Join us for a community appreciation event as we celebrate and say thank you Wellington for your support over the last 18 years! Featuring children's activities from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

the directors to target the needs of each dancer – something extremely important at HCCD. Every two months students receive a copy of their current level showing the steps and techniques they have mastered. In addition to this, they receive comments from their instructors on their accomplishments, future goals, and what to work on! This “one-on-one” approach prevents any student at HCCD from “falling through the cracks.” This also allows each parent the opportunity to know exactly where their child is in the levels' program and how they are progressing.



**Music & Voice. What makes us different?** The Finest in Instruction. High Country Conservatory of Music is proud to provide premier music and voice instruction to students of all ages and skill levels in Northern Colorado. Our instructors are carefully chosen for their expertise, teaching style and for their ability to relate to the typical needs of each student. The classes combine strong technique (an item which is essential in a musician) with fun-filled classes. At HCCD we care about our students. Each is looked at individually and focused on. This factor helps create a wholesome and caring environment which we feel is so important to each student's development!

**Curriculum.** HCCD has a set curriculum for its music students. There are some excellent materials developed by professional music educators that are made for students in a variety of situations. For example in piano, there are books for very young beginners, and books for adult students that have never played before. There are books that can start you at a level you are comfortable with. These materials have been researched and are continually upgraded and improved to make learning easier. These materials ensure that no important part of learning the instrument can inadvertently be left out. If you ever have to move to a different part of the country, qualified teachers and institutions will recognize the materials and be able to smoothly continue from where the previous teacher left off.

**Recitals.** HCCD will have music recitals throughout the year for students to perform in. We feel it is a vital part of each student's education. In order for students to feel comfortable playing in public, they need to have multiple opportunities to perform in front of an audience.

**Professional Setting for Study.** Learning music is not just a matter of having a qualified teacher, but also having an environment that is focused on music education. In a professional school environment a student cannot be distracted by TV, pets, ringing phones, siblings or anything else. With 30-60 minutes of lesson time per week, a professional school environment can produce better results since the only focus at the time is learning music. Students in a school environment are also motivated by hearing peers who are at different levels and by being exposed to variety of different instruments. In a music school, the lessons are not just a hobby or side-line for the teacher but a responsibility which is taken very seriously.



Michelle Meehleis  
info@highcountrydance.com

7670 5th Street, Suite #200  
Wellington, Colorado 80549

[www.highcountrydance.com](http://www.highcountrydance.com) | (970) 225-0600



(970) 221-5400  
1550 E. Harmony Road, 2nd Floor  
Fort Collins, CO 80525  
www.bizwest.com

## Welcome to Wellington Colorado, Home to New Businesses and Residents

(By Wendell Nelson / Past Chair of Wellington Area Chamber Of Commerce - April 14th 2017)

Our great town is very familiar to those traveling Interstate 25 and Colorado Highway 1 between Fort Collins and Cheyenne. More people are familiar with Wellington because its rapid growth has been the topic of conversation and articles in newsprint.

Housing subdivisions are visible on Highway 1 and on both sides of I-25 as you approach Wellington. This provides a large diversity of living facilities from single-family homes on large lots to multifamily units. The result has been a change in population — from 6,700 in 2013 to approximately 9,000 in 2017. Families with children are a large part of our growth due to the affordability of houses and the great family environment in Wellington.

A rapid increase in school-age population has put a strain on our school capacity. However, we have a new middle school/high school coming by 2020.

At the same time, we're still maintaining a small-town atmosphere. Residents comment on the great feel of the town with its many parks and trails, businesses and activities. The schools in Wellington have a great reputation, both locally and nationally, for the quality and results of their programs. Residents can enjoy this town and still have quick access to Cheyenne, Fort Collins, Loveland and points south, local open space and the mountains without significant traffic delay.

Our Main Street Program is embarking on an aggressive downtown revitalization plan that will guide future redevelopment of the Cleveland Avenue historic core. David Michaelson, executive director of the program, notes that "Wellington has all the physical, historical and human scale attributes to become one of the most inviting down towns in Colorado."

Improvements envisioned by the plan include sidewalk bulb-outs at strategic intersections, modifications in traffic flow through the main street, in-fill and design guidelines, locally designed and fabricated contemporary bike racks, public art and streetscape improvements. Opportunities for retail commercial development are available along Cleveland Avenue and other parts of Wellington. We will be welcoming a new restaurant and an O'Reilly auto parts store, along with several new personal services business.

The Wellington Chamber of Commerce has more than 100 business members and provides support and exposure of its business members through chamber events and printed material. The Ambassador program keeps the chamber in tune with member needs, wants and problems.

Community activities sponsored by the town, Main Street Program, Chamber of Commerce and local businesses keep the residents and visitors engaged throughout the year. The large Fourth of July celebration, including a great parade and outstanding fire works program, antique car show, booths, competitions and activities for the children, is a yearly occurrence. Other activities include an Easter Egg Hunt, concerts and movies in the park, Farmer's Market, disc-golf tournament, Halloween "Trick or Treat Down Main Street", Parade of Lights and many others. These activities make the town a fun place to live.

Businesses are critical for long-term sustainability of Wellington from the standpoint of jobs and tax income and meeting the personal needs of the residents. Since the economic slowdown, the commercial development in Wellington has started to grow along with the residential growth. Within the town limits, three commercial parks, 30 to 50 acres each, are in various stages of infill. Two of these parks have I-25 visibility. In the last 12 months, approximately 50,000 square feet of commercial floor space has been sold or leased, and approximately 25,000 square feet is currently available in these parks. There is a cement plant on site and a railroad siding two miles away. Our welcome mat is out for new entrepreneurs and those needing expansion space for their growing business.

Access to Wellington is quick and convenient for visitors, residents and business needs because the Town straddles I-25 at exit 278. When you turn off I-25, you are in Wellington. Wellington is 10 minutes north of Fort Collins and 30 minutes south of Cheyenne.

It is a great place to live and do business!

### Saturday, July 15th

4TH ANNIVERSARY COMMUNITY PICNIC:  
TABBY ROAD ANIMAL HOSPITAL  
11:00 am to 1:00 pm  
7200 5th Street, Wellington

### Wednesday, July 19th

▶ CULPEPPER & MERRIWEATHER CIRCUS  
2 Shows: 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm  
(Located across from Middle School / Eyestone on the Boy's & Girls Clubs vacant lot)  
Stay tuned for additional details!

### Tuesday, June 20th & July 18th

▶ CHAMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
8:00 am  
Wellington Housing Authority - 3914 Roosevelt, Wellington

### Tuesday, July 4th

4TH OF JULY CELEBRATIONS IN WELLINGTON  
Parade down Cleveland Avenue, Vendors, Car Show and Motorcycle Show. All events will stay downtown.  
Stay tuned for additional details!

### Saturday, August 26th

▶ 4TH ANNUAL WELLINGTON DISC GOLF TOURNAMENT 'CHAMER 2 ROUNDS'  
Check-in & Registration 9:00 am - First Round 10:00 am  
Wellington Disc Golf Course, 3rd Street & Mt. Oxford Street  
(Located at Rice Elementary School)  
Singles Tourney, 2 Rounds of 18

### Friday, October 6th

▶ 'DENIM & DIAMONDS' ANNUAL DINNER & MEETING  
Terry Bison Ranch Resort  
51 I-25 Service Road East, Cheyenne WY  
Stay tuned for additional details!

### WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS:

ADVANCED COMFORT SOLUTIONS, INC.  
COTTONWOOD LANDSCAPES  
COUNTRY FINANCIAL - DAVID WIEGAND  
DESIGN BUILDERS INC. OF NORTHERN COLORADO  
EAGLE i MEDIA, LLC  
FRONTIER BUSINESS PRODUCTS  
JOHN FERNANDEZ - NEW YORK LIFE  
LAXCO INC.  
LOVE OF CHRIST MINISTRIES, INC.  
OWL CANYON COFFEE  
SIMON CONTRACTORS  
TERRY BISON RANCH RESORT  
SAFEGUARD  
TREE TOP, INC.

## Chamber Now Offers A New Membership Level for HOME BASED BUSINESSES

### \$96/yr (Pro-rated \$8/mth)

*(Home Based Investments may only remain at this level for two full years, plus a partial initial year, if applicable. After these two renewals, the membership must be upgraded to a Business or Business Plus level.)*

#### BENEFITS:

- ✓ **1 FREE** Business After Hours pass per event
- ✓ **FREE** monthly Networking and Educational Breakfast meetings with guest speakers
- ✓ **FREE** advertising in the Wellington Welcome Packets (\$100 annual charge for non-members)
- ✓ Listing in the online Membership Directory
- ✓ 20% discount to any Larimer Small Business Development Center class attendee who is/identifies them selves as a Wellington Chamber Member
- ✓ Business entry in the Wellington Community Guide & Membership Directory
- ✓ Eligible to participate in the Chamber Bucks Program
- ✓ Membership certificate

#### CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP:

- ✓ Does not include a ticket to the Annual Dinner & Meeting. Dinner tickets can be purchased separately
- ✓ Not eligible for the \$50 'Sweetheart Deal' discount for \$96 renewals, but are eligible for the 'Sweetheart Deal' when upgrading to a higher membership level
- ✓ Not eligible for Board of Directors membership, but may serve on committees

#### REQUIREMENTS TO QUALIFY:

- ✓ Must operate out of a residential address, not a commercial site
- ✓ No more than two employees in addition to the proprietors
- ✓ Not more than \$75,000 annual revenue (self-certified, no financial statements necessary)
- ✓ If business size increases above these limits, member must upgrade to a higher level membership
- ✓ Existing Chamber members may not downgrade to Home Based Business level



4006 Cleveland Avenue | Wellington, CO 80549  
(970) 568-4133 | [www.wellingtoncoloradochamber.net](http://www.wellingtoncoloradochamber.net)

**Rick Freeman / Vice Chairman for Membership**  
(970) 231-7596



(970) 221-0213  
3745 Cleveland Avenue, Wellington  
[www.northfortynews.com](http://www.northfortynews.com)

Blue Federal Credit Union was awarded with six Diamond Awards by the Credit Union National Association Marketing and Business Development Council. The awards were presented at a special ceremony during the council's 24th annual conference in San Antonio, Texas on March 31. CUNA is comprised of over 1,200 marketing and business development professionals across the country.

The most prestigious annual credit union industry competition, the Diamond Awards recognize and reward creative excellence and outstanding results of credit union marketing and business development achievements. Awards are given in each of 30 categories ranging from advertising to community events and beyond.

"We are beyond thrilled to be recognized by the CUNA Marketing and Business Development Council for many of our marketing efforts in 2016," said Michele Bolkovatz, vice president of marketing at Blue.

Blue won awards specifically for four marketing campaigns that took place throughout 2016. The "Wyoming Proud" campaign won in the category of Diamond in the Rough; the campaign celebrated Blue's strong roots in Cheyenne, and offered Wyoming members a unique debit card to showcase their Wyoming pride.

To further honor the Credit Union's strong roots and history in Cheyenne, the "Our Town" pop-up event campaign illustrated Blue's appreciation for local communities and won in the Multifaceted category. Blue partnered with local Cheyenne and Laramie businesses to offer free lunch, coffee, and beer to community members at special pop-up events occurring during the summer of 2016.

"2016 was a year of many changes at Blue, and we wanted to show our members and our Wyoming communities that although our name has changed, we're still the same local and convenient credit union we've always been," said Bolkovatz. "We are proud of the success of the Wyoming Proud and Our Town campaigns and grateful to be recognized for them at the Diamond Awards."

Blue's "Rewards for Life" campaign also won in the category of Membership Marketing. Blue's Rewards for Life member loyalty program launched in August 2016 and rewards loyal members with loan rate discounts, deposit rate increases, and waived fees based on their loyalty status. Blue partnered with creative agency, Warehouse 21, out of Cheyenne for the Credit Union's rebranding in 2016 which included the Rewards for Life campaign.

Blue continued its do good mission with the "Do Gooders Unite" campaign in Fort Collins and Wellington, and won in the Diamond Award category of Complete Campaign. Blue had a mission to open 300 new checking accounts in the fall of 2016, and once that goal was reached the Credit Union donated \$20,000 to Fort Collins and \$10,000 in Wellington for new bike racks in the downtown areas.

Additionally, Blue won in the website category for their 2016 website redesign. Blue teamed up with Click Rain, a marketing technology agency based out of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, which specializes in website design and user experience. Finally, Blue was also awarded in the Plastic Access Card Designs category for the Credit Union's loyalty suite of debit card designs featuring the Wyoming Proud buffalo, the CSU Rams, and CSU Aggies cards.



Ridley's Market, In-Store 7670 5th Street | Wellington, CO 80549  
Toll Free (800) 368-9328 | [www.bluefcu.com](http://www.bluefcu.com)

**David Moody**  
(307) 432-5376

## COTTONWOOD LANDSCAPE - April 13th, 2017

Kevin Lyon, owner of Cottonwood Landscape, was welcomed by the Wellington Area Chamber Of Commerce during their Ribbon Cutting Event & Business After Hours. Cottonwood Landscape offers Commercial Landscaping, Deck Installation, Hardscaping and Land Grading & Excavation. Visit Kevin's photo gallery and read customer reviews at [www.fortcollinslandscapers.com](http://www.fortcollinslandscapers.com).



## TERRY BISON RANCH RESORT - May 11th, 2017

"The West The Way You Want It!" Dan Thiel, owner of Terry Bison Ranch Resort, was also welcomed by the Wellington Area Chamber Of Commerce during their Ribbon Cutting Event & Business After Hours. Between the Sunday Lunch Train, Bison Meats, Special Events like Dance in the Buff and the Dirty Dan Magee Burger or Steak Fry designed for the Motor Coach Industry. Terry Bison Ranch tries to offer every group something fun! Visit the ranch at [www.terrybisonranch.com](http://www.terrybisonranch.com).



# E Entrepreneur



Sujan Patel / Entrepreneur and Marketer, Co-Founder of ContentMarketer.io  
November 14, 2016

## 10 Unconventional Ways to Build Your Personal Brand

You won't find me regurgitating advice like, "Get out there and join networking events." I absolutely will not tell you to "be yourself."

Those things, and more, have been said repeatedly. How about something a little more actionable to help you build a personal brand?

So, think about something more actionable: If you want to stand out, you need to disrupt the norm. Here are 10 unconventional approaches to personal branding to try. Now, I don't recommend employing all of them. Instead, choose one, or a few, and tailor your approach to what works for you and your audience.

### 1. Target an influencer and build a relationship

Find influencers within your industry -- even mid-level people working on their own branding. Reach out to them directly and start building a relationship -- but not a "networking" relationship. Build a high-level relationship that graduates to a genuine friendship.

Having even just a small number of genuine friendships in your industry can have more impact than 100 people who "sort-of know" your brand.

### 2. Get obsessively good with a single marketing channel

Experts say you should have a robust content marketing and content promotion strategy across a number of channels. That advice isn't wrong, but it's a little lacking.

Watch some of the ways your audience digests content and then become a master of engagement and production value on that channel. Think in terms of how Gary Vaynerchuk focused on video to grow his family's Wine Library business.

Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos offered smart advice in this same regard when he said, "A brand for a company is like a reputation for a person. You earn reputation by trying to do hard things well."

### 3. Exercise confidence

This is about as conventional as I'll get for recommendations, because it's an important one. The more confident you are, the easier it will be to cross through uncharted waters and try new things to grow your personal brand. Find ways to exercise your confidence daily and step outside of your comfort zone.

### 4. Be a little silly

Everyone else will tell you to be "your best professional self." That's not bad advice, but it's boring. People want real human engagement. Your audience is more likely to connect with you if they feel a personal connection, and everyone is a little goofy inside.

I'm professional when I need to be, but I like to show my sense of humor in the right situations. Too many people suppress and hide personality traits, displaying strict professionalism when building a brand.

Be a little silly. Make faces in a Snapchat profile pic, as I do with mine. Have fun and give people a reason to pay attention.

### 5. Promote your content directly

Identify people that you want to follow you. Learn a little about them

through their social and shared content. Then go find content you think would be beneficial to them.

Share it with them, and tell them, "I saw you were interested in X, or had X problem, so I think this piece of content might interest you/be helpful."

This is how you delight customers and create raving fans.

### 6. Start a community

Start a community instead of joining one, like an online (or local) community group for a specific niche or an industry that you want to specialize in.

It doesn't even need to be fancy; every Facebook or LinkedIn group started with a single person with an idea. Be that person.



Credit: Shutterstock

### 7. Build content around others

Build content around other people, including influencers, to create a positive association between your own growing personal brand and theirs. You can do this through: Interviews, Co-authored content and Sponsoring content like webinars.

### 8. Call people on their bulls\*\*\*

I'm giving you express permission to stir up a little controversy. Sometimes you need to just go out and make some waves.

Find someone in your industry who doesn't quite have all the facts, or has a differing opinion or perspective. Get out there and engage with that person. Tag him (or her), comment and create a buzz. Keep it above the belt, but don't be afraid to flex a little.

As Peep Laja of the ConversionXL Institute says in his social bios, "I call your bullshit."

### 9. Leverage storytelling

The idea of getting attention through storytelling isn't new, but a surprising number of people still don't leverage it. More than 50 percent of B2B marketers still don't know what kind of content is effective. Even if they are trying to connect through stories, they're missing something.

That's an opportunity to work storytelling into your own branding strategy to make a more personal connection. It's unconventional because so few other people are doing it.

"The best stories have a human element," writes Patrick Armitage, director of marketing for BlogMutt. "Without a personal connection, a story is just information."

### 10. Do an 'AMA.'

Get on sites like Reddit and Quora to answer questions. An AMA (Ask Me Anything) on Reddit and similar communities is a great way to establish expertise within your industry. Just make sure your answers are accurate, and you're being authentic without trying to be promotional ■

**BizWest**  
BOULDER VALLEY • NORTHERN COLORADO



1550 E. Harmony Road, 2nd Floor  
Fort Collins, CO 80525  
www.bizwest.com

Tommy Wood | April 14th 2017

## Wellington grows up: Larimer County town sees home prices soar as housing stock upgrades

(By Kareen Kinzli Larsen / Chamber Member - April 14th 2017)

Seventeen years ago, when Kareen Kinzli Larsen started selling real estate with the Kinzli Team at Re/Max Alliance in Wellington, the town was at the start of its first major spurt of housing growth. That trend has continued, with a mid-2000s interruption, and it has Wellington on the cusp of what could be its next big explosion.

Larsen's family has been selling real estate in Wellington since the 1980s. She moved back there in 1999, became a certified Realtor and joined the business. In those days, Wellington was just building its first higher-density residential neighborhood. It quickly became the fastest-selling neighborhood in Larimer County, Larsen said.

"You get significantly more for your money in Wellington than you do in Fort Collins," she said, noting what was — and still is — one of the town's greatest attractions.

For much of its last decade-plus of housing growth, Wellington has been a "bedroom community" for Fort Collins, a place for people who work there but can't afford or don't want to pay its high housing rates.

Wellington, Larsen said, was well-suited to first-time homebuyers, retirees and anyone else looking for entry-level housing. That's not so much the case anymore. It's still dramatically cheaper than Fort Collins — Wellington has a median home price of \$311,200 (according to the Fort Collins Board of Realtors) and Fort Collins' is \$385,440 — but a new type of home is emerging in Wellington.

Just six years ago, Wellington's median home price was around \$180,000, Larsen said. The 72 percent increase it's seen over that time is partly because of the town's changing home-buying needs and partly the residual effects of the late-2000s housing crisis.

Wellington had a very high foreclosure rate from 2007 to 2012, and it still has the third-highest foreclosure rate of any community in Larimer County at one of every 1,710 housing units, according to data from RealtyTrac.com.

During the housing crisis, Wellington was left with numerous half-finished neighborhoods and housing developments, some with infrastructure, some without. Builders swooped in to buy lots on the cheap during the ensuing auctions — Larsen said that she and her husband even bought a pair for \$15,000 each.

"We're running out of lots to build houses on," she said.

Those "paper lots" are a large reason why Wellington saw a reduction in building permits in 2016 compared with 2015; the focus is on completing those, not building new neighborhoods. There's only one development, called Sage Meadows, that's waiting to break ground in the town.

Larsen also said that Wellington's median home price has increased so much because the town simply didn't have houses worth more than \$300,000 before. Up until the mid-2000s, she said, there was only one neighborhood in Wellington with prices that even touched \$300,000, and now the town has several.

Those houses are meant to appeal to a class of home buyer that Wellington wasn't necessarily catering to before — those who moved to Wellington to escape Fort Collins' prices and want to buy a second, bigger house in Wellington.

"There are buyers who look at prices compared to Fort Collins and buyers who establish in Wellington and are looking for an upgrade," Larsen said. "Our options have changed."

When asked why buyers would look for houses like that in Wellington as opposed to, say, Loveland, with a \$333,750 median home price that isn't astronomically more expensive than Wellington's, Larsen believed education was a big factor.

"We have the advantage of being in the Poudre School District while Loveland doesn't," Larsen said. "That's very high-priority for buyers that we work with. It's a way to get into the Poudre School District and still not pay Fort Collins prices."

## Wellington grows up



Credit: Joel Blocker for BizWest

Whether it's correlation or causation, this is coinciding with the start of some of the most serious commercial growth Wellington has yet seen. It started with Cameron Oil, which opened an oil and natural gas support services facility there in 2014. Since then, Larsen said, numerous light-industrial and commercial lots have started to fill up. Wellington has also seen lots of turnover in its main-street businesses, with old mainstays closing and new companies moving in. She declined to specify who or why, but Larsen also said that she's heard from businesses in Fort Collins that are either looking to move to Wellington or open a branch there. That would be a boon to a town that has been historically underserved in terms of restaurants and commercial opportunities.

All of this is as it inches closer to 10,000 people, which Larsen called the "magic number" for when a town really starts to explode. Wellington had 6,289 people in the 2010 census and 6,725 as of 2013. It may hit 10,000 by the end of the decade.

"I think people see opportunity here," Larsen said. "I think businesses are finally seeing at the new rooftops going in. I think Wellington is being noticed."

**Kinzli**  
Real Estate **Team**



Kinzli Team at Re/Max Alliance Brokers  
4006 Cleveland Avenue | Wellington, CO 80549  
www.kinzliteamrealestate.com

**Kareen Kinzli Larsen**  
(970) 568-3600