All industries are facing current change in the nation's recession, as economic conditions drive many decisions for doing business in a different way to stay afloat.

But last Thursday's announcement that Friday would see the last publication of the almost 150-year-old Rocky Mountain News hit the newspaper industry hard. The fact many of us were together for our annual Colorado Press Association convention led to extensive discussion.

It wasn't a complete surprise, as announcement had been made if a buyer wasn't found, the paper could fold. However, seeing the reaction on the faces of people very close to the situation as the announcement was stated, made it a grim reality which we could all relate to.

Rocky Editor and Publisher John Temple said in his editorial column in the Rocky's final edition, "You could say it's sad, and you'd be right, but you could also say that it's remarkable how long the Rocky survived."

Temple said he prefers to dwell on the second sentiment, in part "because it meshes with our view of this state's potentially boundless future and the expectation that better days await even most of those hit hardest by the current economic free fall."

Once the shock of the message was absorbed, I was proud of my colleagues who showed strength in defending an industry we believe in wholeheartedly.

While newspaper people talked of their quarterly week-long furloughs, mandated in order to save money, most still look with optimism to the future of newspapers.

Will we have to adapt to economic conditions? Of course. Will we have to think outside the box for online extensions of our printed copy in which we take much pride? Absolutely. Will we have to educate ourselves in the ways each generation wants to "get" the news? You bet. And will we have to retrain ourselves on the best source routes for info? Undoubtedly.

Outgoing CPA president Steve Henson of the Pueblo Chieftain described it well when he said newspapering isn't a job. "It's who we are."

As a newspaper industry, we discussed the significance of being in touch with our community. That emphasis is now magnified as economic struggles reign. In general, a fellow newspaper publisher said, it's the papers which are connected to and know their communities that will survive and thrive.

I don't claim to be on top of the latest in either computer or communication technology—just ask my children, who passed me by long ago. However, I felt I was making progress with an understanding of blogging, website loading, pdfs, Facebook and more.

Last weekend I heard more new foreign terms that I plan to check out. From twitter to tweeter, I'm in the dark, but hope to see the light soon with these social messaging utilities.

An online subscription base for the full edition of each week's Holyoke Enterprise—not just selected articles— is in planning stages.

From print to online, the service to our community is our focus. We will not falter in our traditional printed edition through any online advancement nor fade away from the community's view.

It is through the support of our community—readers, advertisers and news-makers—that we exist. And it is this community that we look forward to serving through good times and not so good.

The Holyoke Enterprise is here to stay.