

# Pete's Tour of Greeley

People who live in big cities don't have to think too hard about what to do when people come in from out of town, but in Greeley, you have to set yourself to thinking on it a bit.

Because the thing about Greeley is that it's really more a city to live in than it is a city to visit. I mean no disrespect to the city or any of its fine amenities, and in fact, I think it's a good thing. I'm happy to live somewhere that's suited to, well, living.

But if you're coming to Greeley and want to know some of the best stuff to do, this guide is for you. Well, sort of. It's really more FROM me, and it's FOR you provided you're the kind of person who likes what I like.

This is a highly subjective, more personal guide to where we would go and what we might do if you were a friend or a relative. These would be the Greeley things we'd probably check out.

I've kind of arranged these geographically, and by timing, and also a little by activity type. So I guess it's not really arranged much at all.

There are more restaurants than a normal person should visit in a single day, and lest you think I'm stumbling drunk all the time, I don't necessarily mean for you to have like 7 beers, either 😊

There are also many, many good things to do, see, eat, drink, and smell (YES, I SAID "SMELL") that I didn't include. This is like 10 pages long, and it's not like the local chamber of commerce paid me to do this, this is a labor of love. So, you know, deal with it, and I apologize to the many excellent options Greeley offers that I did not profile.

[Here's a link to a map that has the major stops listed in order.](#)

Geez, that's a really boring, business-like way to close this intro and dive in.

Woozle wuzzle?

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## Before You Even Start, The Smell:

If you insist on commenting on the smell, just know that MANY jokes have been made about it, so if you're breaking one off, it'd better be a banger. Shoot your shot, if you must, but make it a good one, and just know I'm a 40+-year Greeley resident, so I've heard A LOT of 'em.

And you get ONE. ONE attempt. One out of the entire day, so maybe think it over.

Sometimes it smells here, but not all that often, and it usually fades pretty fast.

Hey, every Colorado place has their thing.

Sometimes you get harassed by someone with a clipboard on Pearl Street.

Sometimes a rat runs across your foot at a burger place in Denver.

Sometimes you get through Loveland on HWY 34 in a reasonable amount of time (this was supposed to be bad things, but also rarities, so I had to make a choice on this one).

If you're afraid to visit Greeley because you've heard it smells, just stay home, then, in your perfect little bubble that NOBODY FARTS IN, EVER, apparently.

## First Thing in the morning, 7 AM, [La Petite French Bakery](#)

Listen, I know it's early, but we need to get in line here at 7:15 AM, maybe even a little earlier, for opening at 7:30. I'm not kidding, you almost can't get here early enough because everything sells out.

And that, my friends, is how you know a place is good.

They've got sweet stuff, savory stuff, they've got this one thing with potato in it, which is one of my favorites, it turns the humble potato into an amazing, delicious pastry. I think the potato is kind of the perfect food unit, but the chef over at La Petite has spit in the face of nature and improved upon one of its greatest creations.

I'm not sure how he would feel about me saying that making a great pastry from a potato is the equivalent of spitting in the face of nature, so don't tell him I said that.

## While I wait in line, you hit [Margie's Java Joint](#)

It's a coffee shop with a creepy baby embedded in the floor. There are many, many nice places to get a cup of coffee in Greeley ([John Galt](#) is probably 2 minutes east on the same street and is also a great option, Aunt Helen's is very close to LINC and kind of a downtown staple), but I think Margie's has the market cornered in terms of being a quintessential near-campus coffee shop that also has a portal to horror that you can step on.

If you're an out-of-towner and want to blend in (GET IT!? Blend, like a coffee bean blend!?), know that everyone here just calls it "Margie's," and that it's pronounced like "Mar-geez" not like "Mar-geese." And feel free to tell them Largie Margie sent you. Nobody does that to my knowledge, but I'd like to start it as a thing, if possible.

Also, check out the small market of locally-made artists' goods housed in the same space. And if that's your jam, right next door is Madison and Main Gallery, which is also a great place to find a Susan Haskins or Rodney Barnes or Danyelle Butler or Daniel Augenstein original. There are also pieces from people whose names don't start with "Dan," but we do like our Dans in the Greeley art scene.

## A Walk on UNC's Old Campus

This is probably my favorite place to walk in town. It feels the most like an old, elite east coast campus, the closest Greeley comes to that Gilmore Girls, Stars Hollow vibe. You have to squint. Squint harder. Little harder. But it's actually a really nice place to take a stroll.

You can start right from Margie's/La Petite, head up 10<sup>th</sup> avenue to the south and up the hill (you'll burn off them chocolate croissants in no time). From here, you can diagonal cross and continue uphill to the bear statue, and on a clear day, you'll get a good view of the mountains to the west.

You can also take [a self-guided tree tour](#) with 3 big loops and over 100 trees of note! It'd take you 3 hours to do all three loops, longer if you really like to stop and soak it in, EVEN LONGER if you like to annoy everyone with tree facts. It's a pretty cool way to see the campus, I recommend the Central Campus portion, if your tree-spotting time is limited to less than half a day.

If the doors are open, walk through Frasier Hall. It's got some weird, art-deco-y looking stuff. Go in one of the bathrooms. They're works of art if you ask me. This will not be the last bathroom I recommend checking out.

Oh, and keep an eye out for my wisdom teeth if you go up by the bear statue.

Bet you didn't expect to read THAT sentence today.

Many, many years ago, in a ritual that I stole from a famous author, I took my wisdom teeth, which were removed a short time prior and given to me in a little sauce cup, and from the top of that hill, threw them down towards 11<sup>th</sup> ave and made a wish. It was a snowy day when I threw those teeth, they're certainly long gone or buried, but just in case you see them, please leave them undisturbed. I'm pretty sure that's how magic works.

## Lunch: El Pueblito or Thai One

### El Pueblito

I visited my sister in Manhattan, NYC, the city that never sleeps, The Big Apple Store, and all that, but one thing NYC DOES sleep on is Mexican food. When my sister's friends excitedly suggested going out for Mexican, she pulled me aside and said, "Listen, lower your expectations, this is not Greeley Mexican food."

She was right. My god was she right. I didn't think I'd ever feel bad for NYC people in terms of lacking for a cultural staple, but here we are.

El Pueblito is legit. There are many, many claims on the title of Best Mexican Restaurant in town, and this one is my favorite. I like the Grande Burrito Fajita myself, but get what you like.

I am VERY biased on this one because they always remember my mom, and they're very nice whenever we go in.

For a different wildly authentic spot, Moreno's on 13<sup>th</sup> street is also as good as it gets, and Los Comales Mexican Food is a sure thing as well.

## Thai One

I mean, it's delicious. I don't know what else to tell you. I like everything here. This is normally where I say, "Get the [something]," but I would just say you should get whatever sounds good, because it'll be good.

Bonus, you can stop in at the Asian grocery next door and get some tasty snacks you'd never even conceived of before, just in case the 50 or so food stops I have on this list aren't enough.

## Photo Op 1: North Pole Sign

We're going WAY out west here, and this is a stop on the way.

I have no earthly idea who put up [a sign in Greeley that directs people toward the North Pole](#), but it's been up for years, undisturbed, and that's the kind of shenanigans I'm here for.

I've got several photo ops in here, and look, there are some awesome murals and public art pieces downtown, and those make great photo ops as well. But this is my tour, and I want to give you a few photo ops you're not going to find in any other guides. There's no way you'll stumble on this sign on your own, so go directly to it, get out of your car, snap a picture, and make it your LinkedIn Profile or whatever it is people do with pics these days.

## Greeley Tradition (on the move)

We're headed still further west, but on the way, we're going to pass by a neighborhood, Covington Knolls.

Covington Knolls is one of Greeley's 3 gated communities, and it's probably the most obvious and the one I pass by the most.

It's become tradition in my vehicle to put on a snooty voice, pretend to wear a monocle, and say, "Oooohh, yes, Covington Knooooools." Make sure to draw out your vowel sounds in your best rich person voice. Extra points for talking about something that rich people like to talk about, such as whether you'll be headed to your second home in Aspen or Telluride, maybe how Prague is over and has been overrun by the proles the last few times you visited (this is what I assume rich people talk about, I wouldn't know. I just suggested you take a photo next to a sign someone stapled to a pole, you're not hearing from the classiest gent this side of I-25).

If you're reading this right now and live in Covington Knolls, I don't mean to hurt your feelings, but, like, you have a physical gate that keeps me far, far away from your house, so who struck the first blow in this war of emotions, eh? Who drew first blood?

You can put up a gate and keep out the riff-raff like me, but you can't expect me to drive by and salute it, know what I'm sayin'?

## Missile Site/Arroyos del Sol

[This former Atlas Missile site has been turned into a walking area](#) with some really beautiful rolling hills and natural dirt trails that give you a good idea of what the landscape was like here long before we grassed and blacktopped it up.

It's my favorite natural area in Greeley. [It's got a fascinating history in terms](#) of the missile site, and it's usually pretty peaceful and quiet out here.

My high school cross-country coach used to bring us out here to run hills. This is exactly what it sounds like: Find a big hill, run up it, repeat until tired, then do like 2 more. At that time, it was mostly undeveloped. It probably wasn't 100% kosher for us to be running out there, but we were just kids with a dream: a dream of being done running hills and never running them again.

Do keep in mind that this is a "trail," but it is not paved and not easily accessed if you use a wheelchair or other mobility aid (if this is you, move onto the next suggestion on this list, you'll have a much better time). It's dirt and rocks, and it's hilly.

This area does close from January to somewhere in late March or early April. This is to let the wildlife do whatever it is the wildlife do all winter. So please respect the closures if you happen to visit in winter.

Also with this: This is not a dog-friendly area! Please do not bring your pets here. The area is meant for wildlife, and dogs disrupt the normal wildlife stuff. Plus, snakes, including rattlesnakes, like this area and are not infrequently on the walking paths or just off to the side, and a rattlesnake is NOT something you want your dog messing with.

While we're on this little tear: Please don't let your dog off-leash in any areas in the city unless they're specifically designated for it. Your doggo cannot make good decisions for themselves, YOU have to be the responsible one here. I've been bitten in a park. I had a friend whose dog got into a dead bat, and that's always a rabies concern. Having your dog on a leash is for their safety and the safety of everyone else. I know all your doggos are the goodest, but you don't know what else is out there, and even if you don't think your dog would hurt a fly, or a Pete calmly jogging by, keeping your dog on a leash keeps everyone, including your dog, safe, happy, and it keeps me without a ripped pair of pants and a permanent set of puncture marks in my leg.

End PSA.

## [Alternative: Signature Bluffs Natural Area](#)

If you're into nature and walking and stuff like that, if you annoy everyone else because every time you see a hawk, it's an event that generates a dozen blurry snapshots and a flurry of texts, this is your spot.

Bonus fun: There are sandstone bluffs out here that for many, many years people carved their names into because...I don't know, because Greeley wasn't the most thrilling place to live, so you have to do something, I guess.

I've walked every bit of the Poudre Trail from East Greeley to the spot where it unceremoniously just stops in western Fort Collins (those jerks want to make sure we can't come enjoy their overpriced housing and traffic, I suppose), and the two best stretches are around Signature Bluffs and the bit just east of Windsor (if you park at the lot on 257 and head east, that's honestly the best bit, but it's not in Greeley, so we're just going to pretend it doesn't exist, but seriously, get out there sometime).

## Photo Op 2: Brave Astronaut Plaque



Local brothers done good Dylan and Harper Reed were, apparently, the first astronauts to explore Uranus, and you can see the plaque that proves it.

The story here is that Dylan and Harper played the occasional prank on their parents, like the time they wrapped their dad's car in zebra stripes. [Their father provided the perfect dad quote about the event](#): "I am not very happy about this."

To top that, they decided to go ahead [and create this monument](#) by having a plaque made, having it affixed to a giant stone by Greeley Monument Works, and placing it in their parents' front yard.

From the prank's website:

*A couple notes:*

- *There is a typo*
- *The rock weighs about 800lbs*

- *The plaque is supposed to last around 60 years*
- *We really should double check our work before we set it in stone. so to speak.*
- *We are geniuses*

Now, we're walking a line here, because I don't want this to blow up and turn into the world's greatest tourist destination. But on the other hand, it's totally where I would take you on our tour of Greeley, so let's do it like this: [Here's the location](#), and if you all make this annoying for anyone, I will have a monument made for YOUR house that says you were a jerk when visiting a different monument, and that monument will weigh 801 pounds, and it'll be RIDDLED with typos, and this will just turn into a monument war, and we all know that when monument wars are fought, nobody wins. Except for possibly the fine folks at Greeley Monument Works, they'd probably be just fine with a good ol' fashioned monument war going down.

War profiteering is unethical in most cases, but I guess if it's a war that involves the creation of beautiful but very heavy art, we can look the other way.

Be respectful, stay off the grass and off the driveway. Just, you know, pretend this was in your front yard and imagine how you'd like someone else to act.

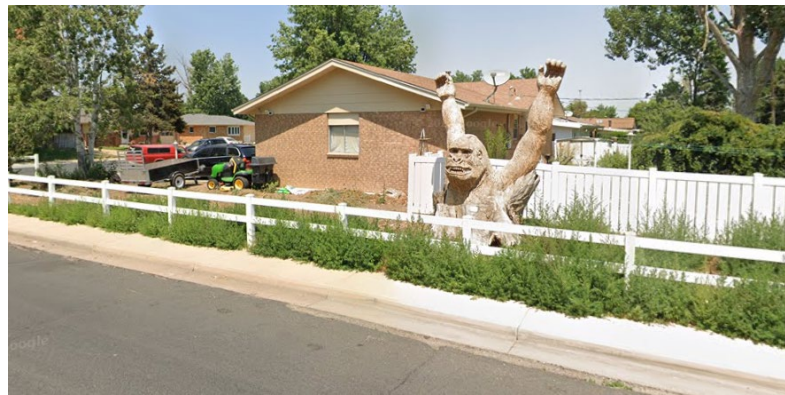
### Photo Op 3: Greeley Gorilla

As we head back into town, we'll dip into another neighborhood for a bit of art.

Carved from a tree, [this triumphant gorilla](#) is like an inkblot test that's more fun than looking at a flat card that someone busted a pen on.

Because what does it mean?

Is the gorilla triumphant, like he just won whatever the equivalent of the Super Bowl is for nature?



Is he frustrated because he found himself in Greeley, without much of a tall building to ascend?

Whatever you think, head to the gap between Broadview and Franklin Parks on W. 6<sup>th</sup> street, get out of the car, and snap a pic. Be respectful of the fence and the person's property, please. You don't see me coming to your city and trashing its treasures. Please lend the same courtesy here.

### Key Largo Lounge

Just a hop, skip, and a jump away from the gorilla, provided you are in the habit of skipping a half mile or so, is the Key Largo Lounge.

I mean no disrespect when I say that this is, for me, a quintessential dive bar. Don't roll up in here expecting to have a selection of 40 IPAs or talking about a citrusy gose. Don't ask where the building blocks for kids are. This is a bar, bar.

Now, this is a matter of taste. For some, this is not the spot. If you are sensitive to feeling like an outsider, you might not love it here, and if you're one to wear their politics on their sleeve, I don't know, this place might not be "it," as the kids say.

But if you, like me, like to stop in at a bar where the locals drink whenever you're in another city, this is a good choice.

## Photo Op 4: Muffler Man

We're shooting back east now.

Muffler Men are the bread and butter of the roadside attractions crew, and [Greeley's got one!](#) Okay, he's missing his signature muffler, but that's for the best because it means you can photoshop in whatever you like. Giant golf club, hot dog, or yourself, laying sideways, cradled in his loving arms, or possibly about to be consumed in an *Attack on Titan* homage.

## Schwartz's

There are two locations in town, and if you don't need to sit, which we don't, go to this one. The krautburgers are great (you might know these as Runzas), and it's a little piece of Evans that's very unique.

Yes, this is in Evans as opposed to Greeley. C'mon, we can show Evans at least SOME love, right?

Grab a krautburger or a regular burger to go if you're not a grandpa like me who laments that so few things contain cabbage.

There's nowhere to sit inside, which is fine because we're headed to a picnic spot. Of sorts.

## Linn Grove Cemetery

It's increasingly rare to find city-run cemeteries these days, but Linn Grove is one of them.

Okay, this isn't for everyone, but did you know it used to be very common for people to treat cemeteries more like parks? To have picnics there? This changed partially because cemeteries are no longer public property most times, partially because we used to have a very different relationship with death. So maybe I'M not the weirdo here, maybe YOU'RE the weirdo!

Perhaps one of the most interesting graves is a single marker that reads "Burial Site of 10 Circus Men." Due to a horrific train fire, 10 men were killed as the train passed through the area in 1884. Up



until a few years ago, this grave was in pretty sorry shape, but the City managed to round up the funds to have a new headstone made.

You know how we all took up some solo hobbies in 2020? Some people made sourdough, some people started jogging. I spent many an hour at Linn Grove photographing graves that people online wanted to see. Particularly, I spent more time looking through some of the stones towards the back to find Infant Denny than I did on all the others combined. There are some very, very old markers here, and time has worn away a lot of the engravings to the point that it's pretty difficult to see what's what as you head towards the back part of the cemetery.

I was eventually able to locate and confirm the resting place of Infant Denny by shining a very bright light at an almost perpendicular angle, which made the letters kind of, sort of legible.

From my wanderings in the cemetery, the north side seems to have newer, more modern stones while the south is home to some of the older, also interesting monuments.

You can also listen to [this episode of the Weld Found podcast](#) hosted by local great guy Tim Coons, which takes a thoughtful walking tour of the cemetery.

If you are bringing your lunch, be extra respectful, clean up after yourself, and if you see any other bits of trash, go ahead and pick them up, too. Maybe don't set your soda on top of a marker, know what I mean?

By the by, I emailed the Cemetery Manager, and he gave the thumbs up, saying it's "Absolutely okay" to picnic in the cemetery, and he added that there are trash cans throughout the cemetery as well as some picnic benches near the office.

If you can find a memorial bench, that's a great place to sit and eat (memorial benches are meant for sitting, after all).

If you've never been to a cemetery before, lucky you, and just know that there aren't a lot of rules, you don't have to check in at the office or anything, nobody is going to make you visit a single grave and leave. Just be quiet and respectful. If there is a burial or other mourners when you arrive, use a different part of the cemetery. There's plenty to go around for both the living and the dead.

Opinions vary on the level of class when it comes to selfies and such. I'm not personally a fan of photographing spooky stuff, by which I mean my face, so I mostly don't do any poses or anything, but if you are going to take some photos, again, be respectful, don't lay across a stone, and maybe save an upbeat TikTok dance for another stop on the tour. Really, ANY other stop.

## Rattlesnake Kate Dress

This is in the Greeley History Museum, a dress made entirely out of rattlesnake skins. The legend goes something like:

This lady, Kate, was living in the Greeley area, a huge pile of rattlesnakes came for her like the giant Critter ball in *Critters 2*, she blasted the lot with a shotgun she reloaded by twirling it like Arnold in *Terminator 2*, then she skinned the snakes and made a dress out of them, which deterred further

attacks because, like, if you saw someone wearing the skins of your murdered brethren, you'd probably move on and rattle your rattle someplace else.

There was a main snake boss, who Kate also dispatched pretty easily, even though the snake boss burst open and launched millions of baby snakes at Kate. I think there was also a tacked-on love story with a mostly useless Channing Tatum type.

That's a wildly inaccurate version of the story, but this dress, which used to be in the old Lincoln Park Library, fascinated me as a kid, and it alone is worth the museum's price of admission (BUT, if you plan ahead, you can [get free admission to the museum through the library here](#)).

## Midnight Oil and Downtown Sound

For shopping in Greeley, I like Midnight Oil and Downtown Sound, which are conveniently located right next to each other.

Midnight Oil is your local used bookstore with an eclectic mix of stuff that changes all the time, so it's always worth a browse, plus it includes **Photo Op 5: the spiraling tower of books**.

Downtown Sound is a music shop of the type we used to remember, where you would go in and buy music on some sort of wound tape or flattened disc of one kind or another. It's fun to browse the bins, not just because you might find something great, but because you get to imagine the people who used to own this stuff.

## Weldwerks/Wiley Roots

I'm giving a joint tie to these two spots for spot as my favorite brewery in town.

Wiley is super fun, it just FEELS like a Greeley institution to me, something that's always been here and always will be, probably in part because I went to kindergarten with one of the owners! It's not super common for Greeley Boyz to grow up and stick around, but two of us did it, and one of us has managed to open a successful business, and the other one has been to that business!

It's like a mix between a nice brewpub and a townie bar in some ways that I can't totally explain and that warms my heart. Yes, even MY cold, blackened heart.

They've got a beer menu that's just all over the place, and at the same time, there's always an easy drinkin' beer to be had.

I especially enjoy having a front row seat whenever a train rolls through, which sounds a little weird and maybe unpleasant to some, but having grown up here in town, the sounds of the trains passing at night have lulled me to sleep many a time.

Alternatively, or, hey, no judgment if you're a TWO BEER person, we've got Weldwerks a short hop away.

At Weldwerks, my favorite beer is the Hefeweizen, and I do think Weldwerks has the number-one-best burger in town. Guys, this is a double-cheeseburger. That's just how it comes. They don't force me to specify double, it's just like that was the way it was meant to be.

I went on a date with my wife here when we were both trying to finish Stephen King's *IT* before an upcoming book club meeting (Pro Book Club Tip: Do not select *IT* as a read, it's WAY too long unless your book club meets annually). We were reading and enjoying a beer when one of the staff came up to us, told us that seeing a couple reading together was about the cutest thing ever, and gave us gift cards for free beers. Which...wait a minute, I still have! WHAT AM I EVEN DOING!?

Weldwerks is also pretty family friendly, if you're headed this way with the kids.

## Downtown Bar Crawl

If you wanted to crawl your way through the gin-soaked gutter like one of the townsfolk, downtown is where you want to be. Now, I'm a little of the older set, so the super party zones are not my thing these days, but all you really have to do is wander, you'll find plenty of those bars just fine. They're easily identified by someone standing outside and checking IDs.

I think the best spots for those of us who like to get a drink on but maybe aren't party animals are The Kress (and the speakeasy down the steps), Patrick's Irish Pub (great beer selection and lots of whiskey choices as well), Syntax spirits (I don't know whether their lothario cat, Gustav, who would periodically disappear and ALWAYS be found living in the home of a female college student, is still there, but that kitty is an absolute legend), Lunas Tacos and Tequilas (it's a visual feast, visit the bathrooms, they're cool), and, of course, Stella's, which has arcade games, pinball, and booze, so it's kind of a paradise.

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You've had like 5 meals, a few beers, done some serious walking, and visited a couple of northern Colorado's premiere bathrooms.

That would be the end of our day together.

Thanks for letting me show you around.

I wish you would've bought some of the food and drinks, but oh, well, I guess being a good host means going bankrupt.

## A Little Something Extra for the Kids

I know a lot of you probably have kids, and most of what I put up before isn't totally suited to the kids, so here are a few kid-centric activities for you:

**Colorado Model Railroad Museum:** I mean, it's pretty legit, it's one of the largest in the world, and it'll keep a kid entertained for at least a little bit. Caution: You, as an adult, will have to

resist the urge to get into model trains. It starts as a minor obsession that blows up into a PROBLEM very quickly.

**LINC Library Innovation Center:** This place has a huge climbing silo, a children's museum, a paper airplane launcher, a gaming room, it's nuts that this is a library.

There's also an art installation by Wes Bruce, one of the big minds behind the Denver Children's Museum....thing that you can see from I-25, and it's right here in Greeley! Walk through it, and hot tip: There's a secret room. Hotter tip: There's also a secret, secret room.

Also, this is all free.

**Westmoor Park:** Kind of hidden away, this park has a pretty great playground, including a zipline swing thingy that can hold a full grown adult as well. Don't ask me how I know.

**Aven's Village Park:** This is Greeley's first "Inclusive" park, which means it's a park designed so that kids with disabilities can enjoy it more easily and play alongside their friends. It's a pretty dope park any way you slice it, but if the idea of all kids being able to play together doesn't bring a tear to your eye, you are a monster, and I can't believe we have to spend the whole day together. I should've know when you made that crack about how trees are boring.

**Jenny's Malt Shop and Diner:** Known for a long time as Tropical Sno, Jenny's diner is like your classic diner, but they also have shaved ice, which is pretty excellent on a warm day. Shaved ice is NOT a sno cone, by the way. You know how a sno cone just turns into this hard ball of ice? Shaved ice is soft enough to eat with a plastic spoon, easily, and the ice melts in your mouth right away. Plus, something about the way its made, you don't have that sno cone problem where the first 75% of the sno cone sucks because all the delicious juices just sluice through to the bottom. No way, this stuff is good all the way through.

This one is honestly great for adults and kids. If you're here in the summer, or if it's like 80 degrees in late winter, which can happen, get that Sno before your tree walk.