

**ASPEN CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
PRESIDENT AND STAFF REPORTS  
January 27, 2009 – ASPEN SQUARE**

**Special Events:** Thank you to everyone for your help and support of Wintersköl 2009. This year's event was a tremendous success and we really couldn't have done it without the assistance of so many people in the community.

Highlights of the Aspen Chamber's Wintersköl events included:

Soupsköl – Restaurants participation increased to 23 this year compared to 18 in 2008, composting was implemented for the soup and soup cups (part of going green is to utilize existing inventory; we used our existing spoon inventory but next year plan to use compostable spoons as well.) Garnish Café & Catering won for a third straight row in a year with Church's Chowder. Brunelleschi's followed in second place and Clark's Market finished in third place. Congratulations to the best soup in town!

Canine Fashion Show – Featured the ACRA's new mascot, Fido the fashion dog, and over 50 participants. The winners were:

1. Most Adorable – Amy with Moxitini
2. Best Theme – Olivia Ayress with Sharuey
3. Best Multiple – Niki with Piloma & Mila
4. Best Celebrity Look-Alike – Nanette with Fin, Friskin and Blythe
5. Funniest – Jason Hoogland with Zero
6. Best In Show – Melinda Goldrich with Pucci, Gizmo, Bonzu, Zigi & Lulu
7. Honorable Mention - Ashlyn with Kipper
8. Honorable Mention – Jennifer Soho with Drake

Parade & WinterFest - Saturday was a beautiful day and this year's parade participants really made an effort to get in the community spirit. The best overall winner was The Red Brick Arts Center. Promoting all the Arts in Aspen, The Red Brick float had a rock band which incorporated the Wintersköl theme "Powder Days & Stellar Nights" into a country rock ballad. WinterFest incorporated our astronomy theme by displaying several original space art pieces from our special guest, Harvard astronomy expert David Aguilar and featured an awesome southern rock band, the James Hayden Band, from Austin Texas.

And over-all Wintersköl 2009 really reached for the stars incorporating the astronomy theme with the addition of a special educational component to this year's event. David Aguilar's lecture at Paepcke Auditorium and telescope experience in Wagner Park received great response and people of all ages were very enthusiastic about these new activities.

The Food & Wine Magazine Classic in Aspen is scheduled for June 19 – 21, 2009. Staff from New York will be in Aspen Jan. 28-20 for our next set of planning meetings. Tickets for this year's event are currently on sale at Stay Aspen Snowmass.

**Visitor Services:** In 2008 the Guest Service Program had over 171,591 individual contacts (12 months of data), up from the 2007 year end total of 144,650. The shift to a 365 day schedule at the Pavilion and Airport factored into the 27,000 contact increase. July and August were the busiest months followed by March and January. Overall the Guest Pavilion has the highest number of contacts, 68,000 in 2008.

The entire Guest Service Team experienced a very busy and sometimes hectic holiday season. The Pavilion and Wheeler closed early on New Years Eve; the Rio Grande Office did open at 8:30 a.m. on January 1st to help facilitate the distribution of information and email press releases summarizing the New Year's Eve incident to Aspen/Snowmass properties and area businesses.

Guest Service staff from the Rio Grande Office has been selected to participate in the 2009 Transit Development Plan. Lynn Rumbaugh from the City Transportation Department has put together a small community group to discuss and provide feedback on the plan prepared by LSC Transportation Consultants. Please communicate any ideas, concerns or general feedback you may have regarding the City Bus Transportation System to Erik Klanderud.

**Membership:** We were busy with programming during the last month. The Holiday Party in December was very well attended and we were able to donate a number of large bags of toys and \$1200 to the Aspen Interfaith Association Gift Basket Program (\$800 in 2008 & 2007 and \$745 in 2006.) Our Wintersköl luncheon was a hit at its new location. Thanks to all the board members who attended. We presented our business of the year awards to: Non-profit of the year: Aspen Youth Experience; Emerging Business of the Year: Timberline Bank; and our Business of the Year went to Charles Cunniffe Architects. Our 2009 Aspen Business Directory is nearing completion and is almost ready to go to the printer. We have revised the book to include the Relocation Guide as well as the Annual Report. Ad sales are \$1000 ahead of last year. We hope to have the Business Directory in our member's hands in early February. We have scheduled a Workers' Comp Safety Committee Meeting for Wednesday, Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> you are welcome to attend to learn more about this program. A Business after Hours Networking Event has been scheduled for Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at Isberian Rugs from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

We have started working on the annual ski pass compliance audit on Jan. 26, 2009. 10% of the membership who received discounted ski passes will receive a certified letter asking for proof of compliance. The audit should be wrapped up by the end of the February.

**Faces of Aspen/ Snowmass:** The Airport Ambassadors greeted over 69,000 people, either over the phone or in person during 2008.

We proudly present the Second Edition of the How to Aspen/Snowmass guest service book, in both English and Spanish. The new book, featuring some of the STARS of the Month and Season on the cover, incorporates fundamentals of great guest service from the first edition, a photographic history line, coverage of the STAR Program, an annual events calendar, and a new What's the Best section of local tips. One copy of the book will be mailed to each Chamber Business. Let Dorothy know how many copies you'll need for your employees and if you'd like a "cheerleading" guest service presentation.

The December STARS of the Month are Skyler Chapin, a waiter at Explore Bistro and Amanda Littell of the Snowmass Lodging Company. Skyler's quote: "Good guest service is as much a gift to the one providing it as it is to the one enjoying it. Providing the kind of service people remember after they leave is one of the great humble pleasures of life."

**Sales and Marketing:** The Destination Marketing budget has been allocated at \$615,000. The City is reviewing whether this year's tax revenues will match slated budget and if not, whether the city can guarantee the funds. The matter is being reviewed at city council meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup>. We are moving forward on the website and database overhaul and have just completed two days of training with Simpleview. The expected website launch is by end of first quarter. We are currently editing the rack brochure which will be available at the end of February and the summer vacation planner which will be available at the end of March. We are planning the distribution of 2009 media kit to top 100 journalists by the end of January. A shop and dine locally message will be promoted via newspapers and radio to help drive business to downtown core.

**Aspen Groups:** Aspen Groups is working on coordination efforts for spring events in Denver. JoAnna is also spending her time working on updating information on properties and conference facilities for collateral pieces and the new website. Since there is no travel until the spring, the winter months are being used for warm and cold sales calls.

**Operations:** Please welcome our new Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Julia Theisen. Julia came on board with the ACRA team on January 5, 2009. Budgets for the Airport, Aspen Groups and Destination Marketing started a new year as of January 1, 2009. We are beginning to start preparation for the March ACRA board election.

**This and That:** Julia and Debbie will attend the Colorado Tourism Day at the Capital on Monday – will update you at the meeting regarding state funding. Debbie is attending the Western Association of Chamber Executives conference in Las Vegas from February 4-6<sup>th</sup>. Highlighted seminars include; Dues Payment options and collection strategies, being a Force at City Hall, PACS – Facts and Myths, Running your chamber like a business etc.... The ACRA is working with the Aspen Lodging Association to research additional funding mechanisms for our destination marketing department. I will provide an update at our next meeting. The ZG master planning group is getting together to regroup since the Art Museum has pulled out of this process. I will give you a better update at the next meeting. I have finished my initial work on the Lift One COWOP, has most of you know this master plan will now go before the Aspen voters in May. Finally, I have agreed to be on the study committee for the Environmental Assessment for the potential runway extension. The EA study is anticipated to take approximately 12 months and the group will meet 3-4 times during the study process.