

**ASPEN CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
PRESIDENT AND STAFF REPORTS  
September 2014**

**Special Events**

The 64<sup>th</sup> Wintersköl™ celebration takes place January 8-11, 2015. Once again the ACRA is hosting the annual slogan contest. Entries are being accepted Monday, September 22 through Friday, October 10 by 5 p.m. The slogan will appear on the Wintersköl button and all promotional materials. Encourage your friends to participate, the winner will receive one pass to the 2015 FOOD & WINE Classic in Aspen. (\*Associate Pass valid for all Grand Tastings; Seminars on a space available basis only.) For more information on the slogan contest, visit [www.aspenchamber.org](http://www.aspenchamber.org). A complete schedule of Wintersköl 2015 events will be available in November.

The 6th annual 12 Days of Aspen will take place December 20-31, 2014. We will be spreading plenty of holiday cheer for our guests and locals alike. The 12 Days will have a calendar of events packed full of free (or nearly free) activities for kids of all ages, including free holiday activities, goodies, gifts and much more! If you have a holiday event that takes place during these dates, please contact Julie Hardman, [jhardman@aspenchamber.org](mailto:jhardman@aspenchamber.org). A schedule of events will be available online in November.

The 2015 FOOD & WINE Classic in Aspen is June 19 – 21. The ACRA events staff were in New York September 22 – 25 for our next set of planning meetings.

The Mountain-Plains Museum Association (MPMA) will be in Snowmass/Aspen September 28 – October 2 for their annual conference hosted by the Aspen Historical Society. On Tuesday September 30, conference activities take place in Aspen. ACRA's special events department has been assisting with the details of "Aspen Day". The General Session/Keynote featuring "Digging Snowmastadon" with Dr. Kirk Johnson is at 10:15 a.m. at the Wheeler Opera House. Admittance is on a space available basis.

**Membership**

The ACRA membership team connected with over 400 chamber businesses while working at the gondola ticket office for the "Super Early" ski pass deadline. For the first time in a number of years the membership department made budget for dues, \$135,000, within the first two weeks of September. Feedback from the membership has been very positive, with business owners reporting that 2014 has been the best year since 2007. The 2014 "Afternoon Blend," held September 18 at the Sundeck, was attended by 200 ACRA members. The attendees enjoyed the program and the format of the event, which was very conducive for networking. Year-to-date there are 795 active members, compared to 772 at the same time last year. Year-to-date we have 66 brand new members, compared to 43 at the same time last year.

**Visitor Centers**

We have been busy with guests calling about the fall colors, which turned a little earlier than last year. Everyone has been saying how beautiful it is at Maroon Bells, Ashcroft and up Independence Pass. The Wheeler Opera House has switched to their winter hours, so the Visitor Center desk is open from 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. During October and into November they will be closed on Sundays except when there is a performance scheduled. The Guest Pavilion will reduce hours to 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. and have only one person working starting Monday, October 6. We will increase hours at the Guest Pavilion in December for the winter season. The Rio Grande Visitor Center will continue to be open 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday – Friday.

**Airport Guest Services**

The most important news to share is the challenge facing our airport and how this will affect our community. At last month's Board Meeting, Jon Peacock explained the situation. Now, he's reaching out to the community

to share it, and clarify any misunderstandings. Jon will be at the **Airport cafe from 9 - 10 a.m. every Monday and Thursday through the end of October**. If you missed his presentation, I urge you to attend one of these sessions. And please share this information with others in your company, with your neighbors and friends. We all understand the importance of air service to our local economy. And . . . good news . . . United and American are both planning to bring in more flights this winter than last year.

### **Destination Marketing/Sales**

Destination Marketing presented the 2014 campaign results and 2015 budget to the Marketing Advisory Committee on Tuesday September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Additional presentations scheduled include the Aspen Lodging Association on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, the ACRA Board of Directors on October 28<sup>th</sup> and Aspen City Council on November 18<sup>th</sup>. We recently hosted groups in collaboration with the Colorado Tourism Office from markets including France, Brazil, Japan and the UK. The PR team recently hosted a group of Australian media for a dedicated Aspen/Snowmass FAM. Recent coverage includes Harper's Bazaar (Brazil), 5280 Magazine, Denver Life Magazine, Destination Weddings and Honeymoons, Huffington Post, KDVR TV Online and many other outlets. Debbie and Julia are joining an Aspen/Snowmass delegation to attend the Adventure Travel World Summit (ATWS) in Ireland in early October – an annual gathering of adventure travel professionals to network with tour operators, travel buyers and media focused on outdoor adventure destinations. The ACRA group sales team hosted six meeting planners for the September FAM in Aspen. Plans are underway for the fourth FAM trip in October when ACRA will host 19 meeting planners. The sales team will be exhibiting at the IMEX America show in October with Aspen Skiing Company, The Little Nell and Destination Colorado.

### **Operations**

After reviewing RFPs, we have re-signed with Mitchell & Company as our IT provider. We are replacing outdated workstation computers, servers, and moving to Office 365. The target date for project completion is mid-November.

We are beginning the board election process. There are 6 seats up for election: professional (1), service (2), lodging (1), restaurant (1), and retail (1). Announcements will be in the papers the week of 10/20, with an 11/14 deadline for submitting nominating petitions. Ballots will go out on 11/20 with a voting return deadline of 12/8.

We used to keep track of employee paid time off (vacation, sick days, etc.) manually, but are now utilizing our payroll processing company for it – and time off balances appear on employee paystubs.

### **Save the date**

"Future of Air Service Planning" public meeting - Jon Peacock  
Thursday, October 23  
City Council Chambers  
11:00 am – 12:00 pm  
RSVP 970-952-1940

Healthcare Forum  
Wednesday, November 12  
The Limelight Hotel  
Time: TBA