

**ASPEN CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
PRESIDENT AND STAFF REPORTS  
AUGUST 2019**

**Special Events:** Special Events has wrapped up a busy summer season, and Jennifer is out of the office for the month of August. Noël is assisting in the planning of the Afternoon Blend with the membership department. F&W will be coming out for site visit and the first meeting for the 2020 Classic will be taking place in mid-September. Planning has begun for ACRA's winter events, 12 Days and Wintersköl.

**Visitor Centers:** As usual, July and August are our busiest times for tourism. We expect to see a slight reduction in young families as children are returning to school in the coming weeks. August and September will still see tourists who are interested in the fall colors. We are receiving a large volume of calls already inquiring on the status of changing colors. The 2019-2020 ski pass has gone on sale as of August 12<sup>th</sup> which will attract new members and the staff will see increased traffic assisting with vouchers for member businesses. The lawn chairs have been seeing high usage. John added an additional Colorado ski chair to enhance our visitor seating and social media photo opportunity.

**Airport Guest Services:** August has been a busy month with flights arriving mostly full. We are just now starting to see a reduction in flight loads with schools back in session. Susan attended an airport safety meeting which addressed ASE's progress and commitment to providing a safe airport environment. ASE is encouraging all stakeholders, staff and airport employees to be proactive in sharing safety concerns with the airport safety committee. ASE has reconfigured our current parking to allow for an overflow lot when the short term and economy lots are full.

**Membership:** Our new Membership Coordinator, Lindsey Fay started on August 12<sup>th</sup> and has been an incredible addition to the department. Lindsey has been in training the last two weeks to learn the overall chamber mission, structure, iDSS system, events schedule and logistics, and the membership budget. She also applied and enrolled in Aspen Citizens Academy, a 14-week course dedicated to educating Aspen citizens on how the government functions; connecting them with community members, city staff, and city leaders, as well as engaging in local issues through discussion. This will enhance communication with the PA Committee and members. Ski Co released the final 2019-2020 season ski pass pricing and chamber rate on August 12<sup>th</sup> and we have jumped into our busy season with renewals and new members joining. The *super early* deadline is Friday, September 13<sup>th</sup> to receive the best rate. Please renew your membership and encourage others to join by that date! We have launched a full marketing campaign between print, digital, radio and social media to ensure we're hitting our target market and increasing our overall memberships in 2019. In addition, we are looking forward to our annual Afternoon Blend chamber event on Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup> at the Sundeck on Aspen Mountain. Kathryn, Sarah, and Debbie have joined the Aspen Rotary with a Corporate Membership to rotate between the meetings, volunteering and events. Kathryn has also joined the board of Response a local nonprofit that focuses on advocating, educating, and ending domestic and sexual assault. In addition, Kathryn was offered a sponsored seat at an upcoming leadership training through Lead with Love on September 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> which she will be attending.

**Operations:** The month has been busy for administration. Debbie has attended meetings regarding healthcare, census, parking, airport and the DMA West Summit in California. The Chambers in the valley are working with the Valley Health Alliance (VHA), a consortium of large local employers, to explore possibilities for combining efforts toward the creation of a more affordable health insurance option in the valley. The Aspen Valley Hospital and Valley View Hospital are members of the VHA, as both employers and hospital providers, and are collaborating to seek sustainable solutions to the high costs of health care. The intent of all parties is to work together to identify an insurance company partner or partners to provide coverage for the smaller employers that are members of the area chambers. Central to the model is the inclusion of primary care providers across the valley that constitute a care network that is focused on better health care, improved health and well-being, and lower overall costs. The target date for implementation of any new plan is January 1st, 2021.

#### About VHA:

The Valley Health Alliance is a non-profit organization currently comprised of six of the largest self-funded employers in the Roaring Fork Valley focused on improving access to high quality health care that is accessible and affordable. Members include Aspen Skiing Co., the City of Aspen, Pitkin County, Mountain Family Health Centers, Aspen Valley Hospital and Valley View Hospital. Our mission is to meet people where they are in their journey to improve their personal health and well-being through trusted partnerships with their employers and providers. Learn more at [ourvha.org](http://ourvha.org). John and Debbie switched offices at 590 N Mill, to offer Debbie additional privacy for sensitive phone calls or meetings. ACRA welcomed our new Member Services Coordinator, Lindsey Fay, who is off to a great start learning and getting ready for the ski pass deadline and Afternoon Blend. John has met with TriNet, a company that works with non-profits for benefits, payroll, and HR services. The office staff came together and helped membership with 3 bulk mailings. John has been putting together a guest services onboarding training manual to assist new staff with the job role and ACRA's mission.

**Destination Marketing:** Jessica attended U.S. Travel Association's ESTO conference in Austin, TX with DMOs/CVBs and State Tourism representatives from across the country. She returns with marketing and tourism insights and inspiration. The [aspenchamber.org](http://aspenchamber.org) website redesign is on schedule to launch mid-September. ACRA's final We-cycle panel is live this month. The team is training staff in Constant Contact, iDSS and updating the website member listings into condensed categories for better SEO in advance of the redesigned website launch. Responsive versions of the 360 tours have been updated on the website. Users no longer need to select which type of device they are on to view tours. A video category has been added to the blog and videos are being uploaded: <https://www.aspenchamber.org/blog/videos>. Based on experiences shared by board members at the July board meeting regarding bike safety, how to tips have been added to the website <https://www.aspenchamber.org/how-to/get-outside/biking-hiking>. ACRA confirmed their participation in CTO's marketing opportunity for Australian photographer Dan Avila's travel show to air on Qantas, Signature Luxury and National Geographic. Sarah is participating in Rotary meetings as part of ACRA's application for a corporate membership. Several prospective and confirmed groups conducted site visits in Aspen and engaged ACRA's sales team for services and support. ACRA will be co-sponsoring RFIMBA with ASC, Snowmass Tourism and GWS for gold status designation of our mountain bike trail system. The sales team hosted 13 wedding planners for the wedding familiarization trip this month and is preparing for the meetings from September 29-October 2. The PR team hosted media from Monocle, Marie Claire UK, Architectural Digest, Family Traveller, Destination I Do, Forbes and five journalists from Australia for the group media fam.

#### **Save the Date:**

Afternoon Blend, September 4, 2019

Board of Directors Retreat, October 29, 2019

Tourism Outlook, November 19, 2019