

**ASPEN CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PRESIDENT AND STAFF REPORTS
January 2018**

Special Events

Happy New Year! ACRA's special events department is pleased to have hosted ACRA's two annual winter events, the 12 Days of Aspen in December and the 67th annual Wintersköl celebration in January. This year's 12 Days of Aspen featured a Winter Wonderland experience with elevated décor, visits with Santa and his live reindeer as well as a valued holiday thermos as the give-away on Christmas Day. We also worked with RRC to administer attendee surveys on December 21st during the Winter Wonderland visit with Santa day, results will be available in February.

Thank you to the community for its support of Wintersköl as well as to all of ACRA's Wintersköl sponsors! We were happy to host a new Saturday night event, the Wintersköl *Snowcoming* Bonfire in partnership with the Aspen Fire Department featuring a performance by the United States Air Force Academy Drum and Bugle Corps, DJ Naka G, free food, and the grand finale Fireworks Extravaganza over Aspen Mountain. Earlier in the day, ACRA hosted WinterFest featuring the traditional Canine Fashion Show, during which an ACRA staff person was asked what the dates for Wintersköl 2019 were as they wanted to book their return trip! Congratulations and thank you again to Warren and Dr. Kathy Klug for serving as this year's Wintersköl King and Queen, it was a pleasure to honor them at this year's luncheon.

The FOOD & WINE Classic in Aspen takes place June 15th -17th, 2018. Passes are currently on sale through Stay Aspen Snowmass. Consumer and Restaurant Trade passes are \$1,600 and increase to \$1,700 after March 1st. For more information on this year's event, please visit <http://www.foodandwine.com/promo/events/aspens-classic/classic-main> . The event staff from FOOD & WINE is in Aspen the week of January 29th for our next set of planning meetings.

Membership

The 5th Annual Helen Klanderud Wintersköl Awards Luncheon and Celebration was held January 11th, 2018 at the St. Regis Hotel. The luncheon was attended by over 200 community members, and once again was a successful event. The 2017 Business of the Year awards, Molly Campbell Service award and the Defy Ordinary awards were presented at the luncheon. The 2017 Business of the Year was presented to Design Workshop, Inc. The ACRA Business of the Year is awarded to the business that has shown profitability, growth and sustainability along with a commitment to community service. The 2017 Non-Profit of the Year was presented to the Roaring Fork Transportation Authority(RFTA). The ACRA Non-Profit of the Year is awarded to the local non-profit organization that has developed a close partnership with the Roaring Fork Valley community as a means to achieve its mission. The 2017 Molly Campbell Service Award was presented to Cristal Logan who was recognized for her passion, dedication and leadership to the Aspen Community. Cristal Logan is the Vice President and Director of Aspen Community Programs at the Aspen Institute. The Defy Ordinary Award is presented to individuals for their outstanding passion, leadership, and commitment to the Aspen community. The 2017 Defy Ordinary Award was presented to Peter Van Domelen and Ali Marshall from Reese Henry & Company for supporting the annual NYC Tour for students from Aspen High School.

The business mix sub-committee of the Public Affairs committee would like to gather information on Aspen's business mix and the specific needs and difficulties of each business sector. Aspen Marketing and Communications will develop a survey to be facilitated by board members to respective constituencies. The ACRA Spring Luncheon will help facilitate deeper conversation through clicker session, round tables, and sector specific conversations. From this data, the committee would like to gauge the "health and wealth" of Aspen's business community, and then share information with appropriate parties on the needs and gaps in Aspen's economy. The committee would also like to have accurate projections for the future, have a better understanding of business clientele, and understand the general stability and sustainability of Aspen area businesses.

Visitor Center

So far, this winter season has seen fairly steady numbers of visitors at all three in town visitor centers. The dry conditions during the month of December and early January has challenged our staff to become very creative in alternative ideas for activities. Off the mountains, we are noticing an increase in retail activity as well as in restaurants and large groups and families strolling through town during the day. Wintersköl brought in many visitors to spend the day in town and stay for the fireworks Saturday. Gay Ski Week always is a draw and again great for local businesses. This weekend, we will have extra staff for the X Games crowd, especially Friday and Saturday.

Airport Guest Services

Our winter season kicked into high gear with a record number of non-stop daily service from Denver, Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, Chicago, Salt Lake City, Atlanta, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Minneapolis/St. Paul. Due to the high volume of aircraft arriving within a short time frame, passengers have dealt with unusually long wait times for deplanement and baggage retrieval. Passengers have also experienced long wait times for taxi service. Fortunately, the number of UBER and LYFT operators is increasing. Delta Airlines began offering passengers the option to ship their bags VIA UPS when flights are short on cargo space. Jedediah's opened a coffee/snack booth in the arrivals area for the winter season. Our staff continues to assist passengers by shipping items that cannot pass TSA checkpoint or have arrived too late to check their bags.

Destination Marketing

The Destination marketing department is currently planning the media campaign and initiatives for spring, summer and fall seasons. We are conducting qualitative research on the spring traveler to find out more about visitor motivation to travel to Aspen in spring. We will be running separate campaigns specifically targeted to each season and will be reaching out to lodges regarding spring promotion ideas. We will launch our Kind Traveler partnership, with Hotel Aspen and Molly Gibson hotels as initial participants. As part of the partnership we will also have a sweepstakes giveaway that will launch late February / early March for a summer trip. The DM and Membership departments collaborated to launch the new and improved membership section of the website as well as produce the Annual Report. The PR team is attending media events in Denver (Colorado Tourism Office) and New York (TravMedia) as well as conducting individual media calls in both markets.

The sales team is finalizing travel opportunities for in market sales missions and tradeshows for stakeholders to participate in 2018. The first FAM trip will take place February 5-8 and details are being finalized with local partners to host 10 planners with potential group business for Aspen.

DM staffing changes: Jessica Hite left ACRA for a marketing coordinator position at Belly Up, we will be searching for a part time marketing coordinator to replace her. Eliza Voss was promoted to Director of Marketing. Sarah Reynolds, Director of Sales, has just returned from maternity leave.

Operations

A successful staff retreat was held this month with all of the full time staff at ACRA. Each department selected goals from the 2017-2019 strategic plan to tackle in 2018.

The new 2018 Board of Directors list is available, please contact Nicole Heronemus if you would like a copy. A new white noise system has been installed in the new ACRA offices to help mitigate the noise levels in the open room.

The lease for the ACRA offices at 590 N. Mill Street should be complete soon.

Debbie attended the DMA West Annual Board of Directors meeting in Phoenix Arizona this month.

Save the Date

FOOD & WINE Classic in Aspen
June 15th – 17th, 2018