

**ASPEN CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PRESIDENT AND STAFF REPORTS
July 2017**

Special Events

ACRA is wrapping up its final annual event of the summer season, the 15th Annual Aspen Arts Festival July 22nd – 23rd. Produced in collaboration with Howard Alan Events, the Aspen Arts Festival features 150 artists in a range of mediums from across the county. In addition, ACRA hosts a local artist section highlighting nine of the valley's own local artists. Coinciding with the Aspen Arts festival, on Saturday, July 22nd the second Shop Aspen Art Walk experience takes place. In partnership with Aspen Sojourner Magazine, we invite you to follow the red balloons and visit participating downtown galleries from 2 – 7 p.m. to enjoy a variety of artists' works and refreshments.

While ACRA's annual summer events may be complete (which include: the FOOD & WINE Classic in Aspen, the Old Fashioned Fourth of July Celebration, and the Aspen Arts Festival) there are still many more amazing events taking place in our community. Please visit <https://www.aspenchamber.org/events> to see what is happening!

Membership

Seventy percent of the membership has been invoiced, once the season ski pass information is announced we will see an increase in membership renewals, this has been the trend for many years. The "Super Early" ski pass deadline will be September 15th. Pricing for season ski passes will be available by mid-August. As of July 20th, membership has signed up 17 new members compared to 23 at the same time last year. The vacancy rate in the core is about the same compared to last year, however there are more pop up retail operations, 3-5 month leases which have not joined the chamber yet. Depending on summer business there is a chance some of these businesses will sign long term leases and get more involved with the ACRA. The Employee Sustainability Committee met on July 13th. Consensus from the committee is the ACRA Mission cannot be fulfilled without a strong workforce. The first call to action: survey the membership to identify the needs of the employer and employee to help create a sustainable work force.

The July 8th Art Walk went well however the attendance was low. ACRA staff and Nancy from Sojourner Magazine agreed that there is so much going on this time of year that it is difficult to engage with locals and visitors. Moving forward, the start and end times will be change from 5pm – 7pm, to 2pm – 7pm. We are hoping to attract more of the Saturday Market crowd and attendees from the Howard Alan Arts Festival.

Visitor Center

July has seen record numbers at the three Visitor's Centers. The Pavilion at Galena and Cooper has topped one thousand guests every weekend in July so far. Also, with the addition of our Junior Ambassador program, we are able to ensure better service during the peak daytime hours. This time of year, we keep in close touch with the U.S. Forest Service to receive weekly updates on trails and back country conditions. The U.S. Forest Service office in Aspen is not open this summer so we communicate with the Carbondale office.

Airport Guest Services

Summer flights have been full providing our Guest Services staff the opportunity to assist a variety of visitors including, but not limited to, Music School students, Aspen Institute event attendees and speakers, wedding and social event attendees and families vacationing in Aspen and the Roaring Fork Valley.

Aspen Airport has contracted with a new restaurant/retail concessionaire with a targeted start date of August 1st, 2017.

Fortunately, the new FAA requirement reducing the number of allowed aircraft landings per hour at the Aspen Airport has not caused any arrival or departure delays.

Destination Marketing

Aspen was recently featured on the Today Show as a top summer destination. We were also featured in the travel section of usnews.com as a top romantic destination. The PR team has been busy hosting media from the UK, Germany, Mexico and U.S. We are partnering with Men's Vows, a website dedicated to men who marry, on a new event this summer, Aspen Summer Holiday. The event will be held August 24-26th and includes a fashion show and dance party on Friday August 25th that benefits the National LGBTQ Task Force. More details and tickets can be found at www.aspensummerholiday.com

Sarah represented Aspen Chamber at the Destinations International Annual Convention. She participated in the first fundamentals course to begin the Professional in Destination Management certification program. The sales team is working on potential city-wide group leads for 2018.

Operations

Nicole will be taking the exam for her aPHR certification on July 29th. Nicole and Debbie are in the final stages of finalizing the floor plan for the new office. Debbie is working with Maria Morrow on the new lease for the old power plant building. The new wellness platform, Goal Guru, was successfully launched for the full time staff. Nicole has been working with ADP on a possible switch over as the Chamber's PEO provider. This includes a review of the health benefits and workers compensation providers. A final decision on whether the Chamber will switch from CoAdvantage to ADP will be made by August 1st. If the change is successful, this could save the Chamber a substantial amount in administrative fees for payroll and benefit administration, as well as provide better services and benefits for the staff.

Save the date

Super Early Ski Pass Deadline
September 15th