

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

Special Events:

ACRA concluded its summer season of annual events with the Aspen Arts Festival on July 21st – 22nd. Per the direction of the City of Aspen, the Arts Festival was required to move to Rio Grande Park for this year's event. Many new logistical procedures were implemented to accommodate this request for the new location including two days to load the vendors in on Thursday and Friday (due to limited adjacent parking space) and night time lighting for load-out on Sunday. New this year, the special events department created a dwell area for the park destination with lounge furniture, picnic tables, and shade umbrellas, as well as a food truck which offered delicious lunch options such as the Palisade Peach Capresé Salad and Strawberry Basil Lemonade. We received positive feedback from attendees who enjoyed the new location however, participating artists expressed concerns of less foot traffic. A hail storm also blew in Saturday afternoon.

On the 4th of July ACRA assisted the Aspen Volunteer Fire Department with the production of the AVFD Block party. This event had two live bands, a beer garden sponsored by Aspen Tap and food provided by the AVFD. The event was well received by the community, and it was a great opportunity for the ACRA to work with the Aspen Volunteer Fire Department. Unfortunately the 4th of July Drone light show was cancelled due to the Lake Christine Fire, the drone show will be rescheduled for a future date.

Thank you for your support of ACRA's annual summer events (the FOOD & WINE Classic in Aspen, the Old Fashioned Fourth of July Celebration, and the Aspen Arts Festival)! Please visit <https://www.aspenchamber.org/events> for other events taking place the remainder of the season.

Membership:

The membership department has been working hard on the 7908 Reasons to Come to Town campaign, implementing statewide Facebook advertisements, banner ads focused on arts & culture in Aspen Sojourner's national e-news, local print advertising and through our personal Facebook page. We have also been focusing on our communication frequency and content. The Business Radar went out on 7/24 and the ACRA at Work will go out on 7/31. Finally, we have been following up on leads, and have welcomed seven new members since June 15th.

Visitor Centers:

Our visitor centers have seen steady numbers this month with the heaviest volume at our Cooper Street location. Our new location at 590 North Mill Street is seeing an increase in volume especially with people using the Rio Grande Trail. With the Fourth of July holiday falling on a mid-week Wednesday, we saw a slight drop in visitor numbers. With the onset of the Lake Christine Fire, we noticed visitors expressing concern over highway closures, airline cancellations and air quality. Telephone volume also has increased with calls about these issues and deciding on travel plan changes or cancellations.

Airport Guest Services:

TFR (temporary flight restrictions) due to the Lake Christine fire caused several days of flight cancellations and diversions during the hours of 9am thru 9pm. Airlines operated as many flights as possible before and after the TFR, provided bussing for diverted flights and travel waivers for rebooking. During this time our staff was extremely busy fielding calls concerning the fire, flight schedules, airport operating hours, air quality etc. (and still are). LAZ Parking is still in negotiation with LYFT and UBER to allow pickup at the airport. Hopefully, this will be resolved soon. We continue to experience too many evenings of inadequate transportation for our guest.

Destination Marketing:

Julia's last day at ACRA was July 6. The department will be managed by Eliza Voss, Director of Marketing, and Sarah Reynolds Lasser, Director of Sales, during a 90-day trial period ending October 1st. The department extended a full-time position to current part time employee Bridget Crosby, who will serve as marketing coordinator during this time of transition. The fall campaign, "Make Fall Count" will begin on 8/1 and run through 9/30. The PR Team hosted media from Mexico in collaboration with Snowmass Tourism. The sales team represented Aspen at the Smart Meetings Northeast tradeshow in New York and reconnected with past fam planner attendees in market. The team is coordinating four upcoming fam trips for wedding planners, the Fruita Welcome Center staff, a CTO French trade group and meeting planners.

Operations:

We've seen a lot of people using the seating and games we've added outside. People are taking selfies on the ski bench with the Aspen City Limits sign that Mitch Osur mounted for us. Both picnic tables are being used and people are stopping to play corn hole and connect 4. There are now newspaper stands outside as well. We're glad that the public is enjoying everything we've added for the summer and hope to continue drawing people down here. We said goodbye to Julia Theisen, our Vice President of Destination Marketing, and wish her well as she moves on to Oregon. Eliza Voss and Sarah Reynolds Lasser have both stepped up to ensure everything continues running smoothly. Bridget Crosby has joined the team full time as the Marketing coordinator.