

VOL 25, NO 2

February 2017

Dear Members,

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for renewing your membership in Rocky Mountain Guides Association. For many of us renewal is a “no-brainer” activity. As long as we are leading tours, we want to maintain our liability insurance; and membership in RMGA is how we stay protected. Or renewal is just “habit.” But everyone has to consider whether membership in an organization, like a magazine subscription, is really fulfilling their expectations. This is the point where the “rubber meets the road,” as they say.

When I joined RMGA, I was persuaded by the insurance protection – and the insistence of Ed Weising. What I’ve come to appreciate about RMGA, however, is that ours is truly a membership-driven organization. The members themselves, not a hired staff, provide the energy to propel RMGA’s activities. Members organize the monthly meetings, the FAM trips, the seminars, and the website. Members attend tourism meetings and represent the group. Members do – not just for their own knowledge, but for the benefit of the other members, and the profession. Thanks, Ed, for inviting me to join RMGA.

I’m glad to know that so many members find value in belonging to RMGA, and have renewed for 2017. Thank you for your renewal. Thank you for greeting new members when you see them. Thank you for making time to attend RMGA meetings and tourism meetings (such as “Tourism Day at the Capitol”). Thank you for representing us all well due to your continued professionalism and commitment. I look forward to seeing RMGA members during 2017: at RMGA activities, at tourism meetings, and, especially, on tour. That’s how RMGA members create value for their fellow RMGA members.

– Mike Pearl, President (303) 868-0021



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FROM THE EDITOR

Thank you to so many of you who took the time to offer encouragement and comments regarding last month's newsletter. I hope that all Members will continue to address their comments about this new newsletter to me at eileen.pearl.rmga@gmail.com. And, please, continue to provide relevant information to me (including photos) via that same gmail.

I am still looking for Member Biographies for the last section of the newsletter.

How do you like the new banner for the *Guide Line*? It comes to us from Sherry Moon. Thanks for all your hard work, Sherry. Beautiful!

The *Guide Line* is published monthly on or about the first of the month. The deadline for news submittals is the 20th day of the previous month. If you have news to contribute, please email it to me at eileen.pearl.rmga@gmail.com

Eileen Pearl

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Website Committee Update

There is no news to include this month.

Recertification Update

Submitted by Mary Bendelow.

The certification study group has formed and is beginning the task of researching the study guide. The test date will be determined by when this group completes the study guide, and at that time, anyone who is eligible to take the test may do so. The requirement is that the test-taker be a member of RMGA for at least a year, dated from when the Board votes to accept the application. Contact Mary Bendelow at [303 838 2089](tel:3038382089) or mmbtravel@gmail.com with questions or comments.

Insurance Update

Submitted by Barbara Johnson.

To those members who did sign up for the NFTGA Liability Insurance, there will be a new certificate of coverage sent to your email address. The coverage IS in effect.

Membership Committee Update

Submitted by Larry Foos and Mike Pearl.

Welcome two new RMGA Associate Members, Melanie Reed and Susan Burrows.

Their contact information will be in the updated roster you will receive after the February Board meeting.

Melanie Reed, Golden, CO "Associate Member" Leads school tours, private tours, or special group tours. She works with the Denver Ambassadors, Snelling & Associates, and the National Western Stock Show. Melanie volunteers at the Byers-Evans House Museum and the National Western Stock Show at the information desk.

Susan Burrows, Centennial, CO "Associate Member" Retired from teaching middle school, she has led many school tours to Washington, D.C. A recent graduate of the International Guide Academy,

she is certified as a Tour Guide and International Tour Manager. Susan also volunteers at the Byers-Evans House Museum.

Public Relations Committee Update

Submitted by Tom Jensen.

Tourism Day at the Capitol

RMGA was well represented at the Tourism Day at the Capitol on Monday, January 23, 2017. Nine members were in attendance: Sherry Moon, Barbara Ford, Shayne Dombrowski, Larry Foos, Madhu Ramesh, Carol Carder, Steve Kaverman, Lily Ewing, and Tom Jensen. This year the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) worked with TIAC (Tourism Industry Association of Colorado) to give us a chance to hear from our elected officials and to learn how to connect more effectively with our elected leaders. At the end of the meeting attendees were expected to use this training and to meet our representatives.

After opening remarks by Cathy Ritter, Director, CTO, Jeff Thormodsgaard, TIAC Lobbyist at Michael Best Strategies, LLC, urged us to meet with our representatives to convey the importance of the tourism industry to the economy of Colorado. It was legislative class 101. Hearing from constituents is the most effective thing we can do to get our message across. This is where we need to have a 30-second elevator speech about RMGA and the importance of tourism.

Representative Donald Valdez (San Luis Valley), Representative Dan Thurlow (Mesa County) and Senator Nancy Todd (Aurora) spoke to the group after opening remarks.

The legislature's only task that is required by the Constitution is to balance the budget. This year the need for money for transportation, infrastructure, health care and education is greater than ever. As workers in the tourism industry, it is our job to communicate to our representatives that the Colorado Tourism Office needs to be funded at the same level as last year.

Some talking points:

- The CTO's \$19.5M budget generated \$19.1B economic impact to Colorado in 2015.
- The taxes (state and local) generated in 2015 were \$1.13 billion. To replace this revenue, each of Colorado's 5.46 million residents would have to pay an additional \$207 in taxes.
- Travel spending generates more than 160,000 jobs in Colorado. It is predicted for 2017 the hospitality industry will generate the most new jobs (12,000) of any industry.
- For every \$1 spent on advertising placements, \$479 was returned in spending by visitors who were influenced by Colorado tourism ads.
- The benefits of tourism are felt not only here in the metropolitan area, but throughout the rural areas, which need economic help.

On Tourism Day at the Capitol each Senator and Representative received a "goodie bag" and a flash drive with the five "Come to Life Colorado" video advertisements and information specific to their district regarding attractions and the benefits of tourism.

Gov. John Hickenlooper spoke to the group. He is truly the spokesperson for the importance of tourism to Colorado. He reminded us of his Colorado Beautiful initiative to link outdoor spaces and people. A comprehensive outdoor recreation map will be released this summer which will include all trails, open spaces, parks and protected lands in the state.

The process for lobbying your representative is fairly easy:

1. Determine your state senator and representative (<https://leg.colorado.gov/find-my-legislator>).

2. To contact your representative find them in either the House/Senate or in their office. Go to the appropriate house and present your business card to the door guard who will deliver it to your legislator. On the back of your card you should write the purpose of your visit. If the representative is available, he/she may leave the floor and meet you.
3. If your representative is not on the floor, go to his/her office.
4. In either case, introduce yourself, thank him/her for the support first and give the representative your message.
5. Expect to only have 30 to 60 seconds to get your message across. Many times you will know more about the subject than the representative does and he/she welcomes the input.
6. Send an e-mail thanking the representative for the opportunity to meet with him/her.

Several members of RMGA applied their training and met with their state representatives. Carol Carder, Barbara Ford, and Lily Ewing met with Sen. Lois Court (D), Senate District 31. She had served several terms in House and ran for Senate because she was term-limited. Senator Court is a very knowledgeable and personable lady.

Tom Jensen met with his Representative, Leslie Herod, House District 8. Tom found the experience very rewarding and not as intimidating as he expected. Finding Rep. Herod in her office, Tom was invited to meet with her. Tom explained he was with RMGA and the importance of tourism to Colorado. Rep. Herod was aware of the value of tourism and said she has our support. Rep. Herod asked about the content on her flash drive that she received with her “goodie bag.”

VISIT DENVER Partner Orientation

On Wednesday, January 25th, RMGA was represented at the VISIT DENVER Partner Orientation by Mike Pearl, President, and Tom Jensen, Public Relations Committee. The purpose of this meeting was to learn how to best utilize RMGA’s partnership with VISIT DENVER. One of the goals of RMGA this year is to become more visible throughout the industry.

Through various presentations, VISIT DENVER provided an overview on how it markets the city – an “Outdoor City for an Urban Adventure.” The attendees received an in-depth look at partner benefits (publications, website listings, brochure distribution, networking and educational opportunities).

Leading the presentation were MC Genova, Meagan Logan and Amy Wrede. The attendees also heard from the Vice Presidents of Tourism, Jayne Buck, Marketing, Justin Bresler, and Convention Sales & Services, Jason Lusk.

The Tourism group operates the Tourist Information Centers and promotes Denver as a leisure destination to both domestic and international consumers.

Last year the Convention Department “sold” over 800+ conventions/groups with an economic impact of \$724M. An interesting fact was of the 800+ conventions only 88 were at the Colorado Convention Center. The rest were throughout the metropolitan area.

The information learned and the connections made will be used by the RMGA Board of Directors as they lead the organization in 2017.

FEBRUARY MEETING INFORMATION

WHAT: RMGA MEMBERSHIP MEETING – McNichols Event Center

WHEN: February 13, 2017, 6:30 pm – Networking, 7:00 pm – Short Meeting, 7:15 pm – History and Tour of the McNichols Event Center.

WHERE: 144 West Colfax, Denver, CO 80202

PROGRAM: Tim Taylor, Venue Coordinator, will provide the McNichols Event Center history and tour. You enter from Colfax to the first floor. The networking and the history will be on the first floor followed with a tour to the second and third floor.

FOOD: RMGA will provide the refreshments and water.

DIRECTIONS: Located on the Corner of Bannock Street and West Colfax.

PARKING: Street parking is available after 6:00pm. The Denver Post parking garage on the 15 Street and Cleveland charges \$5.00 from 5 pm – 5am.

GUESTS: Members are encouraged to invite potential members as guests to meeting.

GUEST FEES: 1st and 2nd Time Guest: Free, Third thru Fifth Time, Same Guest Visit is \$10 each time. Succeeding Times, Same Guest Must Join RMGA.

MEETING NIGHT CONTACT: Larry Foos – Cell Phone 720-581-3820.

MARCH MEETING TEASER

The RMGA, March 13, 2017, program hosted by the Buffalo Museum and Grave is located at 987½ Lookout Mountain Rd, Golden, CO 80401. Buffalo Bill passed away January 10, 1917 and is buried on Lookout Mountain. Several exhibits have been removed from the museum and new exhibits, never shown before, covering the history of the museum and the history of the burial are in place. You do not want to miss your opportunity to increase your knowledge of the Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

In case you missed the RMGA email blast from Tom Jensen on January 13, the following information is repeated here for your convenience.

What is Go the EXTRA Mile?

Go the EXTRA Mile aims to provide education and resources, while creating pride and excitement, about the important role front-line employee's play in the Hospitality and Tourism industry. The program is the largest and most ambitious city-wide hospitality training and recognition program in Denver's history. Go the EXTRA Mile features customized curriculum for all segments of the hospitality industry: hotels, lodging, restaurants, attractions, retail, transportation, venues and services, and airport.

The all day certification training is designed for employees that are the first line of contact with the visitors in your organization. The training provides:

- City tour of local attractions
- Engaging educational components
- Practical customer service training tips and interactive skill building
- Denver facts that are essential to all employees' knowledge of the city
- Takeaways, including prizes and attraction tickets, handouts and online resources
- Professional Trainer
- Breakfast and Lunch
- The training is from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Participant fee: \$20
- Training Date: Wednesday, March 1, History Colorado Center (1200 Broadway Street)

Program Objective:

Make exceptional hospitality a way of life for participants and ensure that visitors leave with positive memorable experiences to share and the desire to return to our city.

SIGN UP TODAY!

For more information [click here](#) or contact Jenna Crafton at jcrafton@visitdenver.com or [303-571-9423](tel:303-571-9423).

FEBRUARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The February Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Monday, February 6, 2017 at 2:00 pm at Bear Valley Church, 10001 West Jewell Ave., Lakewood, CO.

RMGA MARCH SEMINAR

Title: Leading Successful Group Tour

When: Monday, February 20, 2017
9:00 am-3:00 pm

Where: Auraria Faculty and Staff Club, 1041 W 9th Ave, Denver, CO 80204 (On the Auraria Campus)

Cost: \$25.00

Description: What is a successful group tour? One that's engaging, enjoyable, and safe.

Topics include (but are not limited to):

Motorcoach operation and safety

Communication between guide and driver

Group management

Operating the motorcoach's audio/visual system

Situational awareness (Presented by a representative of the Denver Police Department)

Disaster preparedness (when bad things happen)

A motorcoach and driver (graciously provided by Arrow Stage Lines) will be on site

Registration Materials (including forms waiving liability): RMGA website, "[Members Only](#)."

Seminar Organizer: [Mike Pearl](#)

2017 FAM DATES

(To offer your assistance, contact the coordinator)

March 22, 2017 – Wednesday – Brewery, Distillery, Winery Tour ([Rick Tyson](#))

May 17, 2017 – Wednesday – Leadville Day Trip ([Lily Ewing](#))

October 18, 2017 – Wednesday – Globeville Walking Tour ([Mary Lou Egan](#))

JANUARY 2017 MEETING RECAP - HALCYON HOTEL

Submitted by Sherry Moon.

The hospitality industry is changing, and we got a glimpse of how hotels are reinventing their standards. The Halcyon Hotel, the first hotel to open in Cherry Creek North in a decade, welcomed us to see in what ways hotels are more than just sleeping rooms.

The Halcyon offers an independent option to corporate and leisure travelers looking to stay in the tony Denver neighborhood of Cherry Creek.

This boutique hotel, located at 245 Columbine St., was built on [the site of a former post office](#). The 154-room [Halcyon](#) celebrated its opening in August. Developed by Denver-based Sage Hospitality and BMC Investments.

Our hosts this evening were Jason Landers, sales manager, and Brad Porter, conference service manager. They said that the name was chosen because around 1900 "halcyon" was a term used to imply prosperous,

good feelings. (Dictionary definition has it as an adjective denoting a period of time in the past that was idyllically happy and peaceful.)

This is planned to be a flagship hotel with the expectations of doing similar properties in other major cities. They are looking for a new concept in modern luxury in a travel experience. They want guests to check into a comfortable residential experience – a place where people are more like locals and do things like a local.

Upon entering the hotel, the first thing greeting guests isn't a front desk but a "kitchen counter" where complimentary beverages, Intelligentsia coffee and snacks are served all day long, with alcohol served after 3 pm. Most people like to congregate with their friends at home around the kitchen – thus the kitchen counter concept. Hotel hosts (none of whom wear name tags because you wouldn't see name tags at home), are equipped with satchels and iPads and are available to check guests in on the fly. Halcyon hopes to be set apart from other independent hotels in Denver by a focus on creating a homey feel, like you are staying with a friend – a very well-off friend. From there, it's a few steps into the "living room" and the large sectional couches that invite guests to relax and mingle.

They have spent a great deal of effort in numerous little details like having the top 100 coffee-table books sitting out to enjoy. They wanted little touches of home throughout.

The Gear Garage features an assortment of items that guests can borrow while they explore Cherry Creek and Denver: long boards, e-bikes (electric bikes), Vespa scooters, safety helmets, fly-fishing gear, GoPros, day packs, binoculars, and even a vintage Leica M3 camera (with a roll of film that the hotel will get processed and sent to their home) are all available for guest use (part of the cost of a stay).

Still and sparkling water is available from high-end Vivreau dispensers on every guest floor. The dispensers can give you hot or cold water.

Each guest room comes equipped with a turntable and vinyl records – think classics like Fleetwood Mac's "Rumours" and Johnny Cash's "At Folsom Prison" – as well as a Nespresso coffee machine and basic bar set-up, including the hotel's private-label rum, made by Laws Whiskey House. In front of each room is a fun door mat (different for each room), coat hooks right inside the room doors, a small shelf to hold your keys, and full-size bottles of shampoo and conditioner in the bathrooms are meant to evoke a more homey feel. Some of the suites have balconies with open views.

Room rates start at \$299 per night, but lower rates are offered in off-season.

Because shopping the community is part of the experience, they partner with local businesses and venues and offer things like passes to the Botanic Gardens.

Artwork celebrates Colorado artists with their works throughout the hotel. All together they have about 700 works. They also plan on special gatherings where the artists can speak about their work.

Other hotel amenities include a rooftop pool with cabanas, fitness center and a 3,500-square-foot ballroom available for special events.

Asian-themed "Departure Restaurant + Lounge," out of Portland, Ore., is the first restaurant to open in conjunction with the hotel. Culinary director Gregory Gourdet, the runner-up in season twelve of Bravo's *Top Chef*, offers a Pan-Asian menu in a sleek, ultra-futuristic setting. Gourdet has spent time in Japan, China, Vietnam, and Korea and has a genuine take on the culture. The bar design is intended to capture an aviation theme, where the staff wear outfits of flight-attendant-style. Away from the street is also a rooftop bar.

Coming soon will be Quality Italian. The eatery, which will open this summer, features steak. Guests should expect a menu of modern day adaptations of traditional Italian-American steakhouse fare.

They welcome groups of 10 rooms or more and will work with them on rates and packages. There is plenty of room in front of the hotel for coaches and they have partnered with Cherry Creek Shopping

Center to park coaches for overnight. While there is no bell-staff, the hotel's hosts will handle portage. Jason had been a bellman at the Adam's Mark and knows the needs of groups. For individuals, valet parking is in the basement of the hotel for \$45/night.

For conference groups there are meeting rooms with about 6500 square feet and a ballroom with state-of-art AV in partner with an experienced local AV company. The main ballroom has floor to ceiling windows looking out to Cherry Creek and bringing light to attendees. The "board room" has an adjoining guest room for the convenience of the group leader.

We also met a dog who told us that the hotel is pet friendly.



RMGA ELEVATOR SPEECHES

Submitted by Mike Pearl.

At the January, 2017 meeting and later by email blast, I invited members to send me their elevator speech regarding Rocky Mountain Guides Association. What generated this topic was “Tourism Day at the Capitol,” January 23rd. I wanted to be prepared for the inevitable question from legislators and others: “What is Rocky Mountain Guides Association?” Thank you for the many thoughtful presentations I received from a wide range of members.

As one might expect, each response reflects the point of view and personality of its author. Some describe the role of tour guide, others describe the role of the organization. Some are full of information, others are brief. Some paint a picture, others provide a sketch. One even invited the listener to join RMGA.

What they had in common is that RMGA is an organization of members who promote professionalism among themselves. Every paragraph uses the words “learning” or “education” to describe the organization’s activities. In addition, “professionalism” is mentioned often. While the sentiment is not verbalized, mutual support among members is a common theme. Despite their differences, the paragraphs highlight RMGA’s role as an organization of members to promote the professionalism, training, and skills of their own.

From this sampling of “elevator speeches,” one can conclude that members are knowledgeable about RMGA and its purpose. They are also proud to accept RMGA’s purpose as a reason for their belonging. Then this is the language legislators heard at “Tourism Day at the Capitol.” It is a theme that reverberates within the Capitol chambers and among Colorado’s legislators: that tourism is an important aspect of the Colorado economy, and that tourism workers, such as tour guides, take professional pride in their role in the industry.

To be effective, an elevator speech must take into account its audience. As you compare your speech to the texts submitted, consider variations to suit particular listeners, whether prospective member or legislator.

Texts of the “Elevator Speeches” are located in the “[Members Only](#)” section of the RMGA website.

RMGA MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

Unfortunately, no new biographies were submitted for this publication. One photo was submitted, but I did not receive the biographical information to go with it yet. I will be sending out an email that will hopefully make it easier for Members to contribute to this section of the newsletter.

THIS AND THAT

(This segment of the newsletter will feature short notes that may be of interest to many of our Members. Please submit any notes of this type to me at eileen.pearl.rmga@gmail.com.)

The **2017 Colorado Railroad Museum Annual Auction** began on January 27 and **runs until March 11**. This auction is hosted entirely online. Find more information at <http://coloradorailroadmuseum.org/auction/>

UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND THE STATE

Friday, Feb.3 40W ARTS LOOP OPEN HOUSE Hi Little One Gallery, 1528 Teller St.

From Arts Lakewood: “After months of gathering community input, the project team is excited to unveil the official name for the arts loop at the open house! Please join us from 4-7 p.m. on **Friday, February 3** to find out the name and to see what’s new in the state-certified 40 West Arts Creative District. Enjoy free pizza courtesy of Big Daddy’s Pizza.”

February 3 Active Minds: History of Tea 2 pm (Free) at the Virginia Branch Library, 1500 S. Dahlia St. www.denverlibrary.org

Saturday, Feb. 4 Frisco: Spontaneous Combustion Community Bonfire 6 pm, Frisco Marina (Free) www.townoffrisco.com

Feb. 10 Full Moon Snowshoe Tour 5-7 pm Breckenridge Gold Run Nordic Center www.breckenridgerecreation.com

Saturday, Feb. 11 Baby Doe Tabor Cupcake Decorating 1:30 pm. Byers-Evans House Museum www.historycolorado.org

Denver Restaurant Week February 24- March 5 www.denver.org

Dates to Remember

RMGA Meeting – February 12; McNichols Event Center

*RMGA Seminar – February 20, 2017; Leading a Successful
and Safe Group Tour*

VISIT DENVER C.H.A.T – February 22, Unser Karting

Doors Open Denver – April 29, 30, 2017; city wide