



**January 2026**

**VOL 34, No 1**

**President’s Message**

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

What do you know ... we’re in 2026! Not only a new year, but the start of the next quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century! And the year of celebration for our nation’s 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Colorado’s 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I’m looking forward to all the celebrations coming in 2026. I hope you are, too.

The December member meeting featured a night-time tour of holiday lights and activities in Denver. Adrian Swenson coordinated Christin Grover and Colorado Sightseer to plan the drive-around in a (brand new) Colorado Sightseer van. 13 members and guests enjoyed stops at Cherry Creek North, the Christkindlmarket, Union Station, and the Brown Palace hotel as they viewed the holiday lights of the city. Everyone in the van contributed tidbits of information about Denver throughout the tour. Snacks were provided by Lily Ewing and Christin Grover. Once again, special thanks to the Colorado Sightseer for providing transportation. And thanks to Adrian for setting up the program.

I’m excited to note that several members have stepped up to organize programs for 2026. In fact, the calendar is almost filled, which often wasn’t the case during previous recent years. The programs will supplement your knowledge and provide you with insights that will increase your credibility when you lead your next tour. Our thanks to Charles Foster, Steve Kaverman, Tom Jensen, and Hans Kleinschmidt for “wrangling” some of these upcoming programs.

Have you missed previous programs or want to refresh your memory? Check out the Members Only page of the RMGA website to access video recordings or written descriptions of previous meetings and programs. Our thanks to Webmaster Tom Jensen for making them available to us members.

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Are you craving a Familiarization Trip? I know I am. Why don't you start setting one up? Find some guidance [elsewhere](#) in this issue of the *Guide Line*.

As a civic organization, RMGA is owned and operated by its members. It is truly a democratic organization and relies on its members to give it relevance and life. RMGA will continue to serve tour guide professionals only if current members engage in organizational activities. Seriously consider taking on one of the **Leadership and Volunteer Opportunities** available in the Association. They are [listed](#) elsewhere in this issue. I am tremendously grateful for the members who volunteer to take on Board positions and or Committee Chair positions.

-Mike Pearl, President, RMGA

## FROM THE EDITOR

Deadline for submissions for the February *Guide Line* is Thursday, January 29, 2026. Future contributions should be emailed to *Guide Line* editor Eileen Pearl at [rmgaeditor@rockymountaintourguides.com](mailto:rmgaeditor@rockymountaintourguides.com). If anyone has photos to share, please send them along with either a short description and/or names.

## COMMITTEE UPDATES

### Communications Committee

Submitted by Tom Jensen

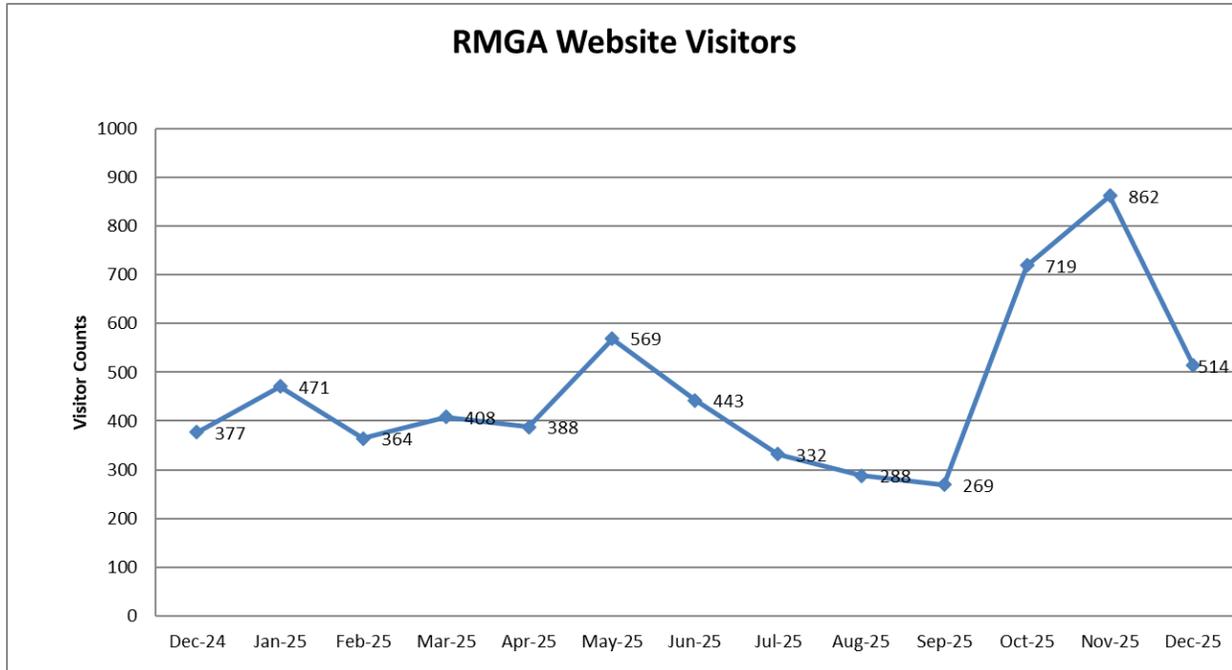
### What's New on the Website?

These updates have been made to the website since the last report:

- Uploaded Guide Lines from September to December

## Monthly Visitors to the RMGA Website

Below is a year-to-date comparison of the number of visitors that viewed the RMGA Website. May and June are estimates.



Access to Members Only Page – On April 4<sup>th</sup> an e-mail was sent to current members with the new access code and instructions for the Members Only page. On this page you will discover archived copies of the Guide Line, Program and FAM trip reviews, and governing documents. If you are having difficulties accessing the page contact Tom Jensen at [tom.jensen72@yahoo.com](mailto:tom.jensen72@yahoo.com).

Profile Update – For instructions on creating or changing your Profile see the “Creating & Changing Your Profile” button on the Members Only page.

### **E-Mail Distribution:**

The distribution of e-mails continues to be done on a temporary basis. If you are interested in sending out the e-mail blasts, contact Mike Pearl at [rmgapresident@rockymountaintourguides.com](mailto:rmgapresident@rockymountaintourguides.com).

If you are not receiving e-mails please contact Tom Jensen at [rmgacommunications@rockymountaintourguides.com](mailto:rmgacommunications@rockymountaintourguides.com).

## Education Committee

Submitted by Mike Pearl

**Call for Familiarization (FAM) Tours.** Did you come across an experience that all members should know about? Is there a venue, attraction, or place that you'd like to learn about? That's a great excuse for a FAM trip. We haven't had many since COVID and maybe we've forgotten why and how to conduct them.

FAM trips usually occur over a 6-hour time (ideally, 9:00 am-3:00 pm) on a weekday. Members get an inside look at a venue or attraction (or two) during a morning session and an afternoon session and have lunch together in the middle. The event provides a great opportunity for members to sharpen their knowledge about places and to network with venue and attraction operators (as well as each other).

Organize a FAM Trip. Contact President [Mike Pearl](#) to get the ball rolling.

## Membership Committee

Submitted by Mike Pearl, Membership Committee Chair

Membership Renewal season begins December 1, 2025, and ends January 31, 2026. Watch for renewal materials coming to your in box.

The RMGA Board of Directors thanks you for your membership. The latest membership directory is posted on the Members Only page of the RMGA Website. Is your information correct?

RMGA welcomes new members! Do your part to improve and expand RMGA's knowledge base by increasing the number and diversity of our members. The best means is for each of us to make a personal connection with non-member tour guides.

Invite tour guides to RMGA's next meeting in-person or on Zoom. Send their contact information to Membership Committee Chair [Mike Pearl](#) so they can be included on the Zoom Meeting Invitation.

## Nominations Committee

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

Nominations for the Board of Directors for the 2026-27 term are being requested. The Nominations Committee must submit a slate of nominees for the offices at the March 2 Board of Directors Meeting and the March 9 Membership Meeting. All offices are available for election.

The Nominating Committee urges all members to sign up to be considered. RMGA is an organization that we've joined to improve our own professionalism and to promote the tour guiding profession. It's important that we all "take our turn" as members of the Board of Directors. Contact a current Board member to find out more. Contact information is on the last page of the *Guide Line*.

## Program Committee

Submitted by Steve Kaverman, Program Coordinator

**WHAT:** RMGA Member Meeting & Program

**WHEN:** January 12, 2026

**WHERE:** Goodson Recreation Center, 6315 South University Blvd., Centennial.

**Networking:** 6:00 pm

**Business:** 6:30 pm

**Program:** 6:45 pm

**PROGRAM:** Denver's 16<sup>th</sup> Street Redevelopment Project. RMGA members are eager to learn about how this project proceeded from start to finish. It is great to see 16<sup>th</sup> Street coming alive again after three and half years of construction. Have you wondered:

- Is 'The Denver Way' the official new tagline for marketing and place-making?
- What was the biggest, unexpected surprise construction crews encountered during the project?

We will be interested to learn answers to those questions, and more when Molly Veldkamp, Program Manager for the project, provides details during the presentation. Tour guides and tour directors love sharing 'gee-whiz' facts that help make local tours and the interpretive guiding we do fun and memorable for our guests.

Bring a potential member as a guest. RSVP by Saturday, January 10 to Steve Kaverman: 303-717-2765 (text) or (email) [steve@tourismchampion.com](mailto:steve@tourismchampion.com) or to Hans Kleinschmidt: (text) 303-990-2505 or (email) [hans1986@hotmail.com](mailto:hans1986@hotmail.com).

**RMGA Program Coordinator:** Steve Kaverman: 303-717-2765 (text) or (email) [steve@tourismchampion.com](mailto:steve@tourismchampion.com)

**Parking:** The Goodson Recreation Center parking lot.

The program will be available via Zoom.

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

**GUEST FEES**

**1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Time, Same Guest Visit: Free**

**3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Times, Same Guest Visit: \$10.00** each time

**SUCCEEDING TIMES, SAME GUEST:** the Guest MUST join RMGA

**2026 Calendar of Programs**

January 12: 16<sup>th</sup> Street Reconstruction Project

February 9: America 250/ Colorado 150

March 9: Brush up on your Customer Service

April 13: Annual Meeting (Elections) – Summer Season Preview

May 11: Denver’s Union Station

October 12: TBA

November 9: TBA

Two program dates are available – October 12 and November 9. Contact [Mike Pearl](#) or [Hans Kleinschmidt](#) with your idea for that program. What can you do to put together a program? Because of our ZOOM account, programs can originate from any of our members’ locations in Colorado and New Mexico.

## Public Relations Committee

Submitted by Tom Jensen, Public Relations Committee Chair

### Photos from the December 8<sup>th</sup> Members Meeting, a tour of the Holiday Lights of Denver

Thanks to Adrian Swenson for these photos.

Thank you to Colorado Sightseer for providing the transportation in one of their new vans and to Christin Grover for driving.



Cherry Creek North



The Denver Christkindlmarket at the Tivoli Quad on the Auraria Campus



We ate!



The Blue Mustang at DIA as part of the Drone Show

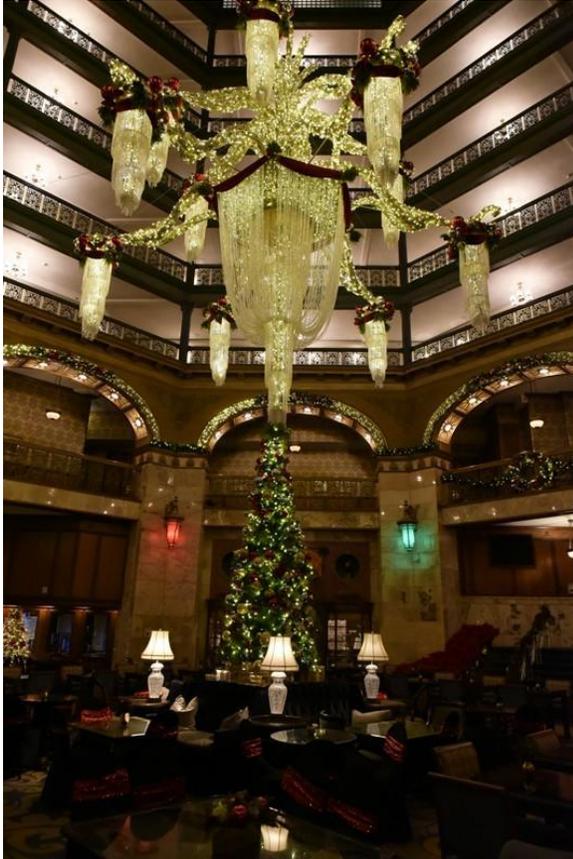


Dancers by the artist Jonathan Borofsky located at Denver's Performing Arts Sculpture Park



Inside Denver Union Station





Brown Palace Hotel



Our tour host and driver Christin Grover



City and County of Denver Building

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# THE DENVER POST

## **Red Rocks broke records in attendance, rankings in 2025**

Red Rocks Amphitheatre continued to reach new heights in 2025, notching wins for the best-attended amphitheater in the United States, as well as the second most-attended venue in the U.S. overall.

The 2025 Red Rocks concert season saw more than 1.75 million paid fans attending 236 events, Pollstar Magazine said, making it the best-attended amphitheater for 2025. Billboard Magazine also ranked Red Rocks as the second most-attended venue in the U.S., only behind Madison Square Garden, according to the City of Denver's Arts & Venues office, which owns and manages Red Rocks.

“Red Rocks will be visited by another 1.1 million unpaid tourists and others.”

## CENTENNIAL AIRPORT

Submitted by Steve Kaverman

*On September 30, 2025, RMGA member Steve Kaverman toured the [Centennial Airport](#) (formerly Arapahoe County Airport) with the Littleton Rotary Club, of which he is a member. Here's some of what he learned.*

Centennial Airport is a very busy place, and RMGA members may have occasion to work with guests arriving or departing on chartered flights, or to dine at *The Perfect Landing* restaurant in the main terminal.

Centennial Airport opened May 12, 1968, and is a public use airport – also known as an FBO or Fixed Base Operator – owned by the Arapahoe County Public Airport Authority. It is an International Airport, with U.S. Customs facilities, but no TSA services.

There are three runways, and in 2023 Centennial Airport was the busiest FBO in the U.S., with 362,407 flight operations. **There are typically around 1,000 flights (take-offs and landings) daily, and it is the fifth busiest general aviation airport in the world.**

The airport has an economic impact of \$2.48 billion dollars. There are [125 businesses](#) located on airport property, including a hotel. The five major flight schools located at the airport together account for about half of all the flight operations. As large and as busy as the airport is, the Authority itself has only 28 staff, although 9,200 jobs owe their existence to the airport. It occupies 1,400 acres of land, all of which is owned by the Airport Authority. No local taxpayer dollars are used to fund the airport.

Most of its operating revenue is generated by taxes on fuel sales, which account for fifty (50) percent of the airport's income. The most recent figure for jet fuel sales, at \$8.21 per gallon, was 16 million gallons! Aviation fuel is slightly less expensive at \$7.55 per gallon, and the airport pumped 800,000 gallons of it according to recent sales figures. It is the first and only airport in the U.S. to offer UNLEADED fuel!

Thirty-five (35) percent of the airport's revenue is from land leases (upon which hangers and businesses are located), and 15% is from concessions. Aircraft hangers are managed by the Authority on a long lease basis.

There are 850 aircraft, including 180 jet aircraft, that use Centennial Airport as a home base. The airport does not handle aircraft as large as standard commercial passenger jets because they exceed the maximum allowable take-off weight of 100,000 pounds, although corporate jets and smaller chartered passenger jets commonly operate from the airport.

Fourteen to twenty lifesaving flights operate DAILY at the airport, using both fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters. Colorado has the most aerial fire-fighting aircraft of any state. One of the businesses located at the airport modifies aircraft specifically for use in fire suppression.

The control tower is 40 years old and is currently undergoing a major, \$8 million dollar renovation & upgrade. Construction of a completely new tower is expected in the next 5 – 10 years.

## ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

Rocky Mountain Guides Association represents professional tour guides in Colorado and the Rocky Mountain Region to tourism-related organizations. As vice president and president, Hans Kleinschmidt and I meet with other leaders of US tour guide associations and guilds through monthly Zoom meetings. We report to RMGA members the information from those meetings.

President Mike Pearl and Vice President Hans Kleinschmidt represent RMGA to

- National Federation of Tourist Guides Associations monthly leadership meetings, and
- Care for Colorado Partners quarterly meetings

Tom Jensen and the Public Relations Committee lead in keeping RMGA (and us professional tour guides) in the forefront of the minds of local tourism industry leaders. He is our liaison to VISIT Denver, the Colorado Tourism Organization, VISIT Colorado Springs, and Tour Colorado, among other such organizations. Do you know of a tourism organization with which RMGA should be affiliated? Contact Tom with information.

The RMGA Website and the RMGA Facebook Page are the digital faces of the organization. They are resources available for members to use to promote their own activities and develop business leads.

The *Guide Line* newsletter disseminates relevant information to members in nine monthly installments.

RMGA Email Blasts inform members of available job opportunities as well as time-sensitive information.

### **VISIT Denver “Go the EXTRA Mile” Training**

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

VISIT Denver’s Front Line Staff Training Program “**Go the EXTRA Mile**” has returned. Many members of RMGA have taken the training and have found it very valuable. The training program is free to RMGA members because of RMGA’s partnership with VISIT Denver.

## **What's in Your Library?**

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

RMGA members wanting to form a book club, contact President Mike Pearl.

## **RMGA Facebook Page**

Another way for members to communicate with each other is the RMGA Facebook page. Find it at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/RMGAssoc>. It's a great place for members to post pictures and tidbits of information that we all can use.

## **RMGA Guide Line**

The official way that RMGA as an organization communicates with members is by means of the newsletter, *Guide Line*, published September through May. Editor Eileen Pearl collects articles submitted by members for the benefit of professional tour guiding. In addition to RMGA members, the *Guide Line* is sent to the Colorado Tourism Organization (CTO), the National Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (NFTGA), and other tourism-promoting organizations. The newsletter is distributed by Tom Jensen, in his temporary role as transmitter of the RMGA email Blasts. Send your articles to [Eileen Pearl](#).

## **RMGA Leadership and Volunteer Opportunities**

Members are encouraged to volunteer to lead these committees:

- Certification Committee Chair (Must have the RMGA Colorado Certification)
- Education Committee Chair
- Email Distribution Committee Chair
- Program Committee Chair

Contact any Board member with your interest.

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### **Memorable Experiences on Tour**

Please use the *Guide Line* to share some of your memorable experiences so that we can all learn. Email your submissions to the [Editor](#). You may also post to the RMGA Facebook [page](#).

### **Future Conferences & Meetings**

Are you going? Send stories of your experiences to the [Editor](#). Post comments to the RMGA Facebook [page](#). This way, we can all learn.

**World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA)** Fukuoka, Japan, February 5-17, 2026. Registration opens in the spring. <https://wftga.org/activities/convention/2026-fukuoka-japan/>

**National Federation of Tourist Guide Associations-USA (NFTGA-USA)** Salt Lake City, Utah, January 13-15, 2027. Registration opens in 2026.

## **NFTGA Leadership Meetings**

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

RMGA is a member of the National Federation of Tourist Guides ([NFTGA-USA](#)), a collective of local tourist guides associations and guilds across the US. From time to time, RMGA Members receive notices from NFTGA via our email Blast system.

Under the leadership of president Jim Carr, NFTGA is providing educational programming from a national perspective to all local association members via monthly webinars. Register for the January 15 program on the San Francisco Tour Guide Guild & Presidio's Tunnel Tops: The [San Francisco Tour Guide Guild \(SFTGG\)](#) has a dynamic presentation about their organization and a lesser-known treasure to incorporate into your tour experiences there: Tunnel Tops. Go [here](#) to register for this virtual program. If you are unable to attend the live stream, the recording will be available to watch for the following 30 days.

To see resources for tour guides, go to NFTGA's [Guide Resources](#).

## Colorado 150/250

2026 marks Colorado's Sesquicentennial (150<sup>th</sup>) Anniversary. Check out <https://www.historycolorado.org/colorado-150> for more information. Also, take a look at <https://celebrate.colorado.gov/> to see how Coloradans are celebrating.

Are you a member of any group organizing for Sesquicentennial? Contact President [Mike Pearl](#).

## Upcoming Meetings

### Board of Directors Meetings

The first Monday of January, February, March, April, May, June, September, October, November, December

Monday, January 5, 2026 (7:00 pm)

(Meetings via ZOOM; email Communications Committee Chair [Tom Jensen](#) for an invitation)

Monday, February 2, 2026 (7:00 pm)

Monday, March 2, 2026 (7:00 pm)

All Members are welcome and invited to attend.

### Member Meetings

The second Monday of January, February, March, April, May, October, November, December

Monday, January 12, 2026 (6:00 pm) Happy New Year!

Monday, February 9, 2026 (6:00 pm)

Monday, March 9, 2026 (6:00 pm)

**PURPOSE of the ROCKY MOUNTAIN GUIDES ASSOCIATION**

The nature of the business and activities of this Corporation is educational and the objects and purposes thereof to be transacted, promoted, or carried on are TO PROMOTE THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF COMPETENCE AND PROFESSIONALISM AMONG PERSONS WHO ACT AS TOUR GUIDES AND TOUR MANAGERS/ DIRECTORS, TO PROVIDE ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AGAINST WHICH ALL TOUR GUIDES AND TOUR MANAGERS/DIRECTORS ARE MEASURED, and, in pursuing said basic purposes,

1. To hold meetings and familiarization (“FAM”) trips for the improvement and continuing education of its members;
2. To provide opportunities for the exchange of experiences and opinions regarding tour guides and tour managers/directors and their profession;
3. To provide a forum for development and promotion of common professional interests and concerns of tour guides and tour managers/directors;
4. To cooperate with other related and non-related organizations in a common endeavor to promote the profession of tour guiding, tour management and tour directing and to promote the public awareness of said profession. – *Articles of Incorporation, Rocky Mountain Guides Association*

<b>Officers</b>		
President	<a href="#">Mike Pearl</a>	303-868-0023
Vice President	<a href="#">Hans Kleinschmidt</a>	303-990-2505
Secretary	<a href="#">Dawn Nelsen</a>	303-898-6853
Treasurer	<a href="#">Brad Hatfield</a>	303-522-3944
Director-at-Large	<a href="#">Tom Jensen</a>	303-968-0515

<b>Committee Chairpersons</b>		
Certification	<i>Vacant</i>	
Communications	<a href="#">Tom Jensen</a>	303-968-0515
Education	<i>Vacant</i>	
Hospitality	<a href="#">Lily Ewing</a>	303-250-9679
Membership	<a href="#">Mike Pearl</a>	303-868-0023
Newsletter Editor	<a href="#">Eileen Pearl</a>	303-868-0021
Program	<i>Vacant</i>	
Public Relations	<a href="#">Tom Jensen</a>	303-968-0515
Nominations	<a href="#">Mike Pearl</a>	303-868-0023