



February 2026

VOL 34, No 2

President's Message

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

I'm pleased to note the number of members who find value in their membership in RMGA. The renewals have been arriving in a steady stream. There are a couple of members from whom the Membership Committee hasn't received a response. It's probably just an oversight. The members who have not yet renewed will be contacted with a reminder.

The January member meeting highlighted Denver's 16th Street redevelopment. Molly Veldkamp, Program Manager for the project, presented members with informative illustrations of the project and regaled us with tidbits of information. No, no dinosaur fossils were uncovered during the excavations. But, the letter "T" from the sign of the Souvenir Warehouse – "Wild West" – was recovered, cleaned, and re-mounted. Who would have known that a special cleaning tool would have to be invented and manufactured for cleaning the storm water runoff drain system? Thank you to Steve Kaverman for arranging the program.

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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Elections are coming up for the next RMGA officer term (June 1, 2026-May 31, 2027). I am not putting my name forward for president for the coming term. I have been president for a combined 7 years; and I believe it is time to share the benefits of holding office in RMGA with other members. Please consider taking your turn in leading the organization by becoming an officer or a committee chairperson. What I've gained is a wider network of contacts for tour guiding. I hope you will discover the same or more benefits.

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 March *Guide Line* is Friday, February 27, 2026.

Future contributions should be emailed to *Guide Line* editor Eileen Pearl at rngaeditor@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

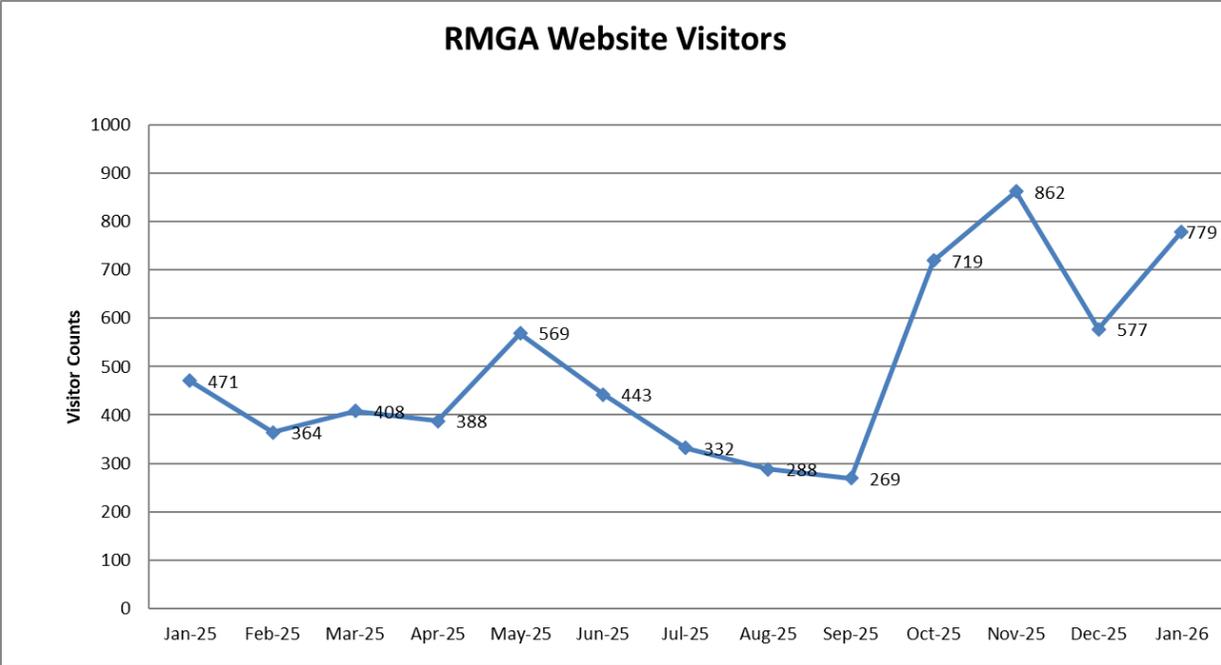
What's New on the Website?

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

- Uploaded January Guide Line
- Updated a Member's Profile (Is yours current?)
- Added Colorado Scenic & Historic Byways to attractions

Monthly Visitors to the RMGA Website

Below is a year-to-date comparison of the number of visitors that viewed the RMGA Website.



What's Coming Up:

Access to Members Only Page – In February members will receive 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 triip reviews, and governing documents.

Profile Update – Profiles from people who did not renew their membership will be removed. A year will be added to the “Years Experience” category. For instructions on creating or changing your Profile see the “Creating & Changing Your Profile” button on the Members Only page.

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.

If you are not receiving e-mails please contact Tom Jensen at rmgacommunications@rockymountaintourguides.com.

Education Committee

Submitted by Mike Pearl

Education Committee

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 wand 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

RMGA welcomes new members!

Michelle Link. Michelle has 3 years of experience leading tours with Intrepid Denver and the Colorado Sightseer. Her favorite places to show guest are Breckenridge and Red Rocks. Welcome, Michelle.

Brian Rossi. Brian is in his first year of guiding tours for Discover Denver Tours. He has several years of experience in the hotel industry. Welcome, Brian!

Genevieve Wooden. Genevieve has 5 years of experience in the tourism industry, including roles as a Local Guide with Aspire Tours, Tour Director with American Tours International, and Assistant Group Leader with Road Scholar. She has received training at the International Guide Academy and Trip School. She is also affiliated with IATDG. Welcome, Genevieve!

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? Reach out to our newest members to welcome them personally.

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*.

Nominating Committee Members are reaching out to members to invite you to consider being an officer or committee chair. Please, give their request your fullest consideration.

Program Committee

Submitted by Hans Kleinschmidt, Program Coordinator

WHAT: RMGA Member Meeting & Program

WHEN: February 9, 2026

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

Networking: 6:00 pm

Business: 6:30 pm

Program: 6:45 pm

PROGRAM: America 250-Colorado 150 Celebration!!!!

Interested in the USA's 250th birthday in 2026? How about Colorado's 150th, too? Addie Bouck, from History Colorado and a member of the America 250-Colorado 150 Commission, will share with us all the exciting news and events Colorado is holding to celebrate in 2026 — Colorado turns 150 and our nation marks 250 years of independence. All across the state, you'll find festivals, events, community celebrations, and hidden gems waiting to be explored. We'll celebrate all year long. From iconic landmarks to small-town surprises, discover the stories, people and places that make Colorado memorable.

Click [here](#) to visit History Colorado's America 250-Colorado 150 website.

Bring a potential member as a guest. RSVP by Saturday, February 7 to Hans Kleinschmidt: (text) 303-990-2505 or (email) hans1986@hotmail.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

1st & 2nd Time, Same Guest Visit: Free

3rd – 5th Times, Same Guest Visit: \$10.00 each time

SUCCEEDING TIMES, SAME GUEST: the Guest MUST join RMGA

2026 Calendar of Programs

February 9: America 250-Colorado 150 Celebration

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

Public Relations February 2026

Denverite

Colorado didn't become a state by accident; it took five tries

Colorado's path to statehood was anything but straightforward. The process stretched across nearly two decades, collided with national politics and reflected deep disagreements about power, representation and belonging.

That winding story anchors "38th Star: Colorado Becomes the Centennial State," an exhibit at History Colorado in downtown Denver. As Colorado approaches its 150th anniversary in 2026, the exhibition examines how the territory finally became the 38th state, and why it almost didn't.

"We had to try very hard in many different ways over nearly 17 years to become a state," [Katherine] Mercier says. "And even then, it almost didn't happen."

Did you know? Although the state appears rectangular, [Katherine] Mercier notes that Colorado actually has 697 sides, the result of 19th-century surveying errors and the limits of the tools used at the time.

Excerpts from an article written by Hayley Sanchez that appeared in the newsletter Denverite. To read the complete article:

https://www.cpr.org/2025/12/31/how-colorado-became-a-state-38th-star-exhibit/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=denverite&utm_campaign=denverite20260102

Better yet, go see the exhibit at History Colorado



‘Freedom Plane’ to fly founding documents into Denver for the semiquincentennial

History Colorado will host an engraved copy of the Declaration of Independence and other artifacts.

A slew of documents from the founding of the United States will be flown into Denver to celebrate 250 years of the country's independence.

Starting in March and running through August, the Freedom Plane National Tour, organized by the National Archives and Records Administration, will be charting its course around the country.

The Denver show, at History Colorado from May 9 to June 14, will be one of eight exhibits nationwide.

The show will include:

- An engraved copy of the Declaration of Independence, printed from a copperplate of the original in 1823.
- The Articles of Association from 1774, which delegates of the First Continental Congress signed urging colonists to boycott British goods.
- Oaths of allegiance to the Continental Army signed by George Washington, Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr.
- The 1783 Treaty of Paris between the U.S. and Great Britain that acknowledged the United States was a nation.
- A secretly printed draft of the Constitution.
- A tally of votes for the Constitution.

“Freedom Plane offers a tangible opportunity to reflect on what it means to be American,” wrote Dawn DiPrince, head of History Colorado and the state historic preservation officer, in a statement.

“These documents embody the revolutionary idea that we are a nation bound together by shared ideals.”

The show has been organized by the America 250 - Colorado 150 Commission, the group celebrating both the state’s sesquicentennial and the country’s semiquincentennial.

Tickets will go on sale soon. For more information, visit [History Colorado online](#).

From Denverite Jan 21, 2026

DENVER — As Denver pours millions into the city's downtown in a push to revive it, one longtime downtown organization has a bright idea.

The Denver Theatre District, established in 2007, covers a 16-block area of downtown Denver. The district programs the area with lights, projections and art installations designed to invest in local creatives while bringing people downtown.

Right now, the Denver Theatre District is working to bring an LED screen to 1515 Arapahoe St. on the Park Central building. The video wall would be about 28 feet wide and 15 feet high, placed so as not to disrupt views for current and future Park Central tenants while helping activate the public space to the east of the building, which is part of Denver's Skyline Park.

<https://www.9news.com/article/news/local/denver-theatre-district-giant-led-screen-skyline-park/73-0ba8a077-eb94-4e9c-bb8a-5443c525558c>

This spring, ride a befuddled duck and evil-looking dragon at City Park and Wash Park

Denver Parks and Recreation is taking over boat rental operations and bringing two new species with it.



In the City Park pavilion, three paddleboats were spotted by Denverite earlier in January. One is a familiar sight — a white boat with the head of a swan. Those boats have long been available for rent for \$12/hour at City Park and Washington Park’s lakes during the warmer months.

From Denverite

Denver mayor confirms the city’s bid to host the 2028 Democratic National Convention

The city last hosted the event in 2008

Mayor Mike Johnston’s office said on Friday afternoon that the city is shooting to host the 2028 Democratic National Convention.

“I can confirm that Denver has submitted a bid to host the 2028 Democratic National Convention,” wrote Johnston’s spokesperson Jon Ewing in a statement.

He declined to say more about the bid, first reported as a possibility by Westword in October. The competitive process is secretive and cities are limited in how much information they can share.

Denver last hosted the event in 2008, when Barack Obama was nominated to be the party’s candidate for president. Prior to that, it had not hosted the convention since 1908, when populist firebrand William Jennings Bryan got the Democratic nod.

The city has never hosted a Republican National Convention, though it made a bid and lost in 2016.

Hosting political conventions is a big boost for tourism — but it also comes with challenges.

The 2008 DNC brought in \$266 million in economic benefit to the metro and \$154 million to the city. Chicago estimates the economic benefit of hosting the DNC in 2024 was \$371 million.

In addition to revenue, political conventions often bring mass protests, traffic snarls and heightened security concerns.

When the DNC came to Denver’s Pepsi Center (now Ball Arena) in 2008, thousands of federal agents descended on the city.

Denver police mobilized 1,500 officers from around the region for the response and spent \$2.1 million on protective gear, \$1.4 million on barricades and \$850,000 on other supplies, The New York Times reported. Law enforcement often uses the events to test new technologies.

Boosters tout the city’s accessibility through Denver International Airport and the A-Line to downtown, the city center’s hotels, restaurants and cultural amenities, and Denver’s track record hosting big events.

“We look forward to taking part in what is expected to be a very competitive process and will share more information as we are able,” Ewing wrote.

From Denverite January 9, 2026

Great American Beer Festival

The organizers of the Great American Beer Festival announced Tuesday that they will move the festival from the Colorado Convention Center to Denver’s Levitt Pavilion in 2026, meaning the two-day October event will take place outdoors.

The Brewers Association said the festival will be reduced to two sessions over two days, down from four sessions over three days a few years ago. This year’s event will be Oct. 10-11 from noon to 4 p.m. (rather than Oct. 8-10, as had been previously announced). Tickets go on sale in June. Attending the festival will cost \$60 this year, down from \$85-\$95 in 2025.

Invitation from Utah

The Utah Tour Guide Association invites you to join tour guides from across the country in Salt Lake City, January 13-15, 2027, for the next National Federation of Tourist Guide Associations conference. We're planning an event that will help you hone your skills as a tour guide, give you the chance to network and socialize with your peers, and that connects you to Utah's natural wonders and curious history.

For the 2027 conference, we're crafting engaging sessions and interactive workshops and panel discussions based on the theme of "Honoring the Past; Looking to the Future." This is something as tour guides we strive to do everyday. We share history, stories, and information to help our guests connect with the places we take them, and we honor the past by ensuring our commentary is accurate, inclusive, and up-to-date. As guides we are ambassadors of wherever we lead tours, and we are the front line for our visitors to those destinations. We look to the future by being prepared for anything, updated on everything, and by entertainingly steering our guests toward a more hopeful and peaceful future by helping them expand their outlook of the world.

We're arranging speakers from all backgrounds and many areas of expertise from museum officials and historian authors to tour guide partners and passionate advocates. Panels are being organized to highlight how to tell forgotten stories, and workshops are being developed for engaging conference sessions. Many topics and speakers are being discussed and planning is well under way. They may cover a myriad of other topics such as association issues, genealogy, and national parks. You won't want to miss a single one.

Stay posted to the NFTGA Facebook group and your association's communication channels for more details over the next several months as we prepare everything for you to register and join us for the conference. For now, save the date and start getting excited for a fabulous conference in Salt Lake City!

Sincerely,
Kevin Earl
President
Utah Tour Guide Association



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.

Contact any Board member with your interest.

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.

Are You Colo-Ready?

RMGA is a Stewardship Partner with the Care for Colorado Coalition. Check out the RMGA logo alongside other Stewardship Partners at <https://www.colorado.com/care-colorado-coalition>. Watch for this logo on the RMGA website and the *Guide Line*:



The Care for Colorado Coalition has joined with Do Colorado Right to amplify the message. RMGA has access to Care for Colorado assets such as stickers and flyers. Contact President [Mike Pearl](#) with your request for materials.

Prepare for Winter Adventures

February 2026

In winter, Colorado is a destination that can't be beat, with opportunities for adventures both on and off the snow. This month, we are asking partners to help visitors Do Colorado Right by sharing these resources so they can properly prepare for all their outings.

Help us remind visitors to take actions to Know Before You Go by checking the weather, packing layers, and downloading maps. A little preparation will go a long way in helping visitors and Coloradans have the best possible experience during all their winter excursions. (From the Care for Colorado *Monthly Messaging* newsletter, February 2026.) Click [here](#) to view the newsletter.

Do Colorado Right Passport Launches

The [Do Colorado Right Passport](#) launches to kick off the Colorado Passport Program as part of the America 250–Colorado 150 celebration. This free, year-long digital experience invites travelers to explore the Centennial State while supporting sustainable travel by using GPS check-ins at EV chargers, bike rentals, visitor centers, transit-friendly locations and other businesses across Colorado. This is one of many passports that will be rolling out throughout the year.

NFTGA Leadership Meetings

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

National Federation of Tourist Guide Associations-USA

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. The February NFTGA Learning program will be a report from US guides who attended the World Federation of Tourist Guides 2026 Conference in Fukuoka, Japan. An email will be blasted to RMGA members inviting you 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. Watch your email inbox.

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

Colorado 150/250

Colorado 150/250

2026 marks Colorado's Sesquicentennial (150th) 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, February 2, 2026 (7:00 pm)

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

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

Monday, April 6, 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, February 9, 2026 (6:00 pm)
 Monday, March 9, 2026 (6:00 pm)
 Monday, April 13, 2026 (6:00 pm) Annual Meeting and Election of Officers

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*

| Officers | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| President | Mike Pearl | 303-868-0023 |
| Vice President | Hans Kleinschmidt | 303-990-2505 |
| Secretary | Dawn Nelsen | 303-898-6853 |
| Treasurer | Brad Hatfield | 303-522-3944 |
| Director-at-Large | Tom Jensen | 303-968-0515 |

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