

January 2025

VOL 33, No 1

President's Message

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

I'm pleased to report that Rocky Mountain Guides Association gained strength during 2024. RMGA welcomed six new members in 2024. For 2025, another six are applying for membership. Only two members did not renew in 2024. The ability to retain and add members shows that an organization is relevant to its members. Being asked to partner with the IATDG *TourConnect2024* conference held in November is another significant event for RMGA. It showed nationally and internationally that RMGA is respected and valued outside of the Rocky Mountain West. I hope that RMGA continues to increase in stature and relevance in 2025.

The December Program/Meeting at the home of RMGA Member Dawn Nelsen was fun despite the weather. Members were treated to holiday foods provided by each other. Several members attended via Zoom. Thanks to Dawn (& Bob) for hosting the group.

RMGA welcomes two professional members for 2025: Terri Gentry and Charley Silverman. Find their biographies in the Membership Committee's Report.

Membership Renewal Season is in full swing and "Early Bird" rates are in effect until January 15. Send in your renewal today!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message	1,2
<u>From the Editor</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Committee Updates</u>	<u>3-9</u>
<u>Organization Activities</u>	<u>10-12</u>
<u>NFTGA Activities</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Members Meetings</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Purpose of RMGA</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Officers and Chairpersons</u>	<u>15</u>

NFTGA offers personal liability insurance for tour guides. A new carrier has been identified and rates are \$85.00 for 2025. Are you participating? Payment can be made by check or by Zelle. Contact Treasurer Brad Hatfield.

The January meeting program will be devoted to preparing members' profiles for the "Find-a-Guide" section of the RMGA Website. 20 professional members and 5 business members are listed. Fourteen professional members and five business members have no profiles posted. Members will review their profiles (or write their profiles) for posting. The "Find-a-Guide" page is a benefit of your membership in RMGA. Please, don't waste the resource.

Of the eight monthly meetings scheduled for 2025, three already have programs: January, April (the annual meeting), and December (the Holiday Cheer). What can you do to put together one of the five other programs for 2025? Because of our ZOOM account, programs can originate from any of our members' locations.

Oh, and how about there be at least one FAM tour for 2025? Who is ready to organize one? Check out the Education Committee article for details.

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. Check out the **Leadership and Volunteer Opportunities** available in the Association listed elsewhere in this issue.

RMGA members continue to determine in what ways the organization is beneficial to them, then join to actualize that vision. Please email your ideas and thoughts about the future direction of the organization to rmgapresident@rockymountaintourguides.com

Mike Pearl, President RMGA

FROM THE EDITOR

Deadline for submissions for the February *Guide Line* is Wednesday, January 29, 2025.

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.

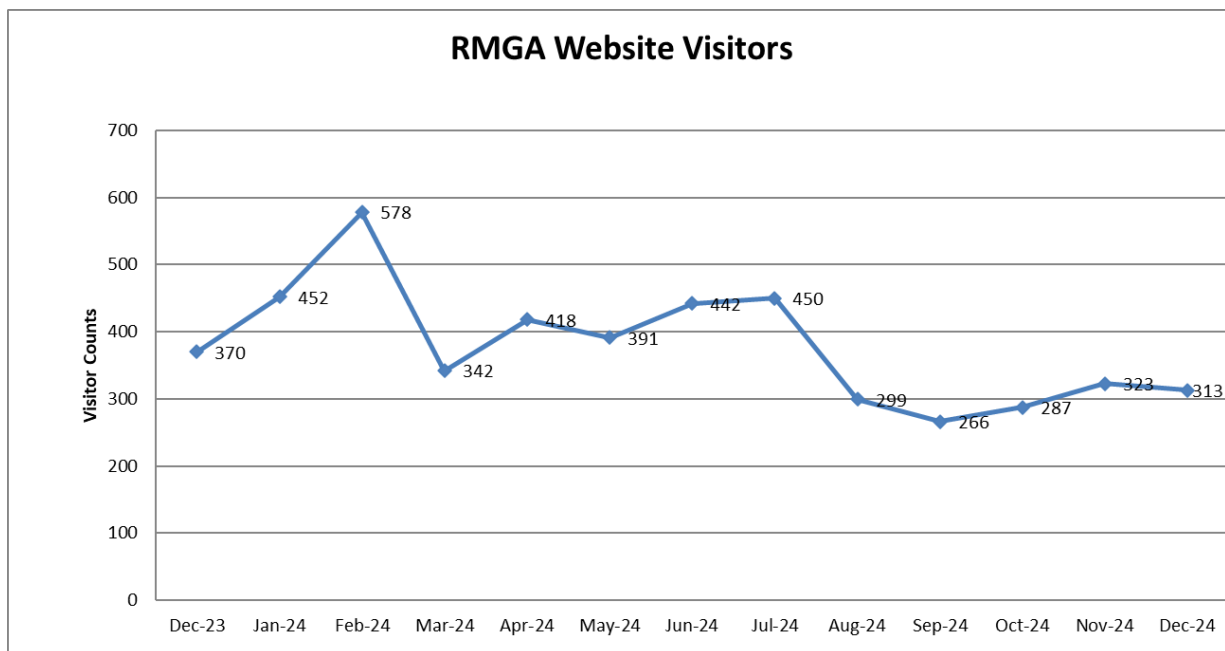
COMMITTEE UPDATES

Communications Committee

Submitted by Tom Jensen

Monthly Visitors to the RMGA Website

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



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 reviews, FAM trip reviews, and governing documents.

Profile Update – Profiles from people who did not renew will be removed. A year will be added to the "Years Experience" category. If you have changes to your Profile, send them to rmgawebsite@rockymountaintourguides.com.

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@rockyountaintourguides.com. The contact list is current with the membership roster. If you are not receiving e-mails please contact Tom Jensen @ rmgacommunications@rockymountaintourguides.com.

Three new members were added to the distribution list.

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.

FAM trips usually occur over a 6-hour time (say, 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.

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

Membership Committee

Submitted by Mike Pearl, Membership Committee Chair

RMGA welcomes Terri Gentry as a professional member. Through the Black American West Museum & Heritage Center, Terri has conducted presentations, guided tours of the Museum and Five Points Walking Tours along Welton Street for school groups, community groups and organizations, governmental agencies, family reunions, and guests visiting Colorado from around the state, country, and the world. She has conducted bus tours of Northeast Denver. She has also collaborated with Historic Denver to conduct Five Points walking tours along Welton Street. Terri has been doing this work for 16 years.

RMGA welcomes Charley Silverman as a professional member. Charley has worked as a tour director for over-the-road tours for over 6 years. He started by working with student groups and now focusses on adult groups. A Colorado native, Charley earned his International Tour Manager Certification from the International Guide Academy.

Membership renewal season is in full swing. If you haven't renewed yet, what are you waiting for?

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?

Please examine the membership directory, then reach out to a tour guide you know who isn't a member yet and give them a call.

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 that they can be included on the Zoom Meeting Invitation.

Nominations Committee

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

No submission this month.

Program Committee

January Members Meeting & Program:

WHEN: Monday, January 13, 2025

6:00 pm Networking

6:30 pm Business Meeting

6:45 pm Program

WHERE: Your favorite chair!

WHAT: Mike Pearl and Tom Jensen will brief members on the “Find-a-Guide” page on the RMGA website. Be prepared to update your profile.

ONLINE: The meeting will be available via ZOOM. Watch for an invitation.

Public Relations Committee

Submitted by Tom Jensen, Public Relations Committee Chair



New Care for Colorado Coalition Partner

The Care for Colorado Coalition would like to welcome a new partner, Glitter Girl Productions and [Colorado Welcome Center - Dinosaur](#). The coalition now includes over 200 tourism related businesses, statewide organizations and state/federal agencies helping the CTO educate Coloradans and visitors on how to protect the state's extraordinary natural and cultural resources. If you are interested in joining, please email careforcolorado@colorado.com.



History Colorado

Solid Muldoon

Here's a bit of Colorado lore that I forgot to include in the October Guide Line.



Images of the Solid Muldoon, taken by J. Thurlow. History Colorado, 84.192.727; 84.192.728; 95.200.138

With Halloween upon us, we dug into the past and found a story that is more trick than treat! William Conant was out hunting for fossils when he stopped for lunch in September 1877 at Mace's Hole near Beulah, Colorado. There he noticed curious-looking stones resembling toes protruding from the ground. As he cleared away the dirt, he unearthed a human foot. Further digging uncovered the petrified remains of a man measuring seven-feet and eight-inches and sporting the stub of a tail. After exhuming the giant, Conant transported the Solid Muldoon, as it was soon named, to Pueblo for display. Some folks swear that they could see the figure take breath as it lay eerily on its couch. Within days, P.T. Barnum paid \$20,000 for the oddity and moved it to New York City.

It was, sadly, a hoax—the scheme was hatched by Barnum and George Hull, who Frankensteined the Muldoon together from a bizarre concoction of ground stone, pulverized bones, clay, plaster,

blood, eggs, and “other materials” and baked it in a kiln. The Muldoon was shipped to Colorado Springs and buried in Beulah for Conant, allegedly under Barnum’s employ, to “discover.”

The Solid Muldoon failed to attract visitors after it was exposed as a human-made statue of modern provenance and largely fell out of popular lore. One of the greatest fakes of its age, lost to time, never to be seen again. Myths and legends like these are a fun part of our cultural fabric. And luckily, they don’t have to fall prey to the dusty annals of time. The Solid Muldoon lives on in the Rocky Mountain News and the Colorado Weekly Chieftain, cobweb-free and digitized in the Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

—Ann Sneesby-Koch, *Archives Collections Specialist*

2024 Holiday Party



Thank you to Dawn and Bob for hosting the annual RMGA Holiday Party. Good food and conversations. They even made sure we had fresh snow for the evening.

QUIZ

How Well Do You Know Colorado?

A quiz to start the new year based on the book “THE GREAT BOOK OF COLORADO” by Bill O’Neill. The answers can be found on pages 13, 14.

1. The largest flat-top mountain in the world is:
 - a. Pikes Peak
 - b. Rocky Mountain
 - c. Grand Mesa
2. The co-creators of *South Park* met when they were taking which type of class at the University of Colorado Boulder?
 - a. Writing
 - b. Film
 - c. Graphic Arts
3. The root beer float was originally called:
 - a. The Black Cow
 - b. The Black Crow
 - c. The Buttery Beer
4. The Fool’s Gold Loaf was which musician’s favorite sandwich?
 - a. John Denver
 - b. Elvis Presley
 - c. Miley Cyrus
5. Great Sand Dunes National Park is home to the largest sand dune in the U.S. How tall is it?
 - a. 750 feet
 - b. 700 feet
 - c. 7,000 feet
6. Football kickoffs in Denver travel ____ farther than they do in other cities due to the high altitude.
 - a. 1%
 - b. 10%
 - c. 25%
7. Which legendary creature was said to lurk inside the mining Caverns?
 - a. Skinwalkers
 - b. Vampires
 - c. Tommyknockers

See pages 13, 14 for answers to the questions.

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.

The training program is completely online. Once you have completed the course, you will receive a certificate and access to the Go the Extra Mile Savings Pass. Go to <https://qrs.ly/uufb2z5>. There you will set up an account, then proceed through the course information and learning modules.

After you receive your certificate, add that information to your biography on the RMGA website.

NOTE I followed the directions in the article above and completed the course. Upon successful completion, I received the app: *VISIT Denver Experiences* where I located the “Go the Extra Mile Savings Pass.” Inside I found discounts on tickets for 7 experiences, including one from RMGA member Discover Denver Tours. The online course took me about 30 minutes to complete. – Mike Pearl

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.

World Tourist Guide Day: Friday, February 21, 2025

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

World Tourist Guide Day, an activity of the World Federation of Tourist Guides (WFTGA), was initiated to celebrate the skills of professional tourist guides in their localities. Around the world guide associations have offered free events to

- Celebrate Skills of the professional tourist guides in their localities.
- Raise Awareness of local authorities, fellow citizens, and the media to the quality and value of the work of professional tourist guides.

RMGA will participate in World Tourist Guide Day by offering a free lunch-hour tour of Denver's Civic Center. Volunteer tour guides will provide narration and describe a tour guide's tasks and responsibilities. Announcement of the tour will be sent to the VISIT Denver Partners, the Colorado Concierge Association, the Colorado Legislature, and the Denver media outlets. RMGA members wanting to volunteer to lead tours should contact Mike Pearl at 303-868-0023. A write-up of the complete plan for the activity, including promotion, is available by clicking [here](#).

RMGA will assist members living outside Denver (i.e., Grand Junction, Colorado Springs, Grand Lake, Santa Fe) to set up a similar activity in their locality.

RMGA members are represented to the WFTGA via RMGA's membership in the National Federation of Tour Guides (NFTGA).

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

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

National Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (NFTGA-USA) Philadelphia, January 2024.

Registration is now open: <https://www.nftga.com/2025-nftga-conference/>.

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.

Do Colorado Right Campaign Targeting Residents

The CTO launched its Do Colorado Right program which specifically targets Colorado residents. This campaign features relevant topics including fire safety and prevention, backcountry safety, trash mitigation and more. Check out the 16 videos on the [website](https://www.colorado.com/do-colorado-right).
<https://www.colorado.com/do-colorado-right>

The ideas expressed in the videos can't be an exhaustive list. What ideas are the videos missing? Send your thoughts to the *Guide Line* [Editor](#).

NFTGA Leadership Meetings

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

NFTGA Leadership Meetings

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

RMGA is a member of the National Federation of Tourist Guides (NFTGA), 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.

Guides in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. are preparing for our nation's Semiquincentennial (250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence with increased programming. For Instance, even though guides on Boston's Freedom Trail can only show their guests the outsides of many of the landmarks, upcoming FAM trips will allow the Boston Guides to have inside access to the sites.

2026 also marks Colorado's Sesquicentennial. Check out <https://www.historycolorado.org/colorado-150> for more information.

The associations "next door" to us are the Utah Tour Guide Association ([UTGA](#)) and the Santa Fe Tour Guides ([SFTG](#)). Check out their websites. When you're traveling, check the NFTGA membership [page](#) to locate the web address for the organization serving your destination. Then, reach out to the organization and make a connection.

The next NFTGA Delegates Meeting will be held Thursday, January 9, 2025 via ZOOM 6:30-8:00 pm. All RMGA members are welcome to sit in on the meeting. Contact President [Mike Pearl](#) for a link.

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

Board of Directors Meetings

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

Monday, January 6, 2025 (7:00 pm)

Monday, February 3, 2025 (7:00 pm)

Monday, March 3, 2025 (7:00 pm)

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

All Members are welcome and invited to attend.

Member Meetings

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

Monday, January 13, 2025 (6:00 pm)

Monday, February 10, 2025 (6:00 pm)

Monday, March 10, 2025 (6:00 pm).

Answers to How Well Do You Know Colorado?

1. C -- Grand Mesa

“The largest flat-top mountain in the world is Grand Mesa which is located in Western Colorado. With an elevation of 11,332 feet and a width of 40 miles, the mountain is named after it’s flat “Mesa” (which means “table in Spanish).”

2. B -- Film

“Matt Stone and Trey Parker met when they were taking a film class together at the University of Colorado Boulder. Stone and Parker not only co-write and c-direct *South Park*, but they also voice many of the show’s characters.”

3. A -- The Black Cow

“Frank Wisner created the root beer float in Cripple Creek. He was allegedly looking out his window one night. He was thinking about his line of soda water and noticed the way the full moon shone against the snow-capped Cow Mountain. It reminded him of vanilla ice cream.

He went back to the bar and added a scoop of ice cream to Myers Avenue Red Rot Beer. He tried his concoction and liked it. It turned out to be an instant success.

Although Wisner called his invention the “Black Cow Mountain,” the children shortened the beverage’s name to the “Black Cow.”

4. B -- Elvis Presley

“The sandwich, created by the Colorado mine Company in Glendale, is made when you bathe a loaf of sour bread with margarine and then basically make a peanut butter and jelly

out of grape jelly and creamy peanut butter. Then you stuff it with a surprising ingredient: a pound of bacon’

The sandwich was invented for Elvis Presley, who allegedly liked it so much that he once flew 22 of his friends out just to get it!”

5. A – 750 feet

“Spanning across 107,000 acres, the park is home to Star Dune, a 750-foot tall sand dune, the tallest in North America.”

6. B – 10%

“Thanks to Denver’s high altitude, football kickoffs tend to travel 10% farther than they do in other cities where NFL games are played. In fact, 3 out of 4 of the longest field goals in NFL history have taken place in Denver!”

7. C – Tommyknockers

“Tommyknockers are thought to be tiny green old wrinkly men who lived in the mines. They were said to knock the walls of the caverns. Hearing a knock from a Tommy knocker was said to be good luck. It was thought that the knocks were there to warn the miners of things like tunnel collapses and other troubles in the mines. If no knocks were present, it was said to be because the Tommyknockers had been disrespected and left, leaving the miners to fend for themselves.

The belief in this local lore was so strong that it’s said to be the reason many of Colorado’s mines were never sealed off, even long after they were no longer used. The mines were allegedly left open for the Tommyknockers to make their way out and follow the miners onto their next mining adventure.”

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