



THIRD
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CITY OF MANITOU SPRINGS NEWSLETTER

NONPROFIT
EDITION

City Hall

By Marc Snyder

Mayor of Manitou Springs

I may always remember July of 2014 as my favorite month during my time as mayor. That month, two years after the fire and less than a year after the devastating floods of August and September of 2013, we collected the most monthly sales tax in our city's long history. What a wonderful testament to our community resiliency that we recovered so quickly after such adversity.

That July was also the last month before we started collecting marijuana-related taxes.

With the addition of these new taxes, our city's tax revenues have greatly increased. Compared to the first six months of 2014 (a good half-year economically), the first six months of 2015 reflect this increase. Without marijuana taxes, sales tax collections were up 8.4 percent through the end of June 2015 over the same period in 2014.

When marijuana-related taxes are included, sales tax collections are up 80.4 percent for the same period. When I was sworn in as mayor in January of 2010, we had a budgeted general-fund reserve of \$160,000. As we budget for 2016, our general-fund reserve is approaching \$1.6 million, despite having expended approximately \$500,000 on flood recovery and other capital projects.

Our city's expenditures have also greatly increased and this will continue for the foreseeable future. We have added six new grant-funded employees to assist in our recovery and resiliency efforts. Grants have also funded their temporary offices at the Public Works facility.

We have applied for numerous infrastructure repair and replacement grants. If all are awarded, our local-match requirement could total \$2.5 million to \$3 million.

Are the above revenues and expenditures sustainable?

Current and future City Councils



Photo by Rhonda Van Pelt

Mayor Marc Snyder, in his office, is proud of the city he's led since 2010.

will have very hard decisions to make concerning proper staffing levels and prioritizing critical infrastructure needs. These decisions will be especially difficult in these uncertain and rapidly changing times.

But times of great change are also times of great opportunity. Like those who came before us, it is now our responsibility to build the very best Manitou Springs we can for future generations.

Manitou Springs Community Library

By Travis Duncan

Pikes Peak Library District
media relations specialist

The Manitou Springs Community Library is a historic Carnegie Library which opened to serve residents of Manitou Springs in February 1911. The library joined Pikes Peak Library District after a ballot initiative citizens of Manitou Springs passed in the November 2012 election.

PPLD's libraries have been rapidly transforming to reflect the communities they serve. The core philosophy and goal of PPLD's 21st Century Library is to provide exactly what you need, in the format you desire, at the very

moment when it will benefit you most. The resources and services offered at Manitou Springs Library will continue to evolve to reflect this mission.

This new core philosophy is reflected in recent innovative programs offered this past year on homesteading, how to build your own tiny house and building Little Free Libraries. The latter were created and installed with the help of the Concrete Couch Fab Lab.

The library also hosted programs that partner with creative arts groups like Concrete Couch and the Manitou Art Center. The annual Summer Lawn Concert Series brings cultural music offerings outside to the library lawn, transforming the

live concerts into an opportunity for residents to see old friends and make new ones.

The building also has an innovative Seed Library offering free seeds and a means of regional seed exchange while teaching people how to save those seeds successfully. These types of programs demonstrate a spirit of hands-on learning and bring people together in a creative, relaxed environment that public libraries have been embracing.

As we continue through fall and move toward winter, library patrons can expect a continued emphasis on providing a third place outside of home and work for community members to create and share with others.



Photo courtesy of Pikes Peak Library District

Chi Ito, Manitou Springs Community Library public services specialist, wrote a successful application for a \$1,000 grant to help create 12 Little Free Libraries around Manitou Springs.

The Mineral Springs Foundation



By Terry Sharpton
Vice president

The Mineral Springs Foundation has had a busy summer.

Our interpretive signs program became a reality early in the season after a year of planning, designing and fundraising. We partnered with the Manitou Chamber of Commerce and its board, and together we created the Mineral Springs Experience.

The first challenge for the experience was to develop national park-style interpretive signs and install them at eight of the mineral springs around town. Through contributions by the chamber and its board, the Mineral Springs Foundation, grants and a successful Kickstarter program, more than \$40,000 was raised to make the project a reality.

We further enhanced the Mineral Springs Experience by completely revamping our website with the help of Mediawerx and Dave Wolverton. Our site now provides even more information on the mineral springs, their history, science and information on the artists who created the fonts at the various spring sites around town.

With the help of Chris Vestal and Concept Vision LLC, we created a new animated video titled "The Journey of a Raindrop," which can be accessed from our website or Facebook page.

The experience continued with our Spring-About tours – guided tours of the mineral springs which started at 9 a.m. each Saturday through the summer at 7 Minute Spring.

We look forward to furthering the Mineral Springs Experience in the coming months. If you haven't seen the new signs, be sure to check them out at any of the eight accessible springs around town.

For more information on the Mineral Springs



Photo courtesy of Mineral Springs Foundation

Shoshone Spring has an informational sign, as do seven other mineral springs around Manitou.

Foundation, check out our website and Facebook page at www.manitoumineralsprings.org or email

us at manitoumineralsprings@gmail.com. You may also contact us through the chamber at 685-5089.

Soda Springs Task Force



By Kelly Snyder
Co-chair with Chief Joe Ribeiro

The Soda Springs Task Force began meeting in early 2012, while Richard Myers was interim police chief. Chief Joe Ribeiro began attending these meetings in the spring of 2012 before he started as Manitou Springs' police chief.

Stakeholders from the school district, the religious community, the city and its advisory boards, and a variety of Manitou Springs citizens developed the following strategic plan:

Mission: To review historic problems at Soda Springs Park that the community perceives as unsafe and/or criminal in nature or that otherwise erode the quality of life in Manitou Springs, and to develop strategic plans and tactics to increase the access to and safety of Soda Springs Park and vicinity.

Vision: A Soda Springs Park that is safe for all to use, free from harassment for any visitors or park users, and crime-free. A park where all feel welcome.

Values: All persons' constitutional rights are valued. Free passage without harassment is valued. Diversity among people, interests, music and activities are valued. Personal, private and public

property are all valued.

After meeting a number of times, the group formulated three proposed breakouts:

- Physical/environmental aspects: Incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), park design, etc.;
- Human aspects: Behaviors that are negative and positive, programs, etc.;
- Policy aspects: Laws, ordinances, park rules, etc.

Over the years, the group has addressed concerns including lighting needs, moving large trash receptacles behind the stage, adding chains across the entrances to and front of stage, working with businesses in the immediate area and removing all benches from the pavilion.

Signs with the existing park rules have been installed and trees and bushes have been trimmed to allow visibility from business, neighbors and street.

The group continues to meet at 5 p.m. first Tuesdays at Manitou Springs City Hall and is open to the public.



Photo by Rhonda Van Pelt

A security firm staffer, left, talks with people near Soda Springs Park in late summer.

Friends of Ruxton Canyon

By Ken Jaray
Facilitator

Friends of Ruxton Canyon was formed in January 2015 as an advocacy group for environmental stewardship of the Ruxton Canyon area. Our mission is to provide a collective voice for those who have experienced the impact of the 250,000-300,000 people who are expected to use the Incline this year.

It's clear that the lack of oversight and management of the Incline, as well as the traffic congestion and noise in and around the Ruxton corridor, has seriously impacted the quality of life of residents. FORC has worked collaboratively with the Incline Friends, Friends of the Peak, and the Trails and Open Space Coalition to accomplish this work.

We also hope to work closely with Manitou Springs and Colorado Springs governments to help drive good management decisions.

The initial effort of the group focused on providing alternatives to a proposed large-scale parking lot at the top of Ruxton Avenue. Fortunately, that plan does not appear to be moving forward.

What is moving forward is a collaborative effort to address the issues of noise, congestion, traffic, safety and quality of life issues for those who live, work and play in the Ruxton corridor.

One of our first steps after organizing a 501 (c)(3) organization as a donor-advised fund with the Pikes Peak Community Foundation was to hire a planning company to help gather data, observations and input from residents, businesses and visitors.

In May, Altitude Land Consul-



Photo courtesy of Friends of Ruxton Canyon

Ruxton Avenue often becomes choked with traffic as people head to or leave the Manitou Incline.

tants was hired to complete a Use and Impact Study of the Ruxton corridor. This report will be available by mid- to end of October and will

provide data about vehicular and pedestrian use of Ruxton Avenue, quality of life issues and the impact on downtown businesses.

For more information about this project, visit www.ruxtoncanyon.com or contact Ken Jaray, ken@kenjaray.com, 660-4217.

The Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development

By Leslie Lewis
Executive director

We're excited to report that, as of Sept. 30, we have assisted 30,905 people in our office this year. This is an increase of 7.77 percent over last year. In addition, we assist others through phone calls and emails and have distributed more than 85,000 "Visitor Guides."

In addition to directions, the chamber office offers member brochures, mineral springs information, menus and maps, plus partner guides including the State Vacation

Guide, Denver Visitors Guide, Cañon City Guide and Division of Wildlife publications.

Our goal is to be a full-service resource for our residents as well as the many visitors who love Manitou Springs.

We promote Manitou as a great destination: locally, regionally and nationally through print, radio, social media and digital advertising to attract people to enjoy our great shops, art galleries, restaurants, attractions and accommodations.

Our 2015 marketing plan was to advertise in traditional ways but, most

importantly, to increase our social media and digital advertising through our media partners, Café Race and Xcite Media.

Café Race has increased our social media presence to more than 23,000 fans in 2015 and has been sharing information on our events, members and activities, as well as our social media advertising campaigns, and complementing our digital campaign by Xcite Media.

Xcite Media's campaign to boost our website, www.manitousprings.org, includes remarketing ads. Those follow visitors to remind them of

Manitou Springs. So far this year, we've seen 202,729 unique users and 905,306 page views. The site ranks in the top five in all major search engines.

We're open 362 days per year. Stop by 354 Manitou Ave. or call 685-5089 if you're looking for information.

We're also dependent on, and grateful for, the many volunteers who help at the office and our events. We're looking for additional volunteers who enjoy meeting the public and love Manitou Springs. Please let us know if you can help!

Manitou Springs Arts Council

By Ben Kuckel
President

The mission of the Manitou Springs Arts Council is to “Preserve, Promote and Pursue” collaboration between the arts and the community. Thanks to the generosity of more than 220 individuals, businesses and foundations and thousands of hours from volunteers, the MSAC is very proud of what we have accomplished since our founding in 2004 and what we continue to do to help make Manitou Springs a delightful place for artists and those who appreciate the arts.

The MSAC has:

- Served as the sponsoring organization for the establishment of Manitou Springs as a “Creative District,” a designation bestowed on only a few Colorado communities;
- Brought sculpture (currently 24 pieces) to downtown as part of our “Art on the Avenue” program; currently, we’re raising funds to purchase “Rusty the Snowman” as one of our permanent pieces of artwork;
- Annually sponsored/supported the Little London Winds summer

- concerts and the Manitou Chamber Music Festival;
 - Collaborated on art projects with Concrete Couch, the Public Library, the Manitou Springs Heritage Center and the Manitou Art Center;
 - Collaborated with School District 14 to launch a program that resulted in 60 colorful banners our public school students created for our town’s lampposts;
 - Helped sponsor/support Arts Month and undertook/promoted many other art-related events;
 - Participated in the Arts/Cultural segment of the “Manitou Springs Forward – Vision and Planning Guide” and sponsored a brochure summarizing the new vision plan;
 - Helped promote Manitou Springs as an arts destination; for example, using a billboard donated by Lamar Advertising.
- In a nutshell, we enjoy what we do. We believe we have made a positive impact on Manitou Springs. We are always in need of volunteers (artists and those who love/support art), so if you would like to join us, please contact MSAC via www.manitouspringsartscouncil.org. We’d love to have you join us.



Photo courtesy of the Manitou Springs Arts Council

The Manitou Springs Arts Council is raising money to keep “Rusty the Snowman” in Manitou Springs.

Partners for Healthy Choices

By Laurie Wood
Director

In 2015, Partners for Healthy Choices is continuing its award-winning efforts to promote health and wellness in each MSSD 14 school.

Teams of teachers create school health-improvement plans to address best-practice topics in the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child framework: physical education and activity, nutrition education and services, health education, family engagement, school environment, employee wellness, counseling, psychological and social services, health services, social and emotional climate, and community involvement.

Our wellness teams spearhead exciting opportunities for our students and families in a variety of ways. In the high school, some students belong to a club called Campaign for Kindness, which practices random acts of kindness throughout the district to promote a positive school environment.

The Cliffhangers club allows students the opportunity to hike, rock climb at local gyms, slack-line and build confidence while having fun with faculty.

PHC procured a grant to add a full-time nurse to our district, allowing more health education opportunities and medical support for our students. MSSD14, through PHC, also provides much-needed basic services for our families in the form of a food pantry, clothing closet, sports equipment bank and holiday help.

Staff, parents, community members and students have access to before- and after-school wellness classes such as yoga, X-Fit, biking and basketball, all offered for free. Please check out the PHC page on the district website, mssd14.org, for dates and times.

All of our schools have received Healthy School Champion awards, being recognized for exemplary work and programming in this area.

The district, through PHC’s efforts, acquired grant funding from the Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Education Initiative, Colorado Department of Human Services, Hillsdale Fund, the local Woman’s Club, Manitou Realty, Manitou Springs Fire Department and anonymous donors to provide these much-needed and much-used resources.

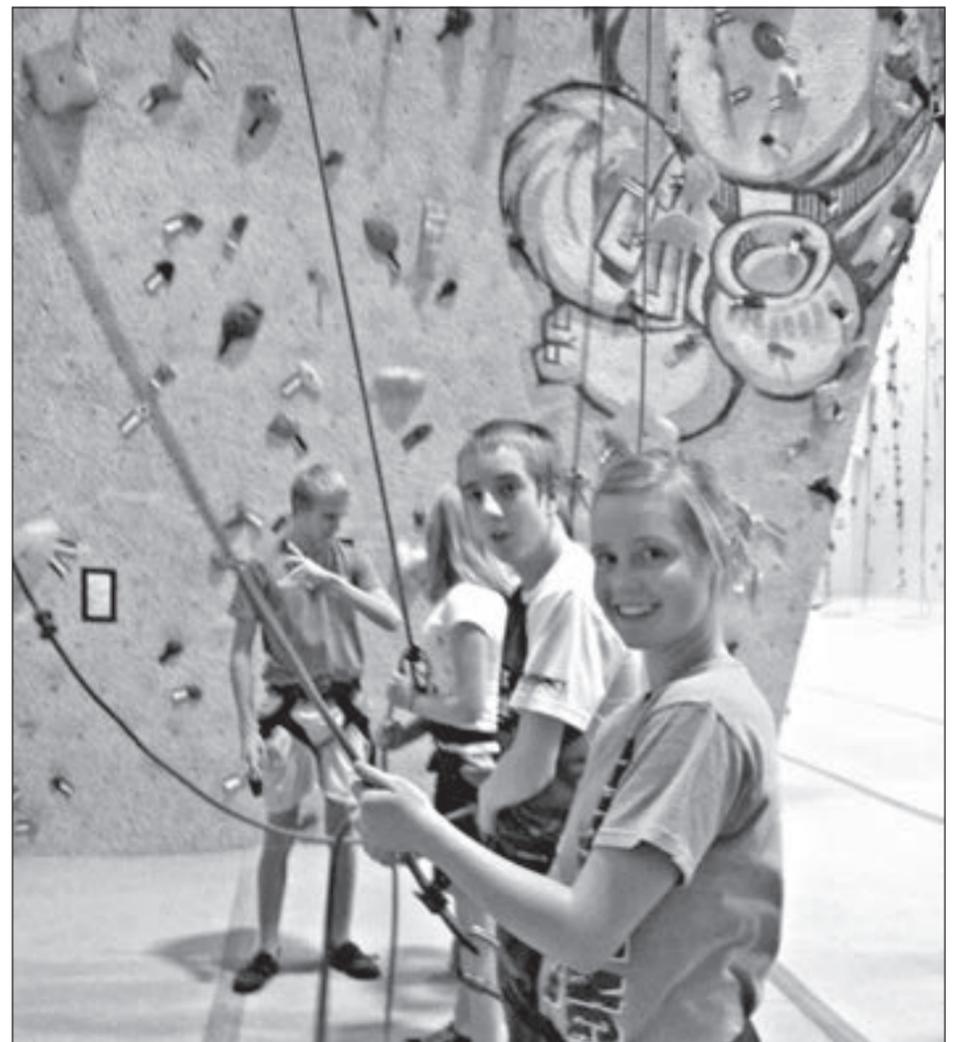


Photo courtesy of Partners for Healthy Choices

Students in the sixth through 12th grades participate in the Cliffhanger group at City Rock in Colorado Springs.