



CITY OF
MANITOU SPRINGS
NEWSLETTER

FIRST QUARTER 2017

Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments

By Mayor Nicole Nicoletta

For this newsletter, I thought I'd focus on a regional topic, the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments and how the city is involved with the organization.

PPACG is a voluntary organization of municipal and county governments serving our regional community. Formed in 1967 under Colorado law, PPACG's mission is to ensure that all communities have a forum to discuss issues that cross political boundaries, identify shared opportunities and challenges, and develop collaborative strategies for action.

PPACG members include El Paso County, Park County, Teller County, Alma, Calhan, Colorado Springs, Cripple Creek, Fairplay, Fountain, Green Mountain Falls, Manitou Springs, Monument, Palmer Lake, Ramah, Victor and Woodland Park. Local government membership dues, combined with state and federal funding, help accomplish PPACG's work.

Additionally, each of our four military installations send a representative to the monthly PPACG meetings, which helps keep me in the loop on joint land use studies, installation changes and advancements. It also has

allowed me to market the free shuttle and preferred parking etiquette for soldiers coming to the Manitou Incline for physical training.

PPACG oversees a variety of programs, including the Area Agency on Aging, which offers Medicare 101 Classes and a slew of resources for seniors and their families; and the Transportation Planning Committee, which is working on the 2050 Moving Forward Plan.

According to the PPACG website, "This plan provides the foundation for all aspects of decision-making by establishing the vision and goals for transportation within our region and identifying strategies for reaching these goals. The plan identifies existing and future transportation needs for the region along with both long- and short-range strategies to address these needs. It also considers available funding and identifies those projects we can

reasonably expect to fund."

The 2050 Plan aligns very well with Manitou Springs' vision of the future regarding inter-modal transportation and infrastructure.

PPACG also focuses on environmental planning, including water and air quality, as well as military impact planning.

All committees make recommendations to the board of directors, and we take their input

very seriously. All board and committee meetings are open to the public (see box).

The top three projects for Manitou Springs in collaboration with PPACG include: Manitou Avenue Pedestrian and Drainage Improvements, Cañon Avenue and Park avenues bridge repairs, continuation of work on the Creek Walk Trail and the Ruxton Avenue pedestrian and drainage corridor improvement design phase.

As an active member of the board of directors, I can tell you that the relationships and cooperation among member entities are essential for Manitou Springs' future successes in transportation and planning.

A special shout-out to David Walker for representing Manitou Springs on the PPACG Citizens Advisory Committee. Thank you, David!

“
We take their input very seriously.
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GET INVOLVED

Upcoming PPACG events include the board of directors meeting 10-11 a.m. May 10. Residents are encouraged to attend and comment. 14 S. Chestnut St., main conference room, lower level; enter from the building's east side. Information: 471-7080 or www.ppacg.org.

Housing Advisory Board

By Coreen Toll

Creation of the Manitou Springs Housing Advisory Board passed unanimously at the March 21 City Council meeting.

The HAB is charged with making recommendations to City Council based on the goals, policies, objectives and actions outlined in Plan Manitou.

Two important goals for the Housing Advisory Board will be to "address all aspects of the city's housing stock and neighborhoods to define, research, facilitate and promote safe, sustainable, resilient and habitable housing for the city of Manitou Springs" and to "improve the condition of existing housing stock in older neighborhoods to

ensure that they are safe and adequately maintained."

There has been a lot of education and community support for local workforce/affordable housing in the past few years. Although a part of its mission, the HAB will do much more than advocate for workforce/affordable housing.

Manitou has more homes built before 1939 than other areas of El Paso County. As much as we love our history, loving something means caring for it. Unfortunately, many of our buildings have been neglected.

It is well-known that neglected homes affect property values of the surrounding neighborhood.

How can the HAB encourage rehabilitation of

buildings without seeming heavy-handed? The old adage "many hands make light work" comes to mind. Since strengthening neighborhoods is another Plan Manitou recommendation, the HAB can organize neighborhood work days where folks come together and help each other with projects in true community spirit.

Some homes may just need a coat of paint for winter protection and improved appearance. All generations can pitch in, take pride in their accomplishments and formulate more cohesive friendships.

Acquiring money for upgrading one's home

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can seem daunting for some. The HAB can encourage and facilitate a relationship with regional lenders and government programs tailored for home improvements to make the process less costly.

The HAB also can develop a Home Improvement Guide for effectively rehabilitating older homes based on best practices and expert advice.

For homes in a historic district, the HAB can assist the Historic Preservation Commission to encourage and coordinate actions for rehabilitating and repurposing historic buildings.

For low-income families living in homes built after 1977, Habitat for Humanity recently created a repair program for siding replacement, exterior painting and more. The HAB can facilitate qualifying Manitou homeowners to apply to this program for assistance with home upgrades.

Many of Manitou's older homes were built for seasonal occupancy and may lack proper insulation and other features for energy efficiency. One of Manitou's goals — going back to the Climate Action Plan of 2008, The Vision and Planning Guide and Plan Manitou — is to reduce our carbon footprint and move toward greater sustainability city-wide.

The HAB can implement a Manitou Springs energy-efficiency upgrade program, already outlined by local engineer Alea German.

Key components include partnering with Energy Smart Colorado, the Energy Resource Center and Colorado Springs Utilities for retrofits to increase efficient energy and water usage in our homes and landscapes. Partnering with these organizations allows us to access educational materials, home audits, incentives and affordable financing for residents. Benefits to homeowners and occupants include reduced utility bills, increased comfort and improved safety, resiliency and



Bulletin file photo

The neglected Beckers Lane Lodge, shown in mid-March, will be replaced by multi-family housing.

building durability.

Many of our structures are vulnerable to hazards due to age, condition and nonconformance with codes. More than 400 of our structures are in the 100-year floodplain.

Wildfire risk will increase if new development, redevelopment and infrastructure expansion occur in high-hazard areas without wildfire mitigation and safety standards in place. More resilience and hazard mitigation principles need to be integrated into our codes and standards related to land use and the built environment.

The HAB can work with the Planning Department to reduce the number of housing units

located in high-hazard zones, develop new codes and regulations for increased resiliency and engage in education campaigns for the entire community.

The seven-member Housing Advisory Board (with three alternates) will serve diverse roles in shaping Manitou Springs' comprehensive future. City Council will appoint members for staggered terms. The board will meet monthly and can use a variety of skills.

If you are a registered voter/resident of Manitou Springs and have an interest in serving on this board, please send a letter of interest to City Clerk Donna Kast, dkast@comsgov.com or 685-2554.

“**Neglected homes affect property values of the surrounding neighborhood.**”

GET INVOLVED

The Housing Advisory Board needs seven regular members and three alternates; meeting days and times are not yet determined. Send a letter of interest and resume and/or statement of qualifications to City Clerk, 606 Manitou Ave., or to dkast@comsgov.com.

Bear Smart Task Force

By Nancy Wilson

Have you helped kill a bear?

Most of us who live in Colorado enjoy and value our wildlife. We would hate to think we had unknowingly contributed to taking the life of a black bear. But when we put our garbage out the night before pickup, we could be unintentionally helping to kill a bear.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the agency responsible for wildlife management in our state, has a policy that requires “nuisance bears ... which pose an immediate threat to or damage property, but do not threaten

public safety” to be destroyed if they are involved in “two nuisance incidents.”

Every time they are forced to destroy a bear, it's not just the bear that loses. We all lose a little piece of the wildness that makes Manitou Springs so special.

But did you know that some laws are on the bears' side?

According to Manitou Springs Ordinance 6.24.020, “Every owner or occupant of any property in this city, where persons reside, board or lodge or where animal or vegetable food is prepared or served or litter is otherwise generated, shall provide,

and at all times maintain in good order, sufficient containers for litter. All containers (litter/garbage containers) shall be adequately protected from upsetting by strong winds, animals, vehicles or other cause.”

If you or your neighbor is not securing your garbage from wild animals, you could receive a visit from the code enforcement officer and eventually a ticket and a fine.

If you cannot secure your garbage in a building, bear-proof containers can be purchased and delivered in both 96- and 64-gallon sizes from Bestway Disposal, our local provider.

Ace Hardware on Uintah Street also has bear-proof containers that can be ordered and available in three days.

A variety of containers are also available online. Just be sure they are tested to be truly bear-proof!

The Manitou Springs Bear Smart Task Force will continue its work in 2017 to increase community awareness and to “keep bears and people safe.”

Find great resources for living with bears on the CPW website: cpw.state.co.us. Also, you can “like” Bear Smart Manitou Springs on Facebook and post your wildlife photos and questions there.

Manitou Springs Creative District

By Natalie Johnson

For the past seven years, the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Office of Economic Development and Visitors Bureau has

been on its own in tackling the challenges of economic development in our community.

Beginning this month, through a partnership with the city of Manitou Springs, the chamber, the Urban Renewal Authority and the Creative District, Manitou Springs now has a new full-time economic development champion — Natalie Johnson.

It's an exciting time to be a part of Manitou Springs. We have Plan Manitou, buy-in from city staff, City

Council and our residents. We have a lot to do. Let's rock and roll!

Several weeks ago, the Manitou Springs Creative District resubmitted its proposal for state-certified Creative District status. We hosted a site visit

on Tuesday, April 18.

In early May, we will participate in the Colorado Creative Industries Summit and the Downtown Colorado Inc. IN THE GAME Conference in Breckenridge.

Using dedicated money from the city of

Manitou Springs, the Creative District also is launching its fiscal sponsorship program.

It offers business, insurance, accounting, space/use deposits and legal support for groups launching

“
Plan Manitou will be an integral part of everything that we do.”



Photo by Rhonda Van Pelt

Bill Marino, left, talks with De Lane Bredvik of the Manitou Springs Arts Council on Tuesday, April 18. Marino, the founder of the Creativity Lab of Colorado and chair of the 40West Arts board, was part of the Colorado Creative Industries site visit to Manitou Springs.

new programs, facilitating one-time events, annual events and other small-time affairs that cannot manage some of these obstacles. We believe this is necessary and important to maintaining and implementing some of our fun and crazy community ideas.

Plan Manitou will be an integral part of everything we do through the Manitou Springs Creative District. We are thrilled that we have such a comprehensive guidebook to support and influence our actions.

Other projects include a multi-phase community broadband cable plan/install; a city-wide holiday lighting plan that will light the way

through our parks and downtown; work with Downtown Colorado Inc.; construction-themed choreography with Ormao Dance Company in support of the Westside Avenue Action Plan project; collaborative signage connecting our trails, parks, amenities and businesses; and the annual Skeleton Craze in October.

There are so many aspects to economic development that just need a little support and management in order to come to fruition.

The Manitou Springs Creative District is ready and willing to help make this happen. Let's see what a little creativity and a lot of energy can do for our city!

ABOUT THE MSCD

Current board: Fred Darpino, artist/business owner; Jason Wells, city administrator; Farley McDonough, chamber/URA/business owner; PK Knickerbocker, Pikes Peak Country Attractions; De Lane Bredvik, artist/Manitou Springs Arts Council; Laurie Wood, director of Learning Services 6-12/director of Partners for Healthy Choices; and Maria Navaratne, E11 Creative Workshop/Arts14.

Board president: Ralph Routon, Pikes Peak Bulletin/Colorado Springs Business Journal/Colorado Springs Independent.

Executive director: Natalie Johnson, Manitou Art Center/community liaison Manitou Springs School District 14.

Manitou Springs Urban Renewal Authority

By Sherri Johnson

The Manitou Springs Urban Renewal Authority has taken decisive action to foster redevelopment in the eastern corridor of Manitou Springs. Our urban renewal area is bordered on the west by the U.S. Highway 24 exit (roughly at the Loaf 'N Jug, 137 E. Manitou Ave.) and at the east end near the welcome arch.

At the east end, the MSURA interfaces with the Westside Avenue Action Plan in the area commonly known as “No Man's Land.” These exciting projects will dramatically improve the economy of the west side of Colorado Springs and the east side of Manitou Springs.

The MSURA has done a significant amount of community outreach to determine the type of development that local stakeholders believe is appropriate for the area. Throughout this process of community meetings, interviews and resident feedback, core development needs have been identified. They are:

Multi-use living/working spaces that would

improve job opportunities in Manitou Springs and allow residents to create a career in Manitou;

Unique and local retail and restaurant options that reflect Manitou Springs' history as an artistic and health-minded community as well as fill retail niches lacking in Manitou Springs, such as a small market or grocery; and

Outdoor spaces including pocket parks, sidewalks and bike paths that encourage residents and visitors to experience the beautiful outdoor assets of our community.

The MSURA has hired an administrator, Sherri Johnson, formerly of the Manitou Springs Planning Department. Johnson will be responsible for administrative tasks and help manage MSURA projects and meetings to ensure smooth workflow and promote efficient communication between the MSURA and investors in the community, such as developers and builders.

Lastly, the MSURA has engaged a communications firm, Madwoman Marketing Strategies, to develop communications messaging and channels to encourage developers, employers, builders and

retailers to invest in the Manitou Springs Urban Renewal Authority area and community.

MSURA continues to work in partnership with other entities to help foster the essential changes that will improve Manitou's eastern corridor.

We have approved the purchase of 56 new streetlights to improve evening safety and visibility in the corridor and have authorized city staff to begin street improvements such as sidewalks, curbs and gutters and bikeways along the corridor.

These projects will move quickly, and we believe residents and visitors will see significant improvement in a short amount of time.

GET INVOLVED

MSURA meetings are at 8:30 a.m. third Fridays in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, 606 Manitou Ave. We welcome your participation, comments and questions. Information: www.manitouspringsgov.com/government/city-boards/ura.

Manitou Springs Historical Society

By Peggie Yager

The Manitou Springs Historical Society was founded in 1971. Five years later, we purchased Miramont Castle for \$60,000, a deal that included the four lots to the west. The building was in the condemnation process to be razed. Volunteers poured in thousands of hours and their own money to restore one of Manitou's crown jewels.

Miramont's restoration continues to be one of the Historical Society's top priorities.

This past year, we completely restored the entry and admissions rooms. This included replacing all the doors with historically correct doors and having all the base, case and picture rail reproduced in fir. Floors that had completely rotted away were replaced.

The admission desk was replaced with a coffin bier, illuminated by historically correct lights. The exterior walls on the third and fourth floors were repaired and re-pointed. The castle was repainted, as was all the metal grillwork and railings.

The Historical Society has purchased archival software called PastPerfect. We have an ongoing project of locating all the artifacts donated to the society and cross-referencing the old paper records with the new.

One of our pet projects is the Sawyer and Garstin Collection. E.A. Sawyer and William Garstin were surveyors and engineers from the 1880s through the 1930s. The collection includes their client files, maps and survey field books. Many of the maps are hand-drawn with original signatures of such notable people as Gen. William Jackson Palmer, William S. Jackson, Jerome Wheeler and Thomas Cusack.

The client files contain correspondence on the surveys done for many Manitou residents and documentation long lost to time. The field books are the original surveys in Manitou, Colorado Springs and El Paso and Teller counties.

The cities of Manitou and Colorado Springs, the Southern Chapter of Professional Land Surveyors and the state (through a Colorado Historical Records Advisory Board grant) have partnered with us to preserve and archive this material so it will be available to the public.

The Queen's Parlour Tearoom is currently open year-round. Miramont's culinary arts team prepares all the food daily and all the breads for the teas are prepared in-house. We design custom cakes for all occasions for your experience here or at another venue. We can accommodate private parties and small weddings.

The Manitou Springs Historical



Bulletin file photo

The historical society has worked to preserve Miramont Castle since 1976.

Society and the Manitou Springs Volunteer Fire Department host a children's Christmas event called Mercy at Miramont, named in honor of the Sisters of Mercy. We give underprivileged children a true Christmas; through donations we spend \$150 per child, purchasing clothes and toys hand-selected for each child.

The families are invited to the castle for a traditional Christmas dinner on Dec. 23. Afterward, Santa is waiting in the parlor to present gifts to the children.

The Manitou Springs Historical Society receives no funding from the

city or any other entity, so all of our funds are generated through our own efforts. It is costly to maintain a building of this size and age.

If you would like to become a part of the Historical Society and participate in all we do, please call the castle — we would be delighted to talk to you.

IF YOU GO

Miramont Castle is at 9 Capitol Hill Ave. Information: www.miramontcastle.org or 685-1011. Tearoom: 884-4109.

Barr Camp, Pikes Peak

By Ashley and Nathan Miller

As of April 4, Barr Camp sat quietly under a fresh blanket of snow. The storm that brought two feet was a welcome sight after an incredibly warm and dry winter that was already causing early-spring fire bans.

The mild weather, however, means that 2017 has provided a steady flow of traffic thus far, something not uncommon for caretakers Ashley and Nathan Miller, and Ashley's brother, Zach.

Last year had a total of 3,236 overnight guests, a record high number for Barr Camp. The caretakers were incredibly busy all summer welcoming visitors, washing dishes and helping with search and rescue calls.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, the caretakers and board of directors were diligently raising funds for some

much-needed construction projects. By late fall 2016, the funds were raised and plans are now in full swing with hopes of completion by the end of summer 2017.

One of those projects involved building an official ATV shed to replace a temporary canvas structure (dubbed the "burro shed"). AdAmAn member Nick Baki completed the construction in the fall, and the caretakers are very grateful for a permanent structure that better protects the ATV and provides a bit more storage space.

The other projects are more complex. Barr Camp is in need of a new deck, as well as a new foundation on the cabin's east side. GE Johnson, the same company chosen for the proposed

replacement of the Pikes Peak Summit House, has agreed to complete the necessary work at Barr Camp as well.

The construction company hopes



Courtesy image

Barr Camp was a winter wonderland in early April.

to begin work as soon as the ground thaws and is excited to do the repairs necessary to carry Barr Camp into its next 100 years. The construction will take four to six weeks, beginning with demolition of the current deck and a large materials delivery by helicopter.

It will be quite a busy time for the caretakers since the camp will be fully operational, continuing to serve both day guests and overnight guests throughout the entire construction period.

This summer also brings a

caretaker transition at Barr Camp. The Millers will wrap up their two years at Barr Camp by midsummer and begin teaching the new hires everything they know about running the camp.

It will certainly be another hectic summer at Barr Camp with the major construction project happening during peak season, but as always the caretakers are committed to doing what it takes to ensure Barr Camp remains a unique and welcoming respite for hikers for many years to come.

INFORMATION

www.barrcamp.com