

Chautauqua Trail Annual Meeting Boulder, Colorado
August 8 - August 11, 2019 - 1

Attending:

Bay View, Michigan	David Antonioni
Boulder, Colorado	Shelly Benford
Chautauqua, New York	Deb LeBarron
Lakeside, Ohio	Nancy and Bill Carlson
Monteagle, Tennessee	Jim Humphreys, Anita Hogin
Muskoka, Ontario, Canada	Gayle Dempsey, Glad Bryce, Andrea Binkle
Ocean Park, Maine	Frank Gwalthney
Waxachachie, Texas	Kirk Hunter, Maureen Moore

Friday, August 8 Morning Session, Rocky Mountain Climbers Club:

Frank Gwalthney called the meeting to order and thanked Colorado Chautauqua for the welcome reception the night before and welcomed Deb LeBarron as the new representative from Chautauqua, New York. She will serve as Treasurer for the Trail.

He then read the mission statement as a reminder of our mission.

The Chautauqua Trail is a group of organizations and individuals committed to the communication and implementation of the chautauqua concept of building community by supporting all persons in the development of their full potential intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically. The Chautauqua Trail facilitates interaction and communication among its members to further their preservation, growth and development.

Nancy Carlson volunteered to take minutes for the secretary Kathy Snavelly who was unable to attend this year. Frank will check with Kathy and will present the 2018 and 2019 minutes for approval at the 2020 annual meeting.

Chautauqua Reports

Monteagle, TN

Jim Humphreys and Anita Hogin reported that they have an 8-week session that begins the second week of June and ends the first week of August. Cottage tours attracted 800 attendees this year which was a record attendance. A major article in the Tennessean helped bring in more people. Monteagle is halfway between Nashville and Chattanooga

and draws from 6 or 7 southern states. There are 162 privately owned cottages that range in price from \$400,000 to \$700,000. There is a 99-year lease on the properties as Monteagle owns the land. They allow no outside financing of mortgages and have worked to make arrangements so that younger applicants can own cottages. The endowment is \$5 million and they draw 3.5 percent of that each year to underwrite programs. Monteagle is non-denominational with the majority being Episcopalians. Each denomination can put up 3 members to the the Board. There are 12 administrative staff members serving a gated community of 93 acres with another 300 acres outside the gates. Monteagle recently acquired another 7.5 adjacent acres. Locals are permitted free entrance during the chautauqua season. Monteagle is located in a rural county which is one of the poorest in the state. There is an active outreach program. Jon Meacham was a big draw this summer. There is a strong youth program including zip lining, water rafting, and pickle ball for all ages. Asked about the annual budget, Jim said he would have to check but he knew that the assets were \$10 million.

Issue:

The Assembly had discussed using its endowment to help finance mortgages, but lawyers advised against such a move as it would risk its standing as a non-profit. Andrea recalled visiting when fund raising took place with volunteers in red shirts and a bucket at admission.

Waxahachie, Texas

Kirk Hunter described the Texas Chautauqua as having the shortest chautauqua session — one day. A bit of history — founded in 1900 by Presbyterians this chautauqua went bankrupt and then became part of the chautauqua circuit in 1912. In 1902 a 2,500 seat auditorium was constructed and was used for chautauqua events as well as performances, reunions, and celebrations. In 1930 the chautauqua movement folded but the Chautauqua Auditorium continued to be used for civic and educational events until 1971 when it was closed by the city. Then in 1974 the Auditorium was saved and restored. In 1999 Kirk and Maureen Moore were inspired to start Waxahachie Chautauqua which thrives to this day. Membership is \$25 for a family but many give much more. There is strong support from the community and the Arts Council. Each year's program has a theme; last year was comedy, this year The Power of Sports. Since 1902, the auditorium has been part of a public park. Currently there is no fire suppression system but now \$200,000 has been

allocated by the city for that purpose and another \$30,000 for technology. To raise funds they had a Trash Can Transformation event (decorated cans) and have now hired a part-time assistant. The state legislature designated July 26 as Waxahahie Day to honor the oldest chautauqua building in Texas.

Issue: Kirk and Maureen are making 2020 their last year as leaders of the chautauqua event and are looking for leaders to carry on what they have developed over the years. So far they have not found anyone with the same vision and commitment. They had hoped to grow the chautauqua beyond one day but even with lots of community support that hasn't happened. Maureen said people do realize that chautauqua is more than a building.

Bay View, Michigan

David Antonioni reported that Bay View was founded in 1875 and officially became a chautauqua in 1886. There are 900 members, 440 cottages, and 30 public buildings. Currently 20 to 30 cottages are for sale. 16 ministers own cottages. Bay View has two interns, one in finance, the other marketing. There is a need for more volunteers as 15% are doing most of the volunteer work. Church services on Sunday attract many people from the surrounding community.

Bay View has begun to use the word program instead of pillar as outsiders seem to understand it better. Programs include Progressive Christianity, chair yoga, a Big Read involving everyone reading the same book. There is a need for an endowment for Education. Monday night traditionally has been a film. The Friday forum has covered such topics as climate change, immigration, the election, and the American experience. David wondered how other chautauqua are building their education programs.

He touted Bay View's Chamber music program as the oldest in the US involving college students who need to return to work and can't stay all summer. As a result Bay View has moved to a 9-week performing arts program. Bay View doesn't have funding for pop artists. There is a need to improve marketing. Wednesday night is classical music, and there is a robust recreation program with 203 per week participating in sailing, tennis, and pickle ball. There is also an effort to encourage community service.

Issues:

Bay View has just completed a disabilities project and is now challenged with waterfront erosion that will cost \$3.5 million to shore up. The bias lawsuit is finally closed and Bay View is now an inclusive institution that permits those other than Christians to own cottages. The Methodist Church owns the land. Anyone purchasing land must have a letter from a clergyman attesting to strong moral character. Affordability is becoming an issue as cottages range from \$150,000 to \$1 million and the declining middle class is affecting purchase of homes.

Boulder, Colorado

Shelly Benford reported that last year was the 120th year of the Colorado Chautauqua, which was celebrated on July 4 last year. The building we were meeting in is 100 years old but has been well maintained. The land originally belonged to the Arapahoe tribe. The Texas Board of Higher Education looking for a place in the north for teachers to continue their education during the summers chose this land, which is leased from the city of Boulder for \$1 a year.. Colorado Chautauqua is 100 percent responsible for upkeep and events. Over a million visitors visit the area each year. There are 15 Board members with 40 full-time staff and 50 part-time with another 40 are seasonal workers plus volunteers. Revenue is \$5.8 million with income from subleases at 9%, outside support 18%, 20% from public events and 53% hospitality, which includes 61 Chautauqua-owned cottages which are rented. They receive \$800,000 from taxes and are supported by an arts and culture tax which is spread over 7 counties. Half of the 38 private cottage owners are from Texas. Some are 7th generation. Programming in the Auditorium centers around 18 pops concerts and six weeks of the Colorado Music Festival as well as a 33-year tradition of silent films. The community supports a total of 150 events with Camp Chautauqua being popular with children. Special event tickets are offered to the community at reduced prices. This year's program on September 28 features activists such as the tribal chief Standing Rock, a civil rights speaker on Ferguson, and a Russian opposed to Putin, Next year there will be someone representing the woman's suffragette movement. The budget is supported by \$771,000 in SFCD funding, \$190,000 in contributions, and \$66,000 in memberships. There are 1700 members who pay \$25 to \$60 for discounted tickets for programs and lodging. Colorado Chautauqua plans to hire a development director and give more focus to raising outside funds.

Issues:

Preservation is important and costs \$1 million annually. The Galey cottage was bought and restored as part of this effort. There is also an effort to bring back a windmill. A tree steward program offers for \$1000 for a tree planted in a member's or family member's name which is posted on a virtual map showing placement. Chautauqua Colorado has 15 kinds of trees. It was suggested that a funeral home might be interested in donating trees. An effort is made to educate the community about chautauqua which does not provide a lot of support beyond ticket sales for special events. They have used a motto — Eat. Stay and Play. Sustainability is another focus requiring the addition of automated irrigation, district cooling, protecting native grass species, and the tree steward program. Colorado Chautauqua is 100% in compliance with Boulder's restrictive rules on energy conservation.

Muskoka, Ontario, Canada

Gayle Dempsey and Gary (remotely online), Glad Bryce, and Andrea Binkle reported that there is potentially a new resource for their chautauqua. A couple have offered to buy the community of Windermere, and gift it to Muskoka Chautauqua. Windermere is a community in the Muskoka region not far from Minett and Port Carling where chautauqua events have been held. Windermere includes a village green, two churches and cottages very much like other chautauquas. Windermere currently holds a festival week in partnership with the _____ Institute and there is a Windermere history project in place. To develop Windermere as a Muskoka Chautauqua would be a departure from the 10-year-old practice of holding events in the 5-star Marriott Hotel and surrounding area. Currently one-half of the \$150,000 to \$200,000 of revenue is provided by the provincial and federal governments. To bring on Windermere would require pursuit of different and broader funding. Muskoka Chautauqua is growing with 6,500 attendees and 50,000 involved in summer events in the area. Reflecting the increased value of chautauqua in the area a second developer has purchased land. However it is not clear what his plans are though he has promised to continue with the chautauqua vision.

BIG Issue:

If the gift should occur, how would Muskoka Chautauqua develop the structure for receiving the land and buildings and how would it organize this new development? Risks associated with accepting the Windermere proposal include the costs of maintenance and operations. Currently there are “3 angels” ready to support the proposed chautauqua. Gayle asked us to stay tuned for further developments as they meet with attorneys and seek advice from others on whether or how to proceed.

Chautauqua, New York

Deb _____ reported that their 9-week season attracts about 100,000 guests. The annual budget is \$35 million. The Board has 24 members, and there are 600 private accommodation. The children’s school, and boys and girls clubs are popular as well as the variety of ministers who participate over the summer. They have changed from a daily newspaper to a new magazine format that comes out quarterly. A new business director has been hired. They have added an app, mambo.com which provides up-to-date information on programs and changes to the schedule. The Opera Trilogy Festival was a big hit with passes for that event ranging from \$25 to \$40. Featured this year was national comedy with Lewis Black. Chautauqua coordinated with the Cleveland International Film Festival.

Issue

Currently a committee is considering new pricing for passes, which had become a complicated process with passes available for too many different scenarios. Single day passes were down 21,000 with 135,000 tickets sold to 175 members. Parking inside the gates has become an issue and a new security director is expected to address this and get back to the limit of one car per cottage owner.

Following Deb’s report, the group broke from the meeting for a tour of several Colorado Chautauqua buildings including the 120-year old Auditorium and the historical Gwentheann cottage.

After lunch we participated in an exercise on the History of Native Peoples and the ongoing impact of the Doctrine of Discovery, the 15th-century justification for European subjugation of non-Christian peoples. The workshop, which focused on how to move toward a “right relationship” with native peoples, was led by Paula Palmer and Jerilyn DeCoteau, a Turtle Mountain Chippewa.

Friday, August 8 Afternoon Session, Rocky Mountain Climbers Club:

The business meeting resumed at 3:30 p.m. Frank reported that the New Piasa, Illinois, Chautauqua, along the Mississippi River was flooded and lost 60 days of its program. As a result, they were not able to attend this meeting.

Ocean Park, Maine

Frank Gwalthney reported that Ocean Park has one full-time executive plus administration and maintenance that swells the staff to three in the summer. Volunteers do a lot of the work. There are 13 members on the Board and four standing committees. The educational bureau elects someone to serve on the board. Historically Ocean Park was founded in 1881 by Free Will Baptists, who were strong abolitionists and prohibitionists. They were associated with Bates College, Maine, which was a school open to all ethnicities and races. Ocean Park's Temple is a building that holds church services with communion every Sunday. The grounds are 1-mile wide and 1-mile long with a railroad running by. Many would like for the trainnot to blow the whistle. The Ocean Park season runs from the last Sunday in June to Labor Day. Morning programs are held unless the temperature goes above 90 degrees. Friday's party night is popular. There are 600 to 700 members who pay dues of \$150. Ocean Park is not gated. There are 565 cottages with 70% being weekly rentals. The transfer fee is 3% to the buyer and 2% to the seller. (At this point questions were raised about other chautauqua's transfer fees with Bay View responding that theirs was 4% and Monteagle's was 10% in-house. Lakeside's transfer fee is 1 percent.

Issue:

Ocean Park is just two feet above sea level and there is a movement to require every structure to be built above 14 feet. Currently sand dues are protecting the area, but heavy rains tumble into Ocean Park and are becoming a major concern. Also fire suppression has become an issue in the Temple where leaks have been found and pipes over the organ have been damaged. Ocean Park is investigating whether insurance will cover the cost of repair and/or replacement.

Lakeside, Ohio

Bill and Nancy Carlson, who is a former Board Chair, represented Lakeside as cottage owners. They reported that new at Lakeside this year was the

introduction of bar codes for gate passes. The process appears to be working smoothly. Also 8 new pickle ball courts have been installed and are attracting players of all ages. A new Mexican restaurant called Lago has opened in south Lakeside in a building that was previously used for maintenance. A new orchestra director led six concerts plus two children's orchestra programs that were initiated this year. Programming attendance broke records this year and has been growing each year. New basketball and volleyball courts with lighting were installed to replace outdated courts. mambo.com, introduced this year, provides updates on the program schedule. A newspaper is published once a week. There are 25 board members elected for three-year terms with a limit of two terms. Lakeside owns its land and leases to cottage owners for 99 years.

Issue:

High water on Lake Erie is threatening the water front with erosion and damage to the dock. A Master Plan is being implemented which requires an assessment of the infrastructure (roads and the storm water system). Also in the Master Plan are ideas to convert an old schoolhouse on the grounds into a performing arts center and upgrade the backstage of Hoover, which was built as a temporary structure 100 years ago and is limiting the types of performing acts Lakeside can host. Prior to adjourning for the evening, Frank suggested several topics for discussion at Saturday's meeting.

- Chautauqua - what it is and what happens there
- CBDC use and/or sale — is it an issue at any chautauqua?
- Marketing - mass vs. targeted
- Use of The Chautauqua Trail website. Make sure to include The or you will be directed to a Colorado Chautauqua trail.
- Fund raising as a separate function or integral to the operation?
- Programming for children, seniors
- Lesse issue

Friday evening three members attended the a performance of the Indigo Girls in the Auditorium. Saturday morning eight members went on a hike of the Reservoir Road Trail led by Bill _____, Colorado Chautauqua Board member, and his dog Clancy.

Saturday, August 9 Morning Session, Rocky Mountain Climbers Club:

It was requested that emails of attendees be provided to everyone who participated in the Colorado Chautauqua meeting. Andrea offered members to visit her at St. Catherine's, Canada, and stay with her. She reported that Niagara on the Lake, which is not far from St. Catherine's, was once a chautauqua.

The business meeting resumed with discussion of four topics: Marketing, Fundraising/Development, Programming, Lessee Issue.

(Suggest inserting the Proposed Agenda Items with questions if possible)

Marketing

Frank suggested that it would be helpful if each locale put its programs on the Chautauqua Trail website.

Lakeside's Marketing includes but is not exclusive to local billboards, newspaper articles (USA Today did an article featuring Lakeside), online announcements, social and the mambo.app.

Monteagle has a new brochure and is generally well-known in the area so doesn't require a lot of marketing of programs.

Texas has Kirk and Maureen who give talks with a slide show promoting the chautauqua history and the annual day event. There also are digital calendars, and a city website that features chautauqua.

Bay View has a website and is developing a marketing strategy.

Colorado has a robust website, a weekly newsletter that reaches 35,000. Much of the focus is on social media which is a major influencer. Currently Colorado pays \$2000 a month to a social media influencer to promote chautauqua.

Bay View has a website and is developing a marketing strategy.

New York holds a golf tournament, cooperates with Cleveland on the Film Festival and has several sponsorships.

Ocean Park has a booklet and a website for members. The Bell Tower is published once a week and promotes non-denominational Sunday services.

Muskoka now has an International airport which opens up the U.S. market for promotion. Porter Airlines serves the airport making it possible to fly in on a Thursday and leave on Sunday. Also there is an effort to geo-target areas of Canada.

Fund Raising and Development.

Waxahachie reported they have an annual membership drive. Corporate fund raising has been helpful in sponsoring the keynote speakers.

Lakeside has a foundation focused on raising funds. Offering naming rights has been successful. Whether or not the rights are perpetual is not known. "Giving Tuesday" has raised funds for specific needs such as refurbishing the gazebo and establishing a teen center.

Muskoka applies for funds at the provincial and federal levels and is seeking long-term funding and program sponsors. The Ontario Arts Council has been supportive of events focused on indigenous people and immigrants.

Ocean Park has a legacy circle that successfully raises funds plus capital campaigns. Names of donors are published. They also have pop-up fund raisers for specific needs. \$3000 was raised for tree replacement and beach care. Frank emphasized the need for maintenance costs to be included in any significant gifts.

New York has a foundation and large development staff. They encourage employee donations through payroll deductions and prizes are awarded.

Colorado focuses on development through grant writing. They are in the process of hiring a development director as current funding is not sufficient to cover costs. There is a perception by the citizens of Boulder that the city pays for Chautauqua because the city owns the land. They must work to correct that perception.

Bay View has a development director. They have pop-up fund raising events and are considering offering naming rights.

Monteagle has an endowment for ministers who speak. A cottage that has been donated is destined to become an artists studio. The gift includes maintenance costs.

Programming

New York has a variety of children's programs. The challenge this past year was to attract big names as major performers appeared to be less interested. Highlights this year were the Beach Boys and Melissa Ethridge.

Ocean Park has an education committee and has focused on special education needs as well as improv acting for kids..

Monteagle reported that they had successful programs on FDR, hospice care, arborists for the George Washington house, Freedom riders, and Quaker ministers. Monteagle shares resources with the local university and has made contacts with the civic circuit.

Texas coordinates all events around a theme such as flight, sports, Mozart, or special olympics. They are challenged to think creatively about programming for the one day of programs which has been held the last Saturday of September for 20 years. Maureen asked that anyone with ideas for a theme for next year let her know.

Bay View has 1800 participants in Boys and Girls Clubs. The music conservatory has continued to be a tradition. A professor on the American Experience was popular as was a performance of the Magic Flute. Friday Forums help to emphasize the sense of community that is key to Bay View.

Colorado's programming is mostly for adults as Colorado Chautauqua must compete with other Boulder programs of which there are many including several national science centers. Topics of interest have included climbing, international biking, triathletes, and a heritage lecture series. More mature performers attract smaller crowds and are generally disappointing in attendance. There is a purposeful effort to have diversity on stage even though the audience is not diverse.

Lakeside has many programs for youth including God Squad, MGM, a teen center, and donuts for college-age students on Sunday before church at Hoover Auditorium. Adults attend chapel in the mornings and a variety of educational programs in the morning and afternoon. There are several book clubs and a thriving recreation program of which shuffleboard is popular with all ages. A race to swim four miles to Kelleys island attracts the hardy and is usually won by a teen. The Rhein Arts Center, which celebrated its 20th year in an old building plus outdoor tents, attracts 10,000 participants each year. Hoover Auditorium featured a year of performing artists every evening for 10 weeks including this year the Texas Tenors, The Letterman, and the Lakeside Orchestra. The last week's musical programs, when attendance is lighter, are held in the evening at the gazebo.

Muskoka has experiential and inter-generational programs in the summer and goes into the schools in the winter. Resorts help with programs.

Lessee Issue

The issue of CBD use on chautauqua campuses was considered. CBD's are legal in Canada. Other chautauqua that own land and buildings might need to change by-laws to permit sale and usage on campus. Some chautauqus have no retail so it is not an issue. Colorado, where CBD and marijuana are legal, has a general store on campus but CBD is not sold there.

In addition to the four topics, there was discussion about the nature of membership in The Chautauqua Trail.

Lakeside has no membership requirement. Paying the gate fee is all that is needed for entrance to the grounds.

Monteagle said that you have to be a member to own a cottage with membership costing \$450 which includes a gate pass. Questions have been raised about passing the membership to other family members.

Texas has 100 members who pay at least \$25 but many pay as much as \$250 in support of the programs. There are no perks other than the opportunity to experience high quality programming.

Bay View has two levels of membership. Full membership requires owning a cottage and costs \$250. There are 900 cottage owners. Another 200 pay \$300 for an associate membership.

Colorado has 1700 members who pay \$25 to \$55 depending on status as a student, individual or family. The membership provides discount and priority access to programs. To own a cottage you have to be a member. There is an annual election for officers and each member gets one vote.

New York has no membership requirement as gate fees provide entrance to the campus and many events.

Ocean Park requires a membership of \$150 a year or an individual can purchase a life membership for 10 times that amount. The life member dollars go into the endowment. You must be 18 or older to be a member which allows you to attend town meetings. There is also a youth membership.

A suggestion was made that membership in The Chautauqua Trail might allow a 10% discount to a visitor to any chautauqua. The idea of a Chautauqua Trail Passport has been discussed in the past. Frank offered that Trail who shows up at a chautauqua will be welcomed. Andrea volunteered to create a Passport for consideration at next year's annual meeting.

That followed with some discussion about the growth of The Chautauqua Trail membership. Current members could encourage others to attend by asking, "Why don't you come with me?" Next year's chautauqua in New York is August 20 to 23 and is a good opportunity to invite new members.

Also some thought was given to creating a DVD that could be shown at different chautauquas. John Schmitt is the archivist at New York who gives talks on, "What is a chautauqua?" Gretchen Curtis of Lakeside has given similar talks. New York maintains a box of items reflecting the culture and activities of the different chatauquas. Maureen suggested that each chautauqua check out its box when visiting New York.

Election of Officers

A motion was made by Kirk Hunter to re-elect Frank Gwalthney for President, Kevin Sibbring for Vice President, and Kathy Snavely for Secretary. Gayle Dempsey seconded the motion which then passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Kirk to elect Deb_____ as Treasurer and Andrea Binkle seconded the motion. Deb's election was approved unanimously.

Deb announced that a request for membership for individuals and organizations will go out after January and will be separate from the newsletter. She also will accept credit card payment.

Bill Carlson moved to adjourn and meet next year in New York August 20 to 23 with Kirk seconding the motion. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned.

Following a Community Lunch at the Picnic Shelter, members met for a Heritage Lecture on the Evolution of Preservation by Jeff Medanich. The focus was on the reuse of current structures (green building) as opposed to new construction. In the evening a Happy Hour was enjoyed at the cottage of Margaret _____ with Colorado Chautauqua Board members attending.

Sunday, August 11

Members participated in an ecumenical worship service led by Marrry Dormish, pastor for The Refuge, a church serving a poor neighborhood in Boulder.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Carlson (and Bill) on behalf of Kathy Snavely, Secretary

Schedule of future Chautauqua Trail meetings
2020 — New York, August 20-23

2021 — Wawasee, Indiana
2022 — Mt. Gretna, Pennsylvania
2023 — Lakeside, Ohio
2024 — Ocean Park, Maine
2025 — Defuniak or Bay View
2026 — New York
2027 — ?
2030 — New York
2031 — Ocean Park
2074 — New York
2076 — Lakeside, Ohio