



Photo by Pam Cain



Brief

Winter 2015

Our Mission: The Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative, through cooperative efforts, seeks to conserve unique natural areas, preserve historic & cultural sites, promote diverse recreation and develop community business opportunities.

MRHI Kicks Off 2014-2015 Adventure Series:

MRHI kicked off its 2014-2015 Adventure Series in December with an Avalanche Beacon Training workshop. Will Barrett, Snow Safety Director at Breckenridge Ski Resort, led the workshop on December 13th that included snow safety, special equipment, and how to use a transceiver in the event they or someone they knew got caught in an avalanche. The presentation was followed by outdoor skills practice, including how to find someone and the best way to shovel them out. Photos courtesy of Dean and Kathy Butler.



Our Outdoor Adventure Series continued in January with a presentation on the book “Outdoors in the Southwest: An Adventure Anthology” by Historian Andrew Gulliford. Mr. Gulliford teaches at Fort Lewis College in Durango. His newest book is a compilation of creative non-fiction essays about real experiences and adventures people have had in the Southwest. Jane Koerner, a Fairplay resident, contributed an essay about a near-fatal accident in the Colorado Rockies. She read an excerpt from her essay, and Mr. Gulliford read other excerpts from his book. Twenty people came out to hear the tales of adventure. *(Photos on next page)*



Our next adventure series event covers ghost town exploration. MRHI's Outdoor Adventure Series features very diverse topics. It is designed to share adventures, teach recreational skills, encourage new friendships, as well as educate and inspire others about our amazing mountain resources. Check out our calendar for more details.

South Park Ranger District Hosts 3rd Annual Christmas Bird Count

Thanks to Kristen Meyer of the USFS South Park Ranger District for contributing this story.

On December 14, 2014, the South Park Ranger District hosted the third annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC). The CBC is the nation's longest-running citizen science project hosted by the Audubon Society, taking place for over a century. This past event marked the 115th year of the census. Each year, the count enlists thousands of volunteers across the U.S., Canada, and many countries in the Western Hemisphere. The Event was started by Frank Chapman, an officer of the Audubon Society, on Christmas Day in 1900 due to concerns about declining bird populations.

The Fairplay CBC took place within a 7.5 mile radius of the town of Fairplay. This season, 7 participants took part in the Fairplay Christmas Bird Count and covered the entire circle, including the towns of Alma and Fairplay, the area west and south of community of Como, and south to Redhill Forest and Warm Springs. The CBC has continued to grow over the years from 25 count circles in the beginning, to more than 2,000 circles, with 50 count circles in Colorado alone. Participants ranged from experienced bird watchers to beginners interested in gaining more skills in birding. *(Continued on next page)*

Twenty-nine species were observed on the count, including common birds, such as the mountain chickadee and white-breasted nuthatch to less common birds, such as brown-capped rosy-finches, pine grosbeaks, and prairie falcons.

The CBC provides data to track how American bird populations are changing over time and to assist in early detection of critical environmental issues that may be influencing bird populations and presence within a given area. The data is incorporated into important research efforts and is compiled in “The State of the Birds Report” (www.stateofthebirds.org), which provides an annual report on bird population in the U.S. Please

visit www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count to learn more about the CBC and its history and to view current and historical data and results.

MRHI Receives \$5000 Staples Foundation Grant

MRHI is pleased to announce that it has been awarded \$5000 by Staples Foundation, the private charitable arm of Staples, Inc., under a program that lets Staples associates direct donations. The grant will be used to help fund MRHI’s youth programs, including our Family Outdoor Adventure Series.



The grants are part of a philanthropic initiative created by Staples Foundation, which allows Staples associates around the world to direct funding to non-profit organizations that are focused on education or job skills. MRHI was nominated by Carolyn Thoene, a Staples Associate.

The program, called 2 Million and Change, awards funds to organizations around the world, reaching more than \$2 million in grants by the end of the year. In 2013, associates globally directed more than \$2.5 million of Staples Foundation grants to over 1,000 non-profit organizations. “Staples Foundation is committed to making a positive impact in the communities where our associates live and work,” said Katy Dobbs, director of global community and giving for Staples, Inc. “Through our program, we are pleased to

support our associates and the local non-profit organizations that matter to them most.”

Tax Talk: MRHI is a designated 501 (c)(3), so if you made a donation to MRHI in 2014 and you itemize deductions on your tax return, you may be able to take a deduction for your donation.



Fun Fact: The world's largest snowman ever built was 122 feet and 1 inch tall; in 2008, it took the residents of Bethel, Maine over a month to build it.

source: <http://inventors.about.com/od/christmas/ig/Snowman/Worlds-Largest-Snowman.htm>

The Six Words or Less Challenge!

Inspired by *Six-Word Memoirs*, we are asking you to describe the Mosquito Range in six words or less. Email your six words to vista@mrhi.org. We would love to hear and share what our readers think. Thank you in advance for participating!

To learn more about Six-Word Memoirs, visit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six-Word_Memoirs

FREEBIE FOR YOU!

As a token of appreciation for you, MRHI has a free gift! Please email vista@mrhi.org with your name, address, and the word "freebie" to receive a gift, compliments of MRHI.

The MRHI Photo Calendar Contest is back!

MRHI is holding our annual Photo Contest! We are now accepting photo submissions for our 2016 calendar. Photographs must be taken in the Mosquito Range (extending from Hoosier Pass to Weston Pass and from Highways 9 and 285 to the ridgeline of the peaks). Deadline to submit is April 30th. Cost of submission is \$5/photo, \$10/3 photos or \$25/10 photos. Please make checks payable to MRHI with a notation that it is for the photo contest. Photo submissions may be emailed to calendar@mrhi.org or a CD may be mailed to: MRHI, PO Box 375, Alma, CO 80420. Thirteen of the best photos will be chosen to create our 2016 fundraiser calendar. Winners receive a MRHI membership and a free calendar. Please visit www.mrhi.org for more information including guidelines, rules, and licensing.

Paris Mill Master Plan Survey

The Park County Office of Historic Preservation is seeking input from Park County residents, our professional partners, and other interested parties as we develop a new five-year Preservation Plan. We are asking everyone to help us set the focus of future preservation activities in Park County. Please take 5 minutes to fill out this survey and let your voice be heard: <http://survey.parismill.com>

Upcoming Events:

February 26th, 2015: *MRHI hosts Bingo Night!* Join us at Alma Town Hall at 6:00 p.m. for a potluck and 7:00 p.m. for Bingo. Proceeds benefit MRHI; prizes for every winner!

March 14th, 2015: *MRHI's 8th Annual Poker Glide.* Please join MRHI for our 8th Annual Poker Glide Family Ski & Snowshoe. Collect cards along the trail to build your poker hand – prizes are given for the best and worst hands. Prizes will also be given to those who wear green! Lunch will be provided after the event at town hall. This year Poker Glide will take place at Aspen Alley. Parking will be available at the corner of CR 12 & CR 10. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m.; the event begins at 10 a.m. Please keep dogs on leash; this is a family friendly event for cross country skiers and snowshoers. Poker Glide will be at no cost this year. We hope to see you all there! *We are still looking for sponsors! If you are interested in being a sponsor (donating gift certificates or prizes), please contact Jill Abrell at vista@mrhi.org.*

March 27th, 2015 – *Adventure Series, The Mining Camps Speak – A New Way to Explore the Ghost Towns of the American West presented by Bill and Beth Sagstetter. \$5 suggested donation.*

Have you ever struggled up a mountain to a ghost town only to be disappointed when you finally arrived? Did it seem like it was mute and there was nothing left? The Sagstetters have been exploring the backcountry of the American West and Southwest for over 50 years as a researcher/writer/photographer team; after 50 years of researching and exploring ghost towns they discovered some little-known techniques for unraveling the secrets of the ghost towns, and they would like to share them with you. Come and bring your questions!

Contact Us!



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Support MRHI, become a Member!

To become a MRHI member, you can either visit our website at www.mrhi.org or request a membership slip and mail it back to us at
P.O. BOX 375 Alma, CO 80420.

Thank you for your support!

Membership levels: Basic - \$25; Family - \$60;
Youth - \$10; Business - \$100; Corporate - \$250.



