



Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce Newsletter January 2024

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Wolf Creek Ski Area in the summer of 2019



Did you know?

Wolf Creek Ski Area (WCSA) is a ski area in southwest Colorado, located on the Wolf Creek Pass between Pagosa Springs and South Fork. It is best known for receiving more average annual snowfall than any other resort in Colorado, at about 430 inches per year.

The following is the second in a series about this vital local treasure.

Present site south of the continental divide

In the Journal, *The San Luis Valley Historian* the author records an interview with W. Edward Sharp, "Late in the summer..(1954)..I was at the Chuck Wagon Dinner the night before the Stampede Rodeo..(in Monte Vista). I was talking to Ronald Major, a fellow member of the Wolf Creek Ski Club. He said he had just gotten some information on a Poma Lift manufactured in France. It was similar to a T-bar tow. He thought we could buy one for \$10,000, about half the cost for a T-bar. If we could finance it, we ought to buy one for Wolf Creek. Ronald Major was a member of the Ski Club, probably since its inception in 1935. He, like many others, spent his Sunday afternoons skiing at the top of Wolf Creek Pass. Several of the good skiers, Kelly and Dick Boyce, Bob Wilkinson, Dick Long and Bob Wright didn't like riding the rope tow they had.... (Many) had learned to ski while in the 10th Mountain Division during World War II.

So, we got together some other members of the Ski Club and talked about it. They were enthusiastic about the possibilities. We decided we could form a nonprofit corporation and sell bonds to raise the \$20,000 necessary to put in this lift. We'd pay off the bonds out of income from the ski area. That fall we appeared before the Chambers of Commerce of Monte Vista, Alamosa, Del Norte, South Fork, and Pagosa Springs and told our story of the need for the new lift.

While doing this organizational work during ski season, a committee of the best skiers in the Ski Club decided we ought to relocate the ski area. They found..(an area)..a little way down the road, on the east side of the Continental Divide. This location was larger and, over time, could be developed into a more diverse ski area. We estimated the tow lines would be much longer than the old site, making the cost about \$15,000, it seemed ideal for what we wanted, so we applied to the Forest Service for a permit to use it. After many meetings with the Chambers of Commerce and other committees, we formed a corporation of 1000 shares at \$25 a share for a total of \$25,000...We spent the winter of 1954-55 talking up the new lift, making plans for the new area, forming the corporation, raising the money, getting Forest Service permits, and so forth. All along we met good response from businessmen, skiers, and the Forest Service."

W. Edward Sharp and the original board called for the first "Investors" meeting at his office building in Monte Vista on June 6, 1955, where the plans for the initial investment of nearly \$20,000 of stock sale was to be discussed. The corporation was called The Wolf Creek Ski Development Corporation. Original board members were W.E. Sharp, president, R.R. Reynolds, secretary, W.H. Arrowsmith, treasurer and Leonard Gustafson, Myron Cochran, Boyd Brown, Dave Goodman, John LaRue, Charles Elliott, and Earl Clark as directors. There was representation from Pagosa Springs, South Fork, Creede, Monte Vista, Sargent, and Alamosa. After the stock was sold and the \$15,000 was raised, a Poma lift was ordered from France and the construction was begun in 1955.

In 1956, the corporation elected Ed Sharp as permanent president and continued to operate the area as a public corporation. Most of the people involved in the leadership over the years were from the east side of the Pass, from Monte Vista and Sargent. On the west side of the pass (in Pagosa Springs) the coordinators were George Yamaguchi, June Lynch, and Dave Goodman. Other families closely involved were the Wylies, the Corriganes, Lynches, Coxes, and the Chambers. On the east side of the Divide there was Ed Sharp (the Ski Corporation president), Kelly Boyce (Ski Corporation vice-president) and his sons, Bob and Dick Boyce, Charles

Elliott, Bob Williams, Howard Walker, John La Rue, Bob Wright (the father of Susan, of Wolf Creek's "Susan's Run"). Johnny Baird, was in the Forest Service Supervisor's office in Monte Vista, was the contact person for all negotiations with the Forest Service since the entire ski area and base area was on U.S. Forest Service land.

Comments from the early Ski Corporation efforts were published in the 1996 brochure of the Colorado Ski Hall of Fame at which Ed Sharp had been interviewed and was subsequently inducted:

"Ed, a civic leader from Monte Vista, had a vision which he turned into Wolf Creek Ski Area, dedicating his earlier years to the development of a small family ski area in Southwestern Colorado. After skiing around the area for fifteen years, he and some friends got the initial idea for expanding the ski area on Wolf Creek Pass, which at that time, had a rope tow 150 yards long. With his engineering background, friends, family members and the local ski club with lots of muscle, borrowed trucks, snow cats, tractors, and determination, they launched a bond drive to raise the necessary funds. He held public meetings throughout the area and approached the Valley chambers of Commerce for monetary assistance. Bonds were sold for \$25 each. They even sold a block of shares, \$500 worth, to Adolph Coors."

Ed stated in a board of directors report, "We spent very little money...freight from New York, materials for the tower foundations, and a gasoline motor. Volunteers surveyed, picked up the tow in Walsenburg, and the motor from Denver. We cleaned up the debris, dug the foundations for the towers, hauled cement to the tower spots, assembled and erected the tow, and finished the logging for the tow site, because the original lumbermen quit the job before it was finished. We borrowed seven to ten caterpillar tractors from farmers to move towers. The instructions were partly in French, so we had to do our own figuring on the tower construction."

In early December that year, they reached a turning point, only to be "snowed out," acquiescing to using the rope tow one more year. Ed learned new skills such as operating a jack hammer and being a ski area manager. The area initially operated only on weekends, charging members \$1.75 for adults, \$1 for children and for non-members, \$2.25 and \$1.50."

Check back next month for more about the history of Wolf Creek Ski Area!

(info gathered from Wikipedia)

Business of the Month:



High Mountain Ag
Phone: (719) 849-1168 : [Visit Website](#)

Address: 1121 US Hwy 285 - Monte Vista, CO

Who We Are

High Mountain Ag is a team of previous farmers that have grown up right here in the San Luis Valley, alongside many of our customers that we serve today. High Mountain Ag is your premier Double L and Dewulf Dealer.

What We Do

We provide our customers with solutions that work for them and for the future of their operation. Our team provides world class service, high quality parts, new equipment sales and used equipment sales. Our lines of equipment have you covered from soil cultivation, planting, harvesting, grading, sorting and transportation. We supply equipment that has been proven and tested all over the world for many different crops; including potatoes, onions, carrots, beats, pecans, peanuts and so much more!

Our Dedication

Our team is dedicated to each one of our customers to supply them with the best service possible.

Contact us at 719-490-8205 or come by our shop at 1121 US Highway 285 North, Monte Vista, CO 81144. We look forward to helping you with all your equipment needs!

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION!](#)

Crane silhouettes are available for sponsorship for the 2024 Swoop of the Cranes! [Click here to visit the Crane Swoop website](#) for more details.

2024 SPONSORSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE!

REGISTER AT
[MONTEVISTACHAMBER.ORG](https://montevistachamber.org)
OR CALL 719-852-2731

THE CRANE SILHOUETTES ARE
READY TO BE PICKED UP
AND PAINTED!!



New Year
CELEBRATION
2024

Please join the Monte Vista Chamber
of Commerce Board of Directors for a
New Years Celebration

FRI, JAN 12 @ 6 PM

The PIVOT Public House
201 Jefferson St. Monte Vista, Colorado

Selected menu & bar options
available for purchase.

Questions?
Contact the MVCOC
719-852-2731

SOUTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE

**A CONFERENCE ON BALANCING
FUNDAMENTALS WITH INNOVATION**

ADAPT & INNOVATE



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**COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION**

CSU SLV EXTENSION 719-852-7381



MV CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 719-852-2731



**SAN LUIS VALLEY
RESEARCH CENTER
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY**

CSU RESEARCH CENTER 719-754-3594



The Craft and Nature Fair

41st Annual Monte Vista Crane Festival

March 8, 9, 10th

2024

Get ready to be thrilled! This weekend is packed with crafty, homey, and garden-y vendors. You'll also get to soak up some nature, check out some wildlife info booths, and catch a live bird rescue demo! Don't miss out!

For more information or to sign up as a vendor, please check out the Chamber website at montevistachamber.org or call 719-852-2731

Questions or seeking information? - Click the buttons on the right-hand side to view more information about Monte Vista as well as various local events in the San Luis Valley!

*Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce
Facebook*

*Monte Vista Chamber of
Commerce*

The next Monte Vista Chamber board meeting Thursday, January 25th at 7 AM.

Member Updates



We hope you decide to move messages from the Monte Vista Chamber to your Primary tab from the Promotions tab. By doing so, all future emails from us should be delivered to the Primary tab. Thanks!

CHECK OUT
MEMBERSHIP
BENEFITS HERE!

New Members:

- Chavez Designs
- Valerie Larson Agency LLC
- John V Meyers - Farm Bureau Insurance

Renewing Members:

- Grower Shipper Potato
- Alcon Construction
- Harold & Margaret Rominger
- Community Resources & Housing Corporation
- Jack's Market Pharmacy
- Wall, Smith & Bateman Inc.
- The Bridge at Alamosa
- San Luis Valley Area Health Education Center

Do you have an event in the San Luis Valley that you would like to add to our website? Please click the button below to fill out an Event Submission Form with as much information as possible. We will add the event to the Monte Vista Chamber of Commerce website as soon as possible and will contact you if

we have any further questions about the event.
Thank you!

Event Submission Form