

PHOTO BY CHERYL DE LEEUW - A VIEW OF OUR EXPANDED TERRAIN

## STAGECOACH EXPRESS - LIFT OFF!

By Nancy Tynan



PHOTO BY NOAH KORVER - TOP OF THE LIFT

The expanded terrain made available to all Castle Skiers is courtesy of the new to us quad: Stagecoach Express. It is aptly named with 500 horses pulling our hair back all the way to the top. We're used to windy rides but not from the lifts and wow what a ride! It is bringing Castle Mountain resort hurtling into the modern day era (circa 1990's) of ski areas and we couldn't be more pleased. We've had so much positive feedback that we stopped counting but here's just a fraction:

"The day we've all been waiting for ... Castle's first high-speed quad chairlift. A 6 minute ride to world class skiing" *Alpenland, Feb 11/26*

"Most amazing day exploring new lift and runs at Castle. Freaking amazing new terrain here"

*Nancy Clemens, Feb 11/26*

"Huge shout out to all those involved in making this project come together. We had a ton of fun and are looking forward to exploring the rest of the terrain for years to come." *Borderline Skateshop, Feb 11/26*

"Don't tell people about this!! Good God! There're no new lifts there people!!" *Joey Pineo, Feb 13/26*

"Castle is a must ski and their new terrain is ideal for powder stashes" *Powder (PowderCanada.com), Feb 12/26*

"...It takes a village to raise a ski lift, and we are thankful to have such an incredible one to bring this chair to life." *Katherine Seleski, Feb 10/26*

"I love that you guys did this!" *Eric Hensel, Feb 10/26*

"Wahoo - a whole new area to explore, serviced by a comfortable high speed quad" *Rachel Newrick, Feb 11/26*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### MARCH

Trivia Quiz in the T-Bar	1
Alpenland Demo Day	7
International Women's Day: Big Mountain Babes	8
Western Day + Fistful of Turns	14
Beats in the Base (2-5pm)	14-15
Movie Quote Game in the T-Bar	15
WCS U16 Western Championship	16-20
St. Patrick's Day	17
Beats in the Base (2-5pm)	21-22
King & Queen of the Castle	22
Spring Fest + Slush Cup	28
Hawaiian Day	28
Beats in the Base (2-5pm)	28-29
Karaoke Roulette in the T-Bar	29

### APRIL

Retro Day	4
Beats in the Base (2-5pm)	4-5
Easter Egg Hunt + Colouring Contest	5
Tentative Closing Day	5

# CMCA PRESIDENT'S REPORT – SPRING 2026

By Tim Luke

Congratulations to everyone on surviving another January early February drought. Life is back to normal at Castle now. Well, better than normal with the Stagecoach opening and some nice storm cycles coming our way. We celebrated the opening of the Stagecoach with a Champagne toast and a few days later with Champagne Powder.

Many more of the latter to come this spring. We have a couple of events to wrap up the season. The CMCA King and Queen of Castle Dual Slalom on Sunday March 22nd. This legendary event is not possible without volunteers. If you are available to put in an hour or two, please let me know. We will hold an Easter Egg Hunt in the village on Easter Sunday. Look for details on the socials.

The big news around Castle is the launch of the Castle Mountain Community Film Festival (CMCFF) which replaces the Opening Weekend Warren Miller Movie. What better way to get together on the opening weekend for a social event and watch some great locals in action? Details are on the website [www.cmcff.ca](http://www.cmcff.ca).



PHOTO BY JEN MCKAY - DIRK KEHLER WON THE SKIS, PICTURED WITH STEVE MUNDELL AND TIM LUKE

The CMCA Carnival was a real success this year. I know my heart grew a little while watching the Castle Spirit come alive. Over 30 volunteers made this event memorable. We also had two great sponsors, Steve Mundell from Alpenland and Tim Davis from Davis Automotive Group. Thanks to everyone who made this possible.

If you are interested in joining the board of the CMCA or would like to be a member at large please let me know. We are always looking for innovative ideas and input from the community on how we can enhance your experience at Castle.

See you on the Slopes,



**Tim Luke**

[timgluke@outlook.com](mailto:timgluke@outlook.com)  
1-416-464-0470

# FIRESIDE CHAT – CASTLE IS 60!

By Karen Perry



PHOTO BY MICHELE FRASER - COLE INTERVIEWING KATHERINE SELESKI

Friday evening Feb 13 saw community members come together to celebrate Castle Mountain Resort's (CMR) 60th anniversary. Cole Fawcett (CMR Sales & Marketing Manger) effortlessly moderated interviews with Dean Parkinson (CMR Manager), Katherine Seleski

(CMR Project Manager) and Dean Prodan (CMR board chair).

We learned that the new Stagecoach Express lift has had an extreme overhaul. Imagine an old car was bought and had the motor tuned, transmission taken apart, frame and body repaired and tested, and the electrical system replaced. The best find contributing to efficiency and cost reduction of the build was the Panther (like its namesake, nimble and fast), which soon became a verb: "Oh, we can panther that."

Give tower 14 some love when you ride past it, the team is still not over its obstreperous install. Finally, everyone repeatedly thanked the

Flintstone and Simpson (see Liftiline 2025 Spring edition for definition) volunteers and CMR team who stepped up and went the extra mile to get the ribbon cut for opening on February 10.

As to what's next? The revised master plan looks to expand village accommodations, amenities and services and rather than adding more lifts, will want to replace old ones. The government's new All Season Resort Act and CMR's strong relationships with regulatory bodies bode well for a viable and sustainable future for all to continue to enjoy and play on and below Gravenstafel and Haig mountains well into the future.

# SKIMO RACE

By Brent Harris

Time flies when you're having fun - and apparently when you are racing uphill on skis.

Has it really been 13 years since Castle hosted its first Skimo race?

What began as a single-race weekend has grown into a three-race event, and Castle is now a mainstay on the Skimo Canada Cup circuit. The athletes love sinking their race teeth into the season openers at Castle.

Ski mountaineering (Skimo) racing includes five disciplines, three of which are hosted at Castle: The Vertical (base area to top of T Rex), the Sprint (always on lower Whiskeyjack) and the big Individual (navigating the entire Castle leasehold).

This January, Castle proudly hosted the Canadian National Championships for the third time. As a sanctioned Canada Cup event, points accrued at Castle

races contribute to the athlete's ranking which help to determine National Teams and eligibility to wear the maple leaf at World Cup and World Championships. What we do at Castle is very important in the development of our Canadian Skimo athletes. Being inclusive

we traditionally welcome a handful of racers from Montana, who sometimes podium but don't earn Canadian points.

This year we saw what is likely a world first. Castle pro patrol Joe Foxon completed the Individual route while juggling. This meant he used no poles (imagine skinning up North bowl sans poles) keeping his three juggling pins in the air. Joe modified his pins with staple-like ski stops that arrested the pin when he dropped one. Safety first.

We are deeply appreciative of everyone at Castle for all their support. The West Castle Ski Club, the Castle Mountain Community Association, CMR Operations and Events teams, and the Castle Mountain Patrol.

We'll see you on the skin track.

Castle Skimo organizers are proud supporters of the CMCA "Wright Stuff" award.

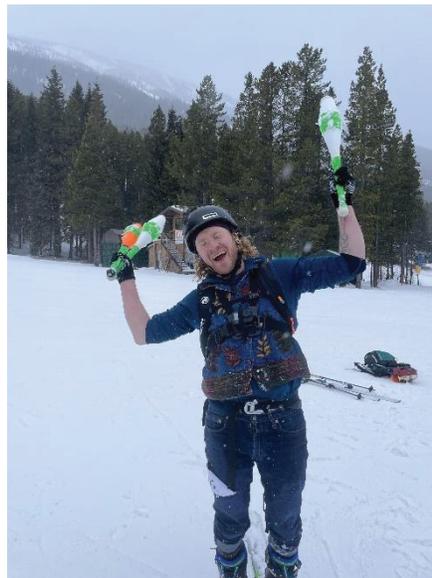


PHOTO BY BRENT HARRIS - JUGGLE PATROL JOE (SKI PATROL ENTRANT)



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# CASTLE LOVES WHITEBARK PINES

By Cheryl de Leeuw



PHOTO BY MIGNON DE LEEUW - BANDITO'S WHITEBARK PINE

Congratulations to Castle Mountain Resort on being recognized as Alberta's first Whitebark Pine Friendly Ski Area!

Thanks to a few dedicated CMR staff members and local volunteers, the Whitebark Pine Ecosystem Foundation has acknowledged the resort's strong commitment to conserving high elevation five needle pine trees. Over the years there has been awareness and education of the importance of these endangered trees as well as help with research and restoration.

White pine blister rust is an invasive fungus that was introduced to North America in the early 1900s by an infected shipment of trees from Europe to a Vancouver greenhouse and has spread to all western forests. More than 90% of Whitebark Pine trees in our area are infected as can be seen by rust coloured needles, oozing

blisters and dead branches. These trees will all eventually die. When a blister rust resistant tree is found, the cones are collected and grown in nurseries, helping restore this vital alpine species.

You can find Whitebark Pine trees throughout our ski area from Gravenstafel Peak down to the top of T-Rex . Beautiful specimens can be seen on either side of Bandito and High Noon. Small gnarly bushes as well as large trees with broad rounded crowns are scattered throughout Drifter. Sliding across the top of Lone Star you will pass a stately specimen. Then two thirds of the way down High Rustler, looking towards Desperado, you will see our healthy "Cauliflower Tree". Speeding up Stagecoach Express, look to your left half way between Towers 11 and 12 and you will glimpse our towering "Broccoli Tree". Take an easy slide through Giddy-Up, or keep your eyes open in the upper bowls for the shiny bark and upswept branches of this declining keystone species.

**Preserving Powder and Protecting Our Ecosystem**  
Skiing Among Whitebark Pine

You have arrived at a special place – a Whitebark Pine Friendly Ski Area. Whitebark pine are unique trees that grow at high elevations. This ski area protects whitebark pine as it faces significant mortality. Its survival means a longer lasting snowpack and more habitat for wildlife.

**A Keystone Species**  
They're pivotal ones in the ecosystem.

Whitebark pine are one of Canada's whitebark pine. They grow at high elevations and are found in the mountains of the West. They are not native to the area and don't tolerate heat and drought. They are also not native to the area.

**Why are Whitebark Pine Declining?**  
Over half of all whitebark pine trees have died and the tree is listed as endangered in Canada. The primary cause is the invasive white pine blister rust fungal infection. The majority of the whitebark pines in our region have been infected.

**What Can You Do?**  
Learn to Identify Whitebark Pine and Spread the Word

- Cones are fist-sized, purple or brown
- Needles are in bunches of five
- Branches are upswept

**Castle Mountain Resort is proud to be Alberta's first Whitebark Pine Friendly Ski Area.**

Learn More About the Whitebark Pine Friendly Ski Area Program and Other Efforts to Restore this Iconic Species

## THE DIETER GERNGROSS "MR SKI AWARD"



PHOTO BY LEO MARESCH

The Dieter Award is awarded annually to celebrate Dieter's "Gemutlichkeit – Love of Life" and in particular his love of life at Castle Mountain.

The 2025 winners are Michele Fraser and Kevin Finn!

Congratulations!

Their volunteer contributions to this community are enormous! To list a few....

- Have organized and hosted the "Welcome to the Ski Season" Chili dinner for all the CMR staff for many years!
- Have served on the CMCA board
- Have served on the CMR board
- Both love the community Winter, Summer, Spring and Fall
- Are consistent volunteers for all community events such as Potlucks, Trail Days, Firesmart Days, Huckleberry Fest, Lifeline Newsletter, etc.
- Have led the Trail Maintenance Days
- Have led the weed pulling and spraying at Castle and surrounding area.
- Have consistently volunteered to pitch in whenever and wherever help is needed.

## MOTHER GOOSE AWARD – MARIE CAMERON

By Wendy Ryan



PHOTO BY JUDY CLARK

This year, the Castle Mountain Mother Goose award was awarded to Marie Cameron. She was nominated by Wendy Ryan, CMR lift operator manager and friend:

I said to Marie one day in 2004: "I've the perfect job for you!" She's been a Blue Chair ticket checker ever since. Marie began hugging her friends in the lift line while scanning, and

soon everyone in line received a hug and the "Hugging Lady" was born. Only a lucky few are given her personal souvenir button: "I've been hugged @ Castle"

She knows everyone's name (staff and guests!) and is lead hand to guide, train, and support the base duty staff while always gettin' 'er done.

Marie takes every opportunity to bring CMR into the limelight, and has been interviewed and filmed by the media many times.

Marie and her husband Jim have been a port in the storm for new staff, ensuring they are picked up, fed, and taken care of before head-

ing to staff accommodations. In the early days, Marie ferried staff from staff accommodations in Pincher and Crowsnest Pass before and after her shift at Castle. Her home serves as the Amazon parcel drop for the entire staff at the ski hill, and her car is often filled with staff parcels.

Marie visits injured staff and pass holders in the hospital, and in the summer works all the weddings and events at CMR.

Marie exemplifies the caring attitude that is symbolized by the Mother Goose award and is a most deserving recipient.

## EARLY MORNING FIRE AT CASTLE MOUNTAIN RESIDENCE CONTAINED BY SWIFT COMMUNITY/CMR RESPONSE

By Carolyn Armstrong



PHOTO BY MATT SCHOENROTH

A potentially devastating early morning fire at a residence in Castle Mountain Resort on February 2, 2026, was successfully contained thanks to the quick actions of guests and nearby residents.

Current and former CMR employees on site recognized the danger and acted immediately, preventing the fire from spreading to the main structure or surrounding forest. Their coordinated response, supported by accessible hydrants, hoses, and firefighting supplies, proved critical in the first minutes of the emergency.

Reliable communication and winter transportation (supplied by a community member) were also key. On-hill radios enabled rapid coordination with snowcat operators to provide support and lighting in the snow-covered terrain. Given the resort's remote location, initial control had to come from the mountain itself; Pincher Creek Emergency Services required

approximately 45 minutes to arrive, with the Beaver Mines Volunteer Fire Department facing an even longer response time.

Fire-resistant construction materials and a commercial-grade smoke detection system further limited the damage. The building's design prevented flames from reaching the main structure and nearby trees, reducing the risk of a crown wildfire and spread to surrounding homes.

Community members, CMR and Pincher Creek Emergency Services say the incident highlights the importance of preparedness in our mountain community, including a comprehensive fire safety plan, proper infrastructure and equipment, training, and reliable communication systems.

## WHAT WOULD JUDITH SAY?

By Steve Motta

Judith Martin is one of the most successful newspaper columnists of all time. Starting in 1978 and continuing to this day, her column has been carried in 200+ newspapers worldwide. After 17 books, at age 86, she is still as popular as ever.

Never heard of her? Maybe you know her by her pen name "Miss Manners". Her gift to mankind is her ability to clarify the essential qualities of politeness. Does she shred? Unlikely. But if she does, I'd sure like to hear her perspective on **my top five lift-line misbehaviour peeves**. Here they are ranked from mild-annoyance to cardinal sin:

*Vapour Lock* - This is the failure of some lift-line participants to contribute to the wellbeing of all, by timely blending with other riders to ensure we all move forward without conflict. Whether through inattention or impairment, we need some folks to step-up and do better. This includes you: stoners and chatter boxes (peeve level: low)

*Blue Tooth Blare* - I'm not against personal music devices. I like most kinds of music. But, I'm here to ride, not experience a "battle of the bands" from two or more sources at volumes well beyond personal. Please "Get Smart" and consider our lift-lines a "cone of silence" (peeve level: low).

*Single Deniers* - On busy days, Castles' lift capacity can fall short. This makes every seat sacred for the wellbeing of all. Don't be a "Chair Hog": enthusiastically recruit and welcome smiling swingles to your under-subscribed chair. Who knows, we might both be into My Little Pony? (peeve level: medium).

*Snot Rockets* - So this one is complicated. Medically necessary or not? Executed from an outside edge of the line? I support medically necessary, outside edge, discretely accelerated snot rockets. I'm not so cool with close proximity, high dispersion, discretionary "Hail Mary's" without medical justification or appropriate telemetry (peeve level: medium).

*Magic Singles* - On a powder day, this is the lowest of the low. It occurs when two available singles (that know each other) don't manage to find a partner (despite standing beside each other) until their other two friends arrive 20 minutes later, just in time to enter the front of the line (the luckiest singles ever). Magic singles use radios to treat others unfairly and selfishly benefit themselves. Please do better in the future (peeve level: high).

Yikes, I just got a call from Judith. Apparently dwelling on the negative behaviours of others is inappropriate in any social setting. My

bad. To recover, here are some encouraged, **positive lift line behaviours**:

- Thank, compliment or treat a liftee.
- Welcome tourists and share your local knowledge.
- Gift a goggle wipe or hand warmer to those in need.
- Save a newby from a poor lift selection (red chair).
- Split-up to help a coach get kids up the lift.

And lastly, hug someone you don't know. Wait a minute, crossing personal boundaries without an invitation is never socially appropriate. Unless you are checking tickets and you have mastered your game for the last 20+ years.



Steve Motta

### TORCHLIGHT PARADE



PHOTO BY JOSH KELLY - FEBRUARY 7<sup>TH</sup>, 2026

It was a beautiful and touching tribute to those from the community who have passed, with an appreciative crowd yahoing and cheering the skiers on.

# WESTCASTLE SKI CLUB: 2025/26 SEASON UPDATE

By Kari Grandoni



PHOTO BY KARI GRANDONI AND LOUISA MURRAY

Westcastle Ski Club (WSC) is heading into the 2025/26 season with strong momentum, a great coaching team, and a growing group of athletes who love skiing hard and supporting each other. We are grateful to be part of the Castle community,

This year we have 60 athletes registered, spanning ages 4 through 16. From our youngest skiers learning fundamentals and mountain confidence, to our performance athletes training and competing across the province, the focus stays the same: build strong technical skills, develop smart, resilient racers, and keep the experience fun and positive for kids

and families (hot dog BBQ lunches hosted by the executive help!). Our coaches are the heartbeat of the club, and we're excited about the depth we have this season. Alongside our experienced coaching staff of JM Martel, Garret Wilson and Sophie Lynch-Staunton, we also have five returning WSC athletes stepping into coaching roles this year. Having athletes come back to lead is a big deal—it strengthens our culture, gives younger skiers role models they already look up to, and keeps WSC knowledge and values growing from within. Our performance athletes have already had a strong start to the

year on the race circuit. Across the categories, WSC racers have attended events and delivered multiple top-10 finishes and podium results. We're proud of the results, but even more proud of the way our athletes are earning them: steady training, teamwork, and the willingness to learn and improve every weekend.

WSC is thrilled to host the U16 Regional Championships at Castle Mountain Resort, March 16–20, 2026—bringing top U16 racers from across Canada to compete right here at Castle. It's a huge opportunity for our athletes and our community—none of this happens without parents and volunteers. WSC continues to be a community-powered program—whether it's helping on training days, assisting with travel logistics, or supporting club operations behind the scenes. Thank you to everyone who contributes time, energy, and positivity to keep the club running.



PHOTO BY KARI GRANDONI AND LOUISA MURRAY



PHOTO BY CHERYL DE LEEUW

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

New Year's Eve Fireworks once again was put on by CMR, CMCA and the MD of Pincher Creek attracting 100s of people who make the trip annually from the resort and from all over the Livingstone region and beyond.

## SNOWBOARD CLUB

By Mariko Belle

Despite the weather, the kids continue to have a blast on the slopes and are getting ready to host the Fistful of Turns 2026 event (Banked Slalom) on March 14, 2026.

This is a club-run event that brings riders together to enjoy the day, keep it fun, and build community. Please come cheer, compete or join the fun. [mariko.belle@skicastle.ca](mailto:mariko.belle@skicastle.ca)



# HOW DID "HARKER'S HIGHWAY" GET ITS NAME?

By Karen, Leslie, Jeff, and Karly Harker

When you drop from the summit, skis humming low,  
Down a long blue ribbon, the groomer we all know.  
Have you asked the wind softly, on a snowy fun day,  
Who carved this wide path called Harker's Highway?

Before maps told the story in inked-in lines,  
As Red Chair rose through the skyline pines,  
There was Jim—local, stubborn, hands rough and skilled,  
Seeking new ski runs and ready to build.

Deputy, Sheriff, Outlaw stood near,  
Bandito, Goat Run—names we hold dear.

But something was missing, a line clean and true,  
From the top all the way down, a run called a blue.

They talked it through over laughter and beer,  
Flagged future dreams on the slopes far and near.

Then Jim, being Jim, said "Why wait around?"

He went to work on that hard ground.

With a grader, an excavator, and a summer-sun plan,  
He climbed where the skiers would later stand.

From Skyline Traverse he cut and he tied,  
A run to the North Bowl, cruisy and wide.

One wild-eyed moment the brakes gave out,  
The grader took off down the North Bowl route.

Blade biting down, heart pounding loud,  
He rode it out—laughed later, proud.

They dreamed of a racecourse, downhill and fast,  
Through corners that make you smile as you pass.

The idea lives on in chuckles and cheer,  
Echoing softly each turn you steer.

He shaped Drifter Easy Out one other day,  
Found more rock than the plans dared say.

He meant to return, level it out,  
Maybe tomorrow, a better route.

When Jim left us in February's snow,

The mountain remembered the work of his soul.

As you fly down Harker's Highway, that long steady way,  
Think about the doer who wouldn't delay.

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When Jim Harker passed away in February 2014, the run was renamed Harker's Highway in honour of his work on this run and his dedication to Westcastle and Castle Mountain Resort.

PHOTO BY KAREN HARKER - JIM HARKER ON THE CAT

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 Dave Clement 403 831 2037  
 dclement876@gmail.com

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## CMCA GOLF TOURNAMENT & FUND RAISER 2026

By Dave Clement

Funds raised by the CMCA Golf Classic will be allocated toward Fire Smarting projects around the community to continue building our defensibility to wildfire.

The plans are in place for another great day of golf and socializing at Waterton Lakes Golf Course on Saturday June 20. Help support our cause by Sponsoring a Hole. The cost is \$250 and can be done on our website ([cm-cagolfclassic.com](http://cm-cagolfclassic.com)) and clicking the Sponsor/Store link. Then click on "Sponsor a Hole".

Another option would be providing a prize for the event. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Thanks

Dave Clement, CMCA Golf Committee  
 dclement876@gmail.com - 403 831 2037



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**Graham Czibere**



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# NEWS FROM THE MD OF PINCHER CREEK

By Dave Cox, Councillor MD of Pincher Creek

Greetings everyone,  
Here's a summary of what's been happening in the MD this winter. It continues to be an unusual year. The lack of snow is concerning, particularly given the already low water table and big demand on the MD's standpipes as several wells have gone dry. Instead of focusing primarily on snow removal, crews have shifted their efforts toward road maintenance.

On a positive note, water levels at the Oldman Dam have been gradually increasing, and water restrictions within the MD have been lifted. Much of the workload of the MD has now centered on planning for this summer's projects while road maintenance remains ongoing.

The Pincher Creek Emergency Services Commission continues to promote FireGuard and FireSmart initiatives. Planning is progressing

well, with key concepts receiving support from the various government agencies involved. The next step is to submit the proposal to the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta for approval. The MD is also seeing significant activity related to irrigation development. The Province has issued several new permits for projects drawing water from above the Oldman Dam. If you've driven along Highway 507 recently, you've likely noticed storage ponds under construction and irrigation pivots being erected.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at 403-627-8164 or at CouncilDiv3@mdpincercreek.ab.ca

Here's hoping for snow in our near future.



Dave Cox



TOP HUT ON RED BY MONICA SIMPSON

## COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS NOW ONLINE

Castle Mountain Community Association – A vibrant community sustained through collaborative partnerships, shared values and common interest.

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Go to the website. [www.castlemountaincommunity.org](http://www.castlemountaincommunity.org)

## STAY IN THE S'KNOW

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✉ [castlemountaincommunity@gmail.com](mailto:castlemountaincommunity@gmail.com)

Look for the next edition  
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## HOURS OF OPERATION

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