

County Commission Update: Deseret Peak Complex, the Crown Jewel

If you haven't been to the Deseret Peak Complex lately you might want to take the time to go see all it has to offer. The Tooele County Fair, this weekend, would be a great opportunity to visit this unique recreation venue while enjoying the Fair's entertainment and exhibits.

Deseret Peak Complex is the Crown Jewel of Tooele County. It's a great family fun location with a lot to offer, and with great potential. The Deseret Peak Complex was completed in November 1998 strictly using mitigation fees from military and west desert industries, not taxpayer money. Those same financial resources, plus grants and sponsorships, are used for day to day operations. We've made, and continue to make, many additions and improvements to Deseret Peak Complex.

Most recently, we added the Deseret Peak Convention Center in September 2009. The 15,000 square foot facility has one large meeting room that can be separated into as many as six separate rooms, which will accommodate 100 people each, for a total of 600 people. The Convention Center also features a large lobby / registration area, ticket booth, food preparation area, and an outdoor stage. This addition to the Indoor Arena building also houses the Tooele County Parks and Recreation Department's administrative offices.

The Convention Center is perfect for parties, weddings, banquets, reunions, political rallies, public hearings, and small group meetings, such as clubs and civic organizations. Tooele Army Depot recently took advantage of the new facility for a Safety Stand-Down Day for 550 employees, and a school group with no other housing options rented the space for overnight accommodations, while traveling through the county.

Deseret Peak Complex is home to many other popular venues. Four softball diamonds and one large baseball diamond are used all season long. The Grantsville Fast Pitch League just used the ballparks over two weekends for its Dash and Splash Softball Tournament in which 60 plus teams participated. Each player received a free pass to the swimming pool. Four new little league / softball diamonds are being constructed as well.

The Complex also sports two official-size soccer fields and one smaller soccer field that are used regularly for league soccer games. Deseret Peak Complex hosted TC United's soccer tournament over the Fourth of July weekend, in which 600 players enjoyed the venues. The Tooele Ute Football League, with approximately 150 young athletes, plays all of its home games on Deseret Peak's grass fields each fall.

Other Deseret Peak Complex venues include the Swimming Pool, Pitch and Putt golf course, Archery Range, Indoor Arena, Outdoor Rodeo Arena, Motorized Arena, Horse Racetrack, three Motocross tracks, BMX track, Utah Firefighter Association Museum, and Oquirrh Mountain

Mining Museum. There is also an Overnight Camping Area with six RV sites with full hook-ups, more with just electrical hook-ups, and a large grass area for tents.

In spite of all these great recreation opportunities offered at Deseret Peak Complex, it is under utilized by county residents. Even though only a small percentage attends, the County provides the Complex as a public service to its citizens. Generally speaking, most public recreation facilities such as swimming pools, golf courses, museums, parks, and campgrounds are not designed or expected to make a profit. However, they are still provided by governments as a service to their communities.

While the facility may not be making a profit yet, the gap between operating expenses and revenue is closing. We believe the fees at Deseret Peak Complex are very reasonable and competitive. We could always adjust fees to help cover costs, but the goal is to keep the facility available to everyone. Deseret Peak Complex contributes financially in other ways by attracting more economic development and tourism, and by creating jobs. Our visitors stay in our hotels, eat in our restaurants, and buy gas at our service stations. The Complex employs 15 full time staff and 57 seasonal staff. Deseret Peak Complex is definitely an asset to the county.

Even in this weakened economy, Deseret Peak Complex is seeing more usage as people are seeking recreation closer to home. In fact, July 5th was the Swimming Pool's second largest revenue day since it opened in 2000, and only 15 to 20 dollars short of the largest revenue day. Swimming Pool fees generally do cover operating costs.

The Complex is being recognized nationally. The National Sheep and Goat Show and Sale was held here July 14th through 17th. The large Motocross track is being touted internationally as patrons rave how good it is. Other future activities scheduled at Deseret Peak Complex include the Great Salt Lake Council's Boy Scout Jamboree, St. Margurites' religious retreat, GHS Rodeo, and the 4H Working Ranch Horse Show, just to name a few.

We encourage you to attend the 2010 Tooele County Fair August 5th through 7th. Deseret Peak Complex allows us to consolidate all the Tooele County Fair activities in one location. The emphasis is to involve more local people and make it a true "county" fair again. The Fair will feature more local entertainment and vendors, 4H exhibits, new carnival, car show, Tooele County Corporate Games, Tooele County Livestock Show and Sale, Ranch Rodeo and PCBRA Bull Riding, and the always sold-out Demolition Derby. Don't miss it. Find a complete schedule at www.tooelefair.com.

You can contact Tooele County Parks and Recreation at 843-4001 or 843-4002 for Deseret Peak Complex reservations and fees. Also check out the calendar of events at deseretpeakcomplex.com. As always, send us your comments at commissionupdate@co.tooele.ut.us.