



Minnesota Resorter

Resorters Helping Resorters

Winter 2014
Vol. 30 No. 1

Education: Resorter of the Year Award 2013
Marketing: Customer Service...Then...and Now
Legislation: Attend 2014 Day on the Hill

A PUBLICATION OF THE CONGRESS OF MINNESOTA RESORTS

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Submit Your Nominations for Resorters of the Year!

Congress of Minnesota Resorts Members, The Resorters of the Year Award is given annually to a resort that exemplifies the spirit and goals of the CMR. The criteria centers around the operation of a successful and progressive business, service to the tourism industry both at the local and state levels, and community service in other areas. Mentoring and helping other resort owners and membership in the CMR are also part of the requirements. Nominations for the award are generated entirely by CMR members, and the whole program is dependent upon the time and effort you give in order to recognize excellence. We encourage you to participate through nominations of resorters you feel uphold the highest standards and are dedicated to service within our industry.

Here are the guidelines:

The Congress of Minnesota Resorts selects, through nomination by its members, one resort and resorter(s) that have shown a dedication to the improvement of the Minnesota resort industry by adopting and carrying out business policies and practices that reflect a personal pride in the industry as a whole. They also live up to the organization's motto of "Resorters Helping Resorters" by involvement in community activities and by displaying a willingness to help other resort owners to successfully operate Minnesota resorts.

Any member of the Congress of Minnesota Resorts can submit a nomination for this prestigious award. Nominations must be received by September 1st each year. The nominating member is not required to verify the eligibility criteria. In the event none of the resorts nominated meet all the eligibility requirements, the Awards Committee will make a selection based on the resort most closely meeting the criteria and notify the winner. The winner will be asked to be present at the annual Congress of Minnesota Resorts

Fall Conference where the formal announcement and presentation will be made.

The following criteria are considered by the Awards Committee in making their selection:

- CMR member in good standing for the previous three consecutive years under the same ownership.
- Ability to maintain a successful and progressive resort.
- History of helping and mentoring other resort owners/operators.
- Involvement in community activities.
- At least five years between awards.
- Not a current member of the Awards Committee.

To obtain a nomination form, go to the CMR website www.Minnesota-Resorts.com, scroll to the bottom of the home page and click on Membership. Login using your Login and Password, select Application from the list on the left, click on Resorter of the Year Nomination, and print a copy. Mail the completed form to the CMR address below. If you need further assistance please contact Vicky Krattenmaker, CMR Office Manager, by emailing: CMR@Minnesota-Resorts.com or calling 320-212-5107.

NOMINATION DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 1ST

Send nomination form to:

**Resorters of the Year Nomination Committee
Congress of Minnesota Resorts
PO Box 358
New London, MN 56273-0358**

Minnesota Resorter

Resorters Helping Resorters



A Congress of Minnesota Resorts Publication

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About the cover: Photograph by Aaron Eickhorst Photography. A winter day at Kohl's Resort on Big Turtle Lake in Bemidji. Jim and Debbie Eickhorst were the recipients of the 2013 Resorter of the Year Award.

The Minnesota Resorter is a triannual publication of the Congress of Minnesota Resorts. The opinions expressed in the articles printed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions nor the official position of the CMR nor any of its officers, directors, or members. Please address any comments or inquires to the committee contact. The Minnesota Resorter is printed by Arrow Printing.

From Your President's Pen



President Su Ugstad
Congress of Minnesota Resorts

By the time you receive this magazine the holidays will have passed and there will most likely be snow on the ground. Whether your resort is open seasonally or year-round, hopefully you are taking that much needed me-time to get out and enjoy some of the natural beauty Minnesota offers in the winter! I personally look forward to this time to recoup and reenergize after the busy summer season.

For those who don't know me my name is Susan (but I go by Su) Ugstad and I am

very honored to be your newly elected president of the Congress of Minnesota Resorts (CMR). My husband, Bob, and I bought our resort in the fall of 2002 and joined the CMR during our first year of resorting. I was immediately impressed by the camaraderie of this resort community and soon realized CMR's motto *Resorters helping Resorters* was not some meaningless tag line, but actually its core ideology. It's the collective knowledge and strength of this association that has made the CMR one of the most influential organizations I've had the pleasure to be involved in and having the privilege to be on the board working with a great group of dedicated volunteers is rewarding as well.

If you missed it, this year's Fall Conference in October at the Radisson in Duluth was chock full of insightful, informative and entertaining speakers. Kudos to the planning committee for a great job in choosing such pertinent topics as accounting, health insurance issues and equally enlightening discoveries about our communication techniques and personality indicators. Also, John Edman from Explore Minnesota Tourism (EMT) updated us on advertising efforts, and our Lobbyist Joel Carlson briefed us on possible legislative issues that may affect our industry. This year's award for *Resorter of the Year* went to Jim and Debbie Eickhorst owners of Kohl's Resort in Bemidji. Congratulations to Jim and Debbie for this well deserved acclamation. We welcomed new members to the CMR Board: Tom and Kathy Marnik, Timber Trails Resort, Remer; Chad and Tina Reuper, Sandy Pines Family Resort, Backus; and Vince Prosocki, Northern Lights Resort, Richville. Two resigning members were Peter Nelson and Dave

Thompson. Jim and Debbie Eickhorst will serve the remaining term of Chuck and Marilyn Appeldoorn. Our thanks to Mark Novotny, Hyde-Away-Bay Resort, for his commendable service as CMR President for the past two terms. They all deserve a big thank you for their commitment to the CMR Board of Directors and for sharing their time and talents to keep us progressively moving forward.

As we go into the coming year, CMR will continue to provide educational opportunities to our members, strengthen and expand our marketing efforts, and work with our lobbyist to keep our legislators informed of critical issues for the resort industry.

To start, look for details in this issue on a new campground feature being introduced for the CMR Website. New enhancements keep the website content fresh; aiding in search engine optimization and increased traffic to the site. We're also taking advantage of additional co-op ad opportunities available to us through EMT's grant programs. Our marketing committee continues to work aggressively with their budget to market our resorts in advertising mediums that could be cost prohibitive to us as individual resort owners.

The legislative committee will be gearing up for our Day on the Hill scheduled for March 18-19 this year. I hope to see all the familiar faces on the bus along with a whole lot of new ones! Joining us for Day on the Hill is one of the best ways you can help the CMR help your business. By connecting with our legislators in this face-to-face fashion, we're able to better communicate our concerns about issues that impact the resort industry. It doesn't mean you have to speak if you don't want to; it's just the more people that attend, the more meetings that can be scheduled with our legislators. Let's face it, a large turnout of supporters makes a huge statement of our commitment just on its own. We always get a warm welcome at the capital and have a lot of fun. If you've never gone before I highly recommend it.

I would encourage you all to get involved in any way that works for you; get on our Yahoo Chat line, attend the Spring Workshop and Fall Conference, join us for Day on the Hill, take advantage of some great *how to* School of Resorting classes, or offer your assistance to one of the working committees. They are all great opportunities for learning and great ways to get the most from your membership.

Enjoy your winter!

Respectfully,
Su Ugstad

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RESORTER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2013

By Lynn Scharenbroich, Black Pine Beach Resort and Sheila Niemeyer, Rugged River Resort



Every year at our fall conference, the Congress of Minnesota Resorts (CMR) presents the *Resorter of the Year Award*. This award is given to resorters who exemplify the spirit and goals of the CMR. The criteria for this award centers around the operation of a successful and progressive resort business, service to the tourism industry both at a local and state level, and community service in other areas. Mentoring and helping other resort owners and membership in the CMR are also part of the

requirements. Nominations for the award are generated entirely by CMR members. Members are encouraged to consider their fellow resorters and nominate those peers that they feel uphold high standards and contribute to our industry.

It is our privilege and honor to present the 2013 Congress of Minnesota Resorts *Resorter of the Year Award* to Jim and Debbie Eickhorst of Kohl's Resort on Big Turtle Lake, Bemidji.

Eickhorsts' resorting journey

At a fairly young age this year's award recipients retired from the campground business and went camping themselves for a few years. During these years, they spent some of their time looking at four potential businesses:

- Golf courses
- Mini golf
- Campgrounds
- Resorts

The answer turned out to be a resort, but which one? The new guiding question became, "Which resort could we be proud to show our family?"

They found the right one and made the purchase, moving to the property in 2003. But by the time they took over, one of the cabins had burned down, leaving just a charred hole. Told by two different sources that the cabin could not be rebuilt, this couple mustered their resolve and set about rebuilding it themselves, launching a successful style of working together with the mantra, *doing as much as you can yourself*, that still serves them well today. The style has been extended to staff, with even some of the young cleaning girls being taught to lay tile and build furniture.



In ten years, their efforts have resulted in successful completion of multiple cabin remodeling projects that included nine kitchen upgrades, siding and re-facing ten cabins and the lodge, re-roofing twelve cabins, replacing 35 windows and 34 doors, adding flat screen TVs to 14 cabins and air conditioning to all the cabins and the lodge, replacing linoleum with tile in 16 cabins, updating lighting in several cabins as well as many other upgrades in every cabin.

In addition to structural changes, they have replaced most cabin appliances, added coin-operated washers and dryers, and updated furniture with many pieces they've built themselves. They added five docks and lifts, a water trampoline system and multiple water toys. The playground was upgraded and daily activities were added. They've kept pace with the new technologies, adding free Wi-Fi and creating a new website that includes 360 degree tours.

Eickhorsts also purchased back four mini-homes, also known as tree houses, and purchased an option to build on already owned property from a prior owner. Purchase of neighboring property, and any property, on their three-lake system for potential rental is a part of this couple's long-range vision for their resort.

Although it seems there would be no more time left in the day for these busy resorters, they have indeed found time....

....to be active in their community:

- Coaching youth soccer, baseball, basketball, football and hockey (even running the Zamboni during games and tournaments).
- Serving on boards and supporting local groups such as Pheasants Forever and the local Innkeepers Association.

.....to be involved in the resort industry:

- Hosting CMR meetings, workshops and social gatherings at their resort, serving as marketing chair for four years and being a part of many CMR committees as well as running several cracker barrels over the years.
- Regularly participating in Day on the Hill.
- Working with Explore Minnesota Tourism, CMR and Minnesota Resort & Campground Association to create the co-op TV ads promoting vacationing in Minnesota.
- Providing an idea framework for the CMR website and helping the team implement those ideas.
- Staying in touch with local and state offices about resort industry issues.

Service to their community and to the industry mirrors the kind of service they provide for their guests, believing that guests deserve an experience not just a vacation. This belief has resulted in their resort slogan, *Where families build lifelong memories*. It has also played into their personal slogan, *If you are not moving forward, you are falling backwards. There is no status quo.*

Their successful and progressive resort is a reflection of time devoted to the business, sweat equity and investing back into the property and employees. They truly exemplify the spirit and goals of the CMR. Congratulations Jim and Debbie Eickhorst.



EDUCATION

CMR Resort Tour

By Timberly Christiansen, Finn-N-Feather Resort

CMR Fall Resort Tour in Isle/Brainerd Wednesday September 11th, 2013

On Wednesday, September 11th, resorters gathered to enjoy the CMR Fall Resort tour in the Isle/Brainerd area. The tour started at 8:30 a.m. at the beautiful Appeldoorn's Sunset Bay Resort, where manager Paul Waldowski along with owners Chuck and Marilyn Appeldoorn were the tour guides. Tour participants toured the amazing new conference center, rental buildings and condo type units.

From there, the tour headed to Hunter Winfield's Resort around 10 a.m. Mike and Margie Christensen opened their doors for resorters to come and explore. Everyone enjoyed the unique custom log cabins. Mike has been a guide on Mille Lacs for years, so their ice house rentals are a luxury.

The resort tour concluded at Niemeyer's Rugged River Resort at about 11:30 a.m. Jim and Kelly Larson and Corby and Sheila Niemeyer have been in the resort business in one way shape or form for many, many years. The resort has vintage cabins, a large RV park and a unique river location.



Resorters gather at Rugged River Resort near Brainerd, as Owner Sheila Niemeyer begins a tour of the resort sharing the resort's history, present accommodations, and future goals.

Appeldoorn's Sunset Bay Resort



Owners Chuck and Marilyn Appeldoorn,
General Manager Paul Waldowski

Resort: The resort is made up of 26 units with occupancy of 156 guests. The resort is located on 300 feet of Mille Lacs Lake shoreline.

Resort History: The resort was previously known as Karpen's Resort.

Before Resort Life: Chuck and Marilyn lived in the Twin Cities. They had for years dreamed of purchasing a resort in the Wisconsin area, but that never seemed to work. So, they became entrepreneurs in the Twin Cities area where they raised their three children: Brian, Crystal and Brittany. As time passed, Chuck began looking for some rental property in Northern Minnesota when he stumbled upon a listing for a resort near a cabin he used to vacation at. They bought the resort in October of 2004 and haven't looked back yet.

Future Plans: In the future, the Appeldoorns are hoping to add more hotel suites to attract corporate clientele during the slower seasons.

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Hunter Winfields Resort



Owners Mike and Margie Christensen

Resort: The resort is located on Mille Lacs Lake with eight cabins and one off site. In the winter, the resort grows to 20 ice fishing houses plus five open cabins and over seven miles of roads to snow plow. In the summer, the resort offers a full guide service with one full-time guide and bring in three or four other guides as needed. The resort has five rental boats and built a new launch this year that holds 45 people.

Resort History: Mike and Margie purchased the resort in 2006 from a family who owned it for 60 years under the name of Severson's Resort. For 15 years prior to the sale, the resort rented cabins only seasonally but before that, ran it as a resort similar to the way it is ran today. Seversons purchased it from the Carlsons who also ran it as a resort and built some of the cabins that are here today with logs from this property. Four of these original cabins are still in use.

Before Resort Life: Mike has been a guide on the lake for over 15 years, so prior to that he was fishing. Margie was a consultant earning the money to purchase the resort. Margie bought the resort in 2006 and met Mike later that year. Mike and Margie were married in 2008. Margie still does consulting as well as working in real estate industry. Margie earned her license in 2012 for tax purposes and it is turning out to be a nice little hobby.

Future Plans: The Christensens have just purchased what is known as Lower Twin Island on Mille Lacs. They are going to be turning that island cottage into a rental for the 2015 season. They need this fall to plan, this coming winter of 2013-14 to bring supplies over, next summer to remodel, and the following winter to bring over decor and furnishings. This project will not go without several challenges and expenses - they are already working on the logistics of toilet, shower, plumbing and regulations around that. It will be a fun adventure!

Niemeyer's Rugged River Resort



Owners Jim and Kelly Larson and family, Corby and Sheila Niemeyer and family

Resort: Niemeyer's Rugged River Resort on the Mississippi is a family fishing resort. The resort sits on approximately 115 acres and 1.5 miles of shoreline. The resort has six cabins, 45 seasonal RV sites, and three RV sites for short-term stays.

Resort History: The resort was a logging camp in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Three of the cabins were bunkhouses for the loggers and one cabin was the cook's shanty. After the logging business died out in the area, the cabins housed trappers. In 1935, Bess & Ted Stallman bought the resort for \$500. They moved two cabins to the river's edge and built a home (Cabin #1) and garage (Cabin #6) for themselves.

In the mid 40s, they built a new home (the brown house) and turned the others into cabins.

Cabin #2 was the cook's shanty and is now remodeled. Cabins #3,4 & 5 were the bunkhouses. The cabins have had several additions in the years since '35, including bedrooms, kitchens and bathrooms. Bess Stallman, after Ted passed away, built the blue house in the early 70s, which is now the living quarters during the summer for our two families.

Lyle and Judy Niemeyer (Corby and Kelly's parents) bought the resort in 1977, becoming the third owners. The previous owner who bought the resort from Ted and Bess only ran it about seven years. Years went by and Lyle and Judy decided it was time for some change of scenery, a.k.a. retirement. After giving the resort life a trial run in 2001, Kelly & Corby's families bought the resort business from their parents in 2002. The two families divide time between the resort, full-time jobs and family.

Improvements completed to the resort include Cabin #2 remodel, upgraded septic to the five acres with the cabins and two homes, and the installation of a pool and hot tub. Lyle and Judy started the North Bay RV Park. The Larsons and Niemeyers developed the Duck Bay RV Area and developed the final phase last year with seven new RV sites.

Before Resort Life: Kelly and Jim Larson have four children, ages 15-22. Kelly works full time as an RN at the VA Clinic in Brainerd, coordinating veteran's home care. Jim works full time as a project manager for Nor-Son. Corby and Sheila Niemeyer have two children ages, 10 & 13. Corby works full time as an HVAC technician for Thelen Heating & Roofing. Sheila works part time in the winter for GoldLeaf Partners, a company that manages pension plans, and is a substitute teacher.

Future Plans: Now that the RV sites are in, this resort team will focus on the cabins. Several of the cabins need to be euthanized. They hope to begin a remodel/demolition this fall. They are also in the process of creating a gathering space in an old boathouse. This will be space to gather and enjoy popcorn, karaoke, card games and movies.

EDUCATION

2013 Vendor Show

By Su Ugstad, Balsam Bay Resort

Many thanks to all the resorters who came to this year's Fall Conference in Duluth and for attending the Vendor Show held on Monday, October 28th. We had 24 vendor booths spread throughout the Superior Street level of the Radisson-Harborview Hotel. It was quite a sight! It's always fun to



see the new products and learn about the services offered by these fine businesses. Please take a moment to check the full list of this year's exhibitors included in this issue.

We are so appreciative to our loyal vendor exhibitors that spend the time and expense to support us during our fall conference. We were also delighted to have some new vendor exhibitors this year, two of which are new CMR Associate members. Lonesome Cottage is a rustic furniture company that also offers a line of bedding and drapery through their

sister company Wooded River, and Clearent is a credit/debit card processor offering an exclusive merchant services program for our members. A special mention goes to Dan and Beth Borseth, Pine Insurance Agency, for their sponsorship donation that helped defray the cost for some of the great speakers at the conference.

I'd like to thank everyone who helped with the show this year. The staff at the Radisson was very accommodating. Many thanks go to Cathy Duvall, Kee Nee Moo Sha Resort, and Tim Senger, Cedar Point Resort, for helping with door prizes and more.



Unfortunately, Karen Senger, the co-coordinator for this year's vendor show, couldn't be at the show but was a terrific help getting it all started. Thanks Karen!

Oh, and speaking of door prizes, 24 resort attendees won the terrific giveaways generously donated by our vendors which included everything



from gift cards to snowshoes. WOW! I also want to thank Jim and Deb Eickhorst, Kohl's Resort, for once again donating two vendor prizes. L & M Distributing and Faster Solutions each won a free night stay at Kohl's Resort. This year's winner of the **Free Booth** for the 2014 Vendor Expo went to CliftonLarsonAllen LLP. Congrats to all the winners!

Once again, to show the CMR's appreciation to all the vendors for their participation in our vendor show, we ask our members to continue to visit their websites and contact them with inquiries. Be sure to thank them for their continued support of the CMR organization as they help make the conference possible. If you didn't get a chance to visit with all the attending vendors, forgot to ask a question, or couldn't make the conference this year, a vendor list with contact information is included in this issue.

So again this year I close by saying: Thank you Vendors! Thank you Resorters!

We just finished our first season as resort owners. Last year we attended the conference, but it was prior to our purchase of Sunset Bay Resort so it was kind of hard to relate to everything since we had not yet experienced a first season. This year's conference in Duluth we were able to really absorb and understand everything that was being presented. We always enjoy the cracker barrels because that is a time that problems and issues that face all of us are discussed.

We always learn where to find new resources and make new friends during these sessions because they truly represent Resorters helping Resorters. We also enjoyed the sessions on health insurance and the social networking. Those are very relevant and timely issues facing all of us as we attempt to control expenses and generate additional rental income via different advertising venues. We are still rookies, but feel that through the conference we gain the resources to allow us to be better informed, and better able to seek out others if we have issues we cannot resolve on our own.

Jim and Kristin Wherley, Sunset Bay Resort

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EDUCATION

2013 Fall Conference Recap...

The CMR Fall Conference was held Oct. 27-29th in Duluth. The pre-conference



Bob Bateman (aka Richard Dawson) was the dapper host for this year's creative entertainment, the game show "Resorter's Feud." Contestant Nancy Loren can't contain her excitement when she gets an answer right!

activities included a tour of Glensheen Mansion that was attended by over 20 resorters. The tour was well orchestrated and all who attended agreed that it was a fun time.

The conference opened on Sunday with introductions and it was awesome to see lots of new resort owners and first-time conference attendees. Presentations were made concerning audits and resort purchases, taxes, etc. Ed Heil, StoryTeller Media & Communications, was present once again and

provided ideas for adding video clips to our websites and how to boost our social media impact. Everyone attending learned something from him. Monday's presentations included health insurance and health savings account information, and we were all *graded* on our **Real Colors**, providing entertainment for everyone! The afternoon was filled with the Vendor Show, attended by everyone with door prizes and many new products featured for the 2014 season.

The conference concluded on Tuesday with the introduction of new board members: Vince Prosocki, Northern Lights Resort; Tom & Kathy Marnik, Timber Trails Resort; and Chad & Tina Reuper, Sandy Pines Family Resort. The morning's presentations included John Edman, Explore Minnesota Tourism, our marketing committee presenting the CMR's website possibilities, legislative updates and a speaker sharing communication techniques to use with our employees at our resorts.

As always, the cracker barrels offered everyone the opportunity to ask questions of other resorters and hopefully take home new information to use at their resorts. A big thanks to the committee and all those involved with the conference...it was a success!



This newly formed family quickly takes the lead during the Family Feud Game Show.

As a second year board member I would love to encourage all to attend the CMR's Fall Conference and Spring Workshop. They are a great way to become involved in the decision making process and the information is priceless that you receive from seasoned fellow resorters. I have learned so much and love being involved.

One key thing I learned was that CMR members have an awesome website to list our last minute openings. The website, that all CMR members can use, is a valuable tool to build your business. I also had fun helping Su and Tim with the vendors' show that is put on for resorters to see the new trends and items available for our industry. Being a CMR volunteer is a wonderful way to be involved and not feel pressured.

Cathy Duvall, Kee-Nee-Moo-Sha Resort

I go to the Fall Conference for many reasons.

It is great to get together with other resorters to share ideas. I hear about things that I would like to do. I also hear some ideas that I would stay away from. We are all in the resorting business. But, we all are a little different. I particularly appreciate the cracker barrels. It gives those resorters that choose to share an idea a chance to share with the whole group. I have been in the resorting business for 13 years, yet, I always leave the CMR Fall Conference with ideas that I can actually use.

We are all in this together. There are usually many issues going on that impact resorts. I, as an individual, cannot keep up with all of it myself. The CMR keeps up with issues for me and shares them at the Fall Conference.

It is a fun get away. We are ready for a little R&R after servicing people's vacation needs all summer long. We find that other resorters are very welcoming and fun to be around. I enjoy the evening activities too. It feels good to laugh together and have a good time.

For these reasons, and many others, I enjoy the CMR Fall Conference. I am looking forward to next year already.

Tim Senger, Cedar Point Resort

Every year the CMR conference is a new beginning for us, filling us with great ideas. We can say we have never left empty. The destination of the conference gives us an opportunity to spend time together while traveling and has always been top-notch accommodations for us. The cracker barrels enlighten us, the special speakers definitely make us think, make us laugh and encourage us for the upcoming year. The greatest hit of all, however, is that we get to see the other resorters that have become our friends and family. We are so excited to share time with them and everyone sharing their season's ups and downs. We were excited to see and meet new resort owners this past year also. We are so grateful that four years ago when we purchased Pike Point Resort on Gull Lake, as a new resorter, that we connected with the CMR. The organization has truly been an asset to our business growth.

Scott and Sue Springer, Pike Point Resort

Look What's New on the Website

By Karen Senger, Cedar Point Resort

If you are already a CMR member, you can sign up for this additional feature for only \$35 per year! If you are not a member, now is a great time to join. You can add this feature for only \$35 more.

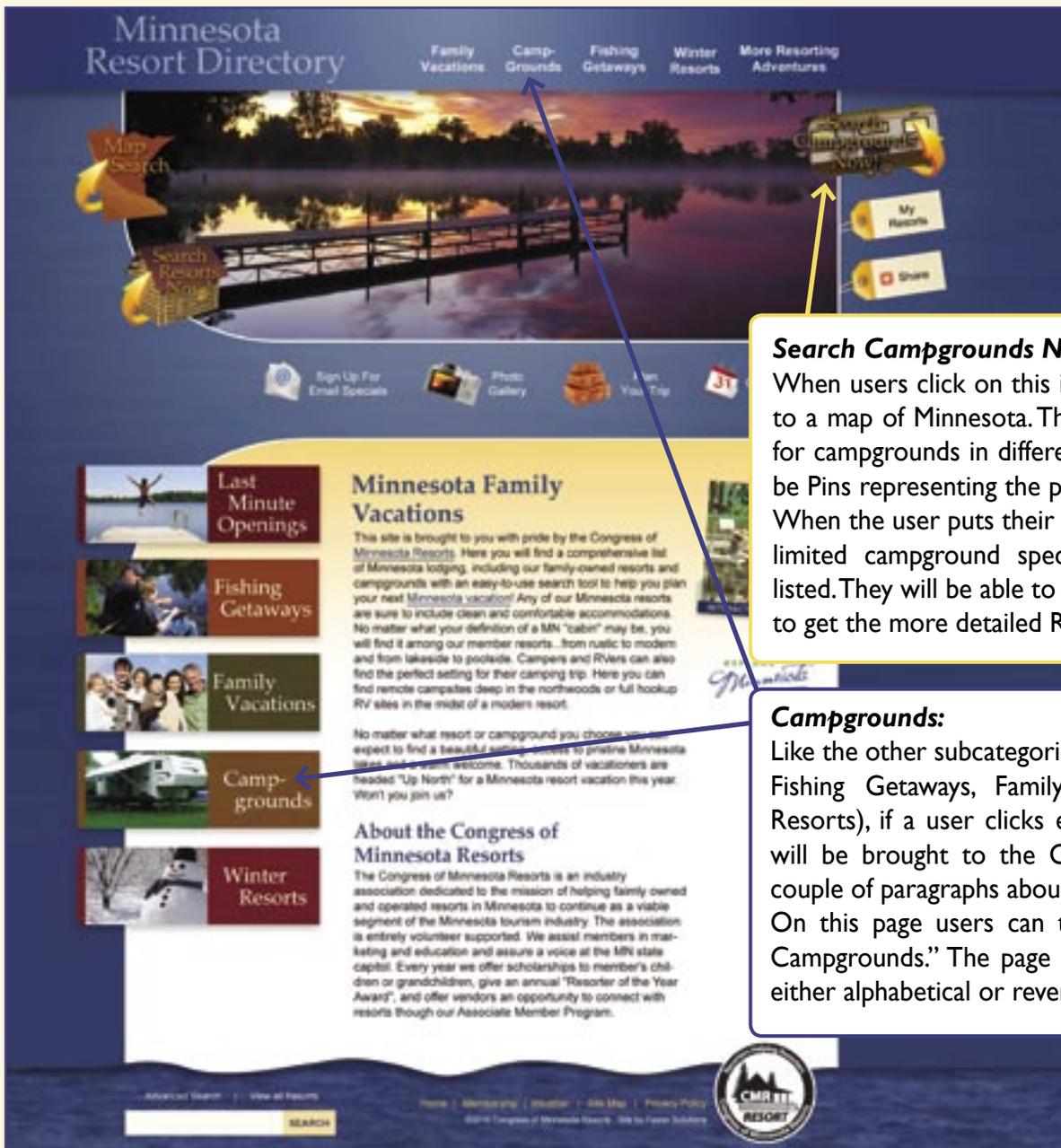
What? We are enhancing the CMR website to include campground information. We are going to have a separate campground page (like we currently have Last Minute Openings, Fishing Getaways, Family Vacations and Winter Resorts). Potential guests can also search using a map. This map will have different zones that will have “pins” reflecting all of the participating properties (like on the Resort Map).

Why? Guests may be looking for cabins and/or campgrounds. We want to be able to accommodate even more of what your guests are looking for.

How much? To add the campground to your listing, the cost is only \$35 annually.

How do I update my information? You will receive a separate user name and password to update your campground information. The format for updating will basically be the same as how you update your resort information. It is THAT EASY!!!

When? These changes are scheduled to be completed in the beginning of 2014.



Search Campgrounds Now!

When users click on this icon, they will be brought to a map of Minnesota. They will be able to search for campgrounds in different regions and there will be Pins representing the participating campgrounds. When the user puts their cursor over the pin some limited campground specific information will be listed. They will be able to click on the Resort name to get the more detailed Resort Information.

Campgrounds:

Like the other subcategories (Last Minute Openings, Fishing Getaways, Family Vacations and Winter Resorts), if a user clicks either of these links they will be brought to the Campground page with a couple of paragraphs about the camping experience. On this page users can then “click here to view Campgrounds.” The page displayed will be a list in either alphabetical or reverse alphabetical order.

THE CONGRESS OF MINNESOTA RESORTS



What the CMR Can Do for You!



MARKETING



Your resort is listed on our website www.Minnesota-Resorts.com.



Our site is professionally marketed through links, banners and extensive search engine optimization.

LEGISLATION



Full-time lobbyist working for the interests of RESORTS ONLY!



Day on the Hill- Make your voice heard in St. Paul.



Stay informed on legislative issues that affect our industry.



EDUCATION



Fall Conferences and Spring Workshops - informative sessions and networking with other resorters.



School of Resorting educational classes.



Yahoo Groups - online resort chat room.



Members only online resources on our website.

PLUS- Vendor Discounts to CMR Members • Scholarships for Education • "Resorters of the Year" Award • And Much More!

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!

Resorters Helping Resorters - Since 1985

Thank you to all who were on board for the website's Last Minute Openings (LMO) web enhancement. I have been able to fill the openings I had for the last four weeks. We were concerned a month and a half ago. In this last week I have spoken to two people who were looking for openings. At that time I had just filled the vacancy for the week they were looking. I had to tell them I was full, and when I tried to explain about CMR's LMO, they told me they were already on CMR's LMO map page. That is how they had called us!

Jim, Kohl's Resort

I enjoyed the bus ride to the capitol with a lot of interactive conversation about employees, cleaning supplies, media devices, photos to share and more.

*I would advise everyone to
Get on the Bus!*

*Cathy Duvall,
Kee-Nee-Moo-Sha Resort*

JOIN THE CMR - YOUR MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

Your membership in the Congress of Minnesota Resorts (CMR) is a good investment for both you and your resort business. Join in the organization's philosophy of "Resorters Helping Resorters." So many benefits await you! Fill out the membership application today and become a member of a unique association of resorters, run by resorters, for resorters. Our focus is very clear!

Resort Name _____ Lake _____

Owner/Manager _____ Years in resorting _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip (9 digit) _____

Township _____ County _____

Phone _____ No. of rental units _____ No. of bedrooms _____

Resort E-mail Address _____ Resort Website Address _____

Membership investment is only \$16.50 per bedroom (Min. \$165 for 10 bedrooms or fewer, max. \$858 for 53 bedrooms or more.) Membership rates good through Aug. 31, 2014.

Associate Memberships - Dues \$165 For vendors and for those with an interest in resorting but not owning a resort.

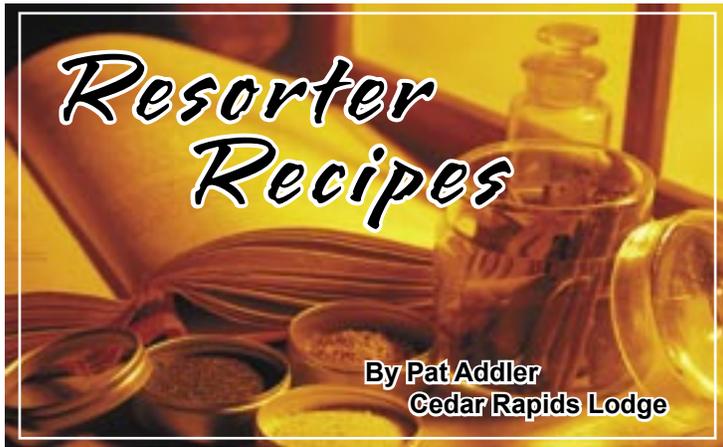
Amount of check enclosed _____ Please Circle.....New.....Renewal



Send to: Congress of Minnesota Resorts
PO Box 358
New London, MN 56273-0358

Questions regarding Membership?
Contact Vicky at CMR@Minnesota-Resorts.com or 320-212-5107

MARKETING



SLOW COOKER CHICKEN PHILLY SANDWICHES

- 2 Tbsp butter
- 1 large sweet onion, sliced
- 2 green bell peppers, sliced
- 3 boneless skinless chicken breasts, sliced
- 2 Tbsp Dale's Steak Seasoning(or your own)
- sliced mozzarella cheese
- hoagie rolls

Spray the inside of a crockpot and cook on low. Add the onion, butter and peppers; mix the chicken with the seasoning and then add to the crockpot. Cover and cook on low for five hours. Serve on hoagie buns. Makes 4-5 sandwiches.



CROCKPOT TORTELLINI

- 1 bag frozen tortellini
- 1 small bag fresh spinach
- 2 cans Italian diced tomatoes
- 1 - 32 oz box vegetable broth
- 1 - 8 oz cream cheese

Put all ingredients into crockpot; cut the cream cheese into chunks. Cook on low for 5-6 hours. You can add chicken to make a heartier dish. Do not cook tortellini before adding to crockpot.



ROTEL BLACK BEAN DIP

- 8 oz cream cheese
- 12 oz can black beans
- 12 oz can Rotel tomatoes
- 6 oz shredded cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 300°F. Press cream cheese onto the bottom of a baking dish, 8" x 8" pan. Mix the Rotel and black beans together and drain the juice. Spread mixture over the cream cheese; add shredded cheese. Bake for 30 minutes; serve with tortilla chips.



PUMPKIN STREUSEL COFFEE CAKE

- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 cup applesauce(or oil)
- 1 box vanilla instant pudding
- 1/2 cup buttermilk(or milk)
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 - 15oz. can pumpkin
- 1 stick butter
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- almost 1/2 cup heavy cream



Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray your jellyroll pan. Mix cake mix, eggs, applesauce, pudding, milk, sour cream and pumpkin with electric mixer until well blended. Pour into the pan and spread evenly. Melt butter in microwave bowl, add brown sugar and cinnamon; mix and drizzle over cake batter; take a knife and make swirls through batter. Bake cake for 30-35 minutes. Mix powdered and small amounts of the cream in a bowl until creamy; drizzle over warm cake. This is a great coffeecake, but also works as dessert.

New Congress of Minnesota Resorts Members!

WELCOME

New CMR Members

David & Shawn Howe, owners
Dale Jackson, general manager
Solbakken On Superior Inc, Lutsen, MN

John and Lisa Dockstader
Birchwood Resort, Sauk Centre, MN

Dan & Kay Dyre
Evergreen Lodge, Park Rapids, MN

John & Kristi Gordon
Train Bell Resort, Merrifield, MN

New CMR Associate Members
Noah Caron
Caron Information Systems, Edina, MN

Brenda Farrell
Clearent, Brainerd, MN

Sherry Schmidt
Lonesome Cottage, Pequot Lakes, MN

Lake Service Provider Law Changes Affect Minnesota Resorts

By April Rust, Invasive Species Training Coordinator

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Ecological and Water Resources

Over the past few years, you may recall hearing about the lake service provider permit and aquatic invasive species (AIS) training required for businesses that install and remove water-related equipment in Minnesota waters. The lake service provider permit was established in state law by the Minnesota legislature and went into effect in 2012. Because of the way the lake service provider businesses were defined in the law, some resorts were defined as lake service providers and some were not.

During the 2013 legislative session, the state legislature modified a couple items in the lake service provider laws that affect many resort owners not previously considered lake service providers. The first change was to update the definition of lake service provider to include businesses that decontaminate, rent or lease watercraft or other water-related equipment, *whether or not their staff installs or removes the equipment themselves*. Because of this definition change, any business that rents watercraft or any water-related equipment is now legally considered a lake service provider.

You will need to attend training and acquire a permit from the DNR every three years if your resort rents out equipment like: canoes, kayaks, motorboats, or personal watercraft to your customers. You now are included in the definition of a lake service provider, even if your staff doesn't put the equipment in or out of the water.

Part of the original lake service provider laws required all employees of lake service provider businesses to complete a short online training course before providing services. The second new revision in the lake service provider laws removed the online AIS training requirement for employees of businesses who work with boats, equipment or structures that remain on their property in the same water body. This legislative change was made to help reduce the staff-training burden on lake service provider businesses that are at low risk for transporting AIS on their own site.

If your resort rents out watercraft or any water-related equipment but keeps it in the same water body and stores it at that same shoreline property, your staff does not have to take online AIS training.

If you still aren't sure if your business meets the definition of a lake service provider business, take a look at the following four questions to figure it out. If you answer yes to any of these questions, you are a lake service provider and will need to attend training and acquire a permit.

1. Do you or your business receive payment to install or remove water-related equipment into or from waters of the state of Minnesota for another person or another business?
2. Do you or your business install or remove water-related equipment into or from waters of the state of Minnesota for another person or business as a service provided as a benefit of membership in a yacht club, boat club, marina, or similar organization?
3. Do you or your business receive payment to decontaminate aquatic invasive species on water-related equipment from waters of the state of Minnesota for another person or another business?
4. Do you or your business rent or lease water-related equipment that will be used in, placed into, or removed from waters of the state of Minnesota?



Next steps for lake service provider businesses that still need a permit:

1. Attend a free, three-hour AIS training and pass a test.
 - 2014 classes will be posted online in January.
 - Most classes will be held during the winter or early spring.
2. Apply for a permit and pay a \$50 application fee online.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has offered 74 aquatic invasive species trainings to lake service provider business owners or managers and issued permits to 1,000 lake service provider businesses over the past two years. Among other things, the training covers how to integrate AIS prevention strategies into business practices. The permit is valid for three calendar years. Lake service providers must have the permits while providing services. All permitted lake service provider businesses are listed online on the DNR's list of Permitted Service Providers www.mndnr.gov/lsp.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources offered training in October at the Fall CMR Conference and hopes to offer another lake service provider training at the Spring 2014 CMR Workshop.

Minnesota's AIS laws have grown and changed quite a bit in the past years. To help lake service provider businesses stay up to date with changes and with training and outreach opportunities, the DNR sends out occasional electronic updates to all permitted lake service provider businesses. If you are interested in receiving those updates, contact the DNR's AIS Training Coordinator, April Rust at april.rust@state.mn.us or 651-259-5706.

The DNR is also interested in developing useful tools for lake service providers in the coming years. The DNR continues to gather feedback and suggestions from lake service provider businesses and to develop tools to help them communicate with their customers. This past year many resort owners and other lake service provider businesses gave suggestions ranging from providing literature about Minnesota AIS laws to hand out at check in, AIS identification cards for cabin booklets, and bill insert mailers with information about Minnesota AIS laws.

To register for lake service provider training, find out if your business needs a permit, or for more information, visit the DNR website at www.mndnr.gov/lsp.

What do the holidays and invasive species have in common?

Oriental bittersweet

By Angela Gupta, University of Minnesota Extension & Monika Chandler, Minnesota Department of Agriculture

As you prepare for the winter holidays with festive decorations and good cheer, be on the lookout for a devastating forest killer: Oriental bittersweet. This attractive vine has been used in holiday decorations, and other crafting items, for years because of the beautiful fruiting branches, which have red berries and yellow fruit capsules spread along the stem. However these same persistent berries that, make wreaths delightfully charming easily spread the seed of this terrible invasive. Fortunately, Minnesota is home to the native vine American bittersweet that is superior with wonderfully persistent red berries with orange fruit capsules. On American bittersweet, the berries are clustered at the end of the stem, rather than spread out along the length of vine as in Oriental bittersweet. By keeping a watchful eye on your holiday decorations you can enjoy the attractive look and craftiness of American bittersweet decorations while feeling confident you are not spreading an invasive species.



A few key points to help identify Oriental (bad) bittersweet from American (good) bittersweet in crafts:

Seed capsules: Oriental bittersweet has yellow seed capsules on red berries (Give a *yell* when you see *yellow*.) whereas American bittersweet has orange seed capsules on red berries (**Orange is OK.**)

Berry placement: Oriental bittersweet has berries strung-out along the stem (Strung-out is bad) while American bittersweet's berries are all clustered near the end (Saving the *best* for last).

Bittersweet beyond decorations

Oriental bittersweet, *Celastrus orbiculatus*, is native to eastern Asia and was planted in North America for ornamental uses as early as 1736. The vines are easily propagated, grow vigorously in a wide range of environmental conditions and produce attractive fruit that has been used by the cut-flower and craft industries. American bittersweet, *Celastrus scandens*, is native to much of the temperate United States. American bittersweet vines are also vigorous but are much better behaved and produce larger and showier fruits. Both species have separate male and female plants and produce flowers. But only female plants produce fruit. The species are easily distinguished by fruit (female plants) and flower placement (male and female plants) at the leaf axils of Oriental bittersweet versus only at the terminal ends of American bittersweet. Fruit capsule color is another distinguishing trait. Oriental bittersweet has yellow fruit capsules and American has bright orange capsules.

Oriental bittersweet has escaped cultivation and is strangling and smothering entire forest stands. It can dominate tree canopies and reduce forest floor light to levels that prevent other plant species from growing. The vine weight, compounded with snow and ice or high wind, can break trees. Heavy infestations result in swaths of downed trees covered with Oriental bittersweet vines and little else. Given damage levels, many states regulate Oriental bittersweet to prevent movement through the sale and distribution of this species. These states include Connecticut, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Vermont and Wisconsin. Oriental bittersweet is considered a serious invasive plant management issue in many additional states.

Oriental bittersweet has been used by the floriculture industry. However, please use American instead of Oriental bittersweet. American bittersweet fruit is larger, showier and better retains the colorful fruit capsule. It is important to distinguish the species since stock is sometimes labeled as bittersweet without further description. When people use Oriental bittersweet fruiting branches to make seasonal arrangements, they inadvertently move seed to new locations. If arrangements such as wreaths are placed outside, birds can eat the fruit and move the seed to new locations. Composting spent arrangements has resulted in new infestations. Existing arrangements containing Oriental bittersweet should be bagged or burned for disposal.

Bittersweet in the Woods

Bittersweet, both American and Oriental, have been used for many years as landscaping vines. It is possible you have one or both on your property. Winter is a great time of year to identify vines in the landscape. The berries will be visible and fairly showy when the summer foliage is down. You can look for red berries with orange seed capsules on light colored woody vines. Bittersweet vines do not have tendrils to hold onto trees, arbors or other supports, rather they encircle them for support. (They can look like a boa constrictor snake wrapping tightly around trees.) In large infestations Oriental bittersweet can be obvious because of the mass of scrabbled vines hanging throughout a wide swatch of tree canopies. Wild grape is most often confused with bittersweet. Grape has a large woody vine but it does not have persistent berries (you would recognize grapes!) the grape vine is a dark chocolate color with flaking/shaggy bark – something you could imagine Tarzan using to swing through the jungle. Both bittersweets, by contrast, have thick woody vines that are greyish (older vines) and light brown (younger vines) colored with a bark that does not peel and bumps that are visible on young vines. Older bittersweet vine bark is sometimes confused with ash tree bark. There are three other common vines in our forests: Virginia creeper, woodbine (often confused with Virginia creeper) and poison ivy. These vines all have very recognizable leaves; but important for winter identification, they also all have tendrils on their vines. These vines use their tendrils to grab onto trees and other support structures. (Please note even the vines of poison ivy can cause a rash, so if you are unsure of a vine with tendrils, it is best to leave it alone.) If you locate a suspicious vine on your property look for fruit, seed capsule color (orange = OK and yellow = yell for help) and fruit placement (Oriental bittersweet has berries along the length of the stems). It is possible to find male bittersweet without berries. In that case you'll have to come back in the spring and look for flower placement.

Oriental bittersweet in Minnesota

A current map of Oriental bittersweet can be found on the Minnesota

Department of Agriculture's website at <http://z.umn.edu/mnobmap> There are known infestations in Red Wing, Winona and around the Twin Cities. Oriental bittersweet has the potential to invade most, if not all, of Minnesota. Living up north may not protect you from this nasty vine. In addition, because Oriental bittersweet has been commonly used for crafting and wreaths it has been found near cemeteries, likely spread by the birds when decorative memorials containing Oriental bittersweet were left on site.

Birds and bittersweet

As mentioned above, bittersweet can be carried by birds as they feed on the berries. Winona State University did a study, and found Oriental bittersweet becoming established under blue bird boxes. So if you have bird feeders or bird boxes around your property please take an extra minute or two to notice if there is any Oriental bittersweet growing there. Birds are also excellent vectors of several other invasive species including buckthorn and honeysuckle. You may be amazed at what you find growing under those bird houses. Stopping these vines when they are small and contained is the easiest form of management.

Oriental bittersweet management

Without management, Minnesota's beautiful forests, so important to recreation and tourism could be destroyed. Oriental bittersweet is designated a Minnesota Noxious Weed on the Eradicate List. Two important pieces in this law include: "These species must be eradicated, meaning all of the above and below ground parts of the plant must be destroyed" and "no transportation, propagation, or sale of these plants is allowed." This means landowners need to destroy live plant material and avoid moving seeds. Thankfully the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, University of Minnesota and Conservation Corps Minnesota recently received some funding to eradicate this plant; hopefully we can prevent Oriental bittersweet from becoming the next buckthorn.

Oriental bittersweet management in the forest will likely involve either a foliar spray (spraying the leaves), cut stump (cutting the vine and treating the cut stump) or basal bark herbicide treatment (using an herbicide mixed with bark oil that will penetrate the bark). For large infestations please contact the MDA (information below) before proceeding with treatment. Small vines can be pulled and bagged or burned. It is important to note when pulling that these vines can root where they touch the ground, not just at the roots, so pulling them and tossing the vines on the ground will not kill them. The vines should either be treated with an herbicide or bagged or burned. NOTE: Burning live Oriental bittersweet in an effort to kill it, like in a prescribed burn for forest or prairie management, will not kill Oriental bittersweet. It will instead lead to a new flush of vigorous growth. For more information about Oriental bittersweet management in *Minnesota* visit: <http://mipn.org/OrientalBittersweetBrochureforWeb513.pdf>.

Engaging Guests in the Quest

Depending on your establishment and your guests' activities, hunting for invasive species like Oriental bittersweet, buckthorn, honeysuckle or garlic mustard (for more about these invasive species visit <http://www.myminnisotawoods.umn.edu/>) could be a fun activity like geocaching. A small treasure hunt could be created on trails and paths to help guests appreciate the unique species of your facility while also being on the lookout for less desirable newcomers.

For locations with large invasive species infestations, ecotourism could be a way to engage guests in removal or management activities; allowing guests to feel empowered and making a difference for the environment.

Another important tool to limiting invasive species spread is to make sure all people clean their boots, clothing and gear before they start recreating

on your property or going home. Much like a floor mat helps stop muddy boots from soiling a clean carpet, boot brushes near entrances, trail heads, or known infestations can make a big difference in preventing the spread of invasive species. Play Clean Go (<http://www.playcleango.org/>) is a new initiative led by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to help remind everyone to enjoy themselves and play, then clean and head out. This message could resonate with your guests as well. This initiative was intentionally designed to be positive and empowering. We want everyone to enjoy living, working, playing and visiting Minnesota. But we also want to protect the very natural resources that make Minnesota so special!

To Report Oriental bittersweet

If you think you have found Oriental bittersweet, please report this find so we can be sure it gets addressed. There are three easy ways to report a find:

Call Arrest the Pest (leave a message): 1-888-545-6684

Email a report (include a GPS or street location and a picture for ID):

Arrest.The.Pest@state.mn.us

Or report online via an online reporting form: <http://www.eddmaps.org/firstdetector/>

Additional information on Oriental bittersweet can be found at: www.mda.state.mn.us/en/plants/badplants/orientalbittersweet.aspx

Kathy' Kraft Korner

By Kathy Marnik, Timber Trails Resort

If you're looking for an activity or craft to do with your young guests, this is the spot to check! Email me your ideas to share in our next issue Kathy@timbertrailsresort.com.

Egg Carton Critters

Supplies Needed:

- Cardboard egg cartons
- Paint
- Paint brushes
- Googly eyes
- Pipe cleaners
- Pompoms
- Glue



I found it easier if you poke the holes in the cartons for the pipe cleaners before painting. I also have the kiddos count to 20 or sing the alphabet when they glue on an eye or pompom (helps give time for the glue to set and a little bit of education never hurts). The most popular creation is the caterpillar, but every critter is unique!



MARKETING

CUSTOMER SERVICE...THEN...AND NOW

By Steve Addler, Cedar Rapids Lodge



Recently, we were designing a new brochure and were looking through a pile of pictures. Most were guests doing resort activities of all types. We had fishing pictures, water skiing pictures, swimming pictures, and kid pictures. Some of the pictures were recent, but some of them were pictures from the 60s. Just like at most of your properties, you probably have pictures that go back a long way. We have pictures in albums in our lodge for anyone to look at. The photos bring back wonderful memories for the guest and also for the resort owner.

What struck me while going through some of the photos is something I have a tendency to forget. They all showed people having a great time! They all had people with big smiles on their faces and enjoying themselves with friends and family. Some of these old pictures were when our resort had no electricity or running water. We had a shower house where you had to stand in line outside. The cabins had a piece of plywood for window coverings so that you had to go outside and prop it up with a stick. The boats were wood and fiberglass that were heavy and leaked, and you had to row them. After dark, there were gas lanterns to light and I'm sure the mosquitoes they had were a nightmare. We have a picture of our first dock and it was a 2x12 with a handrail...what would our guests today say about that!

The point is these people still came and they returned year after year. They had smiles on their faces and loved the week by the lake. Why would these guests drive 600 miles from Illinois or Iowa to spend a week under primitive conditions? I think it is the resort itself and the draw of a new outdoor experience. The service they got, the change in scenery, and a week with your family was a strong draw. The fishing was good, but other things had to happen in order for people to return year after year.

Nowadays, our guests expect all or most of the modern conveniences. We now have a pool, air conditioning, and fancy boats and water toys. But we need to keep in mind the main reason people are coming to our properties and cultivate it. Make sure they get outstanding service. Make sure the kids and Moms are having a good time. Put time in your schedule each week to visit with your guests. Some guests want to be left alone and others need to be shown how to have a good time. How often do you help a family unpack, take a guest fishing, throw a ball with a kid, or take a group for a pontoon ride? These little things can make or break a vacation whether you have the fanciest cabins or fastest boats. Get to know your guests and through great service, make sure they have a great vacation.

Many of the improvements that we can make to our properties cost very little. We all have to make choices every year about what to upgrade. A



cabin always needs a remodel or a septic system fails. New furnishings are needed and appliances break down. These can be expensive fixes! However, it costs very little to have coffee with a guest. Going fishing for a couple of hours with the guy in cabin #6 may not fit into your schedule, but you might make someone's vacation. Take that little kid's picture with his fish and put it on your own business card...an easy project...they not only have their picture, but they will share that card with family and friends when they get home! An extra bonfire on Tuesday night might be special if you learned about the stars or took the time to set up your telescope. Many people from a big city haven't even seen the stars, let alone roasted a marshmallow around a campfire.

We all have the same 24 hours to do our summer work. Have you noticed that some of us never get our work done and others seem to accomplish so much more. When guests ask me what my projects are for the following year, I tell them I will run out of life before I run out of projects. Inexpensive resort projects can be very important if they make our resort a more fun place to vacation. We can have the nicest place around and it is worthless if people aren't coming and having a good time. I think it is important to invest in the commodity of "time" with your guests. They think you have the greatest job in the world. Why not share it with them?

So...as we all make our lists of projects for 2014, stop and think...what can I do for little or no money to let my guests have a great vacation? What will they remember about our resort when they go home? Customer service is a huge reason why guests return to a resort...it's also the reason why they go somewhere else! Keep 'em coming! It'll make their week...and you'll feel pretty good too!

**TELL OUR
ADVERTISERS
YOU SAW THEIR AD IN
THE MINNESOTA
RESORTER**

Take note of an extra week in 2015 Summer Season

By Roger Lykins, Lykins Pinehurst Resort

An extra week in the 2015 Summer Calendar can be used in different ways. I have had success in past years when this has occurred of adding that week to prime time.

As our weekly people return year after year, the week gets earlier by a day or two each year and every six years or so, the dates have to be thrown back a week. I do that over a two-year period by doing the throw back in late July or early August in 2015 and the throw back up to that point the following year.

I base my weeks on the 4th of July. In 2014, that is June 28-July 5. For 2015, that will be June 27-July 4, so my July 4th guests will go home on the 4th. The guests coming until July 26th, will come a day earlier in 2015. I will start the throw back time in late July, so the guests coming July 26 – Aug 2, 2014 will be shifted to Aug 1-8, 2015. This leaves me with July 25-Aug 1, 2015 as an extra week. I find that week much easier to fill than an early June or late August week and it is at prime rates rather than off-prime rates.

One caution is that the extra week will not be there in 2016, so I have told new guests that before they book the extra week. Usually, if they would like to return, I have been able to accommodate them in a different week or cabin. It is a good way to build up your client list.

One other problem is that most of my 4th of July guests would rather arrive on the 4th than depart on the 4th. My guests have been understanding and no one cancelled on me because of their going home on the 4th.

It sounds confusing, but has given me about \$3,000 in extra income if I can fill that extra week with my nine cabins.

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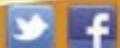
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THE NOT SO SILENT AUCTION

By Pat Addler, Cedar Rapids Lodge

The Congress of Minnesota Resorts Fall Conference in Duluth was the scene of the 16th annual Silent Auction. Resorts, individuals and businesses donate the silent auction items for the bidding every year. You cannot even begin to imagine what will be available to bid on each year. Part of the anticipation of getting to the fall conference is walking into the meeting room and seeing all the donations laid out on two walls of tables, arranged with the bidding sheets, ready for the race to see who gets the winning bid!



The auction begins with the opening of the conference and continues until 6 p.m. the following evening. All attendees are welcome to walk around and place their bids during this time. The coffee breaks are a fast dash to grab a beverage and a snack and hustle over to the tables to see where your bid is at for the items you hope to get. This year the items varied...as they do every year...from lamps, custom fishing rod, handmade furniture, gift baskets, toys, quilted and crafted items, fishing and hunting trips and the Minnesota Wild tickets. Everyone always seems to get wrapped up in several of the craziest donations...and the bidding wars begin to see just how high someone will go!

We have attended all the fall conferences, including the ones held before the idea of the silent auction began. Nothing compares to the fun and excitement of standing around the items you are bidding on...watching that sneaky person stealing your bid...and then trying to trump their bid before the auction ends.

Amid all the excitement, we are reminded of why we hold the auction. The funds raised from this event are donated to the Congress of Minnesota Resorts' (CMR) Legislative Committee, who then use the funds to promote *Day on the Hill*. In late winter/early spring, the committee charts a coach bus, picks up resort owners all over the state at stopping points and heads down to the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul for two days of meetings with our legislators and senators. Our lobbyist, Joel Carlson, hosts this event and schedules all the appointments. He sets up the meetings with the legislators from our geographical areas throughout the state. If it's your first time attending, it can seem intimidating but quite the contrary. These men and women are very welcoming and anxious to listen to our concerns.

This year at the fall conference, the CMR raised \$3,766. A huge thanks goes out to all who attended the conference and all who donated items for the auction. Plan to attend CMR's Fall Conference next October and start thinking about what you want to donate!



2014 Legislative session

By Joel Carlson, Congress of Minnesota Resort Lobbyist

I was trying to explain to my loving spouse of 28 years that I needed to write an article for the *Resorter* – something I love to do but often get writers block and procrastinate like crazy.

She asked what I intended to write about and I listed off at least 10 thrilling items from my daily political life. After eagerly relaying my list my spouse - in her kind and supportive way - told me I was boring! :)

Now, I would rather write about fishing and hunting, hockey or family - but no one will give me print space. I wrote a story for my siblings the other day about the proper method to prevent Grandma (or your creepy Aunt) from grabbing your cheeks and giving you a wet yucky kiss at the holiday gathering. If that awkward lip lock has ever happened to you, my helpful and tested blocking technique is information you need to know!

The key is to not panic when she comes at you – and to take affirmative action to control the situation. Some of those ladies, even in the walker, come at you lightning fast. You have to cleverly deploy your blocking hug early, so that she can't get her arms up and those clammy hands on your face. Never, never, never let her get ahold of your face – you're toast if you let that happen. Pucker up, honey.

No one will print what I have to say about these critical issues :(

So, I am forced to write about politics. Undaunted by the dry subject matter, I've tried to update you on the news that controls our existence at the Capitol, as boring as it may be from time to time.

A State budget Surplus....What!!!

Imagine the stunned faces in the State Capitol when budget officials announced in early December that, given current projections, the State of

Minnesota will have a healthy budget surplus of over \$1 billion dollars.

Things started to tank for Minnesota (and the country) over a decade ago – since then the only budget news has been bad news. Red ink and massive deficits have loomed over Minnesota since Jesse Ventura proclaimed he wanted to come back to life as a Double D bra. Governor Pawlenty went eight straight years managing deficits, as did Governor Dayton in his first two years in office. So, the latest sunny forecast was a truly remarkable day.

Everyone with an election certificate has been quick to claim credit for the reversal of the state's fortunes – and they all might be right. However, when you peel back the fiscal onion, the real magic behind the turnaround is the improving economy and the jobs market. Minnesota has added over 120,000 new jobs since 2011, and the increased tax revenue and activity from increased employment has fueled the rosy revenue outlook.

Minnesota has seen its manufacturing base grow faster than the national average, its student test scores continue to lead the nation, and Forbes Magazine listed Minnesota as the 8th best state for business in its recent survey. Minnesota will have enough revenue to repay all of the money that it has shifted and borrowed from local schools (\$3 billion bucks!!!) Repaying the schools was once viewed as merely a hollow campaign promise.

All this is news that everyone can rightfully feel warm and fuzzy about this winter.

Tax Relief

You can't have good budget news without someone calling for a tax cut, and Minnesota is not immune from this phenomena. Already, there are groups calling for cuts in sales, income and property taxes. The most steady drumbeat has come from businesses impacted by the recently enacted sales taxes on business services.

There are three new areas subject to sales tax after the 2013 session; warehousing services, telecommunications, and equipment repairs. Collectively, the new sales taxes generate over \$300 million in revenues for the State. Repealing these unpopular taxes, although it is a substantial amount of revenue, is atop the list of uses for any surplus funds according to leaders of both parties.

Despite calls for even further tax relief, legislative leaders have been cautious about making any commitments. Part of this reluctance may be from sheer disbelief that a surplus actually exists – it's been so long since this situation has occurred that many current legislators have never experienced it. (Half the legislature has been in office three years or less). So, you can understand the resistance to committing anything on the budget until a longer trend develops.

However, should the budget trend continue, you can bet that calls for more spending and tax relief will dominate the coming campaign.

Bonding Projects in the Mix

The 2014 session will approve a package of state and local building projects through a capital investment bill that will reach almost \$900 million. There are over \$3 billion of project requests, so finding things to build will not be difficult.

The bonding bill is one of those rare legislative activities that almost always will produce bipartisan support. Needing a 60 percent vote to

...should the budget trend continue, you can bet that calls for more spending and tax relief will dominate the coming campaign.

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LEGISLATION

pass - both the House and Senate DFLers lack enough strength to pass a bill without Republican help. The key to winning passage is to sprinkle the bill with enough projects across the State that it becomes difficult for members to vote against the final package.

The most interesting part of the bonding bill puzzle will be the speed at which it is passed. Several members are calling for quick action on the package when the legislature returns in late February, making for an easy path to adjourn for the year.

However, quickly getting the bonding bill approved means a lack of control for leadership on other issues – very similar to eating your dessert first. If the bill passes in March or early April, there is a very good chance the 2014 session will end before the Easter Break.

The Legislative Un-session

Governor Mark Dayton has been proclaiming the 2014 session of the Minnesota legislature to be the *un-session* – a chance for lawmakers to undo useless laws and retool government systems to make them work better for Minnesotans.

I've been thinking about this concept since the governor first mentioned it in September, and have a few things in mind we could maybe do without. (broccoli, chia pets, bullheads, The Hair Club, campaign commercials, and cat juggling are just a few)

If you have more serious suggestions about topics that need reform, you can email your suggestions to: gov.ideas@state.mn.us.

2014 Election

The 134 members of the Minnesota House, Governor Dayton and Senator Al Franken will face the voters and be on the ballot soon. The early handicapping on these races goes about like this: What is going to be more unpopular in November 2014 – the forced government shut-down or the rollout of the Affordable Care Act (aka Obamacare).

There was a point last October that the national government shutdown was so badly damaging the Republican brand that its election hopes were quite dim. That low point was soon matched by the distrust over the new health care law, and it's about worked its way to a draw right now.

Dayton has taken a dip in the polls, but is benefitting from the improved economy and the lack of a clear republican challenger. six Republicans are vying to lead the party as the candidate for governor, but no clear front runner has emerged.

The U.S. Senate race will also be hotly contested as Franken faces the voters in his first re-election attempt. Well-financed and sporting a solid network of constituent services, Franken will be a formidable opponent. Four republicans are currently seeking the chance to take on the former television comedy writer.

The race to control the Minnesota House will garner a great deal of attention. Republicans would like to retain the House back after their short two year reign – and the top of the ticket and national factors may well control their destiny.

An interesting side note about the 2014 election is the number of current legislators from both parties that are seeking higher office. Legislators' fighting among themselves for higher office always makes for interesting politics at the Capitol with lobbyist and other legislators. Battle lines get drawn and it's often best to keep your head low and avoid the fray.

Two legislators are seeking to challenge Franken (Rep. Jim Abeler and Sen. Julieanne Ortman); three legislators are seeking to remove Governor Dayton (Rep. Kurt Zellers, Sen. Karin Housely and Sen. Dave Thompson)

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and three members are hoping to advance to become Secretary of State (Rep. Steve Simon, Rep. Debra Hilstrom, and Rep. Rick Hanson). Additionally, two members are currently running for the U.S. Congress (Senator Torrey Westrom in the 7th District and Sen. John Pederson in the 6th District.)

Day on the Hill

As always, I need to make the pitch for you to come to the CMR Day on the Hill March 18 and 19, 2014. We are making a concerted push in 2014 to change the restricted plumbing license requirement, and we'll have other key issues as well. I know it is a challenge to get on that bus and come to St. Paul, but it is impossible to have the kind of impact CMR has been able to make without your active support and attendance. I hope to see you there!



HR

Handi-Resorter's Tips & Tricks

By Ed Fussy, Pimushe Resort

GO2 Glue and GO2 Adhesive Putty

I found a couple good glues; GO2 Glue and Adhesive Putty. Both products are by Loctite.

GO2 Glue

Pros

What I like best about it:

- It dries clear
- You have more working time than Super Glue
- It's a little more shock resistant and water resistant
- Once you open the bottle, it doesn't get hard

Some of the things I have used it on are:

- Condiment holders on refrigerator doors
- Screens
- Smaller trim pieces and knobs on cupboard doors
- Shoestrings ends that are flaring
- The list is endless...

Cons

- Slower drying time than Super Glue

GO2 Adhesive Putty

This is a similar product.

- Use it to fill stripped out screw holes, cracked items with small chunks missing in cabins and boats
- It can be sanded, drilled and painted
- Doesn't shrink

I have found the GO2 Glue at Menards; the Putty is harder to find, however you can find it online.

CMR School of Resorting

By Cathy Duvall, Kee Nee Moo Sha Resort

WOW!!! What fun and educational too! The CMR School of Resorting on dresser making was hosted by Jim and Deb Eickhorst, Kohl's Resort. We all finished on time and enjoyed the cracker barrel of learning that Jim provided for all of us.

Participants learned to:

- measure with accuracy
- cut with a chopsaw
- rip boards
- plane boards
- be an artist with the scrollsaw
- use the BIG belt sander (so hang on tight)
- make kreg joints
- work as a team to get a beautiful product to take home



Thank you Jim for sharing your talents, ideas, work space and tools. Thank you Deb for the meals and your friendly smile.



Resorters attending were Jack Frost, Joe's Lodge, Clint Mueller, Balsam Beach Resort, Vince Prososki, Northern Lights Resort and Cathy Duvall, Kee Nee Moo Sha Resort.

If this was a missed opportunity for you contact Jim Eickhorst and stay tuned for a possible second CMR School of Resorting on dresser making this spring.

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Be Heard!

CMR is committed to educating legislators on all of the issues that are important to the resort industry. Taxes, game and fish, AIS, Labor Day school start, business licenses and regulations are just a few of the important issues that affect our businesses.

Save the Date!!

Mark your calendars for March 18 and 19, 2014. Details about bus transportation, hotel and meeting agendas will be coming soon!!!

For more information please contact
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or visit www.Minnesota-Resorts.com