



RESORTER REPORTER

Congress of Minnesota Resorts

Published by the Congress of Minnesota Resorts, PO Box 124, Spicer, MN 56288
888-761/4245 cmr@minnesota-resorts.com

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT, ED BECKER

I hope everyone was able to enjoy the nice weather we had at the beginning of February. It was great timing for a little relief from the below zero temps!

Early in January the board met at The Quarterdeck in Brainerd, for the biennial "Think Tank" session. We had a great session! There were a lot of terrific ideas brought up along with other ideas that will be continued from the last session. One of our strongest issues is how we want to help keep our members of the CMR informed about everything from the Legislative issues to the school of resorting classes, and increased member benefits. We want to continue to have all Resorters involved in some aspect to

keep strengthening the CMR and reach new heights of our motto, "Resorters helping Resorters". We welcome you to contact any of the Board Members with any questions, concerns or ideas.

The Minnesota Conference on Tourism meeting was held at the end of January at Breezy Point Resort. The Conference was informative on many different aspects. Peter Yesawich, from Yesawich, Pepperdine, Brown & Russell, gave the results from the National Leisure Travel Monitor and the trend for marketing Minnesota in the year ahead. America is in transition. Mr. Yesawich discussed the emerging lifestyle changes and travel trends which will have im-

plications for destination marketing for tourism. As we look into the not so distant future we will see vacationers that will want shorter stays. Vacationers will also do more with the internet to compare pricing and look for last minute "deals" much like how travelers are searching for airline fares.

Hopefully the phone is ringing and the weeks are filling quickly for the 2005 season! Be sure to continue to watch for information on the Resorters at Yahoo group about upcoming events. Thank you to all of those who participated at the Day on the Hill!

Scholarship applications due March 15



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SPRING WORKSHOP AT HOLIDAY INN OF DETROIT LAKES

"Rev up for Spring"

The date of the Spring Workshop is Tuesday March 29th in Detroit Lakes at the Holiday Inn. Some of the topics this year will be a session

on Shoreland Regulations and how this will affect our business now and in the years to come. Also, a special motivational speaker to get us fired up for the upcoming season! Cracker Barrels!

Look for more information in late February or early March. So mark you calendars now for March 29th as you won't want to miss this "Spring Workshop".

Spring Workshop, Rooms have been blocked for Monday the 28 at a rate of \$64.95 at the Detroit Lakes Holiday Inn. Book your rooms prior February 26
218-847-2121

CMR Day on the Hill

On February 8 & 9 the CMR Legislative Committee and several resort owners went to St Paul to Capital Hill to visit with our legislators about the resorting industry in Minnesota.

“Longer Summers Requested”

“Reprinted with permission from the Minnesota House of Representatives Public Information Services Office.”

If some resort owners get their way, students will have their summer vacations extended.

Testifying before the Tourism Division of the House Commerce and Financial Institutions Committee Feb 9, resort owners said that prohibiting schools from starting before Labor Day would provide a much-needed longer vacation season. Several dozen supporters, all wearing orange life preservers, filled the room for the testimony. The division took no action.

Mary Jane Keller, who owns Brookside Resort in Park Rapids with her husband, Dave said schools and school sporting events are starting earlier in the year, which impacts the resort industry.

“The window of time to vacation is getting smaller and smaller,” she

said. “Starting school after Labor Day would lengthen the season.”

Keller also noted that resorts employ high school students, so a later school start date would allow students to earn more money.

Jennifer Bateman, owner of Two Inlets Resort in Park Rapids with her husband, Bob said the number of resorts in Minnesota has shrunk from about 4,000 in the 1990’s to 980 today. A longer season would allow resorts to make more money and stay in business.

“We’re not asking your to save us,” Bateman said. “We’re asking you to help preserve Minnesota resorts.”

Resorts contribute nearly \$11 million in taxes to Minnesota in addition to supporting local economies, said John Edman, director of Explore Minnesota.

“The Minnesota Resort experience is what differentiates us from the rest of

the country,” Edman said. “Resorts offer people an experience they couldn’t otherwise enjoy.”

Jerry Hammer, general manager of the Minnesota State Fair, also supports delaying the start of schools until after Labor Day so they won’t compete with the fair. He said the later opening wouldn’t hinder children’s education.

“Education is what the fair is all about.” Hammer said. “A trip to the fair is like 100 field trips rolled into one as far as educational value.”

A bill (HF205), sponsored by Rep. Larry Howes (R-Walker), would prohibit the school year from starting before Labor Day. It awaits action in the House Education Policy and Reform Committee. Its Senate companion (SF307), sponsored by Sen. Carrie Ruud (R-Breezy Point), awaits action in the Senate Education Committee.



PHOTO BY ANDREW VONBANK

Observers in the hearing room don life vests to illustrate their cause during a presentation by the Congress of Minnesota Resorts on tourism in small-sized markets at the Feb 9 meeting of the Tourism Division of the House Commerce and Financial Institutions Committee.

CMR NEW MEMBER CONTEST

At fall Conference time, we had 185 members. That number is expected to rise in the next few months with the huge prize being offered by the CMR for a member who brings in new members. Each time you sign up a new member, you get your name in the contest. The more new members you get, the more times your name is entered. The prize is a pair of tamarack rockers with matching end table made by Ed Fussy from Pimushe Resort. The retail value of this set is

\$1,595—and all members are eligible to enter and win! If you need membership applications, contact Vicky at the CMR office (1-888-761-4245) or email her at cmroffice@tds.net. Let's all work hard to get some new members into this awesome organization. The prize will be awarded at the 2005 Fall Conference being held at Cragun's Resort and Conference Center in the Brainerd Lakes Area October, 24, 25 & 26.



"The Congress of Minnesota Resorts exists to help family owned and operated resorts in Minnesota to continue as a viable segment of the Minnesota tourism industry"

NEW MEMBERS

Several new members since the November/December newsletter. Please give them a call or email of encouragement and welcome them to the Congress of Minnesota Resorts.

Dwight or Barbara Tschetter, Stonegate on Superior, PO Box 411, Two Harbors, MN 55616 218-834-3355

Dan Finn, Oxbow Resort, 34944 Blueberry Bay RD, Pequot Lakes, MN 56472 218-734-2244 email: oxbow@arvig.net

Jerry & Deanna Pekar, Sullivans Resort, 7685 County Rd127, Brainerd,

MN 56401 218-829-5697 email vacation@sullivansresort.com

Glenn & Yvonne Hillyer, Breezy Pines Resort, 25138 County 2, Nevis, MN 56467 218-652-4286 email: info@breezypinesresort.com

Aric & Ina Heibe, Dunrovin Resort, Box 183, Blackduck, MN 56630 218-835-7759

J. Buford Johnson & Diane E. Rook-Johnson, Financial Group of Central Minnesota, PO Box 2750, Baxter, MN 56425 218-825-7353 email: financialgroup@PWfincial.net

*WELCOME
&
GOOD LUCK!*

Troy & Nancy Loren, Little Boy Resort, 3600 County 54 NE, Longville, MN 56655 218-363-2188 email: littleboyresort@uslink.net

CMR CALENDAR OF EVENTS



*MARK YOUR
CALENDARS!*

February 17, 2005	Board Meeting
March 15, 2005	Deadline for CMR Scholarship Applications
March 29, 2005	Spring Workshop, Holiday Inn, Detroit Lakes, MN 8:30a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
June 1, 2005	Nominations for Resorter/s of Year Award are due in the CMR Office. See enclosed application or contact the office for applications, 888-761-4245 or email: cmr@minnesota-resorts.com
October 24, 25 & 26	Congress of Minnesota Resorts Fall Conference, Cragun's Resort and Conference Center in Brainerd Lakes Area

CMR Website Serves up Thousands of Referrals

by Karen Kaehler, Pinedale

The Minnesota-Resorts.com website is one of the most valuable benefits to members of the Congress of Minnesota Resorts. Every day, over a hundred potential guests visit the CMR website. In 2004, the website had 59,264 visits for an average of 155 a day! Those 59,264 visits were made by 34,570 unique visitors. Visits happen all year-round, and of course are heaviest in the spring and summer, when as many as 250 visitors a day look for a resort on the CMR website. When visitors get to the website, they spend an average of 12 minutes. Compare that to the Hospitality Minnesota website, where visitors spend only 3 minutes! (Source: Hospitality Focus December 2004)

Total visits	59,264
Average visits per day	155
Unique visitors	34,570
Average visit length	12 minutes

CMR advertises the website in a variety of print publications, including the Explore Minnesota Fishing Guide and Midwest Living. Forty percent of the visitors to the CMR website get there by typing the website address, which means that the advertising is working! The other 60% come from search engines like Google, MSN, Yahoo and AOL. These search engines sometimes bring visitors to the Home Page, sometimes to the Search Page, and sometimes directly to an Individual Resort Display Page. The CMR website uses descriptions, keywords and links from other websites to score high on search engines.

Arrive by typing the address	40%
Arrive via search engine	60%
Google 46%	
MSN 26%	
Yahoo 24%	
AOL 4%	

Visitors take one of two paths through the Minnesota-Resorts.com website:

Path #1: The visitor types the address or finds the Minnesota-Resorts.com website through a search engine. At the Home Page, the visitor clicks on the Search button and searches for the location and/or

amenities desired, leading them to a listing of resorts. There, the visitor clicks to go to an Individual Resort Display Page, and from there, exits to that resort's own website. Sometimes, visitors come directly to the Search Page from the search engine and skip the Home Page, but often return to it later.

Path #2: The visitor enters enough identifying information into a search engine (for instance lake name or resort name) to find an Individual Resort Display Page on Minnesota-Resorts.com, skipping the Home Page and Search Page altogether. Once on the Individual Resort Display Page, the visitor usually exits to that resort's own website.

Individual Resort Display Pages were visited 38,305 times! If you have a website for your resort, those visitors came directly to you. How can you tell if CMR website visitors exited to your website? Look at the statistics for your website under "Referring Domain" for Minnesota-Resorts.com or under "Referrers" for www.minnesota-resorts.com/ResortDisplay_One.cfm.

The CMR website was the number one referrer to the Pinedale Resort website. Over 20% of referrals to our website came from Minnesota-Resorts.com. By contrast, 18% came from Google, 17% came from the Longville Chamber of Commerce website, and 10% came from the Explore Minnesota website. Only 1% came from the Hospitality Minnesota website. We know that many inquiries we get from the CMR website result in rentals. Having a listing on

CMR Website Serves up Thousands of Referrals

by Karen Kaehler, Pinedale
continued

the CMR website is one of the best uses of our advertising dollars.

How can you increase your referrals from the CMR website? First, you must have a website of your own. Over 70% of new business to Pinedale Resort comes from our website. Second, help the CMR website score high on search engines by adding a link to it on your website. On the

adding a link to it on your website. On the Pinedale Resort website, we added the phrase "Member - Congress of Minnesota Resorts" with a link to www.Minnesota-Resorts.com on the Contact Us page. Third, make sure the information on your Individual Resort Display Page on the CMR website is up-to-date and includes both a written description and searchable amenities.

Do you have questions about the Minnesota-Resorts.com website, how to update your Individual Resort Display Page, website statistics or websites in general? Just send an email to cmr@minnesota-resorts.com we'll try to help you! - Karen Kaehler, CMR Board Website Committee.

Resorter/s of the Year Awards

The Congress of Minnesota Resorts selects, through nomination by its members, one resort and resort owner that has 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.

To this end, any member of the Congress of Minnesota Resorts can submit a nomination for this prestigious award. Nominations must be received by June 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, October 24, 25 & 26, 2005 at Cragun's Resort and conference Center in the Brainerd Lakes Area where the formal announcement and presentation will be made.

We want to congratulate some of the most recent Resorter/s of the Year Receipts:

"2004" David and Lisa Moe, Clamshell Beach Resort, Pequot Lakes, MN

"2003" Dave & Bev Thompson, Fisherman's Village, Battle Lake, MN

"2002" Dave & Mary Jane Keller, Brookside Resort, Park Rapids, MN



"2001" Ed & Joanne Fussy, Pimushe Resort, Bemidji, MN

Take a few minutes to look over the enclosed Resorter/s of the Year Nomination form. Think about a Resorter that has helped you through some rough times or one of your neighboring Resorters that has done a lot to promote resorting in your area or for the state. Submit their name for this prestigious award. Nominations need to be into the Congress of Minnesota Resorts by June 1. Mail nomination forms to Congress of Minnesota Resorts, P.O. Box 124, Spicer, MN 56288

Congress of Minnesota Resorts

Congress of Minnesota Resorts
Post Office Box 124
Spicer, MN 56288

Phone: 888-761-4245

Email: cmr@minnesota-resorts.com

**WWW.MINNESOTA-
RESORTS.COM**

Keep you listing current on the CMR website.



CMR MISSION STATEMENT

The Congress of Minnesota Resorts exists to help family owned and operated resorts in Minnesota to continue as a viable segment of the Minnesota tourism industry

CMR MOTTO

The Congress of Minnesota Resort's motto is "Resorters Helping Resorters" We believe that none of us is as smart as all of us.

CMR'S 2004-2005 BOARD OF DIRECTORS & COMMITTEE'S

President: Ed Becker, In-We-Go Resort, 218-652-3536 email: vacation@inwegoresort.com

Vice President: Ed Fussy, Pimushe Resort, 218-586-2094 email: Pimushe@paulbunyan.net

Treasurer: Mark Novotny, Hyde-Away Bay Resort, 218-675-6683 email hydeawaybay@tds.net

Treasurer: Tom Masloski, Weslake Resort, 218-826-6523 email: weslake@prt看.com

Secretary: Brenda Masloski, Weslake Resort, 218-826-6523 email: weslake@prt看.com

Past President: Dawn Sullivan, Woodland Trails Resort, 218-493-1855 email: cmr@woodlandtrialsresort.com

EDUCATION:

Chairperson: David Moe, Clamshell Beach Resort, 218-543-4731 email: vacation@clamshellbeach.com

School of Resorting: Sheila & Corby Niemeyer, Niemeyer's Rugged River Resort, 218-829-6705 email: corby@uslink.net

Darvin & Susan Ferguson, Pine Terrace Resort,

218-543-4606 email: Darvin@pineterrace.com

Sara Becker, In-We-Go Resort, 218-652-3536 email: vacation@inwegoresort.com

Conference & Workshop: Paul Kostelecky, Hunts Resort, 320-634-3323 email: info@huntsresort.com

Tam Mahaffey, Lost Acres Resort, 218-751-4144 email: lostacre@blackduck.net

Pat Ossell, Northern Lights Resort & Outfitting, 952-929-4662 email: nlro@uslink.net

Minnesota Resorter: David Moe & Preston Turner, Big Timber Lodge, 218-732-3607 email: bigtimberlodge@unitelc.com

MARKETING:

Chairperson: Ed Fussy, Pimushe Resort, 218-586-2094 email: Pimushe@paulbunyan.net

Advertising: Ed Fussy,

Website: Karen Kaehler, Pinedale Resort,

612-483-2328, email: pinedale@att.net

Membership: Pat Addler, Cedar Rapids Lodge, 218-243-2487 email: crldodge@paulbunyan.net

Jim & Kerri Ball, Cass Lake Lodge, 218-335-6658 email: clldodge@paulbunyan.net

LEGISLATIVE:

Chairperson: Dave Thompson, Fisherman's Village Resort, 218-495-3326 email: fishvilg@prt看.com

Ed Becker, Mark Novotny, Preston Turner.

Sherm & Mary Anderson, Anderson's Starlight Bay, 218-652-3530 email: relax@starlightbayresort.com

Connie Filley, email: cfilley@willmar.com

GUEST APPROVED RESORT PROGRAM

CMR Office of Surveying

PO Box 1184, Alexandria, MN 56308