



February 2008

RESORTER REPORTER

Message from the CMR President, Dana Pitt

Hello Resorters,

I don't know about you, but by this time of the winter I'm getting a bit tired of snow and cold. I'm really ready to see some grass and open water. However, one great thing about the long cold winter is it gives our Board some time to dig in and make headway on CMR business and projects. And there's lots of activity at CMR headquarters.

The legislative group is diligently working to gear up for the legislative session that just began in St. Paul. With a docket of bills to support, fight or monitor and our Day on the Hill fast approaching, this is a busy time for this committee. Setting up meetings with key legislators and testifying at hearings are all part of the task at hand for them. And we can all do our part to help by attending the Day on the Hill and/or by contacting our representatives and making our voices heard. It's not hard to do - really.

The marketing committee is also doing great things for us. Our effective new website, that has been online for about a year and half, is working very well and will now be getting some "phase 2" updates and tweaking to make it even better. The CMR site already ranks very high on my own list of referring sites to my website and with an aggressive internet ad campaign and a series of TV ads that will be airing in March, I look forward to even more traffic on the site. Also, make sure you take advantage of the wealth of information on the members only portion of the site. It's an extremely valuable tool for you.

As always, the CMR's education branch has got a lot on its plate. The *Minnesota Resorter* magazine provides a steady diet of fantastic resorting information and the School of Resorting has some great new classes for you to take advantage of. Planning for the Spring Workshop has been underway for some time now and it looks to be another quality event. Many opportunities are out there for you to better educate yourself on becoming a more progressive and prosperous resorter.

With spring on the way, the days get more valuable as I calculate what projects need to get done and how many days I have to do them. (Still need to squeeze in a spring break trip with the kids too.) Time is always a precious commodity. Thankfully there are board members working tirelessly now to get the CMR work done that will benefit all of us. As President, it's hard just keeping tabs on all the activity they're doing.

Last Chance!

Day on the Hill

Feb. 26 & 27, 2008

Last chance to join the CMR members in St Paul for "Day on the Hill". You will be meeting Governor Pawlenty and will be able to visit with your Senators and Representatives about many issues for our industry including keeping post labor day school start and property tax relief.

Join the rest of the attendees on the bus ride with pickups in Brainerd and St Cloud and an overnight stay at Bandana Square Best Western, to make reservations call 651-647-1637.

For more information on "Day on the Hill" activities or to register please contact Mark Novotny at 218-675-6683 or email hydeawaybay@tds.net.

Small Engine Repair Class

This class is set up for anyone who would like to learn more about repairing their small engines. Topics to be covered are: How small engines work, trouble shooting techniques, tools that are must haves and a review of the most common repairs. Engines that will be on hand for full demonstrations are: weed eater, lawn mower, chain saw, outboard motor and small tractor.

Participants will walk away with a better knowledge of repairs they can make on their own equipment to save time and money. Instructor, Mike Lauderbaugh, has over 20 years of experience.

Class to be held at 10 a.m. on March 10th (deadline to register March 7th) the cost is \$10 per person which includes lunch. Location for the class is Christiansen Industrial Developer, Bemidji. Maximum of 20 participants, sign up early.

To register or for further details contact Timberly or Jason Christiansen at finnfeather@hotmail.com (218) 335-6598

2008 CMR SPRING WORKSHOP
Hiawatha Beach Resort on Leech Lake
Tuesday, April 8, 7:30 a.m.—5:15 p.m.

Submitted by Kim Bowen, Crow Wing Crest Lodge, relax@crowwing.com

Holy-moly, do we have some great stuff planned for Spring Workshop this year!

We have 5, yep . . . FIVE Crackerbarrels planned. Talk about resorters helping resorters: here's your opportunity to hear how other resorts handle regulation delays and Health Department run-around, loan shopping and banking baloney, on-line reservations and guest internet access, scheduled activities and Saturday change-overs. Do you have a "burning" question you'd like to ask your fellow colleagues? Here's your chance to get immediate and numerous "live" responses. None of us are as smart as all of us. And who knows? You will very likely walk away with a helpful suggestion or epiphany moment to make your business more successful, productive and stress free.

Our keynote speaker is gonna knock your socks off! Your CMR Conference/Workshop Committee has decided to hire a professional motivational speaker this year, and Ginny Kruger (nationally renowned author) has graciously reduced her normal event fees to come join US, bless her heart! A native Minnesotan, her family background involves owning a small family vacation resort in Ottertail County, so we're expecting GREAT things from her and her topic: Live the Life You Desire.

All Spring Workshop attendees are eligible to win the Grand Prize drawing - a brand new electric trolling motor (partially donated by Gander Mountain.) So hey! This alone may be worth the inexpensive registration fee! (One simply can't have too many motors, right?)

As if the Spring Workshop schedule isn't packed enough, the CMR School of Resorting has scheduled FOUR 'hands-on' Pre-Workshop Classes on Monday, April 7, at the host resort of Hiawatha Beach Resort. Classes include a Reservation Master Seminar, one-on-one help for anyone wanting assistance in updating their resort listing on the CMR website, PEX Certification Course and a class on "How to Create Your Own Resort Guest Survey".

You may want to stay overnight at Hiawatha Beach Resort to take advantage of both days of classes, or to eliminate early morning or late night drives. The resort has reduced their room rates for our group in their brand new, simply "gawgeous" facility: \$99/night for a two bedroom suite - you can even split expenses with another couple! Yes, they have an indoor swimming pool and a 20 person hot springs spa! Get relaxed and ready for learnin'!) Call (800) 442-3224 or go to www.hiawathabeach.com to make a reservation.

Oh, and yes, we will have a hospitality room set up on Monday night (I'll bring a bottle of wine!) for those of us chat happy resorters who long to connect with other like-minded folk and whine about not wanting to start spring cleaning their cabins yet. I mean, *ahem*, to yak about how easy it is getting good cleaning help. No, no, no, I mean to cheerfully espouse how fun it is to deal with cancellations and reservation deposits that lag and ah, well, heck. Can you tell I'm not ready to think about the upcoming season yet? Support and empathy are good things, but I reckon a little "whine" with our wine goes a long way and I imagine we can think of some fun stuff to talk about as always at these shin-digs! Looking forward to seeing your smilin' face!

Look for the Spring Workshop brochure in the mail soon. We will be sending out more agenda information in upcoming e-mails. In the meantime, if you know for sure you wanna join us to get you "revved" up for season, contact the CMR Office (see below) today to register!

CMR Members \$49/person (includes lunch & breaks)

Non-Members \$59/person (includes lunch & breaks)

Mail checks to CMR, 21403 52nd Street NE, New London, MN 56273

Minnesota-Resorts.com

“MEMBERS ONLY” WEBSITE INFORMATION

Resort Members:

- PLEASE login and update your resort information. Follow the instructions and add a photo to your listing. Remember to Click “SAVE PROFILE” before you exit.
- Look at our new Vendor page. It has a new look & new features. Associates now offer deals/specials to our members.
- Go to the Media page and link the CMR to your website. This will help with search engine positioning. Your customers are looking, so be up to date.

Associate Members:

- PLEASE login, as new access is available to you.
- You can update your company information, display your products, add a photo, link the CMR to your website, and offer specials to the members.

All Members:

- **Check in frequently:** Day on the Hill, Spring Workshop, Fall Resort Tour, and Fall Conference information will be updated as it is available.

We will be available at the Spring Workshop April 7th & 8th for hands on help or contact Tim Aarsvold at 320-763-3200 or TJA@GenevaBeachResort.com

-Congress of Minnesota Resorts Television Ad-

Great news! In CMR’s continuing effort to promote our resorts through responsible advertising, we’re happy to announce our presence in an upcoming TV ad to be aired in early March during Midwest Outdoors. This ad is in conjunction with Explore Minnesota and will feature our website: Minnesota-Resorts.com. It is sure to bring added traffic to the site, and ultimately to your website! Be prepared by updating your listing with current information. Add or freshen up your text, and if you don’t have a photo, now is the time to add it! Don’t miss this opportunity to draw customers to your resort!

CMR Marketing Committee

Pre-Workshop Bonus Classes!, Monday, April 7

(food will be available to purchase at host resort)

10:00 - 2:00 **Reservation Master Seminar** Free to Spring Workshop attendees. \$30 to non-attendees. Learn about new software enhancements, review basics and ask any “how-to” questions of which you may be struggling. Current users, beginners or prospective users welcome! Bring your laptop --- computers will **NOT** be provided! [Contact Tom Pingel to pre-register tom@tcpms.com](mailto:tom@tcpms.com)

CMR Website Update Free to all CMR members! If you would like some help updating your resort link to the CMR marketing web site, here is your chance to get free and friendly one-on-one support in walking you through the steps to do so. Make the most of this CMR member benefit. Computers provided. Download photos and learn other simple tricks and tips! *** Noon - 2:00 prior to PEX Class, and 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. during and after Guest Survey Class

2:00 - 4:00 **PEX Certification Course** Do-It-Yourself resorters: Get certified in PEX tubing installation for FREE and save some money on professional plumber fees during your next construction project. Install your own in-floor tubing! Spend 1-2 hours in class with instructor Jay Pavel, and walk away with your certification card, guaranteed. **FREE to Spring Workshop attendees, \$10 for non-attendees. 10 min. class size -- please pre-register!*****

3:00 - 5:00 **How to Create Your Own Resort Guest Survey** Learn about different survey styles and the results they provide, how to word questions and the best way to get the information you are seeking. Brain-storm with your colleagues about questions to ask, ways to get guests to fill them out and how to communicate to your guests how you are going to implement their suggestions. 10 min. We need to have a minimum of 10 people for this class, so please plan to attend! **FREE to Spring Workshop attendees, \$10 for non-attendees *****

*****Contact Timberly Christiansen to pre-register at (218) 335-6598 or finnfeather@hotmail.com**

Congress of Minnesota Resorts Website Stats

	Visits	Page Views	Time Spent on Site
2006			
November	1,529	8,176	
December	1,930	9,499	6.50 Minutes
2007			
January	4,568	27,795	9.36
February	3,713	21,584	8.53
March	4,770	27,911	8.59
April	4,002	24,349	8.59
May	4,434	28,159	8.30
June	5,464	34,156	8.25
July	6,003	38,734	8.27
August	3,942	24,042	7.56
September	3,359	13,253	4.56
October	1,900	10,625	4.52
November	1,506	8,018	4.55
December	1,912	10,891	5.17
January	4,099	24,772	6.18

With this report we are also told that the leading areas searched for the month are as follows:

January	Park Rapids, Brainerd, Alexandria
February	Grand Rapids, Alexandria, Walker
March	Brainerd Lakes, Otter Tail Country, 1,000 Grand Lakes
April	Brainerd Lakes, Otter Tail Country, 1,000 Grand Lakes
May	Brainerd Lakes, Otter Tail Country, Central Lakes
June	Brainerd Lakes, 1,000 Grand Lakes, Otter Tail Country
July	Brainerd Lakes, Otter Tail Country, Alexandria
August	Alexandria, Park Rapids/Ely, Grand Marias/Faribault, New London
September	Brainerd Lakes, 1,000 Grand Lakes
October	Walker/Bemidji, Cook/Ely
November	Cass Lake/Ely, Grand Marias/Fairbault, New London
December	Walker/Ely, Grand Marias/Fairbault, New London
January	Bemidji/Ely, Orr/Faribault, New London

Congress of Minnesota Resorts has committed to increasing traffic to it's website thru additional advertising dollars being spent on Google, Yahoo, MSN, and Explore MN. Show your commitment to CMR by adding a LINK to www.Minnesota-Resorts.com on your website, by going to "Members Only"/ "Media" and follow the easy instructions.

We are also adding to and changing the website as needed to keep it up to date and interesting. We will accept suggestions and help from any member that has an idea, expertise, and/or time.

Website suggestions, photos for the website, and advertising suggestions are always Welcome.

Jim Eickhorst, Marketing

Congress of Minnesota Resorts

Relax@kohlsresort.com

Stepping Up to Sustainability

Stepping Up to Sustainability is the theme for the 3rd conference on Sustainable Tourism. The conference is April 15, 2008 at the DECC in Duluth and is hosted by the University of Minnesota Tourism Center.

This one day conference focuses on action by providing practical resources and “how to” steps for businesses and communities. Be inspired by speakers who are both practitioners and experts. Keynote speaker Joel Makower, called “the guru of green business practices” by the associated press, helps companies align environmental goals with business strategy. Learn ways to benefit your bottom line and meet growing consumer demands with sustainable tourism practices.

Conference features include: all day resource fair; learning stations with “how to” strategies; local and organic foods

Register on-line at www.tourism.umn.edu

Tom Ossell, U of M Tourism Center Advisory Board Rep
Congress of Minnesota Resorts
Northern Lights Resort & Outfitting, Kabetogama, MN

NEED \$500 FOR SCHOOL?

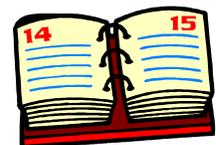
Each year the Congress of Minnesota Resorts offers three \$500 scholarships to a junior or senior in high school or a current undergraduate or technical school student. March 15th is the deadline for the scholarship application to be returned to the Congress of Minnesota Resorts office. A scholarship application can be printed out by going to the CMR website www.Minnesota-Resorts.com Scroll to the bottom of the home page and click on CMR Member (left corner), then by using your Login and Password you will be able to go to Applications and click, then click on Scholarship Application and print a copy. If you need further assistance please contact Vicky by emailing: cmr@minnesota-resorts.com or call 888-761-4245.

Nominating Resorters for the 2008 Resorter of the Year Award

A Resorter of the Year Nomination form can be printed out by going to the CMR website www.Minnesota-Resorts.com Scroll to the bottom of the home page and click on CMR Member (left corner), then by using your Login and Password you will be able to go to Applications and click, then click on Resorter of the Year Nomination and print a copy. If you need further assistance please contact Vicky by emailing: cmr@minnesota-resorts.com or call 888-761-4245.

CMR CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 26- 27, 2008	CMR Day on the Hill, Contact Mark Novotny for details, hydeawaybay@tds.net or 218- 675-6683
March 6, 2008	CMR Board Meeting
March 10, 2008	School of Resorting, Small Engine Repair Class, 10 a.m. Contact: Jason Christiansen, finnfeather@hotmail.com 218-335-6598 Registration deadline March 7th.
March 15, 2008	Scholarship Applications due in the CMR Office
April 7, 2008	Pre-Workshop Classes Reservation Master Seminar, PEX Certification Course, How to Create Your Own Resort Guest Survey & CMR Website Update
April 8, 2008	Spring Workshop, Hiawatha Beach Resort on Leech Lake, Walker 7:30 a.m. - 5:15 p.m.
April 8, 2008	CMR Board Meeting to follow Spring Workshop
April 15, 2008	Stepping Up to Sustainability Conference, Duluth, Register on-line at www.tourism.umn.edu
June 1, 2008	Nominations for “Resorter of the Year” due in the CMR Office
October 26-28, 2008	CMR Fall Conference location to be announced



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Phone: 888-761-4245

Email: cmr@minnesota-resorts.com

**WWW.MINNESOTA-
RESORTS.COM**



**Keep your 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 2007-2008 BOARD OF DIRECTORS & COMMITTEE'S

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