

Minnesota Resorter

Resorters Helping Resorters



Spring 2015
Vol. 31 No. 2

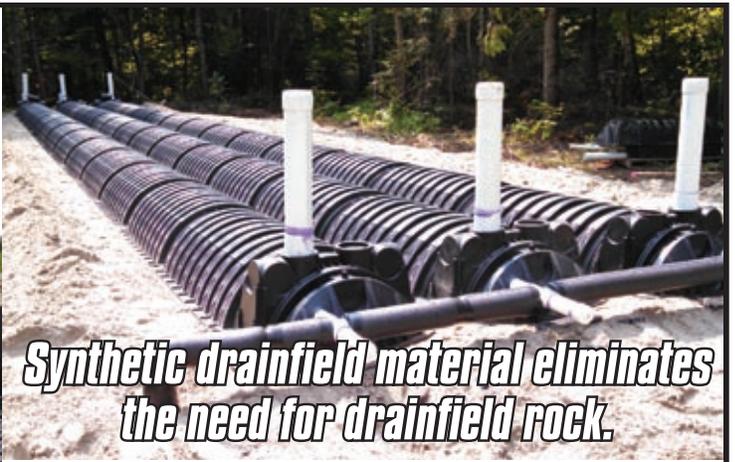


Education: Raising Monarch Butterflies
Marketing: Cooperation and Collaboration
Legislation: 2015 Day On OFF the Hill Recap

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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

Spring 2015

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About the cover: Photograph submitted by Nancy & Troy Loren, Little Boy Resort & Campground, Longville
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From Your President's Pen



President Su Ugstad
Congress of Minnesota Resorts

Happy Spring!

At least by this time, hopefully, we're all seeing hints of spring. As I write this, daylight savings is soon to begin and regardless of the calendar or the weather conditions, when that clock springs ahead and my daylight is extended, I can't help but feel the anticipation of summer soon to follow.

This past February, I attended two important events: first was the Explore Minnesota Tourism (EMT) Conference that was held in St. Paul.

The EMT will be expanding on their #OnlyinMN advertising campaign. Director John Edman said, "We (meaning Minnesota) don't have a product problem, we have an awareness problem!" Spending will be more focused on what is unique to Minnesota. What Edman says are simple and authentic experiences that will *inspire-engage-motivate* travel (paraphrased). The EMT's future direction is to keep the momentum, develop new public relations strategies, strengthen partnerships, and increase new markets.

There was a resonating theme throughout the conference of less is more, which I found reassuring. The fact that consumers, even the Millennials, are changing their view to be *less* economically focused and *more* emotionally invested. This reiterates the *simple pleasures and authentic experiences* idea noted earlier. This people group is becoming more interactive than hi-tech, but not necessarily frugal. Okay, so they may not be tossing out their iPads just yet, but the idea that human contact and engagement is back in vogue is positive news for the resort industry. What better venue, than resorts, provides people the chance to get reconnected with family, friends and themselves?

Simply stated, Minnesota resorts offer the *real deal* - a perfect atmosphere to share real experiences, reminisce old times, and create new memories. A concept, we are now told, that appeals to *all* generations. Of course, we resorters always knew that to be true, but it's nice to have validation.

The second important event, our annual Day on the Hill (DOH), followed the EMT Conference. I want to thank those who took time out of their busy schedules to join us in St. Paul to express our concerns on issues that are critical to our industry. We wish more resorters had been there! The planning and coordination by our legislative committee and our lobbyist, Joel Carlson, and his assistant Tami LeFavor is impressive. They deserve our sincere thanks.

Our focus this year with legislators was on maintaining the post Labor Day School start, the new aquatic Invasive species (AIS) training, and support of EMT. The budget increase received by EMT in the last biennium proved a great boost in marketing Minnesota as a travel destination, but more dollars are needed to be in line with surrounding states. One goal for MN tourism is to go from the \$13-billion industry; it is today, to \$20 billion by 2020. With proper funding, I think it could be a reality. As always, the Congress of Minnesota Resorts (CMR) legislative committee will keep our membership informed on these issues as the session progresses through our e-groups chat line and monthly newsletter.

A special treat during DOH was to visit the Wabasha Street Caves. The caves are a cool piece of Minnesota history!

Lastly, if you're a resorter but not currently a CMR member, I would encourage you to join. It's one of the best investments you could make for your business, yourself, and for the future of the resort industry in Minnesota.

Best wishes for a prosperous 2015 season!
Respectfully,
Su Ugstad

RESORT STORIES & HIGH RES PHOTOS WANTED

We are looking for resort stories & high resolution photographs to print in a later edition of the Resorter Magazine.

Submissions can be sent to Ann Warling
218-821-1031 • ann.warling@gmail.com



Do you think you are alone?

By Karen Senger, Cedar Point Resort

Do you think you are alone? Think again. When we asked resorters what some of the top issues they are having, we found commonality. Of course, you may have challenges specific to you. But, I bet many of us can identify with some of the issues noted in the survey we conducted earlier this year.

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| How to grow your business. | Exit strategy. | Rising expenses. |
| Customer cancellations. | Insurance costs. | Guest safety. |
| Finding quality help. | Government regulations. | Filling shoulder seasons. |
| Marketing strategies. | Aging customers. | Neighbor problems. |
| Guests following rules. | Vacation home rentals. | #%\$*@! Geese on our property. |

As an industry we have unique issues and challenges. Hopefully most of us would agree that this is a pretty awesome and unique business to be in. Together we can help each other. Be an active member of the Congress of Minnesota Resorts. Read the *Minnesota Resorter* magazine, emailed newsletters and the Yahoo Chat Line discussions. Come to workshops, conferences, Day on the Hill, School of Resorting classes and the fall resort tour. We, as an organization, want to share with you and want you to share your insight with us. Think about it!!

Interested in joining the Congress of Minnesota Resorts? Check out pages 12 & 13 for more detail!



Handi-Resorter's Tips & Tricks

By Bob Bateman, Two Inlets Resort

Reciprocating Saw Scraper Attachment

This blade attachment was a real time saver. It's a power scraper for a SawzAll reciprocating saw. The blade attachment was used to pop up old floor tile, but it can also be used to scrape up old linoleum, glue or carpet padding that it stuck to the floor. It was about \$13, purchased at the local L&M Store.




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Gardens Born to Work

By Lynn Scharenbroich, Black Pines Beach Resort

Some may view gardens as simply pretty and fragrant, but in truth, gardens were really born to work. Depending on the owner's social status, a garden's purpose over the years has run the gamut from herbs grown for their medicinal properties and vegetables that families relied upon as food sources, to flowers cultivated as flavorings for desserts and ornately shaped trees and shrubs intended as symbols of wealth and status.

It wasn't until the 1970s that ecological and environment purposes starting showing up among reasons to create gardens. Rain gardens for residential use were developed in 1990 in Maryland by a housing subdivision developer named Dick Brinker whose idea of replacing the traditional best management practice ponds with bio-retention areas resulted in a 75-80 percent reduction in storm water runoff during regular rainfall events.

Today, presenting acceptable plans to mitigate storm water runoff on our properties has become a building permit condition for many resorters. In addition to the well-known rain gardens, there are also infiltration gardens, bio-swales and water gardens, as options for runoff plans.

Most of us can't help but wonder if the investment of time and money in all of this will actually have a measurable impact on our property value.

In our area, a local landscaping company that has been in the business since 1982, suggests that based on their experience, there is always an uptick in property value following landscaping/garden work, and often as high as two times as much value. Below is a look at the before and after photos of a local beach that Lakeside Lawn and Landscape did a few years ago.



If garden and landscape service is something you are considering, here are a few basic tips from the professionals:

- The first site visit is usually free, but always ask.
- Development of the base plan, including all existing conditions on the property, will likely take between 10-15 hours at approximately \$60/hr.
- Determine your project limits: budget and the time available for the project.
- Development of the landscape and garden plan, similar to a CAD building drawing, is usually a minimum of 50-60 hours at approximately \$60/hr.
- Now, your plan is ready to be put out for bids.

If you prefer the *Do-It-Yourself* route, there are easy step-by-step directions on *How to Plant a Rain Garden* at www.myrunoff.org.

Gardens

By Lynn Scharenbroich, Black Pines Beach Resort

In the spring of 2013, at a Garden Tourism Conference in Toronto, Ontario, speaker Richard W. Benfield of Connecticut State University, a leading voice in garden tourism offered this statistic, "**More people visit gardens annually in the United States than visit Disneyland and Disneyworld combined, and more than visit Las Vegas in any given year.**"

Benfield then followed with a prediction that, "Garden tourism is on the rise and will be for the next 15 to 20 years."

The gardens Benfield is speaking about are big, destination-in-themselves, styles. But, the appeal of having a garden component as a part of one's vacation isn't reserved only for these big places.

A representative of the Garden Society of Vancouver, Kathy Gibler, promotes the idea that, "Gardens are increasingly crucial to the neighborhoods as rare sanctuaries in a world where the pace of life continues to accelerate."

That idea of *slowing down the pace of life* fits just perfectly into almost everybody's vision of a vacation. So, it makes sense that if gardens can help do that, then having gardens at resorts, places where people vacation, is a pretty good idea. Folks who find places with gardens to be more appealing than places without them, report being motivated by three things they see as enhanced by the existence of gardens.

- Social side of their vacation/enjoying the company of others,
- Learning about the actual horticulture of the gardens, and
- Setting imparts a greater sense of sensual immersion, peace and tranquility.

All of us probably have at least one or two garden areas at our resorts now. Guests may already comment to you about them. Maybe they mention certain things they especially like about them as they chat. You might have heard about the social side of their vacation as they talk about the resort gardens. What about learning; have they asked about flower names or watering and soil needs? Did you get a sense that walking your landscaped grounds has added a feeling of peacefulness to their vacation? Conversations like these with guests can be almost mini-learning sessions if investing in gardens, landscaping and enhancement of natural areas is part of any immediate or long-term improvement plans.

Should it be? Consider this.

The American Association of Nurserymen contends that high-quality landscaping can increase a property's value at sale by up to 15 percent. Yet, determining the actual economic benefits of adding gardens and landscaping on daily operations at family resorts is still an unfolding area for garden proponents. Currently, there is a scarcity of research on the economic significance of gardens that are not destinations in and of themselves. A list of economically driven questions relating to gardens was posed to some entities with ties to either gardening or research or both, including American Public Gardens Association, Minnesota Landscape Arboretum and the University of Minnesota. If research is inspired by these questions, the results will provide another source of helpful information for resorters considering investment in gardens and landscaping.

- What is the actual, implied and/or perceived value of gardens and enhanced natural areas on commercial properties?
- What is the impact of garden-rich properties on lodging decision-making?
- Which focus is more likely to inspire a desire to stay longer: attractiveness of gardens, environmental features of gardens, or food-gardens where guests can use the fresh herbs or vegetables?
- Have there been any interviews with the business owners as to how the addition of garden spaces, planter boxes or shrubbery, or landscaping has affected their business?



Prepared planting area.



Planting results.

Gardens and landscaping help attract tourists who typically have significant disposable income. For senior citizens, recent surveys reveal that those attracted to well-landscaped, garden rich properties have nearly 33 percent more disposable income than their counterparts who do not report seeking the same style property. This people group offers a strong share of shoulder season customers at many family resorts. And, senior citizens are often the payers for summer family reunion vacations, making them an attractive target group for summer as well.

Whether you view the purpose of your garden and landscape plans as part of marketing or as an investment in property value or both, contacting your local nurseries and landscapers for ideas to fit your plans is a helpful step. They may be able to visit your property and make individualized

suggestions. They can also share ideas that will help you stay on the right side of any current shoreland regulations.

A few years ago at Black Pine Beach Resort, on a relatively quiet early spring day, we went back to work after lunch and discovered that while we were eating, a huge pine tree had fallen over, barely missing a cabin. The result of that loss was a considerably altered lawn area right next to a walkway. The owner of one of the local nurseries that we have worked with for years came out and assessed the situation, working with us to develop a garden plan for the damaged area. The two photos show the readied planting area and the successful outcome, thanks to just a few hours of professional guidance.

Actual comments from resort guests bear out the results of this now appealing area.

"We enjoyed all the beautiful flowers on the grounds. We can't wait 'til next year." ~ Mary and Ray, White Bear Lake, MN.

"Lots of ideas now for my own garden. I know you do this for a living, but it's beautiful and so peaceful here." ~ Greg and Darcy, Ramsey, MN.

As your own garden and landscape plans take shape this year, consider sharing photos of the benefits you see them adding to your customers' experiences by posting images of guests enjoying them in the photo gallery on CMR's website (www.Minnesota-Resorts.com).

2015 Explore Minnesota Tourism Conference

By EMT Council Member Mark Novotny,
Hyde-A-Way Bay Resort

The Explore Minnesota Tourism (EMT) Conference was held at the St. Paul River Centre. What a great venue. The opening ceremony started off with a bang, literally! John Edman was introduced with pyrotechnics! The governor was introduced after John with just words. There were big laughs and jokes going back a forth.

The EMT Conference had many breakout sessions and I attended one where the speaker was Bob Anderson, Star Performances. Anderson has spoken at our Congress of Minnesota Resorts (CMR) Fall Conferences and as usual, he did a great job. He spoke on *Creating a Radically Guest-Centric Business*. Many of the things that Anderson spoke about were little things that made the guest experience lasting and memorable. Things like getting your tools to help your guest fix HIS boat, getting a phone number for your guest and calling to make that reservation for them, or (one that I have done) running to town to pick up your guest because they had car trouble and had no transportation. These little things connect with your guests and because of that memory, they will return.

The next session was with Aaron Hautala, Red House Media. Aaron works with small budgets to get an advertising program put together. Hautala's talk was *Turning a Small Budget into a Big Return*. He illustrated many successes that he is using with everything from a non-profit to a small resort and large companies. Many of the examples that he gave were not focused on one feature of your lake or resort but also included some of your other features that are unique.

If you ever get a chance to attend the EMT Conference, you will get a sense of what the whole economy and how other parts of the tourism industry are doing and you will profit from broad sharing of ideas. If you cannot attend, please at least attend a CMR Fall Conference to get updates and connect with many resorts in the state.

EDUCATION

Gardens Beautiful at Sugar Lake Lodge

By Lynn Scharenbroich, Black Pines Beach Resort



“It’s the second most-heard comment from our guests,” said Gwynne Bobich, Sugar Lake Lodge. She is talking about praise for the beautiful gardens at their Grand Rapids area resort. The first most-heard comment is “Kudos to the staff.”

Great staff and beautiful gardens came together some years ago, in the work of Sugar Lake Lodge’s long-time gardener, Mark Hepakoski, who was with the resort for nearly 20 years, retiring in 2005. A certified master gardener, Mark was the practiced hand behind the features of the resort that contributed so much to guest experiences and certainly played an important role in increasing the likelihood of rebookings and new bookings at Sugar Lake Lodge.

Rebecca Kolls, master gardener, meteorologist and host of both local and nationally syndicated garden shows, has been a resort guest for years. Her interest in gardening spawned a long friendship with Hepakoski, resulting in hours spent talking over gardening ideas for the resort property.

Before he retired, Mark Hepakoski was awarded Resort Gardener of the Year by the Itasca Garden Club. Even now, years later, Mark’s garden and landscape work at Sugar Lake Lodge, entrusted now to new hands, continues to inspire praise from customers.



Bright pink petunias climbing a trellis against a wall greet guests as they walk by.



Dedicated resort staff water and care for the gardens daily.



Andrea Lamb

In 2005, I started Aspire Insurance agency after a 20+ year career with two of the largest insurance companies in the U.S.. I opened our office on the Iron Range to provide professional careers and services to the area where I was born and raised. A cornerstone of our agency is consumer education and advocacy via well-trained, customer-focused and courteous staff. If you haven’t already done so, I encourage you to consider Aspire Insurance Agency. I believe you will be impressed.



Nicole Shaleen

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“And thank you for the awesome FAST service!, Nikki.” - Embarrass area.

“The service and professionalism I got from this agency is beyond an above the rest. Also, Andrea is a lady that is honest, professional and knowledgeable and someone that will take her time to educate you about the different and confusing insurances that you have to navigate through. I have already referred two clients to this agency.” - Mpls area.

“I left last year because my agent said they had a lower price. I came back because there is no one better than Andrea. Live and learn.” - Bemidji area.

“Andrea - WOW, that was quick! You are awesome!” Rochester area.

“Nikki and Andrea are awesome to work with!! If there is a problem they work it out right away. I recommend Aspire Insurance to all my friends and relatives.” - Hibbing Area

“The girls at Aspire (Andrea and Nicole) were the absolute best agents have ever worked with. They were friendly, knowledgeable, & had my best interests. I would recommend them to anyone!” - St. Cloud area



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Storm Blows in a New Cabin

By Cindy Pitt, Bailey's Leech Lake Resort



On September 4th at 6:30 a.m. a storm with straight-line winds lasting only 20 minutes caused a 100+ year-old pine to snap and land squarely on Cabin 8.

We had other cabins available that week so we made a last minute decision to move them to a lakefront cabin with a better view.

On Thursday morning, September 4th, we woke up about 6:30 a.m. to a pretty crazy storm with the wind really howling off the lake. We heard a loud crack, followed a couple seconds later by an even louder crash. I remember telling my daughter that it sounded bad and she looked out the window and said "That's really bad!" The storm only lasted about 20 minutes with no rain, just straight-line winds – but that was all it took to snap a 100+ year-old white pine in half. The worst part was it crashed down on top of Cabin 8! The tree went through the roof in the middle of the cabin, snapping every rafter and bowing the back wall out and a sidewall in. The inside ceiling was completely busted out in a bedroom with a large branch ending up about a foot above the bed. As we approached the cabin we couldn't believe the damage.

Our first thought was - thank goodness we had moved that couple to a different cabin! Even if the tree had missed them, they would certainly have had heart attacks. However, we knew we still had more issues, as we had a new couple scheduled to arrive at noon into the now demolished Cabin 8. Fortunately we were able to scramble and shuffle the schedule a bit to get them into another cabin. Over the remainder of our season, we had other guests scheduled to arrive in that cabin – but thankfully we were able to do a lot of schedule rearranging and shift them all to other cabins.

Our insurance agent quickly arrived that same morning and scheduled an adjuster to take a look at the situation. The adjuster arrived a few days later and confirmed what we thought, the cabin was a complete loss. The work was just beginning. We did not have a new cabin on our to-do list and with fall already here, time wasn't on our side. It was a waiting game for most of the fall, as demolition of the cabin couldn't be done until we had a building permit and waiting for adjuster reports and insurance company decisions took some time too, but it eventually came out in our

favor. We had no plans in place to build a new cabin so we headed out to area resorts to look at a few cabins for ideas. After meeting with our county, getting our septic system inspected and jumping through a few hoops, we were eventually able to submit a plan to them, along with plans to the state. The building permit wasn't in our hands until just before Thanksgiving, but it meant we could finally tear down the old cabin and begin with the new one.



The went through the middle of Cabin 8's roof breaking every rafter and causing the back wall and a sidewall to bow out.

From there it's been a typical winter building project with periods of bitter cold weather where nothing gets done and warmer periods where we can make hay. As of now in early March, the new cabin is framed up with the roof completed, windows in and insulated. So it will be full steam ahead from here on. There should be no problem getting it all finished and ready to rent by June – which is our plan.

The old Cabin 8 was always our last cabin to rent, as it was our smallest 2-bedroom and our house partially blocked the view. It was a bit tired and we always wanted to do something with it, but were hesitant due to the location – although we had just log-sided the front of it three months prior to the storm. But with the storm making the decision for us, we moved the new cabin over about 50 feet from the old location, making the view much better. Our septic system limited us to 2-bedrooms, we were able to put a loft in the new cabin making it about 2 ½ times larger than the old one. Log siding on the exterior with a large deck and a knotty pine interior with much more living space will make this cabin a huge improvement over the old one.

With all of the new cabin improvements and the new view, we're hoping it will be one of the first cabins rented rather than the last. We are definitely very excited about the new Cabin 8 and anticipate that our guests will be too. Hopefully, it will be another 100+ years before the remaining trees come down and create a problem for a future owner. But with good insurance, a storm is not always a bad thing.

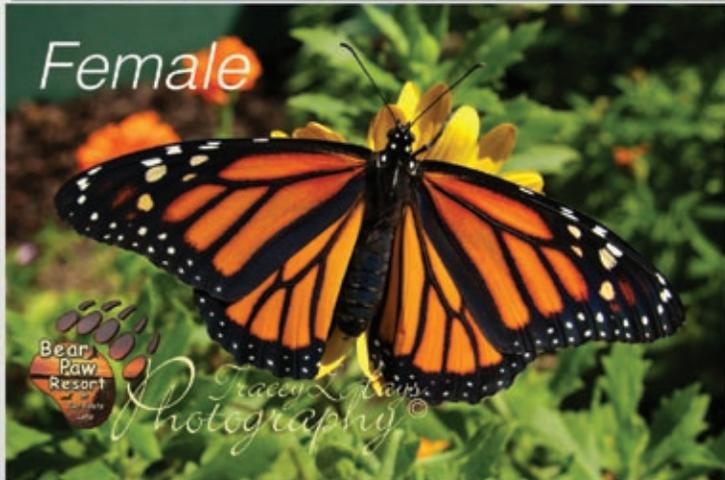


New Cabin 8 in progress. The cabin was moved 50 feet for a better view and a loft was added, making it 2 ½ times bigger..

Raising Monarch Butterflies

By Tracey Hays, Bear Paw Resort

I have been raising Monarch Butterflies since I was eight years old. My grandmother, a 3rd grade teacher at the time, taught me how to raise a Monarch caterpillar to maturity. This amazing process captivated me so much that I continued to search and collect these striped caterpillars watching them turn into beautiful butterflies.



The current news about the huge decrease in Monarch population is quite alarming. The population has plummeted 90 percent over the past 20 years going from a billion in 1996 to roughly 30 million today according to *Journey North* (www.learner.org/jnorth). On February 9, 2015, the U.S. government announced the first federal pot of money for rescuing monarchs, with the Fish and Wildlife Service designating \$3.2 million for the effort. About \$2 million will go toward conservation programs to plant more than 200,000 acres of milkweed along the migration route from Mexico to Minnesota.

What is causing such a steep decline in the Monarch population? *Journey North* shares that the weather is a huge factor especially during migration from Mexico to Minnesota. The migratory route has experienced cold springs, severe storms and extreme droughts that cause a higher mortality rate for the butterflies. Then there are the threats caused by humans such as the lumbering of forests which are used for shelter and the increase of agriculture croplands using herbicides on genetically modified, herbicide-tolerant crops (GMOs) decreasing the acres of milkweed, their source of food.

A life of a Monarch is amazing to me! An adult Monarch Butterfly begins its migration northward in the spring with the onset of warmer temperatures signaling them to breed. They need temperatures to be around 60° F or higher for their wing muscles to work. From spring to fall there can be as many as four generations of the breeding cycle. The summer-Monarchs live two-five weeks during breeding. The last Monarch generation of the season hatching in September through October can sense that migration is near and they will not breed. These are the Monarchs that migrate to Mexico and back to the states for the first breeding cycle living seven to nine months. Scientists still haven't figured out how they know where to go being the 4th generation making their annual migration journey nothing less than amazing. Moving here from Ohio has been so exciting for me because Minnesota is literally in the Monarch migration highway giving us the opportunity to raise two-three generations of Monarchs whereas in Ohio I only had the opportunity to raise one a year.

A few interesting facts about **Monarchs**:

- A female can lay up to an average of 500 eggs. Her veins appear thicker and the abdomen is slightly larger.
- A male has a thick raised dot on each under wing of which is full of *cologne* and he releases it during breeding season to attract the female.
- They are toxic to predators such as birds, lizards and frogs; although I have unfortunately witnessed the Giant Darner Dragonfly grabbing a Monarch for a meal.

Monarch Eggs:

The eggs are laid on the underside of Milkweed leaves. Usually one to a leaf but I have found two many times. They are the size of a toothpick tip, cone shaped and ivory in color. Monarch's are very smart knowing that laying the egg on the underside protects it from the weather and they also lay them on younger leaves so by the time the egg hatches about four days later the milkweed has grown substantially providing the amount of food the caterpillar will need. Sadly enough though in the wild maybe only one in 20 will make it to adulthood.

Monarch Caterpillars:

Once the caterpillar has hatched it eats its own eggshell for the first meal and then starts to eat the leaf. Milkweed is full of milk and it can act like glue for the new caterpillar, causing some to die. I personally have never had a newborn caterpillar die yet. During the caterpillars 10-14 day life it will grow so fast that it will molt (shed) its skin four times and when it finishes it eats the old skin before returning to the leaf. When it reaches its full size it can eat a whole leaf in an hour.

Monarch Chrysalis:

Now that the caterpillar has reached its full size it searches for a sturdy safe object to spin a silk knob on which to pinch its back legs, and then it hangs upside down in a shape of a J. It will take about a day to prepare for the final molting of the skin exposing an alien weird looking green thing. Even though it isn't pretty at first the chrysalis becomes a beautiful mint shade with glistening gold markings as it hardens and dries showing you the outline of the butterfly's wing. The chrysalis will now hang motionless for 10-14 days as the Monarch inside matures. When the hatching time is near the shell of the chrysalis becomes transparent viewing the black and orange Monarch inside.

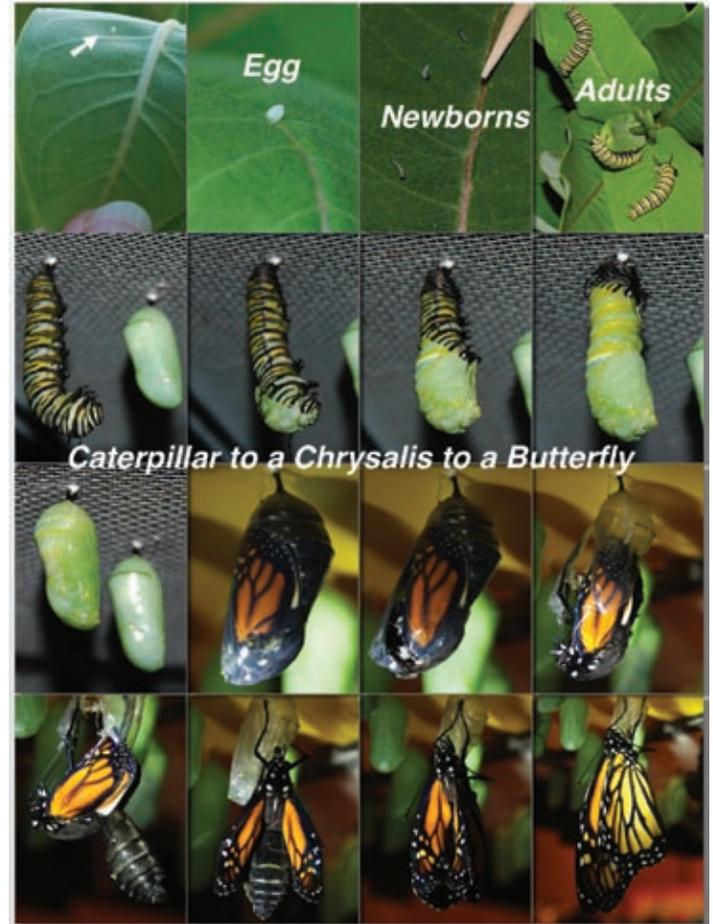
Birth of a New Monarch:

Once the Monarch has fully matured inside its chrysalis it pushes a flap open with its feet freeing the four legs, head and antennas first. It grips the shell with its feet as it frees its body and wings from the rest of the chrysalis. The newly hatched Monarch has a very fat body full of fluid and very wet tiny wings. It immediately pulsates its body pushing the fluid into the wings expanding them to full size leaving a slender body within a few minutes. The Monarch has to continue to hang from something until the wings dry and harden which can take several hours. During this time the Monarch becomes more active and starts to exercise its wing muscles preparing for its first flight.

I know we are all very busy with our resorts and raising Monarchs is a daily commitment, challenge and takes work, but I encourage you to give it a try so we can help their population. The easiest way to raise them is to start with a caterpillar since many of us have a hard time finding the eggs. *Of course, their survival odds are better if you can raise them from the egg.* The most important thing is to find milkweed that has not been exposed to sprays or is growing in old rotated fields as the chemical residues will cause premature death of the caterpillar or deformed butterflies. If you don't have any near your home then maybe check along back road ditches or along natural tree lines. We are limited here and once the road maintenance crews mow the edges I then have to search on a nearby property with the owner's permission.

- You can collect your milkweed and store extra in the refrigerator in plastic to keep the milk moist in the leaves. They prefer younger plants over the big mature ones that have gone to flower or seed.
- Your caterpillar container will need to be cleaned out often since these guys are very regular and will create a layer of fecal material in no time.
- Make sure the lid has fine holes so the caterpillar can't crawl out. Usually the caterpillar will crawl to the lid to hang.

Like I said I have been raising Monarchs since I was eight and started with a mason jar and now I raise them in two aquariums with screen lids. One container is my nursery for the eggs to hatch and the other is for the larger caterpillars that will turn into the butterflies. The most I have raised in one season was 256 and that was literally a full-time job and challenging with running a resort. A couple of years ago the population was so bad that I didn't even find an egg. I hope I never lose the joy in watching a life cycle of the Monarch and the incredible mystery of knowledge they have, knowing where to migrate to when they have never been there before.



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MARKETING



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LEGISLATION



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School of Resorting educational classes.



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THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!

Resorters Helping Resorters - Since 1985

As fairly new resort owners, we are grateful to have found CMR. We have learned so much that we've been able to take home and tweaked to fit our resort. CMR's best asset is its people ... From the vast variety of CMR resorters lives, their years of experiences and especially their "what works for us" to "what hasn't worked for us," there is nothing better than visiting and networking within the CMR members.

John & Kristi Gordon, Train Bell Resort

Do you ever wonder... "What are other resorts doing in this situation?" Whether you have been in the business three or 30 years, you still ask yourself many questions. The CMR Yahoo Chatline has been a wonderful tool for us when questions arise... Where do you buy your sheets, certain cleaning products, to I have some stuff for sale, or what kind of software are you using? At the CMR Spring/Fall Workshops, the cracker barrels are how we have learned most everything for our resort business. There is just not enough GOOD I can say about CMR, the marketing on the website, the collations with Explore MN, everything is just such a huge benefit to getting new customers, keeping our return customers, and keeping our sanity. I can see the benefit in my own business, so why wouldn't you want that same benefit for your business?

Tina Reuper, Sandy Pines Resort, LLC

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 _____ Resort Website _____

Membership investment is only \$18.50 per bedroom (Minimum \$185 for 10 bedrooms or fewer, Maximum \$962 for 53 bedrooms or more.) Membership rates good through Aug. 31, 2016.

Campground Search Function for \$35 Yes/NO No. of Seasonal Sites _____ No. of Overnight Sites _____

Associate Memberships - Dues \$185 For vendors and for those with an interest in resorting but not owning a resort.

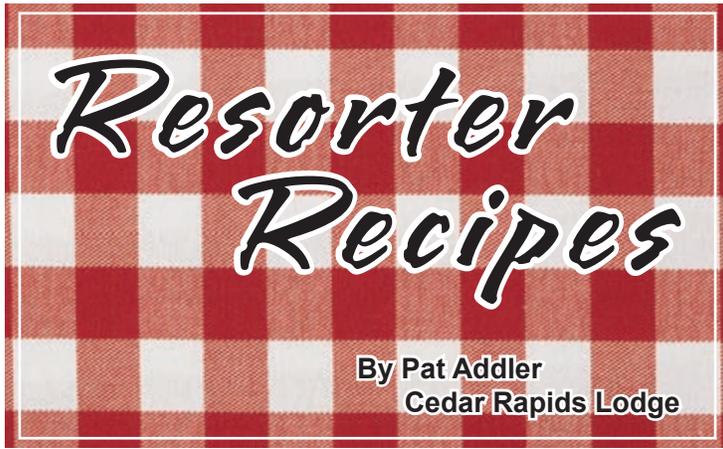
Amount of check enclosed _____ Please Circle One: New or Renewal



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



FIESTA SOUP

- 1 lb hamburger, sauteed with onions
- 26 oz diced tomatoes
- 1 can chopped chilis
- 1 can corn, drained
- 1 can kidney beans or chili beans
- 1 can black beans
- 1 1/2 cans water
- 1 pkg taco seasoning
- 1 pkg ranch dressing seasoning

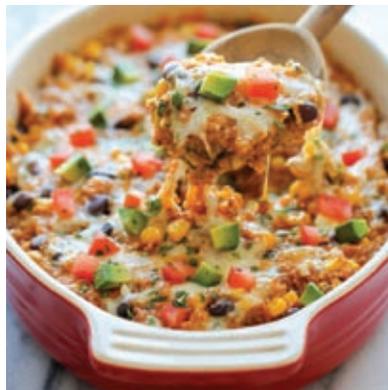
Brown the hamburger with the onion; add remaining ingredients and simmer until heated through. Only 1 Weight Watchers point per cup serving!



QUINOA ENCHILADA CASSEROLE

- (pronounced keen-wa)
- 1 cup quinoa
- 1 (10 oz) can enchilada sauce
- 1 (4 oz) can chopped green chilies, drained
- 1/2 cup canned corn, drained
- 1/2 cup canned black beans, drained, rinsed
- 2 Tbsp chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp chili powder
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 3/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese, divided
- 3/4 cup shredded mozzarella cheese, divided
- 1 avocado, halved, seeded, peeled, diced
- 1 Roma tomato, diced

Cook quinoa in 2 cups water, according to package. Preheat oven to 375°. Spray 8x8 pan or 2-quart baking dish. In a large bowl, combine all ingredients, except avocado and tomato, reserving 1/2 of each cheese to sprinkle on top of dish before baking. Bake about 15 minutes to heat through and melt cheese; garnish with avocado and tomato. Serve warm.



OVERNIGHT OATMEAL

- 1/4 cup old fashion oatmeal
- 1/3 cup vanilla almond milk
- 1/4 cup vanilla yogurt
- 2 tsp chia seeds
- Optional ingredients: strawberries, blueberries, peaches, apple chunks, walnuts, granola - add before eating to keep crunchy

Use 8 oz glass canning jar; add all ingredients to one jar; put lid on and shake well. Open jar and add just a small amount of the optional ingredients to fill the jar. Put lid on and set in refrigerator overnight. Oatmeal will be ready to eat in the morning...eaten cold out of the jar! Delicious!



EASY EGG BAKE MUFFINS

- Makes 12 muffins
- Tater Tot potatoes
- 8 eggs
- 1/4 cup milk
- 2 Tbsp ranch dressing
- diced ham or sausage or bacon
- onions and peppers, diced (optional)
- shredded cheddar cheese

Spray or coat the muffin pan. Put three tater tots in each cup; bake at 400° for 10 minutes; flatten with glass. Put meat or veggie mixture into each cup as desired. Stir the eggs, milk and ranch dressing mixture then pour into muffin cups; sprinkle cheese on top. Lower oven temp to 350° and bake for about 20 minutes. Serve; refrigerate leftovers or freeze them; microwave to reheat and serve.



WELCOME

New Congress of Minnesota
Resorts Members!

New CMR Members

Ryan & Liz Ahrendt
Half Moon Trail Resort, Park Rapids, MN

Greg & Rhonda Williams
Camp Idlewood Resort, International Falls MN

Craig & Angie Nelson
Kee-Nee-Moo-Sha Resort, Hackensack, MN

Steve, Jayne & Landon Routledge
Pine Terrace Resort, Cross Lake, MN

James & Renee Hassel
Hassel's Hideaway Resort, Pennington, MN

Tim, Greg, Paris & Jean Campbell
Brindley's Harbor Resort, Walker, MN

Kevin & Patty Miller
Woodland Beach Resort, Deerwood, MN

Cooperation and Collaboration in Communication

By Kathy Moore, Moore Consulting

Marketing expenses are often the last elements property owners think of when budgeting for the year, but the dollars spent in advertising could be as important as major building improvements and hiring key staff. How do you make your dollars stretch? Cooperation and collaboration.

As a small property owner, it may seem daunting to try to compete with large hotel chains and major resorts. But, look around your neighborhood and see what you have in common with your area. Are there biking clubs holding events? Does your local lake association have a large membership? Are there attractions or restaurants seeking to connect with the same market as your resort?

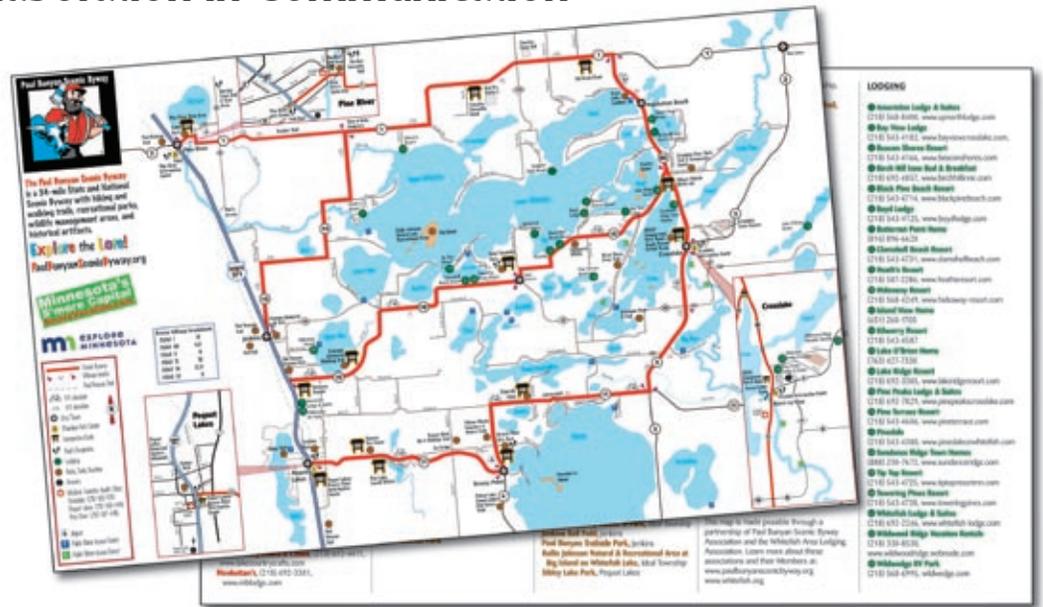
Partnering with a local restaurant, gas station or bait shop could go a long way in supporting all of your businesses. Even partnering with other resorts can help. In some regions, neighborhoods can band together to showcase their *area within an area*. Such an opportunity exists within the Whitefish Chain of Lakes region in the northern portion of the Brainerd Lakes Area. For over 10 years, more than two-dozen lodging properties have worked together to market their region, as well as their individual properties. By establishing a neighborhood campaign, the S'mores Capital of Minnesota, the region has given each business an identifier that they can use and build into their own unique marketing . . . while also supporting the region's overall brand.

In the Whitefish Area, resorts cross promote with area restaurants, local events and celebrations and other regional organizations, like the Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway, a 54-mile driving route that weaves in and around the Whitefish Area. The Whitefish Area Lodging Association supports the printing and distribution of the Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway map, and the byway promotes the lodging properties on their website.

This region is fortunate to have a local lodging tax to help support their efforts, but effective marketing isn't about who has the most dollars to spend, but how effectively and efficiently the money is used.

Here are some tips:

Look at ways to leverage existing local events. Many times, events coordinated by your local chamber, CVB or area civic organizations focus on bringing the community together. Use your collective advertising dollars to expand the reach of an event and promote a weekend lodging package tied to the event. Include the event's name/logo in your advertising.



The Whitefish Area Lodging Association partnered with the Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway Association to make an easy-to-use map. Both organizations were prominently displayed.

Support local organization's efforts with printed materials or on signs. Especially in the age of electronic communication, keeping your name/brand in print is important. Consider supporting the printing of a brochure, map or other tool and ask to have it co-branded with your message.

Ask to share lists. Many local organizations have strong, emotional ties with people. Use that existing relationship to your advantage by offering a special deal/package to that audience via an endorsement or referral. Or, ask to be mentioned in their e-newsletter or mailed communication.

Maximize your electronic connections by *liking* organizations, activities and events via Facebook. *Sharing* photos/comments via Tumblr, Twitter or FourSquare.

Communication doesn't have to be complicated, just deliberate. Cooperate and collaborate with your neighborhood and everyone wins.



To create a branding theme that a wide variety of businesses could support, the Whitefish Area touts themselves as the S'more Capital of Minnesota.

CMR Board is Working for You (You Can Help Too)

By Karen Senger, Cedar Point Resort

As with many organizations, the Congress of Minnesota Resorts (CMR) has a formal board of directors who volunteer their time and talent to advance the organization. Board member elections are held at our annual meeting every October. Board members serve a three-year term and commit to working in one or more areas of our organization. Looking at our new CMR Board of Directors, we anticipate continued leadership as well as some renewed energy in the varied projects that keep our organization strong.

Ever wonder what your board of directors is doing for you? I can tell you... it's a lot. There are many details that we want to share with you. If we went in depth, it would take up this entire magazine. So, to be concise, I am first listing a brief outline. As you are reading this story, if you see something you may be interested in being involved with, contact any board member! You don't have to be on the board or go to tons of meetings to be involved.

The board is generally divided into three legs: Marketing, Education and Legislative.

- Education, generally consists of:** Conferences/workshops, School of Resorting, *Minnesota Resorter* magazine, newsletters and emails, Yahoo Chat Line, U of M Tourism Board
- Marketing, generally consists of:** Website/mobile site, advertising, membership
- Legislative, generally consists of:** Lobbyist, Day on the Hill, Legislative Watchdog, various state councils

	Education	Benefit to you	How you can get involved
Conferences/ Workshops	The Spring Workshop is a one-day event and the Fall Conference and Vendor Show is a 3-day event usually towards the end of October. The group working on this will be looking at any changes we can make to make these great days even better! Watch for details.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn from other resorters and professional speakers. • Opportunity to talk to others in similar situations. • It is fun! 	<p>Easy: Attend seminars, submit topic ideas.</p> <p>Moderate: Help plan it, be a crackerbarrel leader, be a speaker</p>
School of Resorting	A variety of classes have been offered including small motor repair, sign making, Lake Service Provider Training and Reservation Master. Many times these classes are offered at fellow resorters' houses/resorts and some are offered prior to our workshop or conference. Keep an eye out for future classes (like welding, screen door building, creating welcome books and perhaps some repeat of previously held classes).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn from others, be social, keep your skills sharp. 	<p>Easy: Attend a class, suggest a class topic.</p> <p>Moderate: Plan a class, host a class.</p>
Minnesota Resorter Magazine	We work with professionals to publish this magazine three-times a year. We mail it to all resorts as well as other interested parties including Minnesota Legislators. We work to get a variety of articles. Most of the articles are submitted by your fellow resorters, some are from our vendors/associate members and others from subject matter experts. Do you have an idea for an article? Let us know!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied topics, keep up to date on legislative issues, get informed on issues impacting our industry, it's a fun read. 	<p>Easy: Read the magazine.</p> <p>Moderate: Write and submit articles, offer article ideas, be a proof reader.</p>
Newsletters and emails	At times, there is information that we want to get out on a timely basis. We use our newsletters/emails to communicate with our members. It's a great way to get information to our members in a little less formal means.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep up to date on timely issues. 	<p>Easy: Read the newsletters.</p> <p>Moderate: Get involved in the process.</p>
Yahoo Chat Line	If you are a member and you haven't already signed up for the Yahoo Chat Line, you may want to do so. The chat line is offered to any of our members. The topics are as varied as our resorts. If you have a question that you would like other member's input, just write it. Some members just read the information, others offer their insight and respond. Either way, it is a good way to see what others are wondering about.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not every topic will interest you. Just pass over those. But, many will be on topics of interest to you. • Get other resorters' opinions and insight. 	<p>Easy: Sign up and read the emails.</p> <p>Moderate: Offer responses to other's questions or ask questions for others to comment on.</p>

	Marketing	Benefit to you	How you can get involved
Website & Mobile Site	In the last two years, we have been putting your money to work by making updates and improvements to the website: <i>www.Minnesota-Resorts.com</i> . We added an on-line form for you to easily communicate with your legislators, advertising opportunity for those offering camping, membership renewal ability on-line, and more. We also pay for Search Engine Optimization (SEO) annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usable website for both resorters and guests. • Easy vehicle to communicate with legislators. 	<p>Easy: Verify that your information is current and that you have updated photos.</p> <p>Moderate: Review the website and recommend changes.</p>
Advertising	Our advertising dollars go to good use: Pay per click, banner ads and varied other advertising. Annually we take advantage of the free marketing dollars offered by Explore Minnesota by applying for and being awarded grants. This stretches our advertising dollars. One additional thing that we want to point out is that we were awarded <i>one of only six advertising opportunities</i> recently offered through Explore Minnesota Tourism. For a \$2,000 investment we will be involved in the combined advertising efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We use our marketing dollars to benefit you by getting our website, and therefore your website, in front of potential guests. 	<p>Easy: Put a link on your website to the <i>www.Minnesota-Resorts.com</i> website</p> <p>Moderate: Volunteer to assist in molding our advertising ventures.</p>
Membership	The focus for some of our board members is on membership. We are reviewing written communication, member benefits, welcome packets and much more.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The more members we have the stronger our voice is. 	<p>Easy: Talk about CMR and if resorters in your area aren't members, invite them to join!</p> <p>Moderate: Talk to the vendors you use and invite them to be associate members.</p>

	Legislative	Benefit to you	How you can get involved
Day on the Hill	Annually, usually in February or March, <i>we get on the bus</i> and drive to our state Capitol. You don't have to be <i>political</i> to have a voice. You are involved by just being there! The more representation we have the bigger our voice. We find the legislators really do want to listen to our issues and work with us on solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our issues are brought to the attention of those that can create a solution. It really does make a difference! 	<p>Easy: Come to Day on the Hill.</p> <p>Moderate: Get involved in legislative issues and be a contact for legislators.</p>
Legislative Watchdog	We keep abreast on issues that crop up that impact our industry. Not every issue will impact every member. Example: Every year some group tries to change Labor Day school start rules. As issues arise, we mobilize our members to contact their local legislators to let them know how it affects the resort community. They really care about our industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are aware of issues impacting our industry. 	<p>Easy: Be aware of issue that impact our industry and contact your legislators using our on-line form.</p> <p>Moderate: Identify an issue and become a champion of the cause.</p>
Lobbyist	Joel Carlson is well respected at the Capitol and is of great value to our organization. He meets with the lawmakers and assists us in keeping our issue in the fore front.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our issues are heard. We have someone at the Capitol even when we are not there. 	<p>Easy: Come to Day on the Hill. Send letters to our legislators about current issues using the easy form on the CMR website.</p> <p>Moderate: Get involved on our legislative committee.</p>
U of M & Explore Minnesota Tourism Councils	The CMR is offered one position on these councils. Varied industry topics are addressed, discussed and solved. The Explore MN Tourism Council handles the grants and the cooperative and partnership advertising funding along with the tourism budget for the state.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CMR is kept in the loop on tourism topics. We keep up to date. 	
Varied work groups	As issues arise, we are often invited to be a member on an advisory council. For example, due to the hard work and persistence of CMR Legislative participants, especially Day on the Hill attendees, a bill was passed directing the Dept. of Labor and Industry to convene a study group to draft a recommendation, by 1/15, to help solve our plumbing license woes. The CMR Legislative Committee has been a central participant in this study group from the beginning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When specific issues or concerns come up, we are there on the work groups. 	<p>Easy: Be aware of the issues.</p> <p>Moderate: Testify on behalf of the CMR on a bill in front of a conference committee.</p>

This year, Tim and I were re-elected for a second three-year term. We have thoroughly enjoyed the last three years and look forward to the next three. We believe that the more you put into an organization the more you will get out of it!



School of Resorting Sign Making

By Sherrie Porth, Loon Point Resort



Graduates of CMR's School of Resorting Sign Making class. Front row (l to r): Karen Senger, Cedar Point Resort; Jennifer Bateman, Two Inlets Resort; Debbie Eickhorst, Kohl's Resort; Mary Smerling, Paradise Resort Back row: (l to r): Pat Addler, Cedar Rapids Lodge; Tam Mahaffey, Lost Acres Resort; Timberly Christiansen, Finn-N-Feather Resort; Kim Jamtgaard, Wildwood Resort; Sherrie Porth, Loon Point Resort

You've seen those really cute signs! You know, those rustic looking ones in the stores that are priced beyond realistic. I've seen tons of cute signs on Pinterest but that's all I did was look at them because I had no idea how to make them until NOW! I learned everything I needed to know at the Congress of Minnesota Resorts (CMR) School of Resorting Sign Making Class. I can now make my own signs at a fraction of the cost and custom make them to whatever I want them to say. How cool is that!!!

For \$20, I got to make six signs and picked up some really neat ideas from the other nine ladies that were there. Tons of supplies were brought from everyone and it was fun to see the signs come together.

As a new resort owner, we just completed our first year, our membership in the Congress of Minnesota Resorts has been tremendously helpful. We have been amazed by and very appreciative of this network of fellow resorters helping each other. Thank you everyone!!



Hard at work learning how to make customized rustic signs for their resorts. Around the table starting on the left: Karen Senger, Cedar Point Resort; Kim Jamtgaard, Wildwood Resort; Debbie Eickhorst, Kohl's Resort; Sherrie Porth, Loon Point Resort; Tam Mahaffey, Lost Acres Resort

Dirty Dozen FaceBook Tips

1. A picture is worth a thousand words.
 2. If a picture is worth a thousand words, video is priceless.
-
3. While you can use FaceBook on your phone or tablet, it's best to run your FaceBook business page from a laptop or desktop computer.
 4. Sharing content isn't the same as creating content.
 5. While quality content may be king, without an audience it doesn't do much good. Promote your page!
 6. Engage your audience. Ask questions. Ask them to "like" and "share."
 7. Respond to questions - QUICKLY! It's a conversation.
 8. Keep it social. People don't like commercials.
 9. Create a schedule - don't just post random thoughts that pop into your head.
 10. Never go negative!
 11. Reciprocate. "Like" other pages.
 12. Have fun. If it isn't fun, you're doing it wrong.



EMT Conference Review-Speed Sessions

By Bob Scharenbroich, Black Pines Beach Resort



Imagine a kind of mash-up of speed dating and speed mentoring and you'll get the idea of what Explore Minnesota Tourism (EMT) Conference technology speed sessions were like. The speed session format has been part of the conference agenda for a variety of topics in years past. This is the second year for speed sessions on technology topics.

A block of an hour and fifteen minutes of the conference time was devoted to quick and intense 15-minute presentations on various technology topics. Most of the sessions were held in a large open room with each presenter talking at the same time. A bell was rung at the end of each 15-minute block and participants quickly dispersed only to just as quickly reassemble in a new group. Participants could squeeze in five speed sessions, chosen from a total of 13 options that included the likely expected topics of Twitter, FaceBook, social media, YouTube, Instagram and Google Analytics, as well as perhaps less expected ones like *exploreminnesota.com* listings, responsive web design, online journalism, search engine optimization, customer-focused social media, social media in action, and online media buys.

Plusses of Speed Sessions

- Lots of topics to pick from.
- Short presentations (You'll find out quickly if that's the style for you.).
- You have the choice of which sessions you attend. There is no, *Class is full*, worry.
- Knowledgeable presenters who could easily answer questions from participants.
- Sessions choices can be made based on wanting to hone existing skills or wanting to learn new ones*.

**This is one of the more important features in the plus column, because what's presented in these short sessions may lead you into attending a longer session on the same topic, if offered later in the agenda or at a future conference.*

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Minuses of the Speed Sessions

- Level of background noise in this setting made it almost impossible to understand what the presenters were saying and to hear participants' questions*.
- Several repeat topics from last year's conference speed sessions.
- Not enough time to attend the number of topics that were of interest.

**This is one of the most important 'needs improvement' pieces of the minus column. For such an important array of topics, being able to easily hear the presenters should be a priority.*

It's been said that if you can learn one new thing, your time spent was worthwhile. While I'm sure I learned more than one new thing, here's one to pass along with credit for this technology tip going to presenter, Christina Keffer, Director of Content Strategy at BarkleyREI in Pittsburgh, PA.

"Optimization really only needs to be done every six months, unless you're changing content."

LEGISLATION

And the Survey Says...

By CMR Workshop/Conference Co-Chairwomen

Tina Reuper, Sandy Pines Resort and Karen Senger, Cedar Point Resort



Thank you to everyone that responded to the survey that we sent out earlier this year. The CMR Workshop/Conference Committee emailed it to every resort in Minnesota that we had an email for. We received 125 responses and we appreciate everyone that was able to respond.

We created this survey to get feedback and suggestions for future workshops and conferences. It is interesting to get feedback from new and experienced resorters. Seventy-five percent of the respondents have been in the resort business for 11 years or longer. Forty-four percent of the respondents have been CMR members for six years or more. Thirty percent of the respondents are not current CMR members and 60 percent have attended a workshop or conference in the past.

The CMR Workshop/Conference Committee strives to seek out what is most important when developing our workshops and conferences. Based on the responses to the survey, we realize that fellowship with other resorters is as or more important as topics such as marketing, general education, legislative or motivational. The survey responses offered some topic suggestions including financial, legal, increasing sales, and exit strategies.

One of the benefits of attending a CMR Workshop/Conference is hearing the information first hand. We realize that not everyone can attend the workshops and conferences and one person suggested that we give minutes or a synopsis of the sessions. Great idea! A number of the topics do end up being *Minnesota Resorter* magazine articles. For example, the winter edition (page 20) was an article about services dogs. A member of the Department of Human Services spoke on this topic at the 2014 Fall Conference. Efforts will be made to cover as much information from the workshops/conference in the *Minnesota Resorter* magazine or the CMR Newsletters as possible.

You spoke and we heard. The survey responses indicated that the type of speaker matters. You want to hear from other resorters as well as outside subject matter experts. We heard and we listened. The CMR are *Resorters Helping Resorters*. If you haven't gone to a workshop or conference, think about attending!

Kathy's Kraft Korner

By Kathy Marnik, Timber Trails Resort

Rock Dominoes

Crafts that double as a game are a win-win situation for resort families. This is an opportunity to combine an outdoor adventure with a quiet time craft project. The Domino Rocks provide hours of fun playtime, both to create and to play with.

Supplies:

Small flat rocks
Acrylic paints
Mod Podge
Paintbrushes
Newspapers



Instructions:

Collect enough small smooth rocks to make a set of dominoes that goes up to six.

Wash and let dry.

Spread newspaper and paint rocks black. When dry add white lines and dots for your dominoes.

When dry add a layer of Mod Podge to create a glossy finish.

Rock Monsters

Paint and googly eyes turn plain rocks into monsters that can be friendly or scary, depending on a child's imagination. If you want to put them to good use when you're finished, choose smaller stones and glue magnets to the back. Pop them on the fridge for instant art that's also useful for securing recipes and other pieces of kid creativity.

Rock Food

Arm kids with clean rocks and paint to create art that doubles as play food. *Note: This craft is best for older children who won't be tempted to put the faux food in their mouths.*



Yard Yatzee

Supplies:

5- 4x4 Wood Squares. Buy 20 inches of 4x4 from a home improvement store (you can have them cut it into cubes for you).

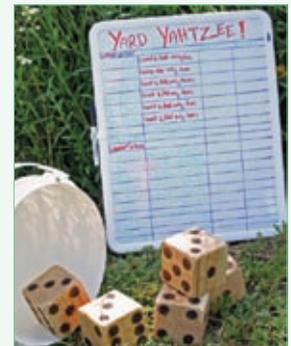
1 large whiteboard (available at school/office supplies store)

Bucket for rolling (optional)

Thick black Sharpie

Once you have five - 4x4 cubes. Create dice by using a marker to add the dots for numbers. Put the dice in the bucket, shake the dice, and roll the dice out.

Use a white board to create a large score card that all players can see. Use the Sharpie Marker for the lines and scoring details. Then use a whiteboard marker for the actual score and the score will wipe clean while the rest stays put! It's a great reusable score board.



Yard Yatzee can be played in teams, going every other roll. It was a good way to get more people involved.

Sometimes playing on the grass causes the dice not to lay flat making it hard to tell which number is up. So, it might work better to play on a sidewalk/driveway with an outdoor carpet down or possibly on a deck.

2015 Day On/Off the Hill

By CMR Legislative Co-Chairmen Roger Lykins, Lykins Pinehurst Resort and Tom Marnik, Timber Trails Resort

On February 4, 2015, the Day on the Hill bus again made the journey down to the State Capitol. Even though this year's Day on the Hill was earlier than most, we had good weather for the trip. About 30 Resorters met in St. Paul. What was different this year was that our Day on the Hill was actually a Day off the Hill event.

We invited the legislators to a get together at the Wabasha Caves. This was a really cool venue and everybody brought a decorative item from their resort to recreate a fun resort feel in the middle of winter. We had all kinds of fun stuff including a campfire, ice fishing tent, canoe, beach balls and mounted trophy fish. A special thanks goes out to Tim Aarsvold for bringing a whole SUV load of stuff.

At the door were *Bonnie and Clyde* types with tommy-guns to welcome our culprits in crime, the legislators. With a history of buried bodies, bootlegging and ghosts the caves provided a neat environment for our get-together. We would have liked more attendance from our



Day Off the Hill participants each brought decorative items from their resorts to recreate fun resort atmosphere for the event. Here a knight is sporting his resort-spirit.

legislators, but the one-on-one time this afforded was very valuable. Instead of the typical 15 minutes in their office where the meeting is very formal, this venue allowed us to get to know our state lawmakers on a different level and connect with them. All in attendance indicated they had fun and so what more could you ask for.

The next day, we met at the capitol and through the efforts of our lobbyist we were able to secure a large meeting room as our base camp. Not an easy task given the amount of construction going on. Our members met individually with 22 house and senate members and met in groups with much of the leadership.

The key issues this year were:

1. Aquatic Invasive Species trailer sticker law changes.
2. The reoccurring onslaught on Post labor Day School Start.
3. Explore Minnesota Tourism Funding.



Congress of Minnesota Resorts members gathered in St. Paul to meet with state legislators to discuss key issues facing Minnesota resorts.

We look forward to making our annual trip fun and enjoyable for all. Please consider attending next year to help nudge our legislators in a favorable direction, which will support our resort businesses.



CMR Legislative Co-Chair Tom Marnik (a.k.a. Clyde) along with Bonnie welcomed Day Off the Hill participants as they arrived at Wabasha Caves.

Legislative Update

2015 Session heading into the home stretch

By Joel Carlson, Congress of Minnesota Resorts Lobbyist



The legislative session is moving ahead at a steady clip and will be fully engaged in negotiations over the \$42-billion budget in the coming weeks. The most recent budget forecast projected a \$1.9-billion surplus, which has everyone clamoring for their favorite program or tax cut. House Tax Chair Greg Davids said that there are \$8 billion of requests already submitted for the surplus and while that estimate may be a tad high, there are a lot of demands on the dough.

One of the more public requests on the use of the surplus is an ad campaign run by the Republic Party of Minnesota. The party wants the entire surplus returned to Minnesota taxpayers. However, Republican legislators have different ideas and have promoted \$500 million in school spending, somewhere around \$750 million for transportation, \$80 million for broadband development and their list goes on and on as well. So, the ad campaign will be about as successful as the failed roll out of New Coke.

It isn't just the Republicans having inter-party fights this year. Senate Majority Leader Tom Bakk had a major public fallout with his DFL Governor Mark Dayton over a series of pay raises for state agency commissioners. It was a rare display of mistrust among DFLers, and it took a few weeks for everyone to kiss and make up.

I think the Capitol restoration is making everyone grumpy and disagreeable...I just hope it doesn't spill into May and cause a special session because an agreement can't be reached on the budget.

AIS Decal program

One of the main items of contention for resort owners has been the state requirement for training and decals to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS). Several proposals have been floated in the legislature that range from scrapping the entire program, delaying it or making modifications that are more reasonable and consistent with other state's programs.

The issue of this training program having a significant impact on tourism has been a consistent subject of the debate. Out-of-state

boaters, that would have little knowledge of the requirements, are worried about enforcement. Several resorts experienced cancellations and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has suspended the program pending legislative action. It's not likely that the program will be repealed, so we are working with the DNR and legislators to modify the program to have as limited impact on tourism as possible and still be effective.

Resort improvement sales tax exemption

Rep. Bud Nornes and Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen have again tried to push legislation that would exempt construction materials used for improving a resort (HF 496/SF 678).

This idea has been kicked around for several sessions and has proven to be an extremely hard sell. Possibly the rosier budget situation could enhance the chance for passage this session. (<http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/sessiondaily/SDView.aspx?StoryID=5596>)

Post Labor Day School

Once again, the tourism industry and state fair officials are working to fend off another attempt to repeal or modify the post Labor Day school start. The argument this year is that Labor Day falls later in. This is the rare occasion that the law actually provides the potential for a long week in September for families to enjoy Minnesota before school begins. So far, the bills have been given a little committee time but have not advanced. We have a long way to go before this issue is decided but CMR has done everything we can to let legislators know how important this issue is for resorters.

EMT Funding

Legislation to again increase the tourism-advertising budget for Explore Minnesota Tourism (EMT) is making its way through the process. EMT board member, Mark Novotny, has been called to the Capitol twice this session to testify on the benefits of this funding for tourism in general, and resorts in particular. The co-op advertising that has been available has benefited many communities and vacation properties. Sen. Tom Saxhaug and Rep. Dan Fabian are carrying that message forward to their colleagues and we hope they are successful.

Early Day on the Hill

We tried something different for the Day on the Hill this year by coming to the Capitol early and holding a reception off site to talk to legislators in a more informal setting. The Capitol construction was the main reason for this format and we had a good turnout of CMR members. Next year, session may not even begin until late into March, so we may have to try something unique again.

I've talked to many legislators that thought this year's leave-behind was memorable and useful. CMR members left behind a *Legislative S'more Survival Kit* for those long meeting days. It was a really clever package and well received. Great job CMR!

Once again, the tourism industry and state fair officials are working to fend off another attempt to repeal or modify the post Labor Day school start.

HEADED FOR COLLEGE?

APPLY FOR A CMR SCHOLARSHIP!



Each year the Congress of Minnesota Resorts offers four \$500 scholarships to a junior or senior in high school or a current undergraduate or technical school student. March 15, 2016 is the deadline for the scholarship application to be returned to the Congress of Minnesota Resorts office. A scholarship application can be printed by going to the CMR website www.Minnesota-Resorts.com Scroll to the bottom of the home page and click on Membership, then by using your Login and Password you will be able to go to Applications and click on Scholarship Application and print a copy.

If you need further assistance please contact Vicky:
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DEADLINE TO APPLY: MARCH 15, 2016

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SAVE the DATE for the CMR Fall Conference

October 25-27, 2015
The Lodge at Giants Ridge, Biwabik
2015 CMR Fall Conference

This year's conference will be held at The Lodge at Giants Ridge in Biwabik. If you haven't been to this Resort, WOW it is stunning! It is seated on two golf courses and overlooks the Giants Ridge Ski Area right in the heart of the Superior National Park. Now, if that's not enough to get you there, we have some incredible speakers lined up for this year's event! We will have a few speakers on marketing from all different views:

1. How to best use your business listings to drive more business.
2. Marketing with a small budget-how to prioritize and maximize.
3. Responsive website design and why it is critical to your business.

These are just some of the topics we want to hit this year! We are organizing another panel of resorters to speak with us. We learn so much from our peers.

So mark the date October 25th - 27th on your calendar now. You are NOT going to want to miss this...CMR Fall Conference!

For more information go to the CMR website
www.Minnesota-Resorts.com