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Education: Plan to attend CMR Fall Conference Oct. 27-29, 2013
Marketing: Social Media
Legislation: Fight against Aquatic Invasive Species



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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



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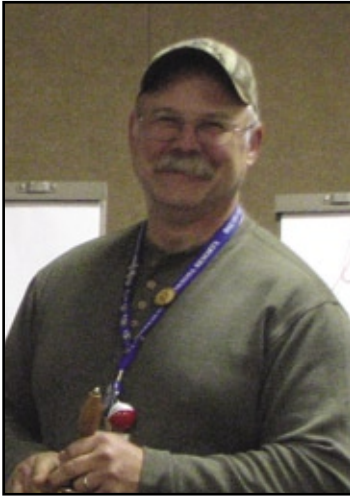
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About the cover: Copyright Minnesota House of Representatives, Photograph by Paul Battaglia
Congress of Minnesota Resorters participated in the Commerce and Consumer Protection Finance Policy Hearing during their Day on the Hill event February 26-27, 2013.

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

From Your President's Pen



President Mark Novotny
Congress of Minnesota Resorts

How Ya'll Doing!

As I write my column, with 18 inches of snow on the ground and another five inches falling, spring still looks a long way off. When you get this magazine, you should be cleaning up the yard and getting those cabins ready for all your guests that made reservations. The ice should be off the lake and guests should be fishing.

I looked back at last year's article and notice that I mentioned that gas prices were beginning to climb.

At the beginning of last year, gas was \$3.19. In Hackensack this year, we saw \$2.99. Last year on March 1, gas was \$3.59 and this year it is again higher at \$3.79. How does this work? Again, they are talking \$4/gallon or higher this summer.

On February 12-13, I attended an Explore Minnesota Tourism Conference. During the whole conference it was stressed how important social media was for getting your resort noticed. Do you have a blog? Do you have a Facebook business page? Are you on Twitter or Pinterest? Personally, just keeping my website updated and having a Facebook page keeps me busy enough with everything else that needs to be done on our resort. Social media is becoming a job title for big business and a career for someone.

On February 26-27, 32 resort owners flooded the capitol building during our Day on the Hill event this year. As always, we had some big issues to tackle. Again, Post Labor Day School Start was at the top of the list. This year, we had more information to include with more substance. We have the University of Minnesota study which shows the impact of starting before Labor Day. Go to <http://www.tourism.umn.edu/ResearchReports/ResearchReportsbyYear/index.htm> and look at *Do families vacation more in the summer when school starts after Labor*

Day? This is the full report. Also, we have 28 school districts in southwest Minnesota that received a three-year exemption to test the Post Labor Day School Start issues with a flexible learning calendar. They are on their last year and the first two years have not been good for the students. Their test scores have been dropping even though they have had two extra weeks before April testing. This is not a victory for resorts or education but it does prove that starting school before Labor Day does not improve learning outcome.

We are also opposing legislation regarding plumbing issues, such as adding another category for *maintenance* requiring four years of experience, additional training, and a test with a 50 percent failure rate.

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) has become a major issue for our lakes and rivers. We are now trying to exclude temporary employees from having to take an online test before they can help us move docks or boats in and out of our lake. We are trying to get an exception in which if we are in direct supervision, they do not need training.

We are concerned about DNR adding 200 camper cabins and also adding seasonal RV sites. These camper cabins are like small homes – beds, table and chairs, electricity, heat, ceiling fans and Internet access. The cabins are about 200 square feet and allow for six people. Whereas our bedrooms have to include 60 square feet per person, which would require 360 square feet just for the bedrooms. They are renting these cabins for \$55 per night for six people. Do you want to subsidize state park visitors with your tax dollars?

With all these issues and more, please contact your senator or representative and let him know how you feel. And, if you are a member of CMR, *Get on the Bus*. We are planning another event for Day on the Hill in 2014.

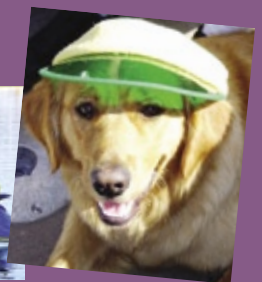
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Respectfully,
Mark Novotny

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SEND THEM TO: ANN WARLING
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CMR Spring Workshop

An Opportunity to Connect, Learn, Share

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



CMR Members practice their CPR skills during the CPR and basic first aid certification courses.

The CMR Spring Pre-Workshops, on April 8th, allowed resorters to obtain and refresh their CPR and basic first aid skills as well as how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED). At the end of the course, resorters received their certifications for CPR and basic first aid. An additional hands-on course was offered on how to increase resorters' proficiency in using Reservation Master software.

CMR President Mark Novotny welcomed 58 resorters to the start of the CMR Spring Workshop on April 9th. The first session focused on *Should my Website have a Blog?* Ed Heil, Story Teller Marketing & Communications, shared his social media expertise in simple terms so all could understand. David Bergman provided an interactive update on Explore Minnesota Tourism efforts. Strategies on how to best *Leave a Legacy for your Kids* was shared by Lemieux Johnson Financial Group. Cracker barrel opportunities throughout the day gave resorters time to share their personal best practices and experiences with one another.



Ed Heil, Story Teller Marketing & Communications, explains the relationship between multiple social media opportunities.

“Even after 11 years in the resorting business, I always learn something new at every workshop and Fall conference. It is well worth my time to attend and participate in CMR activities and events,” Karen Senger, Cedar Point Resort.

When the group returned from lunch, the group spent time learning more about



My dad is fishing to earn your business!








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the CMR website features available to members. The workshop drew to a close in the afternoon, with resorters digging into the details regarding worker's compensation insurance, human resources issues and OSHA requirements. CMR Legislative Committee Chair Dave Thompson provided a legislative update.

“Every speaker had something important we all needed to hear. Even after 25 years, we always learn something and take it back to the resort. It just makes us better resort owners when we attend these workshops!” explained Pat Addler, Cedar Rapids Lodge.



Resorters participated in a hands-on workshop working on laptop computers as they are trained on the software features of Reservation Master.

EDUCATION

Rebuilding a Cabin or Just Building a Cabin

Permits are needed to complete a building project.

By Mark Novotny, Hyde-A-Way Bay Resort

When planning to either build or rebuild a cabin, these are the departments needed to be contacted and permits needed to have while doing the project. I am in Cass County, so permits may be different in your county but the department you need to contact will be similar. State permits are all the same.

Departments to contact and permits needed during the process of rebuilding a cabin.

1. Contact your counties *environment department* to find out what permits are needed to either build or re-build a cabin. When working in a shore impact zone, a variance may be needed to start the project. This may be due to the way the property lies (large hill behind the cabin) or boundaries lie (road runs through the property). Each county has specific regulations so check with the department to see what can be done. The cost of this permit covers a visit from zoning committee and a hearing to either allow or reject the variance.

2. The next permit that will be needed is a *conditional use permit*. This permit goes through a process of having a committee come out to the property and viewing of the plans. Along with this process, everyone within a set distance of the property is notified of the building plans so that they can voice their approval or disapproval of the plans. In the end, the zoning board will determine if the conditional use permit is approved. This permit will require that a septic in compliance be completed or inspected within the past three years. Again, the cost of the permit covers a visit from the zoning committee and a hearing to either allow or reject the conditional use permit.



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3. Once these permits are in hand, it is then time to apply for a *building permit*. If the building plans have not changed, this process is seamless. It will be reviewed and within 30 days the building receipt should be received. The cost of this permit covers the reviewing of the plans.

4. When either rebuilding or building, a *plumbing permit* will be needed. This permit is needed before the project can be started. If a person has a plumbing license, plumbing plans will need to be submitted to the Department of Labor and Industries with all makes and models of the fixtures. If a person does not have a plumbing license, a hired plumber will submit these plans. The plumbing permit cost covers reviewing of the plans, rough-in inspection and a final inspection.

5. The Department of Health will need to complete a *site evaluation* of the building plans and how it lies on the property. Things the department will want to know are where the wells, septic systems, gas lines, gas tanks, water lines, and others are compared to the building project. More regulations that are needed to insure the safety of the guests. The cost of the permit includes the project reviewed and a final inspection before guests can use the cabin.

6. During the building project, the electrician will get an *electrical permit* from the Department of Labor and Industries. This permit cost includes rough-in inspection and a final inspection. The electrician will work with the inspector to get this permitting approved before the cabin can be finally open to guests.

7. The last permit that will be needed is only for rebuilding a cabin. When demolishing an older cabin, contact the Environment Protection Agency to have an *asbestos inspection* done before the cabin is taken down and hauled away. This permit cost includes inspection of the old cabin and samples taken for lab testing.

It is important to begin this process about one year ahead of starting a building project to be sure that all the permits and reviews are done before starting to either rebuild or build a cabin.

This is much different than the average Minnesota residence. If you are building for yourself, most counties only require a building permit and the only state permit that is needed is an electrical permit. Minnesota residence owner can do their own electrical work but a resort owner will need inspections done.

This is what the departments will need to be contacted and the time it takes to get started on these projects. At present, these are the requirements but as time goes, these may change.

Join Us for the
FALL CONFERENCE

Mark your calendar for the
2013 Congress of Minnesota Resorts
Fall Conference
Oct. 27-29, 2013
Location TBA

EDUCATION

Minnesota Department of Health Fact Sheet Water Connections to Recreational Vehicles and Camping Trailers

Submitted by the MN Department of Health



Water outlets that are used for hose connections to recreational vehicles, camping trailers, or similar uses need to be protected against backflow. An appropriate backflow prevention device must be in place to eliminate a direct connection that could allow contaminants to move back into the potable water supply during times of low system pressure or when downline pressure increases, such as with a pump or by heating of the water. This cross

connection control requirement can be found in Minnesota Rules, part 4715.2100.

Unfortunately, backflow preventers that are designed to be screwed onto hose threads at a facet, such as hose bibb vacuum breakers meeting ANSI/ASSE 1011 or ANSI/ASSE 1052, cannot be used on these outlets – because they cannot be used under continuous pressure, which would result when the hose stays connected and pressurized. If they are in use for this purpose, they should be replaced.

The appropriate device to use is a dual check valve with an intermediate atmosphere vent (DCIAV) meeting ANSI/ASSE 1012. It can be subjected to backpressure, and is suitable for a continuous

pressure installation. It should be piped in-line and each water outlet needs to have its own device.

If it is desired to attach such a device to an existing threaded faucet, it should be done only as a temporary remedy until the device can be piped in-line. Such a temporary installation would probably require use of adaptors to go from the hose threads on the faucet to the pipe thread in the device, and then to return from pipe threads to hose threads on the outlet.

Note: To avoid damage from freezing, winterizing the water system should include making sure water is removed from all parts of backflow preventers.

If you have any questions about the proper method of backflow prevention in a specific situation, contact your state or local health sanitarian or the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry Plumbing Program at (651) 284-5067. For more information visit www.health.state.mn.us.

For further information contact the following Minnesota Department of Health District offices:

Bemidji	(218) 308-2100
Duluth	(218) 723-4642
Fergus Falls	(218) 332-5150
Mankato	(507) 389-2501
Marshall	(507) 537-7151
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EDUCATION

Just Like The Good Ole Days

Pike Point Resort Celebrates 90th Anniversary

By Scott and Sue Springer, Pike Point Resort and Lodge



This summer, Pike Point Resort and Lodge guests will experience a bit of history as they join in celebrating the resort's 90th anniversary of continuous operation. Resort guests will have the opportunity to enjoy festivities through a variety of activities, such as: Sunday Afternoon Ice Cream Socials, Wednesday Noon Potluck Fish Fry, Ladies' Night Out - pontooning

and fishing with cane poles, weekly fishing contests, water balloon volleyball tournaments, kid's minnow races, horseshoe rally, 4th of July Celebration, live music, and hayrides.



Before the current lodge was built, what is now Cabin 5 was used as the lodge. The Richardson's used it to serve meals to loggers and farmers.



These are the first cabins built in 1923 establishing Hi's Pike Point Resort, which was the only operating resort on Gull Lake for 13 years.

In 1939, the Richardson's built the lodge structure that is still used today. Meals were served at the lodge for as many as 75 guests at one time. It was originally built down by the lakeshore, but in the mid 70s was moved up on top of the hill and placed on footings where it sits today with modern facilities. The Richardson's cut and planed the lumber themselves, from trees on the property, for all of the cabin buildings and the lodge. They also made all the dining room tables and chairs, which are still used in Cabin 5 and furnishes the lodge's seating today.

The rich history of Pike Point Resort and Lodge begins with the purchase of approximately 80 acres and the building of the first cabin in 1923 by Hi and Ada Richardson. Located two miles west of Tenstrike, it was the only resort in operation on Gull Lake for 13 years. Every year thereafter, they added another new cabin until there were eight. Today's Cabin 5 was the original lodge built and used for serving meals to loggers and farmers.

The Richardson's had their own garden, chickens and cows. Ada canned fruits and vegetables for the meals she served. Cloth linens were used at the dinner tables and water had to be carried from the lake for washing and cleaning. Food and ice were lowered into a box in the ground to keep cold until the lodge was built. The guests would get down on their knees to get their milk and meats out of the box in the ground. An icebox was built in the new lodge for cold storage. The original icebox is still located in the lodge today.



1923 resort guests show off their fishing success with this pole full of walleye.

Cabins rented for \$3 a day, which included three meals a day and a boat. Minnows were 10 cents a dozen and boat rental was 50 cents a day. The lake was stocked from the Red Lake Hatchery and the Bemidji Hatchery, 20 cans were put into the lake each year.



Hi's Pike Point Resort's original business card with rates on the back.

Completely furnished housekeeping cabins, with boat

	1 day	2 days	3 days	4 days	5 days	6 days	1 week
1 Bed	\$5.50	\$7.00	\$10.50	\$14.00	\$16.50	\$18.75	\$20.00
2 Beds	5.00	9.50	14.00	17.50	21.00	23.50	25.00
3 Beds	7.00	12.50	17.50	22.50	25.00	27.50	30.00

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Note how the Richardsons advertised their resort on the tire cover for their automobile. The original tire cover was discovered under a cabin when the Springers raised the cabin during leveling. This along with other memorabilia is on display at the resort.

Hi Richardson died in 1943 and Ada, was remarried to Galen Lapp in 1952. Ada and Galen continued to operate the resort cabins, but did not serve meals as had been done in the past. The camp was full each year with the cabins having the atmosphere of the *good ole days*. The resorters recalled using the *detachable rowboat motor* by Evinrude. That is what they were called back then. The motor was actually purchased for the resort from the Gibbons Store in Bemidji in the early 1920s for about \$50. Twenty flat bottom rowboats, hand made of pine by Hi, were still being used.

The resort changed hands a couple of times between 1973 and 1979. In 1979, Ron and Joan Yearling purchased the property. They had their work cut out for them with cabins needing work and updating. At that time there was no running water to the cabins and only two of the cabins had a sink. They modernized cabins with running water and bathroom facilities. A shower house was built with heat and hot water. Bathrooms and screened porches were added to some of the cabins. Ron passed away leaving the resort's operation to Joan to run. Being a widow and not having the talents of her husband at her side, Joan made the decision to sell the resort.



Hi Richardson was very crafty and used timber from the resort to make everything, including the flat-bottom boats, tables and chairs. The tables and chairs are still being used today in the Lodge and Cabin 5.



The original lodge was built on the lakeshore and remained in this location for 50 years until the second resort owners moved the lodge up the hill to its current location. The lodge had to be jacked up and placed on wheels in order to be relocated.



Current resort owners, Scott and Sue Springer purchased the resort January 29, 2010 and love what they are doing. They live on site in a year-round home originally built in 1923.

On January 29, 2010, Joan sold the resort to the present owners Scott and Sue Springer. The Springers are living at the resort in the remodeled original home site on the property. The first and second spring brought new floating docks to the lake with electrical hookups for the boats. Cabins began to be lifted and leveled for the comfort and safety of guests. New roofs were installed on four of the cabins by the spring of 2012. The original lodge had a make over with new bathroom, fireplace, and kitchen, as well as refinishing existing wood floors and pine walls. The RV sites now have electrical hookups, water hose bibbs and crushed concrete driveways and pads.

Scott and Sue have a vision for the resort and it includes all *those great people* who have made it what it is today; a place to bring family and friends, great fishing, enjoying outside activities, hearing plenty of laughter, gaining new friendships and building memories that will last a lifetime. Follow all of the 90th Anniversary activities in keeping with the atmosphere of the 'good ole' days on the resort's website at www.pikepointresort.com.



The Springers continue to update the resort. They added three new docks in 2012 along with many other updates.



EDUCATION

Build a Business Relationship with your Insurance Agent

By Don Williams, Midwest Insurance

While visiting with resort owners, I hear that two of your largest expenses are taxes and insurance premiums.

I am sure this is true, and I'm also sure that most resorters have talked to their county commissioner and their local assessor. Besides lobbying, there is little that one can do but complain, like I do. I cannot help or give you ideas on how to lower your taxes.

In the Fall issue of the *MN Resorter*, Congress of Minnesota Resorts (CMR) President Mark Novotny talked about resort insurance taking increases. He is right. Property insurance rates are going higher across the country. In Minnesota, we have had three bad years of weather related losses with resorts getting hit hard. I do not see rates coming down, so you need to choose your insurance agent wisely and start a business relationship with him or her.

Choosing a knowledgeable and reliable insurance agent can be one of the most important decisions that a consumer can make, and it is sometimes made using very questionable criteria.

Just because an insurance agent is a friend or a relative, or is an excellent golf partner, or gets you occasional tickets to sporting events, he or she may not be the person best suited to advise you about your insurance needs.

Now that you have chosen an agent, hopefully, he or she may be able to give you some ideas on how to lower your insurance cost, or at least, get you the maximum coverage for your premium.

You can start by forming a business relationship with your agent. This means that you should have at least one, or even two, sit down meetings per year with your agent. These meetings should be at your resort, not at the agent's office or over the phone.

An insurance policy is a contract between you and the insurance company and can be very complex. It is easy to say, "I don't have time to read the policy or try to understand all of the coverages. After all, that is why I have an agent."

Well, I am going to put a disclaimer here! Insurance consumers (you) generally have certain duties of their own. These duties are sometimes neglected. For example, in many jurisdictions, the policyholder has a duty to read the policy, and the policyholder cannot legally plead ignorance if the policy itself has spelled something out in it's fine print that the policy holder missed or the agent didn't explain. Many insurance consumers find it difficult and tedious to read through their insurance policies, and will instead hope that the insurance agent adequately summarizes the coverage details. This can be a recipe for unpleasant surprises.

As difficult and tedious as it may be, it is wise to actually read those policies. Insurance policies these days are written in what is hoped will pass for plain English so that it isn't utterly impossible for the average person, with some determination, to read and understand them. If there are specific sections that are difficult to follow (and this is likely) that is where the insurance agent can be asked specific questions.

Let's get back to our discussion of building a business relationship. Today with email, faxes, and cell phones it is very easy for us agents to get lazy and inform you that nothing has changed from the last year, so we will just send you out the policy. Don't let this happen.

If insurance is one of your largest costs you should know what coverage you are paying for, what coverage you many not need and what coverage you may need but don't have.

Your agent should be answering questions about what deductibles are best for you and if you should be self-insuring some items such as boats and other equipment. They should discuss if you need an umbrella policy or if you should go with replacement cost or actual cash value. Has your agent ever explained to you what co-insurance is and how it works?

These are just a few of the many things you should be going over with your agent.

You should also become familiar with the office staff at the agency so you know who to talk with if you can't contact your agent directly. Most importantly, sit down with your agent at your resort and review your policy at least once a year.

If you have not seen your agent at your resort in the last two years, or they have not tried to meet with you in the last two years, find a new agent.



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Learn to Make a Simple Mosquito Trap :

Idea acquired from Pinterest

Using chemical mosquito repellents available in the market, has serious harmful effects on human brain and lungs. Instead make your own mosquito trap at home. The picture shows how many mosquitoes it can kill in a week's time.

Items needed:

- 1 cup water
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/3 tsp. yeast
- 2 liter empty plastic bottle



How to make :

- Cut the plastic bottle in half. Storing the neck portion:
- Mix brown sugar with hot water. Let cool. When cold, pour in the bottom half of the bottle.
- Add the yeast. No need to mix. It creates carbon dioxide.
- Place the funnel part, upside down, into the other half of the bottle.
- Wrap the bottle with something black, minus the top, and put in some corner of your house.

In a week, you will see the amount of mosquitoes that died inside the bottle. Your very useful and zero-harm effective mosquito repellent is ready.



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THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!

Resorters Helping Resorters - Since 1985

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

Jim, Kohl's Resort

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

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

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

JOIN THE CMR - YOUR MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

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

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Owner/Manager _____ Years in resorting _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip (9 digit) _____

Township _____ County _____

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

Resort E-mail Address _____ Resort Website Address _____

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

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



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



School of Resorting educational classes.



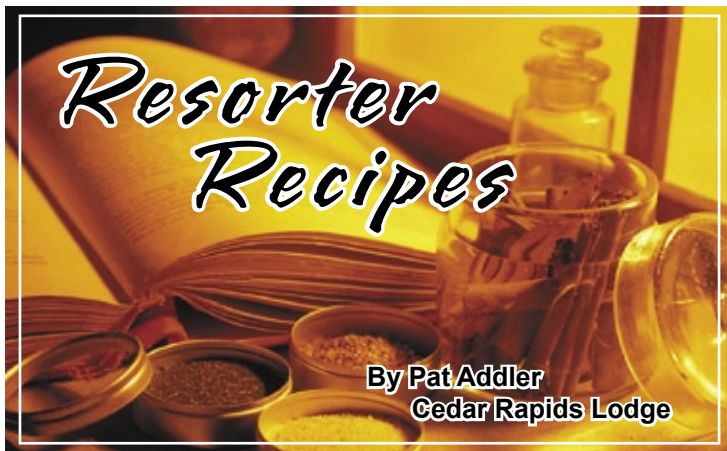
Yahoo Groups - online resort chat room.



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MARKETING



DISHPAN COOKIES

2 cups brown sugar
2 cups granulated sugar
2 cups oil
4 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla
Mix these ingredients together and add:
1 1/2 cups oatmeal
4 cups flour
2 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt
4 cups corn flakes
Optional:
1 cup coconut
1 cup chocolate chips
1 cup nuts
Bake at 350° for 9 minutes
Makes 8-9 dozen cookies!



BROCCOLI SALAD

2 bunches broccoli, cut bite-size
1/2 cup chopped red onion
3/4 cup raisins
1 1/2 cups roasted sunflower seeds
1 lb. cooked bacon, chopped

Dressing:

1 1/2 cups mayonnaise
3/4 cup sugar
3 Tbsp. salad vinegar
Blend dressing ingredients and add to salad 1/2 hour before serving.



CHEESEBURGER SOUP

1 lb. ground beef
1/2 cup onion, chopped
1/2 cup celery, chopped
1 1/2 cups diced potatoes
1 pkg. onion soup mix
1 cup chopped carrots
1/2 cup corn
1 jar Cheez Whiz
Brown meat and onion in soup pot, drain fat. Put in crock pot with all ingredients(except Cheez whiz). Add enough water to 1 inch above the ingredients. Cook four hours on high or all day on low. Before serving, stir in the Cheez Whiz.



STRAWBERRY PRETZEL SALAD

Crust:

2 2/3 cups pretzels, crushed
1 stick butter
1/4 cup sugar

Melt butter and add to pretzels & sugar. Press into 9 x 13 pan. Bake 10 minutes at 350°. Cool.

Cream together:

8 oz. cream cheese
1 cup sugar
Fold in 8 oz. carton Cool Whip.
Spread on cooled crust.

Bring to boil:

1 cup pineapple juice
1 cup water
Add two small packages strawberry jello. Add two 10 oz. packages frozen strawberry slices and a large can crushed pineapple, drained. Stir all together and pour over cream cheese mixture. Refrigerate until set. Cut to serve.



SPRING IS SPRINGING

Sellers, we are having the best spring in many years for solid buyer activity. These are buyers with a solid amount of cash that have been schooled by bankers on what is bankable. If you are serious about selling, now might be the right time. We've been selling resort since 1973, and have a Google search ranking of 2, 4 or 5th for selling resorts. Realistic buyers deal with a realistic broker, Orion Resort Sales 612-805-9646. We are also in the resort business and know values and function.

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Welcome!

**New CMR Members:
Randy & Kathy Soldwisch,
West Crooked Lake Resort, Nevis, MN**

**David & Tracy Smith,
Green Roof Lodge, Hackensack, MN**

Explore MN Tourism Conference Key Message

Websites must be mobile and tablet friendly

By Tim and Carolyn Aarsvold, Geneva Beach Resort



Carolyn and Tim Aarsvold, Geneva Beach Resort-Alexandria, were joined by (l to r) Sara Stadtherr, Alexandria Hotel & Hospitality, Carolyn, Tim, Mark Novotny Congress of Minnesota Resorts' (CMR) President, Coni McKay, Director of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, and Bridget Peterson, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce as they received the CMR Resorters of the Year Award during the Explore MN Tourism Conference.

The Explore MN Tourism Conference provided an abundance of information for lodging owners, both large and small. The main theme that was mentioned at every presentation was, *Your website MUST be mobile and tablet friendly*. Research shows that a high percentage of vacation planners are starting their planning on their smart phones or tablets and then progressing to their laptops to finalize their plans.

We were pleased to hear that the economic outlook for travel is very encouraging. Eighty-seven percent of travelers plan to travel the same amount or more this coming year. Explore MN's research has

found two main groups of travelers that we will find in Minnesota; the Cultural Travelers and the Adventure Travelers. These travelers are interested in staying busy during their vacation, and are looking for fun and unique activities, whether it's visiting museums or rock climbing. Offering links on your website helps these travelers plan their vacation around your resort.

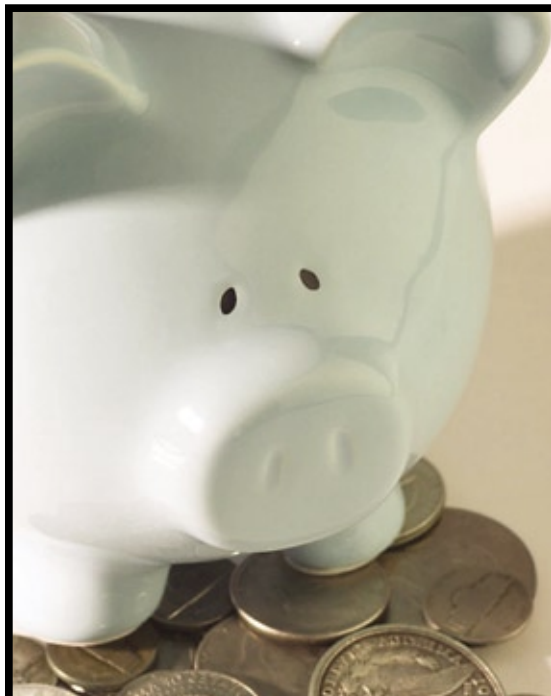
Although guidebooks are still used by 15 percent of Leisure Travelers, *Forbes Magazine* predicts that by 2016, social media will lead the way to generate travel bookings. Resorts are encouraged to have websites that are content rich and have video. YouTube now has 800 million searches each month. Facebook and blogs are very important to your marketing plan, and many travelers will find your website through these venues. Photos are extremely important, and don't forget to tag your photos.

Many of the sessions had slide shows that will be available on the Explore MN Industry site. We encourage you to read through them, as they include many statistics on travel in Minnesota, and much more information on what travelers are interested in and how to market to these interests.

Governor Dayton joined us for lunch on Wednesday, and spoke to us about his interest in MN tourism. He is proposing an increase in funding for Explore MN and is well aware of the impact of tourism in the state of Minnesota.

We were very honored to be presented with the Congress of Minnesota Resorts (CMR) Resorters of the Year at the banquet. CMR President Mark Novotny presented the award, and we were pleased that our children were able to attend, along with staff from the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and Alexandria Hotel and Hospitality. Stevie Ray of Stevie Ray's Comedy Cabaret was the emcee, and he had a great time making fun of our scandinavian name!

Again, remember that your website needs to be mobile friendly, and we hope to see you at the 2014 Tourism Conference!



Apply for a CMR Scholarship!

The Congress of Minnesota Resorts (CMR) was established in 1984, with our theme of "Resorters Helping Resorters." One of our goals is to provide scholastic achievement within the resorting community. Four \$500 scholarships are awarded each year. The scholarships are to be used for tuition and/or related fees by providing assistance to students in pursuit of their academic or vocational advancement. The scholarship funds are made available to children and grandchildren of CMR members. An eligible member is one who has been a member for at least three consecutive years and is currently a member in good standing. Associate members are not eligible for scholarships.

Who is eligible to receive a scholarship?

1. A junior or senior in high school who is planning to attend a four year college, a community college, or a vocational/technical college.
2. A current undergraduate or technical school student.

NOTE: There are no requirements regarding the course of study a student intends to pursue.

To obtain an information packet contact the
Congress of Minnesota Resorts office at:

CMR@Minnesota-Resorts.com or 1-320-212-5107.

You can also print a form from the CMR website, www.Minnesota-Resorts.com.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: MARCH 15th

Social Media, Is it Right For Your Resort?

By Ed Heil, Story Teller Media & Communications

If you've spent time wondering whether your business should "get in to social media," here's a litmus test. Have you ever used Google to look up something you're interested in? When was the last time you looked in the yellow pages to find a business or service? If you're like most people, the answer to the first question is, "Uh, yeah. Duh." The answer to the second question is, "hmmm, let me think, it's been a while."

When we want to find answers to our questions, most of us go online. According to the Pew Internet & American Life Project, Comscore and the Nielsen Company:

- 79 percent of adult Americans use the Internet.
- 78 percent of Internet users conduct product research online.
- The average U.S. Internet user views 2,750 web pages per month.

Meanwhile, the print news media has experienced record decline and broadcast news ratings have fallen since the mid-1990s as people turn to the Internet to gather information on the products and services that interest them. This means that it is becoming vital for businesses to leverage marketing tools that attract customers and prospects online and through social media. "Push" marketing techniques, such as print and broadcast advertisements, are ignored. If you don't believe it, look at your life – do you skip television ads if possible? Do you read all your junk mail? Do you read all of the advertisements in your magazines or newspaper or do you largely ignore that information?

We have become a society of information-on-demand. We want only the information, when we want it, where we want it and by the medium we select and in this fast-paced digital world, that means a handheld device. This means you need to find a way to attract or "pull" your customers to you. We refer to this as inbound marketing or pull marketing. Are you still wondering whether you should "get into social media?" Perhaps the question now is "how do I get into it?"

Keep in mind, an online marketing strategy is no different than any other marketing strategy. It requires planning, implementation and measurement. It also takes time to see results. Unlike running an ad for a special offer in your local paper, your blog or Facebook page won't immediately turn into business. It requires time and cultivation.

Define Your Audience

Before you launch a sustained online marketing strategy, define your audience. It's critical that you know who you're trying to reach. A simple way to begin defining this audience is to separate it into two groups. The first is the customer that simply "should" be your customer. The second group is the customer that you would like to have as a customer but is currently staying somewhere else when they vacation.

Once you have that segment defined create personas for the people that make up that customer or prospect set. For example, if you've identified stay-at-home moms who always do the research for vacations and talk to friends to get recommendations, she may become this persona:

Molly

- 38-years old.
- Married.
- Three children: ages 13, 10 and 8 years old.
- Drives a high mile SUV because it's paid for and her husband

- doesn't want to spend money on a new car.
- She went to the University of Minnesota for undergrad.
- Worked for four years before becoming a stay-at-home mom.
- She likes wine with her neighbors on Friday nights.
- Exercises in the morning.
- Spends the day driving kids to sports events.

You get the idea. If another persona is the guy who gets with his buddies for golf and fishing trips, he has his own persona as well. Once the personas are defined for each customer set you're ready to consider the rest of your strategy because now you know with whom you are talking.

Define Social Tools

All social media tools are not the same, just as all vacation destinations in the United States are not the same. Some social media tools are used more for connecting friends and family (Facebook), some are more business related (LinkedIn) and some are wonderful for people who enjoy sharing recipes and favorite things (Pinterest). Your personas do not engage in all social media tools, perhaps they engage in just one. Understand what social community that persona spends most of his or her time and go meet them.

If you're a novice trying to understand where your personas are spending time, here's a high-level description of some of the most popular social media tools:

Facebook. Family and friends interact here sharing personal information. Users also provide wonderful recommendations and opinions about people, places and things.

Twitter revolves around short messages that can be used to share opinions and observations as well as pictures and video. Here you're able to communicate with customers as well as celebrities and media. You can also follow conversation that could affect your business.

Broadcast yourself and your business on *YouTube*. Create your own YouTube channel where you can keep short videos about your property and services. Prospects and customers can connect with you here and learn more about your facility. YouTube is also the second largest search engine in the world, behind Google.

LinkedIn is the Facebook for business people and businesses. It's no longer just the place to put your resume online. Network with industry leaders and experts. You can also leverage LinkedIn to connect with professionals who book corporate events.

Pinterest is a social sharing platform for photos and digital images. Its premise is that users can maintain their own online bulletin board onto which they can *pin* their favorite pictures of places and things. Pinterest says their largest group of users are upper Midwest females ages 25 to 55 years.

Blogging

For as intoxicating as this talk of social media can be for online marketers, at the center of all of your inbound marketing strategy should be your blog. If you don't have a blog on your website, I highly recommend you consult your web designer to find out how to attach a blog to your website. Here are three reasons to have a blog that you update regularly:

- Improves organic search ranking.

- Positions you and your staff as experts.
- Provides your guests and future guests with information about your facility.

As a *rule of thumb*, it's important that your blog is updated at least weekly, and more than once a week is recommended. In addition, be sure to include keywords that your persona may be using in their search for your resort or resorts like yours. For example, people may search for "best family vacation spots in Aitkin," or "best golf resorts in Minnesota." When possible, include your keywords in the title of your blog and in the text. Remember, cute innuendos and phrases are not highly searchable and do not make the best blog titles.

A final note regarding blogs, be sure again that it's a part of your website if at all possible. Secondly, be sure you link to all of your social tools and that your social tools are connected to your blog. Finally, develop calls-to-action that are located on your blog. These calls-to-action should connect readers to additional information, educational resources or helpful guides.

Social Media Myths

There are a number of myths and misunderstandings of social media that are worth dispelling. These myths can prevent you from developing presence in this dynamic online world and they can potentially prevent you from dispelling rumors about your business.

I don't want to have a (insert your social media tool) page because someone might say something bad about my resort.

Guess what? People will say something bad about you whether you're online or not.

I don't have time for that stuff

A paradigm shift is occurring in marketing. Where time was once spent creating flyers and ¼ page ads for the local paper or magazines, time is now spent in content creation, producing short videos and engaging in social media.

Social media is something for kids

Correct and those kids will grow up to be your customers. What is also true is that adults 35-years and older are the fastest growing segments on Facebook and Pinterest.

I'll hire a teenager who "gets" Facebook to start a page for us

While many teens can set up an account, often these young people lack marketing savvy and social etiquette that is appropriate for a business. Take caution if you go this route.

Inbound and social media marketing can be intimidating for newcomers. Yet, it's important to keep in mind that online business relationships are formed and maintained just like any other relationship. Just as you wouldn't approach a stranger at a social gathering and start to market to them, don't do it online either. Remember, online marketing is about building relationships and trust with your prospects and customers. The cornerstone of effective social media and inbound marketing is helpful and useful content that is created to benefit the consumer. Remember, it's *about* the person who's trying to find answers to questions, not about your sales pitch.

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On the Frontlines

Resort owners help fight the spread of aquatic invasive species

By Marjorie Casey, Aquatic Invasive Species Information Officer – DNR-St. Paul



Vacationers enjoy a quiet moment on the lake; however, this pristine setting is being threatened by aquatic invasive species.

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) continue to move across Minnesota, hitching rides on boat trailers hiding in bait buckets or spreading through wetlands on their way to your area lakes. They compete with native species for food and habitat, foul beaches, harm boat motors, and wreak havoc wherever they show up.

But for every lake or river where zebra mussels, spiny waterfleas, or Eurasian watermilfoil have moved in, there are hundreds more that have no trace of the harmful invaders. Many of these lakes are surrounded by resorts large and small whose owners are working diligently to keep invasive species out. You may be one of the second or third generation resort owners who grew up loving the lake and sharing your passion with guests whose families have been visiting for decades.

Resort owners across Minnesota have a key role to play in helping curb the spread of aquatic invasive species and protecting the resources their guests enjoy. Knowing the current laws and sharing them with your guests can make a difference between adding another lake to the list of infested waters and protecting your area lakes from harmful species.

In a recent interview, DNR Conservation Officer Captain Cory Palmer offered some suggestions.

What are the current regulations governing aquatic invasive species in Minnesota?

There are several steps everyone must take to comply with current AIS laws:

- Clean all aquatic plants, zebra mussels and other prohibited invasive species off boats, trailers, and all water-related equipment before leaving the water access site.
- Drain all the water from the boat, including the livewell, bilge, motor, and portable bait containers.
- Pull the plug, and keep it out while transporting water-related equipment.
- Dispose of all unwanted bait in the trash. It's illegal to dump it in the water or on the ground.

What are the most important steps resort owners can take to make sure their guests are following the law?

One of the biggest things they can do is take a close look at the boat and trailer. Be sure the drain plug is out and that no plant material is

attached. Resort owners often move boats in or out of the lake for guests, so they're in a perfect position to look everything over and make sure that boats are not holding any water and that all aquatic plants and animals are removed. Another thing they can do is add a few questions to the check-in routine. After getting contact information, license plate numbers, and other details, they could ask things like, "Do you have a boat, is the drain plug out, how long has it been out of the water?" It's just a bit of conversation, but a good way to influence guests and help them understand the regulations. If information about AIS is part of check-in, it could have a lot of influence on guests.

What should a resort owner do if a guest arrives and the drain plug is still in their boat, or there are plants hanging from the trailer?

I'm sure as a resort owner they'll want to have a positive, open conversation. After all they don't want to run off their customers. I'd recommend they say nicely, "The law says you have to pull the drain plug before you leave a lake access site, so let's pull it out quick here in the parking lot and let it drain before we put your boat in the lake." This way they will be educating the guest, making sure their lake doesn't get contaminated, and possibly saving the person from a ticket down the road. Having a friendly conversation and getting compliance is the best approach.

How should a resort owner handle a guest who refuses to follow the law?

If there is a confrontation, or the resort owner becomes uncomfortable, they should call a conservation officer or local official and report it. Resort owners from across the state call us now for a variety of issues and they know how to do it discretely. We realize there are times when resort owners can be placed in a difficult position regarding one of their guests, but it's everyone's responsibility to see that the laws written to protect



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Officers are working to educate and curb the transport of aquatic invasive species between lakes.

our natural resources are abided by. For example, unfortunately at times they have customers who are over their legal limit of fish. Realizing their situation, and the position it can put them in as a business owner, we have always worked with them to get the necessary information but not get them directly involved if possible. You can find your local conservation officer on the DNR website (www.mndnr.gov/officerpatrolareas) or use your smart phone and the QR code at the end of this article. You can also call the state patrol or local sheriff – they know how to reach us.



Zebra mussels (far left) and Eurasian watermilfoil can do serious damage to a lake and its many habitats.

Are there other things resort owners should know about AIS laws?

You should know that if you charge guests a separate fee to launch or remove their personal boats from the water, you might be considered a lake service provider. Current state laws require all lake service providers to attend a training session and apply for a permit; your staff may need to take online training. If you hire another business to install or remove docks, lifts or other equipment, make sure they have a DNR permit to do the work. You can find more information about lake service provider training and permits on the DNR website (www.mndnr.gov/lsp).

What is the biggest challenge enforcement officers face in their day to day work?

Educating and informing the public is one of our main challenges – and there are not enough of us to be everywhere all the time. Therefore, we need your help to make sure everyone understands the issues and follows the rules and regulations. We want people to know what aquatic invasives look like, to understand how they harm the environment, and to know what they should do to prevent their spread to new waters. We

need everyone on board, because enforcement can only do so much and go so far. Just as important as educating citizens is getting their assistance to help us protect our natural resources. Boaters, anglers, waterfowl hunters – anyone who enjoys the water – needs to chip in and do their part.

The DNR has a variety of free information to help resort owners spread the word, including brochures, ID cards, video, downloadable posters, grants, training and more. For more information, contact AIS program staff at www.mndnr.gov/invasives/ais/contacts.html. You can use this QR code to locate a DNR Conservation Officer in your area.

Cory Palmer has been working as a conservation officer with the DNR since 1998 and is currently the Southern Region Enforcement Manager.



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LEGISLATION

CMR Legislative Day on the Hill 2013

By Dave Thompson, Fisherman's Village Resort, CMR Legislative Chair



On February 26-27, CMR Members traveled to the Minnesota State Capitol for the Day on the Hill event. Participants on the steps of the Capitol before starting their visits with legislators.

We have completed another successful Day on the Hill event. Our legislative committee spent many hours planning this year's event and it all went very well. This year we provided a deluxe motor coach starting a free pickup route in Wadena, Park Rapids, then Walker, Brainerd, and St. Cloud on its way to our destination at the Capitol. We had 32 participants for the event, many who were attending for the first time.

Several meetings were scheduled with legislators including: Speaker of the House Paul Thissen, Majority Leader Erin Murphy, Kurt Daudt, House Minority Leader Senator Tom Bakk, John Edman and Colleen



Senator Tom Saxhaug (DFL, Grand Rapids) discussed areas of concern for resorters with CMR Members.

Tollefson of Explore Minnesota Tourism. The last scheduled activity was to attend the Commerce and Consumer Protection Finance Policy hearing where Congress of Minnesota Resorts (CMR) President Mark Novotny and Government Affairs/Lobbyist Joel Carlson testified on two bills to fund Explore Minnesota Tourism through a dedication of the sales tax on rental cars.

We had a fantastic evening meal at Yarusso Brothers Italian Restaurant compliments of Joel Carlson. Back at the hotel, we enjoyed spending time with our fellow resorters. Joel and his professional assistant, Tami



MN Senate Majority Leader Tom Bakk (DFL, Cook) met with CMR Members to discuss issues.

LeFavor, did a tremendous job of putting together this year's legislative packets for 37 meetings! The packets were filled with the bills we were either sponsoring or that we were opposing and tourism data sheets for each legislator to use for reference.

Day Two was full of legislative meetings. This year with only 32 resorters attending, those in attendance did a fantastic job on running all through the State Office Building and the Capitol to attend meetings with their own Legislators and also with Resort Area Legislators from areas we did not have any resorters attending. Legislators commented many times asking if there were any resorters from their district. It is so important for Legislators to see their own constituents. Around noon we had a box lunch served and then off again to afternoon meetings.

This year, as always we carried our much anticipated attention getter. We celebrated family time at our resorts by carrying a stick with toasted marshmallows that had a campfire attached. The campfire had our CMR logo on one side and our issues on the other. We received many compliments on how much fun and upbeat our group was as well as how it's a pleasure to expect us each year. The bonus is that we are so identifiable, that many other folks stop us and ask about our issues since we attract so much attention.

Former Hunt's Resort owner Terry Duhn, our bus driver, picked us up



CMR Member Dana Pitt, Bailey's Resort, shows off this year's presentation approach to introducing our legislative issues.

LEGISLATION



CMR Lobbyist Joel Carlson answered questions and gave direction to participants before the legislative visits began.

on the Capitol steps at the end of the day as we headed back to our drop off points.

This year's attendees deserve a big thank you from all resorters for their commitment and sacrifice of two full days and some personal expenses on behalf of all resorters statewide. The issues we work on affect every resort property in the state. This year was no exception. The issues we covered with the Legislature and administration were:

Legislative Priorities:

- Keeping Post Labor Day School Start (There are several bills in committee to remove this bill.),
- Resort Lake Service Provider-Exemption for supervised employees on resort property for online training,
- Support EMT funding with dedication of current sales tax on rental cars, and
- Maintenance Plumber's License instead of the current restricted plumber's license.

Emerging Issues:

- Reasonable Controls on Vacation Home Rentals,
- Monitor Expansion of Camper Cabins at DNR Parks, and expansion of seasonal RV camping, and
- No Net Loss of Commercial Recreational Property.

Here is a list of the attendees:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Mark Novotny | Hyde-A-Way Bay Resort |
| Andrew Sternke | Hyde-A-Way Bay Resort |
| Ed and Joanne Fussy | Pimushe Resort |

- Vince and Cheryl Prosofsky
- Tim Aarsvold
- Kelsey Swagger
- Cathy Duvall
- Roger and Kathleen Lykins
- Su and Jade Ugstad
- Bob and Sue Dice
- Sue Paradeis
- Bob and Lynn Scharenbroich
- Susan Hamilton
- Tom Ossell
- Karen Senger
- Kim Jamtgaard
- Dana and Cindy Pitt
- Jennifer Bateman
- Lee and Laura Nupson
- Isaiah and Samantha Nupson
- Marjean Oelke
- Terry Duhn
- Dave Thompson

- Northern Lights Resort
- Geneva Beach Resort
- Geneva Beach Resort
- Kee-Nee-Moo-Sha Resort
- Lykins Pinehurst Resort
- Balsam Bay Resort
- Dice's Island View Resort
- Shing Wako Resort
- Black Pine Beach Resort
- Cragun's Resort
- Northern Lights Resort & Outfitting
- Cedar Point Resort
- Wildwood Resort
- Bailey's Resort
- Two Inlets Resort
- Oak Point Resort
- Oak Point Resort
- Bowstring Shores Resort
- Former Owner Hunt's Resort
- Fisherman's Village Resort

A BIG thanks is extended to the CMR Board of Directors, who approved an aggressive plan for the event. Due to the success of the CMR Silent Auction, we could provide all of these things free for attendees.

- FREE transportation from out-state to the Capitol,
- FREE snacks and refreshments,
- FREE Wednesday morning coffee and donuts,
- FREE box Lunch,
- FREE attendee legislative packets,
- FREE special legislative CMR badge and neck lanyard, and
- FREE Crappie Year Pins.

As in the CMR motto, "Resorters Helping Resorters," the CMR provides this opportunity on behalf of all resorters in the state that benefit from our legislative effort. The CMR is open to any and all Minnesota Resorts. Whether you are brand new to the industry or a seasoned veteran, the organization needs you and your participation to protect and enhance our tourism businesses. Resorters that are not CMR members, please consider becoming a member of the CMR and be a participant with us next year!



(L to R) MN House Speaker Paul Thissen (DFL, Minneapolis), MN Senate Minority Leader David Hann (R, Eden Prairie), MN House Majority Leader Erin Murphy (DFL, St. Paul), and MN House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt (R, Crown) spoke to CMR Members and appeared to be ready to enjoy a bonfire at a resort.

LEGISLATION

Legislative Session End in Sight

By Joel Carlson, Congress of Minnesota Resort Lobbyist

The first legislative session in decades under single party control is steaming to a conclusion just a few short weeks from now. The 2013 session has been shaped by an improving economy, three divergent budget proposals, some partisan rancor and two overarching non-budgetary issues; guns and gay marriage.

The real heavy lifting is now underway as legislators must decide a host of key issues that remain outstanding. There have been only a few tests on the House and Senate floor so far this session, and the DFL has stood their ground. As issues of income taxes, job creation and environmental protections make their way to final votes, the challenges will be much tougher. There is no possibility that the legislature fails to complete its work before the May 20th adjournment – with one party in control they will have to reach agreement within the allotted time. However, many of the issues that remain divide legislators on geographic boundaries, not party affiliation, so holding together a majority coalition on these key issues can be difficult.

New House Speaker Thissen and Senate Majority Leader Bakk know that they have narrow window to guide their members to a successful end game. Too many taxes and you lose suburban and conservative DFLers. Too little spending on human services and you can't hold the members from core cities like Minneapolis and St. Paul. It really is a tightrope walk and with no other party to point fingers at for a failure, it's fair to say they are doing this stunt without any safety net.

State Budget

The final weeks of any odd numbered legislative session focus on approving a two-year state budget and 2013 is no different. Governor Dayton led a brief charge for an overhaul of the state sales and income tax systems, but abandoned the plan when few DFLers publically embraced his proposal. Dayton's revised budget still has substantial tax increases, but the highly unpopular changes Dayton proposed to the sales tax has been taken off the table.

Dayton withdrew his support for almost all sales tax changes, including a proposed sales tax on professional services and clothing over \$100. It was surprising, and a little refreshing, to see the Governor take such a turnaround early in budget negotiations. He was very blunt, the plan lacks support and can't pass, I'm going to change directions. No one can remember former Governors Carlson, Ventura or Pawlenty backing away from a proposal so completely, or so promptly, in the face of legislative opposition. It was a unique and classic Mark Dayton move and he has won praise from the media for his direct and realistic approach.

Since the Governor's budget release, the House and Senate have since crafted their budget targets and ideas, and are now working these proposals through the committee process. The three main financial differences between the Governor, House and Senate plans appear to be repayment of the monies owed to local school districts, the size of the income tax increase, and how much money is dedicated to new spending in education and human service programs. How quickly these issues can be resolved is an open question, but Dayton appears eager to compromise with the House and Senate to get the session completed.

CMR at the Capitol

CMR has worked on a number of legislative issues this session, many of which we hope will get final approval before the session is completed. We had a successful Day on the Hill with CMR members in February to

promote our agenda, and the results of these efforts will be known shortly. Thank you to everyone that came to St. Paul, contacted your legislators, or driven down to testify this session.

Aquatic Invasive Species

We partnered with the Department of Natural Resources to address a problem with the new Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) law that took effect in 2012 to address resort employees that assist with installing docks, lifts and boats that never leave the resort property. HF 813 (Rep. Nornes) and SF 698 (Sen. Saxhaug) have successfully passed through the committee process and are waiting a vote by the full House and Senate. This legislation was an example of CMR's pro-active legislative initiatives that help resorters, and we hope the legislature will give this final approval soon.

Labor Day

The annual battle with school administrators over the Post Labor School requirement has again surfaced. HF 251 repealed the Post Labor Day requirement, but has since been amended to a plan that calls for a prohibition on holding school on the Thursday or Friday before Labor Day, something of little value to any business based on weekly rentals. So far, this provision is only contained in an omnibus education policy bill in the House, and has been defeated in the Senate Education Committee. The calls and contacts CMR has made on this issue will help us defeat this issue again. We are working to have this provision eliminated from the education bill in the House and are encouraging the Senate to hold the line on this key issue.

EMT Funding

CMR has been an active player in the coalition to seek additional state support for Explore Minnesota Tourism (EMT) marketing support. HF 711 (Rep. John Ward)/SF 428 (Sen. Tom Saxhaug) increase EMT funding substantially and was the subject of a House Commerce Committee during the CMR Day on the Hill. House Commerce Committee Chair Rep. Joe Atkins has included this request in his omnibus Commerce Finance bill, and we are awaiting final action at the end of the session. The proposal to dedicate the motor vehicle tax on rental cars as a means to fund increased EMT funding has not been embraced by legislators, and is unlikely to get final approval.

However, the increased marketing dollars are welcomed from the general fund, and we applaud this effort. Tourism is a \$12 billion industry in Minnesota, providing 240,000 jobs, and \$770 million of sales tax revenue to the state (17 percent of the total collected). We're glad that legislators are recognizing this important segment of the state's economy with efforts to help it grow.

The Big Two

Two issues have generated great debate at the Capitol so far this session, guns and marriage. These are highly personal and controversial issues that to not break down on party lines, so passage of legislation on either issue is anyone's guess. The House and Senate leadership has committed to taking no floor action on these issues until the budget bills have passed but proponents are eager to get to a final vote on both topics. They may not want to rush too quickly to a vote, a loss on the House or Senate floor could seal the fate for their cause for the next 18 months and maybe longer. Better to wait and win then rush to a loss.

Guns: Access to guns and ammunition has been a topic this session driven by new majorities and graphic gun violence in Minnesota and elsewhere over the past year. Legislative proposals regarding guns have been bringing hundreds of pro-gun and pro-gun control advocates to St.

Paul. Much of the debate has centered on the need for greater background checks for firearm purchases to avoid arming violent offenders. It is not likely that a significant expansion of gun control laws will pass this session due in large part to the steady and ongoing opposition of the National Rifle Association (NRA). While supportive of some changes, the NRA is a potent force at the Capitol and most observers, me included, believe the NRA has more than enough support for legislators from both parties to prevail this session.

Gay Marriage: House Speaker Paul Thissen, Senate Majority Leader Tom Bakk, and Governor Mark Dayton have done an artful job of keeping the divisive issue of allowing gay marriages in Minnesota on simmer while the budget plans get set. There is a feeling among legislators that the significant defeat of the constitutional ban on gay marriage is the signal that Minnesota is ready for the next walk down the aisle. But, many legislators that opposed the constitutional ban are not lining up to support gay marriage at this time. It remains to be seen if the House and Senate will take votes on this issue but if they do, passage is not guaranteed.

New Faces and New Challenges

With so many new faces at the Capitol these past two sessions, it has been difficult to make contact with everyone on key issues impacting resort owners. It is only with the successful legislative outreach of CMR members that we have been able to get our voice heard. Thank you to all the members that help in this critical. Coming to St. Paul can be a

thankless task, but CMR members have made it fun, educational and most importantly – effective! Ed Becker and Dave Thompson have been awesome legislative chairs, and officers like President Mark Novotny and others have always stepped up to the plate when we’ve needed someone to attend a meeting, testify, or make a phone call. We need you! Maybe you’ll be the next CMR member to take a leadership role?

We should also send out thanks to some of our tourism partners that we have worked with to help get our messages out. John Edman and Colleen Tollefson at Explore Minnesota Tourism have done a great service for tourism in general, and resorts in particular, by arranging numerous meetings with state government officials, speaking at countless functions to promote resorts and tourism, supporting the Post Labor Day school calendar and including resorters on EMT marketing and promotional efforts. They have been an effective partnership for resorters, and we appreciate it.

I hope the spring flooding is limited and that the docks and lifts are in the lake in a timely fashion. I was in Detroit Lakes over Easter and I’ll be surprised if the snow is all gone before the 4th of July! With a promise of no extended special session, something we haven’t been able to count on for at least a decade, I’m looking forward to doing some early season fishing this year!

Have a great season!

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