

# Minnesota Resorter

*Resorters Helping Resorters*

The logo for the Congress of Minnesota Resorts (CMR II) is circular. It features a stylized mountain range and evergreen trees in the center. The text "CMR II" is prominently displayed in the middle, with "Congress of Minnesota Resorts" written around the bottom inner edge of the circle.

Winter 2010 Vol. 26 No. 1

**Apply for a CMR Scholarship**

**Get on the Bus!  
CMR 2010  
Day on the Hill**

**Bob & Jennifer Bateman  
2009 Resorters of the Year!**



**A PUBLICATION OF THE CONGRESS OF MINNESOTA RESORTS**



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# Minnesota Resorter

*Resorters Helping Resorters*



A Congress of Minnesota Resorts Publication

Winter 2010

Vol. 26 No. 1

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**PRESIDENT'S PEN ..... PAGE 4**  
*Ed Fussy, President*

**EDUCATION**

**CMR FALL CONFERENCE WRAP UP ..... PAGE 6**  
*Jason Ball, Cass Lake Lodge*

**APPLY FOR A CMR SCHOLARSHIP! ..... PAGE 7**

**PLEASE DO NOT FEED ..... PAGE 8**  
*Gail DeBoer, Sunset Bay Camp*

**FISHERPERSON SERVICE ..... PAGE 10**  
*Bill Koch, Shore Crest Resort*

**CRACKER-BARREL QUILTERS ..... PAGE 11**

**MARKETING**

**BECOME A MEMBER ..... PAGE 13**

**CMR 2009 "RESORTER OF THE YEAR" AWARD ..... PAGE 14**

**COULDA, WOULD, SHOULD, SHOULDA! ..... PAGE 15**  
*Sherry Frost, Joe's Lodge*

**DO YOU MEETUP, FLICKR OR TWITTER? ..... PAGE 16**  
*Kathy Moore, Moore Consulting*

**RESORTER RECIPES ..... PAGE 17**  
*Pat Addler, Cedar Rapids Lodge*

**CMR FALL CONFERENCE VENDOR SHOW ..... PAGE 18**  
*Sheldon & Mary Schiebe, Knotty Pines Resort*

**2009 FALL CONFERENCE EXHIBITORS ..... PAGE 19**

**LEGISLATION**

**GET ON THE BUS! ..... PAGE 20**

**FEES, FEES, NO MORE FEES PLEASE ..... PAGE 21**  
*Dave Keller, Brookside Resort*

**LEGISLATIVE NEWS ..... PAGE 22**  
*Joel Carlson, Lobbyist for the Congress of Minnesota Resorts*

*About the cover:*

*A resort owner's child enjoys some alone time skating on his lake.*

*The Minnesota Resorter is a quarterly publication of the Congress of Minnesota Resorts. The opinions expressed in the articles printed here-in 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 Ed Fussy**  
**Congress of Minnesota Resorts**

I hope you all had a Merry Christmas, and I wish you Happy New Year! I am looking forward to the next year as President of the CMR. The only thing I'm not looking forward to is writing these articles! So... please bear with me! I would like to thank Bob and Cindy Tyson from Good Ol' Days Resort for their time on the board this past year, and welcome our new board members. We have a

well-rounded group of board members, and I look forward to working with them.

I hope those of you who are closed down for the winter are trying to relax and re-group for the next season. If you are like me, you may need to work on a bunch of winter projects or a BIG "honey do" list! If you are open for winter business, I hope Mother Nature co-operates and you have a prosperous winter season!

If you are interested in attending the Explore MN Conference, it will be held at Cragun's in Brainerd, January 26 and 27. This conference is always informational, plus our own "Resorters of the Year" will be recognized. Congratulations to Bob and Jennifer Bateman, Two Inlets Resort, for winning this year's award.

Also mark your calendars for the CMR's Day on the Hill held

February 23 and 24. I can't stress the importance of having a large group attend. The senators and representatives need to be made aware of how some of their decisions can affect our industry and individual businesses. Please don't expect the same group of resorters to represent you. Your legislator wants to see and hear from you. Joel Carlson, our lobbyist, and his assistant Tammy have everything organized for us. All you need to do is show up at the bus!! It's a busy, fun couple days and well worth the time spent.

The CMR will continue to keep an eye on the Shoreland and Dock Regulations, and any other legislation that may have an adverse effect on our business. If you know of any issue that could affect our industry, please contact one of the board members or myself.

If you are not a member of the CMR, I invite you to join our organization. We focus on issues that primarily affect resorts. If you are already a member, thank you! We are always looking for more volunteers, so if you have an interest or talent you're willing to share, please let us know. We can use the help. The majority of our organization is strictly volunteer, so anyone working on legislation, education, marketing, etc. also has their own business to run!!

Speaking of this magazine, I would like to personally thank Sue Paradeis for all her hard work and time that she puts into this magazine. Sue, it's not going unrecognized and, I know, that trying to get some of us to write articles is like pulling teeth!! If anyone out there has an article they would like to contribute, contact Sue!

Also watch the Resorters e-groups for upcoming School of Resorting classes. If you are not part of the e-groups, contact Tim Aarsvold. Find his contact information listed under the board of directors in this magazine or on our website.

Enjoy the winter!

***Dana Pitt passed  
the President's bell  
to Ed Fussy.***

***Ed is ready to take on the  
task of keeping the CMR  
involved and up to date on  
current affairs.***



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# Congress of Minnesota Resorts Fall Conference Wrap-up

By Jason Ball, Cass Lake Lodge

What a great way to finish the year!! This year's annual CMR Fall Conference was very educational and entertaining. The conference took place at Arrowwood Resort & Conference Center in Alexandria, MN. Sixty-two Resorters attended this year's conference.

Many of the attendees walked away with great ideas. Some of these ideas included what tax advantages they can use, tips to convert calls into reservations, what to do with those useless bread clips, and much more!! Not only was much gained from the many speakers, the cracker-barrels were also so practical and helpful.

The conference gave attendees the chance to visit with fellow Resorters and learn more about them and the CMR. Dana Pitt from Bailey's Resort stepped down as CMR president. Ed Fussy from Pimushe Resort was elected the new president. He is ready to take on the task of keeping the CMR involved and up-to-date on current affairs. Ed Becker from In-We-Go Resort was elected as Vice President. Tim Aarsvold from Geneva Beach Resort stayed on as Treasurer and Timberly Christiansen from Finn 'N Feather Resort as Secretary. Mark Novotny from Hyde-a-



*We had a great turnout at the Fall Conference. We all learned a lot from the guest speakers.*



*Richard and Linda Wagner shown with Nancy Loren, Little Boy Resort won the non-member drawing.*

Way Bay, Dave and Mary Jane Keller from Brookside Resort, and Steve and Pat Addler from Cedar Rapids Lodge were all selected to the CMR board.

After years of working in the resort business, Bob and Jennifer Bateman from Two Inlets Resort were selected for Resorter of the Year. They have done a great job being involved with the CMR and sharing their experience with fellow Resorters. The fall conference is a great way to see how the CMR is changing and what direction it is headed.

The CMR Fall Conference isn't all work though. There is plenty of fun and entertaining experiences. Dan Borseth from Pine Insurance Agency sponsored the entertainment, Sven and Lars, a comedy duo that used Norwegian humor to keep the crowd entertained. Mullen Insurance Agency, Brian's Log Furniture, and Financial Group of Central MN also provided sponsorships to make this year's conference possible.

This year's Fall Conference vendor show had 25 participants. Some of these vendors were new; including MV Sports (a clothing company), Brian's Log Furniture, MN Lake Cams (an internet webcam company), and Midwest Hotel Furniture Liquidators.

Not only did many of the vendors donate great gifts to attendees at the vendor show; the CMR offered prizes too. Pat Addler won the runner up grand prize, a large log mirror donated by Viking Furniture. JoAnne Fussy won the grand prize, a log nightstand donated by Brian's Log Furniture. The CMR membership committee had a drawing for non-members who attended the conference. Richard and Linda Wagner from Shady Creek Resort were this year's winners. They won a log mirror donated by Viking Furniture and a free night stay at Arrowwood Resort.





*Dave & Mary Jane Keller, Brookside Resort make a haul at the Silent Auction.*

Many resorts also donated great items for the silent auction. This year's silent auction made a profit of \$2450, which helps support the legislative budget.

Overall, the conference provided many laughs and great time for the attendees.

Some Resorters were not able to make it to this year's Fall Conference. We missed out on the opportunity to hear from you about your resort experiences. We hope in the future that you will be able to attend the CMR's Spring Workshops and Fall Conferences. Information will be coming soon with the location of the Spring Workshop scheduled for Tuesday, April 6th. Thank you to all of the Resorters and vendors at this year's conference. We look forward to seeing you again at future conferences.



*The very entertaining Sven and Lars.*

# HEADED FOR COLLEGE?



# GET SCHOLARSHIP MONEY

## 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. Three \$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  
**1-888-761-4245**. You can also  
 print a form from the CMR website,  
**www.Minnesota-Resorts.com**.

**DEADLINE TO APPLY: MARCH 15th**

## Please Do Not Feed

By Gail DeBoer, Sunset Bay Camp

*Reprinted from the Congressional Log, 1990*

Note from the editor. It is our pleasure to occasionally reprint articles from the original CMR publication, *Congressional Log*. The Log offers us a timeless collection of stories and contains a priceless history of resort life in Minnesota.

**A** Northern Minnesota vacation resort: a perfect place to raise a family? Well Almost....

His outraged sister stood staring into the dimly lit refrigerator. "He's eaten three caramel apples already!" she stormed. Three? At 6:30 p.m. we had caramelled eight apples – two apiece. Now, at nine, only five were left. There had been but one consumer: Will.

I confronted my almost 13-year old son. "Three caramel apples in one evening are two too many," I scolded, staring at him sternly. But -- could it be? My 5'6" gaze no longer met his, but angled slightly upward into sparkling baby-blue eyes.

Hands the size of hammocks landed with a thump on my shoulders. "Don't worry, mom," an unfamiliar baritone rumbled. "You can always make more!"

The voice, the added inches, the voracious appetite were sudden changes of the past summer. Upon hearing Will speak, regular guests at our northern Minnesota fishing resort had done double and triple takes. The phrase, "My you've grown!" had become very repetitious. But what had changed most was Will's appetite.

Was this the child who never cleaned his plate in all his 5 ½ years? Who survived to age six on pickled beets, applesauce and Cheerios? Who never ate a hamburger until age seven? One and the same.

A bouncing, ten pound red-haired baby boy with no visible neck had transformed in one year into the pickiest eater on either side of families known for their omnivorous eating habits. Before age two, Will's lack of enthusiasm for food had become legendary. Visiting relatives in Florida, my husband, daughter and I headed for Disneyworld, leaving Will in the capable hands of his aunt. Aunt was determined to enforce her own mealtime rules, including Clean Your Plate (or Tray, for those still in high chairs).

None of this impressed Will, who continued to pick at, rearrange, and occasionally ingest nuggets of food as the mood struck him. After a half-hour battle at the first suppertime, Aunt decided to Get Firm! She tapped her index finger briskly on the high chair tray. "Now eat this!" she commanded.

Will's eyes dropped obediently to the tray, to the exact spot where Aunt's finger had tapped. A breadcrumb? This must be what she means. He carefully picked up the microscopic morsel, brought it to his mouth, and ate it. He beamed at his aunt: mission accomplished!



When we returned, Aunt had abandoned all attempts at regular meals. "He eats whenever, whatever, wherever he wants!" she announced. "Are you sure this child is a blood relative?"

Summers at the resort proved particularly difficult, with irregular meals interrupted for sales in our small store, at the gas pumps, or in the bait house. It was almost impossible to supervise Will's feedings, other than to present food and hope for the best. Yet the child was not withering away, but growing at a healthy, slightly above average pace. Either the air had wonderful nutritional qualities, or the problem was not so severe as we imagined. Our middle-European backgrounds and eating habits would not allow us to believe the latter. The only healthy child was a chubby child – a hedge against sickness, food shortages, or cataclysms! My, immigrant in-laws were great believers in this theory, stressing that a few extra pounds during the last war had made all the difference. It did no good to point out that, 35 years later, peace had broken out, and we were in no danger of a famine.

Summertime also brought a series of young relatives to help around the resort, in exchange for room, board, spending money, lavish sun-tanning time, and a flexible workload. Some had come every summer since Will was born, and noted his eating habits with dismay. We tried to use their visits as leverage.



“Please!” we would plead with the closed-lipped 2 1/2 year old. “Cousin Pam is coming next week. Do you want her to see you’re the same poop eater?” The lips remained sealed. Cousin Pam would come and go; also Cousin Randy, Nephew Tom, and others.

“He hasn’t improved a bit,” they’d comment. “I thought sure, by now....” So did we.

The summer of Will’s third year was the summer of complete mobility, as he trotted up and down the sidewalks to the 14 cabins. Early in June, his sister again made a startling discovery.

“Do you know he’s begging food at the cabins?” she reported, her eight-year old dignity offended beyond measure. “People will think we don’t feed him. No wonder he never eats at home!”

My husband and I conferred. We were not ready to forbid cabin visits, but we could clue in the guests. The next Saturday at cleaning time, I made slight changes on the information posters in each cabin: “Please do not feed the little red-haired boy – no matter what he tells you!”

Within the week, we could tell that the notices were being heeded. One suppertime, a slightly irritated Will showed up and actually ate an entire baked potato. Another lunchtime, two bowls of chicken noodle soup! One day he brought home a snugly tinfoiled cookie with a note attached: “Mom – is this okay?” (signed) – a guest. The panhandling had been slowed.

“He was doing that all last summer, you know,” a grandmotherly customer told me one day. “My husband got such a kick out of him – here’s Will, barely able to walk, toddling up to our screen door, and peeking over the crossbar with his blue eyes staring at us. So we’d ask if he’d like a cookie or something. The answer was always ‘yes.’ And, of course, it was always ‘okay with mom.’ She laughed. “Not that we believed him. He was just too cute to turn away!”

Will turned four, still eating sporadically. Shortly after his birthday,

thanks to Sesame Street and a patient father, he started to read simple one and two-syllable words. I was typing new information posters one late winter afternoon, with Will at my elbow, idly sounding out words as the keys darted and struck the paper. His faint voice whisper, “Please do not feed the little red....” The voice stopped.

Will was no longer at my elbow. I could hear angry crying as he ran for his bedroom. It had all become clear to him – this was why the gravy train had stopped so abruptly the previous summer. I smiled and kept typing the same messages just to be sure!

It has been years since we had to worry about Will’s lack of appetite. With the teens looming ahead, our major concern is to keep food staples “stapled” to the pantry shelves. Yogurts are eaten in tandem; caramel apples in threes; slices of pizza go down the hatch in double-digit quantities! The glacier-washed jeans purchased before school started, expose three inches of ankle and shin by Christmas. The expensive high-topped basketball shoes pinch within three months. His father’s old Air Force uniforms are unearthed and eyed for quirky fashionability.

Friends had warned us about these changes, especially the ravenous appetite. But my husband and I have a secret plan: this summer, when Will hits 13 ½, we’re sending him out to beg at cabin doors again!

*The only healthy child was a chubby child – a hedge against sickness, food shortages, or cataclysms!*

**Recycling Cabin Furniture**

By Pat Addler, Cedar Rapids Lodge

**Are you short on time and/or cash for new furniture this summer?**

The first ten years that we owned our resort, we replaced furniture in cabins as we could afford to. We also found that “rearranging” furniture from one cabin to another bought us another year on a piece that was wearing out but not quite bad enough to replace. My poor husband and sons would be busy carrying those heavy couches from one cabin to another... a little switcheroo let the guest think that they had “new” furniture when they really just got a trade from another cabin!



## Fisherperson Service

By Bill Koch, Shore Crest Resort

*Reprinted from the Congressional Log 1987*

Note from the editor: It is our pleasure to occasionally reprint articles from the original CMR publication, *Congressional Log*. The Log presents an essential aspect of resorting which is always customer service.

**W**e talk about how Minnesota has forgotten the basics, woods, water, and fish. But, how much service are your fishing people getting? Do you have a sign to tell what hours you're open and closed? That way if someone is planning on being on the lake in the morning before you are open, they can get everything up the night before and avoid any possible hard feelings.

Do you have someone at the dock to help everyone out as well as helping them when they come in – even when they say they don't want to inconvenience you? We all like to have someone treat us like we're important.

Is that boat clean every morning? Is it dry from splash over or after rain? How about your customer's boat? How much time or effort does it really take to bail out that boat or turn on his bilge pump for him? It's those extra services he'll remember.

Is that life jacket in good shape? Is it clean? Does it have your name on it so you can avoid any problems? How about that minnow bucket? Is it green with algae or is it nice and clean when the angler gets it? What about the oars? Are they painted and in good shape? Do they fit in our locks? How about the anchor? Is the rope in good shape and tied tightly? If the boat and all its accessories are clean and in good shape, that tells the customer "Here are folks who are taking care of their place and are concerned about me and what kind of equipment I'll be using."

We offer a boat package. With our boat the customer gets a minnow bucket, seat cushion, life jacket, and landing net. This is all explained in our brochure so they won't have to haul all their own equipment if they don't want to.

Here is what guests find at our dock area. On the outside of the door is a sign showing dock hours. Inside we have a sign showing the cost of bait, gas, motor and boat rental. The minnow tank is clean and free of any dead bait. The refrigerator with leeches and crawlers is clean and neat. The minnow buckets are on a shelf clean and ready for anyone to use. Life jackets are hung up and clean. There is a clipboard with a daily chart of each cabin showing what bait, gas, etc., they used for that day. Also, there is a space on the chart for the gas pump meter reading and record of leeches and crawlers left, so we have a daily check and balance.

Our fish cleaning area has a formica counter top, a sink, a freezer for guests' fish and also to freeze all the fish innards so there is never any smell or flies. We provide fish cleaning for our guests, but they can use the facility if they wish. We also have a fish packer's license for that extra care of our guests.

Last year we put in all new aluminum docks (to eliminate maintenance)

and aluminum boat lifts. Our boats are kept on the lifts except when they are being used. Our boats have flat floors, bench and pedestal seats, bow and stern lights, and a bow storage area for life jackets. There is also a lockable glove box unit. The new boats are all deep transom and we lease electric start long shaft motors. We already have guests this year who want the nice boats and are not hauling their own motors up.

For those with their own motors we have two short transom Lund boats. We have lights on each end of our dock area and a plug in receptacle on each dock for battery charging. The new dock system has received many compliments from happy guests. They do appreciate being treated like VIP's.

On Sunday night we have one of our local guides come in and put on a free fishing seminar. He shows our guests how to rig up for our lake, how to hook on a minnow, crawler or leech. He shows them the lures that seem to work best. Each guest is given a contour map copy of our area of the lake, and the guide shows them the best spots for different fish and what times are best for each area. Guests mark their own maps. This is also good for the guide, as he picks up some business.

Every morning the dock help checks the minnow tank for any bad bait. The refrigerator and fish house are clean and neat and everything is put where it belongs. Boats are checked for any cleaning or bailing that should be done, and just general picking up and cleaning are done so that the area is kept neat. Gas tanks are topped off every night.

Giving your customer good clean equipment and excellent service with these little extras can mean a more profitable future for your marina area.



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**Cracker-Barrel Quilters**



*Resorters sharing a laugh over microfiber cleaning cloths.*

Although this “class” is most often called “Cracker-barrel Quilting” (translated, this means chatting about resort business while you’re sewing), it never falls into this pure definition. It’s tough to call it a class, when it’s really more an excuse to get together with other resort women to socialize, eat, drink wine, share resort ideas, and get some craft work done on the side.

On December 7 and 8, nine CMR members got together at Crow Wing Crest Lodge in Akeley for this educational retreat. Some of us quilted, while others wrote their resort Christmas letter, put fish pictures taken this summer into a photo album, addressed envelopes for resort correspondence, or completed simple sewing projects to sell in their lodge gift shops.

In extremely informal fashion, we talked about computer reservation software, resort letters and newsletters, cameras and photo-graphy, web site design, hiring bookkeepers, cleaning products that work like magic, deposit requirements, towel service, cookbooks, haunted cabins in Iowa and ear wax (okay, we got a little off track!)

Speaking of ear wax, we got a little wild and crazy and did some ear candling (see photo). This is something that Kim offers at Crow Wing Crest Lodge - for \$25 and 20 minutes of time, guests can have their ear wax sucked out of their ear canals simply by lighting these long paraffin tubes and letting them burn. She said guests aren’t afraid to do it. That’s certainly thinking outside the box to come up with some guest amenities!



*Elaine Grove, Twin Springs Resort volunteers for ear candling.*

A few of us stayed overnight in Kim’s deluxe cabin and also took advantage of some reflexology sessions from Big John.

Watch for this class to be offered again in the coming months. It’s a great opportunity to hang out with some of your fellow resort co-workers and to spend some time away from your own little chunk of property.

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## EDUCATION



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



School of Resorting educational classes.



Yahoo Groups - online resort chat room.



Members only online resources on our website.

PLUS- Vendor Discounts to CMR Members • Educational Scholarships • “Resorters of the Year” Award • And Much More!



## Resorters Helping Resorters - Since 1985

*None of us is as smart  
as all of us.*

Be it successes or trials -  
We've been there and  
done that and want to  
share it with you.

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

*"I always scope out the groups  
that work best for the resorts and  
found that the CMR is a great  
organization. I didn't want to jump  
the gun on it, so I took time to  
figure it out, liked what I found  
and that's why I joined."*

*Joe Scharber  
Sleeping Fawn Resort & Campground  
Park Rapids, MN*

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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Resort E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ Resort Website Address \_\_\_\_\_

Membership investment is only \$15.15 per bedroom (Min. \$151.50 for 10 bedrooms or fewer, max. \$802.95 for 53 bedrooms and up.) Membership rates good through Aug. 31, 2010.

Associate Memberships - Dues \$151.50 For vendors and for those with an interest in resorting but not owning a resort.

Amount of check enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ Please Circle.....New.....Renewal



Send to: Congress of Minnesota Resorts  
21403 52nd Street NE  
New London, MN 56273

Questions regarding Membership?  
Contact Vicky at [CMR@Minnesota-Resorts.com](mailto:CMR@Minnesota-Resorts.com) or 888-761-4245

## Congress of Minnesota Resorts 2009 Resorters of the Year



**CMR 2009 Resorter of the Year Bob & Jennifer Bateman, Two inlets Resort**

Each year, the Congress of Minnesota Resorts presents the Resorters of the Year Award to an outstanding resorter, who has best exemplified the spirit and goals of the organization. The Awards Committee, made up of past award recipients, visits and interviews each of the qualified resorters, who have been nominated by their peers. The award criteria is centered around the operation of a successful and progressive resort business, involvement in CMR activities, service to the tourism industry both at a state and local level, and community service in other areas.

At this year's CMR Fall Conference in Alexandria, we were proud to present the 2009 Resorter of the Year Award to Bob and Jennifer Bateman of Two Inlets Resort near Park Rapids.

Bob and Jennifer have been involved in resorting for a long time. Jennifer actually grew up at a resort and Bob worked at a neighboring resort. While they were engaged, they talked about someday owning a resort, but ended up working in the outside world for several years. Thirteen years ago they were pulled back into the resort on which Jennifer grew up.

They are exemplary CMR members who have been active in many facets of the organization, including submitting articles for the *Minnesota Resorter*, teaching a School of Resorting class, hosting a fall resort tour, attending nearly all CMR conferences and functions, moderating cracker-barrels, attending the Day on the Hill seven times, and serving on the CMR Board for seven years on numerous committees, including Jennifer serving three years as President. They live the CMR's motto of "Resorters Helping Resorters." You can always count on them to pitch in and help.

Outside of the CMR, they are also active on their Chamber marketing committee, local bank board of directors, golf course board of directors, school activities foundation, 4-H volunteers, their church and Sunday school, and much more.

While raising their three children, who are now old enough to help with some resort duties, the Batemans have made their 13-cabin resort successful by providing a high level of service and keeping their guests' vacation experience their #1 priority. Success has also come about by keeping close tabs on the financial side of the business and reinvesting in it by continually making big and small improvements and adjusting their rates accordingly. They've added two 4-bedroom cabins, upgraded several other cabins, improved the landscaping and added many amenities.

They attribute their success to not being afraid to ask questions of other progressive resorters and being willing to take some risks. For example, two years ago they decided to expand their business and become a 2-resort operation when they bought a second resort over an hour away. That's a challenge many resorters would hesitate to take on, but the Batemans are truly progressive resorters and their success has clearly been worth their efforts.

Bob and Jennifer are assets to the resort industry and the community in which they live. Congratulations to them for this well-deserved award!

### Welcome to our New Members!

**Darin & Michelle Sterup,**

P.O. Box 508, Osceola, NE 68651

**Al Ruszek & John Low,**

Sunset Cove Resort/Allen's Bay Lodge, Cass Lake

**Richard & Linda Wagner,**

Shady Creek Resort, Brandon

#### **Associate Members**

**Midwest Hotel Furniture Liquidators LLC,**

Alexandria

**Todd Christiansen, Christiansen & Associates,**

Minnetonka

None of us are as smart as all of us.

Thank you for joining the Congress of Minnesota Resorts and sharing your knowledge!



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## Coulda, Woulda, Shoulda!

By Sherry Frost, Joe's Lodge

These words came to mind after reading about and talking with different couples thinking about becoming resorters. What makes us go from being dreamers to people of action? Some without realizing it, just love the hunt, but can't make the jump. You can always find something wrong. Then again, maybe some of us jump too soon! What do we all have in common? We all took the leap of faith and became resorters. Our avenues of getting there are all different, but we did it, and that makes us unique. We are risk takers.

Going into business for ourselves is risky. We all had to make educated decisions on what the right place was for our families. In deciding on what resort, location is everything. We all know we can change the cabin, but we can't change the location. Are we looking for a fishing lake, a recreational lake, or both? What limitations are there on the property? Are we maxed out going in, or do we have wiggle room to expand and grow? Are we willing to take on a challenge, or do we want a turnkey property? We also have our personal reasons to consider such as churches, schools, finances, etc.

Buying a resort is an adventure. A little naiveté is probably good! Looking back, knowing what all it has taken and involved, I should have been more scared than I was at the time. We were looking for a change, a new adventure, and a challenge all wrapped up in a family business. Our extended family thought we were nuts. We had a lake place at the time and when Sunday night rolled around and it was time to leave for another week of work and school, it always turned beautiful, and we hated to leave. With that in mind, what better place to work and live than at a resort. We look upon our lives now as going to the lake but never having to leave.

We had our eye on a resort near our cabin that we loved, but when it came to making business sense, we knew it didn't. The owner was retiring and ended up selling off the lots individually to make his nest egg. We felt it was a shame to lose that piece of history, but the price was more than the income justified. We had a contract with another nearby resort after that. Our house wasn't selling, we couldn't get a variance for a garage, and an inspection revealed structural issues that were too costly. The search began again. When Joe's Lodge came up for sale, we saw an ad for it one Sunday in January and decided to take a look. Jack had never been to Bemidji, and I only had a vague recollection from a visit as a child. By the time we ended our site visit, I was tired thinking of all the work that needed to be done but loved the northwoods atmosphere. We knew the resort had a good history, a good repeat business, a wonderful location on a great chain of lakes, and in spite of its condition, it made financial sense. The basic value was there and reinvesting in the property would only add value. We believe those are the factors that matter when you boil it all down.

A wise friend suggested we pray about it. We sat in our car at the resort and asked the Lord what we should do. We made an offer and put our house up for sale. It sold two days later. Out of the blue, we got a call from a friend of a friend asking if we were interested in selling our lake place. We told him we were. We also owned the cabin next door to it and told him that would be for sale as well. He called another friend and both were sold within that week. The marriage of the Frost Family and Joe's Lodge was meant to be. The rest is history as you know. I couldn't start all over again today, but if we hadn't done it at that time, where would we be today? Now that's a good question.

## 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.

To this end, any member of the Congress of Minnesota Resorts can submit a nomination for this prestigious award. Nominations must be received by June 1 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.

### NOMINATION DEADLINE IS JUNE 1ST

### Send nomination form to:

**Resorters of the Year Nomination Committee**  
**Congress of Minnesota Resorts**  
 21403 52nd Street NE  
 New London, MN 56273

## Do you Meetup, Flickr or Twitter? Are you LinkedIn or a fan of Facebook?

By Kathy Moore, Moore Consulting (KnowMoore.com)

Social Media is a whole new way to connect your property with current and potential guests. It's fast, growing and free. But are you ready?

Remember the days when you just needed a nice, color brochure to convince travelers that your property was the best they'd ever experience? Along came the internet, and having a web site became the new staple. Then, it wasn't just a web site you needed – you sought fun downloads (like loon calls), interactive videos and virtual cabin tours. Today, more and more people are connecting and sharing information through social media outlets.

Social media, or digital networking, is the next wave of marketing communication to hit not only the hospitality industry, but also most businesses and non-profit organizations. It involves using online tools to quickly share information. The information may be photographs, video clips or just simple text comments. But once the online user has a network of friends and family established, they all get whatever information is shared, instantly.

These internet tools can offer an incredible opportunity to strengthen your core brand and customer relationship, but they can also destroy years of traditional marketing efforts in a single keystroke — through a bad “review” or damaging photo or video.

Here's a quick summary of some of the most popular social networking tools.

- **Facebook** is a community that allows people to connect with friends and places and organizations.
- **LinkedIn** is a professional networking site that allows people to find and interact with others in your industry or other group (like university or city).
- **YouTube** is a video sharing web site where anyone can upload, view and share video clips.
- **Twitter** is an email or text-messaging service that allows people to stay connected through quick questions and answers – usually related to what that person is doing right now.

Before jumping into any of these networking sites, it's best to understand how they work and who's already there. Think of the first CMR conference you attended. You walked in, scanned the room to see if you knew anyone, maybe walked around to get the lay of the room, listen to a few conversations before you made the bold move to go up and introduce yourself to someone new. Then, during the first conversation, you let the other person lead the conversation. You listened. You nodded. You smiled. Well, starting out with Facebook or Twitter or any of the other social media outlets is no different. Don't jump into these sites like a bull in a china shop. Get online and set up a personal Facebook page. Search for people you know. Watch and listen for the language and the lingo. Learn from good pages and bad pages. What sort of comments do people post? Are the photos all professionally taken, or mostly amateur shots? How often is there interaction between people?

Travelers who are web savvy and long-time Facebook users, for example, will “smell” your attempt to win them over. And, if you're hasty in your race to build your Facebook fans, you might lose potential guests forever. But, if you post interesting, human-interest items, share stories or photos that aren't available otherwise, and establish a network of your best guests that also chime in, the effects can have the same impact as thousands of dollars in traditional advertising. Rather than posting boring drivel about your grandkids or replacing the toilet seat in cabin 2, try posting items that will interest current and future guests like unique facts about what is happening on your lake today or insider info on a local festival or attraction.

### Why do it?

The biggest reason to consider using social media marketing is to increase exposure or awareness of your property, generate new web site visitors and email subscribers, as well as help your overall web site's presence rise in search rankings. It's also a way to attract a new audience to your business that may have never had a reason to learn more. But don't just create a Twitter account or Facebook page because everyone else is. If you don't think about how these communication tools can work in conjunction with your existing marketing strategies, you'll never achieve the results you desire.

### What does it cost?

That's the best thing – social media is FREE. But, it does require time... and not just one-time time, but daily or at least weekly attention.

### How long does it take?

For Facebook, for example, once you get your basic page built, most businesses spend 5-6 hours weekly updating or maintaining the page. While having a lot of “Facebook fans” is important, it's still overshadowed by the need for quality content. If you can't commit to the ongoing time needed to provide quality content (text, photos, etc.) about your property, it's better to not even jump into this arena. And don't forget to reach out to influencers — your best guests. Be polite, honest, sincere, and you'd be amazed what these advocates can do for you.

The bottom line is these new online vehicles offer you yet another way to build relationships. Just like consumers seek travel advice from their friends and family, they trust their social network. The stronger your relationship is with your current customers, the more likely they'll keep coming back and send new referrals your way, too.

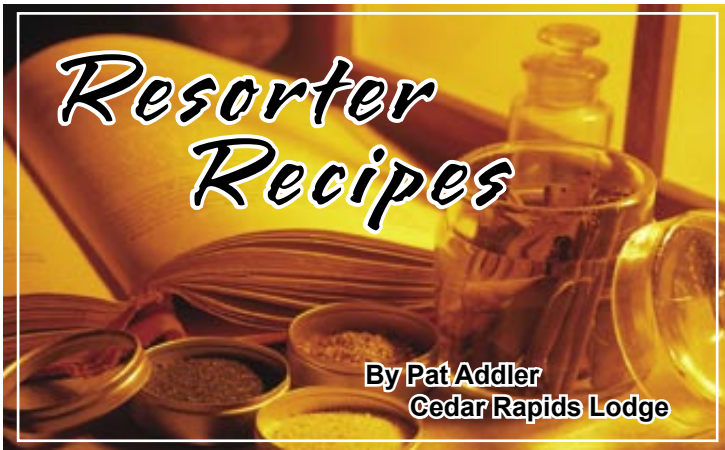
If you're already having troubles keeping your web site current and don't know how to include attachments to email, social marketing probably isn't for you. But, you may have a staffer or even a guest who could help. Or, you can hire a marketing consultant or advertising agency to handle the process for you. But like it or not, social media is the newest tool in the marketing toolbox. And it's here to stay. Tweet!

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*The  
stronger  
your  
relationship  
is with your  
current  
customers,  
the more  
likely they'll  
keep coming  
back, and  
send new  
referrals  
your way,  
too.*

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**Caramel Cashew Crunch**

- 1 11oz. bag Old Dutch Puffcorn
- 1/2 cup cashews  
*(Pour these into brown grocery bag.)*
- 1 stick butter (not margarine), melted
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup Karo syrup
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 3 squares white almond bark
- 3 squares chocolate almond bark

Stir butter, sugar and syrup together and microwave in bowl for 2 minutes. Mixture will come to a full boil. Take out and add 1 tsp. baking soda and stir vigorously. Pour over the Puffcorn/cashew mixture in bag. Shake, fold top down and microwave 1 minute. Take out...shake again and microwave for 1 more minute. Pour out of bag onto 2 greased cookie sheets. Bake at 275\* for 15 minutes. Mixture will start to crunch up. Melt white and chocolate almond bark in separate bowls being careful not to get any water or moisture into bark...it will ruin it. Melt in microwave for 30 second increments, until mixture is runny. Take a fork and drizzle the almond barks one at a time on the baked puffcorn mixture. Set cookie sheets in freezer to harden...or just let set. Break apart and store in Ziploc bags or airtight jars or containers. Great gift...be careful, it's contagious!

**Brownie Bites**

- 1 box brownie mix or your own scratch recipe
- mini muffin tin & papers

Mix brownie batter as directed. Scoop 1 Tbsp. batter into each paper-lined muffin cup...you can sprinkle mini chocolate chips or mini M& M's on top of batter before baking. Bake at 350\* for 15 minutes. Cool. When cooled, take "bites" out of muffin tin...you can frost them or serve as is. Very easy way to serve brownies...

**Carrot Zucchini Muffins**

- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup oatmeal
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 3 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. cinnamon

- 2/3 cup skim milk
- 3 Tbsp. oil
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 1/2 cup shredded zucchini, unpeeled

Heat oven to 400\*. Spray muffin tins or use papers. Combine dry ingredients; add remaining ingredients, stirring just until blended. Spoon into cups; bake for 15-20 minutes, until muffins are golden brown. Makes 12 muffins.

**Easy Meatloaf**

- 2 lbs. lean ground beef
- 2 eggs
- 1 box Stove Top stuffing mix
- 1 cup milk

Mix all ingredients together. Shape into loaf in 9 x 13 pan. Bake at 350\* for about an hour. Mix 1/4 cup brown sugar, 2 Tbsp. ketchup, 1 Tbsp. mustard...pour over meatloaf and return to oven for 10 minutes...let meatloaf cool for 10 minutes more before slicing to serve.

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# 2009 FALL CONFERENCE EXHIBITORS

## CMR Fall Conference Vendor Show

By Sheldon & Mary Schiebe, Knotty Pines Resort

Wow! We have another Fall Conference under our belts. As the Conference Vendor Show Committee, we were very pleased and excited by the resorter and vendor response to the Vendor Show.

Thank you to all you resorters who supported our vendors at the show. The feedback from the vendors is always positive and appreciative for the strong showing of resorters and their keen interest in the products.

CMR members asked for some specific vendors and we were able to get most of those vendors along with the many faithful that come year after year. Keep those requests for specific companies to participate coming. We may not know when a personal invitation will make the difference in a company's decision to participate.

The vendor show is our chance to meet with vendors, become familiar with products that make our jobs as resort owners/managers easier, and get many new ideas as well. We came away with many purchases and information for future purchases. Many resorters won door prizes that were donated by the vendors for the "end of the show" drawing.

Something new this year - we had a cash bar of sorts with soda, wine and beer available to enjoy during the show. Both resorters and vendors enjoyed it.

With your input we will continue to make the vendor show the best show of the year for the resorters and vendors. Be sure to put the CMR Fall Conference on your calendar next year so you won't miss out on the excitement of the Vendor Show! Call or e-mail us at [stay@knottypinesresort.com](mailto:stay@knottypinesresort.com) with ideas and suggestions for additional vendors. Be sure to plan on attending the CMR Fall Conference next year so you won't miss out on the excitement of the Vendor Show! Watch the Resorter Reporter newsletter for the date and place.



## The Congress of Minnesota Resorts Fall Conference sponsors were:

- GOLD • \$500 - \$1000 Pine Insurance Agency - Dan Borseth
- SILVER • \$250 - \$500 Financial Group of Central Minnesota, J. Buford Johnson & Diane Rook Johnson
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Dan, (Maggie) and Beth Borseth, Bret Swanson and Judy Larson.



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# THANK YOU!

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# C'MON RESORTERS GET ON THE BUS!



## TO THE CMR DAY ON THE HILL & RESORT SHOW **FEBRUARY 23 - 24, 2010**

Resorter's Day on the Hill is when Resort Owners gather and travel to St. Paul to visit with legislators about issues that affect their businesses. There will be a pick up point in Brainerd where you can "get on the bus."

**Contact Ed Becker for more information at  
218-652-3536 or [vacation@inwegoresort.com](mailto:vacation@inwegoresort.com)**



**Fees, Fees, No More Fees Please**

Dave Keller, Brookside Resort

When Governor Pawlenty promised that there would be no tax increases while he was in office, we all knew that it wouldn't be completely true. It was obvious to most everyone that there would be, or there would be another way to increase the money we all give our state. When Government has an insatiable appetite for new spending and an inability to stop overspending, we the people will be paying the tab.

Soon we started to see increases in fees required from us for many services. Since then, we have seen some great increases in almost all of the fees (not taxes) that we pay. We have seen increases in car tab fees, hunting and fishing license fees, bait dealer fees, boat tab fees, lodging license fees, campground license fees, irrigation permit fees, electrical inspection fees, plumbing inspection fees, fire marshal inspection fees (good thing we've already paid those) and any other fee you can think of. Those are just fees that we know of in our own industry. It seems as though it must be easier to affect a change in fee structure than to increase taxes, because we surely don't seem to be able to do much to stop the increases. There just isn't too much anyone is able to do .

Hopefully, we've all considered these types of increases when we set our rates for 2010. Maybe we can initiate some kind of fee instead of rate increase. Maybe I'll try a fee to cover Minnesota fees. It can be a fee fee. No, I don't suppose that sounds good either.

I'm just glad to know that the CMR has saved me much more money through their legislative efforts than all of these fee increases combined. The CMR membership, with the help and guidance of our lobbyist Joel Carlson, have been highly effective in watching over our interests through good legislation. You just can't change it all.

I hope that all of you who expressed strong opinions about fee increases on the CMR egroups discussion will consider helping by coming to the Day On The Hill event, scheduled for February 23 and 24. That is your chance to sit down face to face with the people who make those decisions we have to live with. Every session, we need to safeguard our business interests. You can't leave it up to someone else. You need to do it for yourself. It's important.

*Maybe we can initiate some kind of fee instead of rate increase...*

*It can be a fee fee.*

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# Legislative News

## 2010 Legislative Session will be Bruising!!

The normally short even year session of the Minnesota legislature shows all the early signs of a battle royale over the budget and the future of Minnesota's state government. Never before has a second year session been so mixed with deficits, elections and a continuing lagging economy. The issues confronting the sharply divided legislature and the Governor are staggering in scope, and do not lend themselves to any easy solutions.

The November revenue forecast predicts a deficit of \$1.2 billion dollars – this on the heels of an almost \$5 billion deficit that was partially addressed in the 2009 session. More red ink is predicted for the 2012/13 fiscal years - a deficit of over \$7 billion is not unlikely. Sounds like fun....not.

The problem facing Minnesota is beyond budget cuts or tax increases. Minnesota's job market and work force are changing at a rapid pace which will require major changes in most, if not all, of our state and local government programs. Minnesota has an aging workforce, with baby booms reaching or nearing retirement in significant numbers. This inescapable fact will be forcing legislators to consider overhauling local government aid, health care, K-12 education spending, and higher education. This process will start in the 2010 session, but it's likely to continue on for many years to come.

Governor Pawlenty has remained steadfast in his opposition to tax increases to solve the budget deficit. Majority DFLers, while more willing to accept tax hikes to ease the budget pain, acknowledge that no amount of new taxes will solve the long-term structural problems facing the state. So, the painful discussion about how much to fund programs - or even have many of the existing programs in the first place – will be the focus of the coming sessions.

Despite the grim news about the budget, legislators will also be expected to address a number of other pressing issues. DFLers hope to push for legislation to stimulate job creation and a package of state building projects that could reach \$ 1 billion.

Farve mania will also be present at the Capitol. The Minnesota Vikings will continue to push for a new stadium this session. Several legislators are looking at options to push a bill across the goal line (pun intended) in the hopes of keeping the team in Minnesota beyond the 2011 NFL season.

Without a doubt, the Viking's successful season has created a warm fuzzy with many Minnesotans – but questions remain if that will be enough to get the votes needed to pass a bill that requires public support for a new football stadium.

## Election Looms Large

Election politics are always at play at the Capitol – after all – that's how legislators get their jobs. But, this session will be a unique first for Minnesota.

The party nominating process will be accelerated this year as a result of a federal law change regarding primary elections. States must hold

their primary elections at least 45 days before the November general voting. This will place Minnesota's primary election in mid-August, and has moved the party nominating process up to late April. This will be the first time in modern history that the major parties will be holding nominating conventions while the legislature is still in session.

There is an opening for the state's top spot as Governor Pawlenty will be stepping down after two terms. Many current legislators are vying for the support of the party faithful to be Governor, and will no doubt be considering legislative proposals during the session that may have an impact on that process. The 2010 election will be the first since 1986 that will feature the Governor's race at the top of the ticket, so interest is intense. DFLers have not held the Governor's office since 1990, and they hope to break the drought.

DFLers Speaker Kelliher, Rep. Paul Thissen, Sen. Tom Bakk, Rep. Tom Rukivina are all waging spirited campaigns to be the party's nominee. Reps. Marty Seifert and Tom Emmer are leading legislative contenders on the Republican side to date. Each of these candidates face significant opposition from non-legislative candidates including Former Senators Mark Dayton and (possibly) Norm Coleman and a host of other contenders including Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybek.

In addition to the Governor's race all 201 legislators will face the voters in 2010. Historical betting would predict a decline in DFL fortunes in President Obama's mid-term election. Voters seeking change are not feeling it coming soon enough – and may want to shake it up once again! The dissatisfaction with the health care debate and economy will have legislators looking over their shoulders all session long.

## CMR at the Capitol

The CMR legislative committee has been actively developing issues for the 2010 session. In addition to our ongoing issues of proper shoreline management, game and fish rules, property taxes and the school calendar, we will be pursuing other policies that impact resorts. These include a level playing field with vacation rental homes, the ability to transfer resort restricted plumbers licenses to family members or new owners, Department of Health regulations and fees, and others.

CMR needs your active involvement in our legislative program. The 2010 Day on the Hill and Resort Show is slated for **February 23 and 24** and we hope to increase CMR member participation. We directly lobby legislators to improve the climate for family owned resorts, and have a great time doing it. Please mark your calendar – and contact me at [jdcresearch@aol.com](mailto:jdcresearch@aol.com) or Ed Becker at (218) 652-3536 or [vacation@inwego.com](mailto:vacation@inwego.com) if you have any questions!

**See Page 20**  
**for more information on the**  
**CMR Day on the Hill!**

## Support the CMR's Efforts at the Capital

By joining the Congress of Minnesota Resorts you help defend your values and interests as a resort owner.

### As a member, you can:

**Stay Informed-** Get Legislative Updates so you know what's happening around you and what bills legislators are trying to pass that may affect your resort business.

**Be Heard -** The CMR Day on the Hill is your chance as a Resorter to speak to your congressmen and women. Let them know your concerns about new legislation.

**Make a Difference -** None of us is as smart as all of us! YOUR ideas and input can help make a difference in the resort industry.

*Go to page 12 for more information on what your membership can do for you!*



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