



2011 HALL OF FAME AWARD RECIPIENT

We are pleased to announce that Jeanne McGurn has been selected to receive our 2011 Hall of Fame Award!

Jeanne has helped to direct the Maine Tourism Association for more than 15 years, serving on its Board, Executive Committee and Committees too numerous to count!

Jeanne is President and founder of The Maine Tour Connection (TMTC) located in Portland, Maine, a wholesale receptive tour operator specializing in tours for groups of 20 or more since 1984.

In addition to overnight programs, TMTC provides Day Tour itineraries for convention and meeting groups visiting each region. Jeanne has promoted Maine via her Lobster Lady acclaim and her now famous Lobster Lady collectible cards. A ceaseless promoter of Maine who has brought millions of dollars of publicity to Maine at no cost.

We will present Jeanne with her award at our 90th Annual Meeting on May 18th at the Sugarloaf Hotel in Carrabassett Valley. Please join us in congratulating Jeanne!

— Vaughn Stinson, CTC
Chief Executive Officer



NEW TOURISM DIRECTOR



As many of you know, Carolann Ouellette was selected as our new Director for the Maine Office of Tourism. Our industry will excel and continue to be a leader in Maine's economy under her direction.

I have had the pleasure of working with Carolann from more than 13 years. Her leadership as our Chairman of the Board for 2 years was excellent in every manner. Carolann embraces the concept of team work and, to that end, knows the greatest

results come from a combined effort by all parties working toward a common goal. Carolann's solid background in the industry runs from river rafting to culinary arts and just about everything in between those two fields that make up tourism in Maine. Carolann has worked diligently over the last several years on our international presence for Maine tourism with the focus of that work in Europe.

Congratulations Carolann from the MTA and Maine's tourism industry!

— Vaughn Stinson, CTC
Chief Executive Officer

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e-Impact for February:

www.mainetourism.com/assets/stats.pdf

Our Mission Statement:

To serve as a unifying organization representing the common interests of the tourism industry; to create economic opportunities for our members by helping visitors and the general public become more aware of the unique quality of the Maine experience.



Maine Tourism Association is a non-profit association. In this capacity, we operate the state visitor information centers and produce the state's official travel planner for worldwide distribution.

Our association, in its 90th year, is the acknowledged, private-sector tourism leader in the State of Maine. The Association's membership is made up of professional leadership and organizations whose goal is to promote Maine as a prime vacation destination.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

February 1 - 28, 2011

Easton, Town of

Easton
207-488-6652
eastontownmanager@gmail.com
www.easton.me.us
Town

Hidden Pond

Kennebunkport
207-967-9050
info@hiddenpondmaine.com
www.hiddenpondmaine.com
Camp & Cottage, Health Center, Resort,
Spa, Working Farm, Yoga

Moose Prints Gallery/Mark Picard Wildlife Photography

Millinocket
207-447-6906
mark@markpicard.com
www.mooseprintsgallery.com
Art Gallery, Educational, Photo Service, Tours

Ramada Kittery

Kittery
207-439-5555
www.ramada.com/hotel/05078
Conference Centers, Health Center,
Hotel, Motel

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The economic recovery is coming - are you ready?

Start taking the steps now that will make your organization a leader in the coming year. Our free special report "Catch the Next Wave: Positioning for Success in the Coming Economic Upturn" will show you how.

Get it now at
<http://www.acroglobal.com/MTA>

ACRO
GLOBAL
Tourism Advertising & Marketing
info@acroglobal.com
207-633-3934

Do Business with a Member

ATTRACTIONS & SERVICES MAP ALERT

If your question is "So, how are we going to get more tourists to our business?", then the answer is in the **2011 Maine Attractions & Services Map**. Filled with hundreds of places to go and things to do, the *2011 Maine Attractions & Services Map* is the best place in the state to advertise your museum, garden, attraction, amusement park, or whatever else that you have to attract our in-state visitors to your doors this summer.

We will be printing over 100,000 copies of the *2011 Maine Attractions & Services Map*, and it will be available at more than 500 locations, free, throughout the state starting in late May and available through mid-October. In other words, at the height of the tourism season!

Not only is the cost incredibly low (ads start at only \$200!), signing up has never been easier. Last year's map sold out of space, so don't delay in getting your ad in the **2011 Maine Attractions & Services Map** today!

There is also a new price point on the map. **We are now offering a 4-color spot, 3-3/4" wide by 2-1/4" high, on the flipside of the map for only \$700.** That is a great way to really highlight your business or attraction.

For more information on this high yield, low cost marketing opportunity, please call Michael Conley at 623-0363, ext. 107 or email him at mconley@mainetourism.com today.

—Michael Conley,
Manager - Advertising & Membership Sales

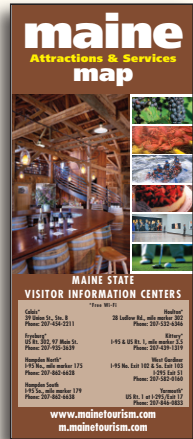
ANNUAL MEETING: MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The 90th Annual Meeting for the Maine Tourism Association will be held on Wednesday, May 18, at the Sugarloaf Mountain Hotel in Carrabassett Valley. With panoramic views of the mountains, this location is one of the most scenic spots in the state, offering the perfect place and opportunity to catch up with your fellow tourism professionals.

And for the adventuresome, we will be offering a chance to ride the resort's zipline the evening before the meeting, complete with a barbecue dinner. As always, we have arranged for a special room rate for anyone wishing to make an overnight stay. All the rooms have been recently refreshed, so plan on treating yourself.

We look forward to hosting this event because it gives all of us here at the MTA a chance to greet our members and thank them for their continued support of what we do here at the Maine Tourism Association.

To register for the event, go to: <https://forms.mainetourism.com/register/>



PUBLIC AFFAIRS

UPDATE

Outdoor Recreation. The legislature is wrestling with a number of issues related to outdoor recreation this session and in some cases, the Maine Tourism Association has been asked to provide our views. One issue in particular is LD 254, *An Act to Amend the Standards by Which Game Wardens May Stop All-terrain Vehicles Operating on Private Property.*

Outdoor recreation is one of the most popular reasons for visitors to come to Maine. Research released at the 2010 Governor's Conference on Tourism shows that, when asked about the primary purpose for visiting Maine, outdoor recreation ranked first for overnight visitors and second for day visitors just behind shopping. In addition, when visitors were surveyed regarding activities during their trip, 68% of overnight and 38% of day visitors reported they participated in outdoor recreation. Many of these activities take place on private land.

Maine has a unique and long-standing relationship with its private landowners; however, we are concerned that this relationship could change and put many activities at risk such as snowmobiling, hunting, fishing, hiking, ATV-ing, wildlife watching and cross country skiing. Landowners are raising concerns about abuses to their land and the dumping of waste. Many landowners have already posted their land forbidding its use by the public. According to the Landowners Relations Program report, within the last four years alone, at least 425 landowners across the state have requested more than 16,600 "Access by Permission Only" signs from the Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife. The Maine Tourism Association is committed to assist with improving this situation.

A public hearing was recently held by the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee on LD 254, *An Act to Amend the Standards by Which Game Wardens May Stop All-terrain Vehicles Operating on Private Property.* Currently a game warden may stop an all-terrain vehicle to ascertain whether a violation of the law has occurred only if the game warden has reasonable and articulable suspicion (probable cause) that a violation of the law has or is taking place. LD 254, supported by the Maine ATV Association, would remove that language and allow a game warden to stop an all-terrain vehicle for any reason. In 2003, legislation passed to allow law enforcement to stop an ATV without cause the same as they can snowmobiles, boaters, hunters and fishermen. As a result of a court case, the issue for ATVs was taken to the Maine Supreme Court where, in 2009, the law was upheld as constitutional. That same year legislation was passed requiring "reasonable and articulable suspicion" in order to stop an ATV.

What is at risk is the continued use of private land for public outdoor recreation. The Maine Tourism Association testified in favor of the legislation along with the Maine Snowmobile Association, Maine Farm Bureau, Maine Forest Guides Association, Small Woodlot Owners Association of Maine, Maine Forest Products Council, the Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife and others.

Maine has the most ATV trails of any state in the nation and 90% of these trails are on private land. This is a growing segment of the outdoor recreation industry that has some 67,000 registered ATVs and an economic impact of \$250 million. The Maine ATV Association is organizing clubs and establishing education programs to honor the tradition of open access of private land; however, without the passage of LD 254, they believe their efforts will not continue.

125th Legislature. As of this writing, we have just passed the 1000 mark with bills being printed and only another 650 to go! The 125th Legislature is very busy holding public hearings and work sessions where they determine the initial vote on these many proposals.

If you need information about the status of a bill or would like to listen to the House of Representatives or the Maine State Senate or to a committee public hearing or work session, simply go to the mainetourism.com Web site and click on the "Member's Only" icon at the bottom of the page. Then, on the left side of the page, go to "contact your state legislator" and then click on "State Legislature Info".

If you need to contact your state legislator, CLICK HERE.

If you have a particular bill you are interested in and need information, please send me an email at carolyn@mainetourism.com so I can let you know.

If you would like additional information, please call me at the Maine Tourism Association, 207-623-0363, ext. 104 or e-mail me at carolyn@mainetourism.com.

— Carolyn Manson,
Manager of Public Affairs

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

February 1 – 28, 2011

Continued from page 2.

Rivendell DownEast Oceanfront Cabin

Steuben

617-327-2834

bronwenfeeney@comcast.net

www.rivendell.ws

Camp & Cottages

Yankee Traveler Motel

Warren

207-273-2321

www.myyankeetraveler.com

Gift Shop, Motel

APRIL EVENTS

*For more information on these events,
go to: www.mainetourism.com*

Bird Walk

April 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2011

105 Eden St., Bar Harbor, ME

207-288-5395

Leave from the George B. Dorr Museum of Natural History at College of the Atlantic, to search nearby trails and the college pier for common and uncommon birds of winter with student naturalist Anna Stunkel. Dress for the weather and bring binoculars if possible. All ages. 4 to 5 p.m.

21st Annual Patriots' Day Celebration

April 14-17, 2011

Ogunquit, ME

207-646-2939

Join us for our 21st annual event as we go back to our roots, with historical characters walking the streets, musterings, and fife & drum concerts. Re-enactments, kids' carnival, cookout, taste-tests, and casino night round out the weekend.

Freeport & Maine's Pirate History

April 14, 2011; 7- 8:30 p.m.

45 Main St., Freeport, ME

207-865-2220

Freeport has its own connection to pirate history: the privateer Dash was built at Porter's Landing and licensed by the United States government to "subdue, seize and take" enemy vessels as prizes – state sanctioned piracy. And that's just part of Maine's pirate heritage. Ned Allen and Jim Nelson are our presenters for this special event. Admission FREE (\$5 suggested donation) Seating is limited, reservations are recommended.

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APRIL EVENTS

Continued from page 3.

Wells Reserve EcoDay

April 16, 2011
342 Laudholm Farm Rd., Wells, ME
207-646-4521

The Wells Reserve at Laudholm encourages healthy habits for you and your planet. As Earth Day nears, get active, be fit, and go green. EcoDay features a green expo and wellness fair, fitness and recreation vendors, Laudholm 5k run, volleyball tourney, beach cleanup, guided nature walks, environmental groups, food, music, and fun. Keynote by Dr. John Carroll plus other speakers. Family friendly and free.

2nd Annual Dancing with the Ellsworth Stars at The Grand!

April 16, 2011
165 Main St., Ellsworth, ME
207-667-9500

2nd Annual Dancing with the Ellsworth Stars Saturday, April 16th at 7:30pm
Based on the popular TV show, Dancing with Ellsworth Stars wants you to vote for your favorite ballroom dance team.
Tickets: \$20.00 General Admission / \$15 Youth.

WHSN's 2011 AS4MS

April 29, 2011; 7 - 11:30 p.m.
126 Union St., Bangor, ME
207-941-7116

Once again, WHSN presents the AS4MS (Acoustic Showcase to Benefit the Nat'l Multiple Sclerosis Society). This year the AS4MS returns to downtown Bangor at the Union Street Brick Church the night before the Bangor/Brewer Walk MS event! With acoustic performances by Dean Ford, The Sophomore Beat, The Great Valley and more to be announced. Tickets \$10 a person, on sale now at all Bull Moose locations. All proceeds go directly to the Greater New England Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Come out for a great night of music that helps Mainers living with MS.

Join Team WHSN for Walk MS 2011!

April 30, 2011; 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
203 State St., Brewer, ME
207-941-7116

Once again, WHSN is participating in the annual Walk MS event. The 2011 Walk MS will take place on Saturday, April 30th at the Brewer Auditorium. For 2011, WHSN wants to invite everyone to join the team, not just WHSN staffers. Listeners, family, friends...EVERYONE! By joining our team, you will be signing up not just for a day of fun, but also for a celebration of the great things we can achieve when working together for a common cause. Each step we take brings us one step closer to a cure - and closer to a world without multiple sclerosis.

SIGNS OF THE TIME PERHAPS?

As the snow begins to melt (hopefully, at least), most of us in the Maine tourism industry start fretting about what the coming travel season will bring. Even though the economic recovery remains a fragile thing, especially with the recent run-up in gas prices, the signs are pointing to a very positive outlook for tourism in 2011.

Requests for *Maine Invites You*, the official travel planner for the State of Maine, are beyond robust through the first two months of the year. In January, for instance, we experienced an increase well north of 100% from the same time in 2010, and February's increase was over 25%. Orders from Canada spiked even more dramatically with a 150% increase in January and then another 65% in February.

In speaking with many innkeepers and cottage renters throughout Maine, early bookings are very solid and often much better than they have been for some time. A number of innkeepers are reporting a surge in heads in the bed during the winter when business has been traditionally light. Most encouragingly, they report that there seem to be no single reason for this sudden spike in occupancies, both current and down the road.

For me, the best bell weather for the state of the travel industry for Maine is the recently concluded AAA Travel Expo held at Gillette Stadium. Final figures for both attendance and, even more crucially, booked vacations, will be coming out soon. I expect that they will both be strong numbers. The MTA brought down more than 9,000 pieces of literature and left with fewer than 250 after the end of the three day event.

Gas prices and foul weather are the wild cards in all this speculation, of course, but otherwise it appears that Maine is in for its second straight robust vacation season.

—Michael Conley,
Manager - Advertising & Membership Sales

HOSPITALITY EDUCATION IN MAINE

A little diversion from my normal topics, but ever so important to our industry, is the area of hiring, especially seasonal hiring. While I worked in the resort side of the business prior to coming to Maine Tourism Association, seasonal hiring was always an issue. We often needed to hire J-1 international students to fill many of our positions. However, the recent announcement from Husson University will help alleviate some of this strain by providing an ongoing stream of qualified applicants that are looking to build their resumes in the hospitality industry. For those not familiar with the announcement, Husson has formed a separate SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY, SPORT AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT.

"The aim of Husson's Business Administration - Hospitality Management program is to prepare students for the wide variety of career options available in the hospitality industry. This concentration is designed to help the student achieve success and is the first step on a career track with endless potential." They plan to train people for careers in restaurants, cruise lines and tourism, clubs and casinos, lodging, as well as event and convention management through the Master's level. A program like this located in Maine will hopefully encourage more people to stay in Maine to work in tourism. I would encourage you to contact the University to discuss internship and summer employment programs that could benefit both yourself and the students at Husson. It is another opportunity to "stay local".

Please feel free to contact me to talk about any hiring related questions and concerns you may have. My phone number is 207-623-0363 x 208.

— Ron Brann,
Finance & Human Resources Manager



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FOR MAINE'S TOURISM INDUSTRY

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Do Business with a Member

ONLINE LEARNING FOR THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

The tourism industry is an exciting field to be in, but part of this excitement comes from the many challenges facing tourism professionals. Ongoing training and education requirements, limited budgets, limited staff, too many new marketing techniques ... these are just a few of the challenges that tourism professionals face every day.

If you, or your staff have ever felt overwhelmed or needed help in any aspect of your job, but haven't had the time, budget or other resources to access the training, then maybe it's time you sought help online. Maine Tourism Association has partnered with Susan Sweeney and the eLearning University and we are here for you.

What are we offering?

We are excited to partner with eLearningU to provide ongoing education through live and recorded one-hour training programs. Every week there will be a live course where you can attend online and at the end of the training program you can ask questions. All courses that are delivered live, as well as additional courses, are recorded and will be available through the eLearningU Web site for you to take anytime, anywhere - so if you need a course on how the search engines work for tomorrow's meeting with your web developer you can take a one hour course tonight from home.

CLICK HERE FOR THE MARCH COURSES OFFERED

Online Course Benefits:

- All courses are tourism focused and are delivered by industry experts on an array of topics of interest to tourism professionals - Internet and social media marketing, branding, customer service, packaging
- You take the courses online from the convenience of your office which means very little down time and no travel time
- Most courses are available at the very reasonable cost of \$49.95 and you can even share this cost if you want to have several people pull up a chair or project the session onto a larger screen
- Courses are available "live" where you can ask questions at the end of the program
- Courses are also recorded and available at any time giving you access to the courses whenever you need them, wherever you want to take them
- You can suggest specific topics and specific speakers

Why this program?

At this point you may be wondering why we participated in this program. This ongoing education program is unique. It is tourism focused and enables us to provide ongoing education to you without you having to do any of the work.

This program has been developed by Susan Sweeney, who has a depth of experience in tourism education and has spoken at major tourism conferences worldwide for the past 12 years. Very few other people are as qualified to produce and develop a tourism education program. eLearningU has invested in the right technology to effectively allow us to deliver programs to you. Sign up today!

TOURISM TIDBIT

Green Tourism is Beautiful Tourism

Tourism professionals are now keenly aware of the importance of green spaces. When urban areas have become fields of concrete held together by rivers of asphalt, tourism suffers. These areas are not only visually unappealing, but tend to hold heat in causing higher air conditioning usage. Tourism professionals are now working with locales to create green spaces that not only add beauty to their visitors (and citizens') lives but also help to replenish the oxygen supply. Police are also aware of the fact that green and beautified locales tend to have lower crime rates. In fact, one of the least expensive ways to reduce crime rates is through beautification projects. Tourism and travel then are faced with the issue of balancing the needs of the environment with the needs of its customer base. If travel becomes too hard, then it may lose its enchantment and glamor; if on the other hand, if tourism does not respect the Earth then there may be no place to which to travel!

From the perspective of tourism, beautification projects help the industry grow by attracting more visitors, providing positive word of mouth publicity, creating an inviting environment that tends to lift the spirits of service personnel, and creating community pride. Here are some suggestions on how to improve your tourism locale while caring for the environment.

- Look at your community the way others may see it. All too often we become so accustomed to run down appearances, dirt, or lack of green spaces that we simply come to accept these eyesores as part of our urban or rural landscaping. Take the time to view your area through the eyes of a visitor. Are there landfills in clear view? How well are lawns kept? Is garbage dealt with in a clean and efficient manner? Then ask yourself, would you want to visit or live in this community?

- Turn your Environmentalism into a form of marketing. All too often people in the travel and tourism industries forget that a clean

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Tourism Tidbit

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and healthy environment does not take away from the bottom line, it adds to it.

- Encourage hotels and restaurants to promote sensible laundry policies. Policies such as washing sheets every three days rather than every day do wonders for the environment, also consider the use of new technologies such as light bulbs that save on light/heat pollutions. Restaurants can be careful to use soaps that pollute less and serve water only upon request.

- Involve the whole community/locale and not just tourism people, in beautification projects. Too many places have come to believe that beautification is the other person's business. While governments must provide funding for major projects such as sidewalks or road reconstruction, there are a whole host of projects that local citizens can accomplish without government assistance. Among these are planting of gardens, cleaning of front yards, developing interesting street corners, creatively painting walls, and/or planting bushes to hide dumpsites.

- Choose one or two key and do-able projects. Nothing succeeds like success, and beautification projects reflect as much about a community's insides as outer appearances. If a community does not like itself, that will be manifested by the way it looks to visitors and possible business developers. Before beginning a beautification project, set do-able goals and then make sure that as many people as possible are enthusiastic about the project and reject negative thought. Beautiful places begin with community harmony.

- Make sure that your tourism beautification projects fit your climate and terrain. A major mistake in beautification projects is trying to be what a locale is not. If you have a desert climate, then plant with water concerns in mind. If you have a cold climate, then seek ways to deal with not only a harsh winter climate but also in a manner to present a cheerful face during the gray winter months.

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GET PAMPERED AT THE GREENVILLE INN

By the Travelin Maine(rs), George and Linda Smith

We spent a February weekend in Greenville to attend the annual Chocolate Festival and discovered – here in the heart of Maine's outdoor playground – the elegant, formal, friendly and distinctive Greenville Inn.

Linda

I'm all for experiencing the rustic "real" Maine, but have to admit every once in a while I love being pampered. If you can relate to this, you'll know why I suggest a stay at the Greenville Inn.

Hosts Terry and Jeff Johannemann are more than accommodating and anxious to share their enthusiasm and appreciation of the Greenville area. After all, they chose to buy an Inn and live here. Jeff is a retired airline pilot and Terry a retired third-grade teacher – just the kind of investors and people Maine needs if we are to prosper. Terry and I shared teaching stories.

The Victorian exterior is striking, but you've got to get inside to see the Inn's formal elegance. George and I stood at a dining room window soon after we arrived and watched a snow squall creep over Squaw Mountain, cross the lake, and envelope the Inn. Beautiful!

Our upstairs room included a gas fireplace and two comfy armchairs, making it feel more like a suite even though it was small. Luxurious accessories from bedding to toiletries to fluffy bathrobes let you know that your hosts want to indulge you.

After a great night's sleep in the world's most comfortable bed, we awoke to wonderful aromas drifting up from downstairs. Breakfast awaits.

This morning's hot items are nut-encrusted French toast and bacon. There are lots of juices and plenty of coffee, huge croissants with a variety of jams, yogurt and a spectacular plate of fruit – and not just your average fruit mix, but fresh strawberries, pineapple, melon and... could it be? Yes, fresh raspberries! Absolutely perfect.



George

Some birds make sloppy nests. Others build works of art. The Greenville Inn is a work of art. And even sloppy nest builders would appreciate a stay here.

The 14 different accommodations vary from a two-bedroom family suite to a knotty-pine cabin. Prices go from \$150 to \$439 per night, depending on the season and accommodation. The price for one night in our room #22 ranged from \$185 to \$235. Rooms have private baths, televisions, and wifi. Over the course of a year, half of the Inn's guests are Mainers and a lot of them are winter visitors.

I asked Jeff what brings his guests to Greenville. "The historical significance of the area," he replied, "Moosehead Lake and fishing and boating, snowmobiling, fall foliage, photography – we are a four season draw."

And of course, moose. He partners with Moose Country Safaris that offers a personal guarantee to those who wish to – want to – must see Maine's ugliest beast.

We used to see so many moose traveling through this region to our North Woods camp that the kids wouldn't even gaze up and out the window when I would excitedly announce, "Moose up ahead!"

We're Lucky

Without snowmobilers, winter in Greenville would be dreadful, economically speaking. And that's a shame because it's a great place for a get-away-winter-vacation (or any other season) – another one of those places we love because "there's nothing to do."

We overheard one guest at breakfast tell another, "Can you imagine, it's an hour and a half drive to get to a movie theater!" This seemed to be a very positive thing in his mind.

We couldn't help but feel sad for the lady who, scheduled to leave for her Massachusetts home right after breakfast, told Jeff that she and her husband, "are all excited to be here, then we go home and it's – oh," as her head hung down. "But we always stop at LL Bean on the way home," she said, brightening up.

Well, you lucky folks who live in Maine, consider what we have here in Greenville, and plan your vacation accordingly! Go North!

Greenville Inn - www.greenvilleinn.com, 1-888-695-6000. Their Web site is exceptional. In the summer the Inn hosts a fine dining restaurant and offers stay-and-dine packages. Many people told us the Rod & Reel Restaurant is the best in town. We enjoyed a great meal there, tasty food, friendly staff, and reasonable prices.

For more news from the Travelin Maine(rs) go to www.georgesmithmaine.com

WHEN SAVING A DOLLAR COULD LOSE YOUR COMMUNITY

By Melyn Johnson

Just recently in conversation someone told me that they purchased their insurance online. Ouch. That really hurt. Biting my tongue is what hurt. The inclination for me to pull out the soap box, climb atop the box, and deliver a personal opinion was strong. But I maintained self-control. Until now.

Online? Really? The very thought gives me heartburn.

Saturday my grandson (and many other people's children and grandchildren) played two games on the Kid's Inc. league. Not a single one of those teams had an online business on the shirts.

The day before, the Ag Appreciation Day was held, an education opportunity for our farmers and ranchers (including a free meal). There were several local insurance agencies that had paid the money for booths and were present. None of them were online agencies.

On Saturday at the Women in Ag conference, there was Phil and Dianna Brown in attendance. No online companies that I saw.

Let's let the imagination run to that tree branch falling on your roof and causing damage to your house and car. It's easy to just call up Phil and Dianna (or Warner and Roger McKinnon or Ken Lane). Good luck on calling that online group. And don't whine to me when you find out how it's working for you.

Whew. I think the soap box can be put up now on that subject.

Wait, though. Before putting it up let me address shopping in your hometown.

Every morning when you wake up you want water to flow out of your faucet. You want your toilet to flush by simply pulling down that handle. You want your streets paved, your trash picked up, your street light giving off light so you don't trip getting to your car. You want a swimming pool where you kids can go all day for just a little bit of money. You want a park with playground equipment for them to play or have their birthday party. You want a golf course so your spouse can be gone for a few hours on the weekend. You decide to do genealogy research and begin using the public library and want research materials. You want. You want. You want.

Don't act like you don't know where the money comes from to provide all of that. A minute part of it is the fees, but in our Oklahoma towns it is primarily sales tax dollars.

How would you like to call the City Manager and tell him about a pot hole on your street that you want fixed and him say, "Sorry, our street crew is working on streets in Amarillo today." Take a deep breath. You brought it on yourself.

When you choose where to buy your groceries think about who provided those buns free at your last Sunday School picnic. Think about who bought ads in your school yearbook so your kids could have an affordable memory of their school years.

When you're buying a car, try to remember if the place you're buying your car (or washer or dryer or furniture) bought an animal at the stock show. Or if they donated to your prom party. Or bought the scoreboard at your school. We might even remember who buys the radio time so you can listen to area teams in the playoffs.

Now, don't be throwing out exceptions as excuses. Sure, it's a fact you can't get everything in your hometown. That's not what we're talking about. As a point, to heck with any excuses at all. Just thoughts to ponder. You say you save some money ... but I wonder just how much of that \$3 gasoline it takes to save those dollars.

And how many hours it took you to drive to and from that other town.

When there are medical emergencies and traumatic events, who steps up and helps out? Hometown zip codes is my guess.

Who buys the tickets to your school and community plays? Who buys the FFA top hands? Who pays for all that expensive candy and other stuff your golf team is selling as a fund raiser? It's always people who own or work for people who are in business in or near your hometown.

It's time to stop going into places just for a handout. Think about where you're going and why. There is nothing wrong with going to other towns, no. But consider what you expect from local merchants and be economically smart. Sometimes when you're saving a dollar, you could lose much more.

And while you're thinking, tell those folks that do provide jobs in your hometown, that do pay the taxes that helps keep water running through your faucet, that do hold up your community events ... tell them thank you. I appreciate our community supporters every time you give to our kids, our school, our community events, our civic groups. You're what keeps us alive.

Time to put the soap box away.
See you on the bricks.

Melyn Johnson is the Main Street Manager in Guymon, Oklahoma.

Tourism Tidbit

Continued from page 6.

- Think of beautification as part of an economic development package. Remember that tax incentives can only do so much. No matter how much money a community offers in tax abatements, quality of life issues will always have a major impact on where people choose to live and locate their businesses. Tourism demands that a community offer a clean and healthy environment, with good restaurants and places of lodging, fun things to do and good customer service. The way your community appears has a lot to do with the choices which business executives make regarding site selections.

- Involve local police and security professionals in the planning of your community's beautification projects. The New York City experience ought to prove to everyone in tourism that there is a connection between quality of life issues and crime. The basic principle is that as communities seek ways to beautify, crime decreases and money used to fight crime can be redirected to quality of life issues. Policing tends to be reactive by nature; beautification projects are proactive. While pretty flowers beds and tree-lined boulevards will not prevent all crimes, the elimination of garbage along streets, unkempt lawns and shoddy structures does a great deal to lower crime rates.

Do not define "green" in its most narrow sense, but rather in its broadest sense. Few people will spend a lot of money to eat over a garbage dump, but many people are more than willing to spend top dollar to eat in a charming setting, be that setting a table overlooking an ocean, a crystal clear lake, a beautiful garden, or a forest. By promoting green and by finding innovative ways to protect the environment, tourism is assuring that it will continue to offer products that are pleasant to the eye, and good for generations that are yet to be born.

— Excerpted from **Tidbits & More, Inc.**, March, 2011. To read more: www.tourismandmore.com

Green Workshops

for Maine Lodging Properties
and Restaurants

Three workshops, with nine speakers, will provide hoteliers and restaurateurs with practical advice about reducing energy, water, waste and toxins; and attracting new customers. The event schedule is:

May 4

Samoset Resort
Rockport

May 5

Bluenose Inn
Bar Harbor

May 12

Meadowmere Resort
Ogunquit

The workshops will be 9:00 to noon, with two optional green tours on May 12 in Ogunquit. The specific topics addressed will include: Overview: Reducing Energy Use in Hotels and Restaurants, Incentives Offered for Energy Efficiency Projects, Advances in Lighting, Energy Management Systems, Energy Efficient Commercial Kitchens, Waste Management, Water Use Reduction, Green Cleaning, and Green Weddings and Meetings.

Attendees' facilities will earn 10 points toward certification for attending. To register, or for more information, contact Dan Ruben, dan_ruben@usa.net, 617-527-7950. The registration fee is \$20. A continental breakfast will be served.

The workshop sponsors are: Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Maine Innkeepers Association, Maine Restaurant Association, Boston Green Tourism, and the U.S. EPA.

AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS INITIATIVE

Last month President Barack Obama announced the Administration's action plan, under the America's Great Outdoors initiative, to achieve lasting conservation of the outdoor spaces that power our nation's economy, shape our culture, and build our outdoor traditions. This initiative seeks to reinvigorate our approach to conservation and reconnect Americans, especially young people, with the lands and waters that are used for farming and ranching, hunting and fishing, and for families to spend quality time together. Recognizing that many of these places and resources are under intense pressure, the President established the America's Great Outdoors Initiative last April to work with the American people in developing a conservation and recreation agenda that makes sense for the 21st century.

The report released today outlines ways in which the Federal Government will help empower local communities to accomplish their conservation and recreation priorities by recognizing that the best ideas come from outside of Washington. Last summer, senior Administration officials held 51 listening sessions across the country to gather input from Americans about the outdoor places and activities that they value most. These sessions drew more than 10,000 participants and more than 105,000 written comments, shaping an action plan that, based on local initiatives and support, which when implemented will result in:

- Accessible parks or green spaces for our children.
- A new generation of great urban parks and community green spaces.
- Newly-restored river restorations and recreational "blueways" that power economic revitalization in communities.
- Stronger support for farmers, ranchers, and private landowners that help protect rural landscapes and provide access for recreation.
- The reinvestment of revenues from oil and gas extraction into the permanent protection of parks, open spaces, wildlife habitat, and access for recreational activities.
- A 21st century conservation ethic that builds on local ideas and solutions for environmental stewardship and connecting to our historic, cultural, and natural heritage.

"This initiative is an effort to reconnect Americans with the valuable resources all around them and shape a 21st century plan for protecting our great outdoors," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. "It is important that our waters, lands and green-spaces are brought back into our daily lives. President Obama's initiative will help make these critical resources a national focus once again, and involve people of every background in conservation of the places that we hold dear."

Specifically, the report calls for fully funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund; establishing a 21st century Conservation Service Corps to engage young Americans in public lands and water restoration; and extending the deduction for conservation easement donations on private lands beyond 2011, among other measures.

The full report is available at: www.americasgreatoutdoors.gov.

BROCHURE POLICY

Dear Member,

Your membership is important to us and the benefits we offer are important to you. It continues to be our goal to offer all of our members the best service at the least expensive cost. I feel and hope you agree that this is especially true of our brochure display, delivery and warehousing fee structure. We are asking for your help in that matter.

With the rapidly rising cost of fuel, we are all looking to economize on what we spend on fuel related costs. This means a greater cost to the visitor and in turn, it means the visitor will look to economize on every aspect of their travel. You should anticipate more visitors using the 8 visitor information centers to be more accurate in their travels and final destinations. Good directions, statewide information and things to see and do are what our well-trained and knowledgeable staff in the visitor centers are known for. This in turn saves the visitor money, time and makes the VIC service even more valuable to you. For \$135 a year, your brochure, no matter the quantity, are distributed year round at the visitor centers. The best way to ensure our service works at its best, and the price remains such a great deal for our members, is to ship directly to the Hallowell warehouse. That is preferred and it does save you time and money. This is especially important for dated material and its timely distribution. For warehouse delivery or drop off at one of the of the visitor centers for re-distribution please make note of the receiving schedule below for timely delivery to the visitor centers. This procedure is very important for your material that is date sensitive.

Please call with any questions. Thank you again for your membership and support of the Maine Tourism Association.

May to September - we deliver to each visitor center on the 1st and 3rd week of the month
Example: brochure is dated for June 1 to June 30 - we would need in the Hallowell warehouse no later than May 4

October to April - we deliver to each visitor center 1st week of the month
Example: brochure is dated November 1-30-we would need in warehouse no later than October 28



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Do Business with a Member

Visitor Information Center TRAFFIC FIGURES FOR FEBRUARY

	Current Month		Year-to-Date		Y-D Comparison	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2011/2010	
Calais	341	202	623	419	-204	-33%
Fryeburg	801	903	1,795	1,861	+66	+4
Hampden (N)	2,694	1,972	4,600	3,473	-1,127	-25%
Hampden (S)	2,110	1,557	3,773	3,019	-754	-20%
Houlton	620	609	1,154	1,145	-9	-1%
Kittery	9,829	8,554	18,986	16,020	-2,966	-16%
West Gardiner	532	446	935	777	-158	-17%
Yarmouth	3,814	3,071	6,988	5,907	-1,081	-15%
TOTALS	20,741	17,314	38,854	32,621	-6,233	-16%

FEATURED MEMBER

The Comfort Inn & Suites of Farmington/Wilton

207-645-5155 • www.comfortinn.com/hotel-wilton-maine-me056

The Comfort Inn & Suites of Farmington/Wilton is the recent recipient of a prestigious 2011 Platinum Hospitality Award from world lodging leader Choice Hotels International, Inc.

The hotel's commitment to excellence and outstanding guest service has earned it this well-deserved recognition as a top performing property among the company's more than 4,900 U.S. franchised hotels, putting them among the top 3% of properties within Choice Hotels. The hotel has also recently added full kitchenettes to their three extended stay suites to accommodate local businesses corporate guests and the added luxury for the leisure traveler.



This property is perfect for a true Maine get-away, offering a variety of outdoor activities throughout the year including: skiing, snowmobiling, hiking, canoeing, boating, birding, foliage, historical sites, and much more!

Maine State Visitor Information Centers

Maine Tourism Association proudly operates Information Centers at these locations:

Calais

39 Union St., Ste. B, Calais, ME 04619
Tel: 207-454-2211 • Fax: 207-454-7227

Fryeburg

US Rt. 302, 97 Main St., Fryeburg, ME 04037
Tel: 207-935-3639 • Fax: 207-935-7670

Hampden North

1-95 N., PO Box 319, Hampden, ME 04444
Tel: 207-862-6628 • Fax: 207-862-6629

Hampden South

1-95 S., PO Box 319, Hampden, ME 04444
Tel: 207-862-6638 • Fax: 207-862-6626

Houlton

1-95 Exit 302, 28 Ludlow Rd, PO Box 482
Houlton, ME 04730
Tel: 207-532-6346 • Fax: 207-532-4792

Kittery

US Rt. 1; I-95; PO Box 396, Kittery, ME 03904
Tel: 207-439-1319 • Fax: 207-439-8281

West Gardiner

1-95 No. Exit 102 + So. Exit 103; I-295 Exit 51
24 Service Plaza Dr. • Tel/Fax: 207-582-0160

Yarmouth

US Rt. 1; I-295/Exit 17, 1100 US Rt. 1,
Yarmouth, ME 04096
Tel: 207-846-0833 • Fax: 207-846-6919

Contact Information

Maine Tourism Association
327 Water St., Hallowell, ME 04347
www.mainetourism.com

For Administrative Assistance:
207-623-0363 • 800-767-8709
fax: 207-623-0388

mtainfo@mainetourism.com

For Maine Tourism Information:
888-MAINE45 (888-624-6345)

The following are the telephone extensions to contact us at the Maine Tourism Association, 207-623-0363:

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<i>Administrative Assistant</i>	
Carolyn Manson	104
<i>Manager of Public Affairs</i>	
Diane Hopkins	201
<i>Publications Manager</i>	
Marcel Labbe	210
<i>Warehouse Manager</i>	
Michael Conley	107
<i>Manager - Advertising & Membership Sales</i>	
Micheline Pierre	203
<i>Publications Assistant</i>	
Ron Brann	208
<i>Finance & Human Resources Manager</i>	
Shawn Brann	103
<i>Assistant to IT Manager</i>	
Sherry Byrne	106
<i>IT Manager</i>	
Vaughn Stinson	113
<i>CEO</i>	