

HOSTING

Rapid City Area Hospitality Association News

published monthly & online at www.rchospitality.com • January 2009

NOTES FROM NANCY

Nancy Brady, Editor

CRACKERBARREL DATES SET

The 2009 Legislative crackerbarrel dates have been set by the Chamber of Commerce for January 24, 31; February 21; and March 7. The meetings will be held at the South Dakota School Mines at 9pm on Saturday in the New Classroom hall.

This is the time for you to address your legislators on issues in which you have an interest or with questions. This two-hour session each Saturday really gives you an insight on what is going on in Pierre and

which representative is speaking to each specific bill.

LOVE THEM COWBOYS!!!!

Time to put on the boots, hats and Levis—The Winter Stock Show is taking place the last weekend in January and has plenty to offer you and the casual visitor or businessman in town. Day and night activity, with exciting rodeos on the weekends: horse shows and auctions, cattle judging, sheep herding, and a huge amount of show booths featuring art, boots, hats, clothing, jewelry and everything for sale. Be sure you get a complete schedule of events at the front desk, hang posters, or whatever you can do to make our rodeo fans and participants feel right at home. And go there yourself! It's just lots of fun.

FINE TUNE YOUR BOTTOM LINE FOR SUMMER

I am not going to hang crepe or rain on your parade today, but I am offering a word of caution to be looking out for your business this summer. It sounds bad all over the country, and we have hardly felt it here, mainly because we do not have a lot of industry. And maybe the states surrounding us have not felt any pinch yet. But you only have to take a look around the country to see what is happening.

With 5.5 million persons now unemployed or laid off, and more bound to be out of work, we know for sure these are the ones who will not be taking a vacation this summer—and those who are still employed will

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is the official publication of the Rapid City

Area Hospitality Association

PO Box 2731 • Rapid City, SD 57709

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PUBLISHER Visitor Publishing 343-7684

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Local opportunities for TAP Dance

The Rapid City Convention and Visitors Bureau is proud to be the site of the Travel Alliance Partners 2009 TAP Dance. Between 35 and 40 tour companies will be in Rapid City for the marketplace, meeting with delegates from across the country.

Hosting such an event takes many hours of planning as well as sponsorship assistance.

If you are interested in assisting the CVB through volunteering or sponsorship dollars, please contact Michelle Thomson a 718-8489 or Thomson@visitrapidcity.com

President's Message

Conrad Rupert

Several days ago your Board of Directors completed a brainstorming/planning session for 2009. Several things became readily apparent through the course of that meeting:

1) It's difficult to plan any major activities when you're operating on limited financial resources. Businesses, States, and Associations are all facing this dilemma. California is \$40 billion plus in debt, South Dakota fell \$5 million short in December, local businesses are folding or cutting back, and some are facing foreclosure and/or bankruptcy.

2) Your Board came up with a

myriad of creative ideas to promote the hospitality of the Rapid City area without spending a lot of bucks. We have committees assigned to pursue and work out details on "meet & greet" at the airport for major conventions, raffles for mini and/or major vacations to be promoted at trade shows & member locations, membership dues structure for various categories and multi-operation members, and map corrections and aesthetic improvements.

We also discussed the pending "no smoking in any public building" legislation, but did not take a position until more details are available.

The third thing that became apparent is that we have a lot going for us in the Black Hills area and a tremendous amount of support. This comes from the Governor's Office, Dept. of Tourism, Rapid City CVB, Black Hills Badlands & Lakes, the BID Board, Airport Board, B.H. Digital Strategy, Cen Res, and all the surrounding Chambers. That's a lot of promotional "muscle" all pulling for the same objective—our success!

While the economy is in the tank and everyone expects a less than stellar year, we are positioned to hold our own and take less of a hit

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OUR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

When you have a need or your guests ask for recommendations or suggestions, think of our friends and associate members first. They support us—

LET'S SHOW OUR APPRECIATION.

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Ted Norman - A G Edwards
Agents of Insurance
Al Cornella Refrigeration
BH Badlands & Lakes Assoc.
BH Power & Light
BH Chemicals
BH Federal Credit Union
Boston's
Casey's Auto Rental
Central States Fair
Certified Folder Display Service
Chexcel
Clean Tech of the Black Hills
Coca-Cola Bottling Co.
Computers, ETC
D & R Service, Inc.
Dakota Bank
Dakota Business Center
Ecolab
Epic Outdoor Advertising
Equipment Service Professionals
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Gillette Dairy of the Black Hills
Golden West Tele Tech, Inc.
Gold Pages Publishing, Inc.

Highmark Federal Credit Union
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HRS Foodservice
Lakeside Dairy
Lamar Advertising
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Mid Continent Testing
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Adventure Travel Expo

The Black Hills Travel Council along with the Northern Route to the Black Hills exhibited at the world's largest travel and adventure show—Adventures in Travel Expo in Chicago, Ill. on January 10 - 11 at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center. Adventure enthusiasts from the Chicago metro area attended the expo in hopes of planning their next travel adventure. The South Dakota representatives were there to promote all of the adventure opportunities that await visitors in our state. This was the third year South Dakota has attended this show and the second time the Black Hills Travel Council has showcased.

ABA a Success

Michelle Thomson of the Convention and Visitors Bureau recently attended the American Bus Association Marketplace in Charlotte, NC. Marketplace gives suppliers the opportunity to meet with numerous tour operators from across the United States. Appointments were held with nearly 40 tour operators. All appointments went well, with a variety of operators either offering product in the area or interested in bringing tours to the area. A large delegation from across South Dakota attended the marketplace to help promote their businesses as well as state as a whole. If you are interested in more information about the show, please contact Michelle at 718-8489.

More Notes from Nancy . . . *(cont. from page 1)*

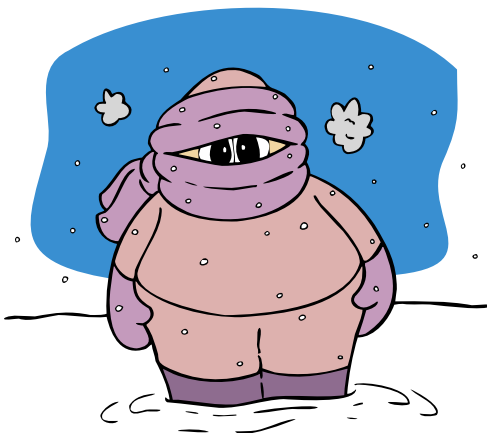
think long and hard before they take an extended vacation for fear that they, too, could be gone in a heartbeat. Add all of these to all of the disastrous flooding and fires this past year, and it just doesn't paint a pretty picture.

Okay already! So what can you do to get yourself in good stead with the travelling public this summer? Hospitality, hospitality, hospitality. Yes, we are good at it, but we can be better. Staff should jump for each request by a guest, nutsy or not. Managers need to give two good ears to the complaints of their guests and make amends, plus more.

Rates are going to be put to the test this year—be prepared for dickering. Or better yet, compromise your bottom line and give a little. Customers love it when they think they are getting into your pocket. Empower your front desk personnel to make a deal—don't let a guest get back out the door.

Okay, I'm preaching! But I so want

**Spring
is on
its way!**



everyone to get their fair share of visitors this year and keep them as long as possible. I feel that I am carrying a mortgage on every property in town. But I am also your biggest cheerleader.

DID YOU PAY YOUR DUES?

Just a reminder to those who didn't get their dues in—pay them now. We will soon be putting together the new map, and you won't be included on this very important map given to all visitors, convention attendees, and those traveling the interstate. Please don't make me call you. I don't like it any better than you do. If you don't have the cash in hand, let me know.

AD ON MAP FOR SALE!

There is one space on the advertising side of the map left for sale. This \$750 ad must bring in business because those who have them do not relinquish them willingly. Please call me if you are interested. We can get it put together with our very able technician.

PATRONIZE OUR ASSOCIATES!

Those of our associates join our Hospitality Association for one reason. They believe they are an integral part of our businesses and want us to do the best job in recruiting visitors that we can. They supply what we need to make our business run smooth. We always invite our associates to join us at the monthly dinner meeting to network with our members.



Rapid City Area Hospitality Assoc.
 PO Box 2731
 Rapid City, SD 57709

RCAHA Mission Statement - *The Rapid City Area Hospitality Association is committed to provide its members with education, resources, and services in order that they can better serve their customers and guests, exceeding both member and guest expectations.*

Upcoming Conventions/Events:

January 2009

Jan 6-8	SD Land Improvement Contractors Assn. Associated General Contractors of SD	250 ppl
Jan 13-16	Aberdeen Area Indian Health Service	60 ppl
Jan 23-24	R-CALF (Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Fund)	300 ppl
Jan 23-25	Rushmore Soccer Club- Winter Classic Tournament	1300 participants
Jan 28-29	Black Hills Stock Show Winter Classic - Annual Quarter Horse Show	130 participants
Jan 29-30	SD National Guard - "Golden Coyote"	50 ppl
Jan 30-Feb 8	Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo	

February 2009

Feb 5-6	SD National Guard - "Golden Coyote"	50 ppl
Feb 6-8	Dakota Territory Buffalo Association	250 ppl
Feb 11-12	SD Water & Wastewater Association	100 ppl
Feb 12-14	SD Lions	100 ppl
Feb 13-15	Church of God - North Central Region	500 ppl
Feb 18-20	Soil & Water Conservation Society of America	250 ppl
Feb 18-20	Association of SD County Weed & Pest Boards	200 ppl

(President's Letter, *continued from page 2*)

than most any of our neighboring tourism areas. It's an exceptionally good time to be geographically located near both the major energy producing fields of the nation and our good neighbors north of the border.

By the time you read this, most likely we will be past the Governor's Tourism Conference, have a new President inaugurated, see some winter dollars flowing in from the Stock Show & Rodeo, and be upbeat on prepping for the 2009 season. Just remember, smooth seas never made a good sailor!

Like our Mayor says, "Life is great in Rapid City – Pass it on !!!"

**JANUARY DINNER MEETING
 TUESDAY, JANUARY 27
 BEST WESTERN RAMKOTA
 LEGION I ROOM-CONVENTION CENTER
 5:00 – 6:00 Social Time
 6:00-6:30 Dinner (\$15) • 6:30 Meeting
 Reservations required – call Ann 348-6907
 before noon, Friday, January 23
 No Shows will be billed**



Calendar information provided
 by Rapid City CVB.