

HOSTING

Rapid City Area Hospitality Association News

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The Hotline Completes the Summer

Nancy Brady, Editor

When the Hotline started on June 21, it was amazing how the traffic picked up. Due to the many athletic events that took place towards the end of June, it filled us with visitors and joy. Throughout July, the trend continued, and we took more to the bank. Then August . . . well, let's just say it was a disappointment.

We had early bikers in August prior to the rally, then it was like pulling teeth to get people into the hotel rooms.

There was price resistance, reservations with minimum stays, and just not enough people to fill the rooms available. This was the first year ever that there were rooms available every night during the rally. Yes, I would say they were full nights, but there was always that 10 or more rooms out there for sale. The number of rooms available at 5pm each day was a surprise. These rooms did not go to bikers—they were the unsuspecting travelers looking for a room. Sticker shock got 'em, and they moved on. There were many rooms available in the hills during the rally, and some

were probably dropping their prices by 9pm at night. We weren't.

I know most hotels and motels were not suffering in the early May and June days. And July must have boosted their revenue beyond expectations. Why, then, is there such a rush to price themselves out for the few days in August. Word spreads and we're doomed.

A few new hotels and motels are on the building list, which just adds more rooms to compete with during the rally. Someone is going to get smart, stay at their summer rates, and clean up. You heard it here!!



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SCARECROW FEST OR OKTOBERFEST?

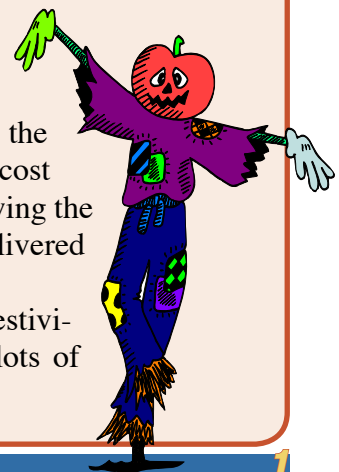
We all love making scarecrows for the Halloween season, but how about a new twist on it. A committee has been making plans to hold a Scarecrow contest within the Oktoberfest on Saturday, October 20th at the Civic Center. The proposal began as an idea to raise money for additional Christmas lights for the surrounding areas of downtown Rapid City. Sounds like a good plan, and easy to participate.

Our members are encouraged to participate with their own entry—hotels, campgrounds, attractions and associates.

Make your business known—submit your scarecrow reflecting the season, or even your business.

A \$20 entry fee is required (not that much), and voting will be by the general public who view the scenes, not unlike the parade of trees. The votes cost \$1.00, but all proceeds go to a good purpose. Following the judging, all scarecrows will be auctioned off, and delivered to the buyer's door.

Of course there will be the usual Oktoberfest festivities—dancing, music, pumpkin carving, and just lots of fun on Saturday, October 20th.



President's Message

Ginny Wagner



Well, happy September, everyone.

This month I was going to enlighten you with one of my many interesting experiences as a General Manager—the one about asking Fish Sanitation to dump my hotel's garbage in a separate part of the land fill so my staff and I could dig through the garbage bags looking for a very special gift that was accidentally

thrown away. See, I knew I would be the envy of everyone. Well to make a long story short, we found it, thanks to Fish's cooperation and my wonderful staff.

However, something else came a during the summer, something much more critical. Did any of you wonder how you would handle 350 hotel guests with tornado sirens going off for what seemed like all night? Pretty scary stuff. We all know what we would do if we were at home, but what about the safety of our employees and hotel guests? Do you

have an emergency plan in place? Does your staff know about it? How about practice drills? Unfortunately we only think of this after the fact.

Even though emergency training is mandatory for my brand, I know now I will take it much more seriously. If you do not have a plan in place, please put one together. There are professionals out there that will help you. It could make a difference.

Ginny Wagner
President, Rapid City Area
Hospitality Association

FIRST MEETING OF THE YEAR

On Tuesday, September 25, we will hold our first dinner meeting since May. Since leaving off in May, lots has been happening in our industry, especially regarding our Visitor Information Center. Also, we will be offering the Nominating Committee selections for

new officers and board members. These will be voted on at our October meeting.

A good showing is so encouraging and we welcome those who have never attended to get together with their colleagues.

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.

1st National Bank
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Michelle's Memos *Michelle Lintz, CVB*



Quality Inn - New Director of Sales

Debbie Poppe is no stranger to the hospitality industry. She's worked for several convention properties and organizations throughout the Rapid City area. Debbie has been working at the Quality Inn as a Sales & Catering Associate since December 2006. Most recently she was promoted to the position of Director of Sales. The Rapid City CVB would like to congratulate Debbie and look forward to working with her.



Debbie Poppe

New Manager - Microtel Inn & Suites

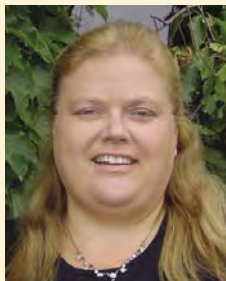
Michelle Lipker moved to Rapid City in 2004 and found her passion was in the hospitality business. She began her career as Front Desk Manager at the Microtel Inn & Suites, then had the opportunity to work at the Hampton Inn as the Director of Sales and later promoted to Assistant General Manager. Most recently Michelle was again provided the opportunity to work as General Manager of the Microtel Inn & Suites. She has truly come full circle. Best of luck to you in your new position.



Michelle Gorsuch-Lipker

Days Inn & Comfort Inn I-90 - New Director of Sales

Heather has spent her entire working career in the hospitality industry. She began working over 10 years ago. She's work at all levels from Front Desk Clerk to Director of Sales & Marketing to corporate trainer. Her current position is with the Days Inn and Comfort Inn I90 as Director of Sales Marketing. Heather is glad to be back in Rapid City and working with everyone.



Heather Taylor

New Director of Sales at Howard Johnson

Sara Rankin was recently named the new director of sales at the Howard Johnson Inn & Suites in Rapid City. She originates from Pierre, SD. Rankin is a May 2007 graduate of Western Dakota Technical Institute and is excited to join the hospitality industry.



Sara Rankin

Hampton Inn – New Director of Sales

Danielle Langston is a native of Rapid City and started her career in the hospitality industry over 12 years ago. She recently accepted the position as Director of Sales with the Hampton Inn. In addition to Danielle's daily responsibilities, she also finds time to be involved with various groups such as Festival of Presidents, Rally Task Force and Hospitality Association. Danielle is excited to be in the tourism industry and looks forward to a long career in this field.



Danielle Langston

SAVE THESE DATES!

*Roger Brooks with Destination Development, Inc.
Branding Workshop and Brand Presentation*

**Monday, October 15, 2007
8am – 12:15pm**

Rushmore Plaza Civic Center - LaCroix Hall

**If you missed his first presentation & workshop
last August – You won't want to miss this one!**

Registration and schedule will be forthcoming

**For more information contact
Lisa Storms at 718-8487
or storms@visitrapidcity.com**

*2008 Governor's Conference on Tourism
Destination 2010: Driving Forward*

January 16-17, 2008

Ramkota River Centre, Pierre, SD

*Registration and Schedule
information coming soon!*

**For More Information Contact Nicole Gall or
Melissa Bump at (605) 773-3301**



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:

September 2007

Sept 21-23	Rapid City Soft-Tip Dart League Black Hills Classic Dart Tournament	900 ppl
Sept 24-27	SD Petroleum & Propane Marketers Association	200 ppl
Sept 27-30	American Quarter Horse Association - Region II Experience	750 ppl
Sept 27-30	Natl. Communicators Network for Women Religious	120 ppl
Sept 27-Oct 1	Independent Churches of God	125 ppl
Sept 28-30	Rushmore Soccer Club – Fall Classic Tournament	750 ppl
Sept 29-30	Peel's Salon Services – Fall Festival	1000 ppl

October 2007

Oct 3-4	Amcon Distributing	150 ppl
Oct 4-5	National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of SD	200 ppl
Oct 4-6	SD Elks	200 ppl
Oct 4-6	SD Association of Bilingual Bicultural Education	350 ppl
Oct 5-6	SD School-Age Care Alliance	200 ppl
Oct 5-7	Oglala Sioux Tribe – Tribal Education Department	150 ppl
Oct 7-8	Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod	150 ppl
Oct 9-11	Workforce Investment Act	150 ppl
Oct 10-13	Plains Anthropological Society	425 ppl
Oct 10-13	Lions District 5 SW	150 ppl

Oct 10-13	Western Jr. Livestock Show	1500 ppl
Oct 11-13	West River History Conference	125 ppl
Oct 11-14	SD National Guard – Joint Thunder Planning	250 ppl

NOMINATING COMMITTEE SELECTION - OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President: Ginny Wagner - Hampton Inn
V-President: Mick Wysuph - Attraction Tours
Treasurer - Kathy Johnson - Black Hills Caverns
Secretary: Chris Dimaria - Putz & Glo
Historian: Conrad Rupert - Black Hills Maze
Officers - 1 year - Lynn Seifert, Grand Stay Residential Suites
Officers - 2 year - Denise Mahar, Old McDonalds Farm
Cindy Olsen, Hospitality LLC
Danielle Langston, our representative on this committee, will fill us in at our September dinner meeting.

SEPTEMBER DINNER MEETING

September 25, 2007 - Holiday Inn Rushmore Plaza
5pm - 6pm Social • 6pm - dinner \$14.00
6:30 Meeting
Reservations required - Call Ann at 348-6907
before noon Monday, Sept 24
NO SHOWS WILL BE BILLED!



Calendar information provided
by Rapid City CVB.