



MEA NEWSLETTER — January 2017

## Mackinac Economic Alliance

2017 tourism is off to strong start in Mackinac County. Assessments from the St. Ignace Visitors Bureau show that revenue increased an average of 6.4% from 2015 for the months of June-September of 2016. According to Mike Soder at the Manistique Lakes Area Tourism, there was a significant increase in revenue for all area resorts, with an overall gain of approximately 10% for the Summer 2016 season. Les Cheneaux Tourism Bureau data collected to date shows a slight decline in lodging revenue in 2016. However after 3 consecutive years of increases this trend is expected to continue once all their data is gathered.

In this issue, we focus our attention on new businesses in the county, with our spotlight interview on the owners of a Naubinway hotel, and further information on the business assistance services offered by MEA.

## In This Issue:

Here's a quick preview of what's inside this month's Newsletter, scroll down to read more about each featured story:

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## Spotlight on adoba® Hotel Naubinway

This month, we interviewed Leslie Chapman and Jim Henderson, co-owners of the adoba® Hotel in Naubinway. Born and raised in the Detroit area, Leslie has worked for 20 years in the hospitality industry. She attended Wayne State University while working at the Hyatt Regency in Dearborn, and later for the adoba® brand there, before relocating to the U.P. Jim has 30 years of major market hotel experience and is currently CEO of the adoba® brand of hotels, which replaced the 37 year old Hyatt brand in Dearborn, in 2010. Leslie and Jim are passionate about their new venture in the Naubinway area, and are looking forward to seeing both Michigan and the Upper Peninsula continue to grow and thrive in the coming years.

### **Q: When did you purchase the King's Motel in Naubinway?**

**A:** We purchased the King's Motel property and re-branded it under the adoba® name in October of 2015. Prior to our investment, this property was in foreclosure and it sat empty for at least seven years.

### **Q: What were the features of the King's Motel property and location that attracted you?**

**A:** We fell in love with the location of the King's Motel and its access to the Great Lakes. In addition to the setting of this property, we were impressed with the

visitation numbers for this area. During the Summer of 2015, we made two separate trips to the Upper Peninsula to look at prospective hotel/motel properties, and each time we were unable to find a room for ourselves. This prompted us to do some research into the traffic reports from the Mackinac Bridge Authority, and the numbers reflected that the Pure Michigan campaign is really a plus for our state.

There has been a steady increase in visitation over the last several years and projections indicate this will continue to be the trend. With the combined advantages of its beautiful location and advertisement of the surrounding area through Pure Michigan, we felt this was a solid investment opportunity.



### **Q: What is behind the adoba® brand - what does it represent?**

**A:** Mr. Henderson launched the adoba® brand on Earth Day in 2010, in order to signify the brand's focus on sustainability and continually seeking out innovative ways of staying green. This is evident throughout our Motel - from the carpet and bedding in each room, derived from sustainable and recycled materials, to the organic, locally produced eggs, meat and pastries comprising the gourmet breakfasts we offer guests. With our adoba® brand, we also recognize that sustainability is a long term investment. The overhead costs for recycled carpet, LED lights, low flow water

fixtures are higher than traditional, lower-cost materials used in hotels and motels, but the savings are greater in the long term because the green products outlast cheaper varieties. For example, we have bamboo sheets on the beds in each of our 22 rooms. Bamboo is a sustainably produced material that offers our guests the luxurious feel of high thread count bedding, with the added environmental benefit of its ability to be air dried instead of using heat. Along with incorporating sustainable products, we also like to use local products. For example, our beds were hand made in Escanaba, MI by Clare Bedding. We have had rave reviews on the comfort of the beds and have even had guests purchase beds from this local business. In each of our rooms we also offer Boxed Water, which is made by a Michigan based company that works to save our planet as well.

**Q: What do you consider to be the most important investments you made in your motel property?**

**A:** In addition to replacing existing materials and paint with sustainable alternatives, renovating the plumbing system and installing new water heaters were essential investments for the functioning of the adoba® Naubinway.



**Q: What are some of the unique features of adoba® Naubinway that distinguish it from other motel properties in the U.P.?**

**A:** Aside from the green features of our motel property described above, we are also unique in focusing our

attention on younger and future generations of consumers, many of whom have developed heightened concerns and expectations regarding the sustainability and environmental friendliness of the businesses they support. Through our example of operating a green motel in the U.P., we hope to attract more young visitors and families to explore this area, as well as spur similar trends in hospitality in this region.

**Q: How do you use social media to drive your business?**

**A:** Leslie has spearheaded social media use for the adoba® Naubinway. She began with a blog detailing restoration updates for the property when renovations were underway, and has since branched out to make regular posts on the motel's [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts. Beyond information about the motel itself, Leslie believes in the importance of reaching out to the public through more general posts on sustainability and the Upper Peninsula region, as well as tagging regional partners such as U.P. Travel, Pure Michigan and Michigan's U.P. In this way, social media has proven to be a valuable tool not only for attracting potential customers, but also for building a shared network of support among other local businesses in the U.P.

**Q: What has surprised you most since you opened for business?**

**A:** We were astounded at the amount of international travelers we received as guests! About 34% of visitors in the busy summer season were internationals, mainly from China and India, with some Europeans as well. This was really unexpected for us, but exciting, too. Many of these guests came by way of the Pure Michigan lake tours based out of Chicago, and several used our motel as a central hub for making day trips out to other locations such as Pictured Rocks and Tahquamenon Falls. We got rave reviews on our breakfast spread, especially from Chinese and Indian guests, though everyone expressed excitement to be visiting the area they'd heard so much about by way of Pure Michigan advertising.

**Q: Did you meet your first year targets?**

**A:** Financially, yes. Although this success was more rate driven than occupancy driven, which was a surprise. The adoba® Naubinway is really akin to an upscale, hybrid bed and breakfast, with the full, organic and locally sourced hot breakfast included in the rate, which averages \$118. For this reason, we were able to meet our financial goals without necessarily hitting the occupancy target we'd expected. That said, while summer occupancy rates were lower than anticipated, fall occupancy numbers exceeded all expectations, with September and October being banner months for our business.

**Q: Do you have any plans brewing for 2017?**

**A:** We've got a lot of energy going into this next year. We're in the due diligence stage to purchase a 75 year old grocery store in Naubinway, with the goal of carrying fresh, organic, Michigan raised products, including a deli and selection of premade meals. We're always looking for new ways to attract people to the area, and hope to build on existing shoulder season opportunities such as the Antique Snowmobile Festival and ATV Festival, as well as to explore new avenues such as Geocaching. We also hope to add another hotel to our portfolio, preferably in the Upper Peninsula, as our experience has shown there is a continuing need for high quality rooms and good long term potential.

## Mackinac County Business Beat



Would you like to have your new business featured in MEA's Newsletter? Use our contact information below to contact us with your information and spread

the word about the good work you're doing in Mackinac County.

### Arborvitae Salon & Spa

**Location:** 361 M-134, Cedarville

**Owner:** Sarah Slater

**Website:** [www.lcisalon.com](http://www.lcisalon.com)

**Phone:** 906.484.HAIR

A graduate of Cedarville High School, Sarah returned to her hometown to open her **NEW BUSINESS** in 2016. Her salon offers environmentally conscious hair products and services, and is also home to the Reiki holistic energy healing practice of Les Cheneaux native, Kimberly Wilderspin. Arborvitae is **NOW HIRING**, visit their website to apply online or to schedule your appointment.

### Captain's Quarters Wash & Dry Dock

**Location:** 417 N State St., St. Ignace

**Owner:** Ken Feldman

**Website:** Visit us on [Facebook](#)

**Phone:** 906.643.8282

Captain's Quarters currently offers daily laundry services with 8 new 30 lb. gas tumblers and dry cleaning services through Pingatore Drycleaners on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Construction on their **NEW EXPANSION** in the former St. Ignace Laundry will begin as soon as the ground thaws! Check out their Facebook page for regular updates on the new building.

### Five Star Transport

**Location:** Curtis

**Owner:** Robert Schmidt

**Website:** Visit us on [Facebook](#)

**Phone:** 810.348.5657

Robert opened his **NEW BUSINESS** in the beautiful community of Curtis in July 2016. His automotive service specializes in hauling all cars, trucks and SUV's. Call Robert to schedule your pick up!

### Les Cheneaux Coffee Roasters

**Location:** 1420 S. Dumler Lane, Cedarville

**Owner:** Jennifer & David Gough

**Website:** [www.lescheneauxcoffeeroasters.com](http://www.lescheneauxcoffeeroasters.com)

**Phone:** 616.212.7534

Owned and operated by roast masters, Jennifer and David Gough, Les Cheneaux Coffee Roasters is a **NEW BUSINESS** in Cedarville offering artisanal, small-batch coffee hand crafted in the heart of Les Cheneaux Islands. Visit their website to order their coffee by the bag, to place wholesale orders, or to purchase your subscription to Les Cheneaux Coffee Society, a unique monthly coffee subscription program with personalized flavors and scheduled deliveries to your home.

## Long Point Lodge

**Location:** Long Point Road, Curtis

**Owner:** Daryl & Michele Lawrence

**Website:**

[www.exploringthenorth.com/longpoint/lodge.html](http://www.exploringthenorth.com/longpoint/lodge.html)

Long Point Lodge reopened in June 2016, under the **NEW OWNERSHIP** of Daryl and Michele. This lakeside rental in has 6 bedrooms that can accommodate up to 18 guests, and provides easy access to recreation opportunities across the U.P.!

## NibbleLungen

**Location:** 197 S. Pickford Ave., Hessel

**Owner:** Anastasia Hamel

**Manager:** Lorie Thompson

**Website:** Visit us soon on Facebook

**Phone:** 906.484.2435

In April 2017, the former Hessel Grocery will open under the **NEW OWNERSHIP** of Anastasia Hamel as NibbleLungen. The interior of the store will undergo a major renovation, while maintaining the historic integrity of the building's exterior. NibbleLungen will continue to offer a fabulous deli, serving breakfast and lunch, freshly brewed coffee, ice cream, beer, wine, liquor and homemade baked goods. Shelves will be well-stocked with affordable groceries for locals and visitors alike!

## S-n-K Construction

**Location:** 988 S. Meridian St., Cedarville, MI

**Owner:** Steve Kozma

**Email:** [stevekozma@live.com](mailto:stevekozma@live.com)

**NEW EXPANSION** - Steve recently purchased the commercial building, formerly the Blue Water Hotel, and most recently the site of Fired-Up Pizza and apartment rentals, on Hodeck Street in Cedarville. The space currently holds 4 rental units and 2 storefront spaces available for lease, and Steve is busy renovating

those spaces right now. He is interested beautifying Cedarville's downtown by showcasing local talent. Need a space for your new business? Contact Steve for details on building availability!

## Sa-wa-quato Inn

**Location:** W17266 Main St., Curtis

**Owner:** John & Mary Gowan

**Website:** [sawaquatoinn.com](http://sawaquatoinn.com)

**Phone:** 906.586.3532

The Sa-wa-quato Inn of Curtis opened under the **NEW OWNERSHIP** of John and Mary Gowan on Labor Day. This lakeside lodging offers 5 beautiful rooms, nestled in the heart of the unique waterfront town of Curtis, with easy access to local hiking, fishing and boating, dining, sightseeing and more!

## The Pasty Place

**Location:** 440 E. Mitchell St., St. Ignace

**Owner:** Rob, Nancy & Eric Dombrowski

**Website:** Visit us on [Facebook](#)

**Phone:** 906.298.5040

Opened in October 2016, this **NEW FAMILY BUSINESS** is owned and operated by Rob, Nancy and Eric Dombrowski. The Pasty Place specializes in handmade Cornish pasties of all varieties as well as dessert. Call ahead to place your order, fresh or frozen!

## Watsons Marina

**Location:** Main St., Curtis

**Owner:** Neil Cannon

**Website:** [www.watsonmarina.com](http://www.watsonmarina.com)

**Phone:** 906.586.9731

Opened under **NEW OWNERSHIP** by Neil Cannon in September 2016, Watsons Marina is your local outfitter for boats, outboard motors, pontoons, KYMCO ATV's and Side by Sides, snowmobiles and more. Check out their website for full product listings.

## Small Business Assistance

### Program Description

The Mackinac Economic Alliance (MEA) works closely with trained and certified business consultants to offer you guidance in your business planning process and to provide tools and resources that will help your business succeed.

If you are in need of funding for your business start-up or expansion, contact us for details on our **Revolving Loan Fund** (RLF). Created through a USDA grant and generous donations from Mackinac County banks and businesses, the RLF program is based on job creation and is designed to help businesses expand in Mackinac

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County. Our loan fund covers between \$2,000-\$16,000, and one job must be created or retained for each loan granted. A loan above \$10,000 must create or retain 2 jobs. Visit our [webpage](#) to read more or to download your application.

Whether you are a start-up or an existing business we can help. Our staff can provide free, personalized, one-on-one assistance in areas such as:

- Developing a business or marketing plan
- Financial planning
- Skills management
- Problem Solving
- Building Management Skills

**To meet with an MEA Representative call:**

Anne Ottaway, MEA Executive Director  
(517) 667-0437

## Business Development

Looking to relocate your business? MEA continues to work with a diverse range of new and expanding businesses interested in investing in Mackinac County. If

you know of an entrepreneur, CEO or industry who is exploring opportunities for their business, please refer them to MEA so that we can assist in offering the many resources available to support the successful establishment of their business in our county.

## Contact Us:

MEA would love to hear from you! Please use the contact information below to get in touch with our board.

**Mackinac Economic Alliance**

P.O. Box 361  
Cedarville, MI 49719

Ph: (517) 667-0437

[mackinaceconomicalliance@gmail.com](mailto:mackinaceconomicalliance@gmail.com)  
[www.mackinaceconomicalliance.org](http://www.mackinaceconomicalliance.org)

MEA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation whose existence depends on the generous contributions of our public and private partners. We hope you will consider making a tax deductible contribution to MEA. Kindly mail it to our offices. Thank you!

## 2017 Board of Directors

**Anne Ottaway**

2016 Executive Director  
USAID, International Economic

**Dean Reid**

2016 Chairman  
D & S Forestry Services

**John Kling**

2016 Vice Chairman  
Financial Advisor at Edward Jones in  
St. Ignace

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Mackinac County Coordinator,  
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Co-founder, Housing Opportunities  
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**Luke Paquin**

Owner, The Cedar Hill Lodge

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