

The Tributary



A Newsletter of The Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association

Autumn 2005

Message from the Chairperson

Welcome to *The Tributary*, your regular source of information on what The Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association is doing on behalf of tourism in our region.

Read on to find out how the Hills of Headwaters region is attracting attention – from the phenomenal growth of visitors to the website www.thehillsofheadwaters.com, to the striking new look at the Visitors Centre, to national media coverage of our region, and to the successful launch of the first “Hills of Headwaters experience”, the *Headwaters Golf Trail*. All of these exciting results are the fruits of labours from strategic plans created months, even years ago, and followed through by Tourism Association Staff, Board and Committee volunteers.

Building the spirit of collaboration between multiple municipal partners and nearly 300 tourism operators, while serving the needs of visitors to our region in person and on the website, is the unwavering focus of the Association.

What we've learned as an Association is when we pool together our ideas, our marketing dollars, and our products and services into *experiences*, it gives people more reasons to spend more time and more money at local attractions and businesses. The annual *Visitors Guide* is a perfect example: it gives locals and visitors thousands of ideas on how to build a personalized tourism experience in our region.

The Tourism Association Board continues to implement its strategic goals for 2004/5, and has just completed its strategic planning session for 2005/6. To give you a preview, some of the goals for the weeks and months ahead will include:

- Putting into place a Tourism Services Agreement between the Tourism Association and the municipalities it serves: Caledon, Erin, Orangeville, Mono, Shelburne and Dufferin County.
- Exploring the potential of co-locating and sharing services with other, compatible community service groups.
- Conducting a “mysterious” event on October 29th- your first clues lie ahead!

I've seen this association grow and evolve over the years, first from the perspective of a Caledon resident, then as a member of the Association, then as a Director, and now as its current Chair. I look forward to developing a stronger, more prosperous tourism community with you in the year ahead.

Jocelyn Klemm

Headwaters Golf Trail a Success

It's been a busy summer for golf here in the Hills of Headwaters. Part of the reason is that close to 800 golfers have opted into the Headwaters Golf Trail passport program. The Headwaters Golf Trail is the first formalized regional tourism 'experience' to be promoted through the Hills of Headwaters. To date, 327 golfers have completed all six courses on the Trail and have submitted their completed passports for redemption (they are each now entitled to 6 free rounds of golf). The Headwaters Golf Trail has received coverage by Fairways Golf Magazine as well as in several Ontario Tourism publications putting the Headwaters region head-to-head with the Muskoka and Niagara Golf Trails. Well done!



Your Hills of Headwaters Board of Directors for 2005/ 2006

Jocelyn Klemm, Chair – The Wine Coaches
 Steve Froemmel, Vice-Chair – Millcroft Inn & Spa
 Don Smith, Treasurer – Wedgbury, Smith, Bonebakker LLP
 Cheryl Spalding Brand, Secretary – Country Manor Antiques & Spa
 David Baldwin – County of Dufferin
 Lesley Burns – Country Host
 Susan Chow – Café Uno
 AJ Grace-Cavey – Town of Shelburne
 Jeff Duncan – Town of Erin
 Brenda Fowler – Town of Mono
 Julie Fredenburg – Orangeville Concert Association

Nancy Huether – Town of Orangeville
 John Jeffery – Kilbirnie B & B
 Norm Lingard – Town of Caledon
 Janine Livingston – Broadway Farms Market
 Ken Manwell – Town of Orangeville
 Jefferson Mappin – Headwaters Arts Festival
 Kelly Myles – Caledon Country Club
 David Pounds – RE/MAX Select Realty Ltd.
 Nita Selby – Robinson House Antiques & Gifts
 Shannon Smith – Hockley Valley Resort
 Allan Thompson – Town of Caledon

Unique visits to Hills of Headwaters web site tops 9000 in month of July!

Not only is the internet a cost effective tool for tourism marketing it also works! Since the launch of the Hills of Headwaters web site in March, 2004 visits to the web site have almost **tripled**; growing from 3,349 unique visits in July 2004 to an astounding 9,814 in July 2005.

Summary of Web site activity

	June 2005	July 2005	August 2005
Unique Visitors	8,420	9,814	9,364
Pages Viewed	87,892	102,143	102,965

Head to the Hills Contest

Created to expand our online marketing database, the Head to the Hills Contest, has had over 400 contestants since it was launched in the spring of 2005. Thank you to our members who donated 22 prizes, which were compiled into 7 fabulous Getaways. Entries will be received at www.thehillsofheadwaters.com up until December 16, 2005. Don't forget to tell your customers how to enter! The customer information obtained as a result of the Head to the Hills Contest is added to our online subscriber list. See the article below for notes on how this list is being used to promote the Hills of Headwaters.

E-newsletter launched

To capitalize on the public's use of the internet for tourism information, the Hills of Headwaters launched its first direct market e-newsletter to over 1000 subscribers on September 17th. Members are invited and encouraged to submit articles for the e-newsletter at a cost of \$75 per article. The next e-newsletter is scheduled to be released on November 15th. Space is limited to 6 articles and reserved on a first come first served basis. Articles promoting events and specials with a strong *call to action* are encouraged. To book your space, contact Cynthia at cynthia@thehillsofheadwaters.com.

More people are turning first to their computers for simple information such as directions, phone numbers, office hours and addresses.

Are you using the tools and web site features included in your Hills of Headwaters membership to the fullest potential?

Help and answers to your questions are just a couple of clicks away. Email our web master:
valerie@thehillsofheadwaters.com for more information.

From the Executive Director

Lisa Hohban Brusse

For those of you whose travel patterns take you past our Visitor Information Centre each day, you will have noticed that our building received a face lift this summer. We are now pleased to sport the official colours of the Hills of Headwaters brand and the large question mark on the building's peak clearly announces who we are to those passing by. But why the improvements, you may wonder, when we are planning for a brand new building in the very new future?

Unfortunately, our plans to partner with local developer, Doc Gillies, on the construction of a new Visitor Centre came to a halt this past spring when complications with access to the property made the project economically unviable. However, rather than sell the property, Mr. Gillies has donated the property to the Town of Orangeville with the provision that any future development include a visitor information facility. Although this turn of events has delayed our move to a new building (hence the improvements to the old building!) it has opened the door for new opportunities as well as bringing new challenges. Rather than being the tenant of a building constructed and owned by a second party, the Tourism Association is now in a position to build and own the facility itself!

Over the summer, the Tourism Association has been working closely with the Town of Orangeville to determine the best plan of action for the development of the property. The Tourism Association has also entered into discussions with both the Greater Dufferin and Area Chamber of Commerce and the Orangeville BIA to determine if there is an opportunity to co-locate in the proposed new building. It's an exciting position in which we find ourselves and we are thrilled to have been offered this opportunity by both Doc Gillies and the Town of Orangeville. We will be sure to keep all of you posted as the details unfold!

Another new face, so to speak, at the Hills of Headwaters Visitor Information Centre is that of Sharon Condotta our new Tourism Assistant who will be providing front-line reception and service to both visitors and members alike. A resident of Caledon East, Sharon has a solid background in administration, marketing and media relations from over 20 years employment with Bombardier Aerospace. Sharon can be reached by email at info@thehillsofheadwaters.com.

Sharon will be joined in October by the first of three Katimavik volunteers who will be with us over the next 9 months. The timing for these newest additions to the Hills of Headwaters team couldn't be better. The number of inquiries and drop-ins at the Information Centre is reaching new highs as awareness of our region grows and as a result of our new role as ticket agent for the Credit Valley Explorer.

With Sharon managing the front line, expect to see more of Cynthia Percival as she takes to the road in her new role as Tourism and Membership Services Coordinator. Outreach, with both the membership and our local community, will be Cynthia's primary task in her new role; helping to strengthen the local tourism community through one-on-one communications and increased industry participation. Wondering how you can make better use of your membership with the Tourism Association? Contact Cynthia at cynthia@thehillsofheadwaters.com.

One final note on Visitor Information Services, a sincere thank you goes out to Stephanie, Jamie and Tracey at Gairdner and Associates Real Estate Ltd. who hosted our Information Kiosk in Erin this summer, to all the folks at Prudential Select Real Estate in Bolton who host a self-serve information kiosk in Bolton on a year round basis and to the forty odd businesses and organizations who enthusiastically distribute our Visitor's Guides, Maps and member brochures through the Hills of Headwaters brochure distribution program. Now that's teamwork!

Murder on the *Headwaters Express!*

Tickets now on sale!

The Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association is hosting an evening of intrigue, suspense and hilarity, aboard the Credit Valley Explorer. Enjoy a three-hour train ride through the Hills of Headwaters but be careful, you never know who might be lurking in the seat behind you!

A Murder mystery set in the 1920's
Welcome Cocktail / Cash Bar
Scrumptious desserts provided by the Train Station Restaurant
And a train ride you'll never forget!

When: Saturday, October 29th

Boarding time: 7:00 pm

Dress code: 1920's attire

Cost: \$99/person

Call 1-800-332-9744 to reserve your tickets

Boost your business (and your neighbour's) through cross-promotion

Kelly Myles, Marketing Committee Co-Chair

Marketing a business is a challenge for most people and it is difficult to know how to market and where to market. It always seems like someone is asking you to advertise in this publication or on that radio station and it all seems too hard and too expensive.

If you want to increase the exposure your business receives and share the expense of marketing then cross promotion is a powerful tool. Choose other businesses in your area and promote each other. If you have products or services that are complimentary package them to make it easier for the consumer. For example, Caledon Country Club does not have overnight accommodation. The only thing the Millcroft Inn doesn't have is a golf course. Together they can promote their services so that they offer a full package to the consumer.

You can create even more excitement by assembling a collection of like businesses into an event such as the studio tours or the more recent example of the Headwaters Golf Trail which combined six independently-owned golf courses into one trail with one promotion. Together the six properties can afford to do a promotion that on their own most businesses cannot. In addition, by cross promoting you are creating a newsworthy event that can have a press release written and may get coverage on local radio, newspapers and magazines. These press releases are free promotions.

Talk to your competition. Talk to your business neighbours. Network within the Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association. Challenge yourself to create a promotion that will be exciting, dynamic and cost effective.

Building the Arts – From Me to We **An action plan for the Arts in the Hills of Headwaters**

Following consultation with over 70 artists and art groups from throughout the region, and with the generous support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an Action Plan for the Arts in the Hills of Headwaters was launched on Thursday, August 18th at the Millcroft Inn. Over 50 artists joined consultant Stephanie Westlake who presented her recommendations for enhancing the prosperity and well-being for the arts in the Headwaters region.

The foundation for the recommendations made in the plan were based on secondary research, input from an industry strategy session in which 68 members of the collective arts community participated, as well as the results of an online artists' survey including the responses from a total of 58 local artists and 16 artists' groups.

Based on this research, five overarching priority action items were identified:

1. Establishing a leadership team for the arts community
2. Creating a forum for communication amongst artists
3. Reducing overlap of regional arts events and services
4. Improving recognition and awareness of local arts through cooperative marketing efforts
5. Finding a centralized home for showcasing regional arts

These priorities are addressed in the Action Plan, within the context of four central themes, described as "pillars", namely: Professional and Business Development, Communication, Collaborative Marketing, and Education of the Next Generation of Artists.

The recommendation for the formation of an "Arts Network" with the mandate to provide a common identity and singular voice for the Arts was enthusiastically received by those in attendance. A call was put out for leaders within the Arts community to participate on the inaugural Leadership Team which will be tasked with hammering out the details for the formation of the Arts Network and with the implementation of the other priority action items.

From the Tourism Association's point of view, we expect to play a pivotal role in facilitating the activities of the new Arts Network as they relate to tourism, experience development and marketing.

The entire Action Plan for the Arts in the Hills of Headwaters can be obtained at the Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association office in Orangeville or online at:

www.thehillsofheadwaters.com/section.php?sid=425

Board Committees and Committee Chairs for 2005/06

The Hills of Headwaters Board of Directors assigns responsibility for its various activities to sub-committees. Members are always welcome to increase their participation in the Tourism Association by volunteering on a sub-committee. Vacancies currently exist on the Membership, Revenue Generation and Marketing Committees.

Executive/Finance Committee

Chair: Jocelyn Klemm, Vice-Chair: Steve Froemmel, Treasurer: Don Smith, Secretary, Cheryl Spalding Brand. The Executive Committee leads the growth, development, and management of the Tourism Association, maintains strong partnerships with the local municipalities and acts as the Board's Finance Committee.

Marketing Committee

Co-Chairs: Kelly Myles and Jefferson Mappin

The Marketing Committee coordinates the Tourism Association's promotional, advertising and media relations activities. The Marketing Committee is currently looking for new committee members to represent Dining/Restaurant and Recreation. If you're interested, contact Kelly Myles at 905-808-0020 or Jefferson Mappin at 519-855-9793.

Membership Committee

Chair: Dave Pounds

The membership committee is responsible for maintaining and growing membership with the Hills of Headwaters Tourism, researching and securing membership benefits, and for internal communications. Vacancies currently exist on the Membership Committee. Call Dave at 519-942-8700 to find out more.

Visitor Services Committee

Chair: Lesley Burns

The Visitor Services Committee provides direction for the management of the Visitor Information Centre in Orangeville and for the seasonal kiosks at the region's gateways.

Revenue Generation Committee

Chair: Julie Fredenburg

The Revenue Generation Committee coordinates all fund-raising activities as well as researching and developing opportunities for generating revenue for the Tourism Association. Interested in helping out? Call Julie at 519-942-2905.

Membership Update

Membership at August 31, 2005: 281 Members

68 members (24%) participate in the Brochure Distribution Program.

254 members (90%) utilize emails for business communications.

202 members (72%) have personal web sites.

153 members (54%) are using the Hills of Headwaters web site.

Membership participation by category

Accommodation – 25, Shopping – 48, Antique Shopping – 9

Arts, Culture & Heritage – 35, Dining & Catering – 32

Farm Fresh & Fairs – 11, Golf – 11, Health & Well Being – 8

Recreation & Outdoors – 33, Business Services - 69

Interesting membership facts

At present we have 48 members who have been a part of our membership since before the year 2000, 6 more who have continued since 2000, 30 more since 2001 & 74 more since 2002. In 2003, which was the year we changed our name to be the Hills of Headwaters Tourism, 52 new members were added. In 2004 we grew by 60 new members & since the beginning of 2005, 11 new members have joined the Association. Thank you to all for your continued support.

Visitor Information Centre Statistics

Inquiries:

June 2005:	483
July 2005:	650
August 2005:	690

Referrals

(June – August 2005)

Caledon:	849
Erin:	345
Orangeville:	1325
Shelburne:	338
Mono:	492
Dufferin:	533

Referral Categories

(June – August 2005)

Accommodation:	238
Shopping:	196
Attraction:	697
Special events:	190
Service:	316
Restaurant:	214
Recreation:	463
Arts & Culture:	73
Directions:	796

Web site activity by month

June 2005

Hits:	810,689
Unique visits:	8,420

July 2005

Hits:	919,119
Unique visits:	9,814

August 2005

Hits:	860,348
Unique visits:	9,364

No Time like the Present

The fall is traditionally the time we pursue expanding our membership so businesses can be included in next year's Visitor Guide & Tourism Guide Map. Any businesses, perhaps new to the area or expanding their marketing budget, who are considering membership with the Tourism Association should contact Cynthia Percival at 519-942-0314 for a personalized consultation.

Summer Students 2005

The Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association would like to thank our three amazing students, Cheryl, Julie & Victoria, for their sincere enthusiasm, dedication & unrelenting efforts over the summer. There is always a lot of activity behind the scenes making sure visitors are directed quickly & accurately plus ongoing administrative activities that often go unnoticed. We wish them the very best at their University studies & are appreciative that they will continue as ongoing ambassadors of our region.

Welcome to the following members who have joined the Hills of Headwaters this past year:

1st Impressions, Orangeville; 24 Hr. Access Fitness, Orangeville; A Scrapbookers Dream, Bolton; Bluebird Café & Grill, Orangeville; Café Uno, Orangeville; Caledon East Studio Tour, Calerin Golf Club, Erin; Cherry Grove Country Home, Shelburne; Chestnut Park Real Estate, Erin; Country Charm Mennonite Furniture, Caledon Village; Credit Valley Explorer, Orangeville/Caledon; Deborah's Chocolate Shop, Erin/Orangeville; Dalerose Country, Orangeville; Dougall's Diner, Orangeville; Echohill Web Sites, Mansfield; Equestrian Management Group, Palgrave; Flapjacks Restaurant & Swift Burger, Caledon; Glendale Veterinary Hospital, Caledon; GreenHills Recreation Turf & Landscaping, Hillsburgh; Green Tourism Association, Toronto; Habit Apparel, Orangeville; Heritage House Fine Furniture Inc., Orangeville; Hockley Hills B & B, Hockley Village; Macintyre Communications, Caledon; Mill Street Bistro, Orangeville; Mille Notte Lingerie, Bolton; Moffat Dunlap Real Estate Ltd., Erin; Orangeville Golf Club; Orangeville Furniture & Bedding Inc.; Rainbarrel Antiques, Erin; Redleaf Digital Photography, Orangeville; Robinson House Antiques, Inglewood; Royal Ambassador/Consulate Dining Banquet & Conference Centre, Caledon East; Seasons Framing & Gallery, Bolton; Shawn Legrow, Orangeville; The Bevelled Edge Gallery, Orangeville; The Design Cellar, Markham; The Home Shop, Orangeville; The Village Arts & Crafts, Caledon; The White Truffle, Orangeville; Top Shelf Graphics, Caledon East; Towne & Country Antiques, Caledon East; Trillium Motorcycle Tours, Orangeville, Unto The Hills B & B, Mono Centre.