



**MICHIGAN  
MAPLE  
SYRUP  
ASSOCIATION**

**Fall 2009 Newsletter**



Greetings!

It's hard to believe that the year is half over and we will be on our fall tour in a couple of months. I've seen the itinerary and it looks like an informative but fun day is set for us. The info for that is in this newsletter so get your reservation in ASAP. It sure helps the planners of the event to have them early.

From everyone I have talked to most of us had a great syrup season. Mother Nature was on our side this past year. Larry Haigh has done up the crop report for this issue.

There are two more bills in the State Legislature and two in the Federal Legislature that we are keeping an eye on. All four bills will benefit the Maple industry in one way or another. Keeping track of the bills and making our needs known to our legislators is quite time consuming so Mike Ross and Craig Waldron are taking care of the Federal side for us.

MMSA is represented at the Ionia State Fair by various producers. They are dividing the days up so our booth will be covered all week. I appreciate everyone who is taking a turn as I was unable to help out due to health issues.

Don't forget we have a great display board that any member can borrow. It has several pictures and statements in it or you can add your own. We need to take advantage of every opportunity we get to have our name out in the public eye.

We still have some issues with the MMSA website but are hopeful that it will be resolved by the end of the year. When we started on this venture none of us dreamed it would turn out to be such a project.

Looking forward to see you all at the Fall Tour.

Ron Thomas

# MMSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

May 16, 2009

Members Present: Ron Thomas, Arnold Hammel, Darren Flagel, Larry Haigh, Dale Forrester, Tim Boonstra, Fred Bates, Joyce Ross. Absent: Gerald Nelson

Guests: Debbi Thomas, Julia Forrester, Karen Haigh, and Cathi Bates

Meeting was called to order at 12:10 pm by Ron Thomas.

Old Business:

Motion was made to approve secretary's minutes as printed in the spring 2009 Newsletter. Motion Carried.

Treasurer's Report: There was a \$150.00 profit from the winter meeting. A down payment of \$1000.00 for IMSI 2011 was sent. Our expenses are up due to the purchase of the folders, pencils and mugs. Motion was made to approve the treasurer's report, motion carried.

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**Your Invitation  
To the MMSA 2009 Fall Tour**

September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Eaton County Michigan

Where: Starting at Haigh's Maple Syrup & Supplies, LLC  
6903 S. Lacey Lake Road, Bellevue, MI 49021-8403

Time: Registration begins at 8:00am  
Coffee, Tea and Donuts

Directions: Coming from the south on I-69 take exit #48 to the right. From the exit turn left on Butterfield Hwy and go west into Bellevue to the stop light. At the light turn right on Capital Ave. and go east 3 miles to Lacey Lake Rd. Turn left on Lacey Lake Rd and go north ½ mile. Haigh's are on the right.

Coming from the north on I-69 take exit #51 to the right. From the exit turn right on Ainger Rd. Go north about 4 miles to first stop sign, Battle Creek Hwy. Turn Left on Battle Creek Hwy and travel 3 miles to Lacey Lake Rd. Turn right on Lacey Lake Rd and go north ½ mile.

Bellevue is easy to find from M-78, M-79 and M-66. We are 10 miles from Charlotte. We are 16 miles from Battle Creek.

If you need more directions call the Haigh's at 269-763-2210.



## MMSA 2009 Fall Tour

Eaton County  
September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009

### Accommodation Information

We will have a campfire at Haigh's Friday evening, all are invited.

We have enough room to accommodate a few RV units in our yard. Please let us know if you wish to camp here.

Ph: 269-763-3107

#### Motels

Holiday Inn Express, 500 Meijers St. Charlotte,  
I-69, Exit #60 (M-50) East of I-69, Beside Meijers  
517-541-5000

Super 8 Motel, 828 E. Shepherd St. Charlotte,  
I-69, Exit #60 (M-50) West of I-69  
517-543-8288

To Get to Haigh's from either of these, go west on Shepherd St. to Battle Creek Hwy. Turn left on Battle Creek Hwy and go 10 miles to Lacey Lake Road. Turn right on Lacey Lake Rd, we are 1/2 mile north on the right side of road.

Comfort Inn, 1302 E. Packard Hwy. Charlotte,  
I-69, Exit #61, Lansing Rd. North on Lansing Rd, then west on Packard Hwy. 517-543-7307

To get to Haigh's from here, get back on I-69 and go south to Exit #60, turn right on Shepherd St. (M-50) then follow the same directions as above.

#### Camp Grounds

Sherwood Forest Campground, 5563 Sherwood Hwy, Olivet  
517-749-9799 West out of Olivet

Mullican's Riverside Resort, 3266 N. Ionia Rd. Vermontville  
517-726-1558 On south side of Vermontville

# MMSA 2009 Fall Tour

Eaton County

September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009

## Schedule

- 8:00 – 8:45 Registration, Coffee & Donuts  
Haigh's Maple Syrup & Supplies  
6903 S. Lacey Lake Rd, Bellevue, Mi.
- 8:45 – 9:30 Tour Haigh's sugar house
- 9:30 – 9:45 Drive to Simpson's, 4800 Lamie Hwy. Charlotte
- 9:45 -10.30 Tour Simpson's sugar house,
- 10:30-10:45 Drive to Halsey's, 5603 Moyer Rd. Charlotte
- 10:45-11:30 Tour Halsey's sugar house
- 11:30-11:45 Drive to Charlotte Eagles, 116 Lansing St. Charlotte
- 11:45-12:45 Lunch
- 12:45 - 1:10 Business Meeting
- 1:10 - 1:30 Drive to Vermontville, Maple Manor
- 1:30 - 2:15 Tour Vermontville Maple Syrup Festival Corp.  
Visit Vermontville Museum  
(optional or alternate groups)
- 2:15 - 3:00 Tour Moore's sugar house  
10075 W. Vermontville Hwy, west edge of town.
- 3:00 - 3:15 Drive to Ripley's, 9580 Carlisle Hwy, Vermontville
- 3:15 - 4:00 Tour Ripley's sugar house
- 4:00 - ? Have fun at Ripley's Haunted Acres & Corn Maze  
(You're on your own)
- 4:15 - ? Board Meeting

*All of the stops are quite close together so we do not have a lot of drive time. However, we have a very busy schedule so we need to be prompt. We do have some very interesting operations for you to visit.*

# MMSA 2009 Fall Tour

Eaton County  
September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009

## Tour Stops

### **Stop #1 - Haigh's Maple Syrup & Supplies, LLC**

Larry & Karen Haigh

550 taps of their own, another 350 they boil on shares. 500 are on tubing gravity feed to bulk milk tanks, only 50 buckets. Their evaporator is a Dominion & Grimm Champion 4' X 14' oil fired with pre-heater and hood, air injectors (bubblers) and automatic draw-off. Larry & Karen are both fourth generation syrup makers.

### **Stop #2 – Max & Al Simpson Sugar Bush**

Max & Sandy, Al & Jayne Simpson

850 taps, 300 from a nephew. 600 on tubing running into barrels, rest on buckets. Their evaporator is a wood fired King 40" X 12'.

Max & Al are third generation syrup makers and brothers Roy and John also get involved. You may recognize Max and Roy from their many years of involvement with Tractor Pulling.

### **Stop #3 – Pleasant Meadows Sugar Bush**

Ryan & Tammy Halsey

Currently 650 taps but going to 1600 all on gravity tubing. Their evaporator is a wood fired Maple Pro 40" X 12' with hoods and a pre-heater. Ryan also can trace syrup making back four generations in his family.

### **Lunch**

Charlotte Eagles

*\*Note: There will be a rest room only at Haigh's, The Eagles, Vermontville and Ripley's.*

#### **Stop #4a – Vermontville Maple Syrup Festival Corp.**

Steve Hayes and a host of volunteers.

200 buckets are hung on the street trees of Vermontville. The Corporation also rents a woods with 500 taps where tubing and buckets are used. The evaporator is a natural gas fired 4' X 14' Leader with hoods. They have used an R.O. the past two years; this machine was donated to them. Some of the Maple Syrup is used for prizes and gifts. The balance of the income is used by the Corporation for donations to community such as Band, Little League, Library, memorial benches around town and picnic tables in the park

#### **Stop #4b – The Vermontville Museum**

Jim Zempke, Vermontville Historical Society

The Museum is housed in the building which was known as “The Academy”. Jim will be there to give us some Vermontville history and to answer questions.

#### **Stop #5 – Be Moore Sweet Sugarbush**

Brian and Becky Moore

They have 600 to 700 taps of their own plus custom boil for three or four other folks bring the total to 1200 taps here. Their evaporator is a wood fired 3' X 12' Leader with steam away. They have road and yard trees and also rent all on buckets. Brian has an identical operation on Sugar Island. When he completes his season here he goes north to do it all over again. Brian has been making syrup here for ten years. Prior to that he boiled in Nashville for many years.

#### **Stop #6 – Ripley's Sugar Bush & Ripley's Haunted Acres**

John & Roxanne Ripley

The Ripley's have 1850 taps mostly on a vacuum tubing system with just a few buckets. Their evaporator is a wood fired 5' X 16' King with hoods and pre-heater. They also have The Ripley's Haunted Acres and Corn Maze. The haunting part does not open until October but we will be able to try out the two corn mazes that the have.

**Do not think that you know it all , for maple sugar making is a science about which you learn something every season if you are observing . From 1894 booklet by VMSMA**

# **The 2009 North American Maple Syrup Council and International Maple Syrup Institute Annual Meetings**

## *A Golden Anniversary*

The Maine Maple Producers Association is delighted to invite you to this year's NAMSC and IMSI meetings, to be held in beautiful Bar Harbor, Maine, an ideal get-a-way destination. The meetings begin Thursday night October 22<sup>nd</sup> and continue through a banquet on Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup> with a separate northern Maine tour beginning on Monday October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The annual meetings will be held at the Atlantic Oakes by the Sea Resort and Conference Center which was formerly a private estate and now offers spacious meeting rooms and 150 ocean view rooms with balconies and patios.

There will be demonstrations, producer workshops and technical sessions, equipment displays and tours to interest everyone involved in maple, from the backyard producer to the largest producers, packers and wholesalers. These meetings will be a great opportunity to celebrate, learn, meet, eat seafood, have fun, and see the latest products developed for the maple industry. Technical presentations and reports from recent maple research will be a benefit to everyone.

For more information, please contact either:

Robert Smith  
Smith's Maple Products  
24 Bennett Ave., Skowhegan ME 04976  
207-474-3380  
Email: bob@beeline-online.net

Eric Ellis  
Maine Maple Products  
449 Lakewood Rd.  
Madison, ME 04950  
Phone: 207-474-3887  
Email: mainemaple@beeline-online.net

## 2009 Michigan Crop Report

At our May 16<sup>th</sup> board meeting each director was asked for a summary of the syrup season in their area. A general comment from all corners of the state was that the sap sugar content was below average by around ½ percent the entire season. Color was medium to dark amber in many areas however the flavor was excellent.

The Shepherd area reported an average to good yield but color was mostly medium amber. Retail prices were around \$45.00 per gallon.

The Thumb area had a good season at around a quart per tap average. Again color was mostly medium amber with a little light and dark amber also being made.

The Lapeer area had a good year reporting a low of two-thirds of a quart per tap to a high of three quarts per tap. Medium and light amber syrup was produced. Retail prices in that area are in the \$40.00 to \$45.00 per gallon.

The Mio/Fairview region reported a good year with yields of one-third gallon per tap. Medium and dark amber color was also made in this area. The retail price here is in the low \$40.00 per gallon range.

Rose City reported a good year with yields of one quart plus per tap. Color here was also medium to light amber and retail prices of \$40.00 per gallon are normal.

The Ludington area also had a good year with color again medium and light amber. Retail price per gallon of \$45.00 to \$48.00 is the norm.

Word from the Upper Peninsula was that it was a very good year with mostly light amber syrup being produced. This was also the case in the northern half of the Lower Peninsula. Retail prices in the U.P. were as high as \$54.95 per gallon with \$50.00 per gallon being quite common.

The southwest corner of the state had a poor year. Yields were less than a quart per tap. The season started with dark syrup and lightened up to medium, no light syrup was made here. Retail prices of \$50.00 to \$52.00 per gallon.

Here in south central Michigan we had a very bad year with yields of only two-thirds of a quart or less per tap. Production varied greatly depending upon the location and elevation of the sugar bush. The most often heard complaint was that it did not get cold enough nights or warm enough during the day. On many days when you would have thought that the sap would run there was a cold north or east wind. The syrup started out dark and did lighten up to medium amber some days. Retail prices run from \$40.00 to \$48.00 per gallon with \$45.00 being the average.

Bring your favorite picture of your sugar house, woods, or sugar camp to the Fall tour, or the Annual meeting to be scanned for the slide show for the 2011 meeting. Pictures can also be e-mailed to [dflagel@i2k.com](mailto:dflagel@i2k.com) or [hammela@cmich.edu](mailto:hammela@cmich.edu)

The National Agriculture Statistics Service reported that on the whole Michigan had a very good year. Many producers reported record production. Overall Michigan had an increase of more than ten percent for the state over 2008. Michigan is ranked fifth in maple syrup production in the United States.

As for retail prices I would say that \$40.00 to \$48.00 per gallon would be the state average. I did have one report of \$58.50 per gallon in the southeastern part of Michigan. I have personally read one ad in a local shopping guide of \$30.00 per gallon, and yes, that was retail. We do often hear of prices in the mid \$30.00 per gallon range in our area. The demand for high quality Maple Syrup and Maple Products is very strong. The market seems to be improving each year.

Have a great year; we are looking forward seeing you at the Fall Tour, which will be in Eaton County Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>. Look for more information in this newsletter.

Submitted by, Larry Haigh

## **2011 NAMSC & IMSI Meeting**

Anyone interested in helping to with our 2011 NAMSC / IMSI meeting plan to meet after the last stop on our fall tour. After this our next meeting will be at the Annual meeting in January. If you want to help but can't make the Fall Tour, send me an email at [debbl612@hotmail.com](mailto:debbl612@hotmail.com)

## **Quilters needed**

A quilter is needed to design and quilt Michigan's quilt block for the quilt that will be raffled off. Each state and province will be designing a block to go into our quilt. If there are a group that would like to work on a design – go for it. Details will be provided as to size and fabric.

Deadline for finished block will be June 2010.

Anyone willing to put together the blocks from the other associations and finish the quilt – let me know.

Debbi Thomas

## Michigan Association at Ionia Free Fair

The Michigan Maple Syrup Association was well represented at the Ionia Free Fair, July 16-25, in Ionia, Michigan. Cathi Bates and her sister, Sue Kelley, created an attractive booth in the National Bank Building in the Home Economics Department. Sharing the aisle with a popular bee keeper resulted in increased interest in Michigan's 'natural sweeteners'. Cathi sold their Maple products Thursday-Sunday, Brian Moore took over for Monday-Tuesday, Larry and Karen Haigh moved their Maple Syrup products in for Wednesday-Thursday, and Arnie and Merrie represented the Shepherd Sugar Bush by selling a variety of Maple Syrup containers on Friday and Saturday. The days were long (10am to 10pm) but the news of Maple Syrup production was shared with many fair visitors, hopefully resulting in increased interest and sales for all producers. Thanks to Cathi Bates for organizing this event and, if you are interested in taking part another year, please contact Cathi at any of the Association meetings or phone her at 231-845-6902.



# Letter from the Editor



How the time has passed, half the year is over and fall is just around the corner. As I am working on the Fall newsletter I find it is still a learning experience. We are looking forward to the Fall Tour. Larry and Karen Haigh have made arrangements for a full day, make plans to come to there fire Friday night if your in town. Arny Hammel will have a scanner for pictures at the Fall Tour for the slide show at the 2011 meeting. The Maple Confection class I was checking on is still in the works, it just did not work out for this spring. Maybe spring of 2010 it will happen. I would still like to have a copy of your favorite Maple Syrup recipe to feature in the newsletter. I look forward to seeing you at the Fall Tour. Happy Tapping!

Darren Flagel  
7509 E. Napier Ave.  
Benton Harbor, Mi. 49022  
(269) 944 4064 dflagel@i2k.com

## Greetings from Moose River Sugar Camp

We arrived this season on Feb. 15, we had 4' of snow on the level. The snow was hard and crusted, real good for walking . We were there about 10 days when we got another 2' of snow. That made walking more difficult & had to wait for that to settle, before we went back to tapping. That gave us a good 5' plus to walk on & we finished tapping about Mar. 20th. with our first boil on Mar. 18th. Our last boil was on April 25th. It didn't get real cold during season, so our sugar content wasn't very high. Our lows never got below 20 in season. For 1-1/2 weeks it didn't freeze but HI's only got to 45. Sap ran the entire time.

It sounds like the lowest production in Somerset Co. was 3#/ tap, with a lot of producers reporting 4#/ tap or better.

We had 3 pump stations. The 1st pump station had a DeLaval pump & we were able to maintain 20" all the time. The other 2 pump stations had liquid ring vacuum pumps, and we were able to maintain 23" on one and 25" on the other.

We have used tap adapters for the last 3 years. The tap adapter stayed tighter in the trees than the trees without the adapters. Our last 250 taps did not have adapters, we were continually tightening them. The new Leader check valve adapters, look quite impressive. I think we will switch to them for this season.

We questioned what to price our syrup at this year. Last year we were \$48, \$25, \$14, & \$8. Sales were real good. So this year producers at our market had there syrup priced at \$54, \$28, \$16, & \$9. We set our prices the same for three weeks and sold no syrup. Then we went back to last years prices and sales went back to normal.

We look forward to seeing you at our Fall Tour-

Dale & Julie Forrester

### **Creamy Maple Syrup Dressing**

Because the ingredients for this dressing are kitchen staples this is a great recipe for something special, great over lettuce fruit or berries .

**1 cup mayonnaise**

**1/2 cup pure maple syrup**

**1/4 cup apple cider vinegar**

**1st** Whisk together the mayonnaise, syrup, and vinegar until smooth.

**2nd** Refrigerate and tightly cover for at least 1 hour to let the flavors blend.

Ontario MSPA.

## MMSA Website Information on Member Listings

The Website has been receiving many hits by consumers looking to purchase MI Maple Products. Thus, the board has established a program for all members of the MMSA to participate in our website for the purpose of selling their products. You must be a paid current member to participate. There will be two listings available: a Directory listing and a Descriptive listing. We hope this new service will increase sales for our members.

### DIRECTORY LISTING: (\$20.00 per year)

There will be three categories available to visitors to our site and you may advertise on any one of all of them. The categories are:

- Retail Maple Products
- Wholesale Maple Products
- Maple Equipment and Supplies

Each listing will allow up to five lines. Due to the need for conformity and page layout requirements, we will only accept directory type information in this listing, including name, address, city/state/zip, phone and e-mail address.

### DESCRIPTIVE LISTING (\$30.00 per year in addition to the Directory Listing)

If you would like to advertise additional information, such as products offered, specific location information or hours, you may sign up for an additional listing or have a link to your own website. If you do not have your own website, you can provide a descriptive paragraph(s).

The official response to inquiries regarding availability of syrup and supplies will be to direct individuals to our website listings. It is MMSA Board's policy to keep the complete membership list unavailable to the general public. This protects our members. Referral to this list also eliminates any concerns over whose name is given out or advertised. If you wish to have your name given out as a syrup or equipment source, the website listing is the way to do it. The lists of maple syrup and equipment suppliers will be available on our website address of: [www.mi-maplesyrup.com](http://www.mi-maplesyrup.com).

To add your name to our site, complete the MEMBER LISTING FORM attached and mail it with your check or money order (payable to MMSA) to:

Arnold Hammel  
725 E. Ward Road  
Shepherd, MI 48883

## 2011 NAMSC & IMSI Meeting

### "PICTURES NEEDED"

When the MMSA hosts the NAMSC and IMSI Annual Meeting in October 2011, it is hoped that a slide show of some form can be shown to showcase our member's Sugar Bushes. To prepare for this event, we are seeking pictures of you and your family and/or your Sugar Bush, woods, products, methods of collecting, etc. If you could email in jpeg form such pictures to

[hammela@cmich.edu](mailto:hammela@cmich.edu) (note: the character after the mme is a one) that would be helpful. If it would be easier, pictures can also be sent by mail to

Arnie and Merrie Hammel, 725 E. Ward Rd, Shepherd, MI 48883.

Thanks for your help. We hope to include all members.

## Maple Confections: 1&2

I am investigating the possibility of hosting **Dr. Steve Childs** of **Cornell University** to come and present his Maple confections workshop in Michigan.

This class is a must for the sugar maker who makes candy, cream and value added products. The class has been featured in the Maple News and is presently available for those who live in the North East. My brother Ken and I have attended several of these classes in Ohio and we have gained a wealth of knowledge from them. This would be the first time it has been offered in Michigan.

The class is so detailed that it takes two days for the complete program. I was aiming at Friday and Saturday for both classes. For logistical reasons the program would be featured in Southwest Michigan. I am now in the planning stages, and if you would be interested in attending, please email me at [dflagel@i2k.com](mailto:dflagel@i2k.com) or call 269-944-4064. If there is enough interest, I will continue arranging the class.

The cost and the date information will follow.

Darren Flagel  
Flagel's Sugarhouse  
Benton Harbor, MI