



## **VERMONT ATTRACTIONS ASSOCIATION 2018 YEAR END REVIEW**

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# VERMONT ATTRACTIONS ASSOCIATION

## Table of Contents

Vermont Attractions Association 2018 Members	Page 3
Distribution of 900,000 – 2018 VAA Road Maps	Page 4
2018 Strategic Plan Progress	Page 5
VAA 2018 Membership Meetings	Page 6
Legislative Representation	Page 7
VAA Website	Page 8
Key Contacts	Page 8-9

## VERMONT ATTRACTIONS ASSOCIATION

### MISSION STATEMENT

**The Vermont Attractions Association is a statewide member trade association that supports and strengthens individual businesses, leveraging this collective voice to influence and enhance the Vermont tourism industry.**

## VERMONT ATTRACTIONS ASSOCIATION 2018 MEMBERS

<b>62 years</b>	Lake Champlain Ferries	<b>19 years</b>	Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park
<b>62 years</b>	Rock of Ages	<b>18 years</b>	Magic Hat Brewing Company
<b>62 years</b>	Shelburne Museum	<b>17 years</b>	Maple Landmark Woodcraft
<b>62 years</b>	Quechee Gorge	<b>16 years</b>	ECHO Aquarium & Science Center
<b>62 years</b>	St. Anne's Shrine	<b>16 years</b>	Bragg Farm Sugarhouse & Gift Shop
<b>60 years*</b>	Vermont Marble Company	<b>16 years*</b>	Hogback Mountain Scenic Overlook (Southern VT Natural History Museum, etc.)
<b>56 years*</b>	Maple Grove Farms of VT	<b>15 years</b>	Danforth Pewter
<b>41 years*</b>	Bromley Mountain	<b>14 years</b>	King Arthur Flour-The Baker's Store
<b>47 years*</b>	Bennington Museum	<b>12 years</b>	Green Mtn. Coffee Roasters Visitors Center & Café
<b>46 years*</b>	Univ. of VT Morgan Horse Farm	<b>11 years</b>	Shelburne Vineyard and Wine Tasting
<b>44 years</b>	Cabot Farmers (Cabot Creamery)	<b>10 years</b>	Great Vermont Corn Maze
<b>37 years</b>	Basketville	<b>10 years</b>	Lincoln Peak Vineyard
<b>35 years</b>	Morse Farm	<b>9 years</b>	Farm-Way
<b>35 years</b>	New England Maple Museum	<b>8 years</b>	ArborTrek Canopy Adventures at Smugglers' Notch
<b>34 years</b>	Spirit of Ethan Allen	<b>8 years</b>	Artesano Meadery
<b>33 years</b>	Hildene	<b>8 years</b>	The Chocolatorium/Village Peddler
<b>33 years</b>	Billings Farm & Museum	<b>8 years</b>	Hathaway Farm & Corn Maze
<b>32 years</b>	Quechee Gorge Village	<b>8 years</b>	Okemo Mountain Resort
<b>31 years</b>	Cold Hollow Cider Mill	<b>8 years</b>	Norman Rockwell Exhibition/Sugar Shack
<b>30 years *</b>	Green Mountain Railroad	<b>7 years</b>	Goodrich's Maple Farm
<b>30 years</b>	Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium	<b>7 years</b>	Vermont Folk Rocker
<b>27 years</b>	Dakin Farm	<b>6 years</b>	Fresh Tracks Farm Vineyard & Winery
<b>27 years</b>	Lake Champlain Maritime Museum	<b>5 years</b>	ClearLake Furniture
<b>27 years</b>	Vermont Teddy Bear Company	<b>4 years</b>	Champlain Orchards
<b>26 years*</b>	Jay Peak Aerial Tramway	<b>3 years*</b>	Camp Meade (formerly MiddleGround)
<b>25 years</b>	Simon Pearce	<b>3 years</b>	Farmhouse Pottery
<b>25 years*</b>	The Vermont Country Store	<b>2 years</b>	Dog Mountain
<b>24 years</b>	Shelburne Farms	<b>2 years</b>	Northeast Kingdom Artisans Guild
<b>24 years</b>	Joseph Smith Birthplace Memorial	<b>Joined 2018</b>	Retreat Farm
<b>23 years</b>	Sugarbush Cheese & Maple Syrup Farm	<b>Joined 2018</b>	von Trapp Brewing Bierhall
<b>23 years</b>	Montshire Museum		
<b>23 years</b>	Vermont Division for Historic Preservation		
<b>20 years</b>	Boyden Valley Winery		
<b>20 years</b>	Lake Champlain Chocolates		
<b>20 years*</b>	Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Factory Tours		
<b>20 years*</b>	Church Street Marketplace		
<b>19 years</b>	Bennington Potters		

\* Not consecutive years

## **Vermont Attractions Map distribution-900,000 printed**

- **400,000 PP&D Distribution**  
Map distribution to VAA member racks and 700+ tourism racks at destinations statewide and in NH Upper Valley and NY Adirondack region.
- **750 Lake Champlain Ferries.**
- **14,000 Vermont Chamber of Commerce.** There is a proactive program to provide maps to all chamber tourism members.
- **282,000 Maxham Warehouse.** Mailed out in fulfillment packets in response to requests received by the Vermont Chamber of Commerce; Vermont Dept. of Tourism & Marketing from: 1-800-Vermont. Distributed at 17 state-run welcome and information centers; and the Big E in Springfield, MA.
- **100,000 CTM.** Bennington/Manchester Region; Boston Attractions/Hotels; NYC Region; Brattleboro and NH Area; Northern New England AAA; I-95 Connecticut Hotels
- **30,000 Berkshire Brochure Display.** Berkshire County, MA; Eastern New York State Capital Region; Columbia County and Saratoga County, NY.
- **10,000 Travel Plaza Information Centers:** I-87 New York State Thruway Sloatsburg Info Center, New Baltimore Info Center, Plattekill Info Center.
- **5,000 Brochures Unlimited.** Albany/Schenectady.
- **24,000 Adirondack Distribution Service.** Greater Lake George Area.
- **15,000. Brochure Distribution - P.D.S.** New Haven, CT to Hope Valley, RI on Rte. 1 and from New Haven to Windsor Locks near the Hartford Airport on I-91.
- **10,000. North Country Distribution Service.** 125 points in the Jefferson/Lincoln area of New Hampshire. Includes: Bretton Woods, Twin Mountain, Jefferson, Whitefield, Littleton, Franconia, Wentworth, Plymouth, Woodstock, and Lincoln.
- **7,000 New England Tourism Center.** Distribution at consumer and CAA meetings in Ontario, Canada.
- **2,250 Vermont Campground Association.** Distribution at association member campgrounds statewide.

## **2018 Strategic Plan progress: Year 1 of 5 year plan!**

### VAA Strategic Plan Core Strategies 2018 Status

VAA updated mission statement 2018:

*The VAA is a statewide member trade association that supports and strengthens individual businesses, leveraging this collective voice to influence and enhance the Vermont tourism industry.*

#### **1. Recast VAA bylaws, mission statement, and operational documents to support/align with the clarified path:**

- Bylaws: **Completed.**
- Operational documents:
  - ED & Admin job descriptions-**Completed.**
  - Board member tool kit to. **Future project.**
  - Identify VAA business/non-profit required business operation, original documents of incorporation, accounting, reporting requirements and include in SOP and Policies. **In process.**
- Committees – rethought for content involving quantity, type, and composition.  
**WE NEED COMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS!**
  - **Existing and seeking additional participants.**
    - Map
    - Web solutions and Communication
    - Membership
  - **In process and seeking additional participants.**
    - Academy (learning opportunities) **for 2019**
    - Ad hoc/task based for special or short-term projects ie: Member tool kit, design templates
    - Photography **for 2019 or sooner!**
- Member orientation/sales kit, Annual Report format, and other existing pieces
  - Annual Report renamed to Year End Review. **New design- completed and ongoing.**
  - Member tool kit created with existing material and new. **New design-future project.**
  - Design templates to be used for these items. **Design-future project.**
- Website update: **In process. New website being developed.**
  - Board accepted proposal from Gregg Banse for development.

#### **2. Establish and secure industry support: identify partners to reduce duplication & strengthen the Vermont message.**

- Communicate VAA strategic plan results to key stakeholders (VDTM, VCB, Ski Vermont, and similar) **In process.**
- Promote VAA to current and potential members with 12-month communications campaign. **Ongoing.**

## VAA Strategic Plan Core Strategies 2018 Status, continued

### **3. Inspire stronger connections with members:**

- Member meetings and Networking: **In process.**

Establish and launch sensible plan to foster ongoing face-to-face networking sessions for members that are useful, geographically/financially sensitive, and achievable. **Achieved with regional meetings**

VAA Regional meetings – 3 scheduled

More than 50 VAA members gathered at two meetings with creative and open discussion.

- May 2 – Fairbanks Museum, St. Johnsbury
- May 3 – Lincoln Peak Vineyard, New Haven
- May 9 – NewsBank Conference Center, Chester CANCELLED due to lack of participation

- VAA Member Familiarization (FAM) Tour-**Completed April 2018 prior to and in conjunction with Vermont Tourism Summit meeting.**

- **Additional suggested projects:**

- Establish a closed VAA Facebook group
- Establish and launch a VAA branded training series, the “VAA Business Academy”
- Deliberately court and secure “new blood” to VAA leadership group (board and committees). **Completed and ongoing. 3 new board members added November 2018**

### VAA 2018 Membership meetings:

- **Regional meeting 1:** May 2, 2018  
Hosted by The Fairbanks Museum, St Johnsbury, 35 people attended
- **Regional meeting 2:** May 9, 2018  
Hosted by Lincoln Peak Vineyard, New Haven, 25 people attended
- **Regional meeting 3:** May 10, 2018 Cancelled due to lack of participation
- **Annual membership meeting:** November 1, 2018  
Hosted by King Arthur Flour

### **Education Presentations:**

- **Regional Meetings:** Best practices for using the VAA rack and map to engage visitors; Partnering with other attractions. How to answer the visitor question “Where to go next?”; Customer Service – What can your attraction do better to serve customers. What are the issues you face in training staff.
- **VAA at Vermont Tourism Summit:** 19 people joined VAA on a tour of attractions in the region of Manchester VT. Attendees included area chamber representatives, attractions, lodging representatives, VDTM and Ski Vermont.
- **Fall Membership Meeting:** VDTM – What’s happening in Vermont tourism?; New VAA website presentation; Building your customer service toolbox, focusing on frontline staff.

## **Legislative Representation by Vermont Chamber of Commerce**

The following items were initiated and/or supported through the work of the Vermont Chamber four-person advocacy team.

### Economic Development & Workforce

- Secured ongoing funding for Economic Development marketing
- Secured new funding for economic development grants to help small businesses
- Maintained funding for the Vermont Training Program
- Added a focus to the older worker task force to include addressing flexibility to keep this population in the workforce
- Addressed workforce needs with an incentive to attract remote workers
- Passed legislation to allow more companies to manage their own efficiency programs

### Tourism

- Maintained tourism funding of \$3 million
- Maintained current nutritional requirements for children's menus
- Stopped an effort to increase the rooms and meals tax and implement an occupancy tax

### Tax Policy

- Reduced the top marginal income tax rates
- Maintained current tax levels without a carbon tax, an increase in the rooms and meals tax, an occupancy tax, or an additional fee for registering a business

### Labor Policy

- Passed an initiative to allow more flexibility with job applicants by banning salary history
- Passed new legislation protecting workers from sexual harassment in the workplace

### Other

- Secured approval for Association Health Plans to operate in Vermont
- Provided regulation to allow Lyft and Uber to operate more broadly in Vermont
- Maintained current minimum wage, tip wage and paid family leave policies
- Supported current best practices for business contracts that also protect consumers
- Supported a regulatory system for using chemicals in businesses that relies upon federal regulations rather than a patchwork system in different states

## **VAA WEBSITE - [www.vtattractions.org](http://www.vtattractions.org)**

VAA is currently in process of designing a new website that will contain many features.

The goal of the new site is to offer visitors information about your attraction and a portal to your website and information.

It will also include a new Member Portal section that will offer members a broad range of information about the association, educational materials, meeting information and the like. VAA plans to introduce the new site at the November 1, 2018 Fall Membership Meeting.

The current VAA website contains many features, including member ability to add and change events, add news and press releases, update your listing and photos, add visitor coupons, and view reciprocal program policies, and download forms.

### **Key Contacts**

#### **Vermont Dept. of Tourism & Marketing**

The VAA map is distributed by VDTM and representatives at trade events domestic and internationally and is a sales tool in training and sales missions.

Wendy Knight, Commissioner  
[wendy.knight@vermont.gov](mailto:wendy.knight@vermont.gov)

Steve Cook, Deputy Commissioner  
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## Vermont Attractions Association

VAA is managed by the Vermont Chamber of Commerce. The president and administrator housed at the chamber offices facilitate conducting the duties of managing the VAA. The current management contract (six-year term) expires 2019.

Karen Ballard, VAA president  
Karen Foote, VAA Administrator

### **VAA Board of Directors for FY2018**

**Chair:** Amy Weller, Ben & Jerry's

**Vice Chair:** Jim Szabo, The Vermont Country Store

**Treasurer/Secretary:** Paul Brown, Cold Hollow Cider Mill

Laurie Callahan, Cabot Creamery Cooperative  
Paula Maynard, Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home  
Josh Palace, Spirit of Ethan Allen  
Todd Paton, Rock of Ages Visitors Center  
David Simmons, Billings Farm & Museum  
John Tunnicliffe, King Arthur Flour  
Gregg Banse, Lake Champlain Maritime Museum  
Gail Albert, Shelburne Vineyard  
Trish Palao, Montshire Museum of Science

