

DITA NEWSLETTER

Creating pathways for business success on Drummond Island.

New Year, New Beginnings...

The start of a new year, and decade, is the perfect opportunity to set goals to take your small business to the next level. Inside this newsletter you will find several helpful tips, information, and upcoming events that could help your business grow. We hope that you will take full advantage of your membership and engage in the new opportunities that are emerging.

One of the most notable beginnings for Drummond Island Tourism Association (DITA) is our brand new building. While we are still working on getting everything into place, we hope you will stop by and take a look at the fresh new look we have to offer our visitors. Not only does the new building provide a spacious welcome center with public restrooms, but it now offers a conference room space.

As a member, you have the privilege of hosting training sessions and meetings in the conference space when it is available. The conference room has a large TV for smart casting presentations, functional tables that can be arranged for roundtable meetings or a classroom setting, plus space for coffee service. DITA is already making use of the area by providing a winter speaker series chocked full of information on a variety of topics. See page 5 for the complete lineup. This lunch and learn series is offered free of charge for our members – just another benefit of being a member of DITA.

Another new beginning is the operation of festivals. Both Jeep the Mac and the Fall on the Island Festival will be chaired by DITA. While some volunteers have decided to move on to other pursuits, DITA's board felt that these events needed to continue based on their economic impact on Drummond Island during the shoulder seasons. We are hoping that new volunteers will immerse to help us move forward. A list of upcoming volunteer opportunities is available on page 2.

Additionally, we reached the milestone of 25 years of service as DITA. Unfortunately, due to the fire, we felt a little less than celebratory, so we will celebrate our 26th anniversary by hosting an **Open House of the new building on May 17, 2020**. Watch for details coming soon.

Lunch and Learn Speaker Series

A new series providing timely information on a variety of hot topics over a light lunch. See page 5.

Volunteer Opportunities

Many hands make light work! Whether you have a few hours or want to make a longer commitment...we need your help.

Ferry Rate Increases

We all know they are coming, but how will these changes impact tourism on Drummond? Find out more on page 4.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joe DePaul
President

Michelle Woods
Vice President

Dawn Gibbons
Treasurer

Blaine Tischer
Secretary

Directors

Denny Bailey
Amy Huffman
Dale Melvin

VISITOR'S CENTER STAFF

www.visitdrummondisland.com
Office: 906-493-5245

Office Manager

Pam Johnson
pam@visitdrummondisland.com

Marketing Director

Kristy Beyer
kristy@visitdrummondisland.com
mobile: 231-330-4389

Greeter/Office Assistant

Terri Hartman
info@visitdrummondisland.com

Volunteering is Smart Business

Volunteerism has been a driving force in the strength and power of our civil society since this country's founding. Paul Revere made his living as a silversmith, but everyone remembers him for what he did as a volunteer.

The hours of time, talent, and effort to improve and strengthen Drummond Island are staggering. Did you know the estimated national value of each volunteer hour is currently \$25.43. Yet volunteers rarely, if ever get financial compensation. So why do people volunteer?

A recent study by a leading volunteer service asked more than 7,000 volunteers one of the big questions in the volunteering industry: *"Why do you volunteer?"* Sixty six percent of respondents volunteer to improve their community.

Many people agree that they volunteer basically to "give back," but when you look a little more closely you find that motivations for volunteering can be complicated, highly personal, and subjective.

People have many other reasons for volunteering beyond simply "giving back". Here are some of the motivations for volunteering that were listed in the report. As you read through them, you come to understand just how subjective the motivations for volunteering can be. You realize that behind every volunteer is a story of sorts, a lifetime of experiences that has led to them giving their time to a cause, and we should all be grateful for that, no matter the volunteer's motivation.

"It gives my life purpose."

"To put my skills to work for others."

"To combat depression."

"I just retired, so now I have more time to spend doing it."

"To show my children and grandchildren the importance of giving back."

"I'm offered volunteer time off through work."

"We take our students to volunteer in the community."

"So those I'm serving feel cared for."

"It's therapeutic for me."

"Family time with my daughter."

"I am disabled but need to feel useful."

"To engage with my work colleagues."

"Curiosity."

"For spiritual/religious reasons."

"To share my knowledge ..."

How does volunteering effect my business?

There are also many benefits to volunteering. You're happier, healthier, and have a sense of greater purpose. Now multiply that by your workforce. When your business volunteers, these direct benefits are shared by your employees too.

Volunteering as a team allows staff members to get to know each other on another level and learn more about each person's strengths and characteristics. **People who work well together as a team are one of the most valuable assets any employer can have** and mixed with volunteering, employees enjoy the mutual feeling of contributing to something positive.

According to the research, companies that regularly integrate volunteering event that have social impact into their business were able to:

- Enhance sales by as much as 20%
- Increase productivity by 13%
- Reduce employee turnover by half
- Protect against litigation risk at a value equivalent to the cost of insurance worth up to 4% of the company's value
- Create a "reputation dividend" worth up to 11% of market capitalization

We hope that you will consider these facts when asked to volunteer for DITA this year. Whether leading a committee, being a tourism ambassador or board member, or or simply sharing your expertise during a lunch and learn speaker series, we hope you will consider pitching in to help strengthen the economy of our community.

A list of current volunteer opportunities is available on the next page. If your business would like to promote a local volunteer opportunity, please shoot us an email so we can add it to our events calendar. Believe it or not, some of our visitors like to volunteer while on vacation.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

We would like to officially thank all of the volunteer firefighters, EMT staff and community members that volunteered during the DITA building fire last spring. We are truly grateful for your service and dedication to our community.

Volunteer OPPORTUNITIES

Jeep the Mac

Set Up Crew Member
Tear Down Crew Member
Trail Head Captians
Raffle Ticket Sellers
Jeep Greeters
Information Table
Scavenger Hunt Chair
Parking Crew Leader
Parking Assistants
Fire Keeper Crew Leader
Fire Keeper Crew
Event Photographers

Summer Events

Nature/Birdwatching Guides
DITA Ambassador Captian
Grant Research Assistant
Poster/Visitor Guide Distribution
Landscaping Attendant

Interested?

Call 906-439-5245 or email
info@visitdrummond.com
for complete details.

New Marketing Tool

Live streaming is the new wave of digital communication, content promotion, and content consumption. Recently, DITA decided to partner with the West Michigan Tourism Association and Weather Matrix to provide a live stream video on Drummond Island. This technology has the power to attract new visitors and increase bookings at our lodging establishments. This broadcast quality live-streaming video feed will allow us to influence travel decisions by sharing real-time views of the island. Initially, we will have the camera installed at the ferry docks to view the ferry and ships in the channel. As an islander, you may appreciate being able to see if the ferry is running wild or if there is an interruption in service.

The live camera feed will be promoted and featured on the DITA website, on WMTA's website, and also randomly featured during local weather reports on television stations statewide. By choosing this particular system, DITA also has the capability of taking still pictures and time-lapse video clips from this camera to promote the island on social media channels. Additionally, DITA will be able to capture valuable insights about our viewers and share them with our members.

Live Feed Sponsorships Available

As a bonus, DITA businesses may purchase sponsorships of the camera feed which will include your business logo and a direct link to your website. If you're interested in this unique advertising opportunity, please contact Kristy at kristy@visitdrummond.com or call or stop into the DITA office.

Watch your inbox for a link to the new webcam coming soon.

DITA Website Traffic by the Numbers - August-December 2019

User Data

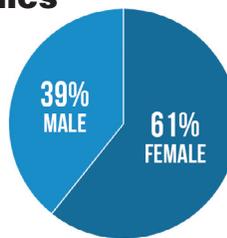
Users	23,816
New Users	24,043
Pages/Session	2.28
Page Views	75,333
Ave. Session Duration	02:27

Top 10 Pages Viewed

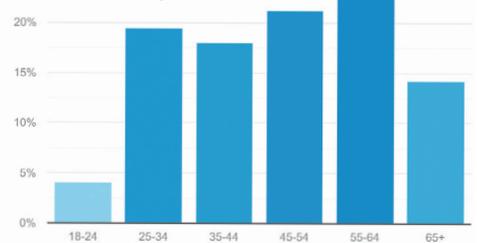
Drummond Island Ferry	13,110
Home Page	10,534
Things to Do and See	3,705
Off-Roading	3143
ATV-ORV Map	2,291
Points of Interest	2,081
Campgrounds	1,981
DI Visitors Guide	1,870
Resorts & Cottages	1,591
Dining	1,550

Demographics

Trips to Drummond are planned mostly by females!



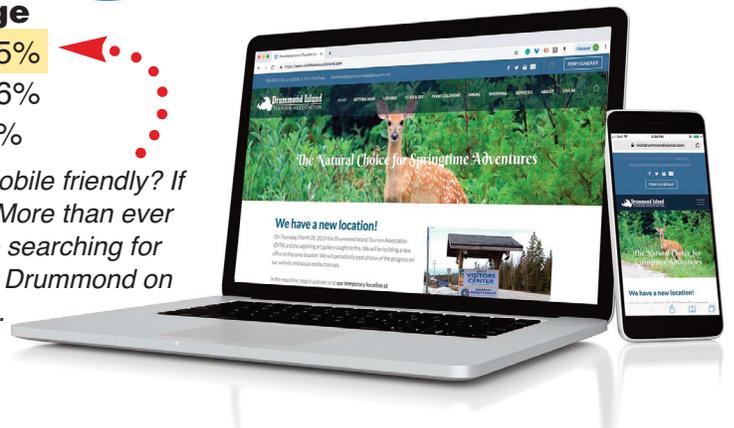
Website user ages



Device Usage

Mobile	60.15%
Desktop	31.56%
Tablet	8.29%

Is your website mobile friendly? If not, it should be. More than ever before people are searching for information about Drummond on their smart phone.



SAVE THESE DATES

FEBRUARY

- 2/12 DITA Board Meeting
5:00 p.m. at Visitor's Center
Members welcome to attend.
- 2/13 Lunch & Learn Series
Establishing a Birdwatching
Friendly Business
See Schedule Inside.
- 2/25 EUPTA Board Meeting
7:30 p.m. at DI Township Hall
Public welcome & encouraged to attend.
- 2/27 Lunch & Learn Series
Printing 101 w/Jack Miles
See Schedule Inside.

MARCH

- 3/3 EUPTA Board Meeting
EUPTA Office at 10:30 a.m.
4001 I-75 Business Spur, Sault Ste. Marie
- 3/3 Drummond Island Township
Board Meeting
7:30 p.m. at DI Township Hall
Public welcome & encouraged to attend.
- 3/5 Lunch & Learn Series
Economic and Ecologic
Impacts of Invasive Species
See Schedule Inside.
- 3/11 DITA Board Meeting
5:00 p.m. at Visitor's Center
Members welcome to attend.
- 3/12 Lunch & Learn Series
Google My Business and
Social Media Marketing
See Schedule Inside.
- 3/28 Annual Township Meeting
Begins at 1:00 p.m. at DI Township Hall
Public welcome & encouraged to attend.

APRIL

- 4/7 EUPTA Board Meeting*
EUPTA Office at 10:30 a.m.
4001 I-75 Business Spur, Sault Ste. Marie
- 4/8 DITA Board Meeting
5:00 p.m. at Visitor's Center
Members welcome to attend.

.....
*Meeting dates and times are subject to change.
Call organization ahead if you're unsure.*



This newsletter contains information worth sharing. When you're done reading it, don't throw it out.
Pass it on.

Ferry Rate Increases

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority (EUPTA) has been working for months to find a fair and equitable solution to keep our ferries afloat. Due to financial struggles over the past six years the organization has used a majority, if not all, of their reserves to cover the operational expenses that have been mounting. In early 2019 the board created a task force to review the fares and propose a plan that would create a fare structure that could be used universally across all three ferry systems and remedy the financial issues. After months and months of board member meetings that provided ample public comment periods at the beginning and end of each session, public meetings on each individual island, a group meeting where all three islands could participate, plus abundant time to provide written comments, provide documentation to the board, and have phone calls answered by the executive director, the board finally made a final decision to approve the proposed restructured fares in December 2019.



Unfortunately, over the Christmas holiday a letter was sent to the EUPTA office and the Federal Transportation Authority (FTA) claiming that the fares violate Title VI and "are discriminatory on the count of race (Native American) and disability." At a special meeting on January 23, the EUPTA board discussed this letter with their legal council.

As of this newsletter, there is no indication that this complaint will effect the rate changes going into effect in the near future. A regularly scheduled EUPTA board meeting will take place on February 25 beginning at 10:30 a.m. at the EUPTA office, 4001 I-75 Business Spur, Sault Ste. Marie.

NEW FEATURE:

If you would like to be more engaged on this topic, you can now watch the EUPTA board meetings online! **Recordings are available on their website at www.eupta.net/about.** Click on the blue link under the date of the meeting you would like to watch. This is a new initiative that started in January to help the board be more transparent and engage individuals that may not be attending the meetings due time of day or distance.

WHERE'S DITA?

Drummond Island Tourism Association is scheduled to attend the following events to promote the area to potential visitors. If you have a special rate or package deal you would like to promote to this crowd, please let us know. We are happy to share that information with these markets.

- 2-29-20 Quiet Waters Symposium** in Lansing, Michigan
Targeting outdoor recreation enthusiast (kayakers, fat tire bikers, birdwatchers, etc.)
- 5-2-20 Blessing of the Jeeps** in Messick, Michigan
Targeting jeep clubs, off-roading adventurists



A series of ideas, concepts, and discussions to help **grow your business** on Drummond Island.

LUNCH & LEARN

SPEAKER SERIES

Hosted by:
Drummond
Island Tourism
Association

All sessions are held at the
Drummond Island Visitor's Center
Located on the corner of M-134 & Townline Road, Drummond Island.

12:00 NOON
TO 1:30 P.M.

THURSDAY
FEBRUARY
13

Establishing a Birdwatching Friendly Business

Birdwatching is one of the fastest growing outdoor recreations activities the United States and many communities are enjoying substantial economic benefits from visiting birders. Attracting birders and nature tourists is one way to diversify your business's income and Drummond Island's economic base. Local MSU Extension Educator Elliot Nelson from Michigan Sea Grant will present current information about the birder demographics and economic impact, ways to communicate and attract birders, and how to overall enhance nature viewing opportunities in the Eastern Upper Peninsula and ways your business can accommodate this growing group of destination tourist. A light lunch will be provided.



Presentation by:
Elliot Nelson,
MSU Extension Educator

12:00 NOON
TO 1:30 P.M.

THURSDAY
FEBRUARY
27

Printing 101

A seasoned veteran of the printing industry, Jack Miles will discuss the basics of understand the print process when it comes to translating your brilliant ideas (and surely hours of your precious time and energy) into successfully printed projects or promotional items. This class is mainly for business owner or individuals that purchase printing, wearables, and/or promotional items for their business. A boxed lunch will be provided courtesy of Bear Graphics.



Presentation by:
Jack Miles,
Bear Graphics

12:00 NOON
TO 1:30 P.M.

THURSDAY
MARCH
5

Economic and Ecologic Impacts of Invasive Species on Drummond Island

Cassel will discuss the importance of managing top priority invasive species found in the Eastern Upper Peninsula, including Drummond Island and the Maxton Plains. Proper identification, methods and reasons for management will be discussed as well as the Three Shores Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA), which is a partnership of federal, state, tribal, and private entities strategically working together to manage these species throughout Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac Counties. A light lunch will be provided.



Presentation by:
Nick Cassel,
Three Shores CISMA
Coordinator

12:00 NOON
TO 2:00 P.M.

THURSDAY
MARCH
12

Google My Business & Social Media Marketing

This session will show you the benefits and importance of having a Google My Business listing as well as using the most relevant social media channels for your business.

- Improve how potential customers can find your business online.
- Learn how to optimize for Google Search and Google Maps.
- Gain timely tips on managing the right Social Media channels.

Note that this session will run until 2:00p.m. due to the amount of content that will be covered. A light lunch will be provided.



Presentation by:
Marcie Wolf,
Owner/Partner
of ABuzz Creative

Space is limited. Pre-registration is required.

NO CHARGE for current DITA Members • **Non-Members \$10.00**

Reserve your seat today! Call (906) 493.5245



GREAT LAKES WATER LEVELS



Information for Homeowners



Information for Businesses



March 19, 2020

6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

**Drummond Island
Welcome Center**

Corner of M-134 and Townline Road.
Drummond Island, MI 49726

MSU Extension Educator Elliot Nelson of Michigan Sea Grant will present an update on lake levels projections, how levels are calculated, what influences lake levels, and helpful resources for dealing with the changing lakes.

Open to the Public • No Charge

Donations to continue bringing this type of programming to Drummond Island is appreciated.

**Please RSVP by calling DITA
(906) 493-5245**