

# M A S S A C H U S E T T S SUGAR BUSH NEWS

*The Newsletter of the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association*

## 3rd Annual Maple Weekend March 19-20

Massachusetts Maple Producers Association will coordinate the third annual 'Maple Weekend' on March 19-20, 2016. This weekend of events promotes local, pure Massachusetts maple products.

Sugarmakers are encouraged to participate by opening their sugarhouses to the public during that weekend and offering demonstrations, tastings, tours, meals and other activities to entertain and educate customers. Participating sugarhouses will be featured on the Mass Maple website, and the Association will purchase advertising to attract consumers to the website. See the back of the membership renewal form in this mailing for details about how to participate.

Restaurants around the state will be asked to highlight items on their menus featuring Massachusetts maple syrup. Sugarmakers who have contacts at restaurants should contact Coordinator Winton Pitcoff to help solicit participation.

Previous years' events have been very successful. Dozens of sugarhouses and restaurants have participated, and there has been excellent press coverage. This is an exciting opportunity to have a coordinated range of activities designed to raise awareness about our work and encourage consumers to purchase pure maple products direct from their local sugarmakers. Members are strongly encouraged to participate by offering an open house and publicizing the weekend's events to your customers via Facebook and other social media.

Emails over the next few months will offer more details and solicit input, but please fill out the enclosed form and start planning your events today!



## MMPA Annual Meeting and Workshops

The 2016 Annual Meeting and trade show will be held on Saturday, January 16, from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Mohawk High School in Buckland.

The trade show will feature a range of dealers from the maple industry. As in past years, members can bring hydrometers for free testing. If you would like to participate in the blind tasting, and allow fellow sugarmakers to sample your syrup and offer comments, please bring a pint of syrup. The business meeting in the morning will include a recap of the year's events and an election of board members, and we'll enjoy a great barbeque lunch.

After lunch, Bruce Gillilan, vice president of Leader Evaporator will present two workshops: "Boiling Efficiently: Tips and tricks to making your evaporator run more efficiently," and "Marketing and Sales: Promoting your business and your products." Details are on the enclosed sheet. Register today when you renew your annual membership!



## Maple Month Kickoff to be held in Conway

The MMPA March is Maple Month Kickoff will be held Friday, March 4 at 10 a.m. at Stonegate Farm in Conway. Host sugarmaker Dana Goodfield will welcome MDAR Commissioner John Lebeaux and other guests as we tap the ceremonial first tree of the season. All MMPA members, along with other supporters of the maple industry, are welcome to attend.

## From the MMPA President

As another year quickly comes to an end I would like to say a few "thank yous."

Thank you Tom McCrumm, for hosting our summer picnic and sharing all of your experience and knowledge with us. We learned about operating as a "one man show," and also about important it is to constantly evaluate how to make everything operate seamlessly.

Thank you Joe Boisivert and family for hosting our fall workshop with Gary Graham. We saw a lot of new faces and had another chance to evaluate our sugarbush and sugarhouse set up. Gary shared how roadways in the sugarbush affects soil compaction and the health of our maple trees, and Joe's mom spoiled us with her delicious maple munchies.

Thank you to the four board members who have completed their full terms: Chip Williams, Andy Schmidt, Pat Delaney, and Cynthia Cranston. It has

been a great pleasure serving on the board with you and sharing our passion for Massachusetts maple together.

As we move into 2016 if anyone has suggestions of how the Association can improve or add to our marketing efforts, educational offerings, or support for our members, please let the board know.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the Verona conference and at our annual meeting in January.

Have a very Merry Christmas and Holiday Season.

*Missy Leab*



### Massachusetts Maple Producers Association Board of Directors

The Massachusetts Maple Producers Association is a non-profit organization representing more than 250 producers in our state. The Association is governed by a board of directors, and daily operations are conducted by a coordinator who serves at the discretion of the board. If you have any questions, problems or suggestions, please let one of the following people hear from you. The board relies on your input to keep them informed on issues of importance to you.

Name	Term Expires	E-mail Address	Town
Cynthia Cranston	2016*	ccranston@verizon.net	Ashfield
Pat Delaney – Secretary	2016*	pdelaney@massmaple.org	Belchertown
Dana Goodfield	2018	danachevww@aol.com	Conway
Missy Leab – President	2018*	missy@iokavalleyfarm.com	Hancock
Andy Schmidt – Vice President	2016*	windsorhill5@yahoo.com	Windsor
Gary Shaw	2017	shawssugarhouse@comcast.net	Buckland
Chip Williams	2016*	cwilliams@massmaple.org	Deerfield
Stan Zawalick	2017*	szawalick@massmaple.org	Florence
Paul Zononi	2017*	pzononi@massmaple.org	Haydenville

*Those Directors with a \* next to their term expiration date will have served two consecutive terms as directors, and cannot be re-elected without at least a one year break.*

#### **Containers**

Mass Maple Warehouse	212 Reynolds Rd., Shelburne, MA	413-625-2900
Devon Lane Farm Supply	357 Daniel Shays Hwy., Belchertown, MA	413-323-6336
Red Bucket Sugar Shack	Kinne Brook Rd., Worthington, MA	413-238-7710

#### **Main Office**

Winton Pitcoff - Coordinator/Treasurer	winton@massmaple.org	Plainfield
Mass Maple Association office	PO Box 6, Plainfield, MA 01070	413-628-3912
E-mail: info@massmaple.org	Mass Maple Website: www.massmaple.org	

## **Cotton Candy Machine For Sale**

MMPA is selling our cotton candy machine from the Big E booth. It's a Gold Medal Deluxe Whirlwind Floss Machine, Model 3008SS. Details about this model are available at <http://www.gmpopcorn.com/products/product-description.cfm?pid=2504>. It has been well-maintained, and only used two weeks each year. Cotton candy is one of the most profitable value-added products that can be made with maple sugar. These machines are \$1,200 new. Asking \$650. Contact [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org) or 413-628-3912 for more information.

## **Annual Bus to NYS Maple Conference in Verona**

MMPA is once again sponsoring a bus to provide free transportation for any member who wishes to attend the New York State Maple Conference in Verona, NY, on Saturday, January 9. This is always an excellent conference and members who have attended in the past have learned a great deal. See <http://goo.gl/TRhkFm> for full details on all of the workshops, covering everything from research to marketing to production to forestry and more.

Contact [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org) or 413-628-3912 to reserve your space on the bus – each member is entitled to up to two free seats. MMPA will register everyone going on the bus as a group for the conference, so don't register directly with the folks in NY.

## **Board Members Needed**

Four slots on the Mass Maple board will be vacant in January. If you are interested in serving, please contact [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org) for more information.

## **Big E Manager Position**

If you are interested in managing or assistant-managing the Mass Maple booth at the Big E, please send a letter of interest to [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org) by December 15.

## **Do We Have Your Email Address?**

If you haven't been getting emails from us, it's because we don't have your email address. Don't miss out on news and events between the printed newsletters. Send your email address to [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org).

## **MMPA on Facebook**

If you use Facebook, look for the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association page and 'like' it. We use it for news and event notices, and to promote the Massachusetts maple industry.



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# Promotional Resources Available from the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism

Greetings from the Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism!

The Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism (MOTT) is the state agency dedicated to promoting Massachusetts as a destination for leisure travel. MOTT provides year-round marketing support to the tourism industry within the Commonwealth.

Tourism is an integral part of the state's economy and in 2014 generated \$19.5 billion in direct spending (\$16.8 billion/Domestic and \$2.7 billion /International); \$1.2 billion in state & local taxes, supported 132,000 jobs and paid \$4.1 billion in wages. In 2014, Massachusetts hosted 21.3 million domestic visitors, 1.5 million overseas visitors and 735,000 Canadian visitors.

How can you tap into some or all of MOTT's resources? Just take a look at the list below:

## HOW TO BE LISTED ON MASSVACATION.COM

Visit <http://business.massvacation.com> and create

an account. Your account will be automatically approved. Once you have created an account, you can add a business listing. Be sure to classify yourself as an attraction and then add yourself to any sub categories that apply. Once your business listing is approved, you can add events and deals. Once listed, you'll also receive newsletters and important industry updates from MOTT. In 2014 there were 2.5 million visitors to [www.massvacation.com](http://www.massvacation.com), so be sure your business is listed! For assistance contact John Alzapiedi, web manager at: [john.alzapiedi@state.ma.us](mailto:john.alzapiedi@state.ma.us), 617-973-8589.

Site features:

### MONTHLY CULINARY CALENDARS

Culinary Calendars features foodie events at all price points. Any type of food-related event which you might be conducting are eligible! To participate, contact Phyllis M. Cahaly, CMD/MOTT, Director of Specialized Marketing: [phyllis.cahaly@state.ma.us](mailto:phyllis.cahaly@state.ma.us), 617-973-8509.

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## '50 GREAT THINGS TO DO UNDER \$50'

This is a budget-oriented program that features activities for either two adults or two adults and two kids (12 and under) for under \$50. To participate, contact Phyllis M. Cahaly, CMD/MOTT, Director of Specialized Marketing: [phyllis.cahaly@state.ma.us](mailto:phyllis.cahaly@state.ma.us), or call 617-973-8509.

## DEALS

For any special deals or services, you can post them to your database record. This is a handy tool for short-lived or last-minute events you want to share!

## WEDDING VENUES

If you host weddings, be sure to check-off this amenity when you list your business. Brides and Grooms are always looking for interesting places to say 'I DO'!

## SALES LEADS & GROUP TOUR

After each industry trade show MOTT attends, sales leads are posted to the Industry Info section of our site. (<http://www.massvacation.com/business-resources/>). To access, type in the protected password, 3RT67JM. For more info about leads or attracting group tours, contact Lesley White, International & Group Tour Manager at: [Lesley.white@state.ma.us](mailto:Lesley.white@state.ma.us), 617-973-8517.

## WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

Throughout the year, MOTT produces workshops and seminars for the tourism industry. Sessions are focused on tourism trends and provide leadership information to the industry. 'Focus' one-day workshops, such as Focus on Canada or Focus on China, cover latest travel stats and tips to market to inter-

national travelers. Check the Industry Info section (<http://www.massvacation.com/business-resources/>) for session schedules.

## TOURISM RESEARCH INFORMATION

MOTT maintains a thorough research database you can access at the Statistics and Reports page on our site: (<http://www.massvacation.com/travel-trade/stats-facts/stats-reports-2/>). You'll find detailed information on expenditures, domestically & nationally, visitor origin and activities and more including our Annual Report. For more info, contact Tony D'Agostino, Research Director at: [tony.dagostino@state.ma.us](mailto:tony.dagostino@state.ma.us); 617-973-8512.

## SEND US YOUR PRESS RELEASES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you need assistance getting the word out about great events and happenings, you can send your press releases to MOTT c/o Michael Quinlin at [Michael.quinlin@state.ma.us](mailto:Michael.quinlin@state.ma.us), 617-973-8503.



## **Massachusetts Maple Syrup Producers win International Awards**

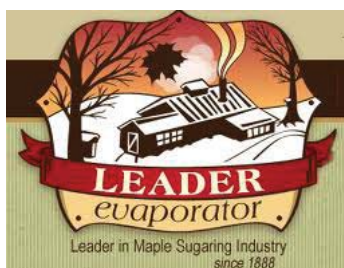
Four Massachusetts maple syrup producers took honors at the North American Maple Syrup Council's annual competition. Sugarmakers from the United States and Canada entered their maple syrup, candy and cream to have them judged based on flavor, color, clarity and density. More than 120 entries were submitted, from 12 U.S. states and Canadian provinces.

Massachusetts tied with Vermont for the most awards of any maple producing state or province. The winners from Massachusetts were:

- Grade A Golden Maple Syrup: Girard's Sugarhouse, Heath, 1st place
- Grade A Golden Maple Syrup: Paul's Sugarhouse, Haydenville, 3rd place
- Grade A Amber Maple Syrup: Boyden Brothers Maple, Conway, 2nd place
- Maple Candy: Windsor Hill Sugar House, Windsor, 2nd place
- Maple Cream: Paul's Sugarhouse, 3rd place

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# How to Make a Half-Gallon of Maple Syrup in 20 Easy Steps

Mark Staples, The Atlantic

1. In October, buy 50 buckets, lids, and taps, and a nice-looking sugaring pan, from a lady who advertised on Craigslist. Total outlay: \$400. What a deal! She also includes two 55-gallon barrels, and many 5-gallon pails. This is going to be great! You've lived in Vermont for many years—it's about time you did this. Back to the land!
2. In November, join with your children to identify and give names to 50 sugar-maple trees on your property. You and the kids come up with some great names like "Two-tap Su-gar" (like the rapper), "Geyser Söze," "Old Faithful," "New Faithful," and "Spouty" (like the Carvel whale, only different). Place adorable nametags on the 50 trees. Fifty trees should yield about 500 gallons of sap, or 10-12 gallons of syrup. This is going to be amazing!
3. Also in November, take delivery of a cord of kiln-dried hardwood. Sure, it costs a bit more (\$320 vs. \$250 for regular-dried), but it's worth it.
4. Later that month, buy 30 cinder blocks and lug them up to what will soon be your sugaring camp. Build an "arch"—a sugaring fireplace. And here's a bonus. On a visit to the town dump, pick up a few sections of metal chimney, and some scrap metal. Try to fashion the scrap into a plate on which your chimney can rest. If your tried-and-true tin snips aren't up to the job, order some new ones from Amazon. Great, they work! You've made your arch.
5. Throughout the long winter, read many books about maple sugaring. Everyone says it's a lot of hard work, but worth the trouble. Night after sub-zero night, dream of a tide of syrup, flowing endlessly into the bottles you've collected and the Mason jars you've bought. Wow, what are you going to do with it all? Give it away, of course! Just think of all the friends and family who will be so delighted with a pint of Vermont Grade-A amber! You're going to have to bear gracefully with all the compliments you'll get. And you'll have syrup all year to pour on pancakes, waffles, ice cream, yogurt ... everything! Try to name a food that doesn't go better with maple syrup. That's right, you can't.
6. In February, check your cordless drill. Wait, it doesn't work? That's surprising. Order a new battery from Amazon. Wait, the new battery doesn't work? Crap, it must be the charger. Order a new charger from Amazon. It works! Okay, now you're ready!
7. It's early March. The temperature is rising. It's time to tap. Take your drill out, follow the guidance in the books, install the taps, and hang the buckets. Wow, that went better than you thought. Just a few hours, and all the buckets are hung. Sure, the snow is pretty deep—it's up to your thighs in places. But hey, this is exciting. What's a little snow?
8. Time for a test boil. Uncover the firewood, and discover it's covered with mold. Hmmm, I thought they said it was kiln-dried? Try to start the fire, but run out of both matches and butane in the fireplace lighter. Back to the store! Okay, now it's going pretty good, everything seems to be working, although the six inches of solid ice in the fireplace is making life difficult. The water in the pan doesn't quite come to a boil, but you're sure you can fix this by getting a better draft going and making the arch burn hotter.
9. The temperature rises a bit, and you check a few buckets. You've got sap! Collect all the sap from your buckets, and carry it to your storage barrels, by dumping the buckets into 5-gallon pails. Five gallons of sap weigh 55 pounds. Carry a 55-pound pail through three feet of snow for 250 mostly-uphill feet. After a few runs, put on your snowshoes, whose straps promptly break. Sneer at the injustice of the world, and improvise a solution with twine. Collecting the sap will take every molecule of energy in your body. But you do it! At the end, you've got about 50 gallons, ready to boil. All right!
10. Three days later, it's the weekend, and here we go! But wait—all the sap you collected is frozen solid. The temperature has plunged to 10 degrees the last few nights, because this is the Winter That Never Ends. Oh well—you'll just have to wait till it's thawed.
11. The weather warms again—and you collect more sap. Your first storage barrel is still frozen, but you fill the second barrel with 55 gallons of fresh sap. This is amazing! Tomorrow, you'll finally be making maple syrup. Golden, delicious, genuine Vermont maple syrup. Cue the cameras!
12. The next day, head out to the sugar camp, and take the lid off that second barrel. It is empty. Pick your jaw up off your chest, turn the barrel over, and see a tiny hole in the snow. Ponder it for a while, and conclude that there is a miniscule leak along the seam of this plastic barrel. You've somehow lost 55 gallons of sap into the snow. And that first 55 gal-

lons? It's still frozen. You head back to the house, where you open a beer, even though it is 8 a.m.

13. Wait two weeks, until early April. The temperature warms again. The sap is running. Collect another 55 gallons in your second storage barrel—only this time you drape a plastic garbage bag inside the barrel to prevent leaks. The snow is only two feet deep now, so collecting sap is practically a leisure activity! It's like shuffleboard, or tiddlywinks! Life is a dream!

14. It's again time to boil, but you can't wait for the weekend—that's when you're traveling on business. So you must boil during the week, while you're finalizing the materials for the meeting. You will receive and respond to an email approximately every 90 seconds, and will fit in the sugaring by running out to your sugar camp in a panic every 45 minutes or so to throw more moldy wood on the fire, see how things are progressing, and say a prayer.

15. The sap isn't quite boiling, but it is steaming, and seems to be shrinking in volume. Keep adding more sap to the pan, and wood to the fire, while the cellphone in your pocket rings, and rings, and ... You have built your arch so that the prevailing winds from the west will blow the smoke away. Today the prevailing winds are from the east. Never mind.

16. It's now 7 p.m. on the busiest day of your year. You have been boiling for 13 hours and have near-syrup in your pan. Ask your teenage son to help you transfer it to the nice finishing pan you bought from Amazon. Your teenage son will drop his side of the sugaring pan, spilling about a third of the near-syrup you have spent all day making into the fire. Never mind.

17. Bring your finishing pan into the house, put it on the stove, and continue boiling. Wait, what's that? It looks like your finishing pan has a leak. How could that be? You bought it from Amazon! And yet it's dripping sugary fluid onto the ceramic stovetop. Wait, wasn't that the one thing that the manufacturer said you shouldn't do? It seems like the sugary syrup is etching holes into the surface of the stovetop. And the steam seems to be liquefying the grease on the overhead fan, which is now dripping into the pan. Turn off the stove, clean up the stovetop, put the pan in the basement where it can't hurt anything, and collapse weeping into bed.

18. Okay, it's the next day, and now you've got a leaky pan with about 5 gallons of near-syrup. What to do? Drag out that hotplate from the basement, set it up outside, put the pan on it, and start cooking. Meantime, keep up with that J-O-B—you know, the one that pays the bills. This is the second-busiest

*See 20 Easy Steps on page 9*



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day of the year, and you will receive another 150 emails that require instant responses. Check in on the pan cooking on the hotplate. If only it weren't 15 degrees outside, it would probably be boiling. Keep it slowly steaming all day long.

19. Take the pan inside and transfer the contents to a couple of saucepans to finish it off. Dig out the two candy thermometers you bought during the winter from Amazon, and put them in the liquid. These are great tools that will tell you when the liquid has reached 219 degrees and thus become syrup. One will say that the boiling liquid is 200 degrees, and the other will say that it is 230 degrees. Test them both in a pan of boiling water. Neither is within 15 degrees of the known boiling point of water. Throw both thermometers in the garbage.

20. You've been boiling inside for hours now, and you think it looks like syrup. It's 10 p.m. Give up. Turn off the stove, and pour the contents into two Mason jars. You have two quarts of runny, dark, smoke-laced syrup. Eat some with a spoon. Nothing has ever tasted so sweet. Congratulations—you're a sugar-maker!

## Commonwealth Quality

Commonwealth Quality, a brand designed by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, serves to identify locally sourced products that are grown, harvested and processed right here in Massachusetts using practices that are safe, sustainable and don't harm the environment. Massachusetts sugarmakers developed a set of guidelines, based upon MMPA's Quality Control manual and the Handbook of Best Management Practices for Massachusetts Maple Syrup Farms, to be used for Massachusetts sugarmakers who wish to participate in the Program.

Participation in the program is voluntary and largely self-regulated, with participants self-auditing their operations using a checklist. Participation will allow sugarmakers to display the Commonwealth Quality seal on their products. To date, four sugarmakers have signed up to participate in the program.

Guidelines for participation and more information about the program are available at <http://www.thecqp.com/images/maple/maple.html>, or contact Winton Pitcoff at [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org).



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## Mass Maple Warehouse

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**SUPPLIES:** The warehouse is well stocked with all sizes of maple syrup jugs, maple cream jars. Other syrup containers stocked include three sizes of glass maple leaf bottles and five-gallon plastic containers for bulk packing. The warehouse also has cardboard cartons for all size of jugs, gift boxes and maple candy boxes. Many other materials are available: Posters, recipe booklets, labels, hang tags, producer manuals, instructional and educational videos, etc.

**HOURS:** The warehouse is open seven days a week, on a "call ahead" basis only. During the maple season if no one can answer the phone, a message on the answering machine will indicate the hours for that day when someone will be home. Otherwise, please leave a message and someone will return your call. Please be sure to call ahead for everyone's convenience - don't be disappointed by arriving unannounced and finding no one there to assist you. Terms are cash or check only upon pick-up - no charges.

**UPS:** We can ship only full cases of jugs. You will be billed for the cost of the jugs plus UPS charges. Call in your order to the warehouse (413-625-2900) and we will send it out with a bill. Partial cases of jugs and glass of any quantity cannot be shipped safely.

## Welcome New Members

The following people joined MMPA in the last six months. If they're neighbors of yours, stop by and welcome them!

Curtis Best, Hopkinton  
Rob Fasulo, Wilmington  
Frank Ferrucci, Georgetown  
Kevin Foley, Brimfield  
Jonathan Williams, Rutland



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## In Memorium: Former MMPA President, Ed Parker



Edward H. Parker, 77, passed away peacefully Saturday, Oct. 24, 2015, at home with family and friends by his side.

He was born Aug. 17, 1938, in Ware, son of Lindolph and Sarah (Fillebrown) Parker. Ed was the last

baby to be born in the town of Greenwich, one of the lost towns of the Quabbin Reservoir. He was raised in Granby and as a young boy was very active in 4-H. Ed married and raised his family in Belcher-town for 20 years before returning to Granby. He proudly served his country in the U.S. Marines, stationed in Okinawa, Japan.

Ed was a builder for several years and then went on

to be a farmer. He and his wife Mona owned and operated Parker's Bed & Breakfast and Sugar House in Granby and he served as president for the Five College Bed & Breakfast Association. Ed was a member of the Church of Christ where he sang in their choir and he served on the board of selectman in Granby for 12 years. He was also the president of the Massachusetts Maple Syrup Association for four years, belonged to several antique tractor clubs including Western Massachusetts Tractor Pulling Association, and could be seen selling his maple syrup products at the South Hadley Farmers Market.

Ed is survived by his loving wife of 55 years, Ramona (Horta) Parker, along with his children Todd Parker and wife Erica of Granby, Suzanne Parker and husband Josef Wille of Amherst, and Edward Parker and wife Candace of Granby.



## Our Heriage Is Maple Sugaring...



Call and ask for our maple equipment catalog and current used equipment list. Bulk maple syrup bought and sold. Syrup and equipment may be accepted in trade toward equipment.

*Photo: Ken Bascom with Jack and Jerry collecting sap, 1953.*



**Bascom Maple Farms**  
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