



VISIT EAU CLAIRE  
THE UNEXPECTED WISCONSIN

## IN THE LOOP

November-December 2009

### HOLIDAY GREETINGS FROM VISIT EAU CLAIRE'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*Linda John, Executive Director*

As 2009 winds down, we reflect on a year marked by both economic challenges and opportunities. Visit Eau Claire has met these challenges with positive energy, ensuring continued growth of the area's tourism industry. We strive to give our members operational efficiencies which maximize the investment you, our members, have placed in Visit Eau Claire.

Visit Eau Claire made several positive changes during 2009, which included:

- Relocation to new offices, significantly reducing fixed occupancy expenses
- Launch of new award-winning website, drawing increased interest in the region from visitors, clients and travel writers
- Name change to Visit Eau Claire to maximize internet search capabilities while maintaining a regional representation of the Chippewa Valley

As 2010 begins, we have plans for many exciting new initiatives. Members can look forward to the following:

- The launch of a mobile visitor center at various events throughout the year
- Development of micro-websites promoting individual Chippewa Valley communities
- A new innovative and exciting model for the printed visitors guide
- Local campaign to encourage use of the Visit Eau Claire website - both by visitors and local residents

Beginning in spring 2010, in an effort to share the Visit Eau Claire mission, we will be taking our "show on the road" to share our story with area civic groups. Please let us know if there is a service club or organization that you know of who would like to schedule a presentation.

Even during a time of economic transition, Visit Eau Claire looks forward to a positive 2010. With each new challenge will be a new opportunity to bring a growing number of visitors to our region.

From all of us at Visit Eau Claire, best wishes to all of you for a Happy Holiday season, and a prosperous 2010!

Linda John

## November Member Spotlight

*Shop Online*

- Boxed Truffles
- Chocolate Boxes
- Featured Items
- Gourmet Sauces
- Bark & Cookies
- View All

 <p>Dozen Roses</p> <p>\$25.00 <a href="#">Details</a></p>	 <p>Wedding Cake Truffle</p> <p>\$4.99 <a href="#">Details</a></p>	 <p>Chocolate Rose Box</p> <p>\$11.50 <a href="#">Details</a></p>	 <p>Pyramid Truffle in Custom Box</p> <p>\$2.65 <a href="#">Details</a></p>
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*About Obsession*


- Philosophy
- Our Truffles
- Our Selection
- Organic Ingredients
- Weddings & Events
- About Our Chef

### Welcome to Obsession Chocolates

Obsession Chocolates is a handcrafted chocolate shop located in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Our chocolate truffles, candies, and sauces are available in our quaint European-style café on Water Street in Eau Claire, at the stores of hand selected retailers across the Midwest, and in our online store.

True to its name, Obsession Chocolates is obsessed with quality ingredients. We know you will find that quality definitely counts when it comes to fine chocolate, especially our delectable chocolate truffles. This obsession is sure to become your passion; chocolate at its best.

Please visit our Obsessions Chocolate blog for more information about our company and products.

 Welcome Facebook Fans!



**More Than Chocolate**  
Rolls, cookies, cakes, and more

For those who love chocolate, Eau Claire-based Obsession Chocolates may be the store for you. Obsession Chocolates is a handcrafted chocolate shop and European-style cafe currently located on Water Street in Eau Claire. True to its name, Obsession Chocolates is obsessed with quality ingredients. Rebecca Flynn, owner and chocolatier, is a creative artist with a passion for making chocolate. Rebecca and her staff spend countless hours blending ingredients with various textures and aromas to create new truffle flavors that become edible works of art.

You can buy pre-selected boxes of truffles in a variety of sizes from 9 to 48, as well as candies and sauces in the online store at [www.obsessionchocolates.com](http://www.obsessionchocolates.com)!

During January 2010, Obsession Chocolates factory and cafe will be moving to Barstow Street in downtown Eau Claire. At the new store, visitors will be able to observe truffles being made and will also be able to enjoy coffee, chocolates, breakfast and lunch - all while experiencing a unique cafe setting.

## December Member Spotlight



SendOutCards

[www.sendoutcards.com/37849](http://www.sendoutcards.com/37849)

715.215.0210

In today's busy society, it is amazing to see the impact of a personalized greeting card for various events. SendOutCards focuses on these special occasions. With a click of your computer mouse, you can select a card, customize a message with your personal handwritten signature and send a printed greeting card. SendOutCards prints it, stuffs it, stamps it and sends it in the mail for under a dollar. It's fast, convenient, cost-effective and fun!

SendOutCards makes it simple to never forget another birthday or special occasion. The SendOutCards system comes complete with a contact manager, a calendar that shows events, and a reminder service that will never let you forget. You may type in your contacts or import them from Microsoft Outlook, Goldmine, Act, etc. The system is ideal for personal use or to keep in touch with business contacts.

As an added customization, when sending a card, you can choose to insert a gift card to one of many different businesses, or you may send a gift of chocolates, cookies, cocoa, or other items.

Click [HERE](#) to set up a free Christmas card gift account!

### **Visit Eau Claire Works to Attract Sports Events**

The staff at Visit Eau Claire is working to attract more sports events to the greater Chippewa Valley in 2010 and beyond. During the 2009 Travel, Events, and Management in Sports (TEAMS) Conference, Visit Eau Claire met with several potential future clients through their events rights holders. Events rights holders, as they are known in the sports tourism industry, are decision makers with a sports event organization that choose locations for tournaments and events.

At the TEAMS Conference, Visit Eau Claire was able to conduct one-on-one interviews with events rights holders to learn more about their events and discover how they can be attracted to the Eau Claire area. Staff promoted the many amenities that the Chippewa Valley offers, including services and products of Visit Eau Claire members. While attending the conference, interviews were held with: the American Junior Golf Association, American Strongman Association, National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, US Bowling Congress, Amateur Softball Association of America, Mid-America Youth Basketball Association, USA Judo, and Professional Footbag Tour.

Visit Eau Claire will be following up with these clients to cultivate the relationships that were started at the TEAMS Conference. As always, the goal is to bring as many new events as possible to the Eau Claire area.

### ***November/December - Successful Months for Group Sales/Conventions***

#### **Convention Alert for November and December**

WI Department of Health & Family Services	11/3/09-11/4/09
WI Honey Producers Association	11/5/09-11/8/09
Eau Claire Area Youth Basketball Association	11/6/09-11/8/09
NW Synod Of WI Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)	11/6/09-11/8/09
Great Northwest Basketball League - Championship Tournament	12/5/09-12/6/09
Chippewa Youth Hockey Association - Squirt A Tournament	12/11/09-12/13/09
Great Northwest Basketball League - Championship Tournament	12/19/09-12/20/09
WI State Junior Curling - WI State Junior Championships	12/26/09-12/29/09
Amateur Athletic Union - Girls High School Holiday Classic	12/27/09-12/29/09

### **Visit Eau Claire Promotes Local Amenities at Rejuvenate Marketplace**

The staff of Visit Eau Claire worked to generate new meetings and convention contacts with faith-based meeting planners by attending 2009 Rejuvenate Marketplace in Birmingham, Alabama. Thirty pre-set one-to-one meetings allowed Visit Eau Claire to discover the unique needs of each meeting planner and inform them how the Chippewa Valley area could meet their individual requirements.

### *Visit Eau Claire Continues to Enhance Web Presence*

#### **VisitEauClaire.com Wins International Award for Outstanding Website**

Visit Eau Claire's website, [www.visiteauclaire.com](http://www.visiteauclaire.com) has won a 2009 WebAward for Outstanding Achievement in Web Development by the Web Marketing Association in the Travel category. Risdall Marketing Group, Visit Eau Claire's design agency, submitted the website to the competition, which included entries from around the world. The website was a collaboration between Visit Eau Claire, Risdall Marketing Group and Eau Claire, WI based website development company, SitePro.com. Risdall Marketing Group did the design work for the website and SitePro.com provides the content management system and programming.

More than 300 travel websites competed in this category, with [www.visiteauclaire.com](http://www.visiteauclaire.com) receiving the award for *Outstanding Achievement in Web Development*. Visit Eau Claire was the winner, while competing against websites from around the world such as Travel Hong Kong, Visit London and Triperati, Inc.

According to [www.webaward.org](http://www.webaward.org), since 1997 the Web Marketing Association's annual WebAward Competition has been setting the standard of excellence for website development. The WebAward Competition is the premier award recognition program for web developers and marketers worldwide. Congratulations to all involved with making the VisitEauClaire.com website an extraordinary accomplishment!

### **Travel Advisor Program a Success**

A very special 'Thank You' to all of our members who have helped to make our Travel Advisor Program a success! Please check out the travel advisor blog updates monthly by going to [www.visiteauclaire.com](http://www.visiteauclaire.com) and clicking on "Meet Our Travel Advisors". Here you will find information about all of the area's great happenings, written by local experts. These blogs are updated monthly with timely information about the Eau Claire area.

We will be continuing our Travel Advisor program in 2010 and are looking for your help! We would like to offer our travel advisors complimentary weekend getaways, overnight stays, dining certificates, attraction passes, etc. If your business would like to donate, please contact Kristen at [kristen@visiteauclaire.com](mailto:kristen@visiteauclaire.com) or 715.832.0012. Visit Eau Claire encourages both local residents and potential visitors to utilize this web service.

### **Volume One Partnership Opportunity**

This year **Visit Eau Claire** is partnering with Chippewa Valley magazine **Volume One** to bring visitors and residents the most current and up-to-date information on local events and destinations. **Volume One** hits more than 300 distribution locations every other week. Beginning in January, there will be a special "Visit Eau Claire" section in each issue featuring local articles, ads, and listings featuring you, our members!

*This plan is a new direction for Visit Eau Claire. Along with an increased focus on our website, we're opting for this recurring style of visitor guide over the single annual guide of years past; this will maximize impact and better match how visitors (and locals) seek information.*

Volume One will contact you soon with more information about this program and how you, a Visit Eau Claire member, can benefit from discounted ad space. Volume One can also help you with an online presence on [www.visiteauclaire.com](http://www.visiteauclaire.com). Volume One's Sales Representative information is below if you wish to contact them. If you do not yet have a representative, please contact Nick Meyer at 715.552.0457 or [advertising@volumeone.org](mailto:advertising@volumeone.org).

Shawn Brunner  
Kate Kurshingsky  
Chad Rykal  
Phone for all three:

[shawn@volumeone.org](mailto:shawn@volumeone.org)  
[kate@volumeone.org](mailto:kate@volumeone.org)  
[chad@volumeone.org](mailto:chad@volumeone.org)  
715.552.0457

If you have any questions about this partnership, please contact Kristen Hartzel at Visit Eau Claire at [kristen@visiteauclaire.com](mailto:kristen@visiteauclaire.com) or call 715.832.0012.

**Thanks to our Member-2-Member Sponsor!**



**THIS NEW YEARS EVE**  
*Party all night long!*

Featuring headliner  
**The Lamont Cranston**  
MIDWESTERN  
9:00 PM – 2:00 AM [Party Room]

Music  
9:00 PM – 5:00 AM  
[Green Mill Restaurant & Lounge]

**New Year's Eve Gala**  
\$75 per Person + taxes  
\*includes:  
• Deluxe Hors d'oeuvre Buffet  
• Open Bar featuring Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic Beverages  
• Midnight Champagne Toast  
• Party Favors  
• Safe-Ride Home (within a 5 miles radius)  
\*Party Reservations: 715-839-8687

**Hotel & Party Package**  
\$250 for TWO + taxes  
\*includes:  
New Years Eve Gala plus  
Lodging at:  
Holiday Inn Campus Area  
OR  
Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites,  
Chippewa Falls  
(Complimentary shuttle service to/from  
Holiday Inn Express)  
\*Package Reservations:  
Holiday Inn Campus: 715-835-2211  
[www.holiday-inn.com/eau-campus](http://www.holiday-inn.com/eau-campus)  
Holiday Inn Express & Suites: 715.723.4654  
[www.hiexpress.com/eauclairewi](http://www.hiexpress.com/eauclairewi)

Reservations Recommended - Walk-in's Welcome

## **New Members to Visit Eau Claire (August-November 2009)**

### **Taverna Grill**

Joanne Palzkill  
2839 Mall Drive, Suite 7  
Eau Claire, WI 54702  
715.835.2845  
[www.tavernagrill.com](http://www.tavernagrill.com)

### **Jake's Supper Club**

Peter Gruetzmacher  
E 5690 County Road D  
Menomonie, WI 54751  
715.235.2465  
[www.jakesupperclub.com](http://www.jakesupperclub.com)

### **SendOutCards**

Linda Campana  
715.215.0210  
[www.sendoutcards.com/37849](http://www.sendoutcards.com/37849)

### **Comcall IT Management**

Rob Brynelson  
PO Box 1293  
Eau Claire, WI 54702-1293  
[www.comcall.net](http://www.comcall.net)

### **BC Entertainment**

Brian Christianson  
715.864.9826  
[www.bcent.org](http://www.bcent.org)

### **Cabin Chic/Petit Jardin**

Debbie Johnson  
13803 Seventh Street  
Osseo, WI 54758  
715.597.2525  
[www.cabin-chic.com](http://www.cabin-chic.com)

### **Feather Communications**

Heather Rothbauer-Wanish  
9411 40th Street  
Colfax, WI 54730  
715.559.6378  
[www.feathercommunications.com](http://www.feathercommunications.com)

### **Lost Creek Ranch & Carriage Company**

Shane & Patti Jorgenson  
2274 16th Avenue  
Cameron, WI 54822  
715.458.2675  
[www.lostcreekranchwisconsin.com](http://www.lostcreekranchwisconsin.com)

### **ClearWater Chiropractic LLC**

Dr. David Flood  
2907 Mall Drive  
Eau Claire, WI 54701  
715.831.2111  
[www.clearwaterchiropractic.net](http://www.clearwaterchiropractic.net)

**Down to Earth Garden Center**  
John & Sandy Polzin  
22223 County Highway O  
Cadott, WI 54727  
715.289.4567  
[www.dwntoearth.com](http://www.dwntoearth.com)

**Artists:**

**Art Work Plus**  
Ruth Lundblad  
By appointment only  
715.210.0782