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Re-Birth...

By Gary McWilliams, *the Festival Nomad*

Ever since I was a kid, I have considered "Spring" as "Re-Birth"! Flowers blooming, trees sporting new leaves and new born birds singing merrily in the fresh spring air all add to this "Re-Birth. For me it is a time to shed my winter cloths and winter blues. As a child I could once again run and play in the woods nearby our home. Time hasn't really changed my feelings of Spring's "Re-Birth". This year it is especially true for Judi and me and our Ontario Visited websites. In March we are introducing a new website; "[FESTIVAL NOMAD.CA](#)" and re-introducing an older festival website, "[FESTIVAL and EVENT PLANNING.COM](#)". Both websites are aimed at national and an international audiences. First, let me tell you about *Festival and Event Planning (FEP)*. This website was originally created to sell the "*Festival and Event Development*" programs that I had published several years ago. That was the website's only function and became quite popular in the United States. As a matter of fact over 75% of our web visitors are from the U.S.A. To build on that international market, we have now added an "[World Headline Festival & Event News](#)" page and an "[International Festival and Event Calendar](#)". In the future we will be offering limited *Banner Advertising* opportunities. Since updating *Festival and Event Planning* website 2 months ago, we have seen an increase of about 40% web visitors.

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Festival Nomad's Report...

Most of our activities, in *February*, centered on building and working on our websites, attending the 2013 annual OAAS (Fair) Convention and sending out Tweets! Yes, as I mention in our last newsletter, we have really embraced "*Social Media*". I even have a "*chart*" to help me to "*remember*" to Tweet and what I Tweeted about! I'll get into that a little later.

March is the start of the "*Maple Sugar*" season and all of the *Maple Syrup Festivals* that are dedicated to the "*sweet taste of spring*". It's also the time for "Spring Break". Instead of traveling south, Ontario students and their families can not only enjoy the many Maple Syrup Festival taking place, but a myriad of other fun activities... the Toronto Zoo, Harbourfront Centre, Blue Mountain Village, Museums across the province and much more! Here a list of some of the festivals and events taking place in March.

Please see *Festival Nomad's Report...* on page 2

Festival Nomad's Report page 1

February 28 - March 2, 2013 - [Port Credit Comedy Festival](#) (Mississauga)
 March 1 - 10, 2013 - [Taste of Burlington Winter](#)
 March 2 - April 7, 2013 - [Sugarbush Maple Syrup Festival](#) (Bruce's Mill & Kortright Centre)
 March 2 - 3, 2013 - [Fanshawe SugarBush 2013](#) (London)
 March 2 - 3, 2013 - [Maple Syrup Festival at Bronte Creek](#)
 March 4 - 5, 2013 - [Ontario Forage Council - Profitable Pastures](#) (4th Napanee & 5th Drumbo)
 March 6 - 9, 2013 - [Uptown Waterloo Comedy Festival](#)
 March 9 - 10, 2013 - [Norfolk Wildlife Festival & Adventure Show](#) (Simcoe)
 March 9 - 10, 2013 - [Fanshawe SugarBush 2013](#) (London)
 March 9 - 10, 2013 - [Warkworth Maple Syrup Festival](#)
 March 9 - 17, 2013 - [March Break at the Toronto Zoo](#)
 March 9 - 17, 2013 - [Maple Syrup Festival at Bronte Creek](#)
 March 9 - 17, 2013 - [BugFeast](#) (Cambridge)
 March 9 - 17, 2013 - [March Break Maple Festival](#) (McDonalds Corners)
 March 9 - 17, 2013 - [March Break at Blue](#) (Blue Mountain Village)
 March 9 - 17, 2013 - [March Break at the Simcoe County Museum](#) (Minesing)
 March 10 - 16, 2013 - [HO Train Display](#) (Pembroke)
 March 11 - 17, 2013 - [ISU World Figure Skating Championships](#) (London)
 March 11 - 15, 2013 - [March Break at Harbourfront Centre](#) (Toronto)
 March 11 - 15, 2013 (March Break) - [Fanshawe SugarBush 2013](#) (London)
 March 15 - 17, 2013 - [Peterborough Home & Outdoor Design Show](#)
 March 15 - 24, 2013 - [Canada Blooms & National Home Show](#)
 March 16 - 17, 2013 - [Buckhorn Maplefest](#) (McLean Berry Farm)
 March 16 - 17, 2013 - [Fanshawe SugarBush 2013](#) (London)
 March 20 - 24, 2013 - [Canadian International Comedy Fest](#) (Toronto)
 March 20 - 24, 2013 - [Canadian Music Fest](#) (Toronto)
 March 22 - 23, 2013 - [Muskoka Arts & Crafts Spring Show](#) (Bracebridge)
 March 22 - 24, 2013 - [Woodstock Home Show](#)
 March 23, 2013 - [Maple Syrup Festival du sirop d'erable](#) (Owen Sound)
 March 23 - 24, 2013 - [Buckhorn Maplefest](#) (McLean Berry Farm)
 March 23 - 24 - [Maple in the County](#) (Prince Edward County)
 March 23 - 24, 2013 - [Fanshawe SugarBush 2013](#) (London)
 March 23 - 24, 2013 - [Maple Syrup Festival at Bronte Creek](#)
 March 28 - 31, 2013 - [Can-Am All Breed Equine Emporium](#) (Orangeville)
 March 29 - 31, 2013 - [Buckhorn Maplefest](#) (McLean Berry Farm)
 March 29 - 31, 2013 - [Maple Syrup Festival at Bronte Creek](#)
 March 30, 2013 - [Easter Parade](#) (Pickering)
 March 30, 2013 - [Sp'egg'tacular Easter](#) (Burlington)
 April 6, 2013 - [Elmira Maple Syrup Festival](#)
 April 6 - 7, 2013 - [Swan Parade Weekend](#) (Stratford)
 April 6 - 7, 2013 - [Lindsay Model Railway Show](#)

Remember: There are a lot more events to choose from... visit [Ontario Event Calendar](#) and [Ontario Event Finder](#) (search engine) to discover other Ontario events!



"Elmira Maple Syrup Festival"



"Canada Blooms"



"Buckhorn Maplefest"



"Sugarbush Maple Syrup Festival"



"Festival Nomad"



"Follow Me to Maple in the County"



"Judi at OAAS Convention"



"Ontario Visited Draw Prize at OAAS"

Re-Birth... page 1

Our new website, "*Festival Nomad*" will be introduced on March 1, 2013. As I write this newsletter, the website has been live in "*beta*" for 2 months. *Google* and other search engines have already picked-up on it! The website is far different from our *Ontario Visited* websites in that it is intended to promote festivals and events internationally. It contains several sections devoted to help both festival and event visitors and organizers, so that they can make the most of the events they organize and visit. The idea for the *Festival Nomad* website came from a Blog that I have been writing for several years, "*The Adventures of the Festival Nomad*". Since then we have had "*Festival Nomad Correspondents*" reporting on *Ontario festivals and events* throughout the province. Also, over the years Judi, in fun, has referred to me as the "*Festival Nomad*". Frankly we've had a lot of fun with the name. At the beginning of the year, I asked Judi if she would create a caricature of the "*Festival Nomad*" for me. She did, and it is now part of our new logo! To celebrate the new logo we have created several "*Festival Nomad*" products and will be offering them for sale on the new website's on-line store. The store will also offer "*Ontario Visited*" products. We hope that you will take the time to visit the "*Festival Nomad*" website at www.festivalnomad.ca. And, please let us know what you think. It's been a "*labour*" of love, as the "*birth*" of anything new usually is! *Happy Spring!*

Twitter/Facebook

As I mentioned in the last issue of *The Insider*, I have started to "*Tweet*" on *TWITTER*. At first I wondered if I could find enough subjects to "*Tweet*" about, but, as it turns out there's more than enough. Although there are many things to talk about, my main focus will be to send out information about the wonderful festivals and events taking place in Ontario. As we get closer to the main festival season, I can see my "*tweeting fingers*" getting well worn from use! It's my intention to promote and to visit as many festivals and events as possible. Judi and I are already getting requests from our *Festival Correspondents* for future events to visit. Judi and I, too, have started our search for upcoming events. So, if you are interested in learning about interesting events to visit this spring and summer, stay tuned and "*follow us*" on *TWITTER!* By the way, for those of you who don't "*Tweet*", all of our "*Tweets*" are also posted on *Facebook*, so you can "*like us*" on *FACEBOOK*. We look forward to hearing from you throughout the year!

OAAS Convention...

On February 14th, Judi and I attended the annual *Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies* (OAAS) at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto. We were honoured to have a booth there and to have the opportunity to meet so many wonderful and dedicated Fair Volunteers. Like festivals, fairs are the life blood of Ontario communities.

Please see *OAAS Convention..* on page 4

OAAS Convention... page 3

It's hard to imagine how many Fairs have been in existence for over 150 years! Although farming is not the dominant force it was in days gone by, it still plays an important part of Canada's and Ontario's heritage. During our time at the OAAS Convention we learned about the challenges that most fairs are experiencing to remain relevant. Of course, that's why the convention is so well attended. The people who run and organize these fairs are eager to learn what other fairs are doing and what's new in the "business". We hope that we were able to share our experiences and knowledge those who visited our booth. We hope to work with many of them in the future.

War of 1812 Celebrations ~ Making Summer Plans

"Paving the way to our Future" ... by *Judi McWilliams*

If history is your passion, then 2013 is your year! Ontario is making the *Commemoration and Celebrations of the War of 1812* a year to remember.

If you "Google" or use the internet to search "Maps" in 2013 you will find "almost" everything you need. From exact travelling distances, to delays along the way (constructions, accidents); where to "gas up", where to "fuel up" (a nutritional meal along the way); where to stop to purchase the last minute needs you and your family might require (some sunscreen, a blanket, or an umbrella). The efforts to commemorate and celebrate the courageous people who came before us are being continued in 2013. It is important to reflect on the historical importance of the *War of 1812* and its impact on our society today.

To quote *Laurie Siblock, Assistant Manager at Lang Pioneer Village & Museum*, from an interview some time ago... "Our ancestors paved the way for us and she appreciates what we have. Laurie mentioned the fact that it would have taken three days to journey from Cobourg to Peterborough, our ancestors literally helped pave the roadways. The richness in the past can inform you and help you understand the present".

With the Bicentennial activities going strong in 2013, it might seem overwhelming to "navigate" your way through all the exciting activities.

Don't forget to check our *War of 1812 Celebrations* website at [LINK](#) to find out about upcoming events, *Headline News*, great Link's to other *Ontario Regional War of 1812 Bicentennial websites*, *Ontario Event Calendar*, *Celebrations Articles*, *Celebrations Newsletter* and much more.



"Showcase Act at OAAS Convention"



"1813 Battle at Crysler's Farm"
Upper Canada Village ~ Morrisburg



"Battle of Fort George"
Niagara-On-The-Lake



"Wasaga Under Siege"
Wasaga Beach



"Elmvale Maple Syrup Festival"
Our 1st Festival Visited



"Spring Toad Festival ~ Toronto Zoo"
Our 2nd Festival Visited



"La Tomatina Festival"
(Tomato Throwing Festival)
Bunol, Spain

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The Birth of the Festival Nomad...

by Gary McWilliams

(The following an excerpt from our new FestivalNomad.ca website)

"No, don't worry. I am NOT going back to when I was in my Mummy's tummy, although that might make an interesting story! Nor am I going to recount my youth, another great story! Instead, I'll just go back to the beginning of the Festival Nomad journey. I had just decided to start up a new event consulting service and I was trying to think how I could get the ball rolling. Yes, I had been around festivals and events for over 20 years. Heck, I had even started a few successful festivals myself and had certainly chaired plenty of event committees, but was that enough? Did I really know festivals as a "festival attendee"? I thought I did, but how could I prove it? When I was a "civilian" the type of festivals Judi and I attended were art related. After all, we were in the art business, what can I say! In hind sight, I can honestly say we didn't know as much about festivals as we thought we did. There are a lot of different types of festivals and events out there. I started to explore the Internet. I Goggled festivals and events and found millions of hits world wide. I couldn't believe my eyes! Just in North America it would take several life times to visit all the festivals and events shown. What to do, what to do? I decided to narrow down my focus to just Ontario festivals and events. I re-Goggled and there were still thousands of sites listed."

(To read the entire article please visit www.festivalnomad.ca)

World Report...

by Gary McWilliams

I am amazed at how many festivals and events that take place across the world! I suppose that I shouldn't be that surprised considering how many events that take place in just Ontario alone. In updating our *Festival and Event Planning website* and adding both a "[World Headline Festival & Event News](#)" page and an "[International Festival & Event Calendar](#)" section, I had the opportunity of searching the internet looking for interesting festivals and events to include. This was especially true for the Event Calendar! During my search, I discovered Ice Carving in China, Battle of Oranges in Italy, Tomato Throwing & Bull Running in Spain, Religious Festivals in India, Sporting Events in Australia, Music Festivals in Russia, Mardi Gras in Brazil and of course, a host of all kinds of different events in Canada and the U.S. The saying "*It's a big world out there*" just doesn't seem strong enough! If you are interested in learning more about festivals and events around the World or are planning a trip abroad, log onto our "[International](#)" pages. If you have had any interesting experiences you'd like to share, please e-mail us at nomad@festivalnomad.ca. We'll be glad to share your story!