

Take a hike and more with Appalachian Trail Adventures

An outdoor enthusiast, John Keough has been leading friends and family on Vermont hiking trips for years and enjoys it so much that in 2007 he decided to make it a business and founded Appalachian Trail Adventures (ATA) in Killington.

ATA is not all about hiking—it also offers kayaking in nearby waterways, exploring local caves, sightseeing tours through Vermont scenic villages and at the end of the day guests can unwind with a relaxing massage. The three season (Memorial Day weekend through Columbus Day) business provides day trips as well as all-inclusive vacations and is open to hikers and kayakers of all abilities and people of all ages including children.

To keep overhead costs down and to make the program more affordable for guests, Keough partners with the North Star Lodge just off the Killington Mountain access road, the nearby Foundry Restaurant at Summit Pond and the highly rated Killington Delicatessen. ATA operates from the North Star Lodge, where overnight guests stay. The Killington Delicatessen provides picnic lunches and evening meals are held at the Foundry Restaurant.

Keough claims that partnering for lodging and dining gives him the opportunity to be with guests hiking, kayaking, caving or driving one of his four mini vans for sightseeing tours. In addition to Aeolus, the beagle pup ATA mascot, there are three full time and two part-time experienced guides, most of whom return every year to work for ATA. Keough and his crew are committed



Appalachian Trail Adventures owner John Keough with ATA mascot, Aeolus.

to a high level of customer service and are dedicated

Woodstock-area excursions include kayaking on

perfect hotel for their needs this year. These properties also serve as key ambassadors and market drivers for the communities they serve."

The hallmarks of Travelers' Choice winners are remarkable service, value and quality and rank in the top 1% of hotels. "Service excellence is not a hard thing. It's all about

BUSINESS BITS

By MARY LEE CAMP



to bringing guests "the best small group adventure they will remember for years."

The daily outings are flexible, depending upon desire, ability and the number of participants. Everyone, including day guests meet for breakfast at the Lodge at 7:30 to plan the day. Typically, the more energetic activities, such as hiking and kayaking will occur in the morning and the less challenging activities take place after a picnic lunch. But—the final decisions on what to do and when are made at the breakfast meetings.

the Ottauquechee river, hiking Mount Tom and Mount Peg and sightseeing—which includes comments of historical significance. ATA has been engaged by the Woodstock Inn & Resort and other wedding, convention and reunion venues for the company's small group "adventures."

A former Massachusetts resident, Keough is a 1993 graduate of the College of St. Joseph in Rutland with a degree in business management—that has been helpful in current endeavor. But until the founding of ATA, the lure of the mountains and outdoor adventures led him to working as a ski instructor in the winter and various summer jobs where he could hike and be on the water.

It's not too early to sign up for a spring, summer or fall Appalachian Trail adventure. For additional information, go online at www.appalachiantrailadventures.com.

Deer Brook Inn wins TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Award

TripAdvisor, the World's largest travel site recently announced that Woodstock's Deer Brook Inn has won the Travelers' Choice Award. Only 25 B&Bs in the US earn the coveted award.

"Travelers' Choice

of their awards as millions of travelers will consider this list when picking the

Photo Provided

anticipating guest needs and timely delivery with overt attention to detail—in everything you do," said Phil Jenkins, owner of Deer Brook Inn.

Jenkins continued, "We are mighty grateful to loyal guests who have taken time to write over 700 reviews about their Deer Brook experience. This amazing award really comes from them, our extended family."

Deer Brook is the fourth inn owned and managed by Jenkins since 1991 in multiple states. Each one has been an award winner, including AAA's Four Diamond Award. Jenkins' career in the lodging industry has spanned over 25 years, including serving as CEO of Select Registry, a collection of over 300 properties nationwide.

Situated along the Ottauquechee River, the Deer Brook Inn is deliberately small with five guest rooms and inviting public areas. It's a simple, stylish and fully renovated c1820 farmhouse. The hosts take pride in their extraordinary breakfasts and an evening hospitality hour. Bright and neutral interiors are the backdrop for art that brings nature in.

Got bits of business news you want to share? Send an email to mcamp@thevermontstandard.com.



One of the inviting public areas at Deer Brook Inn.

Elizabeth Campbell Photo

Infants in workplace program started

Gov. Phil Scott, Secretary of Administration Susanne Young and Human Resources Commissioner Beth Fastiggi announced an Infants in the Workplace program for state employees. The policy will allow a state employee the option to bring their infant children up to the age of six months to work. The program launched on Friday, Feb. 1.

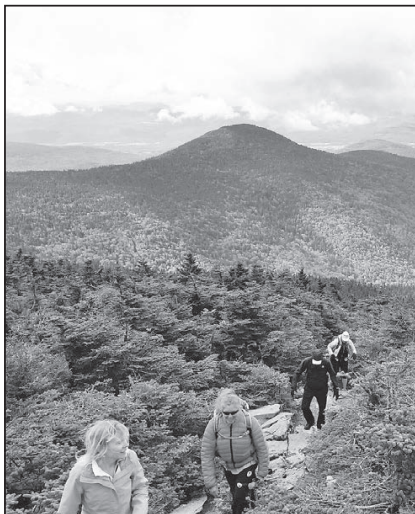
The program is available to State employees who are parents or legal guardians to infants between the ages of six weeks and six months.

Eligible parents must apply to participate and receive approval from their supervisor and the Commissioners of Human Resources and Buildings and General Services, to insure the work site is appropriate and all safety and health measures are in place.

"In conjunction with my proposed bi-state voluntary paid family leave program, this initiative can provide working families with options to give their kids the healthiest possible start to life while allowing them to

remain in the workforce if they choose to," said Governor Phil Scott. "I want to thank Secretary Young and Commissioner Fastiggi for their work to provide this opportunity for state employees."

To ensure the health and well-being of infants, parents and all employees, there are safety measures in place, including safety checks of parents' work spaces, proper health procedures, designating a "care provider" who can assist if needed, and more.



Appalachian Trail Adventures hikers.

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