I had a great time at your state convention this year, spending time with good friends, getting to know some people better, and even meeting some new people.  I was happy to see that the three first timers were good sports and really enjoyed themselves, especially Kerry, who now has 12 BIG reasons to come back next year!  Congratulations. I was pleased to see the number of retirees who not only attended the meeting on Wednesday but stayed for the entire convention. That is something I haven’t seen at the other states I represent.  It says a lot about how active and involved your members are.

I wear many hats in UPMA.  I am currently the treasurer for the Maine retiree chapter, bylaws committee chair for the active chapter, nominating committee chair, and convention co-chair.  I also serve as President of the New England Council and UPMA Retired Area 1 Rep. I will be removing the hats from those last two positions at the end of October this year.  It is up to the National President of UPMA Retired to appoint my replacement as Area 1 Rep, but we will be electing a new president for the New England Council at our meeting at the National Convention.  This year the rotation states that the president will come from the Massachusetts chapter and will take effect on November 1st and can be either an active or retired member.  Jean Marie has expressed an interest in the position.  If anyone else is interested and would like more information about the position, feel free to contact me.  I made my first friendships outside of the Maine chapter at my first New England Council meeting back in the spring of 2003 including Stan the Man, Lorna, Donna, Pam Boudreau, Mike Quinn, Ken Vengren, and more.  These people have become friends for life, and my life is so much richer because of it.

My last duty as New England Council President will be hosting the 2nd annual New England Council Fall Conference in Freeport, Maine and plans are currently underway.  It will be held Saturday, October 19 and Sunday, October 20 at the Hilton Garden Inn. The agenda and registration form will be available at the National Convention in Connecticut, but I already have a commitment from Damon Nix, who will be bringing his D.J. equipment.  Come join us for networking, some education, and a lot of fun! You do not need to be a chapter officer to attend. All are welcome.

I want to make you aware of the need to book early for overnight accommodations as that is prime-time leaf peeping season and the hotels fill up early.  Because the Hilton Garden Inn is located in downtown Freeport, it is a prime spot and the rooms are not cheap. We have negotiated a discounted rate of $225 per night, but you must book both Friday and Saturday nights to get that rate.  Our room block is currently open for booking. Mention UPMA New England Council when booking. The phone number for the hotel is 1-207-865-1433 and the toll-free number is 1-888-728-3027.

If you find the price of the rooms at the Hilton Garden Inn is more than you want to spend, please note that there are several other hotels/motels nearby on the outskirts of town, all within a 5-minute drive to the Hilton, and all are located on Route 1.  They were not selected for our weekend because they do not contain the meeting space we require. Because they are located outside the downtown area, they are significantly less expensive. Below is a listing of those hotels/motels and their phone numbers.  Feel free to stay at any of them if you wish but be sure to book early as they will fill up fast.  I have not negotiated room rates with any of them; prices listed below are from 2018 and may be a little higher this year.  I have also listed the distance to the Hilton Garden Inn. All are located on Route 1.

Hampton Inn            207-865-1400        $159        1.4 miles

Econolodge            207-865-3777        $64        1.7 miles

Super 8                207-865-1408        $77        1.8 miles

Quality Suites            207-865-5568        $128        2.0 miles

Holiday Inn Express        207-865-9020        $137        2.2 miles

Casco Bay Inn            207-865-4295        $135        3.8 miles

Best Western Freeport Inn    207-865-3106        $85        4.1 miles

Thank you for your hospitality, your support, and most of all, your friendship.  I look forward to seeing many of you in Connecticut in July and again in Maine this October.

Barbara Swiderski

UPMA Retired Area 1 Rep

New England Council President

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