

## ROB THORBURN RECEIVES 2011 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN TOURISM

*Ontario Tourism Awards celebrate the best in Ontario tourism*

### NEWS

October 11, 2011

Rob Thorburn, who rebuilt and expanded Scenic Caves Nature Adventures in Collingwood, was honoured for his passion and dedication to Ontario's tourism industry with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2011 Ontario Tourism Awards, the province's most prestigious tourism awards gala.

Thorburn purchased Scenic Caves out of bankruptcy and used his business acumen, creativity and vision to turn it into one of the province's most popular outdoor tourist attractions. Today, 100,000 visitors visit the caves every year and enjoy the variety of activities available.

The former president of Attractions Ontario is also well-known for passionately advocating on behalf of the province's tourist attractions. Thorburn's business background and political acuity helped advance Attractions Ontario into an important industry partner and respected voice for an important tourism sector.

Public policy leadership is another strength that Thorburn has been able to contribute to the tourism industry. He encouraged Southern Georgian Bay to become the first area to use the Premier-Ranked Tourist Destination Framework, which went on to become a fundamental planning and analysis tool for most areas in Ontario looking to attract more visitors.

Thorburn has collected several awards honouring his creativity, leadership and passion for tourism.

The Ontario Tourism Awards celebrate excellence and innovation in the multi-billion dollar tourism industry, which is a key contributor to Ontario's economic prosperity.

### QUOTES

"Rob Thorburn has given so much of himself to support the growth of tourism in Ontario," said Antoni Cimolino, Chair of the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation. "As a successful businessman and passionate champion for creating an unforgettable visitor experience, Rob consistently uses his great energy, ideas and talent to take tourism in Ontario to the next level."

"Rob Thorburn is a dedicated and valued member of the tourism industry in Ontario," said Beth Potter, President of the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario. "Rob not only shares his creativity and passion for the industry, but has also been a leader who has helped to shape the industry."

### QUICK FACTS

- Tourism is an important part of Ontario's economy, supporting 315,000 jobs in 2009.
- In 2009, tourism-related spending in Ontario reached \$21 billion.
- Ontario welcomed 17.8 million out-of-province visitors in 2009.

### LEARN MORE

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Media contact:  
Luanne Walker, OTMPC, 416-325-0699

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