

February 17, 2009

Good evening Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Andi Marie Cantele and I have been writing about Connecticut as a newspaper reporter, freelance journalist, and guidebook author for the past 18 years. I am the author of 52 Weekends in Connecticut and Backroad Bicycling in Connecticut, as well as the coauthor of Connecticut: An Explorer's Guide, whose seventh edition will be published this spring. For Berkshire Living magazine, I wrote about cycling Connecticut's beautiful back roads, as well as hiking Connecticut's section of the Appalachian Trail. For Bark magazine, I wrote stories about snowshoeing and canoeing that, although for a national audience, were both based in Connecticut.

With every magazine article, newspaper piece, and travel book I write about Connecticut, I rely on the expertise and inside knowledge of staff members in the state's regional tourism districts. For years, they have given me authoritative, trustworthy advice that, through my writing, has provided visitors to Connecticut with invaluable tools for discovering the hidden gems our state has to offer.

By the way, my coauthor on Connecticut: An Explorer's Guide is Barney Laschever, who served as Connecticut's director of tourism for more than 17 years. He continues to be a passionate advocate for regional tourism districts, both as a travel writer and as someone who understands Connecticut's tourism industry more than most.

Sincerely,

Andi Marie Cantele
travel writer
Litchfield, Connecticut