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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2019

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checking in

As it happens every year about this this time, we've entered into the holiday season. Locals and visitors alike will be going out to view and enjoy the festive decorations. In this issue, we take a look at the various ways Oahu dresses itself up, from the Honolulu Electric Light Parade to Honolulu Hale's 50-foot Christmas tree.

From a liability standpoint, the holidays can pose more risks to the hospitality industry simply due to a higher number of visitors. As one insurance expert tells us, "hotels need to be more diligent about protecting their well-being from the growing risk that comes with more business."

And we talk story with three rising women entrepreneurs who are making their mark in the Islands' hospitality industry.

Travelers staying at our hotels and resorts are enjoying a wider array of food choices. Although they can still order exceptional room service, new food delivery businesses cater to guests' culinary cravings, from acai bowls to vegetarian wraps and myriad regional choices. See our report inside.

We also take a look at how to deal with guests' complaints, especially those that may obviously seem bogus and contrived. The good news: Hawaii, according to industry insiders, doesn't have a major problem with guests trying to scam for freebies and better accommodations.

Aloha!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David PT".

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DECK *the* HALLS

Dressing up Hawaii for the holidays

BY PRISCILLA PÉREZ BILLIG

Hawaii will see its share of merry-makers this holiday season, and the plethora of festive eye candy is not likely to disappoint. Doorways, lobbies, railings, bars and restaurants, along with special celebrations, will abound. A sampling from last year offers a hint at what's in store for this year's traditional décor and Hawaii-inspired treats.

The Sheraton Princess Kaiulani's Splash Bar displays this season-inspired pineapple as a "holiday mascot."

PHOTO COURTESY SHERATON PRINCESS KAIULANI



Local school children help Billy V and Mayor Caldwell light City Hall's giant Christmas tree.

PHOTO COURTESY TAMMY SEYMOUR

Famed Honolulu City Lights and its Public Workers' Electric Light Parade will again turn Downtown into a wonderland of luminescence and seasonal characters. Last year Mayor Caldwell, singer Billy V and local children threw the switch to illuminate Honolulu Hale's 50-foot Christmas tree display and public wreath exhibit. The celebration will mark its 35th anniversary with a holiday concert near the Sky Gate.

For the 60th year, Ala Moana Center will display its iconic Big Santa, the towering centerpiece of the Center's holiday décor, which includes three giant Christmas trees, over 100 garlands, 750 poinsettias and more than 4,000 ornaments.

The Royal Hawaiian, the "Pink Palace of the Pacific," will once again be all decked out in pink for the holidays, including pink trees, ornaments and tinsel.



Santa's float in the Electric Light Parade

PHOTO COURTESY RON SLAUSON



Sheraton Waikiki's famous sand sculpture features an elf taking a group selfie.

PHOTO COURTESY SHERATON WAIKIKI



This chocolate canoe was inspired by the Hōkūle'a.

PHOTO COURTESY FAIRMONT ORCHID, HAWAII

FLORAL INSPIRATIONS: The Artistry of Fong Tagawa

Honolulu-based Floral Inspirations: The Artistry of Fong Tagawa offers design creations for weddings and corporate events with an emphasis on flowers. Tagawa says, initially, her clients have a vision in their heads of what they want.

Three years ago, the Four Seasons Resort Oahu at Ko Olina admittedly was aware that "visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads" when they reached out to Tagawa to help with the resort's holiday trimming.

What came to life in the main atrium was the "Giving Tree," a 35-foot Oregon Douglas fir at the property she describes as "giving back to the community." Tagawa says she will next introduce more Hawaiiana and natural elements into the tree and its surround-

ing décor.

"My job is to hone in and pinpoint exactly the final design of it all," she says. "Even if they come in with an idea but it is not complete, we talk about it a little bit more, try to figure out exactly what they are looking for and then we come up with a final design for the concept they originally envisioned." Tagawa says she shows her clients sketches and photos.

In the past, Cartier has donated ornaments for décor and others can be inscribed by guests for a donation which the Four Seasons will match up to \$1,000. Proceeds, ultimately in the thousands of dollars, go to the Boys and Girls Club of West Oahu.

"This is not just about holiday décor," Tagawa says. "I'm hoping this will create a sort of a pacesetter in terms of the Giving Tree. The Four Seasons is a great pacesetter to start off that trend. The holidays are not only for traditional settings; it's time to be a family and there are those without. It's a great opportunity for other hotels, different properties and different corporations to think about giving during the holidays."



Fong Tagawa



Four Seasons' Kahu Nettie Tiffany blesses the Giving Tree.

PHOTO COURTESY FLORAL INSPIRATIONS

In the Sheraton Waikiki's porte-cochère, 2018's sand sculpture, "Santa's Selfie," features 24 tons of sand. Kelly Sanders, now vice president of operations—Hawaii for Highgate Hotels in Honolulu, is credited with bringing in Sandsational Sand Sculpting, a company based in Melbourne, Fla., to create these year-round works of art—the only hotel sand sculptures in Hawaii.



Sheraton Maui Resort & Spa's gingerbread village, created in partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Maui, is displayed every year in December in the resort's lobby.

PHOTO COURTESY SHERATON MAUI RESORT & SPA



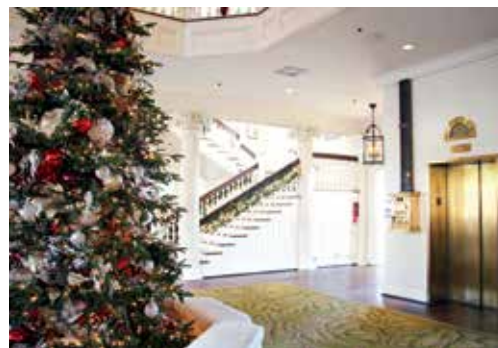
Santa makes his grand canoe entrance on the shores of the Fairmont Orchid, Hawaii, and delights keiki with gift bags and a jolly "Ho ho ho!" on Christmas Eve.

PHOTO COURTESY FAIRMONT ORCHID, HAWAII



Ala Moana Center's iconic Big Santa turns 60 years old this year.

PHOTO COURTESY ALA MOANA CENTER



The Moana Surfrider's lobby

PHOTO COURTESY MOANA SURFRIDER, A WESTIN RESORT & SPA

Curate Décor & Design

Last year at The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Waikiki Beach, thousands of poinsettias were handcrafted from special gold paper to create a holiday tree that sat on the porte-cochère's banquette and a 15-foot tree at the eighth-floor lobby.

"The resort wanted to create something unique and interactive for all to enjoy," says Huy Vo, director of public relations at The Ritz-Carlton. "So a whimsical component was added: pinwheels. Anyone who has visited the resort knows that the porte-cochère is often windy. Using the wind as an opportunity to create something unique resulted in a gold holiday tree made of pinwheel poinsettias that rapidly spun when a gust of wind blows through the area. This unusual installation attracts a daily crowd of spectators and children and has become a social media-worthy attraction."



Abner Aquino

To bring the resort's festive exhibit to life, The Ritz-Carlton partnered with Honolulu-based Curate Décor & Design. The award-winning design agency was founded in 2012 by partners Abner Aquino, chief curator; Jayson Antonio, operations curator; and Chris Salazar, business affairs curator. They discovered an untapped wealth in the need to help create design-centered branding experiences and events for local businesses.



Huy Vo

"We are an experiential design agency," says Aquino. "So year 'round we work with our clients to create experiences through storytelling and bringing their brand and messaging to life within their physical space. Specifically, for hotel properties we really want to not only evoke the feeling of holiday but to tell a story that's unique, that's connected to their brand and property and that gives a surprising 'delight' experience for the guests. So it's not just the typical red and green. While we still want to evoke the traditional holiday feeling, it's always through a modern lens."

"As the newest luxury resort in Waikiki, we wanted to start and create our own distinctive annual tradition that our guests and owners would look forward to every year: a modern holiday installation that celebrates classic traditions with a new point of view," Vo says. "We have partnered with Curate Décor & Design again this year and look forward to unveiling another exceptional attraction and installation that will be Instagram-worthy."



Gold pinwheels spin on a holiday tree in The Ritz-Carlton Residences' breezy porte-cochère.

PHOTO COURTESY THE RITZ-CARLTON RESIDENCES, WAIKIKI BEACH



A spiral staircase's floral décor at The Kahala Hotel & Resort

PHOTO COURTESY THE KAHALA HOTEL & RESORT



Honolulu City Lights festivities feature Shaka Santa and Tutu Mele.

PHOTO COURTESY RON SLAUSON



Aulani Resort's Makaala Lobby will have holiday decorations inspired by Hawaii throughout December.

PHOTO COURTESY AULANI, A DISNEY RESORT & SPA



Hawaii-themed tree ornaments at the Hilton Hawaiian Village

PHOTO COURTESY HILTON HAWAIIAN VILLAGE WAIKIKI BEACH RESORT

On Hawaii Island, Fairmont Orchid's lobby last year displayed a chocolate canoe inspired by the Polynesian sailing craft, *Hōkūle'a*, and crafted by the Fairmont Orchid pastry team led by Executive Pastry Chef Daniel Sampson.

Fairmont Orchid's canoe sculpture stood 9 feet tall, 13 feet long, 7 feet wide and contained 80 pounds of gingerbread, 140 pounds of chocolate and 45 pounds of royal icing. Every year at the resort's shore, much to the delight of keiki, Santa and his elves paddle in aboard his grand canoe.

Kelley Cosgrove, general manager of the Fairmont Orchid, Hawaii, which lies along the Big Island's Kohala Coast, summed it up best: "We welcome a lot of multi-generational families to our resort during the holidays and we love helping them create new memories each time they come."



Kelley Cosgrove



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Business Models

Women in Hawaii's hospitality industry build B2Bs through strong relationships

BY BRETT ALEXANDER-ESTES



Leahlani Skincare combines “the ambrosia of the tropics with desired levels of performance,” says Leah Klasovsky.

PHOTO COURTESY LEAHLANI SKINCARE

Late one evening about four years ago, Leah Klasovsky pressed the “launch” button on her new product website and went to bed.

At 8 a.m., she woke up to “hundreds upon hundreds of orders—and an inbox that was out of control,” she says. “I was terrified.”

Klasovsky, “the formulator, maker, packager and everything in between” for Leahlani Skincare, had been plugging away on her Hawaii-based product line for nearly 10 years.

All that ended with leahlaniskincare.com.



Leah Klasovsky

Last year, a press event in Milan, master classes in Paris and meetings in London featured Leahlani Skincare, Klasovsky says. So do spas in leading Hawaii hotels and resorts—Timbers Kauai Resort and Prince Waikiki, to name just two.



Leahlani Skincare products are 100 percent blended, bottled and distributed from Klasovsky's studio on Kauai.

PHOTO COURTESY LEAHLANI SKINCARE

Starting out as a holistic esthetician and then as director of a spa at a Kauai resort, Klasovsky worked one-on-one with clients. It was, she says, “the most valuable experience to draw upon when formulating a line of skincare products” and entering the ultra-competitive beauty market.

Debra Pompadur, owner and manager of Evergreen by Debra LLC, and Karen Fowler, senior image consultant at Cintas, also offer high-end products—and, like Klasovsky, rely on

strong relationships to build their business in Hawaii's hospitality industry.

A Caring Industry

Pompadur, a former real estate broker, had no experience in Hawaii's hospitality industry when she opened for business in 1994.

That hasn't stopped Evergreen by Debra LLC from providing specialty flooring to the DKI International Airport and leading Hawaii hotels.

“My business model,” Pompadur says, “was to have products that we are expert in—ceramic tile, glass tile and stone”—that is specified by Hawaii’s architects, designers and engineers.



Debra Pompadur

An underground tunnel led her to it.

Touring the Board of Water Supply’s 600-foot-deep Halawa Shaft some years ago, Pompadur saw a big hole full of water. She also saw gauges—1930, 1940, 1950—that show how quickly Oahu’s water supply is shrinking.

At that moment, she says, “my passion became protecting the water table.”

Pompadur’s husband was working for a Hawaii tile company, and she realized ceramic tile “is a very caring industry for the environment. If tiles are broken, they are ground up, they get re-used. They even recycle the dust on the floor.”

Pompadur’s first sale, to an architect, led to more flooring projects and an expanded product line that now includes water-permeable pavers.

At 8,000 psi (pounds per square inch), the pavers withstand virtually all of a hospitality property’s foot and vehicle traffic, including fire ladder trucks.

“My business model was to have products that we are expert in.”

—Debra Pompadur

“The whole paver absorbs the water, is permeable, 100 percent. If there are water ponding issues, the water seeps through” and returns to the water table, Pompadur says. “This is what distinguishes our patented product.”

Other lines include artisan glass recycled from car windshields, and mosaic tiles used in large-scale works of art, such as the Hawaiian Tapestry mosaic at the Hawaii Convention Center.

Pompadur’s vendors are in the continental U.S. and Europe. She has been doing business with most of them for 25 years or more.

“My focus is on personal relationships,” she says. “In terms of vendors,



Evergreen by Debra supplied the mosaic tile for the Hawaii Convention Center’s Hawaiian Tapestry mosaic (detail above).

PHOTOS COURTESY JEFF POMPADUR



Specialty, non-slip tile in the DKI International Airport international arrivals area, supplied by Evergreen by Debra



Evergreen by Debra supplied barefoot-wet, slip-resistant mosaic tile for the Ilikai pool deck.

it’s based on relationships. In terms of customers and clients, it’s based on relationships. I would rather work with you because I know you, and see what I can do to help you.

“One thing you can count on in construction, you’re going to have problems. It’s how one deals with problems that makes all the difference.”

Front to Back

Fowler, senior image consultant at Cintas, says her division “designs and manufactures apparel for everyone on a (hospitality or food and beverage)

property, from the front of the house to the back of the house.”

Cintas, she says, is “currently rolling out apparel programs for the new Halepuna by Halekulani, Four Seasons Koele, Residence Inn at Kapolei and the newly rebranded Sheraton Kauai at Coconut Beach.”

Fowler, who joined the company as a sales representative in 2004, says Cintas is “rebranding to

Karen Fowler and new Design Collective for Cintas hospitality apparel fabric

PHOTO COURTESY CINTAS





Fowler says Design Collective by Cintas apparel aims to “provide brands that employees want to wear.”

PHOTO COURTESY CINTAS

‘Design Collective by Cintas’ to better reflect (its corporate) strategy. We have recently created our ‘House of Brands,’ partnering with leading companies like Chef Works, Under Armour and Express to provide brands that employees want to wear. And when employees feel good, everyone wins.”



Karen Fowler

Right now, Fowler says, “slimmer-fit garments are definitely the trend, along with apparel that does not look like uniforms. Many of our clients want a retail-inspired look.”

“When employees feel good, everyone wins.”

—Karen Fowler

Client relationships are crucial in Hawaii’s hospitality industry, Fowler says. “Everyone knows everyone. Our business is not a one-time sale,” she points out. “We roll out an apparel program and continue to work with the property for the next two to four years to provide uniforms for new hires and replacements.”

While many companies provide uniforms to Hawaii properties, Fowler

says, “there are fewer that provide the depth and breadth—as well as service—that Design Collective by Cintas offers.

“We have built a following through our sales and support.”

A Wondrous Alchemy

Days after launching Leahlani Skincare’s website and as wholesale partnerships flooded in, Klasovsky “made the snap decision to move our



Beauty Balm, a Leahlani Skincare product, is one of six Hawaii best sellers that include Bless Essence, Aloha Ambrosia Elixir, Siren Serum, Mermaid Mask and Kalima Cleansing Powder.

PHOTO COURTESY LEAHLANI SKINCARE



Design Collective by Cintas is offering new retail-inspired product lines.

PHOTO COURTESY CINTAS

entire operation into a larger space 15 minutes down the road." A year later, sales outgrew it.

In Hawaii, Leahlani Skincare's six best-sellers include Bless Beauty Balm, Bless Essence and Aloha Ambrosia Elixir. Hawaii resort and spa clients, Klasovsky says, "love the aromas, vibrancy, textures and the results." All her products, she says, are "100 percent blended, bottled and distributed" from her studio on Kauai.

Currently, Leahlani Skincare is sold "all around the world, and in all sorts of different online and brick-and-mortar boutiques, spas and shops," Klasovsky says. "You can find Leahlani throughout North America, Europe, Asia, Australia" and elsewhere.

"My husband and family have always been an incredible support system."

—Leah Klasovsky

Klasovsky expanded her original product line "according to the needs of my practice and my clients.

"The decision to start marketing and selling them came naturally due to client demand. It was my clients who were introduced to my products while on vacation who convinced me to start selling them online.

"My husband and family have always been an incredible support system," Klasovsky says. Her success, she says, is "a wondrous alchemy of endless hours of hard work ... and the support of some incredible people."



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A Legitimate Beef...or Just Scoring Freebies?

Real guest concerns compete for time and resources with illegitimate complaints from guests exhibiting less-than-stellar behavior

BY MEGHAN THIBAULT

Everyone in the hospitality industry deals with guest complaints. We've all been there and it's par for the course. Whether it's a steak that isn't cooked to a guest's liking, a hotel room that's too cold or too hot, or noise from neighboring guests. Some complaints are legitimate, and some are not. Some are easily taken care of—you can simply cook a new steak or move your guests to a quieter, upgraded room to soothe their ruffled feathers.

The relationship between hoteliers and their guests is a more intimate one than that of most service providers and their customers. For that reason, it was a difficult topic to broach with smaller hotels and resorts. After all, complaining about your customers runs counter to the very notion of hospitality.

Sometimes, you run across a guest who complains about just about everything, and who simply cannot be satisfied. A small number of these are looking for a complimentary stay, or other free services to compensate for their less-than-positive guest experience.

Says Tom Bean, a former general manager for a fine dining hotel restaurant in Wailea: "You do see people trying to get free stuff, but it happens less than you think."

Bean notes that the majority of guest complaints are due to legitimate lapses in service or the guest experience.

Having the opportunity to remediate guest complaints while they're on property is, of course, the best-case scenario and the one we all hope for. Offering complimentary goods and services, or "comps," is a common practice, and with only so many room nights to sell in a given year, often food and beverage vouchers are the preferred remedy to ensure hotel guest satisfaction. "I would get hit with \$500 food and beverage credits all the time," Bean says.



Mufi Hannemann, president and CEO of the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association, says the high level of services offered by the Islands' hotels and resorts staves off cases of problem guests.

"I spoke with several members of our association," he says, "and none of them have indicated that this is an issue that arises with any sort of regularity. I believe it speaks to the quality of the experiences offered by Hawaii's visitor industry that the vast majority of tourists come here to enjoy their stay rather than exploit their host."

With the explosion of social media and the prevalence of consumer-advisory review sites like TripAdvisor and Yelp, however, hotels are now facing a bigger threat: A vast army of potentially disgruntled guests with their thumbs poised to post negative online reviews (whether justified or not).

Research by Sarah Tanford, associate professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, shows that negative online reviews outweigh other factors in the decision-making of prospective hotel guests when they are searching online for crowd-sourced information to help them make decisions about where to

stay. Negative reviews, according to Tanford, even outweigh price as a factor in the decision funnel.

Michael Rossolo, director of revenue management for Marriott in Hawaii told *The New York Times* in 2016 that the threat of negative online reviews happens "more frequently now" and that some guests take the step of posting a negative review while still on property, in the hopes that hotel staff will catch it and offer them some form of compensation. A bottle of wine and a note of apology sent to the room was one example Rossolo provided.

The lucky hotels are those where guests leverage this power while still on-site. They, at least, are provided with the opportunity to remediate any issues before the guest's negative feedback reaches thousands, if not millions, of online shoppers looking to book their next Hawaii vacation.

Rossolo says his hotels make it a practice to provide guests with advance warning of construction or other potential disruptions ahead of their stay. By doing so, they preempt any unwanted surprises when the guest arrives. A 14-year veteran at Marriott,



Rossolo currently works for Kyo-Ya Hotels & Resorts within the Marriott Waikiki complex.

Guest databases have been a convenient resource to larger hotel chains that are able to

share information internally, across properties. Often referred to as blacklist databases, they are set up more generally to manage difficult guests, rather than refuse their bookings altogether.

However, there are instances where such refusal is warranted. Hotels and resorts can experience unruly and even destructive or abusive behavior from guests. The proverbial rock star trashing a hotel room is indeed a reason to refuse someone a return visit.

Tara Lattomus is a lawyer who cautions against refusing guest bookings in general. In an article published on the Luxury Hotel Association website, she writes: "Given the potential exposure to common law claims, a hotel should proceed with caution if it decides to prohibit guests from returning to the hotel. If a guest is that disruptive, then the hotel should carefully document all of the guest's complaints and the hotel's attempts to resolve them. The more details, the better."

TripAdvisor, for its part, encourages hotels to report any threatening behavior before a guest posts a negative review, so the site can investigate. They ask for proof of the claim in addition to reviewing the history of both the property and the guest.

Shared database services have followed in the wake of online review sites. No Stay, based in Australia, is a paid service that screens guests in order help hoteliers "manage risk when accepting bookings," according to the company's website. GuestChecker.com, a service provider in the U.S., appears to have gone out of business, despite early success.

Generally speaking, where database services do exist, hotel users are only able to query individual guest names, rather than view the entire list of potential guests who've exhibited less-than-stellar behavior at other properties. In

other words, it's not a terribly efficient means to ensure your guests aren't the unruly or destructive types.

Apart from inefficiency, one of the reasons that shared, industry-based databases of this type haven't hit their stride might be that participating in them means sharing your guests' confidential data, and potentially violating a hard-won consumer trust in doing so.

Another reason is the potential for liability that Lattomus warns against. She suggests that disgruntled guests demanding a free stay or other compensation be offered an agreement to sign stating that

they will not return to the hotel in exchange for their refund or other compensation. "In that instance, the agreement should provide the hotel with sufficient protection," says Lattomus.

For most who've been in the industry for any length of time, sharing aloha is at the heart of making good on the guest experience, knowing that the vast majority of tourists coming to Hawaii are thrilled to be here.

"Honestly, 90 percent of guests are so awesome. I guess I do what I do because I truly want to see the best in people," says Bean.



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'Tis the Season— for Liability

**More holiday guests on your property
call for added precautions**

BY BRETT ALEXANDER-ESTES

That rowdy table can spoil your property's holiday atmosphere—and more. "With more guests visiting for the holidays, and facilities hosting holiday season-related parties and functions, hotels need to be more diligent about protecting their well-being from the growing risk that comes with more business," says Chad Lindsey, risk consulting manager at DTRIC Insurance.

"The probability of an accident and injury will always rise with an increase in exposure," he points out.



Chad Lindsey

Accidents causing the most guest claims, says Van Nakashima, senior account executive at Atlas Insurance, will likely be "your common slip-, trip- and fall-type incidents."



Van Nakashima

Guests aren't the only ones at risk. "We often see an increase in the number of (staff) injuries during this time of year that are caused by additional responsibilities, decrease in the work force, added stress or simply a rush to get the job done," Nakashima says.

Prepare a Plan

Management should prepare before the holiday whirl begins, Lindsey says, and "review the premises and oper-

ations for hazards in all areas of the hotel."

To better target these areas, Nakashima recommends reviewing prior years and trends. Also, he says, "it's always a

"The probability of an accident and injury will always rise with an increase in exposure."

—Chad Lindsey

Block Sexual Harassment

Chad Lindsey, risk consulting manager at DTRIC Insurance, says the key to reducing violent incidents involving your staff is to review potential exposures. Protective measures can include:

- Reducing the number (if possible) of staff members working alone in secluded areas.
- Placing cameras in strategic areas to help identify perpetrators.
- Instructing housekeepers to block room entrances, or to secure rooms when working alone.
- Arming housekeepers with personal alarms to call for help in an emergency.
- Educating and training your staff on acceptable guest behavior.
- Empowering your staff to report an incident, no matter who the guest may be.



Porcelain tile on the Ilikai pool deck, supplied by Evergreen by Debra, meets stringent slip-resistance standards.

PHOTO COURTESY JEFF POMPADUR

Curb Wet Floors—and Claims

Safety and slip-resistant floors are “huge” best sellers at Hawaii hospitality properties right now, says Debra Pompadur, owner and manager of Evergreen by Debra LLC, a Hawaii importer and distributor of tile and other flooring.

Debra sells “wet-barefoot, slip-resistant products for common areas, for walkways, pool decks,” she says. “We have a wonderful product out of Germany that is slip-resistant when wet and greasy, which is great for back-of-house.” Evergreen products meet European standards for slip resistance, she says, which are more stringent than those in the U.S.

People trip and fall even on dry floors, Pompadur notes. Her goal, she says, is “to make sure that (properties have) a safe floor. So when someone does fall, the client can open up their file” and document that their floor has gone “above and beyond” by meeting European slip-resistance standards. This, she says, has a strong impact on an insurance claim.

Hospitality properties in Hawaii that have installed Pompadur’s products, she says, include Outrigger Resorts, Hilton and Marriott.

good idea to have your insurance agency conduct property inspections that would identify any hazards that could cause personal injury to a guest, and to provide solutions for improvement.”

Next, work with your agent and prepare a holiday safety plan. This might include improving your physical plant—for example, repairing walkways—and enhancing staff and management procedures.

Protect Your Staff

One management procedure that is increasingly important—and possibly more critical during the holidays—is preventing and reporting sexual harassment of staff.

Nakashima concedes that it’s difficult to obtain specific sexual harassment data relating to Hawaii’s hotel industry. “However, more than 25 percent of sexual harassment charges filed (nationally) in the past decade occurred in industries dominated by service-sector workers,” he says. “This is according to an analysis of unpublished U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission data by the Center for American Progress.

“Workers who often work in isolated spaces have a higher-than-average rate of sexual harassment and assault,” he notes. “Hotels and resorts should have anti-harassment policies in place, communicate with employees frequently on these policies and reporting procedures, test the reporting procedures, and educate and train management on how to respond effectively to incidents.

“It’s always a good idea to have your insurance agency conduct property inspections.”

—Van Nakashima

“You want to ensure the safety plan contains all the essential components that cover the hotel property exposures,” says Nakashima, “as well as being in OSHA compliance.”

Strengthen Your Safety Culture

Lindsey says a strong hotel safety culture begins at the top. “We start

Stop Slip-and-Falls

Chad Lindsey, risk consulting manager at DTRIC Insurance, says your holiday safety plan to prevent slips, trips and falls should include:

- Reviewing housekeeping practices to ensure busy walkways are kept clear of debris, and surfaces are kept dry
- Highlighting any changes in elevation, like curbs and stairs
- If warranted, posting signs to warn guests of hazards that may be easily overlooked
- Briefing staff frequently about hazards to reinforce safe work practices

Van Nakashima, senior account executive at Atlas Insurance, says your plan should also include:

- Placing cameras in high-traffic areas
- Reviewing recordings when an incident occurs
- Investigating incidents promptly and thoroughly
- Resources for overcoming language barriers
- Making sure you have adequate staffing
- Alerting employees to the increase in holiday business
- Ensuring your employees are taking precautions

Nakashima also recommends MyAtlas Connection, “a 24/7 client portal where a hotel client can obtain hundreds of sample safety plans and programs.”

with ensuring that there is a functioning safety process by reviewing Safety Management practices,” he says, and offers one—whether managers constantly analyze the potential hazards in their operations.

“When the safety program is stabilized at the management level,” Lindsey says, “we then address the staff in providing basic safety resources and training to heighten their awareness.

“Safety and good risk management should be practiced all year ‘round,” he emphasizes.

But “hotels should pay extra attention to safety for guests and staff during peak occupancy seasons.”

HRA Adds Two to Hall of Fame

PHOTOS BY ANJJ LEE

The Hawaii Restaurant Association inducted two new members into its Hall of Fame on Sept. 23 at the Sheraton Waikiki. Selected for the 2019 class were Peter Kim (Signature Prime Steakhouse, Yummy Restaurant Group) and DK Kodama (D.K Steakhouse, Sansei Seafood Restaurant & Sushi Bar, Vino).

The HRA also honored Steve Ueda of Suisan Food Service with the Legacy Award, Wally Takara of Cavalier's Restaurant and Charlene "Charley" Goodness of Maile Restaurant with the Pioneer Award, McDonald's Franchisee Miles Ichinose and Eric von Platen Luder of the Luana Hospitality Group with the Active Restaurateur Award, and Dean Okimoto of the Hawaii Agricultural Foundation and Felix Tai of Pounders Restaurant with the Local Champion Award.

The event included the annual Dine Around with the "Chefs of Aloha."



Alan Yamamoto, Liliha Bakery; Dean Okimoto, Hawaii Agricultural Foundation; Carolyn Ikehara and Peter Kim, Yummy Restaurant Group



Marcus Fikse and Holly Kessler, HRA Education Foundation



Jo McGarry, MOJO The Business of Food; Tom Jones, Gyotaku



Stephen Ueda, Esther Ueda and Dan Yasui, Suisan Wholesaler and Fishmarket



Troy Terorotua and Lisa Kim, Real Gastro Pub



Kiana Mawae, Kapiolani Community College; Cherie Pascua, Justin Koide and Garret Cho, Sansei Restaurant and Sushi Bar



Paul and Linda Taniyama; Desiree Koyanagi; Gordon Au, Pyramid Insurance



Sharon Shigemoto, Hawaii Gas; Victor Lim, McDonalds; Cheryl Matsuoka, HRA; Greta Tom, Aloha Shoyu/Aloha Packaging and Supplies



Kainan Roman, Schance Aglugub, Will Silva and Adam Gilbert, Plantation Tavern



Robert Szatkowski and David Marcelli, Schofield Culinary Arts; Matthew Small, YHata & Co. and King Specialty Foods; Ernesto Limcaco, King Specialty Foods and Chef Zone



Chris Yankowski, Triple F; Alisha Antonio and Charlie Goodness, retired, Maile Kahala Hilton; Paul Reynolds, Outback Steakhouse



Peter Bellisario, Peter B Food Safety; Milena Ordonez, Kapiolani Community College; Matt Rose, Sanikleen



Barbara and Miles Ichinose, McDonalds; Tammy Fukagawa, TS Restaurants



Jeremy Maluhia Stevens, Kapiolani Community College; Chris Robinson, Matt Young, Kaitlyn Taketa and Mike Day, Hula Grill



Marcy Uehara, Russell Siu, Michelle Wong and Alan Sakaida, Kakaako Kitchen



An Instacart personal shopper fills her grocery order.
PHOTO COURTESY INSTACART

Place My ORDER

Digital grocery cart, luxury room service—make life a little easier

BY PRISCILLA PÉREZ BILLIG

With all the food delivery services at one's disposal, it may be easy to forget about hotel room service.

For those wishing a meal or snack while staying in, room service has almost fallen by the wayside—but not quite—especially at luxury resorts as they ramp up the visitor experience.

“The problem with hotel room service is that it has really lacked creativity and variety,” says Kelly Sanders, vice president of operations—Hawaii for Highgate Hotels in Honolulu. “Guests today know that they can get what they want, and have been using these type of offerings for years already.”

Kelly Sanders

He adds that guests seem more comfortable in a social space, interacting or working.

“I would say that this is really the downfall of room service across the globe,” Sanders says. “People’s habits and how they work have evolved and

are not about being in a hotel room, but inside or outside in a comfortable working area that has interest, or more of a work/play type of environment.”

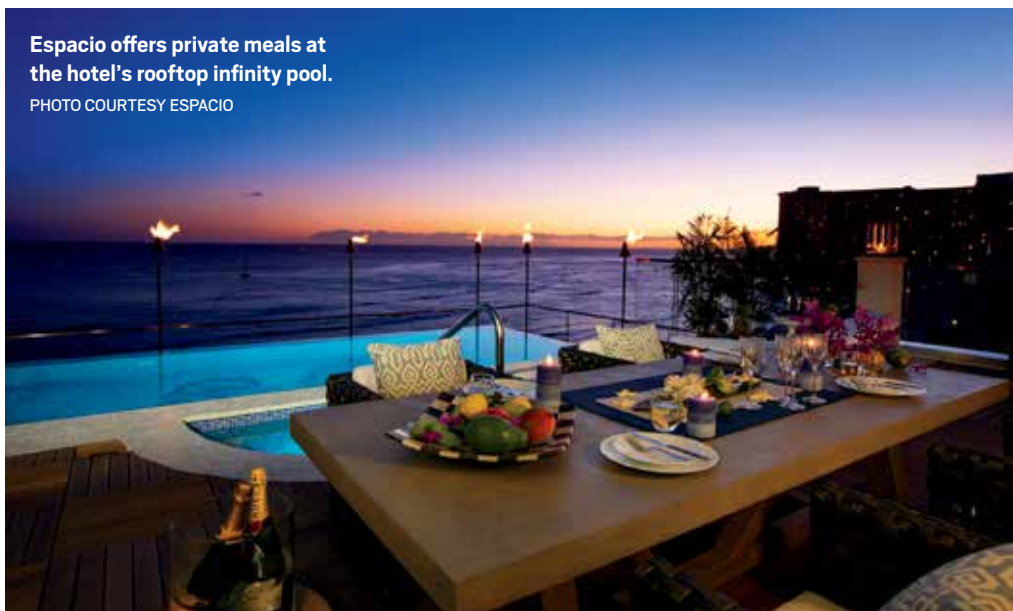
However, high-end luxury hotels, such as the new Espacio—The Jewel of Waikiki, have taken room service to new heights through its 24/7 butler service, which can arrange private meals

either in-suite or at the hotel’s rooftop infinity pool.

“Guests can order anything off the menu at Mugen’s, Espacio’s Japanese-French restaurant, or request a separate meal or snack that suits their preferences but may be off the menu,” says Theresa van Greunen, senior director of corporate communications

Espacio offers private meals at the hotel’s rooftop infinity pool.

PHOTO COURTESY ESPACIO





Theresa van Greunen

at Aqua-Aston Hospitality. “Such dishes might include foie gras, poached plums and Marcona almonds over streusel; squash puree with Parisian gnocchi and snow crab with ikura (salmon caviar); and 21-day aged Wagyu tomahawk steak cooked over Binchotan charcoal.”

For vacationers or *kamaaina*, who really want or need to stay in, almost any item—from acai bowls to vegetarian wraps and all manner of regional cuisine—are deliverable from restaurant to home for a small fee (and delivery tip) via a mobile app, online and even by talking to your personal Amazon Alexa.

Food delivery services like Grubhub, DoorDash, UberEats and Bite Squad boast delivering a range of cuisine and drinks from hundreds of local restaurants. Home and office delivery or catering are also available services.



The busy worker can simply have lunch delivered.

PHOTO COURTESY UBEREATS

“Hawaii has been one of our strongest markets since we first opened up in Honolulu in 2016,” says Dean Turcol, Bite Squad media relations director.

“For a while we were focused just on Oahu, but this year we decided to test the waters on Maui. The grand opening in Kahului earlier this summer was one of the best we’ve ever seen, so we were encouraged that we should keep going. That led us to Kihei next, and now hopping over to Hilo.”



Dean Turcol

Turcol says Bite Squad now does over 500,000 deliveries a year in Hawaii.

“On the future, we can affirmatively say Hawaii has been great to us,” Turcol adds. “We would love to keep grow-



DoorDash will pick up and deliver even from small shops, like Andy’s Sandwiches & Smoothies.

PHOTO COURTESY DOORDASH



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ing our business here. We have heard hotels are referring us to the guests. I don't know if they're saying us instead of room service, but we appreciate their support in telling their guests what Bite Squad offers."

Turcol says the top 10 food orders for Hawaii are burgers, pad Thai, BBQ chicken salad, garlic cream fettuccine, chicken piccata, burritos, Thai crunch salad, yellow curry, pepperoni pizza and Cobb salad.

Instacart customers select groceries via the company's mobile app or on Instacart.com. A personal shopper makes a same-day pick-up and delivery. In Hawaii, Instacart has partnerships with Costco, CVS, Foodland, Safeway, Sam's Club and Times Market.



A parmesan cracking demonstration at Whole Foods PHOTO COURTESY WHOLE FOODS



Oahu Fresh provides weekly bags of locally grown produce and specialty items.

PHOTO COURTESY OAHU FRESH

Whole Foods Markets on Oahu maintain a personal shopper and deliver through the independent vendor Hawaii Kai Gopher. Safeway offers online grocery shopping using a downloadable Safeway app and will deliver, provide drive-up-and-go order pickup or make a rush delivery by Instacart.

Oahu Fresh provides a \$20 market bag filled with local fruits and vegetables for home delivery or dropped off at convenient locations. The bag varies in content from week to week, depending on availability and season of the produce.



Ordering via a phone app

PHOTO COURTESY GRUBHUB

Online Ordering

- 60 percent of U.S. consumers order delivery or takeout once a week.
- 31 percent say they use these third-party delivery services at least twice a week.
- 34 percent of consumers spend at least \$50 per order when ordering food online.
- 20 percent of consumers say they spend more on off-premise orders compared to a regular dine-in experience.
- Digital ordering and delivery has grown 300 percent faster than dine-in traffic since 2014.
- 70 percent of consumers say they'd rather order directly from a restaurant, preferring that their money goes straight to the restaurant and not a third party.
- 57 percent of millennials say that they have restaurant food delivered so they can watch movies and TV shows at home.
- 59 percent of restaurant orders from millennials are takeout or delivery.
- 33 percent of consumers say they would be willing to pay a higher fee for faster delivery service.
- 87 percent of Americans who use third-party food delivery services agree that it makes their lives easier.
- 45 percent of consumers say that offering mobile ordering or loyalty programs would encourage them to use online ordering services more often.
- 63 percent of consumers agree that it is more convenient to get delivery than dining out with a family.
- Americans who have not used a third-party restaurant delivery service say fast delivery (31 percent), restaurant selection (28 percent), low-order minimums (27 percent) and first-use coupons (26 percent) would motivate them to try it.
- 60 percent of restaurant operators say that offering delivery has generated incremental sales.
- Orders placed via smartphone and mobile apps will become a \$38 billion industry by 2020.
- Pizza chains reported an 18 percent increase in customer spending from online/mobile orders vs. phone orders.
- Working with a third party delivery service has been found to raise restaurant sales volume by 10 to 20 percent.
- Delivery sales could rise an annual average of more than 20 percent to \$365 billion worldwide by 2030, from \$35 billion currently.
- 43 percent of restaurant professionals said they believe third-party apps—many of which withhold data—interfere with the direct relationship between a restaurant/bar/pub and its customers.

SOURCE: Upserve Inc.

Online postings each Monday provide types of produce plus recipe recommendations for delivery on Wednesday or Thursday depending on the chosen delivery area. Oahu Fresh provides access to food from local farms for homes, offices, restaurants, hotels and schools throughout Hawaii.

Additionally, Oahu Fresh orders can be placed for locally produced eggs and

dairy, as well as Kualoa Ranch grass-fed sirloin steak; Kunoa Cattle ground beef and beef bar; Oahu Food Hub eggplant dip; 'Ulu Mana ulu hummus; Waialua Estate Coffee ground or whole bean; and produce from Kualoa Ranch, Kahumana Organic Farm, Ho Farms, Kunia Country Farms and 'Ai Manuahi Farms. Gift certificates ranging from \$100 to \$600 are also available.

Nguyen Wins Culinary Scholarship

The Hawaii Restaurant Association Educational Foundation has awarded **Jimmy Nguyen** a \$1,000 scholarship to further his education at Kapiolani Community College's Culinary Institute of the Pacific.



HRAEF President Hide Sakurai, Jimmy Nguyen and Vice Chair Chris Yankowski

PHOTO COURTESY HRAEF

HRAEF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization focused on bolstering workforce development beginning at the high school level.

Nguyen is HRAEF's first scholarship recipient who earned a national ProStart Culinary Certificate of Achievement before graduating from Farrington High School last year. The scholarship check was presented by HRAEF President Hide Sakurai and Vice Chair Chris Yankowski at a special ceremony at ChefZone.

Outrigger Announces New Appointments

The Outrigger Hospitality Group has added **Chris Riccardi** to its leadership team as its new senior vice president of global sales where he is responsible for overseeing corporate, Oceania and North America sales.



Chris Riccardi

He leads the property sales strategy while supporting the planning and execution for the Group's branded, managed and third-party franchise properties with an emphasis on core Hawaii-owned assets in Waikiki. Riccardi also collaborates with regional sales leaders internally and manages independent contractors.

Outrigger Hospitality Group announces the appointment of **Kenny Kan** to senior vice president and chief development officer. Kan will help execute the company's



Kenny Kan

strategic growth strategy—increasing the Outrigger portfolio through acquisitions of resort properties and securing management contracts in Hawaii, as well as global resort destinations. He will reinforce development across all three tiers of ownership and management, including Outrigger Resorts, the “by Outrigger” branded portfolio and third-party managed assets.

Outrigger Hospitality Group recently appointed **Julie Burbine** as human resources senior director and **Ryan Sanada** as assistant general counsel.

Burbine will provide proactive, responsive and professional HR consultation and business partnership to Outrigger's two beachfront properties in Waikiki: Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort and Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort. She will also lead the strategic and operational direction for



Julie Burbine

benefits, compensation, HR policies and compliance with federal/state laws and regulations for the state of Hawaii.

Sanada will report directly to the general counsel, assisting with all legal and related



Ryan Sanada

aspects of the company, including providing effective advice on labor and employment law, general commercial transactions and company compliance.

Laylow Hires Maxwell as Assistant GM

The Laylow, Autograph Collection has hired **Heidi Maxwell** as assistant general manager. She will oversee day-to-day operations of the 251-room hotel, which opened in 2017 after undergoing a \$60 million renovation.

Previously, Maxwell served as director of rooms at Aston Waikiki Sunset and has held management positions at Four Seasons Hualalai; Aulani, A Disney Resort & Spa; and The Modern Honolulu. Maxwell



Heidi Maxwell

also has five years of military housing experience, gained while working at Forest City Residential Group and Army Hawaii Family Housing.

Maxwell received her bachelor's in travel industry management from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

The Laylow is part of Marriott International's Autograph Collection, a portfolio of more than 180 independent hotels around the world.

HPU Receives Hospitality and Tourism Management Scholarship

The Hospitality and Tourism Management program at Hawaii Pacific University (HPU) has been endowed with \$30,000 scholarship fund by the JTB Goodwill Foundation.

The announcement was made in September at the nonprofit's 30th annual golf tournament, a fundraiser to support the organization's mission of supporting the exchange of cultural values and relationships between Hawaii, Japan and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

HPU President John Gotanda says the



At the check presentation are, from left, John Gotanda, HPU president; Craig Ibara, JTB Hawaii director of purchasing and tournament coordinator; Lena Young, JTB Goodwill Foundation director/treasurer and JTB Hawaii advisor; and Hiroyuki “Keith” Kitagawa, JTB Goodwill Foundation chairman and JTB Hawaii president and CEO.

PHOTO COURTESY JTB GOODWILL FOUNDATION

scholarship fund “will make an incredible impact on our campus. Hawaii’s tourism industry is the heart and soul of our economy, so it is critically important that we keep the workforce pipeline strong for years to come.”

HPU’s Hospitality and Tourism Management program combines theory and practice with project-based learning, group projects and field experiences to prepare students for the hospitality and tourism field.

The Kahala Appoints Ibarra GM

Joe Ibarra has been named general manager for The Kahala Hotel & Resort as the hotel celebrates its 55th year of operation. Ibarra comes to the role with more than 15 years of experience in the hospitality industry.

Previously, he held various management positions at the JW Marriott Ihilani Resort & Spa, including front office and event manager, before joining The Kahala in 2014. At The



Joe Ibarra

Kahala, Ibarra has served as director of front office and director of rooms.

Ibarra is responsible for all operational aspects of the 338-room property. He also will guide strategic direction and financial performance.

Kaanapali Beach Hotel Taps Three F&B Hires

Kaanapali Beach Hotel announces the hiring of **Jason Kayatani** as director of restaurants, **Marissa Ugale** as catering sales manager and **Angelo Sicad** as junior sous chef.

Kayatani spent five years at the Westin Kaanapali Ocean Resort Villas directing and opening three restaurants from concept to operations. He served in a senior management role at the Westin Princeville Ocean Resort Villas, The Royal Hawaiian Hotel and the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach in which



Jason Kayatani

he oversaw all aspects of the food and beverage operations.

Ugale has been in the hospitality industry for over 40 years. Most recently, she was the restaurant and events manager of Sea House Restaurant and floor manager of Wowie Maui Kava Bar. Previously, Ugale was the food and beverage manager at Grand Wailea Resort Hotel and Spa, as well as restaurant manager of Pineapple Grill restaurant.

Marissa Ugale

Sicad began in the food service industry as a line cook at Star Noodle where he gained hands-on experience in Asian-Fusion cuisine. He attended the University of Hawaii Maui College where he earned an associate’s degree in applied science in culinary arts.



Angelo Sicad

Herman Joins HTA as VP for Marketing and Product Development

Pattie Herman has been appointed vice president of marketing and product development at the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

With more than four decades of managerial experience in Hawaii’s tourism industry, Herman will begin work at HTA on Dec. 2. She will be responsible for supporting HTA’s initiatives and programs, including overseeing branding strategy and planning, the development of new products and experiences and the administration and coordinated promotion of all tourism programs supporting leisure and group travel.

“In addition to having a long and successful career in the visitor industry, Pattie’s experience and success in the Asia market will be vital as we continue to focus on this high-spend traveler,” says **Chris Tatum**, HTA president and CEO.

Herman was born and raised in Yokohama, Japan, and moved to Hawaii with her family when she was in high school. She graduated from Star of the Sea School and received

an associate’s degree in hotel management from Kapiolani Community College.

She joins HTA following her role as director of sales and marketing for Waikiki Beach

Marriott Resort & Spa. She formerly served as area director of sales and marketing—Asia for Marriott Hotels & Resorts in Hawaii. Prior to that, she worked at Sheraton Kauai Resort, Westin Resorts Hawaii and Sheraton Waikiki/Moana Surfrider.

“Having worked in Hawaii’s hospitality industry for more than 40 years, it’s time for me to give back to the Islands, and what better position than through this new role with the state,” Herman says. “I love tourism, meeting new people and building relationships.”



Pattie Herman

Anderson Joins Prince Waikiki

Prince Waikiki has announced the appointment of **Joy Tomita Anderson** as director of sales and marketing. Anderson will oversee initiatives for the 563-room Honolulu Hotel, including its signature 100 Sails Restaurant & Bar, meeting and events space and the 27-hole championship golf

course, Hawaii Prince Golf Club.

Anderson most recently served as director of sales and marketing at the Queen Kapiolani Hotel, where she led the property’s rebranding and repositioning. Previously, she held sales and



Joy Tomita Anderson

marketing roles at various Honolulu venues, including The Modern Honolulu, Hotels and Resorts of Halekulani, the Oahu Visitors Bureau and the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau.

A lifelong Oahu resident, Anderson graduated from the University of Hawaii at Manoa with a bachelor’s in travel industry management and a bachelor’s in dance theater. She currently sits on the advisory boards for Hawaii Tourism Japan, Hawaii Tourism Oceania, Hawaii Tourism Canada and Hawaii Tourism Europe.

5 Critical Issues for the Hospitality Industry

The Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association recently concluded its 192nd General Membership Meeting, which was held at the Westin Hapuna Beach Resort on Hawaii Island. Our annual meeting is our largest gathering of the year and it brings together representatives from our nearly 700 member organizations to network, learn and grow.

The GMM offered educational sessions, government discussion panels, a showcase for our allied members to share their products and expertise and numerous fun events for our industry's stakeholders to enjoy with each other. Traditionally, I also deliver a State of the Industry address on where our industry is at and, perhaps more importantly, where we are headed.

I want to share the five critical issues that I proffered at the GMM that are currently bearing down on our industry. These will be the focus of HLTA's advocacy and government affairs for the coming year.

Overtourism

Hawaii has reached a point where people are beginning to wonder aloud whether we have reached the upper limits of how many tourists the Islands can sustain. Between now and the 2020 elections, there will be countless viewpoints offered about this issue. We, as an industry, are focused on the quality of the visitor who comes here, and it is imperative that we provide a quality experience that will benefit visitors and residents alike.

Perhaps taking a page from what has happened at Hanauma Bay is what should be done in more areas in our Islands.

In the late 1990s, Hanauma Bay had reached a saturation point that was threatening the long-term health of what is one of Hawaii's prime attractions. Existential questions were being asked about the status of Hawaii's tourist industry. How many visitors are



too many visitors? How do we protect our precious resources?

My colleagues on the City Council and I enacted the following regulations: the establishment of the Hanauma Bay Fund where all collected fees from visitors to enter the bay were to be used to maintain the nature preserve; a once-a-week closure of the bay; a strong education program that highlighted the importance of the bay; and a \$1 fee that was assessed to all park goers whether they be local residents or tourists who wish to park their vehicles there.

While these policies technically remain in effect today, there are those who feel that the management of Hanauma Bay has strayed from the original path that we set forth in the '90s. This stems from a lack of oversight and enforcement by the city that has resulted in a markedly less-than-desirable experience for visitors to the park despite the continued good work of the Friends of Hanauma Bay.

Although strong management policies are important, they are only

as effective as the administrations that adhere to them.

Illegal Vacation Rentals

With Honolulu's passage of comprehensive legislation to address transient vacation rentals, each of the major counties has now moved positively on this front, and I am hopeful that this will encourage the Legislature to finally follow suit. Further management of TVRs will certainly bolster our local housing inventory, and strong enforcement and pursuit of unpaid fees will fill our government's coffers enough that

...continued on page 26



Mufi Hannemann is president and CEO of the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association (HLTA).

Embrace and Share Your Gratitude

While most people have an instinctive understanding of what gratitude is, my hope for everyone this holiday season is to define what you are truly grateful for—and to share it with your family, friends and business associates.

Embrace gratitude and make sure to mention it, show it and demonstrate it.

Every one of us, no matter what is happening in our busy lives, has something daily to be grateful for, whether that's our health, our relationships or just the breath of life.

In the hospitality industry, we are grateful for our loyal customers, our hardworking and dedicated employees, our vendor partners, our business relationships and more.

Gratitude is different for everyone and takes on different meanings for each individual, but one thing remains

the same: Gratitude is a thankful appreciation for what an individual receives, whether tangible or intangible. Research suggests that gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness, and that it helps people feel more positive emotions, improves their health and helps to build strong relationships.

My family just went through a very challenging situation and as I am practicing daily gratitude, I said to my family, we need to be grateful for our excellent health and that we have each other for support during this time. Demonstrating gratitude during challenging situations is a true test.

I would like to hear how you express your gratitude. I am always open to learning new ways of expressing gratitude.

My message is that gratitude should be practiced numerous times throughout your day, not just at Thanksgiving.

Mahalo for being a part of our hospitality industry and may the good things of life be yours in great abundance, not only during Thanksgiving but throughout the year.

Sheryl Matsuoka is executive director of the Hawaii Restaurant Association. For more information on the HRA, email Info@hawaiirestaurant.org or call 944-9105.



HLTA | Mufi Hannemann

they will hopefully resist the temptation to always look to our industry as a means to cover budgetary shortfalls.

TAT and RPT Rate Hikes

Oahu and Maui raised their real property tax rates in the past year. It is possible that this will embolden the other counties, or maybe even the original two, to attempt another hike or even the state to do likewise with the TAT. We are monitoring this possibility closely and will staunchly oppose any proposed rate increases or any other tax that is directed at the hospitality industry.

Airports Corporation

We have received consistent comments from Hawaii's visitors that our

airports are severely lacking. While we applaud the modernization work being done by the state administration, we will continue to push for the establishment of an Airports Corporation. This would come at no additional cost to taxpayers and will fast-track much needed upgrades to the airports across our state.

Homelessness

HLTA has worked tirelessly to support the organizations that are addressing homelessness. We do this on a number of fronts, most notably through our acquisition of state matching funds that allows us to allocate monies to qualified homelessness service providers. These funds were matched by private money which resulted in a combined \$2 million being given to agencies that aid those who are experiencing homelessness. When

the next legislative session begins in January, we will again lobby vigorously for these funds.

This sort of advocacy work is critically important because we have seen time and time again how a single vote can make all the difference on issues that affect our industry. It was a single vote that resulted in a slim 5-to-4 majority at the behest of the mayor that approved real property tax rate increases on Oahu that were unfair and unjustified, and added immensely to the cost of doing business in the county.

For this reason, the leaders and stakeholders in our industry must be much more involved and engaged in the upcoming election year. We are putting together an action plan that will have us identify and support candidates that will work with us to strengthen the state's No. 1 industry so that we can continue to provide quality jobs for our local residents.



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In addition to commercial and residential projects, RCM has been the Contractor of choice for remedial repairs on multiple historical structures in Honolulu. These include treasures such as the Hawaiian Mission Houses' Hale La'au in downtown, the oldest frame home in the Islands; Shangri La at Black Point, once the home of Doris Duke and today a museum of art; and the Spalding House, formerly The Contemporary Museum in Makiki.

We consider it an honour to be the contractor of choice on such significant buildings of Hawaii's past.

PROVEN REPAIR SYSTEMS. QUALITY WORKMANSHIP.

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