

# TeleGRAM

♥ Great American Hotel Group Newsletter ♥

## Around the Block

Wishing a "Happy Anniversary" to our Great American Hotel Group office:

*Rob Greene - 21 years  
Dan Hays - 17 years  
Jerry lanella - 15 years  
Sheri Kresky - 2 years  
Sheela Patel - 1 year*

## A Little Bit Wiser

Wishing a "Happy Birthday" to our Great American Hotel Group office and property GMs:

*Mary Reese - January 23  
Gerald Lawton - February 6*

## Social Butterflies

GRAM recently opened a Twitter account. While we are newbie tweeters - we'd love you to follow us! @GreatAmerHG.

If you haven't already - "Like" us on Facebook too.

## A Laugh A Day



## A Deal In Santa Fe

One company's loss is Great American Hotel Group's gain. It was announced earlier this month that the state land commissioner has decided not to move forward on a deal with another hotel company to redevelop the 2.7 acre property occupied by Garrett's Desert Inn opening the door again for our Company. Bids were solicited last year regarding redeveloping the property and a deal was made. That deal has fallen through.

"We are very happy that we will continue providing leadership for, and oversight of the Garrett's Desert Inn in Santa Fe for the foreseeable future under our operational entity 221 Santa Fe Innkeepers LLC," noted Dave Akridge, President of Great American Hotel Group. "The hotel will continue providing affordable, clean and comfortable accommodations for travelers to the area and Santa Fe Bite restaurant will continue to do business in their location at the hotel. This is a positive step for both our companies."

The State Land Office acquired the property at 311 Old Santa Fe Trail in September 2016 by way of a land exchange with Cochiti Pueblo. Dunn returned 9,000 acres of ancestral lands, formerly Dixon's Apple Orchard, to the pueblo, and Cochiti purchased the 60-year-old inn from the Catron Family Trust and transferred ownership to the State Land Office.

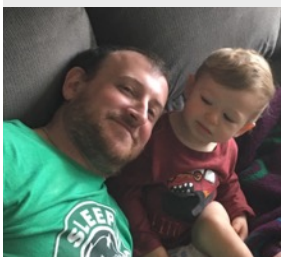
## New Kids In Town

### FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES MILLVILLE



Welcome to Sian Moshier (pronounced shawn), the new General Manager at the Fairfield Inn & Suites in Millville, NJ. Sian joins the team with a briefcase full of Marriott brand experience. Her 9 years of Marriott experience includes her most recent position as GM at the Courtyard Langhorne PA. Previous company positions include Director of Operations at Courtyard Glassboro NJ, AGM at Fairfield Inn Depford NJ, and Bench GM at Towne Place Suites Horsham PA. Other brand experience includes GM, Holiday Inn Express and GM/DOS for Best Western.

A native of Cambridge, England, Sian and her family of 3 teenage boys, 1 year old stepson, and fiancé Jon currently live in Cherry Hill, NJ.



Sian grew up in the UK and attended private schooling in Cambridgeshire. She has experience in running charities and has attended/

organized events such as a horse dressage group with Princess Anne.

Having a love of the hospitality industry and travel, one of her favorite pastimes is enjoying music by the band Phish and traveling to their concert venues. Welcome Sian!

## I Am Human, I Am A Resource .... Suzanne Baele, Corporate Director of Human Resources

Earlier this month I participated in an exceptional webinar conducted by Mr. Eric Meyers, Esq. and his colleague entitled, "Lets Get Real About Sexual Harassment". This one hour class was a great brush up on the nuances and land mines that one would expect on a this topic.

As a manner of procedure, recently, GRAM verified with each of our properties General Manager's that their property is compliant with Great American Hotel Group's Sexual Harassment policy and that each of their associates are aware that there is a system in place to report any accusation of harassment. Each associate has been provided with a copy of our policy along with personal cell phone numbers to call if they every feel threatened. This communication, coupled with our ongoing communication in the form of weekly/bi-weekly payroll notices has and continues to be made to each associate.

Sounds like we are doing a good job right? With this topic at the forefront of news, it is important that we keep abreast of what should be done should you or your hotel be a victim.

In the webinar, attendees were reminded of the steps that need to be taken in the workplace. Our company is proud to report that we have a solid procedure for our teams.

According to statistics that were presented from the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 38% of all working women have been sexually harassed in the work place. Keep in mind, that this number is only representative of those whom choose to report it. The Center believes the numbers could be much, much higher.

We know that victims of sexual harassment typically leave their company's employ (usually) within two years, driving up recruitment and training costs. The Center also reported that some of the victims [men (35%) and women (81%)], might also experience PTSD, which symptoms can drive increased absenteeism, sick days, and abuse of alcohol/drugs. All of this can be very costly to the us as their employer.

Great American Hotel Group is dedicated to ensuring our associates have a work place that is free of Sexual Harassment, and that all complaints will be taken seriously, managed confidentially and with transparency.



**All complaints of harassment must be taken seriously and communicated to Suzanne Baele, Corporate Director of Human Resources at 603-978-3201.**



## Property Happenings

### SPRINGHILL SUITES QUAKERTOWN

GM Sheri Kresky (right) and Sales Coordinator Gail DeHelian (left) recently attended an open house and networking event at The Farm, a new wedding and social venue near Quakertown, PA.

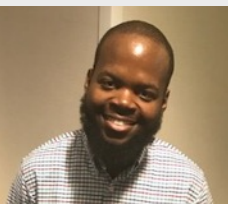


Despite the chill and snowy weather, the two donned their holiday headwear and are excited about their new working relationship with this venue.

### HAMPTON INN EAST HARTFORD

Congratulations to December Employee of the Month, Houseman TJ (Theodore Copeland).

Known affectionately as "Tireless TJ", he always works diligently with this smile! He is one of the original East Hartford employees and guests and co-workers alike have great respect for his work ethic!



Rick Boulware and Kimi Irene Ginn, two recent hotel guests, rang in the New Year by getting married in the Hampton Inn East Hartford hotel lobby. In addition to the happy couple's thanks to the

staff for helping make their event memorable, they wanted to especially thank Front desk agent Sophia Shirley who made the bouquet and FOM David Doyle who videotaped the event. They also praised Night Auditor Nigel Shakes on his exceptional service as the groom became very ill with severe food poisoning the night before the wedding. Even though AGM Charlotte Thompson offered them the meeting room for their event, they opted to exchange vows by our cozy, lobby fireplace and surrounded by their new family!

## Presidential Knowledge

1. Earliest presidents were born British. Who is first American citizen elected president?  
a. Adams b. Jackson c. Van Buren d. Lincoln
2. Most people know the teddy bear was named after Teddy Roosevelt. Which president had a fairly popular sport named after him?  
a. Washington b. Cleveland c. Hoover d. Truman
3. Who is the only president to hold a patent?  
a. Buchanan b. Wilson c. Lincoln d. Carter
4. Which president is NOT on Mt. Rushmore?  
a. Washington b. Jefferson c. Jackson d. Roosevelt (Teddy)
5. Which president did NOT win a Nobel Peace Prize?  
a. Obama b. Wilson c. Roosevelt (Franklin) d. Carter

Answers on Page 6

## By The Numbers .... Gabrielle Smith, Corporate Controller

Accertify, an American Express company, recently published *The Hotel Guide to Fighting Loyalty Fraud*. In the article they addressed hotel loyalty programs and the potential fraud (the unauthorized use of points in their loyalty accounts) that is happening around the globe. Having fraudsters take over loyalty accounts via a mixture of phishing, identity theft and hacking is on the rise and is a threat to our most loyal customers and frequent travelers. Attacking loyalty accounts is easier than compromising traditional bank accounts and credit cards.

The following are the key takeaways from the article:

- Many consumers don't treat their loyalty accounts like bank accounts thereby increasing targets.
- With hotel brands merging, sometimes it is difficult for both the customer and the hotel to know what is going on.
- Hotels pay for loyalty fraud in multiple ways - losing through damage to the bottom line, through negative brand reputation and to customer attrition.
- Financial impact includes the number of accounts compromised, cash value of stays or goods they are redeemed by fraudsters and the number of points you must give back to customers.
- Negative brand reputation is impacted because customers remember the good ones more than the bad ones. Social media posts will make the news spread like wildfire.
- Preventative measures include good, difficult passwords, secure account capture procedures, and keeping abreast of new programs.

For more detailed information, or to read the entire article, go to [The Hotel Guide to Fighting Loyalty Fraud](#) or contact Gabrielle or Linda to have a copy sent to you via email. Taking control of all types of financial security of our guest's data starts and begins with all of us.

## Industry News

### HILTON QUIETLY CHANGES ITS DO NOT DISTURB POLICY

*Excerpted from an article written by Jeff Weinstein and published by HOTELS MAGAZINE - 1/3/18*

The movement in the U.S. to revise policies surrounding "Do Not Disturb" signs is gaining momentum as USA Today reported that Hilton has updated its policy, stating that team members should alert security or the duty manager if the sign remains on for more than 24 consecutive hours.

In the past, Hilton might have allowed multiple days to pass before an employee entered a room. But in November, in fact, it revised its internal policy to provide new guidance. At the same time, a Hilton spokesperson said that the change in policy does not mean that a hotel will have someone enter every room every 24 hours.

Hilton hotels will have to notify guests of the policy. In addition, any "Unable to Service" cards or notes employees leave for guests must contain the following language: "We understand and respect your need for privacy. The hotel reserves the right to visually inspect all guest rooms every 24 hours to ensure the well-being of our guests and confirm the condition of the room. If service is refused for this length of time, a member of hotel management will check on the guest room."

"It's not a change of policy; it's more a revision of the timeline," Hilton spokesperson Nigel Glennie told HOTELS on Wednesday, adding there are no plans to change signage and that control and discretion remains with the property managers. "This policy provides more guidelines and considerations for the staff."

HOTELS also queried Marriott International about any changes they are considering to its Do Not Disturb policy and a representative said it had nothing to offer at this time.

Just last week, four Walt Disney World resorts in Orlando, Florida, replaced Do Not Disturb signs with "Room Occupied" signs that allows staff to enter at any time after first knocking on the door and identifying themselves.

While both companies said the changes were not made in direct response to the Las Vegas mass shooting in October where a gunman used a room at the Mandalay Bay to fire on a crowd of nearby concertgoers, more hotel companies appear to be revisiting their policies.

Wynn Resorts, Las Vegas, has employed an even more strict policy with room checks after Do Not Disturb signs stay in place more than 12 consecutive hours.

## What If? Wednesdays

*What If? Wednesdays* is the brainchild of our new Sales Manager Tanya Preston at the Homewood Suites Gateway Hills in Nashua, NH. It is a customer centric program that asks all associates to think about what makes our hotel unique and why our associates are proud to work at the Homewood. Tanya is certain that this new weekly program will be contagious and will morph into their daily activities. Each Wednesday they will take on a What If? task and then promote it on the hotel's social media. Publicizing is not for the anticipate kudos, but to show the hotels "sales edge", the fact that each associate goes above and beyond the customer's expectation!



"What if is the platform of positive energy and putting into the universe what you hope to live, expands into everyone's daily thinking - not just on Wednesdays, but everyday!" explained Tanya. "I am obsessed with the idea because service is a natural part of my DNA and I believe this program promotes our property in an uncommon way - with energy - rather than just facts, dates and rates."



The first week, the hotel's first What if? project was,

*"After you cleared the snow off your car, you cleared the car beside you?"*

Setting the example, Tanya took it upon herself to clear off several cars in the parking lot. Imagine how relieved a guest might be (especially this guest with Florida license plates) when they came down after a great night's sleep, expecting to have to clear their car before they could drive, to find it already done for them?

Now that's service!

If you would like to start a What If? program at your hotel (or another unique customer-centric program), brainstorm with your teams at your next staff meeting to decide if a What if? program might be good for your hotel.

Thank you for challenging us Tanya. These are examples of programs that make all of us stand out from the crowd.

## Recipe for Love

Sales is all about relationship building. People buy from people they know and like. How many times have I said that out loud? In this season of “love” how can you strengthen your business relationships and make yourselves better salespersons?

Let's follow this “Recipe for Love”:

**1 Cup of Romance** - I am certainly NOT going to encourage you to pursue romantic relationships in the workplace. What I will suggest is that you romance the customer (using the informal definition of the verb *romance*): “*seek the attention or patronage of (someone), especially by use of flattery*”. By knowing your product and building up the features and benefits of our hotels, your potential clients can be wooed to book your services.

**1 Pinch of Humor** - Think about the article I wrote in the last issue of the TeleGRAM. I referenced clever marketing. Integrating humor or fun in your messages keeps the customer engaged (and smiling).

**2 Spoonfuls of Joy** - Think about the mirror exercise. Salespeople who hang mirrors by their phones and watch themselves talking on the phone with a smile on their face, come across as happy, positive, and confident. Inject joy in your everyday tasks!

**1 lb. of Compatibility** - Working as a team with every one on your staff will create a choir of beautiful music makers. Everyone on the team is an extension of your sales department and teams who have each other's back in every situation make for a well-oiled machine.

**3 Tablespoons of Trust** - Trust your brand. Trust your leadership. Trust yourself. Trust me. Know what you need to do, follow your plan and trust that you are on the right path.

**1 Cup of Respect** - Be on time. Be thorough. Do your job. Respect your leaders and colleagues. Be professional. Be proactive - not reactive. Tell the truth. Don't cuss. Respect given is respect earned.

**1/2 lb. of Sharing** - Make sure you share the details of the deal! If the staff doesn't have the facts they cannot take the baton and service the group, banquet, or event. You cannot be on the job 24-7 so making sure that all your i's are dotted and t's are crossed is paramount to your hotel's success.

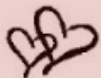
**1 Zest of Tenderness** - No one likes a “my way or the highway” approach. Negotiate tenderly and make sure that you have the grace to give as well as take!

**3/4 Cup of Patience** - Deals don't happen over night. It takes time - and most of all - patience to get a person to give you their business, move their business from somewhere where they are comfortable, or to buy something with which they are unfamiliar. Take a deep breath and explain it again for the 20th time. Patience is a virtue you must possess.

Happy Booking and Cooking!

Linda

## RECIPE FOR LOVE

Ingredients: 

1 Cup of Romance

1 Pinch of Humor

2 Spoonfuls of joy

1 lb of Compatibility

3 Tablespoons of Trust

1 Cup of Respect

1/2 lb of Sharing

1 Zest of Tenderness

& 3/4 Cup of Patience...



#### Presidential Knowledge Answers (All answers are C)

1. Martin Van Buren, the eighth president of the U.S., was born in Kinderhook, New York, in 1782.
2. Hoover-ball, a mixture of volleyball and tennis in which players throw a medicine ball, was created by Hoover's physician to help him stay in shape. The national Hoover-ball tournament is held every year in West Branch, Iowa, Hoover's hometown.
3. Lincoln holds Patent No. 6,469 on a device that was designed to keep boats afloat when they passed over a sandbar or entered shallow water.
4. The four presidents on Mount Rushmore are George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln.
5. Franklin D. Roosevelt never received the Nobel Peace Prize. But his fifth cousin, Theodore Roosevelt, was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1906. Barack Obama (2009) and Woodrow Wilson (1919) both won the award while in office. Jimmy Carter won in 2002, more than 20 years after he left office.

#### GREAT AMERICAN HOTEL GROUP

Pipeline Social Media Service publishes a quarterly newsletter and typically includes several posts from around the blog world that they deem informational.

Congrats to Linda Komornik, GRAM's own Corporate Director of Sales & Marketing and author of The Roomer Mill. One of her blogs, entitled "Google Alerts - Free Sales Prospecting Tool" was selected to be featured in their newsletter.

If you are looking for a company to represent your hotel please check out their services. Pipeline has been a good friend to Great American Hotel Group in the past, representing many of our hotels. Currently, they represent two of our hotels.

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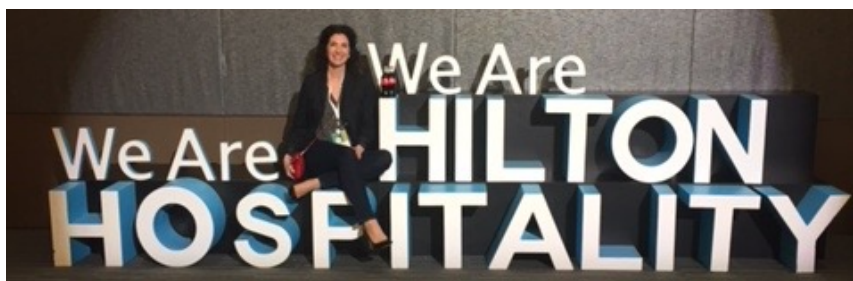
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## The Big Easy Welcomes Hilton Brands



The Inaugural Hilton Brand All-Suites Conference was recently held in New Orleans. Attending on behalf of the Homewood Suites Gateway Hills were GM Adam Robitaille and DOS Tanya Preston.

The attendees travelled from all over the globe and they represented all extended-stay brands including Embassy, Homewood and Home 2. Picture 2,500 personable and motivated bodies in New Orleans convention center!



The agenda included many informational breakout sessions, brand speakers and fun and games. There was also an opportunity to connect with suppliers and Hilton support teams in every category!

