

# Escape

a chronicle of the christie lodge owners association

## Happy Anniversary! Christie Lodge Enters Its 25<sup>th</sup> Year!



Just a quarter of a century ago, before the world wide web was around, when facsimile machines were the latest electronic gizmos, when nobody blogged, the good folks at U.S. Home in Texas were busily building what we now refer to as "units" of the Christie Lodge.

The completed "units" were then trucked to Avon where they were hoisted, hammered, welded and coaxed into their permanent locations and collectively became the Christie Lodge!

Our present Assistant Chief Engineer, Dale Levesque [*see more about Dale on the back page!*], was around back then and recounts, "When I moved to the Avon area in 1979 there was hardly anything here. In '80 I was hired by a local contractor to help with the construction. When I arrived on the job the units were already in place. We erected the transitions, installed the siding and finished the interiors. The Christie was one of the first large structures to be built in Avon."

The Christie Lodge has tested its mettle and evolved into one of the favorite timeshare resorts in the country. For the



*Did a UFO land in the atrium? Naw, that's just an early version of a hot tub. Old-timers remember it being quite steamy in there!*

third consecutive year the Lodge has received RCI's distinctive Silver Crown Resort of Distinction designation.

But things were not always as nice as they now are. In the early days the lodge was marketed as a wholly-owned condominium resort. Because of limited success, it was changed to a timeshare operation and units started selling. However, many facets of the resort were still experiencing problems. Its financial health was less than desirable, the morale of the troops needed bolstering, and the Lodge needed some real guidance for a bright future.

A rescue came along in the form of Resort Advisory Group. In 1988 RAG accepted the management contract and overcame the plaguing problems. RAG remains the managing company to this date. Since 1988 Lodge accomplishments speak for themselves.

The CLOA is now very healthy, the Lodge is physically in its best shape ever and the staff is without a doubt the most professional, well-trained and enthusiastic ever in the 25-year history of the place. Our exchange company comment cards are a testimonial to

*(see 'Happy Anniversary!' on next page)*

Summer '06

(Happy Anniversary! - continued from previous page)

these claims. The Lodge enjoys regular renovations and major improvements are constantly underway, such as the total remake of the Front Desk area.

In spite of all the progress, the Lodge retains much of its original heritage. Because each unit was planned to be stand-alone and wholly-owned, there was a need for individual utility billing. Those 280+ electric meters are still functioning in various closets throughout the lodge. As you might imagine, that's a clerical nightmare as we get literally hundreds of electric bills each month that we have to pay. We have been working with Holy Cross Electric for two years on a joint billing study and hope to switch to a better plan this very summer.

Because of the modularity, we can't change the basic unit layout, but renovations have brought the comfort level to a height never imagined 25 years ago. More openness, new furniture, classy fixtures and designs by professionals recognized in the industry have helped us accomplish this miraculous feat. We are proud of our Lodge!

On the personnel front, literally thousands of good people have trained in the hospitality industry by working for us and moved forward to other resorts and even other walks of life. The Lodge has practically been a university to them. Mike Morris, Assistant Director of Operations in the mid-1990s, is now a professor of computer science in Oklahoma and says, "The Christie is so complex and diverse - something exciting is always happening. I learned so much about business, resorts, people and even myself during my tenure - it's helped me in every endeavor since I left!"

Even the temporary housekeepers, like the Jamaicans working under the government's H2B plan, have added warmth and appeal to the Lodge. Witnessing a couple of housekeepers walking through the common area in full song, because



*Yes, Folks, cedar siding was original equipment for the Lodge. If you peel back today's steel siding, you'll still see the original cedar underneath.*

they're happy and enjoying their work, is a sight that can't help but make you feel good. Workers in all departments from dozens of countries have always given us a nice international atmosphere that most guests find very appealing.

Where do we go from here? As they say in the maritime industry, we are on an even keel. The Association is healthy, the Lodge is healthy, the crew is solid - we foresee no major problems around the corner. The present project comes up for renewal in 2022 and we will have many decisions to make in anticipation of that hurdle. But for now, enjoy the fruits of all our labor and of your valued ownership and support.

When you decide on how you will use your week next, consider visiting us in Avon! And don't forget about things like Bonus Nights! The more you join us, the happier we'll be. Y'all come, now, ya hear!

## **Q. Why are these owners happy?**

We are very fortunate to have a great group of owners (you!) that regularly pay maintenance fees when due. This keeps the Association healthy and allows us to constantly make improvements to ensure your ownership in the Christie Lodge is one of which you can be proud and cherish.

One of the ways we say, "Thank you!" to our owners who pay promptly, is our exchange week giveaways. Locations available are all the properties through RCI and II.

We hold these drawings twice a year, just after each billing period. We draw names of three owners from this group. Then we pick up the exchange fee for each winner's week!

**The lucky winners of free exchange weeks this period are:**

**Barbara Harville,  
Brenham, Texas**

**Rirchie Roeslein  
Hampshire, Illinois**

**Ronald & Carol Hinds  
Elmhurst, Illinois**



## **A. Because they paid dues on time and won a week!**

# Reservations Update . . .

... from B. Jay Bliss, Reservations Manager

As the Christie Lodge heads into another summer season of blue skies and a lobby full of bustling families with their hiking, biking, fishing or rafting gear, we all take great pride knowing that the reservations staff of the Christie Lodge is very busy and is in top form! All of our reservations agents are well-equipped, trained and knowledgeable about the booking process and provide great customer service to all our owners and guests.

Every agent in the reservations department has been working here at the lodge over a year. The agent with the longest tenure Corrina Jimenez, is also our Reservations Administrative Assistant, and has been in reservations for over six years!

The reservations department has many goals that go beyond answering the phone and making reservations. To fill empty rooms and book association-owned inventory, there are budgetary goals set for us in terms of hotel guest rentals and also revenue generated from a variety of owner benefits, including bonus nights. We also develop association income from sources like group bookings and monthly rentals.

Our top salesperson, Lyssandra Martins, comes to us from Brazil. Lyssandra currently holds the highest marks in sales for 16 months running and in a previous tenure with us she held the top spot for 7 months straight. Lyssandra is practically unbeatable when it comes to generating revenue for the association! Almost every owner has had the pleasure of receiving her first-class customer service at some time.



All of our staff strive to obtain high marks in owner satisfaction. Occasionally owners may find the timeshare concept confusing or frustrating. Owner education and usage are our specialties! We are always happy to go to great lengths to advise and assist our owners in understanding and using their ownerships to their best possible advantage.

**Rez Hotline**  
**1-888-325-6343**

Call or email us at 888-325-6343 or [reservations@christielodge.com](mailto:reservations@christielodge.com).

From all of us in the Christie Lodge Reservations department, have a wonderful summer and be sure to stop by when you're in town and say hi!

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## Farewell to a Man of the Highest Esteem . . .



*Bruce & wife Cindy during last year's holiday season*

It is with heavy hearts that we report the passing of our Director of Operations, Bruce McDaniel.

Many of you knew Bruce as one of the nicest guys on the planet. He could repair anything anywhere and always responded with a smile and a kind word.

Bruce was a very intelligent fellow and had skills in many diverse areas of engineering, building and maintenance. He was directly responsible for the excellent physical state of the Lodge. Bruce not only was the best at repairs, but he had an eye for design and regularly made improvements that we all enjoy. The entire staff had a deep respect and admiration for him that was well earned.

Shortly before his passing, Bruce happily stated, "I've been waiting for this day all of my life." Godspeed, Bruce. You were truly a man of honor and class.

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**THE CHRISTIE LODGE  
OWNERS ASSOCIATION**

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# Education Valued by Christie Pros ...

The Christie Lodge is strongly affiliated with the American Resort Development Association, or ARDA. ARDA serves as a national political watch dog for the hospitality industry. ARDA diligently works to make education available for its dedicated members.

The designations offered are: Associate Resort Professional (ARP), an intermediate-level designation and Registered Resort Professional (RRP), which is top-level. These designations represent each individual's personal commitment to integrity and professionalism.



Recently ten members of the Christie Lodge earned professional designations with the ARDA International Foundation. They are dedicated to their jobs and are passionate about their involvement in this industry and making vacation dreams come true.

This group of individuals was a record number for ARDA designees from one company. We are very proud and wish to congratulate all of our ARP and RRP designees and look forward to great accomplishments from these dedicated professionals.

**Rumor Mill . . . and it's just a rumor, but some folks believe that there may one day soon be a new gondola that is quite close to the Lodge!**

*Lisa Siegert-Free, RRP  
General Manager*

*B. Jay Bliss, ARP  
Reservations Manager*

*Shirley Byrne, RRP  
Assistant General Manager*

*Edward Carraro, ARP  
Director of Human Resources*

*Dave Champaign, ARP  
Resident Manager*

*Christina Farrall, ARP  
Marketing & Group Sales Manager*

*Carol Green, ARP  
Executive Assistant*

*Lisa Hauge, ARP  
Owner Accounts Manager*

*John Lee, ARP  
Chief Financial Officer*

*Eric Lickteig, ARP  
Controller*



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## Annual Meeting to Elect Two New CLOA Board Members

The 2006 Christie Lodge Owners Association's Annual Meeting is scheduled for October 14, 2006 at the Christie Lodge. Owners will have the opportunity to elect two owners to become members of the CLOA Board of Directors.

Owners interested in serving on the Board should submit a resume to the CLOA Executive Office, P. O. Box 1196, Avon, CO 81620-1196. All resumes must be submitted and received by July 31, 2006.

Board member services include attending about 3 or 4 meetings per year. There is no remuneration for Board member services, but travel, meals and lodging expenses are reimbursed for attendance to Board meetings. Board members must review periodic financial information and be available for input on other interim issues. Officers of the Board invest additional time.

*(continued -->)*



*General Manager Lisa Siegert-Free (second from left - front row) leads a dedicated team of professionals, these being the above list of ARP and RRP recipients.*

More detailed information will be included in the Official Notice and Agenda to be sent to all owners, closer to the meeting date. Please plan to attend and take part in this important meeting.

# Calendar of Events - Summer '06

## June, 2006

Honda Sport Touring Association  
*National Motorcycle Rally* ..... 17 ~ 21

## July, 2006

Vail *Farmers' Market* ..... Each Sunday  
 Edwards *Farmers' Market* ..... Each Saturday  
 Jazz @ the Market ..... Each Sunday  
 Vail Lacrosse Shootout ..... 2 ~ 4  
 Vail America Days ..... 4  
 Avon Fireworks & Concert ..... 3  
 Music at Midday ..... 5, 19, 24  
 Docent Guided Tour ..... 6, 13, 20, 27  
 Dallas Symphony Orchestra ..... 7, 9, 13, 14  
 Chamber Music Classics ..... 11, 18, 25  
 Bud Light *Hot Summer Nights* ..... 11, 18, 25  
 Teens 'n' Tools ..... 12, 19, 26  
 Casual Classics Music ..... 17, 24, 31  
 New York Philharmonic ..... 21~23, 26~28  
 Vail Antiques Show and Sale ..... 28  
 Vail International Dance Festival ..... 30  
 19th Annual Beaver Creek Arts Fest ..... 30

*This is only a small portion of the multitude of activities happening in our area this season. For more information on anything here which interests you, or for answers to other questions on local activities, please do not hesitate to contact our concierge.*

## August, 2006

Vail *Farmers' Market* ..... Each Sunday  
 Edwards *Farmers' Market* ..... Each Saturday  
 Minturn Market ..... Each Saturday  
 Jazz @ the Market ..... Each Sunday  
 Docent Guided Tour ..... Mondays, Thursdays & Saturdays  
 Bud Light *Hot Summer Nights* ..... 1, 8, 15, 22, 29  
 Horticultural Therapy ..... 1, 8, 15  
 Chamber Music Classics ..... 1, 3  
 Children's Programs at Vail Amphitheater ..... 2, 9, 26  
 Avon's Dunk-Dash ..... 2, 9, 16  
 Kick-It 3v3 Soccer Tour ..... 4 ~ 6  
 Vail International Dance festival ..... 4 ~ 8  
 Avon Antique Show ..... 11  
 Vail Arts Festival ..... 11 ~ 13  
 Darwin in the 21st Century ..... 14  
 Taste of Vail Summer ..... 18 ~ 20  
 Business Before Hours ..... 25  
 Christopher Cross Classic Rock ..... 26  
 Avon to Vail Triathlon ..... 26

## September, 2006

Vail Jazz Festival ..... 1 ~ 4  
 The Fine Art of Small Talk ..... 7  
 Vail *Oktoberfest* ..... 8 ~ 10  
 35th Annual Home Tour ..... 17  
 Vail Harvest Festival ..... 23, 24

## Knotty Alder Enhances New Front Desk Area Look

One of the first projects taken on by our new Assistant Chief Engineer, Dale Levesque (see more about Dale on back page), was the renovation of our Front Desk area.

Dale and crew faced the desk with knotty alder. Alder is a gorgeous wood widely used in the furniture industry because of its elegant grain patterns and hardness.

Knotty Alder will contain an occasional knot (obviously - or why would we call it such?), but the knots are small, smooth, and not open. Knotty Alder finishes have a more rustic or "lodge" look with both clear and knotty grains. It's a top-shelf choice.



The back wall was covered with



slate and the desk was topped with granite. The area maintains its 4-station functionality and is truly a beautifully warm facility that you will enjoy visiting.

While Dale and crew were on the knotty alder bandwagon, they used even more of this fine wood for the posts in the lobby and gave the old "luggage row" outside Charter Sports a new facelift. Hats off to our Engineering Department - they never cease to amaze us with their high levels of skill and craftsmanship.

# Getting to Know Us . . .

In 1978 a young man named Dale Levesque graduated from Lamoille Union H. S. in Hyde Park, Vermont, and decided to head west to seek fortune and high adventure.

For reasons known only to him, he wound up at the Avon exit on I-70 and decided to check it out. Dale reports that he went half way to Minturn, turned around and went half way back to Edwards looking for Avon, then realized that what little there was to Avon was right where he was standing!

Dale took a job with Phil Weber of Mountain Steel and Welding and guess what they were doing? They had assembled the Christie Lodge and were now finishing it out!

He saw the completion of the Lodge and remained in Avon in the construction trades, performing finish carpentry and cabinet making, all the while enhancing his craftsmanship.

A little bit later he met a local girl, Carol, who was attending high school in Eagle and lived in Edwards. Edwards wasn't much more than Avon back then, barely a speck on the map.

Carol soon became Mrs. Levesque and is currently our Assistant Executive Housekeeper. She has been doing a spectacular job in the Housekeeping Department for several years now and we're sure glad to have her.

Dale and Carol have a daughter Michelle Lynn and a 4-month-old granddaughter, Avery, that of course, is the apple of their eyes!

Oh, yeah, before we forget it, Dale currently is the Assistant Chief Engineer at the Lodge. His construction experience has been a valuable asset to us - one example is the completion of the front desk remodel.



*Dale, our Assistant Chief Engineer, knows the Lodge from the inside out - literally!*

Dale states, "I have been involved in many other projects since my arrival. I really enjoy being a member of the Christie Lodge team. When I started working here I was amazed at how genuinely happy and friendly the entire staff is. I hope to remain a part of this team well into the future." That's a Done Deal, Dale!



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