



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### RESPECT!

I've been involved in the tourism/hospitality industry going on 51 years. It has been a rewarding career.

Looking back there is a sense of accomplishment but also a sense of frustration. Why is the number one industry in the State of Florida treated with such a lack of respect.

On a statewide level, the proposed roll back on property taxes is an innovative, though controversial idea but it forgot one thing-TOURISM.

The idea of swapping a rollback for an increase of 2.5% in sales tax, not only hits the low income residents of the state, but **IT WILL PUSH THE HOTEL TAX ON TOURISTS IN SOME AREAS, LIKE GREATER MIAMI & THE BEACHES TO 15 and 1/2%, THE HIGHEST IN THE NATION!!**

The reaction through the convention facilities and hotels throughout the state is one of disbelief. The exodus of conventions from the State of Florida will resemble a cattle stampede.

On one hand we had VISIT FLORIDA seeking \$57 million of additional funds to advertise and market Florida and on the other hand a proposal to chase people away.

I could spend the entire newsletter on the local lack of respect for our industry but I would not have enough space.

For an industry that generates hundreds of millions of dollars in both bed tax and sales tax, one would think we would have earned some level of respect.

As the cliché says "No good deed goes unpunished".

Stuart L. Blumberg, President & CEO

## 13<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL INN KEY AWARDS LUNCHEON, A TRIBUTE TO THOSE WHO MAKE US LOOK GOOD - OUR EMPLOYEES

There's an old expression "try hard and once you get there, try a little harder". This tried and true cliché was applied to those hotel employees who were honored at the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Inn Key Awards.

On May 14, 2007, at the Hyatt Regency-Miami, nearly 1,000 members of the hotel/hospitality industry including over 850 employees turned out to honor their own. The Selection Committee was again faced with the daunting task of selecting this year's winners.

You know, if you follow sports, there is that one shining moment that defines us all. Such a moment took place at the recent NCAA Basketball Championships where the Florida Gators won for the second year in a row. Inn Key was One Shining Moment" for all the employees in attendance as they rose as one to receive a well deserved standing ovation.

Tradition has always been the cornerstone of this event, which continues to hold the distinction of being the largest event of its kind in the country. Tradition was reflected in the showing of a video of last year's winners, a video produced by the GMCVB for which we thank Bill Talbert and David Whitaker.

Highlight of the awards ceremony was the naming of the 2007 GMBHA "Lodging Employee of the Year", Roseline Bien-Aime of the Loews Miami Beach Hotel

The selection of the recipient of this year's "Meritorious Inn Key Award" was a popular choice as our industry reached out to one of our longtime partners, and selected Bruce Turkel, of TURKEL, Inc.

The selection of Turkel was in recognition of his efforts in re-branding our destination, taking us to a new level of awareness, both nationally as well as globally. His vision and the ability to turn our image through his creativity, has made Greater Miami & The Beaches the envy of all destinations.

Special Recognition was given to Ann Fields for her dedication to the

## Academy of Hospitality & Tourism Program.

We also wish to thank our sponsors: American Express Establishment Services; Colonial Bank; Aventura Limousine; Florida Coca Cola Bottling; Bell South; Joe's Stone Crab; Loews Miami Beach-South Beach; American Airlines, Tecton, Boucher Brothers, The Trane Company and Florida Power & Light.

Prior to the luncheon over 85 Allied Members again participated in this year's Business Expo. The Expo creates an opportunity for our allied members to showcase their products and services.

This event, which continues to be looked upon as the model for other hospitality associations. As it heads towards its 14<sup>th</sup> year in 2008, the focus remains **our employees**.

To that end, we present the 2007 "INN KEY" Award winners;

### Lodging Employee of the Year

Roseline Bien-Aime  
Loews Miami Beach Hotel

### Bellperson of the Year

(over 200 rooms)  
Henroy Forde  
InterContinental Miami

(under 200 rooms)  
Douglass Rivera  
The National Hotel

### Food/Beverage Employee of Year

(over 200 rooms)  
Richard Greller  
Don Shulas Hotel & Golf Club

(under 200 rooms)  
Rene Gonzalez, The Hotel

### Front Office Employee of the Year

(over 200 rooms)  
Alexander Gonzalez  
The Conrad

(under 200 rooms)  
Marc-Antonio Downes  
The Winterhaven

### Roomkeeper of the Year

(over 200 rooms)  
Martin Torres  
Doral Country Club & Spa

(under 200 rooms)  
Martha Robles  
The Blue Moon



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(2007 "Inn Key" Awards)

2007 Security Officer of the Year  
(over 200 rooms)  
Tracy Kimble, Loews Miami Beach

(under 200 rooms)  
Jesus Mauricio  
Ritz-Carlton, Coconut Grove

2007 Recreation Employee of the Yr  
(over 200 rooms)  
Philogene Dieusaint  
Sheraton Bal Harbour Beach Resort

(under 200 room)  
Maggie de la Cuesta-The Delano

2007 Engineering Employee  
Of the Year  
(over 200 rooms)  
Harri Dasai-Hyatt Regency Miami

(under 200 rooms)  
Jacinto Garcia-Grand Bay Miami

2007 Restaurant Employee  
Of the Year  
Brian Micelli-Pacific Time

In addition, awards were given out to hotel properties in the following categories:

COMMUNITY RELATIONS  
Doubletree Surfcomber

DIVERSITY IN WORKPLACE  
Mandarin Oriental, Miami

GUEST RELATIONS  
InterContinental Miami

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS  
Grand Bay Miami

ENVIRONMENTAL  
Four Seasons Hotel-Miami

To all the participants we say "Congratulations" to all those who helped put on this event "Thanks"

**2007-2008 CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Thurs. Sept 6...Board Meeting  
4:00 – 6:00 PM

Mon, Oct 8.....Annual Meeting  
4:00-7:00 PM  
Loews Hotel

Thurs. Nov. 15...Board Meeting  
4:00-6:00 PM

Thurs. Dec.13....Holiday Luncheon  
Miami Beach  
Resort & Spa  
12 Noon

2008

Thurs. Jan. 24...GMBHA Luncheon  
TBA-12 Noon

Thurs. Feb 14.....Board Meeting  
4:00-6:00 PM

Thurs. Mar 20...GMBHA Luncheon  
Miami Shores C.C.

TBD.....14<sup>th</sup> Annual InnKey

TBD.....21st Transplant/  
M.B. Kiwanis  
Golf Tourney  
Don Shula's

Thurs. June 19...Board Meeting  
4:00-6:00 PM

Thurs. Sept 18....Board Meeting  
4:00-6:00 PM

TBA.....Annual Meeting

Thurs. Nov. 20....Board Meeting  
4:00-6:00 PM

Thurs. Dec. 18....Holiday Luncheon

(Please note that the dates and times listed above are subject to change)

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**WHAT'S HAPPENING:** Don't look now but October is right around the Corner. So what's so good about October? Check out the following events:

**GMBHA ANNUAL MEETING**  
October 8, 2007 at the Loews Miami Beach Hotel

**GMCVB ANNUAL MEETING**  
TBA

**GMBHA "Champions Cup" 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Golf Tournament**  
October 12, 2007 at the Miami Beach Golf Club

**AHOT 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration** honoring its founders; **STUART BLUMBERG; BOB DICKINSON** and **JEANNE WESTPHAL.**  
October 19, 2007  
Hyatt Regency Miami  
Michael Putney, MC

All of this and the World Series; the National Football League, the beginning of the NBA season and two months until Christmas!

**SAVE THE DATE**

**October 8, 2007**  
**Loews Miami Beach**  
**4:00 P.M.**

**GMBHA ANNUAL MEETING**

**For Reservations Please**  
**Call (305) 531-3553 or**  
**Email**  
**[gmbha@bellsouth.net](mailto:gmbha@bellsouth.net)**