

Hopes and Challenges

By Murray Towill

To date, this year has been filled with challenges. As you may have already heard, Aloha Festivals is having financial difficulties, and its Ward Warehouse office closed earlier this year. A number of organizations rallied together to continue this year's festivities. The Hawaii Hotel & Lodging Association stepped in to distribute the 2008 Aloha Festivals' ribbons for the island of Oahu. We saw that the sale of these ribbons was important to continue offering the various cultural events for free. This year we were successful, but the event is not out of the red yet. A big mahalo to all who supported this year's Aloha Festivals. We hope that we can continue to count on your support as HHLA will always be committed to keeping the Aloha Festivals alive as one of Hawaii's largest Native Hawaiian cultural festivals.

According to many industry analysts, the outlook for next year does not look bright for business, but I am confident that by working together and increasing our marketing efforts, we will bounce back stronger than ever. In the meantime, the HHLA has tightened its belt by putting a hiring freeze on filling the education coordinator position.

In early November, we are holding a membership mixer cocktail reception at the Hawaii Prince Hotel. And don't forget to mark your calendars for the Na Poe Paahana Awards luncheon on Jan. 8 at the Sheraton Waikiki. This event honors our outstanding stars of the industry throughout the state. Winners from the categories of Manager of the Year and Outstanding Lodging Employee will be submitted to the American Hotel & Lodging Association's Stars of the Industry Awards program.

Congratulations, Ed Wary!

On Oct. 23, Ed Wary was inducted into the University of Hawaii School of Travel Industry Management Alumni Hall of

Honor. A respected entrepreneur and restaurant operator, Wary owns and operates Dixie Grill and Auntie Pasto's. A former chairman of the Hawaii Restaurant Association and now an emeritus director, Wary also is very active on the national level, having



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represented Hawaii on the board of the National Restaurant Association.

Selection to the TIM School's Alumni Hall of Honor is based on career achievement and service to the community, industry and alma mater. For a number of years, in addition to overseeing his restaurants, Wary has devoted his time to teaching and sharing his knowledge and experience by lecturing at the TIM School as well as supporting its fundraisers and events.

From the entire HRA board of directors and members: Congratulations!

Olympic Fundraising Idea

By Shelly Awaya

September's Las Vegas convention had it all: food, folks and, most of all, fun.

For Second Vice President John Yamamoto, one of the highlights of his trip was judging the Housekeepers Week Olympics. He would like to see a local housekeeping Olympics as a fun way to get everyone involved in the chapter while also raising funds.

The Olympics idea consists of housekeeping teams that challenge one another in various housekeeping games and relays, with one team pronounced grand champion. Winning the Olympics would not only give the team bragging rights but also would earn that team great prizes, mostly donated by vendors. At the convention, winners received such prizes as brand new beds and vacuum cleaners.

"You should have seen the camaraderie and spirit," Yamamoto says. "I feel this would be an excellent opportunity to get all our members together to earn money for the chapter, but also have fun doing it. Member participation is the key to the future of our chapter."

Money would be raised by team entrance fees to participate in the Olympics. Yamamoto says 17 hotels competed at the convention. The Hawaii chapter hopes to garner a similar level of participation to help sustain the association.

"There's no wondering about the next fundraiser," Yamamoto says. "You worry about it once a year, and then you can focus more on community service and educational workshops for the members."

More information on this wonderful idea will develop within the next few months while the board discusses how to coordinate such a venture. If you have an idea for a game, want to volunteer or would like to host the Olympics, please contact John Yamamoto at jjyamamoto@aquaresorts.com.

