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THE OFFICIAL SASKATCHEWAN HOTEL & HOSPITALITY EXPO SHOW GUIDE - SEE PAGE 35

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When the Stars Align

Alberta's hotel industry showing strong confidence moving up to 91st Annual Convention.

An improving economy south of the border and renewed optimism in the oil patch has Alberta hoteliers looking to more positive times ahead. While overall room demand was up by 1.4 per cent, according to the most recent HVS report, there has been a downward pressure on rates with an increase in room supply of 2.4 per cent. RevPAR was down by four per cent year over year as a result. PKF Consulting statistics for Alberta (November YTD 2010) show occupancy of 59.9 per cent with an ADR (average daily rate) of \$125.85 and a RevPAR of \$74.91 with over 65,000 hotel rooms province-wide.

Alberta Hotel and Lodging Association

President & CEO, Dave Kaiser says the industry "still faces challenging times." Hotels in the mountain parks are still suffering from a lack of international tourists due to the slow recovering global economy. Going forward, things are looking more optimistic for Alberta's energy-based economy. Drilling activity has increased substantially and hotel markets like Grande Prairie are experiencing some recovery. Fort McMurray is doing quite well with the price of oil back to \$90 per barrel. Labour shortages are still

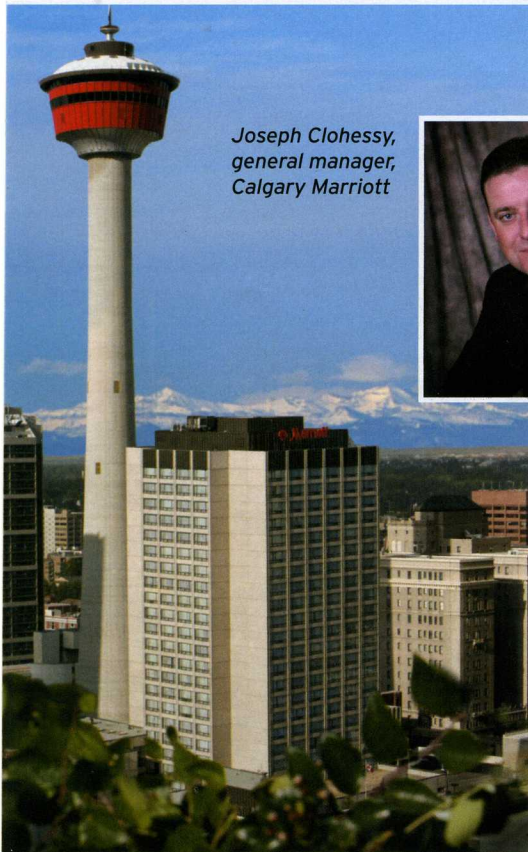


Dave Kaiser, president & CEO, Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association

a challenge for many of our members and the expectation is that this situation will get much worse as the economy continues to recover."

Joseph Clohessy, general manager of the Calgary Marriott and a director of the AHLA, says that corporate travel has shown some strength over the last year." I think there is still some weak-

ness on leisure travel within the Alberta market. Of course, travel from the U. S. offers challenges with the par dollar and the unsettling U.S. economy making things



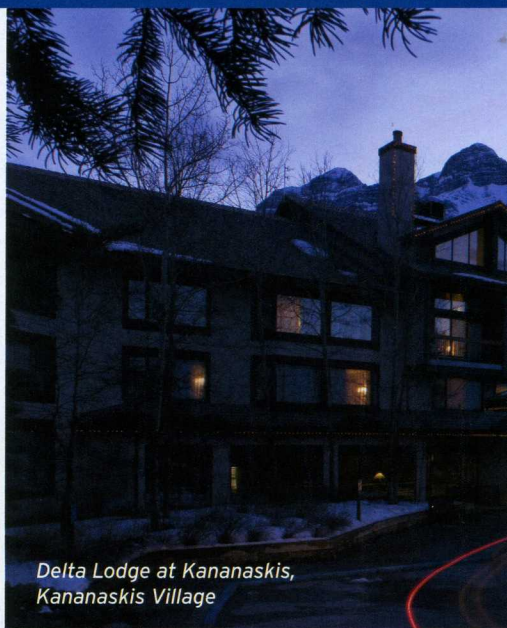
Joseph Clohessey,
general manager,
Calgary Marriott



difficult on the leisure side,” said Clohessey, adding “Group Travel over the last two years for Calgary is showing promise with optimism for a stronger future of group within the next couple of years.”

According to Barry Zwueste, general manager Fantasyland Hotel, and AHLA vice-chair, the future for the industry is bright — “The economic prognosticators predicted a slow growth recovery from the recession and they were correct. Alberta stands to recover quicker and better than most due to its petro economy. Still, people are influenced by the news and their decision to spend is often guided by what they see, hear and read regardless of regional differences. Once the petroleum industry hits its stride again, Alberta and its hospitality sector will flourish. New inventory should be absorbed and rates should start to return to pre-recession levels. The future is bright albeit cautious.”

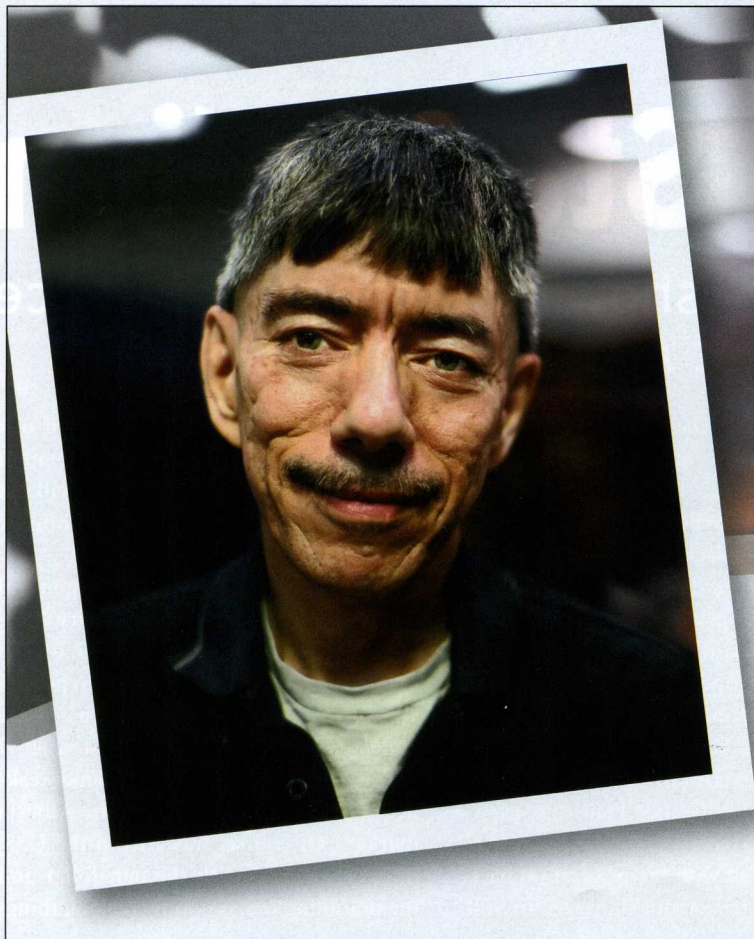
In a Canadian context, Alberta’s accommodation industry is significant, employing over 31,000 people with an annual pay-



Delta Lodge at Kananaskis,
Kananaskis Village

roll of over \$750 million. According to the Hotel Association of Canada, Canada’s lodging industry as a whole employed close to 319,000 people paying over \$8 billion in wages and salaries.

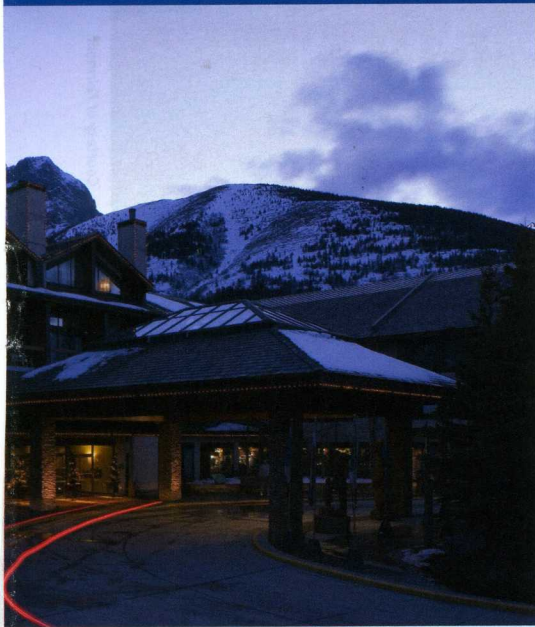
Clohessey is buoyed by the industry’s efforts to collectively market the province as a destination. “Working as a destination



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Courtesy of the Delta

Alberta

Occupancy rate (%)58.4
Rate (\$)134.75
Supply (%)2.4
Demand (%)1.7

Calgary

Occupancy rate (%)	.....64.6
Rate (\$)	.....\$144.96
Supply (%)	.....3.1
Demand (%)	.....1.7

Edmonton

Occupancy rate (%)	.....61.7
Rate (\$)	.....\$123.49
Supply (%)	.....3.0
Demand (%)	.....1.0

Alberta North

Occupancy rate (%)	.....52.1
Rate (\$)	.....139.40
Supply (%)	.....2.5
Demand (%)	.....10.1

Alberta South

Occupancy rate (%)	.....51.5
Rate (\$)	.....\$108.15
Supply (%)	.....2.0
Demand (%)	.....4.3

cooperatively ensuring everyone is on the same page as to how to promote the destination and how attract business to it in its entirety... making sure we have a unified voice and ensuring we are very competitive on the group side to be a destination in the future years." Clohessy feels that the industry stakeholders are optimistic that as things improve in the economy south of the border Alberta will garner more U.S. dollars in the future years ahead.

AHLA President & CEO, Dave Kaiser reports the association has undertaken Destination Marketing Fund (DMF) studies. The DMF is a fund voluntarily charged and collected, usually in the form of a percentage of room charge, and used to support tourism development, marketing and/or infrastructure for the region for local tourism promotion allowing the region to market themselves to potential visitors, tour operators and convention planners as a total destination. "We have just completed

our recommendations for DMFs in Alberta based on the DMF study we conducted in 2010. DMFs are voluntary in Alberta and many regions and communities are looking at establishing a DMF to bolster the marketing of their destination. Our study identified some of the important governance and administrative issues that need to be addressed to ensure transparency and accountability for DMFs, as well as, tax and legal issues. Our recommendations will help make existing DMFs more effective

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and will provide a process and guidelines to hotel operators who may be contemplating a DMF for their community.”

The association is also working on a government relations strategy to create a permanent foreign worker solution for the industry. “We acknowledge the value of the Temporary Foreign Worker program but believe we need a permanent solution to address the structural labour shortage that exists for our industry,” states Kaiser while adding, “We believe an expanded Alberta



The Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge.

Courtesy of Fairmont

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Immigrant Nominee Program represents the best means for our members to transition their temporary foreign workers to Canadian citizens and potential long-term employees.” The AINP (Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program) was designed to support Alberta’s economic growth by attracting work-ready immigrants to the province for permanent residency.

Kaiser reports the AHLA has been busy working with the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission on changes to Alberta’s VLT network. Key this last year was the rollout of new electrical energy program with ENMAX Energy. The volume secured on that program to date represents more than \$21 million in annual electrical energy consumption.

The future government shift is also being addressed, says Kaiser. “As a result of Premier Ed Stelmach’s decision to resign as leader of the PC Party, we will engage the

candidates vying for the party leadership to educate them about our industry and inform them about our issues.”

Exciting Conference Line-up

The AHLA is holding their 91st Convention and Trade Show in April 2011 under the theme of When the Stars Align! The beautiful Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise is the backdrop of the launch of the new Canadian Star Quality Accommodation rating program, a national accommodation rating program that is designed to deliver a standards-based program that provides quality assured reservation for travellers and added value for the accommodation industry in Canada. The three days of sessions, two-day trade show, and industry awards gala will highlight the belief that there are no limits to what can be achieved when AHLA members gather, share, celebrate achievements and connect with colleagues.

Provincially the new hotel developments over the last year:

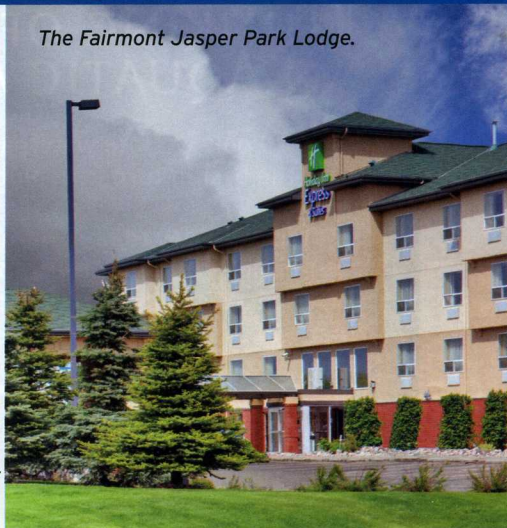
Days Inn Athabasca.....	69	Athabasca
Best Western Bonnyville Inn & Suites.....	98	Bonnyville
Days Inn Bonnyville.....	85	Bonnyville
Service Plus Inns & Suites Calgary.....	139	Calgary
Spring Creek Vacations.....	20	Canmore
Redwood Inn & Suites.....	92	Clairmont
Ramada Drayton Valley.....	82	Drayton Valley
Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites Edmonton South.....	91	Edmonton
Comfort Inn & Suites Edson.....	40	Edson
Hospitality Inns & Suites.....	100	Fort Saskatchewan
Motel 6.....	132	Grande Prairie
Hinton Lodge.....	86	Hinton
Ramada Lac La Biche.....	83	Lac La Biche
Executive Express Leduc.....	107	Leduc
Ramada Olds.....	98	Olds
R&R Inn & Suites Provost.....	43	Provost
Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites.....	96	Slave Lake
Nova Inn.....	89	Slave Lake
Pomeroy Inn & Suites Valleyview.....	105	Valleyview
Best Western Wainwright Inn & Suites.....	85	Wainwright
Ramada Inn & Suites Wainwright.....	83	Wainwright
Western Budget Motel 3.....	112	Whitecourt

The AHLA's Annual General Meeting kicks off the convention with a full report of the AHLA 2010 activities and revealing plans for the future as well as the results of the 2011 - 2012 Board of Directors online elections results announcement. The two-day trade show has become known as one of the most popular hospitality industry trade shows in Canada attracting exhibitors from a wide range of services and suppliers to the

industry and offering innovative profit driving yet cost-saving products and ideas.

This year the convention will include educational sessions and top speakers addressing the members' greatest challenges in delivering practical solutions to the tourism and hospitality industry in Alberta. Opening day starts with a keynote by John Furlong, the chief executive officer to the Vancouver Organizing Committee overseeing teams that organized and staged the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. Sessions over the few days include industry current topics such as using social media & storytelling, social responsibility and the future of liquor and gaming, price wars, online reputation management, the Alberta accommodation outlook, and staffing issues such as compliance with health and safety in the workplace, leadership, teamwork, recruiting, employee development and how to build morale and a customer focus.

Within the sessions the AHLA campground members hold a special meeting with their colleagues to discuss the unique challenges and opportunities facing their



The Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge.

Courtesy of Fairmont



Prince of Wales Hotel, Waterton Lakes National Park

Courtesy of Travel Alberta

business and as well the Recreational Vehicle Dealers Association of Alberta will be on hand with an update and recap of the campground industry and sponsoring a Campground Members' Dinner evening of networking and celebration.

Awards celebrated at various functions include the Housekeeping Awards Gala Dinner, Sponsored by Travel Alberta, to celebrate the front-line staff members whose skill and hard work helped to earn their property the



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THE AHLA MISSION

The **Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association** proudly boasts more than 850 voluntary members and lists more than 1500 annually-inspected properties, representing hotels, motels, campgrounds, inns, resorts bed & breakfasts and lodges, serving Alberta's tourism and hospitality industry. With a purpose to support their members and the strength of the Alberta's Tourism and Hospitality Industry, the association strives to provide programs and services to enhance the economic prosperity and social fabric of the tourism and hospitality industry. The AHLA members' mission consists of eight key values: Respect of the equality and intrinsic value of every person, honesty in daily interactions, demonstrated trustworthiness, a commitment to quality, stewards of the legacy of the AHLA, celebration of unique talents, contributions, and successes, pride in serving and exhibiting the courage to live in harmony with its mission and key values.

2011 Housekeeping Award. The Gold Key and Employer Choice Luncheon will celebrate the employers and employees who are committed to making Alberta's tourism and hospitality industry the best that it can be. The finale being the Chairman's Dinner closing the 91st Annual Convention with an elegant evening of dinner and entertainment, including the presentations of the Award of Distinction and Life Membership to AHLA members whose service has con-

tributed to the association and Alberta's tourism and hospitality industry.

Also in honour of the industry commitment to the environment this year's AHLA Convention and Trade Show is monitored under the EcoStay Program and is carbon neutral with all the unavoidable emissions resulting from the event balanced off through carbon offsets from emission reducing programs. The EcoStay Program supports conservation projects for Canadian

Hotels in their efforts to take action against climate change through environmental green initiatives in the hotel resulting in measuring the carbon footprint and striving for a carbon-neutral industry standard. According to the program an average 150 room hotel not working to reduce its avoidable emissions contributes 1000 tonnes per year of greenhouse gasses or the equivalent of driving 200 cars, heating and lighting 100 homes or taking 5000 airplane flights. ●

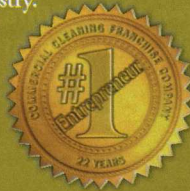


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