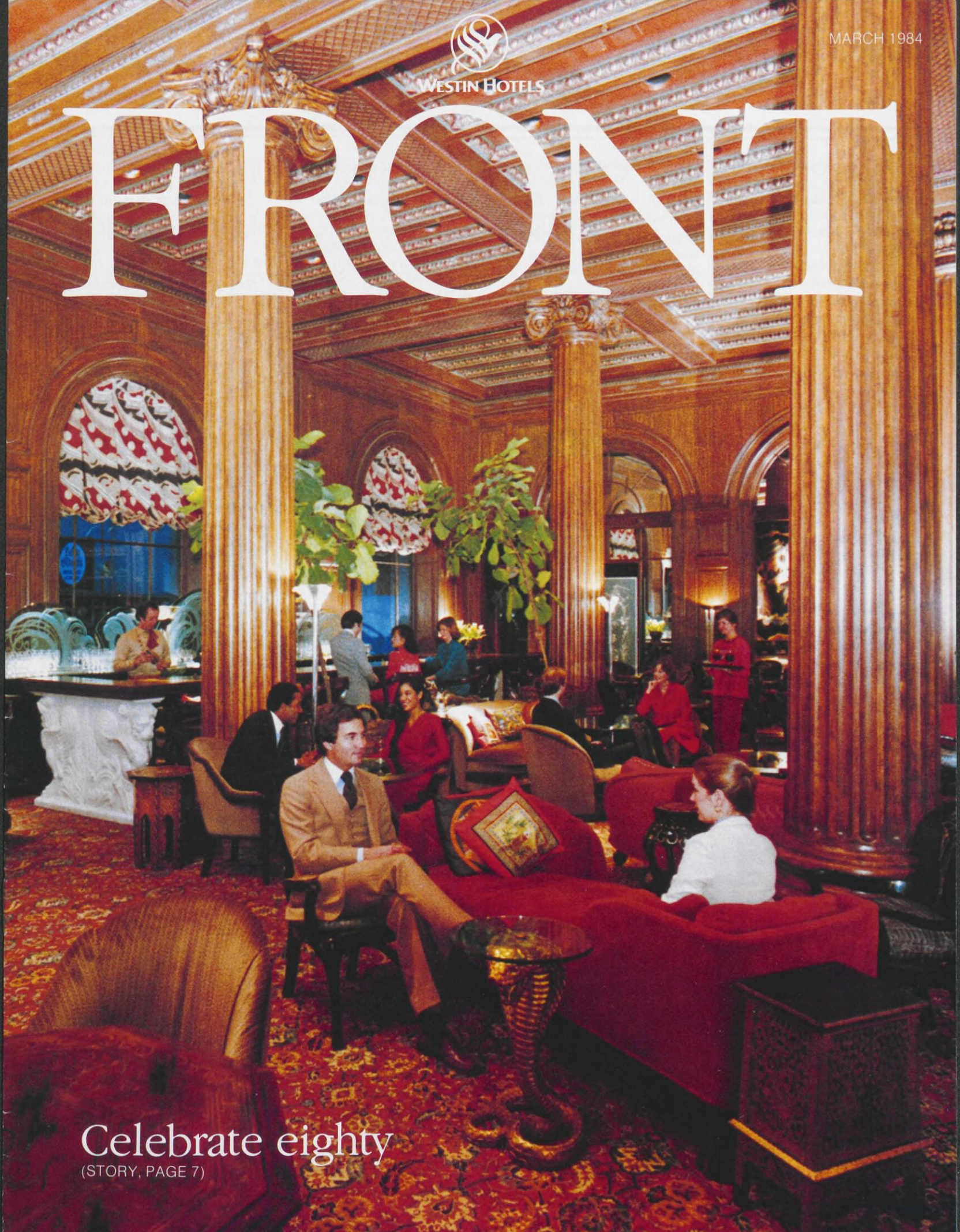




WESTIN HOTELS

MARCH 1984

# FRONT



Celebrate eighty

(STORY, PAGE 7)

## Moving on Moving up

**Lisa Bliss**, sales assistant The Westin St. Francis to sales manager/corporate accounts The Westin South Coast Plaza.

**Bernard Grob**, executive chef The Carlton, Johannesburg to chef de cuisine The Westin St. Francis.

**Patricia Hall**, director of housekeeping Cherry Creek Inn to director of housekeeping The Westin Hotel, Vail.

**Tom Moore**, director of personnel The Westin Hotel, Chicago to director of personnel The Westin Bonaventure, Los Angeles.

**John Nielsen**, administrative assistant The Westin St. Francis to front office manager The Westin Galleria, Houston.

**John Rampone**, Canadian purchasing manager Westin Services, LTD to director of purchasing The Westin Bayshore.

**Sue Rotramel**, sales manager/corporate accounts The Westin South Coast Plaza to sales manager The Westin Hotel, Tabor Center, Denver.

*COVER—Though opened only since 1980, the Compass Rose at The Westin St. Francis gives the feeling that "it has always been there" recapturing, as it does, the early character of the hotel. The room's soaring fluted columns, oak paneling, antique furnishings and air of sophisticated conviviality have inspired guests to label it "San Francisco's grand bar."*

## FRONT

A monthly publication by and for employees of Westin Hotels

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Publications Editor  
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Seattle, WA 98121

Printed in U.S.A.

**Brent Ramsey**, credit manager The Westin Hotel, Seattle to assistant manager front office The Westin Hotel, O'Hare.

**Roldolfo Sison**, sous chef The Westin St. Francis to executive sous chef The Westin Miyako.

**Debra Williamson**, assistant credit manager The Westin Hotel, Chicago to credit manager The Westin Hotel, O'Hare.

**David Wit**, administrative assistant The Westin Hotel, O'Hare to senior assistant manager The Westin Hotel, Tabor Center, Denver.

## Planners pick Westins in '10 Best' list

"When a hotel provides outstanding services it stands out in a (meeting) planner's mind."

So headlined a featured article in the January issue of CORPORATE MEETINGS & INCENTIVES magazine that reported on "The 10 Best Hotels for Excellence in Meeting Services" as chosen by the publication's readers.

Two of the ten hotels winning the largest number of respondent votes in the nation-wide poll were Westins. They were The Westin South Coast Plaza and The Westin St. Francis, San Francisco.

As with the eight other hotel winners, respondent comments in praise of their Westin choices were included in the article.

In its editorial comment, the publication noted, "One thing the hotels that were nominated can be sure of: once they do a superb job for a planner they'll see that planner again and again. Repeat business is a sure sign of a satisfied customer".

## L.A. writers applaud, award Westin's restaurants

The "Chef of the Year" award goes to Werner Glur, executive chef of The Westin Bonaventure, Los Angeles. (Standing ovation).

For the fifth consecutive year, a "4-Star Circle of Fame" award to Beaudry's restaurant at The Westin Bonaventure, Los Angeles. In addition, the restaurant is presented with a "4-Star Wine List" award. (Extended applause).

Now it was the Century Plaza's turn.

To Mahmut Gulen, Maitre d' for the Vineyard restaurant at the Century Plaza, the "Maitre d' of the Year" award. (Applause and cheers).

And to the Century Plaza's Vineyard restaurant, its first "4-Star Circle of Fame" award. (More applause).

The scene, a banquet room at the Beverly-Hilton in Los Angeles in early February. The

occasion, the Annual Los Angeles Restaurant Writers Association banquet. Each year this group of knowledgeable experts on the Southern California dining scene gather to award what they judge are the top rated restaurants in the area, as well as to single out specific individuals or other factors contributing to a total dining excellence experience.

Restaurant operation over-all

quality is evaluated and awarded with star ratings, with four stars being the maximum honor.

According to these critics, the Vineyard and Beaudry's not only ranked with the best the area has to offer, but are staffed by some of the best people in the business. (Bows and loud applause).



At the Los Angeles Restaurant Writers Association pre-banquet reception, this foursome from The Westin Bonaventure, Los Angeles had yet to learn of their award honors. From left: Fred Mensinga, Beaudry's sous chef; Demetrios Tsiatsos, Beaudry's maitre d'; Werner Glur, executive chef; Walter Eckstein, chef de cuisine.

## Awards reflect increase in safety awareness

Take the old adage, "there's safety in numbers". Flip-flop it to read "there's numbers in safety." And that might pretty well sum up the story of the dramatic increase in the number of hotels that qualified as serious contenders for 1983 Westin Hotels Safety Awards honors.

Erwin Mallernee, Westin's risk manager, and Herb Poulson, loss control manager, judge the annual competition based on certain criteria.

Included are actions taken by hotel safety committees to promote employee safety awareness and, of course, resultant decreases in accident and loss statistics.

Noted Mallernee, "Because of the great increase not only in the number of participating hotels in the safety program, but in qualifying candidates for awards, we've had to revamp and expand the program to give due recognition. Previously, we've presented one annual award. This year (for 1983) ten hotels were given award recognition."

Winner of the top award, the newly named Westin Safety Award of Excellence, was the Westin Hotel, Cincinnati. The hotel was presented with the Traveling Award Plaque (held by previous winner The Westin Galleria, Houston), and a check for \$1,000 that went to the hotel's safety committee.

And, an International Division Award of Excellence was also presented. It went to The Carlton, Johannesburg, and included a hotel plaque and a

\$1,000 check. (This was for 1983 only. Beginning with the 1984 program, all hotels will compete in a single company-wide competition.) In both instances, the hotels were particularly recognized for their total commitment to safety that permeated through all levels of each hotel's operation.

New this year was a close-contender award, the Westin Safety Award of Distinction. Winner was The Westin South Coast Plaza, which received an appropriate recognition plaque.

Also new this year, the Westin Safety Achievement Award given in recognition of the attainment or maintenance of a high level of safety performance through an aggressive safety program.

Achievement Awards were presented to the following seven hotels ranked in the following order: The Westin Galleria, Houston; The Westin Hotel, Edmonton; The Westin Hotel, Calgary; The Westin Crown Center, Kansas City; The Westin Hotel, Chicago; The Westin Ilikai, Honolulu; The Westin Hotel Renaissance Center, Detroit.

The Safety Award program, introduced in 1976, was designed to stimulate greater hotel safety awareness, reduce employee accidents and injuries, and to encourage employees to contribute toward a safe environment for themselves and guests alike.

## Discoveries - now it's also a catalog

Many Westin people recognize Discoveries as a Westin hotel specialty retail store operation.

Now, Discoveries has added a new convenience dimension for in-room and air travel shoppers.

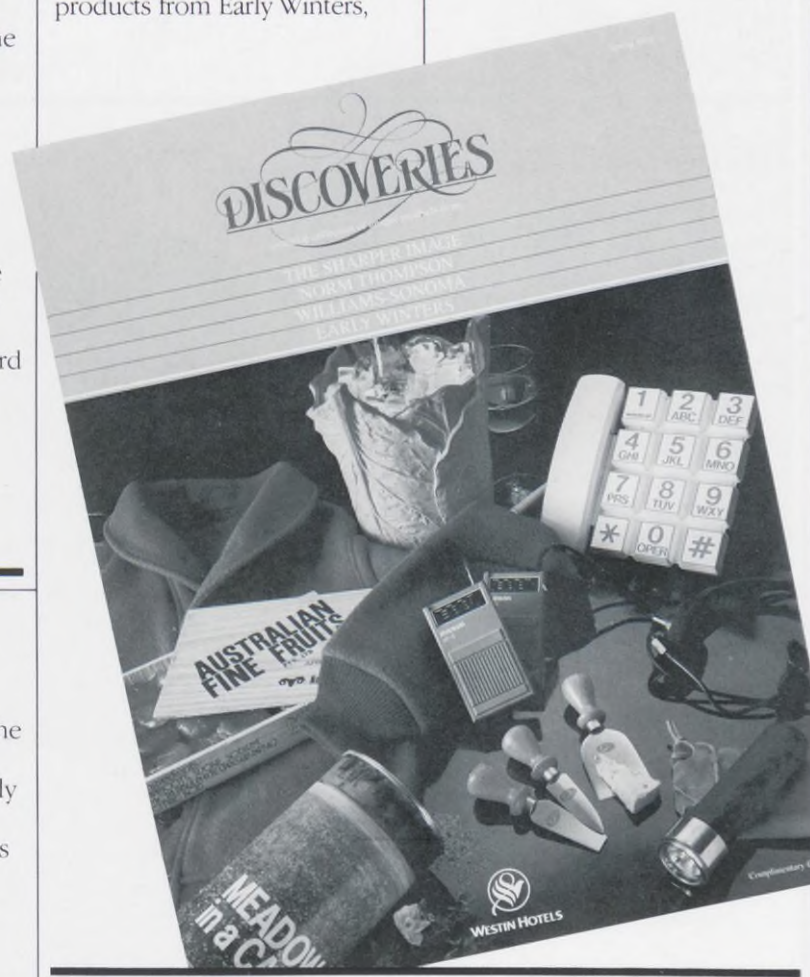
Introduced on March 1 was Discoveries first mail-order gift catalog, featuring distinctive gifts and quality merchandise from four leading U.S. mail-order companies. Catalogs have been placed in all Westin Hotel guest rooms in the U.S. and Canada as well as on United Airlines' domestic flights.

The Discoveries catalog presents a selection of the most popular and sought-after products from Early Winters,

Williams-Sonoma, Norm Thompson and The Sharper Image—companies known for their quality merchandise and excellent service.

In announcing the catalog's debut, John Calvert, president of Westin Enterprises, a diversification subsidiary of Westin Hotels of which Discoveries is the first venture, noted that the catalog is being market tested. Based on successful test market results, plans call for new catalogs to be issued periodically.

For U.S. and Canadian employees interested in selecting and ordering merchandise from the Discoveries catalog, copies have been placed with hotel personnel offices.



## Make that sixteen

The original report from Mobile Travel Guide listed fifteen Westin Hotels as recipients of their 4-Star awards as reported in the February issue of FRONT.

But as it turned out that report was incomplete. In their recently released public announcement of the ratings, one more 4-star Westin hotel was included. It is The Westin Crown Center, Kansas City.

To the management and staff of The Westin Crown Center, belated congratulations on this enviable rating achievement.

## PHOTONEWS



### They delivered — in style

HOUSTON—The Westin Oaks' catering department kicked off its all new 1984 "We Deliver" catering campaign on January 29 in grand style. The event, a white glove treatment black tie affair catered for Houston's Alley Theater to honor Arthur Miller, America's greatest living playwright, was held in the city's Republic Bank Center. Under the guidance of Doug

Dick, banquet manager and executive chef Pat Wheeler, the polished catering staff served a French service dinner to some 400 guests including some of Broadway's most famous stars.

Here, Tony Cherone, the hotel's F&B director, helps seat playwright Miller and his wife Inge at the Alley awards gala.

### Premier at The Plaza

NEW YORK—The Plaza was home away from home while in New York for Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang during his first official visit to the U.S. in January. The Premier and his entourage occupied 250 rooms including one entire floor during their two-day stay at the hotel. Escorting the Premier through The Plaza lobby upon his arrival is J. Philip Hughes, managing director (left) and Hartmut Ballin, manager.

Two other Westins also had the opportunity to host the

Chinese leader during his North American visit. While in Ottawa, Zhao attended a State Dinner in his honor hosted by Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau in the Grand Ballroom of The Westin Hotel, Ottawa. And, while Zhao was in San Francisco, it was The Westin St. Francis' Grand Ballroom that was the site for yet another State Dinner. Host for this affair was California's Governor Deukmejian.



### Tips from the master

TUCSON—Golfing great Jack Nicklaus gives on-site instructions for construction of the 27-hole championship golf course he designed to encircle The Westin La Paloma, a 790-acre planned resort community in Tucson's premier Catalina Foothills area. In addition to the Westin hotel, the project will include a country club, garden offices and approximately 1,600 residences—custom homes, town homes and patio homes—as well as restaurants and financial offices. The 400-room Westin is scheduled to open in the fall of 1985.





### Wine by the case

ATLANTA—A wine selling contest among the staff of The Westin Peachtree Plaza's Savannah Fish Company restaurant resulted in a whopping 109 cases sold in January, the first month of the three-month contest. Sponsor of the competition, the local vendor for Illuminati wines, is awarding an espresso machine to the top sales person.

Gathered around a wine case display are Savannah Fish staff members (clockwise from center): Randall Bracewell, Phil Scales, Angelo Fabbris (beverage manager), Jamie Hernandez, Michael O'Keefe and Daniel Sokolovic (assistant restaurant managers); Keith Willard, Charles Shakelford, Michael Machuta and Chia Kim.

### 'Sam' checks in

LOS ANGELES—"Sam The Eagle," official mascot of the 1984 Olympic Games, checked in at The Westin Bonaventure, Los Angeles recently as honored guest at a luncheon for Olympic Committee members and official sponsors. Host was Pacific Telephone, one of the official sponsors of the Games. Sam, the creation of Walt Disney Productions, was welcomed to the hotel and escorted to the California Ballroom meeting site by Lee Jenks, managing director of The Westin Bonaventure.



### Tokyo connection continues

SEATTLE—It was pleased smiles all around in late January following the review and approval by Akasaka Hotel executives of a North American marketing contract for 1984-85. The contract, as prepared by Westin's Marketing Division

and Cole & Weber, the corporate advertising agency, furthered the continuation of Westin's on-going relationship with the Westin affiliated 761-room Tokyo hotel.

Pictured at Seattle Marketing Division offices signing cere-

monies are (from left): Dave Evans, vice president/marketing; Bill Newman, senior vice president/marketing; Eiju Oshima, general manager of the Akasaka Prince Hotel; Y. Maki, Akasaka Prince Hotel sales manager.



### Try it. You'll like it?

CALGARY—Piping of the haggis on Robbie Burns Day (January 25) has been a standing tradition at The Westin Hotel, Calgary since 1966. The skirling sound of a tartan-kilted bagpiper announces the procession of two food servers at the hotel's various food outlets who pass out portions of the classic Scottish dish to anyone who would like to try it. (The taste

for haggis is an acquired one that combines oatmeal with certain animal "innards", usually of a sheep or calf).

Willing to "give it a go," a dining guest at The Terrace room is served by Scottie Sharp (center), food server at the Terrace, and Sandy Morrison, from the hotel's front desk.



### Many happy returns

MONTREAL—Once again it was a "happy return" from the annual Quebec Culinary Competition for The Westin Bonaventure, Montreal's culinary staff. From this year's event, the talented eleven-member group brought back two Awards of Excellence, five Awards of Great Distinction, one Medaille d'Or and the Gerald Delage Prince Gastronomer trophy. The partici-

pants in the province-wide competition are pictured here with the hotel's F&B director, Michel Rea (middle left). (Back row): Charly Saile, Rene Junigling, Michel Pujol-Soulet, Gisela Bottausci, Jeff Wedge, Salim Somani. (Front row): Stephan Dubhe, Ken Chong, Mohammed Bashar, Guy Chan, Jean Christian Sylvestre.



### Cooking for charity

HONG KONG—The Courvoisier Gala Charity Banquet, held in the Shangri-La's Grand Ballroom, was the first of its kind in Hong Kong. Well-known chefs from eleven top restaurants, including the hotel's Shang Palace, prepared a specialty dish each for the charity banquet. The event raised almost HK\$15,000 for the local Community Chest. Pictured is Stanley Ho (left) board member of the Community Chest, presenting a certificate of appreciation to Dye Ho-Man, senior assistant manager of the Shangri-La's Shang Palace.

# The lady is eighty,

**Or . . .** It is said that a lady never tells her true age. But San Francisco's acclaimed "grand lady" of hostelry, The Westin St. Francis proclaims hers without the slightest hesitation. Just ask.

Oh, you might get a few different answers, ranging from 80 years to less than a year. Or even 12 years. As contradictory as these answers may seem, there is however, a certain amount of unarguable truth in all of them.

For the record, the lady is indeed eighty. She was born on March 24, 1904 in a prime downtown location overlooking Union Square. (Today, the Union Square area is among the top ranking retail locations in the nation.) The hotel was immediately acclaimed as the finest and most luxurious west of the Mississippi.

Over the next few decades, as San Francisco established itself as the West Coast's most cosmopolitan and exciting metropolis, the St. Francis kept pace as the city's most cosmopolitan host and exciting center of social activity.

Hotel traditions took hold including the still popular practice of "meeting under the clock." This refers to the great magneta clock in the hotel's lobby which generations of San Franciscans—and out-of-towners—used as a landmark for meeting friends.

The hotel's international grand style reputation was further enhanced by the uniquely personable style of some of its managers. Among the most colorful was Dan London who managed the hotel between 1938 and 1970 and became known worldwide as "Mr. San Francisco." It was during London's tenure in 1954, that Westin took over the management of the hotel.

Succeeding London was Bill Quinn, now vice president and managing director of the Century Plaza. This is where the "age 12" comes in.

It was under Quinn's management that

inspired the 600-room, 32-story tower addition. This handsomely conceived structure, including its two tower-topping attractions, Victor's restaurant and OZ entertainment room, opened in 1972 or 12 years ago.

And the "less than a year old" age?

This refers to the \$36 million plus restoration of the original building which was completed in June of 1983. This roof-to-sidewalk project that, in essence, saw a brand new hotel emerge from the 80-year-old structure, was undertaken under the direction of the hotel's current managing director, Bob Wilhelm.

The biggest expenditure of that restoration program was the modernization of the 600 guest rooms and suites of the main building. Designed by Westin Service, the original architectural character has been preserved down to duplicating doors and molding. Added were miles of new copper plumbing and electrical wiring plus the

latest in heat, air conditioning and life support systems.

Most sensational, and most visible result of the restoration was the creation of the Compass Rose lounge (see cover) off the main lobby which opened in late 1980.

The Compass Rose, rising from the site of the former Terrace Room, was not simply a remodel or revival of an original, but an entirely new gut-the-room and start-from-scratch concept.

So successful was its execution in blending with the architectural design harmony of the hotel that when it opened many veteran patrons, including one very prominent newspaper columnist, swore that it looked exactly as they remembered it from years past.

This month the Five-Diamond rated hotel celebrates its 80th, 12th or less-than-a-year anniversary. Take your pick; it really makes little difference. The grand lady of Union Square is truly ageless. Though with 80 years of San Francisco's colorful history in her beams, she still is the lovely, lively pacesetter she has always been. And guaranteeing that pacesetter prominence is a 1,100 member hotel staff reared in a long tradition of hospitality excellence.

As Wilhelm notes on the hotel's anniversary occasion, "While The St. Francis continues to host heads of state and other visitors from throughout the world, it also continues to maintain its role as an integral part of San Francisco's business and social life. For generations to come, they'll still be saying, 'meet me at The St. Francis'... 'meet me under the clock'."



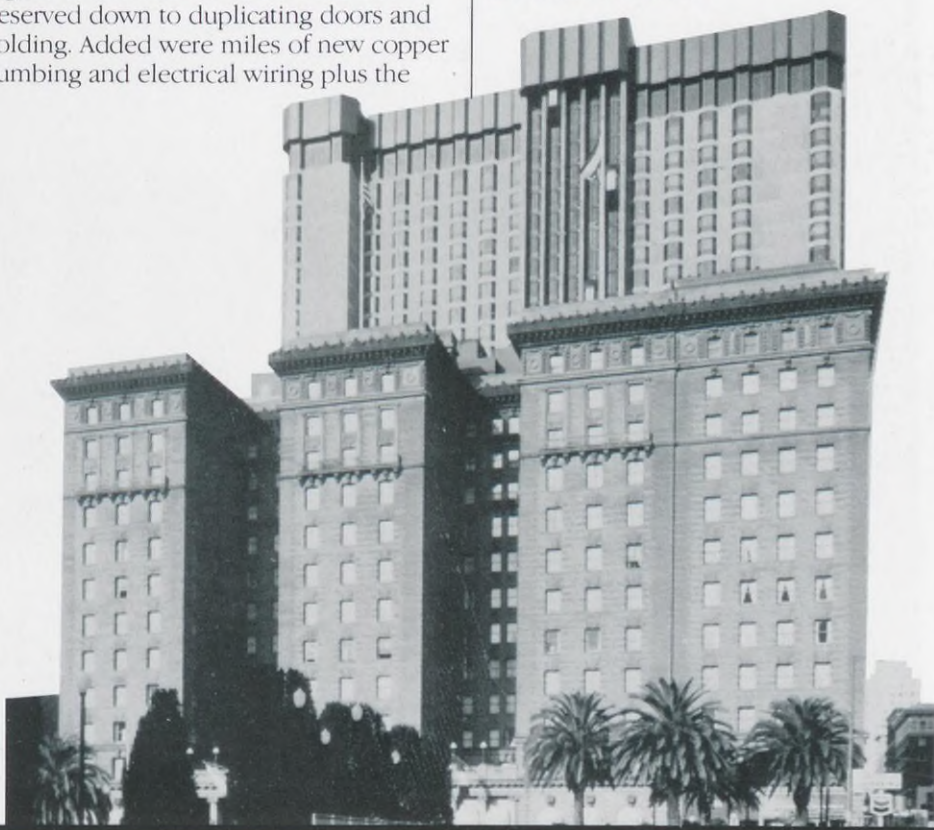
BOB WILHELM



DAN LONDON



BILL QUINN



***"I really wish there was something I could do to help him. He's been with the hotel for some 20 years and has always been a good and very reliable employee. I'd hate to have to let him go, but...."***

**D**ee Ronk, director of personnel for The Westin Benson listened intently to the department supervisor's disturbing report. She learned that the employee in question had, in recent months, been failing to show up for work with increasing frequency. And that on other occasions he arrived late and seemed to be nursing a hangover; had even appeared somewhat intoxicated.

In confrontations with his supervisor, the employee always had some ready excuse for his behavior. None of them however were related to the possibility of a drinking problem. Now, in spite of repeated warnings and "one more chances," the situation had not improved. Clearly, it was time for some more drastic action to be taken.

Though Dee considered advising letting the employee go as the solution, because of the employee's long record of exemplary performance she too felt there must be some alternative answer to outright dismissal.

That search for an alternative answer was the planted seed that was to develop into an Employee Assistance Program that is now in its second successful year of operation at the hotel. (Employee Assistance Programs—or EAPs—are a relatively new workplace concept designed to provide resource contacts for a company's employees in need of professional assistance for personal problems.)

Dee recalls, "That incident got me to thinking how little I really knew about alcoholism. Or, for that matter, the whole area of chemical or substance abuse (alcohol/drugs).

"Because my job involves me in the career well-being of all the hotel's employees, I felt I should know more about the subject. At least to the extent of knowing what outside sources were available to any employee in need of assistance relating to chemical abuse problem help."

She called the Care Unit section of a nearby hospital that she had heard about and asked to be taken through their program. They were happy to oblige. Over the next two months as she could spare the time, she attended their sessions as well as a number of Alcoholics Anonymous meetings.

From the outset she learned that alcoholism was considered a disease. But unlike such other illnesses as dia-

# CHEMICAL ABUSE

**This hotel faces the facts head on**

betes, cancer or heart disease, it is a disease of denial. That is, the victim will seldom admit to its existence. And to some extent, it is also denied by others.

"Like a lot of people," Ronk admits, "I viewed alcoholism as sort of a character weakness that you didn't want to talk about. And like a lot of people, because I didn't understand it and didn't know how to deal with it, I tended to ignore it. When it became a real problem, affecting the employee's performance or that of other employees, my sentiment was for letting the individual go.

"If I had felt that way about it", she continued, "I knew others in the hotel must feel the same. So I thought it would be a good idea to have the Care Unit program presented at the hotel. Not only would it help people gain an understanding about chemical abuse, but also it could teach them how to deal with it."

When she approached Paul Himmelman, the hotel's general manager, about the possibility he was very enthusiastic and gave it his full support.

Arrangements were made to have the program presented and training began for department heads, supervisors and the members of the executive staff.

This met with such success, that the next step was taken to present the program to all employees. At these employee sessions, details of the hotel's Employee Assistance Program were announced providing financial as well as chemical abuse assistance. (As Ronk notes, victims of chemical abuse often suffer from related financial problems.)

Emphasized was that the program was strictly confidential offered only to help employees and not to be recorded in their personnel files.

Employees who have voluntarily responded, either in recognition of their own problems or problems with their spouses or children, were subsequently directed to appropriate agencies for assistance. Often this is with a Care Unit counselor.

But since chemical abuse (alcoholism in particular) is a disease of denial, it has been largely up to supervisors

and department heads who have been trained in recognizing disease symptoms to initiate the assistance process.

"That recognition is largely based on work patterns and attendance records," says Dee. "If some drastic behavior changes are noted over a period of time, it's a pretty good indication that the employee is having problems."

Supervisors are trained to confront

had experienced that they returned eager to discuss the results with fellow employees—especially with those whom they are aware are also experiencing chemical abuse problems.

In the little over a year of EAP's existence, several employees have taken advantage of the rehabilitation program, including some employee family members.



*Resource literature on chemical abuse is exhibited by Dee Ronk (left) to hotel staffers Janice Johnson, Kyle Bakke, and Wanda Lowery.*

such employees with the facts of the situation and not to make accusations. ("None of us is qualified to diagnose chemical abuse—that's up to the Care Unit or similar institution evaluator to determine.")

If after repeated confrontations with his or her supervisor does not produce improved results, the employee and the supervisor meet with Ronk to attempt a resolution.

Where possible chemical abuse is indicated as a behavior problem, the employee is asked to meet with an outside evaluator for diagnosis. Then, as a condition of continued employment, the employee must strictly adhere to the curative program advised by the institution. In the case of alcoholism, this may require the employee taking a leave of absence to attend a treatment center which may last from 21 to 28 days. The employee's involvement is kept strictly confidential, known only to the supervisor and Ronk.

In spite of its confidentiality however, some employees who have gone through the program have been so grateful for the new lease on life they

"Not all have made it," Dee says regretfully, "but those who have come back with a whole new wonderful feeling about life, about their families and, yes, for the hotel."

In fact, the hotel's Employee Assistance Program has been so well accepted by employees that Dee has extended the program to include Crisis Center assistance in such areas as spouse and child abuse.

She notes "You'd be surprised as to the number of hospitals and other institutions and agencies there are out there that are equipped to provide assistance with all kinds of personal and social problem needs. What we try to do with the Employee Assistance Program is to bring the help and the need together for the greater well being of the hotel's employees."

When asked if she considers the hotel's EAP program a success, Dee's reply is a simple one. Her answer, "If it can help one employee—and it's done more than that—then I think it is well worthwhile."

# WESTINPEOPLE

## This lady is tops

HONG KONG—Excellence has its rewards. In the case of Ho Kit Ling (left) general service attendant at the Shangri-La, Hong Kong, the reward was two roundtrip air tickets to Manila and five nights complimentary accommodations at Westin's Philippine Plaza for her popular selection as the hotel's "Employee of the Year." Kit, who joined the Shangri-La's housekeeping department in 1981, is responsible for keeping the lobby and public areas in sparkling clean order. Her professional excellence and conscientious attitude has earned her much praise from her supervisors as well as compliments from hotel guests.

Presenting Kit with her award during hotel staff ceremonies, is Jeffrey Flowers, general manager.



## Youngest housekeeper?

JOHANNESBURG—At age 23, it's a pretty good bet that Ilona Milz is the youngest director of housekeeping in the company. The West Germany born employee of The Carlton was appointed to that top position after four years with the hotel where she started as a floor supervisor. She now supervises a 180-member staff.

Milz began her hotel career at the tender age of 16 in Germany where she worked as an apprentice. Two years later she went to London and worked as a food server in a hotel to learn English before heading to South Africa where she joined the Carlton staff.



## Oh you kids!

OTTAWA—A '20s revival party heralded the opening of Hartwells seafood restaurant and bar at The Westin Hotel, Ottawa in December. Featuring a "Great Gatsby" theme, some 300 spats and spangles-costumed guests kicked up their heels to the tunes of the era and enjoyed a grand boop, boop de doop time. Employee "flappers" who assisted in the celebration included (from left): Karen Von Schie, restau-

rant manager, Sandi Degras, public relations manager; and Merita Dracott, sales manager.

Hartwells' opening followed the previous month's opening of Daly's the hotel's three meal a day restaurant. In January, the last of the hotel's trio of restaurants, the elegant Les Saisons, made its debut and is already being acclaimed as the "in place" for fine dining in Canada's capital city.



## Calgary's best

CALGARY—Each year, the Calgary Convention and Tourism Bureau selects outstanding members from throughout the city's hospitality industry as recipients of its prestigious "The Best of Calgary" awards. Winners are presented with a white Western hat, symbolizing the best in Calgary hospitality, and an honorary "White Hatter Award" plaque. The Westin Hotel, Calgary was the only hos-

pitality institution in the city to come up with two "Best" award winners. The white hatted pair are Evelyn Zajac (top photo), named as the "Best Concierge" in Calgary, and Serene Leach (lower photo), food server in the hotel's Terrace restaurant, who was awarded the title of Calgary's "Best Waitress." Posing with the winners is the hotel's beaming general manager, Arthur Oades.

## LIFE SAVER AWARDED

It was early evening when Nasario Solis, security officer at the Westin South Coast Plaza received the emergency call. He was needed immediately in one of the guest room floors.

The room's occupant met him at the door and anxiously reported that his wife was locked in the bathroom. When he had knocked and called her name there had been no response—only the sound of running bathwater.

Solis called a hotel maintenance engineer to open the door, and found the guest's wife with her face down in the water-filled tub. Solis quickly removed her, forced the water from her lungs, then began

mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Before outside medical assistance arrived, the woman had almost fully recovered.

In recognition of his quick-thinking life saving action, Solis was recently awarded the Westin Hotels Chairman's Award of Merit. Presenting Solis (center) with his award plaque is Bob Hawes, general manager of The Westin South Coast Plaza. At right is hotel Chief of Security, Lee Sawyer.



**I**s it possible to define excellence? It's certainly difficult, and it's subject to a great diversity of opinion. But there do seem to be certain characteristics that are present regardless of who's doing the judging. These characteristics may be subtle, but they nevertheless make all the difference between being "very good" and being "excellent."

## THE CHARACTER OF EXCELLENCE\*

**"The striver for excellence... does not rest until he or she is satisfied that whatever is being worked on is the best that it can be."**

The first is *simplicity*. Or, to be more accurate, the *appearance* of simplicity. In reality, the final result may be very complex in both its component parts and the steps necessary to achieve it, but the receiver of excellence should not be made aware of that complexity. The feeling should be one of ease and naturalness, like a Japanese flower arrangement. Although the artist may have studied for years and spent many hours on it, the viewer sees only the end result: an arrangement of breathtaking simplicity.

The second is the *tradition* of excellence. Although it is certainly possible to produce something for the first time that is almost universally acknowledged as excellent, it is only after years of matching that first effort in quality that the judgment is truly earned. The ability to meet expectations of excellence with reasonable consistency distinguishes the mature author from the promising young novelist.

There also needs to be a considerable *challenge* in the pursuit of excellence. As Voltaire said, "The best is the enemy of the good." Often, in the interests of expediency, it is possible to "get by" with no one

the wiser. But to those who demand and create excellence, something will be wrong even when they can't put their finger on it. Whatever the circumstances, somehow what they're doing just isn't good enough.

The striver for excellence, therefore, does not rest until he or she is satisfied that whatever is being worked on is the best that it can be. Then, and only then, is it "good enough."

Fourth is the *purpose* of excellence. Although the concept of pursuing "excellence for its own sake" is a laudatory one, it doesn't really see to suit anyone but a few characters in fiction. Artists paint to show their paintings, poets write to have their poems read, actors are nothing without their audiences.

**W**estin Hotels strives for excellence not because we want to feel good about ourselves—although that is certainly a salutary by-product. We strive not to win awards, although we do that too. And we strive not so that we can judge one another on our performances, however useful that process of self-evaluation may be in keeping our standards high.

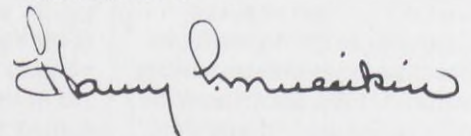
No, we strive so that people who appreciate excellence will patronize our hotels.

Which leads us nicely to a final characteristic: the *rewards* of excellence.

If you ask a great artist which is more satisfying, a lot of money for a work that took years to produce, or the appreciation of someone who truly understands what the artist was trying to say, the choice should be obvious.

Financial rewards are undoubtedly important. They pay the rent and allow achievers of excellence to go forward, often in great style. But the deepest satisfaction comes when one is recognized for having done nothing less than the best for one's goal.

And reached it.



Chairman and President  
Westin Hotels