ROUTE TO:
General Manager
Sales Manager
Chief Engineer
Executive Housekeeper
Rooms
F & B
Purchasing
Personnel
Front Desk
Lobby

"Green" Hotels Association®

GREENING NEWSLETTER

ALLY MEMBER SUCCESS STORIES

As we all well know, none of us can be green without the green products and services offered by green vendors. GHA does all it can to encourage and support our Ally Members, and to bring you news of their successes—new products, new ideas, new techniques, recent awards, new contracts, etc. So, each July/August issue of this newsletter brings you interesting stories about our Ally Members. So, let's begin again . . .

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ENERGY EYE EYEPOWER™ SOLUTION WINS 2009 EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD

The votes have been cast, and the EYEPOWER™ Solution of **ALLY MEMBER Energy Eye** was selected the winner of the "Editors' Choice" Green Technology Award at the International Hotel/Motel & Restaurant Show®.

The EYEPOWER™ Solution, certified to save 15-35% on HVAC energy usage, delivers its results via the application of occupancy, door and window sensors, plus thermostat control. Because the EYEPOWER™ Solution is thermostat-neutral, hotel owners can easily integrate the system into their existing HVAC systems.

Founded in 2001, Energy Eye's HVAC energy management systems have been successfully used to control all types heating and air conditioning systems—driving immediate, day-one cash-flow-positive investments to hoteliers worldwide. Energy Eye's mission is to help hospitality clients increase the value, performance and prestige of their properties by providing them with high-performance, economical energy management solutions that will universally integrate with their existing and new hotel systems. For more information, visit **energy-eye.com** or call **866/463-3135**.

SUNHEAT SOLAR ENERGIZES EFP

Sunnier days are forecast for the energy bills of an Earth Friendly Products' (EFP) plant in Addison, IL, which has invested in a solar power collection system. The rooftop installation by **GHA ALLY MEMBER SunHeat Solar Inc.** includes 312 solar electric PV panels for supplying electricity to the building. Solar energy is expected to provide 60-70% of the plant's overall electricity requirements. The plant operates four side-by-side packaging lines for the 150 environmentally-friendly cleaning products that EFP distributes globally.

Based on average sun hours daily in the Chicago area, the panels will generate 100,000 kW of power annually. Aided by rebates and tax credits through state and Federal incentives, the overall investment payback is calculated to be four years. "The move to solar power is the right thing to do", says EFP vp Kelly Vlahakis-Hanks

The 104,000 sq.ft. headquarters plant is the second of five EFP plants that plan to use solar power—a total investment of $2 million. The use of sun power is a natural extension of the company's sustainable focus in the products' formulations using plant-based, nontoxic ingredients, packaging and now production operations for the 43-year old company. EFP plans to market its sun-powered capability through packaging graphics in 2011, after all five facilities have made the upgrade to photovoltaic power. "The EFP solar installation is the largest rooftop solar array in Illinois," say Shari Walsh of SunHeat Solar.

SunHeat Solar designs and installs solar energy systems. For more information on solar energy, go to **sunheatsolar.com**.

Continental-Girbau Saves Tennessee Hotel $12K Annually

The first LEED-certified hotel in Tennessee is the 118-room Hilton Garden Inn Gatlinburg. Every system was examined in order to heighten hotel sustainability, especially the in-house laundry. **ALLY MEMBER Continental-Girbau**'s equipment came complete with an ozone system, soft-mount, high-speed washer extractors and high-efficiency dryers. In five years, the laundry is expected to save the hotel $60,196. The total cost of the laundry with the ozone system was $48,000, and the laundry will pay for itself in 48 months.

The hotel is located in the Smoky Mountain National Park. So, making this property a Silver LEED-certified hotel was the right thing to do.

Of top concern during the hotel's development was maintaining the consistency of the Hilton Garden Inn brand, according to GM Kris Reagan. "The landscape uses less water and pesticides; the pavers in the parking lot are porous to improve drainage; and the hotel features recycled wallpaper, granite counter tops and a chemical-free saltwater pool and hot tub, as well as in-room recycling," says Reagan. The property also boasts low-flow showerheads and faucets, dual toilet flushing, as well as the super efficient laundry.

The laundry is outfitted with two Continental 55-lb. capacity soft-mount washer-extractors, and three Continental 75-lb. capacity high-efficiency drying tumblers. The soft-mount washers were selected for a number of reasons, including efficiency, laundry productivity, ease-of-use and ease of installation. The free-standing design of the washers eliminates the requirement of bolting the machines onto a re-bar reinforced concrete foundation. The suspension systems are designed to absorb up to 95% of the vibration during extract. Because there's less stress on machine components, soft-mount washers typically outlast hard-mount models and operate quietly.

By combining the high-efficiency washers with ozone technology, utility savings and productivity catapult further. Altogether, the ozone-equipped laundry will save an estimated 205,860 gallons of water and 3,886 ($6,413) therms of natural gas per year. In the wash, ozone breaks down organic materials using only cold water, dramatically reducing hot water usage along with the natural gas used to heat the water. It also reduces a laundry's overall water and chemical needs. Because ozone effectively loosens material from linen fibers, it can eliminate the need for a pre-wash cycle. Therefore, the washers consume less water and complete cycles faster. Using a soft-mount washer in combination with ozone, a load of high-quality cotton towels will dry in about 26 minutes, while a hard-mount washer without ozone will dry in 40-45 minutes. By using ozone with a high speed washer, dryers run less often, productivity increases, labor decreases and bottlenecks at the dryer are eliminated.

To simplify things further, the washers at the Hilton Garden Inn Gatlinburg are programmed to automatically adjust water levels, cycle times, number of rinses, water temperature and chemical injection according to linen type. That way, towels, duvets, sheets, rags and shower liners, which each have separate programs, are washed properly and consistently every time. Attendants simply input a program number and press start. Linens also last longer, thanks to less dryer wear-and-tear, shorter wash cycles and the use of fewer chemicals.

Call **800/256-1073** or visit **continentalgirbau.com** to learn more NOW!

INNCOM Debuts Wireless Bedside Controls

ALLY MEMBER INNCOM's new, affordable, customizable radio-frequency touch-screen controller puts ALL guest services at arms' reach, from accessing the Internet to turning off lights, controlling room temperature, setting wake-up alarms and more.

INNCOM International's new Radio Frequency (RF) Tabletop/Bedside Controller, as part of its Integrated Room Automation System (IRAS), is completely customizable. It is a multi-purpose device that provides the ultimate in convenience, and features customizable touch screen guest control of room temperature, lighting, drapes and alarm clock. The Internet-enabled TBL-80LCD can also display guest services information and online communications, automated CRM information delivery and easy staff reporting functions. INNCOM's Privacy/Make-up Room, its patented ecoMODE® and in room/outdoor temperature also are part of the branded and customized display.

Also available is the MODEVA™, INNCOM's next generation of guestroom controls that takes its popular "Glass Series" to new levels. With an unprecedented MODular design, the guest-facing DEVice boasts heightened functionality and customization to accommodate new construction and retrofit hotel projects with equal ease.

"Our customers have pushed us to deliver products and systems that give guests memorable, positive experiences without confusing technology," said Rick Quirino, INNCOM President and COO. "We've been inundated with requests from customers in the luxury segment to integrate even more controls into our IRAS family.

A light touch on any of the functions displayed on the screen will provide an instant response from the controlled device, as well as the feedback displayed on the TBL-80LCD. Because the system is wireless and uses low voltage, it is very energy-efficient and eco-friendly.

Also making its debut is a new, advanced room interface device called MODEVA. The guestroom control system provides endless control features and options that interoperate seamlessly with INNCOM's IRAS. Inncom had already elevated the look, feel and customization of guest-facing room devices to blend with the décor. Now there's a whole new way to think about light switches and thermostats.

MODEVA consists of customizable user interfaces, low- and line-voltage interfaces, wired and wireless communications, dimmers and wall box switches designed to operate within INNCOM's IRAS. The guest-facing devices can be replaced during a renovation while the load assemblies stay intact in the wall, offering a fresh look to the room at a fraction of the cost of a total replacement.

INNCOM Assists in Bardessono's LEED Certification

ALLY MEMBER INNCOM International Inc.'s work as ambassador of eco-luxury to the worldwide hospitality industry is now attached to serious recognition—LEED Platinum certification awarded to **PARTNER MEMBER Bardessono Hotel, Restaurant and Spa.** The 62-room Yountville, CA, hotel is the third in the world to receive the Platinum certification.

John Tavares, vice president marketing and sales, said, "We're providing a superior guest experience using energy that is managed appropriately and not wastefully." INNCOM provided three vital parts of guestroom energy management. It controls the lights and the thermostat in the room, and introduces automated solar shades—highly technical Venetian-like blinds placed on the exterior of guestroom windows to keep heat in or out.

Each guestroom has an entrance space, living area and bathroom. INNCOM's automated guestroom system features a magnetic switch at the guestroom door, which signals entrance and exit activity. In the entrance corridor is the thermostat, which senses motion and signals when a guest is in the room. There also are motion detectors in the living and bath areas. When occupied, the system sets the lights and thermostat to predetermined levels. At this juncture, the solar shades outside the windows automatically are lifted.

An occupied but empty room is detected when the door's magnetic switch detects door activity, but no motion in the room. The lights are then turned off, the temperature is set to conservation levels, and the solar shades are dropped to enhance energy management. Finally, the system recognizes check-in and check-out status.

Founded in 1986, INNCOM develops, manufactures, and markets advanced guestroom control systems for the global lodging industry. The company's product line ranges from programmable digital thermostats to fully integrated energy management, lighting control and communication systems. INNCOM systems are installed in more than 750,000 gues-

trooms in hotels in 42 countries. For more information, visit **inncom.com**.

Kimberly-Clark Professional's Headquarters Building LEED® Certified

Kimberly-Clark Corporation achieved LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council for its **ALLY MEMBER Kimberly-Clark Professional** headquarters building in Roswell, GA, under the LEED for Existing Buildings designation. Green enhancements include:

- Improving the building's EPA Energy Star rating from 72 to 79 after changes which reduced energy use by 548,084 kilowatt hours per year, resulting in an energy and maintenance cost savings of over $42,000.
- Changing one gallon-per-flush urinals to one pint-per-flush urinals helping reduce water use by 99,140 gallons per year.
- Ramping up the recycling of office materials to include aluminum, glass and plastic, thus diverting 5,300 pounds of waste from the landfill.

The education program the company developed to present the project's sustainable design practices to occupants and visitors to the facility gained special attention. Kimberly-Clark Professional is also committed to reducing environmental impact at every stage in a product's life cycle with its Reduce Today, Respect Tomorrow program.

Kimberly-Clark Professional Gains FSC Certification

ALLY MEMBER Kimberly-Clark Professional has received Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) chain-of-custody certification for a broad range of its North American tissue and towel products, making it the first away-from-home tissue products provider in North America to receive this distinction. FSC standards are globally recognized as the highest social and environmental standards in forestry, and this certification enables KCP to support forest stewardship.

The certification applies to a variety of Kleenex and Scott brand products for the away-from-home market which will feature the FSC label on their packaging. FSC chain-of-custody procedures provide a link between the forest where the fiber originated and the product into which it is manufactured. Possession and transfer of wood fiber from the FSC-certified forest are tracked through every stage of manufacture.

In addition to its FSC-certified products, Kimberly-Clark Professional uses FSC-certified paper for its catalogs, brochures and other printed materials. All catalogs and many other printed materials are also available online, which helps reduce the number of paper copies. See **kcprofessional.com/us/Resource-Center/environment.asp**.

T2 Site Amenities Helps InterContinental San Francisco Recycle

Opened in 2008, the InterContinental San Francisco, has embarked on a "green triple bottom line" program of Social Responsibility, Eco Responsibility and Fiscal Responsibility. According to Harry Hobbs, Director of Engineering, recycling was the first step. Mr. Hobbs said, "The light bulb really went off when I received a guest letter stating they couldn't believe a new hotel in San Francisco in 2008 could open its doors without recycling bins in the guest rooms. Our housekeeping staff was picking up recyclables in the rooms, but that was invisible to guests. The guests needed to see what we were doing. So that was the turning point."

Plans were first put in place to work with the waste hauler to bring in a compactor and blue cardboard recycling containers. The hotel originally budgeted $264,000 annually for waste removal based on zero recycling. Since the recycling program began, over $120,000 has been saved annually in waste removal fees because they:

1) Teamed up with the City of San Francisco to implement the city's recycling and composting programs.
2) Linked recycling efforts with the waste hauler.
3) Introduced 2- and 3-stream Metro recycling receptacles from **ALLY MEMBER T2 Site Amenities** in public spaces (trash, co-mingled recycling and compost streams).
4) Installed Treela Recycling containers from T2 Site Amenities in guestrooms.

Hobbs said he's amazed at the popularity of the Metro recyclers. "They are in very public areas and look terrific. We have 5 units that get constant use, and we even collect compost. The Metro Recyclers have also been a big part in winning green meetings. When meeting planners ask about recycling, we are totally ready to meet their needs." For additional information, contact Lori Tilkin of **T2 Site Amenities** at **847/579-9003** or visit **t2-sa.com**.

ACTIVEION'S IONATOR EXP™ WINS ITALIAN AFIDAMP GREEN CLEAN AWARD 2010

ALLY MEMBER Activeion won AFIDAMP's (Italian Association of Manufacturers, Equipment, Machines and Products) Green Clean Award 2010 for Ecodesign and Innovation for environmental sustainability. Activeion (Europe) GmbH distributes and markets the ionator EXP™ throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Activeion's ionator EXP™ is a handheld, on-demand, cleaner that converts tap water into ionized water, a powerful dirt-removing and bacteria-killing agent.

The Clean Green Award is AFIDAMP's annual prize recognizing cleaning industry companies for their innovative environmental products. Activeion took the winning award for the cleaning tool category. "We are proud to be recognized for our innovative approach to cleaning, our remarkable cost-savings benefits and our reduction of environmentally damaging measures," says Andre' G. Krell, General Manager, Activeion (Europe) GmbH, located in Baden, Switzerland, and the European operation of Activeion Cleaning Solutions, LLC.

IONATOR EXP™ WINS "KITCHEN INNOVATIONS" AWARD

The National Restaurant Association awarded their prestigious Kitchen Innovations™ (KI) Award to the ionator EXP™ from **ALLY MEMBER Activeion Cleaning Solutions**. The awards program recognizes the most innovative and revolutionary commercial kitchen equipment from around the world.

"Products like the ionator EXP™ from Activeion make restaurants run faster, smoother and more efficiently, which results in better customer service and higher quality food," says Ira Cohn, convention chair for NRA Show 2010 and president of ARAMARK Business and Industry Group. "The ionator EXP™ is great for restaurants and food service operations." When applied to a surface, the ionized water cleans and kills harmful bacteria without chemicals, even H1N1, while leaving nothing behind—zero residue. Call **612/296-8786** or visit **activeion.com** for further information.

Atlas Paper Mills Wins 2010 Sustainable Florida Award

ALLY MEMBER Atlas Paper Mills, Florida's only Green Seal™-certified manufacturer of 100% recycled bathroom tissue and paper towel rolls, was awarded the 2010 Sustainable Florida Best Practice Award for the Large Business Category. The award honors businesses, organizations and individuals whose work demonstrates that a healthy environment and a healthy economy are mutually supportive.

In 2009, Miami-based Atlas Paper Mills received Green Seal certification, becoming the only Green Seal-certified manufacturer of tissue and paper products in the state. Atlas has never cut down a tree to create its paper, saving an estimated 18 million trees over its 28-year history. By using only recycled wastepaper, Atlas saves 19,000 gallons of oil and 150,000 cubic yards of landfill space each year. It removes 100 million pounds of paper from the waste stream annually by recycling the paper in its mill and saves 230 million gallons of water each year by recycling the water in its manufacturing operations.

Atlas Paper Mills recently planted 25,000 longleaf pine trees in three Florida State Forests as a gesture of community service.

Atlas Green Heritage™ bathroom tissue and kitchen roll towel are Green Seal™-Certified and qualify for LEED Certification points. Atlas Green Seal-certified products are made from 100% recycled paper fiber, are 100% chlorine free, produced using eco-friendly manufacturing processes and made in the USA. For more information, call **800/562-2860** or visit **Atlas-PaperMills.com**.

Eco Advertising planned Earth Day events

Earn more green with eco-friendly events planned by **ALLY MEMBER Eco Advertising LLC**. Advertising isn't the only way to attract folks to your business or hotel. Community and media relations as well as special event planning are important marketing tools for you to consider via Eco Advertising LLC.

Dallas-based Eco Advertising LLC planned a week's worth of special events to celebrate Earth Day 2010. A panel of conservation specialists shared information on how their organizations work to protect the environment at a free event open to the public.

Shelley Franklin, Public Education Specialist for City of Garland Water Utilities gave water conservation tips. Molly Rooke, Air Issues Coordinator of Dallas' Sierra Club spoke about how the organization continues to safeguard nature. The event also included Staff Director Renee Vaughan of Texas Campaign for the Environment and Tierney Kaufman, Outreach Coordinator for The Trinity Trust.

Eco Advertising is a full-service marketing firm that specializes in green media and materials. Services include advertising, bilingual campaigns, promotional items, graphic design, image branding, marketing, media buying, media and public relations, photography, signage, special event planning, website design and videography with an Emmy award-winning team! Call **972/322-1095** or visit **ecoadvertisingco.com** to learn more.

G.E.T. Enterprises, Inc. SUCCESSES

Audrey Copeland, Sustainable Products Manager of **ALLY MEMBER G.E.T. Enterprises, Inc.**, reports events of an exciting year:

► The company gained an additional 300 Eco-Takeout customers including Campbell Soup, Vogue Magazine, Nintendo and Duke University.

► New products include a spill-proof model along with additional shapes and sizes.

► Aramark foodservice launched the Eco-Takeout program in 100 universities throughout North America.

G.E.T. has also launched a new product line called BambooMel™, made of a biobased plastic with 30% bamboo content. This innovative dinnerware is reusable and biobased—combining the best of two worlds. Unlike the typical biodegradable, single-use plate, BambooMel™ is constructed for multi-use commercial applications and is commercial-dishwasher safe and break-resistant. BambooMel™ is the perfect way to showcase your commitment to sustainable business solutions! Visit **get-melamine.com/Merchant2/news/gogreen.html** TODAY!

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Howdy Green Mountain Energy Network!

Deep in the heart of Texas, where the wind blows free and clear . . . and almost non-stop, the south plains of West Texas host some of the largest wind farms in the country. Producing the cleanest form of energy, these giant wind turbines have multiplied into the thousands. That's why native Texan, **ALLY MEMBER Greg Goza, Independent Representative for Green Mountain Energy Network**, decided to explore alternative energy.

Green Mountain Energy (GME) offers 100% wind and renewable sources of energy for both commercial and residential customers through traditional transmission venues, via the current electric grid system. GME has also established a nationwide footprint through their Carbon Offset program and Renewable Energy Credits. With service now available in Texas and New York, and other states to follow, it is easier to make the right choice for pollution-free electricity.

The best part of this business is that we know with every flip of a light switch we are helping our communities make a positive impact on the environment, save money and change the way power is made . . . one customer at a time. For more information, contact Greg Goza at **888/968-2347** or visit **allgreen4u.net**.

studioDWgreen offers affordable green design guestroom packages

Hospitality interior design firm and **ALLY MEMBER, studioDWgreen**, has created 10 themed green softgood design specification packages for the hotel industry. Hotels are readily implementing green practices as consumers demand that the hospitality world be more sustainable. The packages embrace the increasing interest in minimizing use of our Earth's resources. These low-cost designs are pre-packaged specifications ready to order online at $397 per scheme.

Each themed package comes with detailed specifications and samples of sustainable fabrics, wall and floor covering. Clients can adjust quantities, so they are able to order all or some of the items. "We created this concept to fill a market niche that has not been tapped for sustainable design in the hospitality sector. The fact that the client can choose the quantities makes for a simple ordering process. The client receives a green guestroom scheme designed by a professional, award-winning hospitality design firm at an unbelievably low price," said Gail McCleese, principal of studioDWgreen.

studioDWgreen is a multi-faceted design studio offering design services, including design maintenance, full-scale renovations and new construction. All packages are delivered via mail and are available for purchase NOW. The designs may be viewed and purchased at **studiodwgreen.studiodw.us/**.

CCI'S STUDENT WORKFORCE

For 25 years, **ALLY MEMBER Center for Cultural Interchange (CCI)** has been serving the global community with its mission to promote cultural understanding, academic development, environmental consciousness and world peace through international education. CCI's Work & Travel program provides international university students the ability to work in the US on a J-1 Work and Travel visa during their main break from school. The program is designed to enable American employers the opportunity to expose their business to an international perspective.

In 2004, CCI became "The Greenheart of Cultural Exchange" by formally adopting Greenheart as its environmental and social initiative. Greenheart is CCI's medium to connect people and planet through environmentalism, fair trade, social transformation and cross-cultural understanding. The Greenheart initiative was implemented in all of CCI's cultural exchange programs. Exchange students across America participate in the Greenheart Club by taking the initiative to make their employers' businesses greener.

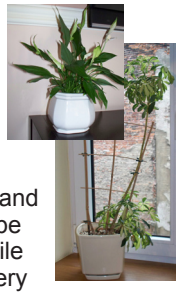
The program participants who are working for hotels are encouraged to help their employers analyze ways in which to make their workplace greener. The participants are instructed to think critically about specific areas of environmentally-friendly practices, such as water and electricity conservation, and whether certain practices would be practical or possible for their hotel to utilize. To learn more, visit **cci-exchange.org/greenheart_home.aspx**.

Greening from European Travels

by Patty Griffin, GHA President

During late April and early May I was thrilled to travel to Berlin, Dresden, Prague, Krakow and Warsaw, and what a delight the trip was. Of course, I am so focused on anything green that I look for greening in everything I do. I was really pleased about many green things I experienced, and want to share them with you. I feel that Europe is more advanced than the US regarding greening for two simple reasons: Their 220k electricity is much more expensive than our 120k so consumers are going to work much harder to conserve it. Their land mass is more populated than ours, so there is much less space for landfills, etc. Real estate is much more expensive—so expensive that 100-year home mortgages are not uncommon.

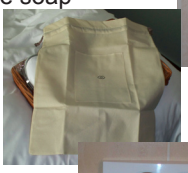
On our first stop in Berlin, it was a thrill to see this guestroom phone with a full keyboard and a small screen for texting—a real step forward in ramping up the technology side of things.



This room and another had a live green plant in the room to keep the air fresher.

A special thrill for me came during a walk in Berlin's huge and very central Tiergarten Park. Instead of composting clippings, downed branches and tree limbs by spreading them flat over the ground, all the brush was stacked in a very long row about 2-3' high and 2' wide which wandered through the woods. It won't be clear in the photo shown, but the look overall of this pile of dead sticks and branches was, for some reason, very graceful and almost arty, and very pleasing to me. Beside the appealing appearance of the piled branches, the row could also serve as a bit of a fence to keep the public on the foot path rather than cutting through the thicket which they may be tempted to do.

Every hotel had soap dispensers. Most were utilitarian, but effective. All contained a combination soap and shampoo. I've read that the US is the only country in the world where people insist on a separate soap product to wash their hair.



This cloth bag and wicker basket are a particularly appealing green way to provide laundry services.

All toilets were dual flush, and all had large panels on the wall as you can see to choose a lot or a little water for the flush. Hotels that offered two rolls of bathroom tissue always offered both one-ply and two-ply paper rather than two rolls of the same type of paper.

Every hotel had a linen program asking guests to reuse towels. This card used a bear as a graphic on the posted card. The bear is apparently a favorite mascot to Germans.

Most of the hotels had an energy management system. Some appeared to be quite old, but nevertheless they were definitely managing the energy.

The most expensive hotel at which we stayed, in Prague, managed their energy by turning it off. Even though it was early May, it was quite hot during the day.

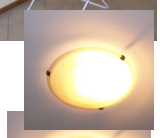
When we called because the AC didn't come on, the front desk clerk said, "Oh, it's not on at the moment." As we soon learned, they still have a situation where they choose to have either heat or AC, but not both. So, we had to sleep with the windows wide open when we were paying $178 a night.

Online (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electricity/tariff) is a comparison of electricity costs around the world. While the average cost per 1kWh (one kilowatt hour) in the US is 9.28¢, the cost in the UK is 18.59¢ and in Germany it is 30.66¢.

Television sets all had a button to turn off the "ready" light, which seems to be typical in Europe. I've never seen such in the US, but think it would be a great addition. About half of the hotels had large flat screen televisions. We found there were always at least two English-speaking channels: CNN and BBC.

We rented an apartment in Krakow which was particularly nice. Again, because of the difference in the cost of electricity, things we take for granted are just not available. Though the apartment was very nice and clearly newly renovated, there was no oven in the kitchen and no microwave. Apparently all cooking is accomplished on 4-burner electric cooktops in most home kitchens.

The lady who cleaned the 4 large apartments had no clothes dryer. She washed our clothes for us, and hung them on a drying rack that folds out and holds lots of clothing.



Ceiling lights had two bulbs and two switches. So, you could choose the amount of light you prefer from the ceiling fixture.

All interior doors (except the bathroom door) in this apartment were 8-light doors which I've never seen before inside a home or apartment. Though there is a large window on all exterior walls, I assume the purpose is to bring more light into the space. A good green idea.

Grocery shopping is very different in Europe. Many small, crowded shops. The receipts given are tiny—generally about one inch wide. As our receipts in the US get longer and longer with enticements to go online for this or that, it was an interesting minimalization.

The only large grocery stores we found were very long and narrow, usually under a train station and often underground. The aisles are very narrow, and the shopping carts tiny (the size of a hand-carried basket in our stores).

Grocery store fruit generally has stickers, but the stickers were only advertisements. There was no other purpose. Those stickers have always bugged me a bit. It seems like a lot of trouble to put a sticker on every piece of fruit, and, of course, we have to deal with it at home. And, then there's the glue . . .

Paper napkins in restaurants were small and very thin. In this case, the paper squares were very delicate and light. In another restaurant, our order was apparently going to take a little longer to serve. So, the waitress said, "I'll bring you some bread and lard." Which she did. She brought out a cup almost overflowing with lard that had traces of cooking bits in it.

Some things I particularly liked were all at a 5-star hotel in Dresden. A gentleman housekeeper wore a navy knit shirt with beige overalls. The overalls looked to be very comfortable as well as being attractive.

Newspapers are delivered to guestrooms in these beautifully embroidered cloth bags.

A large umbrella was available in the closet. Of course, the note said it may be purchased. I'm unsure if guests are allowed to use the umbrella on rainy days without purchase. A nice offering, and a possible sale!

A minor point was a brochure on a train. Instead of the whole brochure being covered with a shiny varnish, only the circles and colored portions of the brochure were varnished. It just means less varnish was used, which might have reduced the cost.

Walking the streets in these beautiful old cities with buildings hundreds of years old, I noticed that window sills almost never are wood. If they aren't stone, then, as this one, they are sheet metal, copper or brass.

Between cities we traveled by train, and the rail cars are marked either first or second class. Second class is, of course, cheaper, but not by much. We only had one hitch in our train travel, but it was a doozy. Second class tickets are sold for use within 30 days, so you can use the ticket on any day on any train going to your destination. So, the train people have no idea how many people will actually travel on any one day on any one train second class. First class tickets are sold reserving a particular seat in a numbered rail car for a certain trip.

On a Monday morning, we were going from Prague to Krakow second class, and knew we had one train change. Things began very well, but at some point the conductor came and told us that at the next stop we, and anyone going on to Krakow, had to move to the last 5 cars because those cars were breaking off and going to Krakow. We knew it would be a mad dash, but we had no idea 100+ other people would be dashing too. Here's where things got goofy. We ended up standing in the passage way at the end of a rail car along with about 5 other people and all the luggage. At one point, as the train stopped at different stations there were at least 10 of us standing in the very small area. The bathroom was also there, so we continually had people coming and going, squeezing between us and stepping over luggage to get to the bathroom. We ended up standing at the car's end for over two hours during the 300-mile trip. You guessed it—that was the last of second class train travel for us!

What was absolutely amazing to me about the experience was that not one single person was even slightly upset or angry. Everyone was very calm, and accepted the situation gracefully. Obviously, they are used to the workings of their train travel.

All the people were all amazingly friendly and helpful. Almost everyone to the age of about 50 speaks English. Often people offered help when we'd not asked—clearly, we must have looked like we needed help!

Ah, as you know, it's wonderful to go away and visit other

places, but it's always wonderful to come back home as well. I dearly love to travel. Every place we visit is interesting and exciting, and different from our everyday lives. I almost can't wait for the next trip!

HOUSEKEEPERS IN HAIRNETS

Housekeepers at the Crowne Plaza Philadelphia Cityline all were hairnets. It's required. And, it makes such good sense. If a hotel can keep one single hair from being dropped in a guest bathroom or on a guest bed or anywhere in the guest-room for that matter, and upsetting a guest who won't return, then every housekeeper at every hotel should be required to wear a hairnet. It's one of those very simple things that works.

SEARCHING ONLINE

We all use search engines online regularly, but there are ways to be more effective in our online searching. The key to finding what you want online is to phrase the search terms well. There are times when being very specific works best; other times, you'll want to be deliberately vague. What's important is to use the wording that's most apt to find the page you want.

It helps to know that search engines generally ignore common words such as *and*, *a*, *in*, *the* and so on. You can phrase the search without them.

If you're looking for something very specific—say, a phrase or a headline—then put it inside quote marks when you search. When you don't use quotes, the search engines look for the words anywhere on a web page. When you use quotes, they'll look for those words in exactly that order, and adjacent to each other.

For instance, if you were looking for the lyrics of *The Farmer in the Dell*, you might get results relating to a farmer using a Dell computer. But, if you put the words in quotes, you'll get the song instead.

The quotes trick can be particularly helpful when you are troubleshooting cryptic error messages on your computer. Place the exact text of an error message inside quotes when searching, and you'll likely find lots of discussion online about it, including ways to fix it.

You can also structure a search to look for something on a specific site. Do you want to find something with the word *computing* in it on chron.com? Set up your search like this: *site:chron.com computing*.

Do you want to search for something, and ensure certain words appear in the results? Add a plus sign in front of the required word, such as *farmer +dell*. If you want to prevent certain words from being included, use a minus sign instead: *farmer -dell*.

If you want to get fancy, most search engines have a page that lets you set up a search using specific parameters. You can limit your search by date, site, even where the words appear on a page. At **Google**, this page is at google.com/advanced_search. At **Bing**, do a standard search, then click the Advanced link next to the search box on the results page. At **Yahoo**, the page is at search.yahoo.com/web/advanced.

Happy searching!

Silverman, Dwight, "How to make search engines do your bidding," Computing, Houston Chronicle, June 29, 2010

FLAVORED SALT

Storing rosemary and sage separately in salt reaps two benefits. The salt will draw out the moisture from the herb. You can use the dried herb and/or the herb-flavored salt for seasoning everything from roasted winter vegetables to chicken.

Break the branches up, or, if you prefer, removed the leaves from their stems and cover completely with kosher salt in a glass jar.

Cotler, Amy, The Locavore Way, "Green Philosophy works for husband-wife caterers," Houston Chronicle, April 18, 2010

VENDING MACHINES . . .

. . . are usually the antithesis of going green. Filled with prepackaged snacks and drinks made from dubious ingredients, these machines are bad for your wallet, your health and the planet.

Mahany, Barbara, Chicago Tribune, "Unplugging, less spending: Teens can make the difference," Houston Chronicle, April 22, 2010

FOLDABLE SHIPPING CONTAINERS

Inventors in the US, Netherlands and India are moving closer to easing a headache that costs the shipping business billions of dollars a year. Empty containers must be shuffled around the world to be refilled, requiring millions of ship, truck and rail journeys that yield no revenue. The net cost of moving empties is around $7 billion a year.

The possible solution: a mass market foldable shipping container. Industry officials say trucks, trains, barges and ships could carry four times as many containers if they were folded and stacked on top of each other. That would cut the cost of moving empties by as much as 75%, saving billions of dollars, say analysts and the makers of foldable containers.

Because of their complexity, foldable containers would cost at least $4,000 each, roughly double the cost of normal containers. The boxes must be able to withstand the heat, cold and salt water of the high seas, and the rough handling of dock cranes. On ships, containers are stacked up to 10 deep, so each one needs to be able to withstand 350 tons of weight. They also must work within the standardized systems used world-wide in highly automated ports.

Cutting the expense of moving empties would raise profit margins at a time when the shipping industry is reeling from the financial crisis—the industry reported losses of about $20 billion last year.

Rene Giesbers, heir to a central-heating fortune in Rotterdam, designed a composite fiberglass container and started Cargoshell. He is hoping for help from the Dutch government in the form of a green label that would give companies buying his container tax breaks. The container's vertical walls fold inwards, giving it an X shape as it collapses on itself. He says his container saves 75% of the fuel needed to transport it, and the material is as strong as steel, but won't rust and requires less maintenance.

Miller, John W., "Foldable Shipping Containers Try to Stack Up," The Wall Street Journal, April 12, 2010

Sun, Sand, Surf and a Pop Quiz

Kids Take a Working Vacation Studying Leaves, Tortoises. etc. While Mom and Dad Lounge Poolside

While most people lounge on the beach when on vacation, Jillian Haversat, an 11-year-old, took part in the Ritz-Carlton Naples kids' program when she was vacationing. It included biology lessons, pop quizzes and "no-talking-without-raising-your-hand" rules. In the program, "Nature's Wonders," participants wear mini lab coats and peer under microscopes to examine the cell structure of plants. Another activity teaches kids about the feeding habits of red-footed tortoises. Kids also play a version of "bingo" with words like "conifers" and "ornithology."

Hotel and resort kids' programs are becoming more lavish—and more overtly educational—particularly among high-end hotels. The programs, where parents can drop off their children for a few hours or even all day, used to include not much more than supervised swimming and the occasional Disney movie.

At the Hyatt Regency Scottsdale Resort at Gainey Ranch in AZ, "Camp Hyatt" participants are given environmental lessons with details about the resort's "aquatically balanced" lagoon pond and solar-energy initiatives. The kids' club has its own demonstration solar panel.

Rosewood Hotels and Resorts' Little Dix Bay in the British Virgin Islands has a marine biologist on staff to teach in the "Children's Grove" program about the area's coral reef and marine life.

The added attention to kids' clubs is part of an overall strategy by hotel and resort companies to lure more leisure travelers. In the recent past, as the economy has soured, business travel has fallen dramatically. Leisure travel has also taken a hit, but is expected to recover sooner. Families are attractive to hotels. They tend to stay longer, book more rooms and rack up higher bills at restaurants and other facilities because packing up the kids to go out to dinner is more trouble than ordering room service.

Hotels say that a vibrant kids' program can drive repeat business, especially since kids are more involved these days in deciding where their families vacation. Hotels also hope that hooking kids will build their guest lists far into the future. "We want to engage them and make them Ritz-Carlton guests for life," says Darryll Adams, hotel manager at the Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort, Naples. A sister space-themed program called "Eye Wonders" includes gazing at constellations through telescopes and using the sun's rays to make "solar s'mores."

The key, hotels say, to having successful kids' programs or "edutainment" is to make them hands-on. "Nature's Wonders" looks like a mini aquarium. It has 11 tanks with about 100 fish and other sea critters. Staff keep up a steady stream of information about the fish, and ask questions to see what the kids are retaining.

While some kids programs are complimentary, most charge a fee. "Nature's Wonders" costs $60 for a morning or afternoon session, or $110 for the day, including lunch. Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts offer a complimentary "Kids for All Seasons" program at its resort properties.

Petersen, Andrea, "Sun, Sand, Surf and a Pop Quiz,"
The Wall Street Journal, April 14, 2010

LIFEGUARD UMBRELLAS REDUCE THE TEMP

You'll want to check out this 6' double canopy silver beach umbrella made with specially coated Solarteck fabric that reflects UV rays and reduces the temperature underneath the umbrella by up to 15°. The vented mesh system curbs high winds. It has a heavy-duty two-piece powder-coated aluminum pole with the tilt feature. Google "silver lifeguard umbrella" for more info.

FINAL WORDS . . .

"Give fools their gold, and knaves their power;
Let fortune's bubbles rise and fall;
Who sows a field, or trains a flower,
Or plants a tree, is more than all."

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

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Committed to encouraging, promoting and supporting ecological consciousness in the hospitality industry.