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HOTEL & HOSPITALITY MAGAZINE



KOSTA'S FAMILY RESTAURANT IN LA RONGE HAS A RICH HISTORY THAT DATES BACK TO 1965

From left: Gladis Cairo, Winter Miller, Chris Tkach, Tye Bird, Owner Carmen Vancoughnett, Mancil Bell, Prince Ching, Marc Savidan, Angie Schafer, Amanda Thimpson

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Saskatchewan Hotel & Hospitality Association

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CONTENTS

ASSOCIATION NEWS

- 5 CEO MESSAGE
- 6 WINE MENUS: NOT ALL WINES EQUAL
- 6 SHHA 2019 CONVENTION DATE
- 7 FOR THE FUTURE GOLF TOURNAMENT

INDUSTRY NEWS

- 9 HOW MUCH DOES OTTAWA SPEND ON WINE GLASSES
- 9 TOO MANY MOVING PARTS
- 10 HOTEL INDUSTRY PUSHES FOR TOUGHER BYLAW ON AIRBNB RENTALS
- 11 REDUCE YOUR ENERGY COSTS BY UP TO 40%
- 12 THE CANNABIS USER AND YOUR DUTY OF CARE
- 13 HSLC THE SOLUTION YOU NEED
- 13 TRAINING UPDATE ON FOOD SAFETY COURSES
- 15 TOURISM JOURNEYPERSONS

MEMBER NEWS

- 17 KOSTA'S FAMILY RESTAURANT



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CEO MESSAGE: Provincial Update Fall 2018

STRENGTH IN SASKATCHEWAN'S NATURAL RESOURCE SECTOR Converge with the Hotel Industry



Jim Bence, President & CEO

According to the Royal Bank of Canada's June 2018 Provincial Outlook, "Growth in the Saskatchewan economy is expected to remain above the national average this year and next rising to 2.4% and 2.8%, respectively. This above-average strength results from a number of key natural resource sectors showing solid growth over the next two years".

As Warren Nerby and I toured the province through September, we saw the results of this strength. You just have to talk to a hotel manager in Kindersley, Humboldt, Moosomin, or Esterhazy. When asked if occupancy has improved the response is "most definitely". "If you do not have a reservation you likely will not get a room".

Take a drive to Carlyle and experience the vibrancy of the community, or visit Kipling, and do some shopping. Our very own Kenossee Inn is seeing improvement as well, with the property being "sold out" on a Tuesday night in mid-September...awesome.

In 2015 we were seeing occupancy rates in rural Saskatchewan at 55% with average daily rates of \$117 bucks, and in 2017 we were at a dismal 45% with an ADR of \$112. Now, in the first 7 months of 2018 we are seeing 50% occupancy with an ADR of \$109.*

There is little that we can do as hoteliers to influence the resource markets or external economic pressures so we

often react. All too often, when occupancy turns south, some hoteliers believe the best way to gain market share is to slash rates. Unfortunately other operators follow suit and then "The Great Race" to the bottom ensues. I have never seen the wisdom in this tactic but I guess that's why I was in HR for so long. In Human Resources, if someone dropped their pants at work, there would be discipline and corrective action.....just sayin'.

You can feel a cautious sense of optimism, a slight sigh of relief. But, we are expecting big changes in October and we are going to see a significant shift in our current reality related to liquor and pot sales.

- The moratorium on the sale of RSP's (Retail Store Permit) will be lifted and
- The sale and consumption of cannabis will be legalized in Canada.

In the case of the sale of RSP licenses, the big question and/or concern is "who will be my new competition?" Costco, Sobeys and Superstores are the players allegedly buying up RSP's and we are seeing big-box liquor stores coming to your communities and neighborhoods now.

With regards to the sale of Weed, one common sense solution would be to have cannabis sold in more locations around the province by people and businesses that already deal in the sale of a controlled substance, alcohol. By providing a product and service in a controlled and responsible way, cannabis retail sales can be managed effectively. Adding another revenue stream for rural RSP holders never hurts and would certainly welcome a much needed injection of cash.

Stay tuned. ■

*Source, CBRE Hotels "National Market Report"

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WINE MENUS: Not All Wines are Created Equal



Doug Reichel

I remember pouring a sample of wine for a man in a rural Saskatchewan liquor store. His attire suggested that he was no stranger to the land, livestock, sunshine and wind. I explained a little bit about the wine I was pouring then he knocked back my 1 oz. sample and pronounced: "Wine is wine. All tastes the same." Before I could catch myself, I replied something like, "Yea, just like any cut of beef from any cow is all the same. Beef is beef." He glared at me. I got his attention.

Why is some wine more expensive than other wine? Is there really that much of a difference? Grape wine is a natural product and all quality starts with nuances of grape varieties (of which there are thousands), its vine health and age, growing conditions in a particular year (vintage), the way it is handled and stored in the winery. The more expensive the wine the more time and labour and attentiveness to each grape berry that has gone into the crush producing

rarer wines. So usually the better wines are not mass produced wines. That's not to say there isn't a place for the mass-produced wines, just like there's a market for mass-produced burgers.

Like no other beverage, wine is meant to travel in the company of food. Food calling to food. That's good news for restaurants. And that's why more and more people look at the wine list when they eat out. And that's why restaurant owners and managers and servers need to pay attention to their wine lists. The quality of the wines on your wine list say something about your restaurant. Restaurants that wouldn't dream of promoting a cheap cut of meat as their signature dish, will often offer a wine menu with only mass-produced wines. Restaurants don't need pages of wines but the wines they offer should speak of the same care they apply to their food menu.

Questions or information: info@dougswines.com ■



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SHHA ANNOUNCES 2019

CONVENTION DATE: Tuesday
May 28 in Regina

The Saskatchewan Hotel & Hospitality Association's (SHHA) Conference & Trade Show is being held Tuesday May 28, 2019 at Queensbury Centre and the International Trade Centre, Evraz Place, Regina.

We are planning an incredible celebration which includes the Trade Show, Luncheon, Informative Sessions, and, the Delegate Dinner.

The Hotel, Liquor & Restaurant Trade Show will take place on Tuesday May 28, ITC Hall C.

The trade show will include 75 beer, wine and liquor distributors, along with other exhibitors that supply goods and services to the hospitality industry, including Foodservice, POS systems, Uniforms, Dishware and Guest Supply, to name a few... 171 booths in total.

Please mark the date and join us for Saskatchewan's premier show for the hospitality industry, including a tremendous day of exhibits, delicious food, and great prizes. ■

FORE THE FUTURE GOLF TOURNAMENT

A Game of Golf and Some Blues & Brews!

Kindersley Golf Course Photo Credit: Rob Campbell, ACLP Training Solutions

Forty golfers participated in 18 holes of “Best Ball” at the Kindersley Golf Club, raising scholarships for outstanding students registered in the “Hospitality and Restaurant Management Program” at Saskatchewan Polytechnic, Saskatoon Campus.

The Saskatchewan Hotel & Hospitality Association hosted its 20th Annual Fore the Future tournament in Kindersley, SK. on Thursday September 6. To date, the SHHA has helped raise \$100,000.00 in scholarships for students.

Before the tournament the golfers were treated to a delicious Italian buffet lunch hosted by hotel manager Chris Regier at the Kindersley Inn. And post-game, participants enjoyed a steak dinner and live music from Saskatoon’s own BC Read, an award winning recording artist with a unique style of Roots & Blues. The evening festivities were hosted by Marcel and MaryAnn Georget, and Mark and Sherry Werner at the Red Lion Inn, Kindersley.

The 2018 edition of the Fore the Future Golf Tournament was a huge success! After a couple of years of rough weather, this year was almost perfect. The golf course was in good condition and the staff was great.



The winning team with a score of 66, 6 under par were, from left: Bob Kadis, Tourism Saskatchewan; Bob Anderson, Concept Media, Regina; Derek McDonald, DMCD Services; and, Denny Joyal, Waterfront Beach Bar & Grill, Regina Beach.

To all the sponsors and participants who helped make the tournament a fun and successful fundraising event, and our scholarship partners who work with us each and every year to ensure the students are acknowledged for their dedication to the hospitality industry...

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We are already looking forward to next year’s event. ■

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HOW MUCH DOES OTTAWA Spend on a Wine Glass?



Todd McKay
Prairie Director – Canadian
Taxpayers Federation

Ln the hospitality industry, little things, like glassware and seat cushions, can make an important impression, but it's also important to keep costs reasonable.

Unfortunately, the Government of Canada is having trouble finding that balance.

The Canadian embassy in Mexico spent \$24,638 for 86 couch cushions, according to access-to-information requests submitted by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. That's \$286 per cushion.

The Canadian consulate in Hong Kong spent \$46,000 on tables, chairs and a credenza, according to another access request. And no, these purchases weren't made to equip an extensive banquet facility. The 16 chairs were \$1,050

each. The credenza (also known as a sideboard) was \$7,500. Unsurprisingly, the Hong Kong consulate didn't waste any time checking prices with competitive bids.

The spending spree got completely crazy with the federal department for Global Affairs spending \$127,000 on crystal glassware, according to yet another access request. The glasses cost Canadian taxpayers \$117 each. The Parliament giftshop in Ottawa sells engraved wine glasses for \$17.49 each. Even luxury retailer Tiffany's sells crystal glasses for \$55 each.

So what's the big deal? What's an overpriced wine glass in the grand scheme of things? Anyone doing the books in the hospitality industry can answer that question.

Financial wrecks don't usually come in one foul swoop. They come one poor decision at a time. And the federal government has been making a lot of poor decisions. The national debt is almost \$660 billion and it's going up by about \$2 million an hour.

Maybe it's time to check the price tags on the seat cushions. ■

TOO MANY Moving Parts



Daniel Hirschhorn
Saskatoon Immigration &
Employment Consulting Inc.
(SIECSI)

Anyone who has hired a foreign worker or provincial nominee in the last five years is well aware of the immense amount of paperwork involved, as well as the potential for follow up audits by the federal or provincial government. While this may create a sense that a lot is happening with respect to the foreign worker industry, in fact there have been no significant changes.

What we'll likely experience will be a result of other changes within Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. One large change that many may not know about is that the call centre and processing centre located in Vegreville, Alberta has closed

and moved to Edmonton. This is significant as it affects 280 federal government workers. The volume of files processed at that location is large and the relocation of so many people and files is likely to increase processing times for many files and potentially result in months of interruption until everything is settled.

The public's fascination with border crossers from the USA continues to distract from areas that may be more relevant and have an immediate impact on businesses in Saskatchewan and Canada. Instead of asking why Service Canada zones Kindersley with Saskatoon to come up with a 7.5% unemployment rate, which is clearly inaccurate as anyone from Kindersley knows, we are still being led to believe that refugee claimants from south of the border are creating a critical strain on federal resources. While there is some truth to this sentiment, it does get more attention than it should thanks to partisan politics in Canada, and the impending federal election. ■

HOTEL INDUSTRY PUSHES For Tougher Bylaw on Airbnb Rentals

The City of Regina has been subject to “pretty significant” lobbying from the hotel industry over Airbnb rentals, which continue to evade bylaw enforcement efforts

With files from the Regina Leader-Post

So far, only a single Albert Street property owner is known to have sought approval for a residential homestay in accordance with a 2013 bylaw.

Regina Hotel Association CEO Tracy Fahlman came to raise concerns over the application. She said online postings for homestays in Regina have grown by 30 per cent in the past year and a half. The leading platform, Airbnb, is currently advertising 238 rentals in the city.

In Fahlman’s view, many homestays operate like businesses and should be paying commercial taxes. “We will be asking the city to consider levelling that playing field,” she said. “What we’re hoping to do is work with the city administration to help and assist in modernizing those bylaws and come forward with something that would be of benefit to the community.”

Mayor Michael Fougere said that Fahlman has expressed her concerns to him on a few occasions. Asked about the extent of the hotel industry’s lobbying efforts, he said he thinks they have been “pretty significant.”

Fahlman said there has been “back and forth” with city officials, but called the discussions “preliminary.”

The existing framework requires homestay hosts seek approval from the planning commission and council through the so-called discretionary use process. A standard discretionary-use application costs \$2,500.

Fahlman said the city should look at changes like limiting short-term rentals to a resident’s primary home. She said her main concern is “commercial operators” who rent out multiple residences as hotels, without complying with the same health and safety standards. “We’re not against an individual using a home-sharing platform in their house to make a little bit of extra money,” she said.

She also has the Saskatchewan Hotel & Hospitality Association behind her. In a June interview with the Leader-Post, its president, Jim Bence called residential homestays “an underground economy.” “The commercial operations are illegal hotels — it’s simply unfettered, it’s unbridled,” he said. “They’re just allowed to operate in any way that they please.” ■



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"We decided to take part in the SaskEnergy Commercial Programs basically for two reasons," said Raphael Cerezo, who works for a local land developer in Regina. "We have savings when we are purchasing the equipment, and then there are other operational savings that we are passing on to our tenants."

Cerezo's company offers a variety of real estate services, including property management, land development, land acquisition, and leasing. "Our main goal is to meet our clients' expectations," said Cerezo. "The only thing we want to see is our tenants succeeding."

The SaskEnergy Commercial Programs are available to a variety of commercial properties, including municipal buildings, community centres, offices, mechanical shops, restaurants, malls, and condominiums. Incentives are provided for qualifying furnaces, boilers, rooftop units, infrared radiant heaters, and variable speed ECM pumps.

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THE CANNABIS USER and Your Duty of Care

Cannabis legalization will provide bars and restaurants with risks and opportunities.

Although there may be opportunities, such as increased customer traffic, slick marketing campaigns or, eventually edibles, the single largest concern for all bars and restaurants should be the “Occupiers’ Liability Act” when serving a customer who is under the influence of cannabis. The act reads in part... “An occupier of premises owes a duty to take such care as in all the circumstances of the case is reasonable to see that each person entering on the premises and the property brought on the premises by that person are reasonably safe while on the premises.”

People have been smoking pot and going to licensed establishments for ever. But legalization does present the possibility of more widespread cannabis consumption, and ways to easily hide that consumption so that a server would never know. And if that customer, impaired by cannabis is served alcohol, and then cause’s property damage, personal injury or even death, could the establishment that served the alcohol be liable?

This possibility should be on your mind. A restaurant or bar owner has a unique duty of care owed to consumers both while they are on, and once they have left, the premises.



In Saskatchewan, for example, the provincial Liquor Licence Act imposes liability on the employees or agents of a commercial host if they sell alcohol to someone whose condition is such that consumption would intoxicate the person or increase the person’s intoxication so that they would be in danger of causing injury to themselves, to another person or to the property of another person. The person who sold the alcohol can be liable for damages if personal or property damage is caused, or if the person dies, or kills someone while intoxicated.

That is a serious matter, and you should be concerned. A licensed establishment could be one of the first test cases of the liabilities arising from cannabis legalization

There is no doubt that alcohol and marijuana, whether consumed separately or together, impair judgment and physical ability. As a result, establishments that serve alcohol are often held to a higher standard of care to ensure their patrons remain safe while on the premises.

And that higher duty of care will be exactly what will be at issue the first time a customer is — unknown to the server — impaired by cannabis and orders alcohol, leading to intoxication to the point of personal or property damage.

That is why education is important. “Serve It Right Saskatchewan” (SIRS) is the official provincial responsible service of alcohol program. SIRS provides consistent training for the sale and service of alcohol, helping commercial permittees and their employees ensure that alcohol-related activities are conducted with integrity and in a socially responsible manner.

As well, the Saskatchewan Education Council (STEC) offers “CannaSell SK Responsible Cannabis Sales” the official provincial training program for cannabis-related education. With the risks for bar and restaurant owners so high the meaningful education for servers is crucial.

Responsible Service is Smart ■

HSLC: The Solution YOU Need



The HSLC, or Hospitality Safety Leadership Certificate, is the highest standard for safety certification in Saskatchewan. One hospitality organization has started their HSLC journey and have certified all eight of their locations with HSLC Level 1. Jesse Tiefenbach, Chief Human Resource Officer at d3h Hotels incorporated, gives his feedback on their experience so far with HSLC.



“d3h Hotels Incorporated has been focusing on safety this summer. Our teams have been engaged province-wide on

ensuring safety is a high priority for both our team members and also for the guests staying in our hotels. Partnering with the SHSA has been incredibly positive, they have been by our side every step of the way, encouraging us and providing us with fantastic resources. As a company d3h hotels has committed to the HSLC process and this summer all of our Saskatchewan properties completed their level 1 HSLC. As we move forward we will be working towards certification in the next modules of the program.”

Because the HSLC is incremental, it allows organizations such as d3h Hotels Inc., the opportunity to take it one step at a time. Getting started takes senior management commitment, and once you have that, you are well on your way to Level 1 Certification.

If you want to be certified but aren't sure where to start, contact the SHSA at info.servicehospitality.com or at (306) 955-1349. ■

TRAINING UPDATE on Food Safety Courses



Diane Cohoon,
Hospitality Industry Consultant

Food safety is everyone's responsibility including producers, processors, transporters, retailers, restaurants, banquet facilities, food trucks, food regulators and individuals preparing food for themselves or their family and friends. Food may be contaminated along the “field to fork” route and make people sick. The contaminants may be biological, physical or chemical. Safe food products result when using wholesome food, properly designed,

constructed and equipped food facilities and good food handling practises.

The Food Safety Regulations require that “an operator of a public eating establishment must ensure that a person who has successfully completed a food safety course approved by the local authority is working in the public eating establishment at all times when food is being prepared and served.

The Saskatchewan Health Authority has a list of approved courses.

Approved on-line courses:

- Basics.fst Food Safety Training for Food Handlers (TrainCan Inc)
- National Food Safety Training Program (NFSTP)
- ServSafe Canadian Course
- Safecheck Advanced Food Safety
- Probe It Food Safety
- Canadian Institute of Food Safety
- FoodSafetyTraining.ca

(Review these programs and check with your local Health Inspector to ensure examination requirements are met.)

Approved in-class food safety courses:

- ServSafe (Manager's Certification Program)
- Food Wise
- FoodSafe 1
- FoodSafe 2
- Basics.fst Food Safety Training for Food Handlers (TrainCan Inc)
- Saskatchewan Basics Safe Food Handling
- TrainCan Advanced.fst
- SafeCheck Advanced Food Safety
- FNIH's Safe Food Handler Training Program

Program access, content and price are readily available by checking these products on-line. ■



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TOURISM Journeypersons

Congratulations to the 2018 -2019 Tourism Apprenticeships Participants. The program runs between September 1, 2018 and May 3, 2019. We look forward to celebrating the successful participants at the Tourism Saskatchewan Leadership Conference in June 2019.

The Tourism Apprenticeships Program provides an opportunity for employers to enrol eligible employees for training funded by the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC).

STEC works in partnership with SATCC to provide opportunities for experienced front line workers to complete their Journeyperson certification in two trades; Food and Beverage Person and Guest Services Representative.

Food and Beverage Person Apprenticeship:

People working in this trade sell and serve food and beverage products, mix and prepare alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.

Training and certification include:

- Two emergit Professional Certification; Food and Beverage Server and Bartender
- Service Best customer service training (or an equivalent customer service program that includes testing).
- Serve It Right Saskatchewan (SIRS) responsible service of alcohol.
- FoodSafe or equivalent.
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) Certification.
- Workplace Trainer online.
- Standard First Aid and CPR "A".

Requires 3600 hours of trade experience for completion.

Guest Services Representative Apprenticeship:

People working in this trade promote, sell and book accommodation products and services.

Training and certification include:

- Two emergit Professional Certifications; Front Desk Agent and Reservation Sales Agent.
- Performance review checklist for emergit Tourism Visitor Information Counsellor.
- Service Best customer service training (or an equivalent customer service program that includes testing).
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) certification.
- 100 Night Audit hours.
- Workplace Trainer online.
- Standard First Aid and CPR "A".

Requires 3600 hours of trade experience for completion.

To inquire about Tourism Apprenticeship contact Darcy Acton, Workforce Development Consultant at (306) 933-7466 or email darcy.acton@tourismsask.com ■



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RESTAURANT OWNER CARMEN VANCOUGHNETT embraces her line of work

by Jonathan Hamelin

SHHA Member Profile

These days, Carmen Vancoughnett has a lot on her plate.

Vancoughnett is the owner of Kosta's Family Restaurant in La Ronge. She employs 27 staff members and has two managers to help assist in the operation of the business. Kosta's restaurant is open every day until 9 p.m. and the lounge is open until 1 a.m. The lounge handles delivery and takeout orders.

"I just turned 42 years old and have never been busier," she said. "I'm also a mother of two; I have one seven year old and one 10 year old."

The restaurant has a rich history in the town that dates back to 1965, when it was built by Gene Poirier and known as Gene's Steak House. It has since gone through numerous owners and was gutted by a fire in 1983, eventually being rebuilt.

In 2007, Vancoughnett purchased Kosta's Family Restaurant in LaRonge as part of a joint ownership group that included her parents Genny and Larry. With her parents retiring in March 2017, Vancoughnett had to decide whether to sell to an outside buyer or take on full ownership of the establishment. After weighing the pros and cons, she decided to carry on as the solo owner of the business.

“I have always worked in the hospitality industry. I started at the age of 16 and leased a small town bar in 2004 to see if it’s what I wanted to do with the rest of my life,” Vancoughnett said. “I have a business college certificate. I grew up in a family of entrepreneurs. There is nothing I’d rather do.”

Over the years, customers have come to rely on Kosta’s for a hearty meal in an incredible atmosphere. Vancoughnett said the establishment is classified as a steak and rib house and is well known for its homemade chicken fingers. The building is situated along Main Street and has lake view seating.

Kosta’s runs a popular buffet during the weekday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. that always draws a crowd. It’s lounge features 13 video lottery terminals and is a great place to unwind after a hard day of work.

“People think of Kosta’s Restaurant for their anniversary suppers, birthday suppers or special occasions,” Vancoughnett said. “We want people to feel like they are having a ‘fancier’ meal when coming out in the evenings. We are also thankful that they think of us for their catering needs.”

Kosta’s has been a member of the Saskatchewan Hotel and Hospitality Association (SHHA) since the ownership group took over in 2007. She said she has benefitted from the advocacy efforts of the SHHA in the past, including recently getting a letter of support on a city council issue that was affecting bars in La Ronge. ■



WHAT DIFFERENCE does it make?

People ask what difference it makes if I am a member of the Saskatchewan Hotel & Hospitality Association (SHHA)? The difference is we are a stronger voice that can advocate more effectively on your behalf. There is strength in numbers.

The SHHA has a reputation of being an extremely effective lobby and advocacy group because of the activities we engage in and the strength of our membership. We are YOUR voice with government ministries, MLA’s and bureaucracy. The hospitality industry gets “wins” when we work together.

The SHHA is the provincial organization that represents YOU and the many hotels/motels, resorts, bars, restaurants and, retail store permittee’s in Saskatchewan. We provide the voice and support the hospitality industry needs to operate effectively and profitably.

Details and examples of our work can be found on our website at www.skhhha.com

Supporting the SHHA Keeps Your Voice Strong! ■

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