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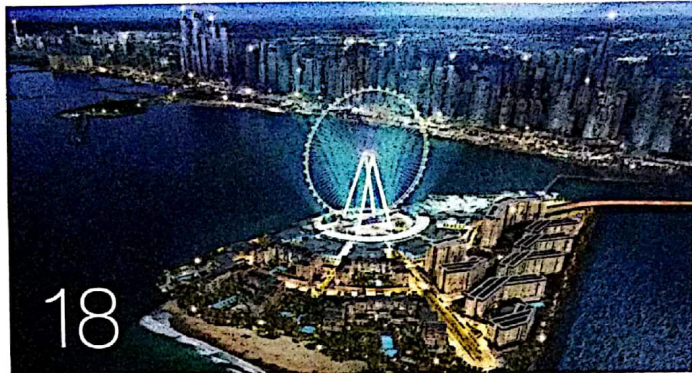
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Hurricanes in August and September of 2017 left their marks on Houston, Puerto Rico and Florida. Left: Marriott Marquis Houston. Middle: A "then-and-now" image out of Punta Santiago, Humacao, Puerto Rico, shows the original post-hurricanes' SOS message for help, water and food now transitioned to a welcome message. Right: Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club

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A single purpose, not a single person

BY STEFANI C. O'CONNOR
HM COLUMNIST

As a young reporter, myself and the other ink-stained wretches in the newsroom would wonder exactly what it was the editor-in-chief did all day. He wasn't out pounding the pavement, tracking sources, pleading for an interview because I AM ON DEADLINE!! No, he was calm behind those glass walls, seemingly always in an amiable conversation with someone on the phone or standing in front of a chart plotting how and with what to plug the news hole. Sure, there were times when we could see someone getting disciplined—"If the guy's name is Joe Smith you still check the spelling!"—or getting pushed to get that one more piece of information that no competitor would have.

Overall, however, it seemed pretty cushy to those working 10- to 12-hour stints chasing the bits that give you a byline. The best we could figure out what he did in terms of REAL work (like us) was what we sometimes jokingly referred to as "column." "Column," you see, was the publication's editorial page, the platform where the editor-in-chief could shed the strictures of journalism to always remain objective and instead deliver an opinion on any number of issues.

And as much as we might have joked about it, we always read "column."

In essence, the editorial page—like the one you are reading now—is the heartbeat of a publication. It helps define the overall attitude of a news outlet and its position in the media universe. So, the onus of compiling my first discourse for Hotel Management, a 143-year-old journal my great-great-grandparents could have read, has not been lost on me.

I am following in the footsteps of a multitude of great editors—most recently David Eisen—who over decades have shaped the publication, transitioning it from a 19th-century, sweat-producing hot-type operation to the cool,



streamlined digital age. The baton in my hand is, indeed, a weighty one; however, it's a privilege to carry it.

So where will we take it? There are any number of exciting paths ahead. Together with Group Publisher Amy Waxman, our sales and marketing groups, and our editorial and production teams, we just compiled our roadmap for 2019 in our editorial calendar and media kit. We will be executing on a variety of innovative editorial, advertising and event features, and our extensive range of newsletters will highlight enhanced and insightful content. We've forged a strong partnership with the Asian American Hotel Owners Association as part of our proprietary Hotel ROI e-book

series and I'm looking forward to bringing my expertise as moderator to our roundtables in the months ahead.

And we want to hear from you, our readers, the key component of what we do. Without you, there is no us. We want to hear your stories, your tactics, your strategies for making the most of what's being referred to as the Platinum Age for hotels and its adjunct disciplines. Personally, I find going down in the basement to look at the co-gen can be just as exciting as learning what a CEO is up to. I'd rather learn than be jaded.

So, email me (scoconnor@questex.com) with your news, concerns or just to introduce yourself. Let's connect at a conference sometime. Or call me. Anyone in the industry who has worked with me over the past two-decades-plus at various publications knows I pick up my phone (Hello, Empress of Editorial.)

That said, I'm still the new kid on the block here at Questex Hospitality Group, where every day I'm learning and absorbing, gaining knowledge of, and fluency in, the advanced systems that befit a global company. It's great.

And just one more thing: it's a team here that functions as a well-versed, single unit that delivers this successful enterprise, not a single person; the editorial "We" will remain strong at Hotel Management. **HM**

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EDITORIAL

757 Third Ave., New York, NY 10017

Editor-in-Chief—Dorothy C. O'Connor

scoconnor@questex.com | (212) 895-4236

Managing Editor—Diane Miller Jones

dmillerj@questex.com | (212) 895-4420

Associate Editor—Amy Waxman

awaxman@questex.com | (212) 895-4237

Associate Editor—C. Elliott West

cwest@questex.com | (212) 895-4238

Art Director—Amy B. Wilke

awilke@questex.com | (440) 540-4935

ADVERTISING/SALES/CIRCULATION

Group Publisher—Amy B. Waxman

awaxman@questex.com | (609) 257-3412 Fax: (609) 257-0960

Dir. Business Development, West, Midwest, NJ—Cynthia Lopez

clopez@questex.com | (732) 845-0011 Fax: (732) 358-0296

Dir. Business Development, East Coast—Deborah

dewilke@questex.com | (212) 895-8409 Fax: (212) 895-4219

Dir. Business Development—Mary Miller

mmiller@questex.com | (216) 402-3467

Audience Development Manager—Dorothy Salzman

PRODUCTION

Production Director—Neil Garboden

ngarboden@questex.com

Production Specialist—Sue Gagnon

sgagnon@questex.com | (212) 895-8239

MARKETING/MAGAZINE SERVICES

Marketing Director—Alexandra Acosta

aacosta@questex.com | (212) 895-8294

Digital Marketing Coordinator—James Ingrosso

ingrosso@questex.com | (212) 895-8408

List Rental—MeritDirect LLC—Anthony Caputo

acaputo@meritdirect.com | (974) 368-7063

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HotelManagementOnline.com | Toll Free: (866) 344-5215 Int: (440) 510-4028

EXECUTIVES

President & Chief Executive Officer—Norm C. Gamba

Chief Financial Officer—Chris S. Macdon

Chief Revenue Officer, Quarterly Digital—John Bronte

Senior Vice President Sales and Business Development—Lakshmi

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