

INSIDE Torgerson PROPERTIES

WINTER/SPRING 1992

Benton Advances to Super 8 Bed-Making Finals!

Cindy Benton, Assistant Executive Housekeeper for the Holiday Inn and Super 8 of Fairmont has recently qualified for Super 8's National Bed-making finals to be held in New Orleans during Super 8's annual convention later in 1992. At the time of this printing, Cindy had recently qualified at the regional competition held in Milwaukee for her extraordinary talent to make a bed per Super 8 standards, in an unbelievably short time. The following article is reprinted from an August, 1991 edition of the Fairmont Sentinel:

''BLAZING BEDWORK SMOOTHS SHEETS AT RECORD PACE NATIONAL CHAMPION?''

By: Sean McManamy, Sentinel Writer
FAIRMONT—Those folks in the Twin Cities must think they're pretty hot stuff.

This summer they hosted the U.S. Open and International Special Olympics. If things keep going the way they are, another World Series may be in the offing. Next year they'll have the Super Bowl and NCAA Final Four. *Big deal!*

All of those so-called "world class" events pale before the spectacle of intense competition that took place in Fairmont Monday. That's right—the Super 8 Motel Bed Making Contest.

Seldom has Minnesota witnessed such heated rivalry. Three housekeepers from Super 8 gathered early Monday morning at the Holiday Inn, each one with a competitive fire ablaze in her eyes. In the middle of the room stood a

continued on page three

Holiday Inn Austin Wins Excellence Award

Reprinted from Nov., 1991 Austin Daily Herald



The Holiday Inn-Holidome and Austin Conference Center has been awarded Holiday Inn Worldwide's Quality Excellence Award, which is bestowed upon those hotels that have achieved excellence in all aspects of their operations, from product quality to customer service.

The Holiday Inn Austin is one of only 147 properties selected from among the chain's 1,600 hotels for maintaining these high standards of excellence in product quality, hotel operations and guest service. Each hotel to receive the award has maintained a score of 85 or higher in the Customer Satisfaction Tracking System, a system designed to measure guest satisfaction.

"This hotel exemplifies Holiday Inn's commitment to quality and wins where it truly counts - with the customers," said Bryan D. Langton, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Holiday Inn Worldwide. "The Holiday Inn Austin maintains the high standards of excellence that enable Holiday Inn to lead the industry and we are proud to have it in the Holiday Inn Family."

"It is a real honor to be appointed to this elite group of hotels. I must thank our tremendous employees and the management team. Without their commitment to excellence and customer satisfaction, we would not have received this award," said Kirk J. Schultz, CHA, General Manager Torgerson Properties Austin. According to Schultz, "A strong work ethic and minimal employee turnover are major reasons for our excellent customer satisfaction." "I also attribute this award to the community of Austin and surrounding area, for

continued on the back page



Torgerson Properties Weather Halloween Storm of 1991

Where were you October 31, 1991? That will probably be a question most of us will answer with ease, even



Mitch Peterson pictured at Perkins Bakery in Austin

decades from now. In fact, many of you can boast to family and friends that you went to work, as usual, despite the heaviest single snowfall in recorded history. However, while you may have arrived for work on Thursday, Oct. 31st, you may also relate that you did not return home on the 31st. Many worked double and triple shifts until early Friday morning and on through the weekend. Others were unable to return home at all, instead staying at one of our hotels and resuming duties after a short nights sleep.

I was personally hung up in Fairmont from Thursday until Sunday afternoon, at which time there were approximately 50 semi's huddled on the highways in front of the Holiday Inn, Super 8 and Perkins Restaurant of Fairmont. I witnessed many employees who experienced the aforementioned. I recall Dave Zellmer, Head Maintenance Engineer in Fairmont, present throughout this ordeal. "Dave, did you ever get home?"

While Willmar and Fairmont were experiencing heavy snowfalls and blizzard conditions (Fairmont snowfall measured well over 20 inches), Austin's experience was quite different, but probably even more threatening. While snow fell in record amounts in Fairmont, one hour east on I-90 in Austin there was no snowfall, but rather a crippling ice storm which also effectively stranded travelers at the Holiday Inn and Days Inn. In fact, Austin hosted a motorcoach full of passengers from Detroit who could not proceed to their intended destination of Willmar's Holiday Inn and Jackpot Junction.

continued on the back page

It's New and Coming in '92! Torgerson Properties Retirement Savings

Torgerson Properties has developed a 401(K) plan for it's employees because it feels obligated to assist you in achieving financial security for your retirement years. Employees who are 21 years of age and have completed two full calendar quarters of employment whereby they average 25 hours or more each week are qualified to participate in this plan. Your 401(K) plan is administered by the Great-West Life and Annuity Insurance Company. Great-West has consistently earned the highest ratings awarded for financial strength in the industry. At your request Torgerson Properties will automatically deduct an amount you choose from

your paycheck and forward it to Great-West. From that point on you manage your funds directly with Great-West. Great-West offers a wide variety of ways for you to invest your funds with ease along with regular reporting on your fund's performance. Contributions to your fund are tax deductible when made and earnings are tax-exempt until you elect to make withdrawals. Additionally, Torgerson Properties will contribute on your behalf an additional 25 cents for each dollar you contribute up to a maximum of 3% of payroll. Torgerson Properties' contribution is subject to the vesting requirements below:

by Tom Torgerson

| Qualified Employment Term | Percentage Vested |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 year | 20% |
| 2 years | 40% |
| 3 years | 60% |
| 4 years | 80% |
| 5 years | 100% |

Bill Wirtanen Joins Torgerson Properties



William W. Wirtanen, CHA recently accepted the position of General Manager, Holiday Inn and Super 8 of Fairmont. Bill, his wife Patti and their two children, Billy and Beth, are in the process of looking for a home in Fairmont upon the completion of the school year in Iowa where they currently reside.

Bill is a veteran in the hotel industry, having worked in a variety of management positions since earning his B.A. degree in Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management from Michigan State University in 1968. Bill began his career with the

Kahler Corporation, headquartered in Rochester, MN, and spent sixteen years with them before moving on to upper management positions with Radisson Hotels International, Village Resorts and Conference Centers and most recently with Equity Hotel Corp. managing the Ramada Inn-Burlington, Iowa.

Bill is anxious to begin his work with Torgerson Properties in Fairmont and to become a part of the Fairmont community. We are excited to have Bill join us and welcome he and his family to Torgerson Properties.

by Dave Torgerson



Cindy Benton, Holiday Inn & Super 8, Fairmont

Bedmaking Contest

Continued from page one

single bed, oblivious to the battle about to ensue.

Tensions were on the rise as the officials for the competition took their designated spots around the bed. Melanie McDermott, general manager of Super 8 and Holiday Inn-Fairmont, served as judge, making sure each tuck and fold was in its proper place.

Assisting McDermott was Alice Jensen, executive housekeeper, who was on hand to offer expert advice should any conflicts arise. Timekeeping duties were performed by Mark Neubauer, assistant general manager of the motel.

Everything seemed ready to go as the last load of linens was brought in and placed on a table. Then a hush fell over the group as Super 8 and Holiday Inn owner Tom Torgerson entered the room. Speculation began to fly as this unexpected spectator made his way to the cheering section. Why was he here? Would he throw out the first pillowcase? Sing the national anthem? No one knew.

Torgerson quietly took his seat, unknowingly adding an air of anxiousness to the already tense situation. A moment later the room grew silent; the war was about to commence.

What took place for the next 20 minutes is now a blur. Sheets soared, blankets billowed, pillows were fluffed. The three contestants, Cindy Benton, Sheryl Pedersen and Maylea Seltun, competed with the flash and flair of Olympic decathletes.

Tempers flared as points were deducted for breaches of proper bed-making procedure. Neubauer tallied the totals, and McDermott announced the results: Benton emerged victorious with a time of 1 minute 45 seconds, more than 15 seconds less than the time attained by last year's national champion.

The room erupted in applause for this champion who has a chance to represent Fairmont at the regional competition in Des Moines next month, and possibly after that the national tournament in New Orleans.

"We have a potential national champion here," McDermott said. Whether or not Benton attains that status, she has already proven herself as one of the toughest competitors in the area. And that's no small sheet, *'er feat.*



West Honored from Willmar Area for Quality Service

Rewritten from the West Central Tribune, Willmar

Scott West, Convention and Banquet Service Manager at the Holiday Inn and Willmar Conference Center recently was honored as one of 16 recipients in the Willmar area by the Minnesota Council for Quality. The awards are given annually to Minnesotans who demonstrate outstanding quality in providing service to customers and the public. Recipients can be nominated by customers or co-workers.

Winners were honored at a dinner last October, 1991 at the Radisson

South Hotel in Bloomington, where the awards were handed out by Governor Arnie Carlson. Willmar's local winners also received a congratulatory send off at a breakfast at the Holiday Inn and Willmar Conference Center sponsored by the Willmar Quality Council. The Willmar Council is one of 12 quality councils in the state.

Scott has served in his management position for four years and lives with his wife, Deb, and daughter, Samantha in Willmar.

Willmar Days Inn Ranked #1

Days Inn of America recently issued results for its Heartland Alliance Region Quality Assurance scores. The Days Inn of Willmar has the best 1991 year-to-date quality assurance (product quality) score of its 42 member region. Mike Mulleady, General Manager for the Days Inn, as well as the

Holiday Inn and Willmar Conference Center, credits the Motel's staff for a concerned effort toward guest satisfaction.

The Days Inn of Willmar and Days Inn of Austin both have consistently ranked at or near the top in Q.A. scores since becoming Days Inns in early 1991.

Excellence Award

continued from page one

their encouragement, support and local community involvement during our first years in business," Schultz said.

The Holiday Inn and Austin Conference Center is owned and operated by Torgerson Properties in Fairmont under license form Holiday Inns Worldwide. Quoted from Thomas R. Torgerson, President of Torgerson Properties, "The Holiday Inn Austin's staff should be truly proud of themselves for this prestigious award, It is a tremendous accomplishment!" Torgerson Properties owns and operates the Days Inn and Perkins Family Restaurant in Austin as well and similar developments in Fairmont and Willmar.

Holiday Inn Worldwide, which is owned by the UK's Leading Brewer, Bass PLC, is the world's leading hotel chain, with more than 1,600 hotels and 326,000 guest rooms in 51 counties and territories around the world.

Halloween Storm

continued from page two

However, the ice storm in Austin had severe operational effects as power lines throughout the region were downed because of the excessive ice clinging to them. A prolonged power outage occurred directly affecting all three businesses in Austin - Holiday Inn-Holidome and Austin Conference Center, Days Inn-Austin and Perkins Restaurant & Bakery of Austin. Darkness and loss of heat were the primary concerns for hotel guests and inability to prepare hot food in our restaurants. Staff scrambled to acquire sufficient portable gas powered heaters and lighting to maintain sufficient service to guests and prevent potentially excessive damage to facilities as a result of the cold environment especially at Perkins where Mitch Peterson, G.M.-Perkins had to discontinue service temporarily until power was restored—hours later.

by Dave Torgerson

*INN*side Torgerson Properties is written to highlight the people and events of T.P.. Your suggestions for articles and anecdotes are welcomed and encouraged. This is the first edition of a biannual publication.

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