

Marriott chain directing focus on millennials

By Alexandra Wolfe, Wall Street Journal

Bill Marriott, the 82-year-old chairman of Marriott International, the \$19 billion hotel-management company, is done with flowered drapes and white tablecloths. In place of fusty bedspreads and fluffy carpets, he wants most of his 200 new luxury and lifestyle hotel projects to be filled with sleek flat-screen TVs, hardwood floors and hopping bars.

"We've got to be cool!" Marriott exclaims, sitting in one of the last bastions of the old Marriott aesthetic -- his office. Surrounded by oil paintings, old photographs and a model boat, his sprawling suite in his company's headquarters in Bethesda, Md., is exactly what the future of Marriott hotels will not look like. It will look instead like the hotel company's innovation lab a few floors below, where mock rooms are being built in a cavernous space to be tested among 20-somethings.

Later this summer, Marriott will launch its new hotel chain, Moxy Hotels, aimed at the millennial generation (roughly ages 18 to 33). In partnership with Inter Hospitality Holding, the hotels will feature small, low-cost rooms with grab-and-go food and the feel of a Silicon Valley startup.

"In four years, 60 percent of our business will be millennials," says Marriott, who adds with a laugh, "All of us old folks are moving on."

The future of Marriott Hotels will look like the hotel company's innovation lab, where mock rooms are being built in a cavernous space to be tested among twentsomethings.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Jackie

Jackie is one of several kittens at the shelter right now. She is a beautiful and friendly gray tabby short hair kitten, 15 weeks old.

She's been at the shelter for over a month already, along with eight other kittens and cats, some of whom have been waiting for their new homes for more than five months.

Jackie is spayed, microchipped, tested for FIV, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes.

Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go

online.

– Karen Kuentz

Survey: Cleanliness a key to hotel guest satisfaction

By Catharine Hamm, Los Angeles Times

Hear that thunderous applause? As Pharrell Williams would say/sing, “Clap along if you know what happiness is to you.” If you’re a traveler, happiness apparently is a hotel, judging by a J.D. Power report released Wednesday.

The 2014 North American Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index Study shows satisfaction with accommodation hit a record: 784 points on a 1,000-point scale.

The results were collected between June 2013 and May of this year from more than 67,000 respondents in the U.S. and Canada who had stayed in a hotel in North America between May of last year and May of this year.

So what irks hotel guests most? It’s not a stingy loyalty program or noise or long lines at the front desk; it’s cleanliness – or lack thereof. Those guests who perceived their rooms as not clean generally were a whopping 213 points less satisfied than those who thought their rooms were clean.

Read the whole story

Zac Brown puts plenty of rock in his country



Zac Brown delivers a high-energy concert July 20 at Harveys. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Susan Wood

STATELINE – Despite a raucous storm that produced a widespread power outage affecting thousands of South Shore customers, the Zac Brown band electrified an enthusiastic audience who stood on their feet for most of the show at Harveys.

The drizzle that ended Sunday's dramatic summer storm did little to dampen the spirits of the Southern rock, country band or the audience at the casino's outdoor summer concert series. This is even with a late start that sent lines of people rushing to the food and drink concessionaires. (No French fries, though, with the cutter being electric, and only cash-only payments were accepted given no power.)

But the important thing – the show went on and turned out to be a huge hit.

Right after roadies took the tarps off the stage equipment, guitarist and vocalist Clay Cook entertained with a few acoustical numbers, including those performed by artists ranging from Ray Charles to John Mayer. The improvisation provided a key opening to the eight-member band waiting to be powered up.

Then, the power of the three-time Grammy award-winning band showed its appeal and its range, knocking out hits and popular numbers from their five albums and other artists' covers as well. Zac Brown, himself as lead, came out with a top hat on and asked of the audience: "Staying warm?"

Even if the air had cooled off considerably, the concert turned hot quickly.

Between the screams, fist pumps and dancing, the concertgoers rewarded the band with love. After all, not all country bands can go from singing a sentimental "falling in love" in the ACA-nominated "As She's Walking Away" to Cook's own rendition of Robert Plant from the legendary rock band Led Zeppelin.

From there, the band led by Brown on vocals and guitar and violinist Jimmy De Martini accompanying turned up its country prowess and heavy string influence with a perfect imitation of Charlie Daniels' "The Devil Went Down to Georgia." This was fitting, given Brown's roots come from Georgia, and he references the state in their huge hit "Toes."



People were on their feet for most of the entire sold-out show.

Still, Brown acknowledged his appreciation for Lake Tahoe and mentioned expecting to see a “wampus cat” in these rugged mountains. The cat is a type of cougar descending from Cherokee mythology.

“It’s a beautiful place,” he said, as drummer Daniel de Los Reyes flashed a peace sign. Reyes had just won a Percussionist of the Year 2014 Drummies award.

The sound quality appeared to reverberate through the mountains, and it especially proved pertinent when Brown slowed things down with poignant lyrics featured in “Sweet Annie” – “But one day lightning will strike, and my bark will lose its bite, but don’t give up on me.”

It was as though the audience was made up a giant Zac Brown fan club, mouthing the words to most of the songs.

“Their music is different than most modern music, with a lot of sex. They just like to have a good time,” Bella Wulfsberg of Rohnert Park said. The recent South Tahoe High School graduate, who had an urban picnic near Cecil’s Market before embarking on the concert, characterized one of her favorite bands as the guys next door who look after you.

These guys next door brought a rare combination of perfect

harmony in the vocals and synchronicity of their instruments as demonstrated in their stirring, back-to-back singles: "Free," "No Hurry," "Goodbye in Her Eyes" and "Knee Deep."

Sandwiched between sets, the band launched into a melancholy version of Van Morrison's "Into the Mystic." You could almost hear the "fog horn blow" to a tune that would "rock your gypsy soul."

During their own soulful ballad "Colder Weather," Brown got up and close and personal at stage level to take pictures of the audience with a cell phone. The melancholy sweetness of the song oozed from the stage. He tapped his heart as if touched by the reception and the song's effect on the audience.

From there, he gave out a heartfelt thank you to the concertgoers for attending, as some of the proceeds go to the band's charity Camp Southern Ground. It has raised more than \$2 million in the last few years to help special needs children. Brown was inspired since he spent summers as a camp counselor.

In a special tribute, members of the Armed Forces came out in uniform and saluted on stage during one of three encores the band performed.

The skeleton suits provided an interesting backdrop to a country band led by bassist and singer John Driskell Hopkins pulling off the hit Metallica song "Enter Sandman." The heavy metal band plays it in honor of former star New York Yankees closing pitcher Mariano Rivera.

Then in a complete melodic turnaround, the band got light and breezy with their biggest hit: "Chicken Fried." Brown didn't even need to sing. He put the microphone out and the audience eagerly belted out these laid-back lyrics and melody that are in large part what sent the group soaring on the charts.

Notes:

Harveys will continue its lineup of concert performances with:

- Train, July 25
- Journey and Steve Miller, July 30
- Lady Gaga, Aug. 2
- Boston and the Doobie Brothers, Aug. 3
- Aerosmith, Aug. 8
- Bruno Mars, Aug. 14
- Sammy Hagar and Friends, Aug. 16
- Rascal Flatts and Sheryl Crow, Aug. 24.

Overheating a problem for dogs

By Timothy B. Hackett, Denver Post

On a typical summer day it likely feels much hotter for many dogs.

In fact, heat-related illness is one of the most common preventable causes of multiple-organ failure in dogs.

Consider a few basics about canine physiology: Unlike humans, dogs don't sweat to regulate body temperature. Panting is the main mechanism for evaporative cooling of the body. A dog's

long nose also helps to cool air and regulate temperature.

But heat easily overpowers these functions, especially if a dog is sick, older or otherwise less able to effectively regulate body temperature.

And dogs, being dogs, rarely resist a chance to hike, run, fetch and play, even if this exercise leads to overheating.

This means owners must be attuned to the hazards of heat for their pets, beyond never leaving them in cars in the summer heat.

Read the whole story

Underwood blows away Lake Tahoe audience



Carrie Underwood brings her unique country persona to Harveys on July 18. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – From sultry to raunchy to melancholy to edgy – Carrie Underwood’s vocal delivery is as expansive as her lyrics.

On Friday she was a bundle of energy that charged the crowd at Harveys Outdoor Concert Series. So many in the audience were singing right along with her.

With multiple hits year after year, it seems like Underwood has been part of the country music scene for decades. But the 31-year-old wasn’t discovered until she won “American Idol” in 2005.

Her first album “Some Hearts” debuted that same year. It was at the top of Billboard’s Country Albums chart for 27 weeks and has sold more than 7 million copies.

Her songs and persona have grown up in the last seven years.

Just look at her album covers – they are like a photo album of her going from innocent vocalist to diva.

If you missed Underwood live on July 18, check out the “Somethin’ Bad” video where she and Miranda Lambert sizzle. Lambert, who played Tahoe in 2011, has the song on her latest album.

While Underwood didn’t sing “Somethin’ Bad”, it was piped through the speakers just before she took the stage.

Underwood is a definite crossover artist – able to sing pop ballads and rock hits. Not many other country artists could pull off Guns N’ Roses’ “Paradise City” – though, she did sing it at the 2013 CMA Music Festival.



Many fans were dancing throughout the night.

Her seven-member band, though, looks like they would fit in well behind a rock star, or that they could have been mistaken for athletes participating in the American Century Championship. Providing the robust sounds were two bass guitarists, two guitarists (one who also plays fiddle), a keyboardist and drummer. The steel guitar whined like a jilted lover. A backup singer also accompanies Underwood.

While she didn’t interact much with the audience, she did comment on how gorgeous Tahoe is.

She explained how Randy Travis was an inspiration growing up. When she heard his song “I Told You So” she thought a woman

should sing it. They have performed it as a duet, but Friday it was all Underwood crooning the lyrics of the love song.

Underwood co-wrote eight of the 14 songs on her fourth and latest album, "Blown Away".

"Two Black Cadillacs" is a not so subtle story about what happens to a man when his wife and mistress get together.

Underwood seems to have aced songs in which women have been wronged.

What had the full house singing the loudest was "Before He Cheats". Though, it was clearly a chorus of women belting out: "I dug my key into the side of his pretty little souped up 4 wheel drive, carved my name into his leather seats... I took a Louisville slugger to both headlights, slashed a hole in all 4 tires... Maybe next time he'll think before he cheats."

There's a reason the 7-year-old song is still her best hit – it resonates.

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Notes:

The lineup for Harveys Outdoor Concert Series:

- July 20 Zac Brown Band
- July 25 Train
- July 30 Journey, Steve Miller Band
- Aug. 2 Lady Gaga
- Aug. 3 Boston, Doobie Brothers
- Aug. 8 Aerosmith, Slash
- Aug. 14 Bruno Mars

- Aug. 16 Sammy Hagar and Friends
 - Aug. 24 Rascal Flats, Sheryl Crow
 - Aug. 29-30 Eagles.
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Boomers can still be relevant in the workplace

By Steve Kayser

Boomers may want to recall one of the poets they grew up reading, Dylan Thomas, and his most famous poem, named for its first line, “Do not go gentle into that good night,” a desperate appeal to resist the trappings of old age.

As they retire, baby boomers need to stay true to their reputation for grand statements, and to mobilize their skill set in the business world.

In fact, many older Americans may have little choice but to adapt their mindset and survive longer in their careers if they want to maintain something resembling their current lifestyle during retirement.

Here are a few trends that may incentivize aging workers to clock in for a few more years:

- The number of Americans 55 and older will almost double between now and 2030 – from 60 million today to 107.6 million, according to the Census Bureau. That will likely strain public safety nets such as Social Security and Medicare.
- American life expectancy is at an all-time high, and death

rates are at an all-time low, which means some people will outlive their retirement savings.

- The global economic crisis has wiped out or severely affected millions of middle- and senior-aged people's life savings.

But with an increasingly competitive pool of professionals whose skill sets need to be regularly updated, how can boomers stay in the game?

Alvin Toffler said, "The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn."

Older workers can maintain their value – by staying "R-E-L-E-V-A-N-T."

- What it means to learn, unlearn and relearn. The ever-shifting sands of technology pose a special challenge to older workers. Younger professionals not only grew up working and entertaining themselves with screens, they also learned to adapt to technological leaps. A program you learn today may not be relevant in a few years, so keep an open and flexible mind.

- Being R-E-L-E-V-A-N-T: Take this mnemonic device to heart: Risk, Experiment, Listen and Learn, Engage, Value, Attitude of gratitude, No to negativity, and Time. This is an ongoing, evolving note to keep in your mind no matter your professional situation. I've been around a lot of charismatic and effervescent folks in their 70s and 80s who are still successful and growing, both on a personal and business level. The acronym encompasses the ideas that seem to promote a proactive life.

- Answer the question, "What resonates with you?" This is a deceptively deep question when you apply it to your life's trajectory. If life hasn't turned out to be what you expected

it would 30 years ago, then it's time to recalibrate how you see yourself, especially if that's as a perpetual pre-retiree. If you're not sure of how you see yourself in today's setting, start with what the spiritual writer Joseph Campbell called the "moving power of your life," which can be sensed by the things that resonate within you. The things that resonate within you, such as an unusual book, may just be the compass you need to find your way.

Steve Kayser is an award-winning writer, editor, publisher, former radio host and founder of Kayser Media.

Cool bedroom may make for better night's sleep

By Gretchen Reynolds, New York Times

Sleep is essential for good health, as we all know. But a study hints that there may be an easy but unrealized way to augment its virtues: lower the thermostat.

Cooler bedrooms could subtly transform a person's stores of brown fat – what has lately come to be thought of as "good fat" – and consequently alter energy expenditure and metabolic health, even into daylight hours.

Until recently, most scientists thought that adults had no brown fat. But in the past few years, scanty deposits – teaspoonfuls, really – of the tissue have been detected in the necks and upper backs in many adults. This is important because brown fat, unlike the more common white stuff, is metabolically active. Experiments with mice have shown that it takes sugar out of the bloodstream to burn calories and

maintain core temperature.

A similar process seems to take place in humans. For the study, published in June in *Diabetes*, researchers affiliated with the National Institutes of Health persuaded five healthy young male volunteers to sleep in climate-controlled chambers at the NIH for four months. The men went about their normal lives during the days, then returned at 8 every evening. All meals, including lunch, were provided, to keep their caloric intakes constant. They slept in hospital scrubs under light sheets.

Read the whole story

Saving water without letting the lawn die

By Anjali Hemphill, CBS13

An El Dorado Hills woman is taking big steps to save water during the drought, rigging up her home to the point where she's cut her water use by more than half.

Marie Levy has built her own water-saving system from simple products you can find at any hardware store. She's even figured out a way to reuse water more than once.

"Every year in California it's dry," she said.

Levy doesn't hide her lawn watering during the drought. In fact, she's proud of it.

"It's about one load of wash to water my grass for an hour," she said. And I can do that every day of the week and not run

out of water.”

She’s discovered a way to save water wasted every day and put it to good use. She built her own system without any professional experience.

Read the whole story

Tahoe crawfish attracting international clientele

By Erin Breen, KTVN-TV

It is a beautifully calm day on Lake Tahoe as Ben Caldwell and his dad, Sonny, launch their boat from Cave Rock. They are headed for their first set of crawfish traps about 20 minutes away.

“This is the greatest cubicle anyone could ever work in,” says Ben with a smile. He and his dad sold an 18-foot boat to buy a 23-footer and joined forces with Fred Jackson and the Tahoe Lobster Company. “We love to fish and this is great.”



Tahoe Lobster Co. was the first to harvest invasive

crawfish from Lake Tahoe .

Photo/LTN file

These days you'll find Jackson on the water less and less because more and more he's focusing on the marketing end of the business, which is paying off nicely.

"I love being out on the boats," Jackson says. "But what I found was that I just didn't have the market for the crawfish we were catching. So I'm creating a bigger market."

And that he has. Not only has he expanded the number of boats on the water with two subcontracting boats like Caldwell's, but he's opened a store front and warehouse in Minden. He's purchased a refrigerated truck and next week they'll make their first international shipment – to the U.K.

Read the whole story