



**THE MINUTES
OF
INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
U.I.C.H. LES CLEFS D'OR
23-28 MARCH 2009
NEW CENTURY GRAND HOTEL
HANGZHOU
CHINA**



Executive Committee Meeting

New Century Grand Hotel
Hangzhou, China

23 March 2009

Present: President Roger Bastoni, First Vice President Robert Watson, Third Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos, General Secretary Virginia Casale, Assistant General Secretary Michael Romei; Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé, French President Roderick Lévejac, Past President Denis O'Brien, Comité des Sages Members Aldo Giacomello, Marjorie Silverman and Andras Gunst, and Zone Directors Shujaat Khan, Arshad Khokhar, Christian Sussman, Colin Toomey, Tamas Ungar, and China President John Sun Dong

Absent: Second Vice President Rainald Egerth

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Official Welcome

President Bastoni called the meeting to order and warmly welcomed all attendees.

President Bastoni said the President, four members of the Board of Directors and two substitutes need to volunteer to be a part of the Ethics committee. Mr. Robert Watson will oversee the committee. Christian Sussman, Roderick Lévejac, Denis O'Brien and Jean-Roland Boutillé volunteered to sit on the committee. At

the Board of Directors meeting, Mr. Watson will ask for other volunteers, after which he will choose the necessary number of members.

Among other things, the ethics committee will help resolve issues and prevent problems. The following are some examples of things that have occurred already:

- Theft in Denmark (where items went missing/stolen). President Bastoni reminded his colleagues not to leave things lying around and to be careful to avoid future incidents.
- Rumors of poor behavior by a concierge. President Bastoni was informed by a French chef of a bad experience with concierges in Los Cabos, Mexico. Mr. Watson resolved this issue with the assistance of the Mexican National President.
- Cruise ship concierges are wearing official keys while on duty. President Bastoni reiterated that they are not members of UICH. They should not be wearing keys.
- Use of the logo without permission: A very complimentary article was used by Leading Hotels of The World with our Logo however we were not informed prior to. International identity cards were issued to Presidents by the Austrian section, courtesy of Budget. President Roger Bastoni was distressed that Austria allowed Budget to reproduce the international logo without approval. He implored the entire Executive Committee to not allow the unauthorized use of the logo in the future.

Overview of Congress & Important Moments

UICH needs to be sure that adequate insurance is purchased for all attendees during congresses. President Bastoni tried to get insurance through AXA, but they would only cover the European attendees. He is very concerned that should an attendee have an accident, he/she would not be covered at this Congress. Zone Director Shujaat Khan believed members are obliged to go through their primary insurance carrier first. Zone Director Christian Sussman warned that in China there is a requirement that people needing medical care pay upfront. Much discussion ensued.

The entire Executive Committee agreed that, looking to the future, insurance must be a part of the registration fee. Proof of insurance for all delegates will be a standard requirement. President John Sun Dong delivered insurance proof to the Executive Committee before day's end.

The Congress Guidelines will be revised to reflect that insurance is mandatory, it must be purchased by the Congress Organizers, and the type of coverage must be clearly specified.

Much discussion ensued about President John Sun Dong's wish to include China's national members in the meetings. At issue was whether such members should witness the business portion of the meetings. There was no concern over including them in the educational symposium. Executive Committee members were polled to assess their feelings on the issue and there was much lively discussion. Zone Director Christian Sussman and Mr. Aldo Giacomello agreed to discuss the matter privately with President John Sun Dong. At day's end, they returned and respectfully requested that the Chinese National Members be able to attend all parts of the meeting. The Executive Committee agreed.

President Bastoni was given the list of attending presidents and delegates by Ms. Casale. He reviewed the list with the executive committee and made appropriate adjustments to the official list.

The Executive Committee decided to set up a separate seating area at the Board of Directors and General Assembly meetings, where Zone Directors will sit. If the Zone Director is also a President of his section, he will still sit with Zone Directors. Only the delegate of the country section will sit at the main table.

There are 9 observers scheduled to join the Board of Directors meeting, including Dubai and India.

Several other congress details were reviewed. The gala is being held in two separate ball rooms. President Bastoni reminded President John Sun Dong to be sure that all UICH delegates can sit together in the same room, without being separated. The main room accommodates 460 people. There are approximately 700 attendees expected.

President Bastoni hopes to invite all the Asian Presidents to sit together for 15 minutes to discuss splitting the Asian Zone into smaller areas, due to its enormous size.

There are only three blank diplomas in inventory at the Paris office. They will need to be reordered. French President Roderick Lévejac suggested that future proposals for Membres d'Honneur be reviewed and approved by the Executive committee before they are issued. Countries should state why they feel the individual should get recognition.

The UICH Board was able to contribute and help the China Congress Organizing Committee as follows: American Express (10,000 Euro); International Herald Tribune (10,000 Euro); and Elite (2,500 Euro). By using Luxury and Attitudes and Holly Stiel as the educational presenters together with the raffle we managed to contribute another 45,000 Euros to the China Congress.

Executive Committee candidates speeches will be heard at the Board of Directors meeting. Summaries of these speeches will be made available to General Assembly delegates.

The Executive Committee will distribute a separate ballot sheet for each position. Additional ballots need to be prepared in the event of a tie vote. There are currently 29 Presidents registered to attend. If a President is not present, their assigned delegate may vote on their behalf.

President John Sun Dong reviewed the congress agenda in detail.

China Raffle Procedures

President Roger Bastoni was pleased to be able to secure two very nice watches as well as a Chanel package as raffle prizes. All raffle prizes should be forwarded to Zone Director Shujaat Khan for safekeeping and distribution.

Mr. Khan said 25-30 prizes have been donated so far. Raffle tickets cost \$25 USD (or 20 Euro). A price of 150 RMB was established for those who wished to use local currency.

Zone Director Khan detailed exact raffle procedures. Tickets will be sold for five days. As a time saver, some tickets will be pre-drawn. The five largest prizes will be drawn at the gala during the meal.

Tour de Table (since Livorno)

President Roderick Lévejac was voted “best concierge in the world” by the Robb Report.

President Bastoni reported visiting Great Britain for their annual Ladies’ Night. He traveled to Marrakesh for the Morocco National Meeting. While there, he reminded the Moroccans Section to have their AGM within the first three months of the year to adhere to UICH statutes. They did comply and elected a new President.

President Bastoni also attended Malaysia’s national meeting. While there, he reminded the Malaysians to be sure to discuss international news with its national members. President Bastoni found the Malaysian concierges to be very professional and active, but not implicated enough with UICH internationally.

The files for every country are complete in the Paris office, with the exception of 11 countries, which are missing only the trademark protection. Only one country to this date has not provided any documents.

The Executive Committee reviewed upcoming Congresses. President Federico Barbarossa offered to have Italy host the congress in 2014. More will be heard about this at the General Assembly.

- ☞ Lisbon, Portugal – January 2010 (will be confirmed tomorrow)
- ☞ Toronto, Canada – 2011
- ☞ London, England – 2012
- ☞ Auckland, New Zealand 2013
- ☞ Sardinia, Italy 2014 (offer will be made formally at General Assembly)

Zone Business

The procedure for Zone Director selection requires that countries within a zone nominate candidates by forwarding names to the International Secretary two months prior to a UICH Congress. The American Zone is the only section that complied with the statutes. The Executive Committee agreed with Zone Director Khan’s comment that “Ignorance of the statutes is not an excuse for inaction.”

No one in the Asian Zone put a name forward to replace Mr. Christian Sussman, who will step down this year after a four-year tour of duty. President Bastoni reported that several Asian countries will be meeting together in Malaysia this year. Splitting Asia into two zones would be a possible solution to managing Asia’s size and growth.

Much discussion ensued regarding the Zone mandates in Article 7, specifically Section 9(D). Ms. Marjorie Silverman suggested that the process be professionalized and made formal. Countries are more apt to follow guidelines if they are clearly spelled out.

Several countries did not reply to the questionnaire sent in preparation for this Congress. National presidents cannot simply fail to respond to official communications. Perhaps the Assistant General Secretary could contact those who fail to comply.

Conversation veered toward a general discussion with compliance failure on all fronts -- paying dues in a timely fashion, responding to inquiries for membership lists, etc.

Spain, for example, has failed to submit articles for the last eight International Reviews. They are the last to have paid their dues; they do not respond to international communications; they have nothing on their website and to this date no documents are filed in Paris. Other sections are also of concern: Turkey and Israel. Ultimately, Zone Directors have the responsibility to make sure that Presidents of the countries in their area are communicative, responsive, and in full compliance with all Paris mandates.

President Roderick Lévejac believes sections who do not demonstrate growth and compliance should no longer be allowed to be a section. The Executive Committee must communicate clear objectives to all Presidents, and perhaps this would help sections understand the need for full compliance.

The Executive Committee closely reviewed Article IV, Sections 5 and 8 (regarding suspension).

There is no official provision for “observation” in the bylaws. However, the Executive Committee agreed on the following as policy:

The General Secretary will send official registered letters to delinquent presidents informing them that their country has been placed under observation and listing the reasons for concern. Before the next Congress, a written progress report by that section president must be sent to the General Secretary. If no response is submitted by the country under observation, the country may then be subjected to suspension.

Last year, Morocco and Romania were put under observation as well as Russia and The Philippines. Central Zone Director Tamas Ungar said Romania has demonstrated their desire to be in compliance with the statutes. They will be given an additional year to comply. Morocco has re-instated themselves to normal compliance as well as Russia and The Philippines.

Though significant improvements still need to take place in Russia and Philippines. The Executive Committee will lift the suspension with some reservations. Care should be taken to ensure that they do not slip back into a state of non-compliance.

This year only Spain will be under observation. Furthermore, the Executive Committee will look closely at Russia, Romania, Philippines, Malaysia, Morocco and Turkey.

General Secretary’s Correspondence

General Secretary Virginia Casale reported that the lecture of correspondence at the Board of Directors meeting will include letters from Mr. Andre Damonte, Mr. Piotr Prasula (Warsaw) and Marco Milanez (American Express Centurion, Mexico), Gerald Parent (American Express Canada).

New presidents elected since the last Board of Directors meeting include:

ARGENTINA: Alejandro Noya
AUSTRIA: Mr. Christian Paral
AUSTRALIA: Elvis Soiza
GREAT BRITAIN: Paul Still
IRELAND: Brendan Spence
JAPAN: Etsuko Higashide
NORWAY: Henning Kletvang

MEXICO: Yasmin Flores
MOROCCO: Taoufiq Ait El Haddad
PHILIPPINES: Leo Hidalgo
RUSSIA: Ms. Ekaterina Zhuravleva

New Applications from Members in Different Parts of the World

UICH needs to develop a standard formula to handle requests from new areas of the world consistently and quickly.

- Dubai has submitted its official request to become the 41st member section.
- A concierge from South Africa has expressed interest in joining UICH.
- India and Macau will most likely soon present requests for becoming official sections.
- UICH did not consider Singapore's request for Corporate membership possibilities.

No decision on policy was made, but the following suggestions were heard:

- The 3rd Vice President could process all such membership requests and forward them to Zone Directors for action.
- Zone parameters need to be expanded to include all parts of the world.
- Hotels with candidates in countries that are not member sections should be prepared to host a UICH member who comes to observe the candidates at their desks.

The Board of Directors and Executive Committee will give this topic further consideration.

The procedures for application submission vary widely around the world. Zone Director Colin Toomey has designed an application form that can be used by countries that don't already have an official form. The form states only the minimum requirements for membership and could be expanded to suit a country's specific desires over and above the minimum. Some discussion followed. In the end, the Executive Committee agreed to share the draft of the application with the Board of Directors, with the caveat that the process will continue to be refined moving forward.

Andy Pongco Award:

Ms. Marjorie Silverman designed a comprehensive exam that included questions regarding the history of UICH, the tools of the concierge desk, geographical knowledge, airline and restaurant knowledge, hotel knowledge, and essay questions.

Zone Directors Colin Toomey, Tamas Ungar, and Christian Sussman assisted in developing the criteria for the award. Candidate essays were mailed to these gentlemen for review.

This year's candidates were:

- From Argentina, Maria José Iturralde
- From Austria, Annabell Schwarz
- From Denmark, Anders Olsted Ruggiero
- From France, Christophe Caron

- From Great Britain, Toru Machida
- From Hungary, Gabor Sinka
- From the USA, Naomi Abe
- From Thailand, Wirachai Chakumrod
- From Holland, Eef Sparta

The exam was open book and candidates were given 10 days to complete the test. The candidates' responses were "impeccable." The essays were e-mailed to the award committee for review. President Bastoni suggested that the candidates be given the opportunity to observe the Board of Directors meeting. This would allow the Board to get to know the candidates.

No official decision was made on the best procedure for selecting or announcing the winner of the Andy Pongco Award.

Statutory Changes

President Roger Bastoni submitted his suggestions for statutory changes to General Secretary Virginia Casale.

Treasurer's Report:

Mr. Jean-Roland Boutillé presented the Treasury Report for 2008. The Executive Committee reviewed the details of the report line by line.

UICH realized a profit at year end of 28,602 Euro. All countries paid their dues. All section presidents received copies of the balance sheets prior to this Congress.

Treasurer Boutillé reported that there are 31,000 Euro in the French account. Mr. Aldo Giacomello reiterated that 20,000 of this was from American Express -- with the stipulation that they be allowed to earmark the use of the funds. Treasurer Boutillé will make this fact clear in the final draft of his report. As of today, there are still 10,000 Euro of American Express funds that have yet to be relegated.

Mr. Aldo Giacomello will no longer represent UICH to American Express.

Past President Denis O'Brien reminded the Executive Committee that Article VII, Section F states that Zones are self-funding. Much discussion ensued on this point.

The international account is a dual-signature account. The authorized signatures will be those of the President and Treasurer. Only one signature per check is required for it to be valid.

Treasurer Boutillé will hand-deliver invoices for annual subscription fees and Bucherer key orders to Presidents at this Congress. Payment of annual dues is required by May 31st. The future methodology for ordering Bucherer keys was discussed.

3,290 members were reported in 2008; 3,356 are projected for 2009.

When Mr. Aldo Giacomello asked if the Treasurer intends to show 90,000 in the account, President Bastoni replied that the minimum an international organization should have in its account is 100,000 to demonstrate its viability and health.

Varia

Book of Members. President Roger Bastoni will forward an outline on how he produced the last Book of Members to the new International President. He will also pass on the publisher's information. The new President will be responsible for carrying forward the Book of Members tradition. In the most recent printing, the Czech Republic, Romania, Israel, Italy, Belgium, Luxemburg, Philippines, Denmark and Norway were lacking national logos.

International Website. There will not be an official website presentation at the Board of Directors meeting. However, President Roderick Lévejac will ask Presidents to give him a USB key containing membership listings for their section before the conclusion of this Congress.

Comité des Sages Procedures. The Executive Committee reviewed the procedures for appointing an individual to the Comité des Sages.

Questions from individual sections. The Executive Committee reviewed the Questionnaire in detail. Issues raised by individual member sections will be discussed in detail at the Board of Directors meeting.

Guidelines for Ordering Bucherer Keys. Looking to the future, the Paris office will require section Presidents to state the names of those to whom they issue keys. Alternatively, they must certify that a certain number of keys required by a country is accurate.

The meeting concluded.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Casale
General Secretary
UICH, Les Clefs d'Or



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

**New Century Grand Hotel
Hangzhou, China**

24 March 2009

Present:

ARGENTINA
AUSTRALIA
AUSTRIA
BELGIUM
BRAZIL
CANADA
CHINA
CHINESE TAIPEI
CZECH REPUBLIC
DENMARK
FRANCE
FINLAND
GERMANY
GREAT BRITAIN
HELLAS
HOLLAND
HONG KONG
HUNGARY
ISRAEL
IRELAND
ITALY
JAPAN
LUXEMBOURG
MEXICO
MOROCCO
NEW ZEALAND
NORWAY
ROMANIA
RUSSIA

PHILIPPINES
PORTUGAL
SINGAPORE
SOUTH KOREA
SWITZERLAND
THAILAND
TURKEY
USA

Absent: MALAYSIA and SPAIN

Inactive: SWEDEN

Observers: DUBAI and INDIA

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Official Welcome

President Roger Bastoni and the Board of Directors stood to applaud President John Sun Dong for his wonderful work organizing this meeting.

Of the 39 active member sections, 37 countries are represented and 2 are absent. Presidents from each section briefly stood to introduce themselves and their delegates. Each gave a brief overview of activities within their section.

President Bastoni welcomed observers from India and Dubai. He also thanked Gerry Soh for his participation at this meeting.

President Bastoni announced that the Andy Pongco Award was entering its second year. He asked that all award candidates sit at different tables during lunch so they can speak to as many international members as possible. There are 10 nominees this year.

He reflected on time's passing and on the reasons he became President. One of his goals was to establish an Ethics Committee.

First Vice President Robert Watson talked about the Code of Ethics, which are contained within the annual Book of Members. The goal for the Ethics Committee is to ensure appropriate member behavior at all times. The following individuals volunteered to serve on the committee:

- Maurice Dancer - USA
- Kevin Trimoulla - Switzerland
- Gregory Tan – Singapore
- Gustavo Concha – Argentina

As the membership grows and the world shrinks, it becomes increasingly important – and simple – to communicate regularly through email. President Bastoni encouraged all Presidents to reach out and stay in contact with their colleagues throughout the world. It is incumbent on all Presidents to communicate and interact regularly with their Zone Directors. Five of the Zone Directors were introduced, as follows:

- Colin Toomey, Zone Director of Australia and Oceania
- Christian Sussman, Zone Director of Asia
- Shujaat Khan, Zone Director of the Americas
- Arshad Khokhar, Zone Director of Scandinavia
- Tamas Ungar, Zone Director for Central Europe

Zone Directors Claudio Caser (Western Europe) and Mario Erroico (Mediterranean) were not present.

Comité des Sages members Mr. Andras Gunst, Mr. Aldo Giacomello, and Ms. Marjorie Silverman were introduced.

Members of the Executive Committee introduced themselves and briefly addressed the delegates.

Lecture of Correspondence

A lecture of correspondence was read that included letters from Mr. Andre Damonte, Mr. Piotr Prasula (Warsaw) and Marco Milanez (American Express Centurion, Mexico), Gerald Parent (American Express Canada), and a message from Liborio Pimenta of Portugal.

Resume of Minutes from Executive Committee Meetings in Livorno (January 2009) and China (23 March 2009)

General Secretary Virginia Casale reviewed minutes from Executive Committee meetings held in Livorno and here in China..

- The new Book of Members will be printed in 2010 in both CD format and in book form. The last book cost 8 Euros per member.
- The International Review continues to evolve in a positive direction with good advertising revenue.
- The UICH logo use is strictly regulated. Approval must be received prior to its use.

- The Swiss bank account has been closed. The Paris office now processes all requests for Bucherer keys.
- Most countries are now in full compliance with documentation filings in Paris. Warnings will be issued to countries that are still delinquent. Eleven sections are still missing trademark protection.
- The Executive Committee is in place to help all sections Presidents are encouraged to ask for assistance if they need it.
- Mr. Aldo Giacomello will be officially stepping down as the American Express liaison after this meeting concludes.
- Sections must remain in full compliance with UICH statutes. Sections failing to meet these requirements will be officially placed “under observation.” Presidents who receive notices of “observational status” will be required to write a letter to the General Secretary, before the next Congress, explaining the progress they have made toward statutory compliance. Failure to do so may result in a section’s suspension.
- As a reminder, there is no provision for cruise ship concierges. Such individuals are not authorized to wear keys, nor may they claim to be members of UICH.
- Countries that host congresses must provide proof of insurance for all attendees. Guidelines of the exact insurance requirements will be created for distribution. The cost of insurance should be factored into the registration fee.

President Maurice Dancer motioned to approve the Board of Directors Minutes from Copenhagen. President Catalin Malureanu seconded; all approved.

Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé gave a powerpoint presentation detailing the cash flow, balance sheet figures, and 2008 year-end budget. He described where the sponsorship dollars are coming from and the expenses involved in running UICH. 85,000 Euro was received from subscription fees. 3,292 members paid 2008 fees, and there was also some income from past-due 2007 fees. President Bastoni congratulated all member sections for paying their annual subscriptions on time the past year.

President Geoff Argue motioned to approve the budget; President Gustavo Concha seconded; the motion was approved by a show of hands.

International Review

The major expense of the Review is shipping. All advertisers who sponsor the Review have been asked to renew their sponsorship commitments. The current price to produce the magazine is approximately 1.5 Euro/member.

President Bastoni was disappointed that some countries consistently failed to submit items for publication in the Review. A review of the last eight publications makes it clear who has participated and who has not. He encouraged those who have not participated to do so in the future.

Deadlines continue to be a disappointment to the Executive Committee. Articles are not submitted in a timely fashion. Also, there are some countries that do not distribute the magazine in a timely manner to their members. Presidents are responsible for ensuring that all members receive the publication in a timely fashion.

Book of Members:

Currently, the cost of this book is 8 Euros per member. For accounting purposes, all charges for the 2008-2010 Book of Members are being billed to fiscal year 2008.

President Bastoni wanted so much to reinforce the importance of Zones that he redesigned the 2008-2010 Book of Members to reflect this importance. Each country was listed under its Zone. For ease of locating colleagues, however, the Board of Directors all agreed to return to printing future editions in alphabetic order by country name.

Website:

Roderick Levejac will make himself available after the lunch break for any updates.

Bucherer Keys:

In acquiring Bucherer keys, proof of a wire transfer must be given to the International Treasurer. Bucherer will then ship the keys from Switzerland (without any added shipping charges). Orders must be placed by National Presidents only.

Much discussion ensued about the best way to ensure that only full members receive keys. The Board of Directors agreed that Presidents must forward a list of names of all members within their section who received keys during that fiscal year.

Some presidents were disappointed that keys were not available at this meeting, since that is what had been promised originally. Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé will be taking key orders from Presidents at this meeting. All orders will be filled during the last week of April. 672 sets of keys were sold during 2008.

Membership Inquiries from Different Parts of the World

Robert Watson reported that Dubai has presented all their documents for consideration of being the 41st member section of UICH. A large file was given to President Bastoni from a representative of Dubai for consideration.

Countries expressing interest in becoming member sections of UICH should forward their inquiries to the General Secretary. The Executive Committee is working to standardize procedures for new member sections and will inform sections as these practices are more fully put into place.

Statutes:

President Bastoni has made a list of all the statutes that he feels need revision. He will pass this on to the next International President. If you have suggested revisions, please submit them to the International General Secretary.

Application Process Proposal for UICH Membership

President Colin Toomey and Ms. Regena Falling (USA) have put together a comparison of application processes in each country. The purpose of the study was to check on how countries go about selecting candidates of superior quality and integrity.

They presented a list of minimum standards (included in the statutes) that are required for membership. They then made the following suggestions for the application process:

- Conduct a personal interview.
- Test candidates in several areas of knowledge (general knowledge, UICH historical knowledge, etc).
- Require letters of recommendation from active members. Active members must mentor candidates. This helps retain the tradition of excellence toward the future.
- Review the Code of Ethics with the applicant.
- Ask the candidate for a statement of how he/she plans to contribute to UICH.
- Require that members pay subscription fees within four weeks of acceptance.

The template developed by President Toomey and Ms. Falling is not intended to replace the applications of those countries that already have stringent procedures in place. Rather, it is intended to assist those countries who need to professionalize their membership processes.

President Bastoni thanked President Toomey and Ms. Falling for their work. The draft of their document will be reviewed with each Zone Director so that they may make suggestions to enhance the final form.

President Roberta Bezzerà requested that all official documents, including the application, be created in a standardized language (i.e., English).

Area Director Reports and New Zone Director Nominations

Oceania. Zone Director Colin Toomey characterized his small zone as very well-organized. All expect tourism in Australia to rebound in the near future. Australia has had a surge in membership over the last few years. They now have 38 members. There has been steady growth in New Zealand as well. Mr. Toomey credits support from hotel management as a major reason for this growth. Mr. Toomey will be retiring as the Zone Director at the conclusion of this meeting, when President Gustavo Concha will take his place. Australia brought 8 members to this China Congress; New Zealand was able to bring 4 members.

Scandinavia. There are four countries that make up the Scandinavian Zone. Zone Director Arshad Khokhar's goal has been to reactivate the Swedish section. Mr. Khokhar visited Sweden numerous times to help promote the growth of the concierge profession in that country. Mr. Khokhar will retire as Zone Director at the conclusion of this meeting, and Mr. Henning Kletvang will take his place.

The Scandinavian Zone hosts regional meetings periodically. Mr. Khokhar thanked President Roger Bastoni for attending the most recent one in Helsinki. The next meeting will be in Copenhagen, 14- 17 August 2009, and Mr. Khokhar invited any member from the executive committee or zone directors to attend this meeting on a complimentary basis.

Central Europe. Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, Romania, Russia and Hungary are within this zone. Thought not yet a member section, Poland, too is included within this Zone. Zone Director Tamas Ungar attended the European Zone directors meeting on 30 June 2008. Last year in Copenhagen, Romania was put

under observation and Russia was suspended. Both sections continue to try and move forward in strength, and Mr. Ungar has assisted them wherever possible. Requests for all documentation from the Paris office have now been answered, with the exception of the trademark protection filings, with which Russia and Romania continue to struggle. Last November, Hungary celebrated its 25th anniversary as a UICH section with a party in Budapest. Mr. Ungar thanked Third Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos for his support over the past year.

Western Europe. Roderick Lévejac presented the report in the absence of Zone Director Claudio Caser. President Bastoni attended a Western Europe regional meeting this past year. The Irish section is stronger than ever, and at their AGM, awards were given to Tom Doyle and Robert Devine. Meetings have been held in various sections of Ireland. Luxembourg presently has 10 members and 3 are present at this China Congress. Luxembourg hopes to organize a Zone Directors meeting in June. Switzerland has 190 members, their national meeting was held in May 2008.

The Netherlands has upgraded its website. The International Herald Tribune sponsored a member from the Netherlands at a reception they held in January 2009.

France is celebrating its 80th anniversary this year and will be holding its national meeting on 27 November 2009 – the exact date that, 80 years ago, French concierges first came together after a major bank crash. Mr. Lévejac will be discontinuing his involvement with the Executive Committee at the end of this year, when he turns his attention toward developing a training program.

Mr. Lévejac reported on the progress of Ethiopia to form a Clefs d'Or section. The salaries of the concierges there are four times the average salary of the country's residents. One site inspection has already occurred, and a second trip has been planned for October. In three years, UICH will require a follow-up site inspection to ensure that UICH standards continue to be met over the long term. If all is well, at that time Ethiopia may be considered for UICH membership.

Asia. Mr. Christian Sussmann gave a huge thank you to all Asian member sections. Mr. Sussmann feels there should be a new Asian Zone Director. He has made his contributions and is ready to relinquish this responsibility to a new individual.

Americas. The American Zone is very strong. Zone Director Shujaat Khan thanked the five great presidents who comprise this zone. "They are so dedicated and take their jobs so seriously, that tomorrow, after dinner, they will have a zone meeting." Mr. Khan distributed an American Zone newsletter to all delegates. Canada's meeting will take place 17-19 April 2009. The USA meeting is scheduled for 22-26 May 2009. Mexico's annual meeting is 27-30 August 2009. Brazil's meeting is scheduled for September.

The American Zone is in compliance with all requested documents for Paris.

The USA conducts classes called "The Art of the Concierge" throughout the Caribbean. Today, in fact, a class is being taught to 400 hospitality workers in Curacao. Ms. Marjorie Silverman conducts classes called "Keys to Excellence" all around the country. Last year, she taught classes in Florida, New York, and Washington.

The Foundation of the Americas has a little over \$500,000 in the bank; \$21,000 was given in grants this past year.

The Mediterranean. Zone Director Mario Eroico could not be present due to personal reasons. Six of the seven countries comprising the Mediterranean Zone held a meeting to determine how business will be conducted moving forward. The Mediterranean Zone will create a newsletter to keep its member sections involved and to keep other UICH sections informed. Mr. Federico Barbarossa believes the zone will have excellent participation and he looks forward to working cooperatively with his Mediterranean Zone Presidents.

President Bastoni said Zone Directors are the essential means by which UICH creates a proper communication flow between countries. He asked all Presidents to please respect the need for communication and to respond to all correspondence promptly.

Zone Directors for 2009-2011 were announced as follows:

- Americas: Mr. Maurice Dancer
- Central Europe: Mr. Tamas Ungar
- Mediterranean: Mr. Mario Eroico
- Oceania: Mr. Gustavo Concha
- Scandinavia: Mr. Henning Kletvang
- Western Europe: Mr. Claudio Caser
- Asia (still undecided; to be announced later)

Third Vice President Emanuel Vrettos has been the liaison between the Zone Directors and the Executive Board. He applauded the work of the outgoing Zone Directors and thanked them for their service. President Bastoni thanked his Third Vice President.

The Board of Directors is not in compliance with the statutes that require all nominations for Zone Directors be submitted to the General Secretary two months prior to the start of a Congress. The Executive Committee discussed this situation at its meeting with an eye toward meeting these requirements at next year's Congress.

Future Congresses

The 57th International UICH Congress will take place in Portugal, 14-20 January 2010. Delegates watched a short video on Portugal. In an effort to make the meeting affordable to everyone, they intend to offer different accommodation options. The price has been set at 800 Euro for meeting attendance only. Accommodation prices have not yet been set. To help garner interest, Portugal is offering a 100 Euro discount to members who register before the end of June 2009. Sponsors and other non-LCD members who wish to attend will be assessed an additional 100 Euro fee. Much discussion ensued about the steep pricing structure and the need to evaluate Portugal's plans more closely. President Bastoni is confident that a good solution will be found.

President Geoff Argue announced that Canada will host the 58th International Congress in the spring of 2011 and are proud to welcome their friends from around the world. A detailed presentation will be given at the general assembly.

President Paul Still is pleased to have Great Britain host the 2012 Congress on 27 January for five nights in London. The committee has created two housing options. The Congress gala coincides with Britain's longstanding tradition of its annual Ladies' Night. London hopes to be able to accommodate 1,000 attendees, and already, theatre tickets and sponsorship guarantees have been put into place.

New Zealand and Switzerland have expressed interest in 2013 and 2014. President Gustavo Concha showed delegates a beautiful video featuring several highlights of New Zealand.

Proposals for Future Board of Director Meetings

President Federico Barbarossa from Italy presented a video of Sardinia, and looks forward to perhaps hosting an international congress in 2014.

President Bastoni is delighted to know that congress hosts have been found for meetings through the year 2014. He encouraged future host countries to enlist the support of those who have recently held congresses. Education remains a very important and expensive feature of meetings. In addition to financial contributions, value-added contributions (i.e. Holly's presentation) help to defray overall expenses.

Andy Pongco Award

This is the second year of the Andy Pongco Award, honoring the memory of Mr. Andy Pongco (Philippines), who was about to become the President of UICH when he was taken from us suddenly. Past President Denis O'Brien is happy to know that Mr. Pongco's legacy will live on through the mentorship of young concierges, which was Mr. Pongco's passion.

The first award was given to Mr. Tony Chang (Chinese Taipei) in Copenhagen in 2008.

Requirements for award candidates are:

- The candidate needs to be a member of Les Clefs d'Or.
- They must be under 35 years of age.
- They must be attending their first congress.
- They must be fluent in English.
- They must be sponsored by their national section.

The winner receives paid registration and airfare to the next congress.

This year we have 10 candidates. They are from Argentina, Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Hungary, Thailand, and USA.

President Bastoni explained that Ms. Marjorie Silverman was put in charge of organizing the guidelines for the award. She enlisted the help of President Tamas Ungar and President Colin Toomey, and a comprehensive test was created that included areas of hotel knowledge, UICH history, restaurant knowledge, geographical expertise, and more. The test also included two essays: Candidates were given 10 days to complete the exam, and they were invited to use any resources necessary. Candidates will also undergo personal interviews with the Award Committee.

Last year American Express sponsored the winner. This year the sponsor for the award is Elite Limousine. President Bastoni wished all the candidates good luck and said that although there will be one winner, all the candidates are winners. Ms. Silverman expressed her delight at having met each of the candidates. She enjoyed assisting with the award process overall.

Code of Ethics

At last year's Congress in Copenhagen, four countries were either put under observation or suspension. Romania, Russia and Morocco have been returned to full status. The Philippines will remain under observation.

The Executive Committee believes the activities of Spain remain unacceptable. As a result, they will be put under observation for one year.

Introduction of International Board Candidates

Candidates were introduced by General Secretary Virginia Casale:

Treasurer: From France, Mr. Jean-Roland Boutillé

Assistant General Secretary: From USA, Mr. Shujaat Khan

General Secretary: From USA, Mr. Michael Romei

Third Vice President: From Italy, Mr. Massimiliano Errichiello
From Great Britain Mr. Simon Thomas
From Australia, Mr. Colin Toomey

Second Vice President: From Hellas, Mr. Emmanuel Vrettos
From Denmark, Mr. Arshad Khokhar

First Vice President: From Canada, Ms. Virginia Casale

President: From USA, Mr. Robert Watson
(Great Britain's candidate, Mr. Colin Short, withdrew)

Questions and Proposals from Various Countries

Great Britain. Great Britain suggested revisiting the ways in which the international Treasury operates. President Roger Bastoni answered that during the last two years, UICH has been lucky with getting a great deal of sponsorship and support. He concluded by saying that 97,000 Euro in the UICH Treasury is a comfortable cushion to continue to operate a worldwide organization.

Looking to the future, the Board of Directors may want to consider how incomes differ in varying parts of the world. A tiered congress fee structure and/or tiered subscription format might allow more members to attend meetings, which is a very important facet of UICH membership. It would be ideal to ensure that congress attendance is affordable to all.

Belgium. Belgium has a partnership with outlet shopping in several different countries. Mr. Alain Vanderouwera distributed a little booklet to everyone that describes the outlets and their locations. He

believes there is a good possibility that this company can become a source of advertising revenue in future editions of the International Revue.

Hungary. The international flag will be updated and repaired by the Hungarian section.

Portugal. An international membership card would offer added value and prestige to members. A discussion on this issue was tabled until Mr. Roderick Lévejac could give a presentation on a alternate idea that might satisfy Portugal's desire for a membership card.

China. UICH flags are available through John Sun Dong for purchase. Countries interested in purchasing these flags are welcome to contact him.

USA. There are still cruise ship concierges wearing Bucherer lapel keys on their uniforms. The Executive Committee reiterated that these concierges are not members of Les Clefs d'Or and that this is a problem that continues to plague the association. The discussion veered toward the topic of club-floor vs. lobby-level concierges. Canada, for example, accepts club level concierges for membership while the USA does not. The Board of Directors will give consideration over finding a solution to the varying requirements in varying nations. The Board of Directors agreed to ask Bucherer to consider designing alternative clasping options that could accommodate different uniforms and fabrics throughout the world.

Romania. The section was removed from observation status and returned to a section in good standing.

Singapore. Creative solutions to cost-cutting were explored. The "In the Know" program created by InterContinental Hotels has been successful. Working closely with the sales departments of hotels can also be beneficial. The Board of Directors agreed that this would be an excellent topic for deeper discussion.

Luxembourg. Luxembourg asked if there was a school for concierges anywhere in the world affiliated with UICH. President Bastoni responded that there is a school in France that trains concierges, but it is not affiliated with UICH nor does it have the right to use any UICH logo. The school is part of a public college that is open to all individuals. Luxembourg hopes that the Board of Directors will exhibit appropriate decorum in all its communications with each other. President Simon Delcomminette reminded everyone that UICH is an organization based on friendship. Sections are each independent and must be given the autonomy to operate thusly.

France. President Roderick Lévejac had several points to address:

- Executive Committee term limits should be increased.
- It should be mandatory for Presidents to ensure that at least one member from their country attends all international congresses. Representation from all countries should be seen at all congresses.
- Perhaps the Board of Directors should consider giving countries with larger numbers of members a greater number of votes.
- New member sections should go through a probationary period before they become fully autonomous sections of UICH. Furthermore, new member sections should not be responsible for ancillary members from other countries under their wing. The tutelage of these individuals should come from established sections.
- Every UICH member should be assigned a member number. The first two numbers would be the year their member section became a member of UICH. It would be an excellent way to track the evolution of the association and it would also remedy Portugal's desire for a membership card.

- The Board of Directors might wish to rethink the way it distributes Membre d'Honneur diplomas. Simply forwarding the name of an individual does not seem adequate. Perhaps a more complete proposal would be better.
- The Book of Members should include the names of affiliate members of sections.
- The statutes need updating and revision. A policy for maintaining currency of the statutes should be developed.

Concluding Remarks

President Lévejac reminded the Board of Directors of the dangers of growing the membership too quickly. It is always best to contemplate an action first. It is much more difficult to try and undo an action later.

Presidents were asked to be sure to give Mr. Lévejac a USB key containing their membership lists before the conclusion of today's meeting.

President Bastoni thanked everyone for their participation and attendance.

The meeting was adjourned.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

**New Century Grand Hotel
Hangzhou, China**

25 March 2009

Present:

ARGENTINA
AUSTRALIA
AUSTRIA
BELGIUM
BRAZIL
CANADA
CHINA
CHINESE TAIPEI
CZECH REPUBLIC
DENMARK
FRANCE
FINLAND
GERMANY
GREAT BRITAIN
HELLAS
HOLLAND
HONG KONG
HUNGARY
ISRAEL
IRELAND
ITALY
JAPAN
LUXEMBOURG
MEXICO
MOROCCO
NEW ZEALAND
NORWAY
ROMANIA
RUSSIA
PHILIPPINES

PORTUGAL
SINGAPORE
SOUTH KOREA
SWITZERLAND
THAILAND
TURKEY
USA

Absent: MALAYSIA and SPAIN

Inactive: SWEDEN

Observers: DUBAI and INDIA

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Official Welcome

President John Sun Dong warmly welcomed the delegation. After delegates watched a short video sent from Claudio Caser (featuring Mr. Roberto Naldo GM of Hotel Giardino, Ascona, Switzerland). President Sun Dong talked with delegates about how Les Clefs d'Or China is structured.

President Sun Dong says it is necessary to "think of others first; provide service from the heart." In the last 10 years, 69 courses have been taught to Chinese Gold Key members. Candidates must pass a test at the conclusion of the course.

President Sun Dong is proud of the many accomplishments of his section. "We promote UICH at every opportunity." China has national members in more than 1,000 hotels throughout the country. A committee is in place to discuss, analyze, and anticipate future changes in the hotel and service sectors. Each city has its own committee to handle the membership process.

Les Clefs d'Or China distributes its income on the basis of education and training, and to support those in need. Of the money they bring in, 10% goes to charity; 40% is used for education and training, and the final 50% is in a fund that will help support retired members. Those who have worked 30 years as a member of the society will receive support on their retirement.

China created and uses the "E-Concierge" system. Delegates watched a video that describes the system's functionality, which includes a 24-hour reservation hotline and a tracking system that allows China to report its profits/losses to decisionmakers in hotel management. Information is power, and it will help bring more business to hotels. President Sun Dong's dream is to link the world to China's efficient system.

President Bastoni welcomed Ms. Daphne Kau, the representative from the International Herald Tribune and Mrs. Daniela Cerboni from American Express.

International President's Report

President Roger Bastoni thanked the Chinese delegation for the excellent job they did organizing this congress. He is delighted to see such great participation.

President Bastoni is concluding his two-year tenure as President. He is pleased to have been able to serve the organization and is proud to see all his mandates realized:

Most countries have now complied with all the international filing requirements at the Paris office. There is still a bit more work to be done before the entire process is complete.

Andy Pongco's passing has created a legacy that motivates youngsters to attend International Congresses and pursue the profession as a lifetime career. This year, 10 candidates have been nominated to be considered for the Andy Pongco Award.

The International Review continues to improve and finally, through the support of new sponsors, it is mostly self-financing.

The 2008-2010 Book of Members has been successfully produced. The next Book will reflect some changes (specifically, it will be alphabetized by country instead of by zone) and will also be produced in CD format.

The new international UICH website is up and functioning very well. To date, 38 countries have put elements from their country on the site. President Roderick Lévejac was thanked for all his diligence in seeing this task to fruition.

President Bastoni was extremely pleased to report that all sections paid their subscription fees on time in 2008.

President Bastoni thanked the Zone Directors and their primary liaison, Third Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos, for their efforts to streamline communication amongst countries. President Bastoni has observed that, when he attends national AGMs, there is sometimes a lack of information given about international business. He hopes this will change in the future.

President Bastoni presented a slide show highlighting his activities and travels.

Introduction of Newly Elected National Presidents

General Secretary Virginia Casale announced new presidents elected since the Copenhagen Congress:

ARGENTINA: Alejandro Noya

AUSTRIA: Mr. Christian Paral

AUSTRALIA: Elvis Soiza

GREAT BRITAIN: Paul Still
IRELAND: Brendan Spence
JAPAN: Etsuko Higashide
NORWAY: Henning Kletvang
MEXICO: Yasmin Flores
MOROCCO: Taoufiq Ait El Haddad
PHILIPPINES: Leo Hidalgo
RUSSIA: Ms. Ekaterina Zhuravleva

Lecture of Correspondence and Roll of Deceased Members

A lecture of correspondence from the following individuals was read by General Secretary Virginia Casale: Mr. Rainald Egerth, Mr. Andre Damonte, Mr. Piotr Prazula, Mr. Marco Milanez, Mr. Gerard Parent, and a message from Liborio Pimenta of Portugal.

General Secretary Virginia Casale requested a moment of silence in memory of the following deceased members

From Belgium: Michael Peetermans, From Canada: Diane Harding
From Finland: Timo Mannonen
From Great Britain: Richard Higgins
Roy Harden
From Hellas: Christodoulos Vazeos
From Holland: Luck Rockx
From Ireland: Fred Meridith
Tom Flanagan
Charles Marnell
Michael Nolan
Maurice Horgan
James Connor
From Portugal: António Pinho Figueiredo
António Domingos
From Switzerland: Armando Benech
Modeste Follonier
Gian-Domenico Pedrazzi
From France: René De Vroede
Raymond Del Rocchio
From Italy: Michele Cinque
Silvestri Mario
Pacini Piero

Resume of Decisions Taken at the Board of Directors Meeting

General Secretary Virginia Casale reported the following highlights from the Board of Directors meeting on 23 March 2009:

- Each President gave a report on developments within their section. Overall, UICH is healthy and there is good interest in new memberships, both individually and nationally.
- The Board reviewed the official Code of Ethics. Due to unfortunate situations in Copenhagen last year, an ethics committee was created. The objective is to ensure appropriate member behavior at all times. Presidents Maurice Dancer, Gregory Tan, Gustavo Concha, and Mr. Kevin Trimoulla of Switzerland agreed to serve on this voluntary committee.

There is no provision in the statutes for cruise ship concierges. No cruise ship concierges have been authorized to wear keys or to represent themselves as members of UICH.

The use of the UICH logo can only be done with official permission.

With the exception of 11 countries still missing their trademark protection documents, all member sections are up-to-date with the required paperwork to be filed in the Paris office.

We are pleased to welcome observers from Dubai and India.

UICH continues to seek quality sponsors to keep the cost of congresses affordable. This year, donations have been received from American Express, International Herald Tribune, and Elite. President Alain Vanderauwera hopes to add the Chic Shopping Outlet Group (which represents 9 shopping outlet villages throughout Europe) to the list of next year's sponsors.

Another way to defray costs is a raffle, and the USA section brought the Tiger Raffle to China this year. Several wonderful prizes have been donated. Tickets will be sold throughout the congress and winners will be announced during the gala.

Adoption of the Minutes from the General Assembly in Copenhagen

President Maurice Dancer motioned to accept the minutes from the General Assembly meeting in Copenhagen. President Gustavo Concha seconded; the general assembly approved the minutes by a show of majority hands.

Treasurer's Report for 2008 and Budget for 2009

President Geoff Argue motioned to accept the Treasury Report and Budget as presented at the Board of Directors meeting by Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé. President Alejandro Noya seconded; the motion carried by a unanimous show of hands.

Future Congresses

Upcoming congresses have been proposed as follows:

- 57th International Congress: Lisbon, Portugal – 14-19 January 2010
- 58th International Congress: Toronto, Canada – 2011
- 59th International Congress: London, England – 2012

- 60th International Congress: Auckland, New Zealand - 2013

A short video on Portugal was shown to all delegates. A short video on Canada, host of the 58th Congress in 2011, was also viewed.

There is interest from Italy and Switzerland to host the 61st International Congress in 2014.

Mr. Timothy Tan (Malaysia) invited delegates to attend the Asian Congress, 7-9 August 2009, in Malaysia.

American Express Lifestyle Presentation

President Bastoni introduced Mrs. Daniela Cerboni (American Express) who gave a presentation on how American Express Lifestyle services interact and cooperate with Les Clefs d'Or concierges.

Andy Pongco Award

Comité des Sages member Ms. Marjorie Silverman explained how this award evolved. Mr. Andy Pongco (from the Philippines) passed away in 2007, just as he was about to become the International President of UICH. He was an area Zone Director who helped many Asian sections established themselves. He traveled extensively and his passion was organizing educational classes throughout Asia for young concierges.

The Andy Pongco Award was created during the presidency of Mr. Denis O'Brien. It is meant to honor Mr. Pongco's memory and to encourage all national presidents and area directors to mentor young people.

To be a candidate, members must be a member of Les Clefs d'Or, they must be under 35 years of age, they must be attending their first congress they must be fluent in English, and their congress attendance must be sponsored by their national section.

The winner receives paid registration and airfare to the next congress.

Candidates take a comprehensive test that assesses areas of hotel knowledge, UICH history, restaurant knowledge, geographical expertise, and more. The test also includes two essays. Candidates were given 10 days to complete the exam, and they were invited to use any resources necessary. All candidates have also undergone personal interviews with the Award Committee.

Last year's first-ever award winner, Mr. Tony Chang (Chinese Taipei) came to the podium along with Past President Denis O'Brien and Mrs. Daniela Cerboni (American Express), who sponsored the award last year. Mrs. Cerboni congratulated Mr. Chang and gave him her best wishes for a "glamorous concierge career." Past President O'Brien presented Mr. Chang with a trophy and a certificate.

This year's candidates were introduced:

- From Argentina, Maria José Iturralde

- From Austria, Annabell Schwarz
- From Denmark, Anders Olsted Ruggiero
- From France, Christophe Caron
- From Great Britain, Toru Machida
- From Hungary, Gabor Sinka
- From the USA, Naomi Abe
- From Thailand, Wirachai Chakumrod
- From Holland, Eef Sparta

Ms. Silverman was inspired by the essays of the candidates and highlighted some of the answers to the question, "What does Les Clefs d'Or mean to you?"

Ms. Silverman was delighted to discover how well-mentored all the candidates were. Each understands the culture of Les Clefs d'Or, the culture of service. They are all winners. Candidates received a standing ovation.

The 2009 recipient of the Andy Pongco Award went to Mr. Christophe Caron. Mr. Caron cut his teeth at the Disneyland Hotel in Paris. Now, he works at the world-famous Four Seasons George V. Ms. Silverman concluded with a quip, "There are no little jobs; there are great concierges in small hotels and some not so great ones in large hotels."

Comité des Sages member Mr. Aldo Giacomello presented the award to Mr. Caron on behalf of Elite car rental, this year's sponsor.

President Roger Bastoni looks forward to seeing many presidents bringing many more candidates next year.

Membre d'Honneur Diplomas

International membership in UICH were issued to the following:

ARGENTINA: Carlos Budden
 HUNGARY: Andras Gunst
 PORTUGAL: Sergio Correia
 TURKEY: Babur Arslan
 NEW ZEALAND: David Shackleton
 BELGIUM: Michel Hasselwander
 NORWAY: Svein Petter Haslerud
 ISRAEL: Jonathan Harpaz
 SWITZERLAND: Roberto Naldi
 FINLAND: Timo Georgsson
 THAILAND: Pierre Andre Pelletier
 FRANCE: Cedric Moreau and Sylvain Stagnaro
 HELLAS: Georgios Prasinos
 LUXEMBOURG: Carlo Spletz
 BRAZIL: Ronaldo Galdino Campos

HOLLAND: K. Quaser
SINGAPORE: Luxury Tours & Travel

Elections and Speeches by Candidates

The candidates were asked to give their speeches to the general assembly; after which the election process began. The positions that were running unchallenged were voted in by acclamation as follows:

- For Treasurer, Mr. Jean-Roland Boutillé (France)
- For Assistant General Secretary, Mr. Shujaat Khan (USA)
- For General Secretary, Mr. Michael Romei (USA)
- For First Vice President, Ms. Virginia Casale (Canada)
- For President, Mr. Robert Watson (USA)

Ballots were cast to determine the Third Vice President. Nominees included Mr. Massimiliano Errichiello (Italy); Mr. Simon Thomas (Great Britain) and Mr. Colin Toomey (Australia)

Ballots were cast to determine the Second Vice President. Nominees included Mr. Emmanuel Vrettos (Hellas) and Mr. Arshad Khokhar (Denmark).

Ms. Marjorie Silverman and Mr. Andras Gunst counted the ballots and winners were announced as follows:

- Mr. Colin Toomey for the position of the Third Vice President
- Mr. Emmanuel Vrettos for Second Vice President

President Roger Bastoni congratulated the winners and thanked the Comité des Sages for handling the election so efficiently.

Questions/Comments:

Several people stood to congratulate the Board of Directors and Executive Committee on all their hard work.

An Indian observer, Mr. Albert Amanna (InterContinental Mumbai) asked if a map of India showing Les Clefs d'Or member presence could be linked to the international website.

Mr. Massimo Francucci (Kempinski Munich) asked what is being done to protect the concierge profession and Les Clefs d'Or. President Bastoni responded that the Board of Directors puts its heart into this effort every year. One of the best ways he knows to protect the career is to follow up with guests after their departures. He concluded his response by saying what a compliment it is that there are so many in the world who wish to compliment us.

Luc Lavoie (Le Crystal Hotel, Montreal) suggested that UICH's international website be password encoded similar to the way that Canada and the USA presently operate.

Raphael Pallais (Plaza Athenée, New York) asked Les Clefs d'Or to look into creating a permanent IT committee.

General Secretary Virginia Casale reported that Hellas and Ireland have nominated Past President Denis O'Brien to join the Comité des Sages.

President's Conclusion and End of Meeting

Comité des Sages member Ms. Marjorie Silverman offered concluding remarks. She explained that the Conseil des Sages are available to do any kind of project that may be assigned by the Board of Directors. As a suggestion, she mentioned that future General Assemblies may profit from hearing questions first and conducting business last, rather than the reverse which has been the common practice to date.

President Roger Bastoni characterized this General Assembly as a "day of change." He wishes Mr. Watson the very best. He has confidence that he will carry out all his duties in very fine style. He thanked everyone for being themselves and acting with confidence and smiles. He thanked his Board of Directors, his Zone Directors, his Executive Committee, and especially General Secretary Virginia Casale for all that she did to make his term so successful.

The meeting was adjourned.

T A L E N T

M O N D I A L

SAN FRANCISCO - LONDON - CAPE TOWN

1E Grand Floor, Bowell Avenue, 51 Jomo Road, Quatre-Bornes, Republic of Mauritius
Email: concierge@talentmondial.com - Web: www.talentmondial.com

For the second part of our educational program we heard a new talk from an old friend, Holly Stiel. Holly is a former Concierge and founding member of LCD USA. She is the author of the concierge text 'Ultimate Service' and has been a speaker and seminar leader for the past 16 yrs.

Holly customized her presentation with stories and concepts directly relating to the professional concierge. The talk also linked to our host country and city (the silk capital of China) by using the metaphor of SILK™ to define the qualities and skills needed to consistently create remarkable guest experiences, which Holly calls: The Silk Experience.

As Holly said in her speech:

"We weave a tapestry of experiences for our guests, we do it as part of the fabric of our Hotel, our cities, ourselves personally and our professional association in Les Clefs d'Or. It is in the combination of all those layers that we not only deliver a guest experience, we also design a meaningful life for ourselves."

The main points of the entertaining, inspiring and informative talk were divided into four main categories that were an acronym for the word SILK™.

Signature: Our positions provide us with the opportunity to deliver a memorable and signature experience to each guest each day. A Signature means to put your personal stamp and use your personality to differentiate your hotel and connect with the guests.

"The exceptional Concierge incorporates his or her whole self in delivering the experience to the customer – their values, education, interests – it is a bit like sharing a part of your soul with the world in much the same way an artist shares their interpretation, vision and heart on the canvas. It is not about punching a clock or making reservations, it is about sharing oneself, your whole self. The silkworm produces liquid silk in order to spin its cocoon; this exquisite material is self-generated. Everything you have experienced in your life is woven into your service, thus, weaving a piece of yourself into a guest's experience."

Integrity: This is contingent on living and behaving with a set of values. Our values in Les Clefs d'Or are the road map on which our profession's success hinges.

"It is in the extraordinary power of— our motto and creed, 'In Service through Friendship', that the strength of our material resides. Everyone in this audience surely knows that a concierge isn't an individual; it is a team. But a Les Clefs d'Or Concierge is a collaborator. Our network is of course, not only our colleagues at our desks and within our hotel and cities but, our worldwide association, our Les Clefs d'Or team. The value of our membership in this association cannot be overstated. Having access to this network is an enormous aspect of our ability to create magic. It is this motto along with our other guiding values that ensure the foundation of LCD's integrity:

Our Word Is Our Bond
My Guest Today Is Your Guest Tomorrow,
Our integrity and values are the hallmark of our art. These are the threads that strengthen the fabric of our profession. "

Legacy: Delivering these Signature experiences repeatedly over time conveys the integrity of your company and brand and builds the trust that is critical to long term relationships. These Guest experiences generate the sustainable financial performance necessary to continue to build the legacy for future employees and Guests.

"By extending yourself through the passionate, and enduring relationship that you have with your city, (a romance of sorts) is in fact, what makes us, as professional concierge a valuable differentiator.

It is in the sharing of this personal location relationship that we weave our magic. This is so valuable a differentiator that the InterContinental Chain has hinged their entire Brand Identity to it and made it a part of the value proposition the hotel communicates to its customers.

If you haven't experienced the videos of our colleagues sharing their favorite places, go to the InterContinental Web site and share it with your managers."

Kindness: This concept is truly the over arching mantra of our profession and should be for all service professionals.

"In the end, when I think of the one quality of silk and the one quality of artistic service it comes down to this. It feels good! In order for those good feelings to endure it requires care.

You can't just throw silk in the dryer; it must be hand-washed or dry-cleaned, ironed and steamed. In much the same way, artistic service demands great attention and care, to our guests and to ourselves. The word that describes it best is kindness. And One act of kindness for ourselves and for our guests is to pay attention to the present moment - to not just be in the 'everyone wants it now' but to actually be in the now.

How many times a day do we pull out a map and put an x on the spot and say 'you are here'? All the while thinking about the 20 other things you have to accomplish. What if we simply changed one word and said 'We are here'. That one change, with a deep breath can transform the experience for everyone and connect us to the deeper affection we have for our work and our guests.

Care, kindness and being present in the moment is demonstrated so perfectly by Ann Sullivan, a concierge at The Grand Hyatt in San Francisco.

It was during a break in a busy day when Ann looked out the window and noticed a disheveled man at least 80 years old, in a bright orange hat, stumbling around near the front door. He looked homeless; he was very dirty and had on torn clothing. But, something about him caused her to go outside to ask him if he was OK and where he was from. He said Seattle and Ann instantly knew something was wrong. She brought him into the Hotel and somehow managed to get his name, although she could get no other information. She actually got him a room and went to the employee cafeteria to get him some food. (I really enjoyed the part of the story where he told her he didn't like what she brought him to eat.)

She called Seattle information and found a phone number for someone with the same last name. It turned out it was the man's daughter, he was suffering from Alzheimer's and he had gotten on a bus out of town a week earlier. The family had had no idea where he was. Ann told her he was safe and at the hotel. The hotel staff bought him some clean clothes at Macy's, had the hotel Doctor check him out and brought him to the airport where he met his daughter and she took him home. The hotel got some good press out of the incident but Ann and the gentleman's family got to be wrapped in the connected cocoon of silken service."

At the end of the talk Holly facilitated an interactive exercise that was very powerful. It is described below, but it was one of those wonderful moments that erupted in cheering, a kind of "you had to be there" moment!

'Under every chair there is a piece of silk. **It starts with you.** Tie them together with the person on either side of you and behind you so we are all connected - **we are a network, in service through friendship.** Let's

stand up, pull your end of the silk, hard, do you feel how **strong our connection is**? Each of us is a thread in the tapestry of our guest's experiences, in the success of our hotel, in the **integrity** of our professional union. Look around the room and know that this thread ties us one to the other beyond our many languages and cultures there is the thread of truth. It is right here, in our sameness not in our differences.

That thread comes from our heart and is at the heart of our service. Remember to **take care of it**, and on the days when you might be thinking I am only hanging on by a thread, remember this moment, this feeling of connection knowing we are a part of a worldwide community, working in relationship to our cities and resorts, to our hotels, our Guests and to each other. May the power of that connection inspire you to deliver service as only a golden keys concierge can: Through Your Signature, Your Integrity, Your Legacy and Your Kindness - Silk™!"