

THE IMPACT OF HOSTELS

Hostelling International USA
Golden Gate Council
Annual Report 2009



Dear Friends,

2008 will long be remembered as a year that impacted everyone. From bank executives to Joe the Plumber, no one escaped the events of this year. As significant as the news-generating events of the new year, was the positive impact that hostels had on daily lives. Though they may not receive the same fanfare, hostels have been impacting individuals irreversibly now for 100 years.

As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the hostelling movement worldwide, we are pleased to share with you this annual report, which illustrates the impact of the Golden Gate Council of Hostelling International USA over the past year. With our fiscal year ending March 31, 2009, we again saw a Council record number of overnights — 233,707, an increase of 3% over the previous year. As the economy started to show signs of instability, we were able to continue strengthening the Council's financial reserves while furthering our efforts towards environmental sustainability.

This year held much to celebrate, and we highlight the Council's major milestones and achievements in a timeline overview found later in this report. This has been a year focused on improved facilities and continued mission delivery. We are happy to have secured three long-term concessionaire contracts with the National Park Service, for our hostels in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and in Redwood National and State Parks. The Golden Gate Council showed Northern California's strength in hostelling through a variety of awards, including placing in HIHostels.com's Top 10 for highest customer satisfaction ratings worldwide.

Our Hostel Adventures educational programs had a strong year, serving more than 1,600 young people from around the San Francisco Bay Area. We achieved significant growth in the Community Walls program, including expanded curriculum and a new partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of San Francisco. Two new World Travel 101 workshops were introduced, and we debuted an Urban Trekking program which brought Bay Area Girl Scouts on a train trip to the Sacramento Hostel. More than \$3,500 in scholarship funding was distributed to groups and schools (all with a population of students on a free lunch program), allowing them to experience the beauty and inspiration of our National and State Parks and hostels, through the Outdoor Hostel Adventure program.

We have achieved the first goal of our three-year strategic plan, with a successful transfer of leadership to a new executive director. It is a testament to the strength of the Council that this transition has not only been a smooth one, but enjoyable as well. Along with the start of a new executive director in September, this year has seen the transition to a new president of the Board of Directors.

We are excited by all that has developed and been accomplished this year. We look forward to the challenges that lie ahead. Most of all, we are grateful to our board, staff, donors, volunteers, members, and friends of the Golden Gate Council. Without you, we would be unable to impact the world around us as we do. Without you, we would not be celebrating the past 100 years and anticipating the next century with great optimism!

Sincerely,



Danielle Brumfitt
Executive Director



Valche Kalfayan
President, Board of Directors

HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL USA GOLDEN GATE COUNCIL

425 Divisadero Street Suite 307
San Francisco, CA 94117
phone: (415) 863-1444
fax: (415) 863-3865
info@NorCalHostels.org
NorCalHostels.org
SFHostels.com
HostelAdventures.org

Founded in 1958, HI-USA Golden Gate Council is a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

OUR MISSION

To help all, especially the young, gain a greater understanding of the world and its people through hostelling.

OUR VISION

Hostel guests become caring global citizens who are catalysts for intercultural exchange and understanding stewards of the earth.

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Illustrations by Michael Wertz. Photos by Lindsay Carver, Mary Gabriel MacGabhann, Cheri M. Larsh, Brian K. Leadhingham, Jeff Parry, and Barbara Wein. Design by Molly Mitoma.

THE IMPACT OF HOSTELS

By Danielle Brumfitt
Executive Director, HI-USA Golden Gate Council

Hostels have been getting some press lately. News outlets are covering budget-conscious households and the money-saving strategies they are developing as they evaluate their travel options. The low-cost nature of hostels allows these travelers to follow through on their dreams of exploration. Yet, those of us who are passionate hostel users know full well that staying at a hostel is not about saving money. It's about discovery, expanding the mind, learning different points of view. It's about impact.

My first day in a hostel was also the first time an airline lost my luggage. I was in a strange country without the comfort of any of my belongings, and I was scared. But five days later, when the backpack was finally returned, it was no longer a priority in my mind.

I had been embraced by the Spanish girl behind the hostel's front desk, who offered me the gift of a toothbrush and toothpaste, but more importantly an understanding ear to my predicament. Better yet, I had found a group of lifelong friends from around the globe.

Each had their own story of lost luggage, and everyone understood that my dilemma really had very little to do with a missing t-shirt, and more to do with the nervousness of being alone on a big adventure. This nervousness and excitement was something we all shared. More importantly, whether we

had traveled five or five thousand miles, we had learned the important lesson that we all had common goals, fears, and viewpoints that transcended our differences in language, identity, or physical appearance.

This life-changing lesson is one that Hostelling International enables travelers to learn every day around the world. Hostels expose us to the idea of shared experience, an idea that ultimately results in greater understanding and tolerance. Indeed the very mission of Hostelling International is:

To help all, especially the young, gain a greater understanding of the world and its people through hostelling. Our vision is that our hostel guests become caring global citizens who are catalysts for intercultural exchange and understanding stewards of the earth.

To stay at a hostel is to actively interact with fellow travelers. Whether you stay in a dormitory or private room, it is impossible to pass through the doors of a hostel without having a meaningful exchange with at least one other guest. This may take place in the dining room where you share travel tips over breakfast, in the kitchen while you prepare your evening meal, on a hostel-organized outing to explore the local area, or in a guest lounge where you exchange tales of far-flung adventures or life at home. The very set-up of a hostel ensures that these

opportunities are not only offered, but facilitated and encouraged.

Hostellers positively impact the world around them both during and after their hostel stays. During their travels, they are visitors who seek to get off the tourist track and learn about the local community. Their independent nature is one that shuns organized tours, and they seek to find their own way to those neighborhood restaurants, cafes, pubs, and shops that truly showcase a unique local flavor. They are guests who are aware of their impact — both culturally and environmentally — and their passion and curiosity enable experiences that are both meaningful and have long-lasting repercussions, for travelers and locals alike.

In a global society that is increasingly connected, many organizations seek to further tolerance, yet it is still rarely facilitated effectively. Hostelling International has long understood the value of promoting cross-cultural communication in order to increase understanding among citizens of the world. The communal facilities, cultural focus, and mission-based activities found in HI hostels all seek, not just to provide an affordable place to lay your head, but to provide an experience that encourages a spirit of cooperation in individual hostellers that lasts long after they have moved on in their journeys.

The mission of Hostelling International

"Thank you for everything! Hostelling makes travel possible for me. The environment it promotes is one where you inevitably meet new people from around the world." —Suzanne, guest at HI-San Francisco City Center

"I really liked my first new (older) hostel experience. And by the last day I had some wonderful brief conversations that will stay with me, making the world seem a smaller community." —Donald, guest at HI-San Francisco Downtown

"Excellent location. Excellent value. Excellent way to meet people from all over the world." —Warren, guest at HI-San Francisco Fisherman's Wharf

is not defined by a particular style of accommodation — it reaches far beyond the overnight experience. It is a mission that addresses a need felt by citizens across the world — a yearning for tolerance, for understanding, for active engagement, for positive change.

Within our mission statement, you will not find the words “accommodation,” “lodging,” or “cheap bed.” This is not what the hostelling movement is built on. It is built on the recognition that in order to elicit change, one must first provide understanding. Hostel guests interact in subtle and obvious ways, all of which are designed to promote friendships and experiences that hostellers bring back home, where they continue to affect change and promote understanding outside the hostel doors.

For 22 years the Golden Gate Council has been impacting the lives of urban youth in the San Francisco Bay Area through environmental and culturally focused programming. Known collectively as “Hostel Adventures,” these programs focus on exposing participants to each other, to the world, and to the natural environment.

Through Outdoor Hostel Adventures, youth who live in inner cities are exposed to the beauty of our National and State Parks, and the concepts of conservation and environmental stewardship. Through the Cultural Kitchen program, children who have never traveled past their city limits suddenly find themselves learning of other countries and interacting with hostel guests from all corners of the globe. And through

the Community Walls mural project, young members of San Francisco’s Boys and Girls Clubs explore cultural identity and the definition of community, and then share artistic interpretations of their neighborhoods with hostel guests.

Each year, HI-USA Golden Gate Council provides scholarship money to schools and groups to facilitate their participation in programs they may otherwise be unable to attend. We are proud to keep our programs financially accessible through both donor-supported scholarship funds, as well as proceeds from the operating revenue of our largest hostels. Just another way the hostels are impacting and creating global citizens of the future!

This year marks the start of an active focus on raising the funds needed to assure we continue to impact our guests and our local communities, now and for generations to come. The Campaign for Hostelling is a nationally led initiative that seeks to raise funds for the hostelling movement. This three-year campaign focuses on reaching out to those who wish to support the impact of this movement, to assure we may deliver its mission now and in the future.

Be it large or small, a one-time donation or a legacy gift, all contributions will have a direct impact on the foundation of hostels across the U.S. Money raised in the campaign will assure we continue to deliver timelines, like the one found in this report, which include a year of facility improvement, programming, and mission delivery.

We are excited and privileged to work with so many who have such passion and commitment to the development of tolerance. We will continue to inform on how you can be part of the Campaign for Hostelling, and are pleased to provide a channel for fundraising that you can be assured directly impacts not just our guests, but the world around us all.

In the pages of this annual report you find personal stories of staff, donors, and friends. You also find testimonials from guests and program participants. No doubt many of you have your own experiences. How exciting is the fact that we could publish multiple volumes of an annual report on the impact of hostels alone, and no doubt very few would have reference to simple “accommodation?” I encourage you to reflect on what your life would be like without hostels. How many of your daily interactions and decisions are influenced by the lessons of tolerance, acceptance, and adventure you have learned during your hostel stays? Where would the world be without tolerance and those who seek to promote it?

Every day travelers are stepping foot onto planes, trains, and buses, with a notion of what their trip will be like. Many have plans and commitments to return home to. Some have an idea of what lies ahead for their future. Yet as each one, young and old, steps through the hostel doors, few can predict just how their lives are about to change. Be it subtle or grandiose, the hostel doors are opening, the impact starting, and lives are changing.

“The stay at City Center Hostel was the best ever. Your staff is terrific, and the facilities are perfect for a high school group. Thank you for all of your hard work providing lodging at such a reasonable cost for students who otherwise might not be able to experience San Francisco (some of them for the first time).” —Mike, Yosemite High School, guest at HI-San Francisco City Center

“Stunningly beautiful, clean, friendly. The photo albums which told the story of the history of the mansion helped me to appreciate even more the love and work that went into preserving this historical landmark. I felt incredibly lucky to be able to have access to this luxurious place I would otherwise never experience as a humble (poor) teacher. Thanks to HI for acquiring such a great place for the regular folks!” —Katherine, guest at HI-Sacramento

APRIL

The Redwood National Park Hostel ties (with the Shin-Osaka Youth Hostel in Japan) for highest guest satisfaction ratings in the world, according to the rankings of hihostels.com users over the past 12 months.



Three other GGC hostels — HI-Point Montara Lighthouse, HI-Pigeon Point Lighthouse, and HI-Sacramento — tie for sixth place worldwide.

After undergoing a new competitive bidding process, the Redwood Hostel is awarded a seven-year concessionaire contract by the National Park Service, earning the right to continue operations in Redwood National and State Parks.

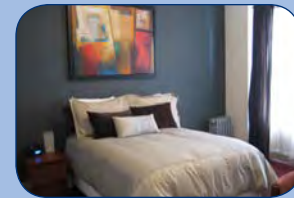


The San Francisco Downtown Hostel completes the first phase in a series of major renovations, including new paint, carpeting, lighting, furniture, and linens in the guest rooms and common areas, and a new media room with widescreen satellite TV, surround-sound, bean bag chairs, and nightly movie screenings.



The San Francisco City Center Hostel unveils two new Premium Private rooms, which provide hotel-style comforts with all the benefits of a hostel stay.

In addition to the amenities of Standard Private rooms — full en-suite bathrooms, sitting areas and writing desks, in-room safes, and radio alarm clocks — the Premium Private rooms offer iPod docking stations, bathtubs, and are located on the top floor with street views.



JUNE

A flurry of media coverage surrounds the Point Montara Lighthouse Hostel, when it is discovered that the lighthouse is much older than previously thought. It was built in 1881 and erected on Wellfleet Harbor in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and eventually made a 3,000-mile journey to Point Montara, where it was installed in 1928. It is now the only known lighthouse to have stood watch on two oceans.



In honor of its 50th anniversary year, HI-USA Golden Gate Council launches the "Adventures in Hostelling" writing contest, receiving more than 100 entries from travelers eager to share their hostelling tales.

50th

JULY

HI-USA Golden Gate Council launches a new campaign to produce and sell environmentally responsible, HI-branded merchandise at its hostels.



The first item is a stainless steel Klean Kanteen printed with the HI logo. Several hostels install new filtered drinking water systems to further discourage the use of bottled water.

After a 25-year tenure, Barbara Wein resigns as executive director of HI-USA Golden Gate Council, and takes on a new challenge as the 2009 Anniversary Year Director for Hostelling International USA.

The Marin Headlands Hostel celebrates its 30th anniversary.

AUGUST

The staff and Board of Directors of HI-USA Golden Gate Council complete and officially adopt a new three-year strategic plan.

HI-USA Golden Gate Council welcomes a new executive director, Danielle Brumfitt.

OCTOBER

The San Francisco Fisherman's Wharf Hostel completes renovations to the reception area of the historic building, creating a brighter and more welcoming entrance for guests.



More than 200 guests attend the Golden Gate Council's 50th Anniversary Luncheon at the United Irish Cultural Center in San Francisco. The event includes a pre-luncheon hike on Ocean Beach, a special anniversary program, and a silent auction benefiting the Council's Hostel Adventure programs.

50th

NOVEMBER

The Pigeon Point Lighthouse Hostel becomes the third Golden Gate Council hostel to receive official Green Business Certification through the Bay Area Green Business Program.



The San Francisco Downtown Hostel unveils a completely remodeled guest kitchen and dining room, with all new appliances, countertops, cookware, dishes, and tables and chairs.



JANUARY

Four Golden Gate Council hostels earn national awards from HI-USA for the 2008 calendar year.



The San Francisco City Center Hostel had the highest Quality Standards rating of any high-volume hostel in the U.S., based on HI's annual inspections.

The San Francisco Fisherman's Wharf Hostel had the highest traveler satisfaction rating of any high-volume hostel, according to hihostels.com.

The Point Montara Lighthouse Hostel had the highest traveler satisfaction rating of any medium-volume hostel, according to hihostels.com.

The San Francisco Downtown Hostel was the third most reserved hostel in the world, according to hihostels.com.

Hostelling International USA enacts more stringent requirements for environmentally responsible hostel operations nationwide.



These new standards are the result of the work of the seven members of the HI-USA Sustainability Committee, including Redwood Hostel manager Kaci Elder, and Pigeon Point Lighthouse Hostel manager Jeff Parry.

Vatche Kalfayan is elected president of the Council's Board of Directors. Former president Walt Knoepfel leaves the Board after serving the maximum of two three-year terms.

FEBRUARY

The Golden Gate Council delivers its first "Urban Trekking" educational program. 29 Girl Scouts (and 12 mothers) learn a range of travel skills and gain the confidence of firsthand experience, by traveling by train from the Bay Area, exploring historic downtown Sacramento, and staying overnight at the Sacramento Hostel.



MARCH

After an intensive public bidding process, the Marin Headlands Hostel and San Francisco Fisherman's Wharf Hostel are both awarded a seven-year concessionaire contract by the National Park Service, earning the right to continue operating in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.



The Point Reyes Hostel is awarded federal economic stimulus funding through the National Park Service, for a new building to include more private family rooms as well as staff housing.



The Point Montara Lighthouse Hostel becomes the fourth Council hostel to receive official Green Business Certification through the Bay Area Green Business Program.



The Golden Gate Council debuts two new Travel 101 workshops: Women Traveling Solo and The Free and Independent Gay Traveler.

The San Francisco City Center Hostel receives a full exterior makeover courtesy of award-winning architects Wayne Barcelon and Darlene Jang. The new look is a bold and innovative approach that adds a fresh and lively color to the surrounding neighborhood.



"The BEST hostel experience and retreat ever! Very intimate feeling, amazingly well-run green hostel, with expert and incredibly friendly staff. I was made to feel at home immediately, and the staff always went the extra mile to help me. They set the tone for the entire hostel's visitors to be communal and kind to one another. The feeling and atmosphere both inside the hostel and its immediate environment is superb. I wish I will own a home one day as inviting!" —Hanul, guest at HI-Point Reyes

"Excellent place and very friendly staff. I just had a single day vacation and it was well spent at the Pescadero hostel. The hot tub experience and walkway to cliff overhang was pure bliss. The quality and diversity of folks in my room was excellent — and I learnt a lot from them in the single night." —Ashok, guest at HI-Pigeon Point Lighthouse

"Heck you could trip around the world just talking to the people who stay here." —Kal, guest at HI-San Francisco City Center

JUNE – NOVEMBER

In 2008, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of HI-USA Golden Gate Council with a series of special events hosted by eight Northern California hostels, as well as a gala luncheon in San Francisco.

50th

Summer Kick-Off BBQ, June 1
HI-POINT REYES

Seaside Sunday BBQ, September 14
HI-PIGEON POINT LIGHTHOUSE

Keith Knight Art Exhibit & Reception, September 20
HI-SAN FRANCISCO CITY CENTER

Local Wine & Cheese Tasting, October 2
HI-SAN FRANCISCO DOWNTOWN

Haunted Hostel Halloween Festival, October 25
HI-POINT MONTARA LIGHTHOUSE

50th Anniversary Gala Luncheon, October 26

Labyrinth Building at Wilson Creek Beach, November 2
HI-REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK

Golden Gate Council Staff Art Exhibit & Reception, November 8
HI-SACRAMENTO

Thanksgiving Dinner Potluck, November 27
HI-MARIN HEADLANDS



Molly Salyer

Assistant General Manager, HI-San Francisco Downtown



I don't remember when I first learned about hostels, because there has never been a time when I wasn't staying in them. When I was young it was not at all unusual to come into the kitchen on Saturday morning to find my mother packing up our little ice chest and a reclaimed wine box with enough food for three meals, and then bundling us into the car for a night away, an excursion, a mini-adventure within the hour.

Growing up in San Francisco mostly meant leaving it every few weekends for Montara, Pigeon Point, Hidden Villa, Marin Headlands, and Point Reyes. We camped too, and stayed with friends and family, but the hostels — with their board games, old pianos, eclectic guests, and free reign to explore — were the best. It's funny how cooking in a hostel kitchen feels like vacation, while waiting around for dinner at home is the most boring thing in the world. And the chores! I loved the chores. I would run to the chore list in the morning, hoping against hope that no one had claimed the carpet sweeper, and then spend 20 minutes chasing one piece of lint around the room.

Over the years, hostels have been my first and favorite option for accommodation. At 19, I stayed in a hostel for the first time without my parents, in Sterling, Scotland. The bright paint, warm people, and general good times planted a small seed in my head: that working somewhere that supports all kinds of people to meet each other and save money — all so they can more deeply enjoy

"We are creating community on a reassuringly small and dauntingly large scale."

and understand the places they are visiting — might be something I could be great at.

Four years later, out of college, returning from traveling through 15 countries in 11 months, I knew it was meant to be, and after working the front desk at a for-profit hostelling company, I got a job at HI-San Francisco Downtown as the Front Desk Manager.

The hostel is huge, different from most hostels I've stayed in, and especially different from the small and charming hostels of my childhood, but it is vibrant and busy. And there is still a feeling I get when I'm running down the stairs between tasks, making sure all the chores are getting done, and I hear strangers introducing themselves as they make their beds in their shared room. It's the knowledge that we are doing good, that we are creating community on a reassuringly small and dauntingly large scale. That people are coming together to understand this city and one another. There is nothing like it, and I love it.

Molly Salyer began working as the Front Desk Manager at HI-San Francisco Downtown in 2005, and was promoted to Assistant General Manager in 2008.



Nancy Reynolds

Hostel Assistant, HI-Point Reyes

“The most satisfying thing about working for Hostelling International is being around people who are committed to peace, the health of the planet, and a broad global perspective where everyone is equal and welcome.”

I am a corporate runaway. I jumped off the treadmill for the first time in 1997 and discovered hostelling in New Zealand, at the big city hostel in Auckland. It was the beginning of an around-the-world trip, after leaving a career in financial services that was full of five-star travel on the company dime. The hostel in Auckland was short a few stars, but I was hooked immediately. The staff knew everything about their country, and in a few hours we had a full month of fun mapped out.

After a year of travel I returned to the U.S. and a bigger, higher-paying corporate job, but I was never the same. Five years and a lot of unsatisfying working hours later, the big bank kindly laid me off and I skipped, smiling, back into the world of independent travel.

Eventually, after a few more years of travel, I needed a job, a home, and a community. And I wanted to find out firsthand if I would ever want to run my own hostel. I randomly picked 10 hostels out of a book, made some calls, and in the summer of 2006, I was hired by the Point Montara Lighthouse Hostel. Little did I know, I had just stumbled upon the funnest job ever.

Sometimes you just know you are in the right place. I just knew. I have tried several times to go back to the corporate world, but it never felt right. You see, the big job paid for my travel, but it didn't feed my soul.

The most satisfying thing about working for Hostelling International is being around people who are committed to peace, the health of the planet, and a broad global perspective where everyone is equal and welcome, where barriers and borders come down, and we all get along.

Each hostel experience has left me with a lesson. Staying at hostels has taught me that it's never too late to follow your dreams. And working at hostels has shown me that people are interesting, and peace is possible.

Nancy Reynolds was a Hostel Assistant at HI-Point Montara Lighthouse from 2006–2008, and at HI-Point Reyes from 2008–2009. She is now off on another travel adventure in Spain.



Steve Haynes

General Manager, HI-Sacramento



"Hostelling and our nonprofit work environment have provided me with a place where I personally make a difference in the lives of our guests and employees every day."

I came to hostelling through a fortuitous reunion with a long-lost friend and career mentor in 1989. Mike Reed and I had worked together at the Atlanta Hilton for many years until he was transferred to Florida. Distance and busy careers caused us to lose contact, until the day that we discovered that our life paths had brought us to within a mile of each other in Washington, DC.

Mike had recently opened Hostelling International's DC hostel, and I was managing the front desk of a small luxury hotel. My job at the Jefferson Hotel was challenging and full of the interesting people that make up the political scene in our national capital. The nagging feeling for me was that I felt like the proverbial "fly on the wall," always observing but not really participating in the political action around me.

As we renewed our friendship, Mike filled me in on the concept of hostelling and the mission of American Youth Hostels (now Hostelling International USA), an organization I knew about only peripherally. Hostelling was appealing to me on so many levels — here was affordable travel for the masses, educational programming, and a commitment to facilitate intercultural understanding through a communal lodging experience. I was so excited about hostelling that in 1991 I attended AYH's National Meeting in Philadelphia.

By this point I knew that Mike had been tapped to open the second AYH hostel in San Francisco, the latest development in a plan to create more urban "gateway" hostels. During the meeting I was blown away by the workshops and the fascinating people that made up AYH. Mike needed a deputy manager for the Hostel at Union Square (as the San Francisco Downtown Hostel was then known), and I had the good fortune to be interviewed by Golden Gate Council executive director Barbara Wein for the position.

The rest, as they say, is history. I've spent over a decade of cu-

mulative years working for the Golden Gate Council, and it has been a rewarding ride for me. Hostelling and our nonprofit work environment have provided me with a place where I personally make a difference in the lives of our guests and employees every day.

In the tumultuous dawn of this new millennium we continue to see basic human rights and dignity take a back seat to financial greed, corruption, and political apathy. It is a rare and gratifying feeling to be able to get up in the morning and go to work with an uncompromised and completely clear conscious that you do not contribute to the exploitation of others. Our hostels provide the catalyst for guests and staff to have equal and honest interactions based on mutual respect, furthering the attainment of the core values and common goals of our worldwide Hostelling International organization.

Steve Haynes was the Deputy Manager of HI-San Francisco Downtown from 1992-1995. Since 2001, he has been the General Manager of HI-Sacramento.





Mike Byrnes

Assistant General Manager, HI-San Francisco Fisherman's Wharf

"Working in hostels has taught me not to underestimate people."

When thinking about how hostels have impacted my life, the words I come up with are people and gratitude. Initially, hostels allowed me to see Europe and meet amazing people, when I wouldn't have been able to otherwise. Those first months backpacking are one of the magical experiences of my life. Meeting people on a train, and then traveling with them for a week as if we had long been friends, showed me that life held much more possibility than I had previously seen.

Hostels eventually became this accidental career that allows me to keep my toe in the travel river daily. Whenever working with the public in our "intimate" setting becomes a little too much, someone always seems to walk through the door who reminds me

why I loved it in the first place. Whether it's a guest who biked from Sacramento even though he could barely walk following a stroke, or another who left, then drove three miles back to give me a letter insisting I NEVER stop surfing, or the Ace Ventura impersonator who after checking in walked outside and sang "The Hills are Alive With the Sound of Music" at the top of his lungs — working in hostels has taught me not to underestimate people.

Above all I am grateful for the people I have worked with, past and present. They have taught me, made me laugh, and enriched my life in many ways. In particular I am fortunate to have had two supervisors, Brian McHugh and Jeanne Comaskey, who allowed me to be myself, gave me a balance of space and structure which helped me to develop as a person, and showed me how to supervise people with genuine compassion and humor. I can't imagine my life without them having been in it.

Mike Byrnes began working as a Hostel Assistant at HI-Marin Headlands in 1995, and was promoted to Deputy Manager in 1998. In 2005, he became the Assistant General Manager at HI-San Francisco Fisherman's Wharf.

Beryl Kay



"What has hostelling meant to me? An appreciation for an organization supported by active, inclusive, and international people."

Hostelling has been in my blood since an early age, as I grew up living next door to a youth hostel in the North of England. We would watch the hostellers come and go with interest and often received reports from the hostel manager, or "warden" as he was called, who would rush into our home to excitedly tell us who was staying at the hostel. One of his favorites was an elderly man who arrived each year on his tricycle. In those days you were not allowed to arrive at a youth hostel by car, you had to be on foot or on a bicycle. Some hostellers cheated — they left their cars somewhere else in the village and pretended they had walked in.

Upon arriving in San Francisco in the '60s, I was delighted to find an established hostel movement. The only thing was, there were no actual hostels! Those came years later. Meanwhile, we had a wonderful program of outdoor trips.

Every week, we would meet on Thursday evenings to sign up for various adventures. Each weekend offered hiking, bicycling, car camping and often sailing, backpacking, and skiing. I particularly enjoyed hiking and camping. Coming from cold and rainy England, it was marvelous to lie awake in my sleeping bag and gaze up

at the stars — few of us had tents in those days. With my many new hostelling friends, I explored the spectacular scenery and sights of the Bay Area and Northern California.

What has hostelling meant to me? An appreciation for an organization supported by active, inclusive, and international people. Most of all, the wonderful and interesting people I have met, including some who, after a span of almost 50 years, remain my very best friends.

Beryl Kay is a longtime donor and volunteer for HI-USA Golden Gate Council, and served as President of the Board of Directors from 1971-1973.

Russ Hedge

Executive Director, HI-USA

It was April 1983 and time for my first extended trip to Europe. I had started my career four years earlier and was firmly and happily entrenched in economics and finance. A summer program at Oxford University seemed a perfect next career step, both to my employer and to me. I received a leave of absence for education, plus a few extra months for some backpack travel.

When the airplane landed in Germany, I eagerly put on my backpack and hit the road. During my first week I toured incredible sights while staying in cheap hotels and pensions. Yet money was still flying out of my wallet at an alarming rate. My six-month travel budget would soon be in shambles. I needed to do something.

In a Frankfurt hotel I met an American backpacker who shared a travel secret that would change my life: "Try hostels."

The next day we checked into the local hostel — at one-third of the cost of my room the night before, my travel plans seemed rescued! Yet it was just the beginning.

That night, I went to the common room where I easily met a half dozen other travelers all from different countries. Struggling happily with each other's languages, we talked and laughed and gestured our way to some understanding and even more camaraderie. The next morning, several of us decided to leave Frankfurt for a local castle a train ride away.

It would happen again and again. A common room filled with seeming strangers who hours later would become travel companions. Conversations among nationalities who were not supposed

to be friends. A shared thirst for new ideas and diverse opinions. An exhilarating lack of predictability at what the next day's travels would bring. An unimaginable bond forged through hostels and backpack travel.

"It would happen again and again... An unimaginable bond forged through hostels and backpack travel."

Hostels were places that changed attitudes and opinions, I learned. They enabled personal growth, I felt. They needed to be more widely available, I came to deeply believe.

By the time I reached Oxford University, I knew the most rewarding part of my summer was already behind me. And I knew my career would change as well. I had discovered hostels.

Russ Hedge started as a volunteer with Hostelling International's Potomac Area Council and helped to establish the HI hostel in Washington, DC. Later he abandoned his well-conceived career plans to become the Potomac Area Council's Executive Director, and in 2000, he became the Executive Director of Hostelling International USA.





Simon Poulton

Board of Directors, HI-USA Golden Gate Council

“Courtesy of the Hostelling International network that allowed me to travel and live economically, I managed to traverse two continents, meet lots of new people, have a brilliant time, and ultimately change my life.”

So, there I was. Bored, facing a career ceiling of 10 years, staring out of my office window at the London rain. And it just kept on raining.

Solution: Take a sabbatical, travel, stay away as long as possible! And this is how, courtesy of the Hostelling International network that allowed me to travel and live economically, I managed to traverse two continents, meet lots of new people, have a brilliant time, and ultimately change my life and find a permanent solution to London rain — move to San Francisco.

Did I mention the rain? Well, by the time I left London in September 1993, it had rained all day every day for four weeks straight. So, I decided to buy a plane ticket and see how long I could keep dry.

Long story short, I had a fabulous time. I traveled the whole West Coast from Seattle to San Diego, then inland to Arizona and Nevada with extended stays in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Hostels were the best way to make this trip happen — not only did I get to extend my budget considerably with economic accommodations, I got to meet all kinds of new and interesting people along the way. Want to be a tourist but don't care to go alone? Check into a hostel, make new friends, and go out together! And so I did for four months, having a great time, until I met an Australian girl in Los Angeles who persuaded me to go to Australia.

Again getting my feet on the ground courtesy of HI, Sydney was my home for a year, where again I met more fabulous people, one of whom had worked in San Francisco and said they knew someone back there looking for my professional skills. A number of (expensive) phone calls later, I was winging my way back to the USA for interviews and a job offer. Staying at HI while this was going on allowed me again to meet an amazing diversity of interesting new people (some of whom are still friends 14 years later), manage my budget, and get established in my new home.

Yes, HI changed my life, and broadened my horizons beyond what I could have previously imagined. I highly recommend it!

Simon Poulton joined the Board of Directors of HI-USA Golden Gate Council in 2008.



DONOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS (April 1, 2008 – March 31, 2009)

We are grateful to all of the individuals and institutions who have made financial and in-kind contributions to HI-USA Golden Gate Council this year. Your donations help to make possible our educational programs — Outdoor Hostel Adventure, Cultural Kitchen, and Community Walls. Thank you for supporting our efforts to impact the world through hostelling!

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My trip to the Marin Headlands

I went to Marin Headlands for a field trip. Marin Headlands is not like a city. I went with parents, teachers, and students.

We went on a solo hike and a night hike. We played games on the hike. We also learned about plants and animals.

I made a fort. We also slid down a hill.

I saw a giant beetle on the beach. We saw lots of grass, trees, and plants. Some of us saw a turkey and a deer. There were lots of grass, trees, and plants all around me. I know I was in a different place because Marin Headlands is not like a city.

We heard wild turkeys. My favorite part of the trip was the night hike. I felt happy there.

—Third grade student, Yick Wo Elementary School



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Dear HAP Donors,

Thank you for donating money for our scholarship for our overnight at Marin Headlands. It was really fun. I liked the set up of the hostel. The rooms were nice and the kitchen too. The game room was the most popular room. It was so cool! The living room was nice and quiet.

The hike was long and peaceful. I really enjoyed all of it. We saw wild turkeys. That was neat. Another thing we saw was deer. The beach was windy and calm. I could say it was the best trip ever.

Sincerely,
 Xianna, Jefferson Elementary School

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Golden Gate Council of American Youth Hostels, Inc.
Statements of Activities ending March 31, 2009 and 2008

	2009	2008
Operating Revenue:		
Hostels and education	\$ 6,929,511	\$ 6,242,422
Membership	34,150	33,319
Contributions	53,171	165,194
Interest and dividend income	20,761	41,220
Sales and miscellaneous	360,070	393,787
Total Operating Revenues	<u>7,397,663</u>	<u>6,875,942</u>
Operating Expenses:		
Hostels and education	6,372,914	5,790,567
General and administrative	\$ 783,807	\$ 587,216
Total Operating Expenses	<u>7,156,721</u>	<u>6,377,783</u>
Change in net assets before nonoperating activities	\$ 240,942	\$ 498,159
HI-USA equity share	<105,961>	<78,942>
Change in net assets	134,981	419,217
Net assets, beginning of the year	\$ 3,859,037	\$ 3,439,820
Net assets, end of the year	<u>\$ 3,994,018</u>	<u>\$ 3,859,037</u>



Golden Gate Council of American Youth Hostels, Inc.
Statements of Financial Position as of March 31, 2009 and 2008

ASSETS		2009	2008
Current Assets:			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$	1,285,349	\$ 1,181,364
Accounts receivable		10,314	34,523
Inventory		63,706	37,261
Prepaid expenses		102,935	146,399
Deposits		41,351	41,035
Total Current Assets		1,503,655	1,440,582
Long-Term Assets:			
Restricted cash		57,234	57,363
Loan costs, net of accumulated amortization		58,416	85,896
Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation and amortization		9,523,761	9,551,794
Total Long-Term Assets		9,639,411	9,695,053
Total Assets	\$	11,143,066	\$ 11,135,635

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		2009	2008
Current Liabilities:			
Mortgage loan payable, current portion	\$	309,396	\$ 289,649
Accounts payable and accrued expenses		531,293	470,665
Advance deposits		437,717	422,328
Minority interest equity share payable		40,197	19,811
Total Current Liabilities		1,318,603	1,202,453
Mortgage loan payable, net of current portion		5,324,206	5,633,670
Total Liabilities		6,642,809	6,836,123
HI-USA equity share payable		506,239	440,475
Commitments			
Net Assets:			
Permanently restricted		300	300
Temporarily restricted		10,310	9,507
Unrestricted		3,983,408	3,849,230
Total Net Assets		3,994,018	3,859,037
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	11,143,066	\$ 11,135,635

IN MEMORIAM

Albert Lanier

Albert Lanier was a quiet warrior and a rare human being. He freely gave his considerable talent to philanthropic organizations and projects he believed in, and his contributions in the area of architecture and community service are too numerous to mention here. At the Golden Gate Council, where he was a driving force as a longtime Board member and officer, his many contributions were symptomatic of his readiness to give of himself.

As an experienced architect and community advocate in San Francisco, Al understood the importance of livability, whether in a neighborhood or in a hostel. Earlier, he had learned the importance of community and public service as a student at the innovative, now extinct, Black Mountain College, where he studied under such luminaries as futurist Buckminster Fuller and the Bauhaus visionary Joseph Albers, and met his wife-to-be, artist Ruth Asawa.

The Golden Gate Council was fortunate to have Al's pro bono services. He reviewed the Council's hostel development and operation plans, and rendered opinions and recommendations that were wise and correct. In the case of the renovation of the former Army medical dispensary that became the Fort Mason hostel, Al went so far as to provide its renovation plans, to act as project supervisor, and to help the Board, the executive director, contractors, foreman, workers, and teenaged California Conservation Corps volunteers open the flagship hostel on April Fool's Day, 1981. Originally named the San Francisco International Hostel (now the San Francisco Fisherman's Wharf Hostel), this facility was to become the Council's "cash cow" for years to come, enabling the development of other Northern California hostels.

Al embodied the spirit of hostelling. He did not elicit or need compliments to spur him to give of his time and creative skills. Along with his fellow Council Board members, Al simply believed in the cause of hostelling. He considered their appreciation, and the personal satisfaction of seeing new hostels open their doors, as adequate reward and thanks.

—Shimon Schwarzschild

Former Executive Director, HI-USA Golden Gate Council

Brian O'Neill

The hostelling movement lost a great friend on May 13, 2009. Brian O'Neill, the longtime General Superintendent of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), died unexpectedly of complications from heart surgery.

The Golden Gate Council enjoyed a long and productive relationship with Brian because our two beautiful hostels in Fort Barry and Fort Mason are located within the GGNRA. Our shared vision of introducing youth to the wonders of nature cemented a partnership that spanned more than 25 years.

Attending the celebration of Brian's life held in Crissy Field on May 29, I was so moved by the diversity of people he loved and touched, the breadth of his accomplishments, and the immense legacy he left behind. The world is forever a better and more beautiful place because of Brian O'Neill. His vision and accomplishments have had a powerful impact on millions of people and will continue to do so.

I personally have learned so much over the past 24 years, working with Brian and watching him in action. Forming partnerships and creating community are key elements of my work at the hostels. I am very lucky to have learned these concepts from Brian, who was always so generous in sharing his ideas, knowledge, and enthusiasm.

I feel so privileged and grateful to have had the unique opportunity to work with Brian, who was such an inspired and passionate leader. He truly was a great man. I miss the gentle giant with smiling eyes and a huge heart, but take comfort in enjoying, and watching others enjoy, the beautiful park that he so lovingly created and nurtured.

—Jeanne Comaskey

Director of San Francisco Operations, HI-USA Golden Gate Council
General Manager, HI-San Francisco Fisherman's Wharf



STAFF & BOARD

(As of March 31, 2009)

HI-MARIN HEADLANDS

Josh Bruner, hostel assistant
Kimberly Douglas, hostel assistant
Meghan Ellwood, hostel assistant
Rose Fluharty, assistant general manager
Mary Gabriel MacGabhann, general manager
Steven Leonard, hostel assistant
Lilli Misner, hostel assistant
Maryam Moody, hostel assistant
Jack Moser, hostel assistant
Eden Nelson, hostel assistant

HI-PIGEON POINT LIGHTHOUSE

Sparrow Baranyai, hostel assistant
Alexander Jones, hostel assistant
Michael Mendenhal, hostel assistant
Jeff Parry, general manager
Bertha Perez, housekeeping
Dave Schuster, maintenance
Annie Siemer, hostel assistant
Hope Swank, hostel assistant

HI-POINT MONTARA LIGHTHOUSE

Chris Bauman, general manager
Peggy Holsclaw, hostel assistant
Felicity Huang, hostel assistant
Victoria Larkowich, hostel assistant
Janice Pratt, lead front desk agent
Dave Schuster, maintenance
Brian Wentzlaff, hostel assistant

HI-POINT REYES

Laife Janovyak, hostel assistant
Hanna Morris, general manager
Nancy Reynolds, hostel assistant

HI-REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK

Sarah Dumas, hostel assistant
Kaci Elder, general manager
Ryan Forsythe, lead front desk agent
Lezlie Heckel, hostel assistant
Brandi Lawson, hostel assistant
Barbara Saloni, hostel assistant

HI-SACRAMENTO

Brooke Bergez, lead front desk agent
Ammie Freymeyer, hostel assistant
Steve Haynes, general manager
Ryan Metzger, hostel assistant
Allison Padilla, hostel assistant
Andrew Richker, hostel assistant
Andrew Stevenson, housekeeping

HI-SAN FRANCISCO CITY CENTER

Evangalina Alaniz, housekeeping
Oscar Araujo, maintenance
Juana Bravo, housekeeping
Chris Chapel, front desk
Augustina Diaz, housekeeping
Atousa Farahani, front desk
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Cynthia Garcia, front desk
Ivonne Garcia, housekeeping manager
Lizbeth Garcia, housekeeping
Regan Goodin, front desk
Rosa Guerrero, housekeeping
Greg Hansen, front desk
Salome Hernandez, housekeeping
Sam Hussein, assistant general manager
Arjen Kammeraad, front desk
Jose Lima, general manager
Evelyn Maldonado, maintenance
Megan Meshot, front desk
Yolanda Rivera, housekeeping
Gabriel Rodriguez, front desk
Maria Elena Villalobos, housekeeping
Taylor Whelan, front desk

HI-SAN FRANCISCO DOWNTOWN

Reuben Alvear, front desk
David Bolger, front desk
Edgar Brocales, facilities manager
Adam Brown, front desk
John Burnett, general manager
Chris Diehl, front desk manager
Lesley Greene, front desk
Josh Horwitz, front desk
Matthew Krellwitz, front desk
Karla Manzo, housekeeping
Juana Saavedra, housekeeping
Molly Salyer, assistant general manager
Sarrina Staub, front desk
Thap Ta, maintenance
Janar Tatubaeva, front desk
Nobert Teves, maintenance
Mark Underwood, front desk manager

HI-SAN FRANCISCO FISHERMAN'S WHARF

Autumn Belnap, front desk
Mike Byrnes, assistant general manager
Nicolas Chaffin, maintenance
Aye Chan, housekeeping
Jeanne Comaskey, general manager
Dylan Dekay-Bemis, front desk
Jon Dockery, facilities manager
Fernando Esterilla, front desk
Francesca Foglia, night auditor

Christopher Hauth, front desk
Paul Heasman, front desk
Kathryn Hyatt, front desk
William Krieg, front desk
Lisa Markuson, front desk
Courtney Ream, front desk
Laura Schweizer, front desk
David Smyth, maintenance
Dani Spinks, front desk manager

SAN FRANCISCO SERVICES

Justin Borge, café assistant
Joshua Capdeville, café assistant
Danny Case, food services manager
Jeanne Comaskey, director of San Francisco operations
Franco Greco, café assistant
Trevor Johnson, café assistant
Sarah King-Cash, café assistant
Brian Leadingham, group sales coordinator
Kate Luscher, café assistant
Nannette Mickle, group sales manager
Dan Powell, café assistant
Nicki Rapp, café assistant
Jesse James Riscen, volunteer & activities coordinator
Justin Anthony Rose, café assistant
Kyle Thomas, café assistant
Heather Woolley, café assistant

CENTRAL SERVICES

Stuart Bousel, office manager & benefits coordinator
Daniel Brumfitt, executive director
Javier Bujanda, finance director
Klaudia Goldberg, accounts payable
Sherezada Kent, marketing & communications associate
Shoko Kinukawa, staff accountant
Molly Mitoma, marketing & communications manager
Sofia Qureshi, educational programs coordinator
Mike Yoshioka, educational programs manager

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Divya Kapasi, vice president
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Andrew Mowat, treasurer
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HI-Marin Headlands

Fort Barry Building 941
Sausalito, CA 94965
(415) 331-2777
marinhostel.org



HI-Sacramento

925 H Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 443-1691
sacramentohostel.org



HI-Pigeon Point Lighthouse

210 Pigeon Point Road
Pescadero, CA 94060
(650) 879-0633
pigeonpointhostel.org



HI-San Francisco City Center

685 Ellis Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
(415) 474-5721
sfhostels.com



HI-Point Montara Lighthouse

16th Street & Highway 1
Montara, CA 94037
(650) 728-7177
montarahostel.org



HI-San Francisco Downtown

312 Mason Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 788-5604
sfhostels.com



HI-Point Reyes

1390 Limantour Spit Road
Point Reyes, CA 94956
(415) 663-8811
pointreyeshostel.org



HI-San Francisco Fisherman's Wharf

Fort Mason Building 240
San Francisco, CA 94123
(415) 771-7277
sfhostels.com



HI-Redwood National Park

14480 Highway 101
Klamath, CA 95548
(707) 482-8265
redwoodhostel.org



HI-Hidden Villa

26870 Moody Road
Los Altos Hills, CA 94022
(650) 949-8650
hiddenvilla.org
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