PEOPLE

CONVENTION BUREAUS

Ken Lawson has been named president and CEO of Visit Florida. A former



U.S. Marine Corps judge advocate general, Lawson most recently served as secretary of the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation. Lawson

succeeds former president and CEO Will Seccombe, who resigned amid a controversial \$1 million tourism promotion contract with the rapper, Pitbull.

Steve Hammond has announced that he will retire as president and CEO of Visit Sacramento, effective

June 30. He held the position since 1999. During Hammond's tenure, the organization's convention and sports sales production has increased by 78 percent and its operating budget has grown from \$2.2 million to \$11 million. His successor is expected to be confirmed this spring.

VisitPittsburgh has announced the promotion of Tom Loftus to chief mar-

keting officer, a newly created position aimed at capitalizing on the organization's marketing, digital marketing and communication departments. Loftus joined

munications in 2015.



PLACES

VisitPittsburgh as vice-president of com-

SPOTLIGHT: PALM SPRINGS

The desert city of **Palm Springs**, California, recently hosted the annual Palm Springs International Film Festival and used the occasion to show off its new meetings offerings to a group of visiting planners. The festival's star-studded

gala was held at the downtown Palm Springs Convention Center, which offers a 112,000-square-foot exhibit hall. Attached to the convention center is the 410-room Renaissance Palm Springs Hotel, which offers an additional 30,000 square feet of space. A full renova-

open this summer with 155 rooms and a rooftop pool. The Andaz Hotel by Hyatt is under construction and will offer 150 guest rooms and several garden areas when it opens.

Kimpton Hotel is expected to

Just south of downtown, a number of properties have recently completed

> renovations. At the Ace Hotel & Swim Club, updates have been made to the its spa, 173 guest rooms and 6,000 square feet of meeting space. A few blocks east is the colorful Saguaro hotel with 244 guest rooms and more than 19,000 square feet of recently renovated

indoor and outdoor meeting space. In the works is a new, 1,175-square-foot terrace located right outside of the Sago Ballroom, which can accommodate groups of up to 300 people.

Moji Rosson has been named vice-president of sales at Visit Wichita (Kansas). Rosson previously served as the general counsel and director of government affairs for the Realtors of South Central Kansas.

Jodi DiSalle has been appointed vice-president of communications at Experience Kissimmee (Florida). She most recently served as director of marketing and public relations at the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center, also in Kissimmee.

Phil Hannes has been named senior director of international marketing at the San Diego Tourism Authority. Hannes most recently worked at Visit Anaheim (California) where he served as director of tourism development for 20 years.

HOSTS & SUPPLIERS

Lukus Kindlesparker has been named general manager of the Westin/

Nashville in Tennessee. Kindlesparker most recently served as general manager of the W/Atlanta-Midtown, and prior to that, he was general manager of Atlanta's



Lukus Kindlesparker

Glenn Hotel and W/Atlanta Perimeter.

Tauseen Malik has been named general manager of the Adolphus Hotel in Dallas. Malik most recently served as general manager of the Lakeway Resort & Spa in Austin, Texas.

Kathleen Cochran has been hired as general manager of the Alisal Guest Ranch Resort & Spa in Solvang, California. Cochran most recently served as general manager of the Resort at Paws Up in Greenough, Montana.

Zach Meyers has been named general manager of the Arrabelle at Vail Square in Vail, Colorado. He has served as director of hotel operations for the Grand continued on page 19

The Renaissance Palm Springs is scheduled to undergo a complete renovation that will begin this June.

expected to begin this June and wrap up by January 2018.

The downtown area is also planning to debut two new hotels. The

tion of the Renaissance Palm Springs is

$people(\mathcal{E}) places$

Association Update

News from state and regional associations and local societies of association executives



• The Virginia Society of

Association Executives, based in Richmond, recently presented its annual Awards of Excellence. Richard Johnstone Jr., president and CEO of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives, was awarded the CEO Award of Excellence. Wilmer Stoneman, associate director of governmental relations at the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation, was awarded the Association Staff Award of Excellence, And Lisa MacArthur, convention sales manager of the Virginia Beach (Virginia) Convention & Visitors Bureau, was awarded the Associate Member Award of Excellence.

 The New York City-based American Society of Mechanical Engineers has promoted Jeff Patterson to chief operating officer, a newly created position. Patterson previously served as the organization's associate executive director of marketing and sales. Prior to starting at the association in January 2016, Patterson served as president of the insurance division of ALM Media, an information and intelligence company based in New York City. He also served as chief executive officer of Mile 21 LLC in Santa Rosa, California, and Safari Books Online in Sebastopol, California.

• The American Pet Products Association, based in Greenwich, Connecticut, has promoted Edith Martignetti to associate vice-president of human resources and Alexandra Simonfay to the position of associate manager of industry relations. Martignetti was formerly the organization's general man-

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Teton Lodge Company in Moran, Wyoming, and as hotel director of operations and acting general manager at Hotel Jerome in Aspen, Colorado.

Peggy Trott has been appointed general manager of the Stella Hotel,

which is scheduled to open in March in Bryan, Texas. Trott has previous experience serving as general manager of the Inn at Laguna Beach in Southern Califor-



Peggy Trott

nia and as general manager of the Kimpton Hotel Palomar/Philadelphia.

Kate Grattan has been appointed general manager of the Lodge at Vail in Vail, Colorado. Grattan has been with Vail Resorts for 17 years, serving in various management positions. She also served as general manager of One Ski Hill Place in Breckenridge, Colorado.

Justin Simpson has been named general manager of the Kimpton Shorebreak Hotel in Huntington Beach, California. He most recently served as director of operations at the Westin/San Diego. Prior to that, he spent three years at the St. Regis Monarch Beach Resort & Spa in Dana Point, California, most recently as director of front office operations.

Mark Karbotly has been named general manager of the Hotel Indigo/Tuscaloosa Downtown in Alabama. He previously served as director of operations at the Houston Marriott North.

The Residence Inn/Breckenridge in Colorado has hired **Scott Lypson** as general manager and **Pamela Brown** as director of sales and marketing. Lypson previously was director of services at Marriott's Timber Lodge in South Lake Tahoe, California. Brown most recently worked at Robert Half, an international staffing firm. The property opened in December with 129 guest suites and nearly 3,000 square feet of meeting space.

Hotel Becket, which recently opened in South Lake Tahoe, California, has named **Gregg Harper** as general manager and **Kate Brown** as regional director of sales and marketing. Harper most recently was general manager of the Salishan Spa & Golf Resort in Gleneden Beach, Oregon. Brown has worked at properties including Northstar and the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, Nevada.

In Irvine, California, Hotel Irvine has hired **Joe Martino** as director of sales and marketing and **John Cullinane** as director of sales. Martino most recently served as director of sales and marketing at the Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort & Spa in Dana Point, California. Cullinane most recently was associate director of sales for the Hyatt Regency/Jersey City in New Jersey.

CONSTRUCTION & EXPANSION

The **International Convention Centre Sydney** (ICC Sydney) has opened in the heart of its own harbor waterfront pre-



International Convention Centre Sydney

cinct. ICC Sydney features more than 375,000 square feet of exhibition space, more than 85,000 square feet of meeting space and a theater.

The **Andaz Scottsdale Resort & Spa** recently opened as the first Andaz property in Scottsdale, Arizona. The 201-room resort offers 10,000 square feet of indoor meeting space and more than 36,000 square feet of outdoor event space. A more secluded option is "The Retreat," located on the southern portion of the resort; it features 22 guest rooms and several outdoor dining and event spaces. *continued on page 33*

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ager and Simonfay previously served as its project coordinator.



· In March, the Dallas-based International Association of Exhibitions & Events plans to launch its new IAEE Certified Exhibition Program, a certified exhibition designation that will set the "gold standard" for exhibitions and events, as well as establish a broad set of best practices that all events with exhibitions should adhere to. Organizational candidates that meet all criteria will be awarded an IAEE "Certified Exhibition" graphic, which can be used on promotional materials. IAEE also plans to announce newly designated exhibitions throughout the year. For additional information, visit iaee.com.

 In other IAEE news, the association has appointed Ryan Strowger as its incoming chairperson. Strowger serves as senior vice-president of exhibitions, conferences and sales for the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions.

 Chicago-based Corcoran Expositions, an independent trade-show organizer, recently announced that it will manage the Chicago-based American Dental **Hygienists Association trade** show and renew its agreement with the Washington, D.C.-based International City/County Management Association. Corcoran Expositions will provide exhibit sales and management services for the ADHA's 2017 Center for Lifelong Learning 94th Annual Session, scheduled to be held in Jacksonville, Florida, as well as its 95th Annual Session, scheduled to take place in Columbus, Ohio. For the International City/ County Management Association, Corcoran Expositions will provide exhibit sales, sponsorship sales and management services for the 2017 National Brownfields Training Conference, to be held in Pittsburgh.

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The Marriott Marquis/Houston has opened in downtown Houston. Con-



Marriott Marquis/Houston

nected to the George R. Brown Convention Center, the 1,000-room hotel offers more than 100,000 square feet of meeting space, including Houston's largest ballroom. The property's outdoor event space includes Parkview Terrace, home to a rooftop, Texas-shaped lazy river.

The **Radisson/Oakland Airport** has opened less than two miles from California's Oakland International Airport. The hotel has 280 guest rooms and more than 7,400 square feet of meeting space.

The **Andaz Mayakoba Resort Riviera Maya** has opened near Playa del Carmen, Mexico, and is the brand's first property in that country. The beachfront resort features 214 guest room and 14,000 square feet of meeting space.

The **Four Points by Sheraton/Cleveland Airport** recently opened with 147 guest rooms, more than 7,000 square feet of meeting space and an indoor pool. It is the brand's first hotel in Cleveland.

Ithaca Marriott Downtown on the Commons has opened in Ithaca, New York, with 159 guest rooms, a restaurant and a fitness center. For meetings, the property offers more than 2,300 square feet of meeting space.

The **Four Seasons/New York** in New York City recently unveiled a \$120 million renovation of its 368 guest rooms. For meetings, the property offers 12,123 square feet of space.

In Hawaii, the **Wailea Beach Resort– Marriott, Maui** has completed a \$100 million transformation. The shorefront property now features six new dining options, three new distinct pool experiences and 547 redesigned guest rooms. The update also included a modernization of its meeting spaces—30,000 square feet indoors and 72,000 square feet outdoors—fitness center and spa.

The Hilton Marco Island Beach Resort & Spa in Marco Island, Florida, has completed a \$40 million renovation with updates to its lobby, 310 guest rooms and pool. The Deck at 560 Bar & Restaurant and 560 Market were also recently unveiled. The resort features more than 25,000 square feet of meeting space, and a beachfront event lawn is expected to debut this fall.

The **Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino** in Palm Beach, Aruba, recently completed a \$25 million renovation that redesigned guest rooms, refreshed its pool and beach areas and updated menus and décor at its restaurants. The 357-room property also offers 15,000 square feet of indoor event space and 24,000 square feet of outdoor space.

The 174-room **Hotel Karlan San Diego**, a DoubleTree by Hilton property, has completed a \$12 million renovation. Features include remodeled guest rooms, a new dining concept and gastropub, an upgraded spa with a fitness center and an upgraded pool with outdoor cabanas. The hotel features six meeting spaces, totaling more than 14,000 square feet.

IN MEMORIAM

Jef Russell III, former executive director of the Beaumont (Texas) Convention & Visitors Bureau, passed away in Beaumont on December 31,

2016. He was 68. In addition to leading the Beaumont CVB for more than 10 years, Russell also held leadership positions at the Fort Worth (Texas) Con-



Jef Russell III

vention & Visitors Bureau and the Eureka Springs City (Arkansas) Advertising & Promotion Commission.

-Edited by Jennifer Lee