



Vail Valley Success Awards: Green Business of the Year

1. Are environmentally sound practices a component of your business's mission? (Yes/No) Please elaborate on various strategies.

Not only are they a component of our business, they have been for a LONG time. This isn't a new, trendy thing for us. We've tried to be "green" for the last twenty years.

Highway Cleanup – In 1988, the Antlers staff adopted a two-mile stretch along I-70 near the top of Vail Pass. Every single year since then, and sometimes twice a year, the Antlers employees spend a good part of the day cleaning that section of highway. It's voluntary, but the Antlers does pay everyone their regular wage for the time spent cleaning. Afterwards, we come back to the hotel and have a poolside bbq or some kind of picnic lunch to celebrate.

Over the years we have coordinated a number of times with other clean-up groups including the Colorado Friends of John Denver as well as Ellie Caryl and the ECO Trails volunteer crew. Each time we have included them in our luncheon, which the Antlers sponsors at no cost to them.



One year (pictured at left) we talked one of our board

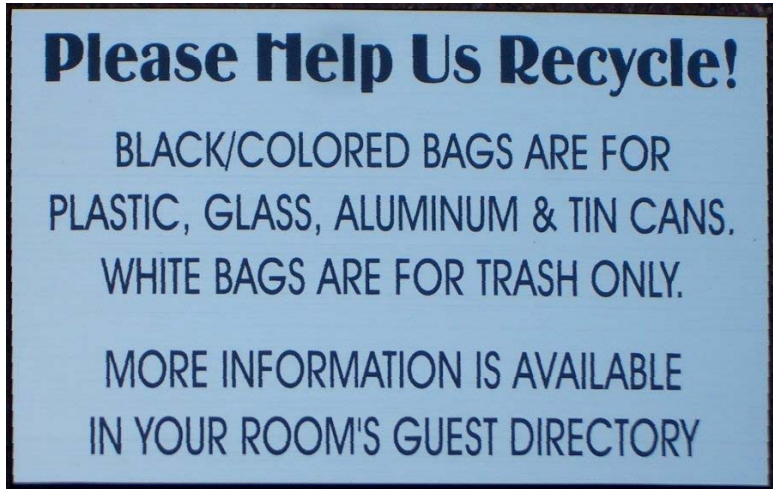
members, as well as our \$350 an hour Association attorney into joining us (no, we didn't pay HIM for his time)

Fireplace Conversion – People don't remember it much any more, but back in the 80's there was a significant woodsmoke pollution problem in Vail. Because of the tight valley and the temperature inversions, it was not unusual in the winter for a terrible smokey haze to permeate the core area. It was commonly recognized as one of Vail's more significant problems ... just check the



community surveys from back then. In 1992 the Antlers led the way and voluntarily converted all 70 woodburning fireplaces to natural gas. The cost was over \$70,000 ... a lot back then. Perhaps more importantly, afterwards we helped encourage a number of other properties to do the same. Today there are far more gas burning fireplaces in the core area than there are woodburning and it has absolutely eliminated the pollution problem. In 1995 the Antlers was awarded the very first ToV Mauri Nottingham Environmental Award, specifically for this fireplace conversion project as well as our influence on other subsequent conversions.

Recycling – In about 1990, We Recycle (headed by Mauri Nottingham) started up a county-wide recycling program. The Antlers quickly came to appreciate that curbside recycling was extremely expensive for that operation. It was not cost effective then, and still isn't. At that time, we started collecting recyclables not only from our internal operations, but also encouraging our guests to participate in the program. The enclosed sign can be found in every one of our rental condominiums. More importantly, we made the commitment to take our recyclables over to the central collection point regularly, rather than expecting someone to come pick them up.



Today, our housemen, housekeepers and maintenance crew load plastic, glass, cans, cardboard, newspapers and office paper into an old van (dedicated to this one purpose) every single day. Once or twice a week it takes two guys about an hour and a half to drive the van over, sort everything and deposit it at the collection center. We think our annual commitment in wages and hard costs are probably about \$8,000 a year. We estimate our total recyclable volume at 15 tons a year.



Water Saving Measures – For many years (even before it was popular) the Antlers has encouraged our guests to help us conserve water. This sign has been in every one of our 151 guest bathrooms since the early 1990's.

Community Support – As a result of our ongoing and varied support of the Eagle Valley Alliance for Sustainability, the Antlers was recently named the “Official Hotel” of that organization.

Bus Passes – As a way to encourage employees to use ECO transit rather than drive, the Antlers pays the entire cost of the bus pass for every employee who will use it. That will be about a \$6,700 commitment this year.

Eco-friendly Laundry Services – The Antlers recently invested in environmentally friendly laundry equipment costing about \$17,000. The ozone generator allows the hotel laundry to use cooler water temperatures saving considerable energy. We also use phosphate-free detergent and other biodegradable products in that laundry, thus generating far less pollution than other similar operations. Bill Jones services more than 80 commercial laundries in the Eagle and Roaring Fork Valleys through his company, In-House Laundry. Bill recently stated that he thought the Antlers laundry was the “greenest” one in either valley.



Green Star Rated Property – The Antler is a Green Star (www.greenstarinc.org) rated property. This national program assists businesses in taking a hands-on role in caring for the environment, and recognizes those that meet certain criteria toward that end.

2. Why do you feel that your business should win the Success Award for Green Business of the Year?

As stated previously, being environmentally conscious has recently become in vogue. We would never disparage the efforts of any business that tries to “do the right thing” environmentally ... regardless of their motivation. Nevertheless, we feel like we've been

doing these things for an awful long time ... not because of the current marketing or PR value, but simply because we believe strongly in the old William James quote, "I will act as if what I do makes a difference". By the way, that quote was on the Vail Symposium's 16th annual poster, which hangs prominently in our offices.



Again, while it does nothing to diminish the value of their efforts, there are also some companies that are large enough that they can simply throw some money at the issue for appearances sake. While we think the Antlers has a significant reputation and standing in the community, let's not forget, we are simply a homeowners association. While we rent out the units short term for our owners, and thus have the appearance of a typical commercial hotel, we are really nothing more than a not-for-profit homeowners association, with a budget that simply tries to match expenses with income. We are not that much unlike the homeowners association for the townhomes in which you, or someone you work with, lives. Try to imagine that group making the type of financial commitment toward this worthy mission that we do.

3. How does your business contribute to the economic vitality and quality of life in the Vail Valley?

The Antlers has tried to build a reputation as Vail's very best corporate citizen. Yes, there are certainly a few companies that donate and contribute more to the community. However, we maintain that none of them do more relative to their size than the Antlers. Examples of that include (but are not limited to):

Bravo Music Festival – For 20 years the Antlers has provided housing for a large number of the visiting musicians as well as some of the staff. There were over 1,100 room nights provided in 2007 ... more than 100 of those were full comps. The rest were provided at a deeply discounted rate ... less than half of the Antlers average daily rate during the summer. Those included twenty rooms for nine nights for the Rochester Philharmonic, thirty-five rooms for ten nights for The Philadelphia Orchastra and thirty-five rooms for nine nights for the New York Philharmonic. Additionally, six times a year the Antlers hosts the Bravo executive board meeting at no charge.

Jimmy Heuga Center – (4) four night comp stays annually (16 nights total) for participants in the Heuga MS program.

ECO Trails – Sponsor free luncheon for participants of Highway Clean-up.

Vail Symposium – As the “Official Hotel of the Vail Symposium” the Antlers provides complimentary housing for all of their speakers who need it. That includes the Unlimited Adventure Series, co-hosted by the Vail Library. The Antlers has also hosted several meetings and speaker events at no charge to the Symposium.



Eagle Valley Alliance for Sustainability – As the “Official Hotel of the Alliance” the Antlers provides complimentary housing for all of their speakers who need it, and makes a small cash contribution as well.

Vail Valley Foundation – Annual sponsor of the American Ski Classic with two comp weeks (in March!), as well as a sponsor of the International Dance Festival with comp rooms for ballet instructors and production personnel. The Antlers recently has also sponsored the Winter StreetBeat Series with additional comp rooms in December.



Colorado Children's Chorale – As the “Official Hotel of the Chorale”, the Antlers has hosted their annual Vail residency since 1989. Most years that amounts to almost 100 comp room nights for the children and staff.

Colorado Adopt-a-Highway program – Antlers staff has cleaned litter off our two mile section of Vail Pass every year since 1988.

Colorado Friends of John Denver – Deeply discounted housing for participants in the annual CFJD clean-up day and total sponsorship of their luncheon.

The Resource Center – Over the years the Antlers has served as a safe house when victims of domestic abuse need help.

Salvation Army – Just ask Tsu Wolin Brown if she's ever asked the Antlers for anything and not received an answer of “yes”.

Town of Vail – Free meeting space for staff retreats, occasional comp rooms for consultants or job applicants.

VVCTB – Ardent supporter with comp rooms, free meeting space and active membership.

Colorado Association of Commerce and Industry – Active membership with representation on the board of directors. Host to the Annual CACI board retreat.

Vail Jazz Foundation – 10 comp nights for winter program and Jazz Goes to School.

Vail Rec District – Financial sponsor of the Youth Mountain Bike Series, the New Year's Eve program and others.

Eagle County Summer Air Program – Have repeatedly agreed to contribute to shortfall if necessary and also donated some comp space.

Other organizations supported in 2007, generally with a couple comp nights:

- Wild West Days
- Channel 6 Public Television
- United Way of Eagle County
- First Descents
- Rocky Mountain Wildlife Conservation Center
- Colorado Ski Museum
- Vail Arts Festival
- Vail Local Marketing District
- Eagle Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Vail Valley Business Women's Association
- Eagle Valley Rotary

4. How does your business demonstrate excellent customer service?

For starters, our company motto is this ... "The answer is Yes, now what's the question?" We don't have a bunch of SOP's (standard operating procedures) when it comes to guest service. Instead, we try to just maintain a culture based on that motto, and one in which every guest (and employee) is treated with respect and empathy, just as each of us would always like to be treated. That culture has resulted in family reunions



*Morris Family
Summer 2004* We had a great time. See you next year!



coming to the Antlers for 25 straight years. We have not only hosted, but actually been asked (and agreed) to perform the weddings of two of our guests and three of our employees.

We have had employees loan a guest their own personal car (in a pickle). We had one employee find an envelope with over \$2,000 in hundred dollar bills in it, and then go find the guest who lost it. There are way too many similar examples of exemplary guest

service to even recount. No big deal though ... we want these folks to think of the Antlers as their extended family, so we simply treat them that way.

5. Please cite examples of your company's positive employee relations. (i.e.: employee retention, benefits, overall satisfaction, etc.)

Naturally, we do all the normal stuff like the end-of-season party, Christmas party, holiday bonuses, birthday celebrations, cost savings incentives, recognition and bonuses for extra good service, etc. etc. More importantly though, we simply try to treat every employee with kindness and respect. There are twelve employees who have been with the Antlers for more than a decade. Five of those have been here more than 20 years, and three of them more than 30.

In 2002 we named our brand new elegant board room after our executive housekeeper ... the Millie Barela Board Room. Where have you ever seen that before?

One of the staples of our regular staff meetings is the open question, "What could the Antlers do to make your job more fun?"



The Antlers has nine units of employee housing ON-SITE. If that space was used for free market units, it would be worth three to four million dollars. We charge the employees that live on site the princely sum of \$295 per month for their own private apartment. Keep in mind that in addition to a pretty outrageous employee benefit, having those folks live on-site has the environmental benefit of reducing vehicle traffic significantly ... day in and day out.

The Antlers continues to pay over 90% of all employees health insurance costs, and recently added coverage of their children's health insurance as well. Although the employees do have to contribute toward their children's coverage, the Antlers pays more than half that cost.

In addition to a modest matching contribution for employees' 401k plans every year, the Antlers has also provided profit sharing for every employee, whether they contribute to their 401K or not. Years ago this program established a retirement account for everyone, and has since encouraged some of the entry-level hourly employees to begin deferring some of their wages as well.

The Antlers pays 50% - 100% of tuition for any Colorado Mountain College course taken by employees, depending on its applicability to that person's job description. Courses such as resort management or foreign languages are paid 100% for any employee. A small bonus (\$25) is paid whenever an employee gets an "A" in any class.