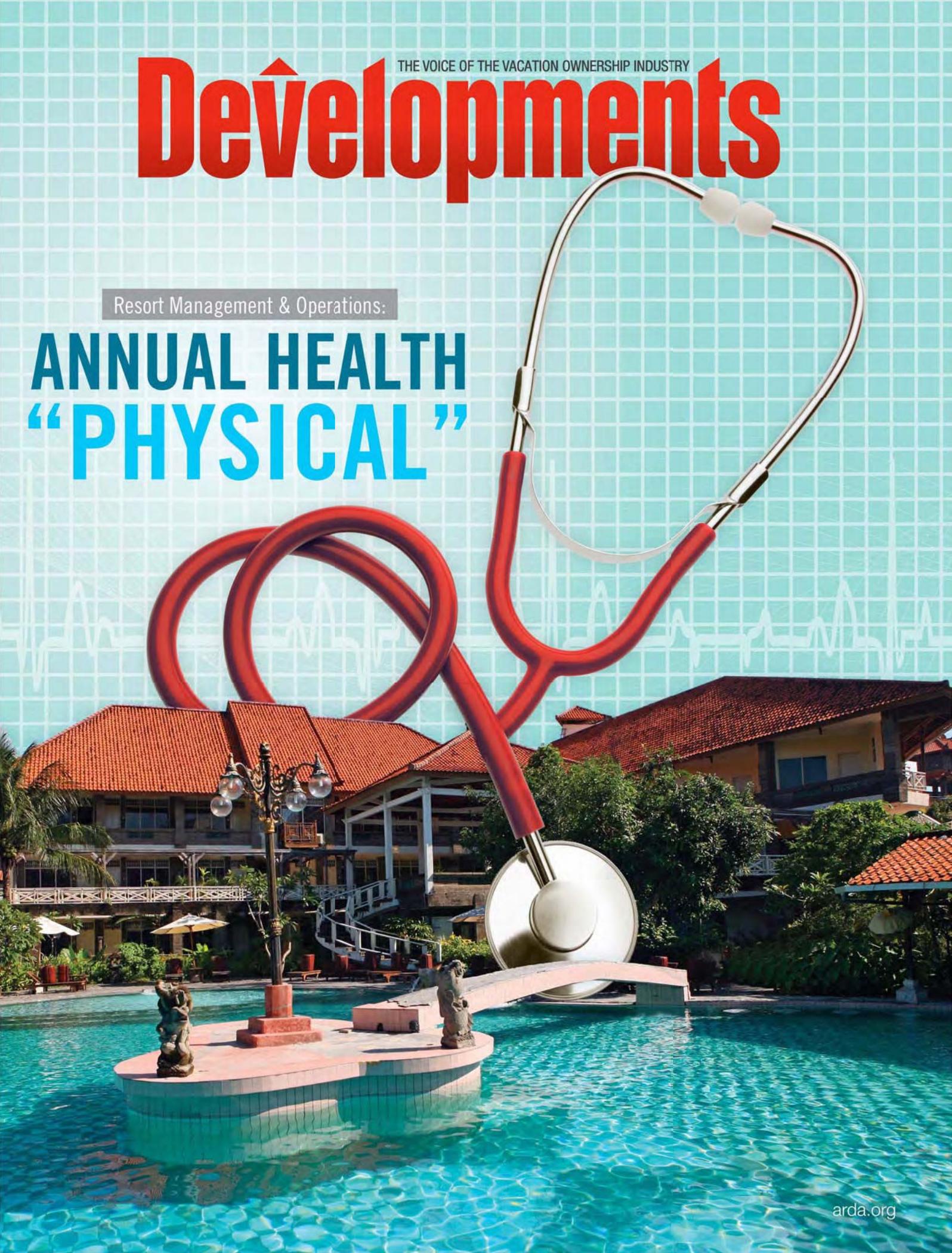


Developments

THE VOICE OF THE VACATION OWNERSHIP INDUSTRY

Resort Management & Operations:

ANNUAL HEALTH “PHYSICAL”



September 11th Ten Years Later: Interval International and A “Year of Giving”

Sharing the Gift of Vacations with Military Families

A June trip to Orlando “served” as both a honeymoon and a vacation for former U.S. Army Specialist Alex Dixon, his wife Amanda, and four year-old stepdaughter, Madison. Married in late May, the Dixons wanted to share the getaway as a family.

“When we were presented with this unexpected trip, we hoped to be able to take Madison to Orlando,” said Alex. Not only were they able to enjoy perennial favorites Walt Disney World and SeaWorld but the Dixons also had the chance to travel from the west to east coast of Florida, visiting Clearwater Beach and Cocoa Beach.

“SeaWorld was a huge experience for Madison—she loves animals.”

Dixon served in the Army from 2002 to 2006 as a ground surveillance systems operator. During his second deployment to Iraq in 2005, a roadside bomb went off and he was injured when pieces of metal

struck his face. He was later decorated with a Purple Heart and has since recovered.

The Dixons are one of more than 100 active military families, wounded warriors, and veterans who are being honored through the good works of Steel Magnolias Ministries/Operation Any Soldier and Interval International and its resort partners. Over the past year, in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the September 11th attacks, U.S. servicemen and women have been presented with week-long vacation stays at one of Interval’s global network of affiliated resorts.

With the memory of those tragic events weighing on the hearts and minds of the nation this month, the gift of family time means even more.

Interval Member’s Vision

It was just about five years ago when Steel Magnolias co-founder, Deborah Powers-Holloway, and her husband, Milton, became Interval members, with their purchase of an oceanfront, two-bedroom vacation ownership week at Beach Quarters in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

“We are so fortunate to have this retreat. We use it every other year, and then we trade for trips to a variety of places,” shared Powers-Holloway. “The chance to exchange is a wonderful benefit, and it occurred to me that our ownership could also benefit others.”

She approached Interval with this idea in mind. In addition to the work her charity was already doing—creating custom care packages for deployed troops from all branches of service—she hoped Interval could help with the gift of vacation packages, too. The company embraced the idea and thus the “year of giving” was born.

“I’ve been at Interval for more than 25 years, and it’s always such a pleasure to hear from members such as



The Dixons

Deborah—particularly about her work to improve the lives of our servicemen and women,” said Jeanette Marbert, Interval’s chief operating officer. “As our company celebrates its 35th anniversary this year, we are privileged that Interval and our affiliated resorts can play a meaningful role in giving back to and creating cherished memories for these families.”

Creating Unforgettable Vacations

Once a family’s getaway has been awarded, the trip is arranged by Desmin Neita, an account coordinator for the resort assistance department at Interval. She handles villa accommodations for the recipients and their loved ones and acts as a liaison with the host resort.

“I feel very privileged to serve these extraordinary families,” said Neita. “It’s so touching to talk with them. You can hear in their voices how happy they are to vacation with their families.

“Our resort partners are amazing to work with, too. They have eagerly stepped-up to host the families and create special vacation memories for them.”

From assisting with theme park tickets to organizing professional family photo shoots, the properties have gone much further than providing comfortable beds for their guests to lay their heads on at night.

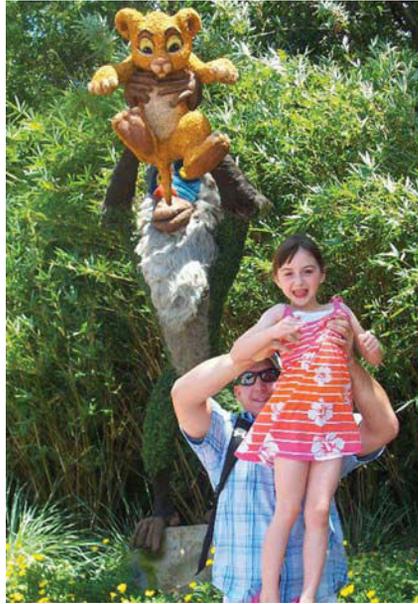
“Vacationing gives family members the opportunities to create lasting memories,” said Sergio Rivera, CEO of Starwood Vacation Ownership, “and it’s so important for military families, who are often separated for spans of time, to come together and reconnect.”

Embracing Time Together

For six year-old, Aja, May 13 was a very special day. She was flying to Orlando to meet Mickey Mouse and his friends. And tagging along were her parents, retired U.S. Army Sergeant Travis and Belinda Manning.

Their path to this vacation, however, was not without trials. Travis experienced severe injuries during his deployment in Iraq, and Belinda and Aja were in a charter bus accident the day before they left for Florida. Despite these setbacks, they were destined to have this time together.

The Mannings met in 2002 while Travis was enlisted and were later married. By January 2004, he was deployed to Iraq, and eight months later, Belinda received news her husband had been injured, including



The Mannings

burns to 40 percent of his body. After many months of surgeries and physical therapy, he returned to his unit at Fort Bragg (North Carolina) until he was medically retired in 2006. Travis was honored with a Purple Heart and several other medals due to his military contributions.

Commenting on this spring’s vacation, Belinda said, “It was exciting to have all

The Steel Magnolias Ministries’ 2012 goal is to touch the lives of 20,000 deployed troops through custom care packages. To help reach this goal, Deborah Powers-Holloway had the pleasure of participating in a conference call with First Lady Michelle Obama to discuss Joining Forces, a national initiative that mobilizes all sectors of society to give service members and their families the opportunities and support they have earned.

This single opportunity has allowed Steel Magnolias to partner with other groups to leverage and share resources, and ultimately, connect with greater numbers of servicemen and women around the globe. For more information or to make a donation, visit www.steelmagnoliasministries.org (designed by veteran U.S. Army Specialist Alex Dixon).

three of us together and so good to get away. We’ve never been on a big trip like this. One of the highlights was when Travis went swimming. Since he was injured, he usually doesn’t swim, but he did it for Aja. There are not enough words to express how much we appreciate this vacation.” ■



Starwood Vacation Ownership has partnered with Interval International and Steel Magnolias to host several military families, including the Dixons and Mannings. Both families stayed at the Sheraton Vistana Resort (pictured) in Orlando, Fla.