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## New Princeville owner: employee housing, renovation of hotel are top priorities

**Paul C. Curtis**  
THE GARDEN ISLAND

Jeffrey R. Stone, leader of Princeville Associates, LLC, new owner of the 9,000-acre Princeville Resort on the North Shore, took a very hands-on role in negotiations with Princeville employees he wants as happy members of his team, said Jay Furfaro, general manager of Princeville Operating Company, LLC.

Stone negotiated directly with all the current, non-hotel employees, offered them continuing employment in their

same positions, without them having to lose seniority, vacation time, sick leave, and other benefits that sometimes leave when a new owner comes around, Furfaro said.

That involvement delayed the closing of the sale of the resort, until late last week, said Furfaro, a member of the Kaua'i County Council.

"The transaction closing was delayed, due to the buyer's perseverance to ensure that all employees of Princeville Corporation were transferred in an unprecedented manner," Furfaro said. "Because of Mr. Stone's local roots and

connection with the state and community, he wanted to be sure that every employee received a unusual gift upon the transfer of ownership," Furfaro continued.

"Mr. Stone considers Princeville to be a one-of-a-kind, rare community, where families are connected." Furfaro said he is "impressed with (Stone's) commitment to the employees."

Now that the sale has been finalized, Stone said that providing affordable employee housing and undertaking a massive renovation of the 252-room Princeville Resort (hotel) are his top

priorities.

"Our first intent is to build rental apartments primarily for Princeville employees, immediately addressing one of the important concerns of the community," said Stone. Furfaro said Stone immediately plans a survey of employees to determine affordable-housing needs. "We are committed to the success of Princeville, and to enhancing the lifestyles of the residents of Kaua'i," continued Stone.

"And, as soon as plans are ap-

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# Princeville

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proved, a multi-million-dollar renovation of the Princeville Hotel will be initiated," Stone said. "We look forward to restoring this one-of-a-kind property, a North Shore icon for so many years, to the grandeur it enjoyed in the past."

Furfaro said that also means restoring in the hotel the Hawaiian quality, and history, of north Kaua'i.

Starwood (The Luxury Collection) leaders will continue to manage the operations of the Princeville Hotel, and all hotel employees will be retained under Starwood's management, Stone said.

Plans for the renovation of the Makai Clubhouse, which will serve as the resort hub, housing lifestyle facilities and a visitor sales center, are also underway. Kitson & Partners, a leader in golf course and country club operations nationwide, has been selected to manage the operations of the Prince and Makai golf courses, and will evaluate potential upgrades to both, Stone said.

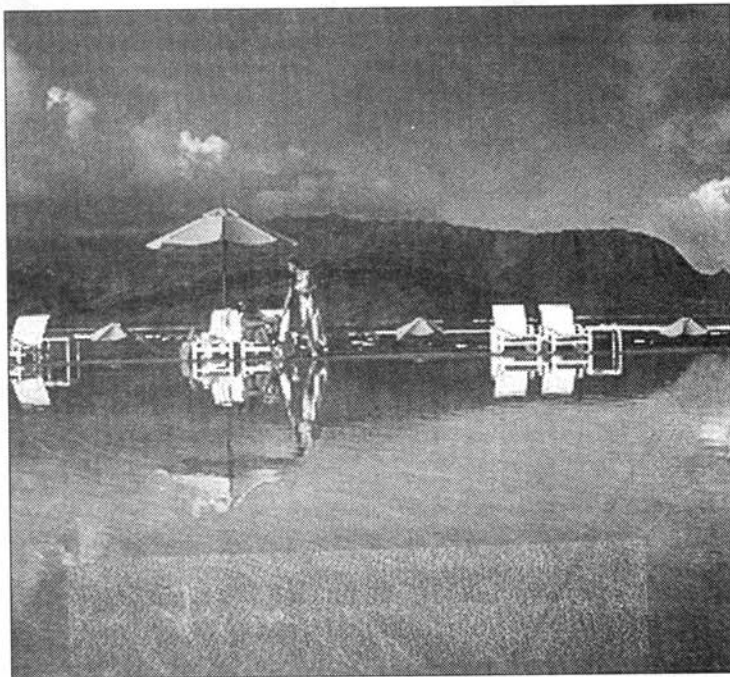
The purchase price was not disclosed. The acquisition includes the 252-room Princeville Hotel, two Robert Trent Jones Jr.-designed championship golf courses, the Princeville Tennis Club and Pro Shop, Princeville Health Club and Spa, Princeville Shopping Center, Princeville Airport, and other land holdings on the North Shore.

"We're glad to be part of the Princeville family," said Stone. "This resort is a true reflection of Kaua'i's hospitality and lifestyle. We are here to learn as well as be good stewards, bringing together the best that the North Shore community has to offer," he said.

"We're also extremely proud of the management team we've assembled. General Manager Jay Furfaro has been a dynamic member of the Kaua'i community for over 30 years," he said.

"And both Mamo Cummings, our director of resort marketing, and Eric Knutzen, director of finance, bring a wealth of resort, hospitality and community experience to our operations."

Princeville Associates, LLC, a joint venture between Honolulu-based Hawaii Land Devel-



Contributed photo

**Messing with perfection?** *The new owners of Princeville plan massive renovations to the Princeville Resort (hotel), long the resort's showpiece and anchor.*

opment Corporation and the Morgan Stanley Real Estate IV Domestic, and Cornerstone Real Estate Advisors, purchased Princeville Resort from Suntory Ltd., Mitsui and Company Ltd., and Nippon Shinpan Company Ltd., owners of the property since 1979.

Cornerstone Real Estate Advisors, whose leaders provide private real-estate equity investment management services for their parent corporation, Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company (MassMutual), and tax-exempt and taxable institutions, was also introduced to the partnership.

In 1988, Cornerstone/MassMutual teamed with Stone on the purchase of the JW Marriott Ihilani Resort & Spa at Ko Olina on O'ahu.

While Princeville leaders in 2000 were successful in getting their vision for a "mauka village" on company land mauka of Kuhio Highway into the county General Plan, much of the property is without "entitlements," or permits, necessary to carry out that vision, said Furfaro, 56.

Princeville's new leaders intend to focus on entitlements and ideas in the General Plan first, and then work in areas

like the central and eastern plateaus of makai Princeville, he said.

Not many people know of Furfaro's long history with Princeville, he said. In the 1970s, he was resort facility manager at Princeville, before the Princeville Resort (hotel) was even built. He helped set up the original community association, and opened the Makai Cottages and Makai Clubhouse.

He said he has a "deep history with the area," and knows the community.

Furfaro, who served several years as a hotel general manager at various locations across Hawai'i and the Pacific, most recently at the Radisson Kauai Beach Resort, before he was elected to the County Council and decided to retire from the visitor industry.

That retirement didn't last so long, though. "We met and began talking," he said of his short history with Stone, and how he came to be offered the top management position at Princeville.

Stone has been in Hawai'i since he was 13, Furfaro said.

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