I join Human Resources in congratulating Pam Cabrera on her appointment to assistant general manager at the Outrigger® Reef on the Beach, effective Jan. 1, 2014. Pam will report to general manager Dean Nakasone.

In her new role, Pam will be responsible for

Pam Cabrera ... >> 6

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**David Reed Named Director, Systems and Programming**

By Alan White

I join Human Resources in congratulating David Reed on his promotion to director, systems and programming. David reports to Vice President, Information Technology John Neeley.

David began his hospitality career joining the Outrigger ‘ohana at the Outrigger Waikiki Surf Hotel in 1988 as

David Reed ... >> 6

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**Obamacare – What a Mess!**

By Dr. Richard Kelley

Members of our ‘ohana who live in the United States are watching another example of “political kabuki” – the “Shibai” I wrote about two weeks ago – as our politicians and talking heads are sparring around the clock in the media and on the Internet while the implementation of the so-called “Obamacare” legislation crashes onto the stage. Once again, it is important to watch what is going on in the background to understand what is really happening not only to your pocketbook but also to one of the world’s greatest health care systems.

Some may argue with my admiration of U.S. medicine, but I was part of the U.S. health care system for close to 20 years, studying and working in Boston, San Francisco and Honolulu. I was involved with the care of people from all walks of life and from many countries. I was particularly impressed that leaders in business, science, education and government from all over the world – even royalty – routinely come to our country for treatment when disease or other impairments put their health in danger.

Our physicians, hospitals, researchers, pharmaceutical companies and medical equipment manufacturers must have been doing something better than their counterparts in other countries.

Now, just 40 years later, I watch in dismay as our country turns essentially the same fine system over to our federal government to run under the vast and complex rules and regulations of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), signed into law by President Obama on March 23, 2010.

The American public got its first good look at ACA on October 1, when eligible citizens and residents were urged to begin shopping for and enrolling in a variety of health care plans available through government-run “exchanges” in each state. It has been a disaster!

Telephone lines to the exchanges were jammed and estimated wait times were given not in minutes, but hours. The ACA website, www.healthcare.gov, crashed and was unavailable most of the month. The image on pg. 9 shows what I found when I tried to access that website.
Happy Birthday!


Nov 14: N. Chanel Bergado, Sasithorn Seekongkaew, Cynthia R. Stowell and Ronnel Tiong.

Nov 15: Ambrose Andres, Kehaulani Cappo, Wai Choi Ho, Emesto Justado and Hui Lun Weng.

Nov 16: Orlando Abat, Jr., Danette Bolosan, Josephine Camacho, Piyamit Eiadkong, Kaulangi N. Finau, Bill Fletcher, Jong Hwan Lee, Kenneth Lopez, Shaun McCoy, Thepbumrung Muadmanee, Joel Ono, Jodymae Suyat and Michael Y. Tomei.


Nov 18: Thanyalak Kittwichit, Jill L. Lottie, Janice P.Y. Ng, Pailin Panchalard, Wassana Seped, Carina Sharp and Lynn Tran.


If you are interested in a position listed below and meet the qualifications, you may apply online. Please go to Outrigger.com, click on ABOUT OUTRIGGER, then EMPLOYMENT. We only accept online applications for the open-listed positions from internal candidates. If you have any questions, please call Chad Teramae at (808) 921-6989. Application deadline for the following positions is November 8, 2013.

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JOBS

Control Clerk (Full-Time)

Must have at least one year clerical experience and Stellex experience preferred. Excellent communication skills required to service guests and employees. Must be able to read and understand various correspondence and reports. Must be able to work any shift and day.

Outrigger Aina Nalu

Housekeeper I (On-Call)

Must be able to work well with others, follow instructions and communicate in English. The ability to work any day and shift is required. Experience in cleaning and servicing guest rooms and/or public areas preferred.

Outrigger on the Lagoon – Fiji to Host BMI Clinic

By Talei Tora

Outrigger on the Lagoon – Fiji (FOR) in conjunction with the Coral Coast Hotels Association will host the Benevolent Mission International (BMI clinic) eye specialists Nov. 1 – 9. A team of 11 specialists will be in the country to conduct eye checks and surgery for people in Sigatoka.

This is the 18th year the BMI will be returning to Fiji to conduct these clinics. This year the team is being accommodated at the FOR and as a token of their appreciation will review and treat 50 staff with eye problems.

General Manager Peter Hopgood stated that the resort is delighted to host the team of specialists who will render much-needed assistance to the people of Sigatoka. “When we were approached by the BMI team for accommodation assistance, we didn’t think twice about offering our help as the assistance that is being provided by these specialists to the people of Sigatoka and to our staff is immeasurable. Our staff are also very fortunate to be given an opportunity to get their eyes checked and treated by these specialists as we know how important having good eye sight with proper eyewear is for their lives, our business and the tourism industry as a whole.”

According to the BMI website, www.eyemissions.com, the team is expected to review 600 patients and perform around 75 eye surgeries.

Each year BMI has sent a team to Fiji to help provide medical and surgical care for the underserved. Over the past three years, at the suggestion of the Fijian government, the BMI teams have been working in Sigatoka where eyecare is needed. Over the years, BMI has donated an operating microscope, a lensometer and a keratometer to the Sigatoka Hospital.
Nov. 4, 6-7 p.m. - Call the Coach Show
Featuring University of Hawai'i Women's Soccer
Head coach – Michele Nagamine
Kani Ka Pila Grille • Outrigger Reef on the Beach
More info: http://www.espn1420am.com

Nov. 8, 9 & 11 – 49th annual Outrigger Hotels Rainbow Classic
Men's Basketball Tournament – Hawai'i, New Mexico, Western Michigan & Tennessee State
UH – Stan Sheriff Center
More info: http://hawaiiathletics.com/

Nov. 9 – Free Posters & Autograph Session -
UH Men's Basketball team
Get your free Rainbow Classic poster and have it autographed by the team immediately after the game.
Stan Sheriff Center • Concourse area near Gate B

Nov. 11 & 18, noon - Lunch & Learn with David Luedtke
ChiWalking and ChiRunning techniques will help you reduce injury and increase efficiency. Learn what they are and how to incorporate them into your everyday life!
OHANA Waikiki East • Lobby Conference Room

Nov. 20, 12- 1 p.m. – Lunch & Learn with Laurie Hirata
Chocolate Covered Treats make great gifts! Learn how to make chocolate-covered strawberries, Turtles, Oreo's and bark and how to package them to give to family & friends!
OHANA Waikiki East • Poolside Conference Rooms

Nov. 20, 5:15 p.m. – Heart & Sole Walk
Join fellow co-workers, friends and family for this 45-minute walk around Waikiki
Meet at the OHANA East Bell Desk

Nov. 24, 7 a.m. – XTERRA Trail Run World Championship, O'ahu (Kualoa Ranch)
The crown jewel of the XTERRA Trail Run Series with the majestic Kualoa Ranch as the host site.

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:15-1:15 p.m. - Core! with Kathy Foley
Increase your core strength utilizing the stability and Pilates balls and hand weights
OHANA Waikiki East • room announced weekly
More info: Email kathysb@outrigger.com

TLP “Fancy Night”
By Patcharee Chananto (Paew)
The Outrigger Laguna Phuket Resort (TLP) recently held our Host Party 2013 themed “Fancy Night.” General Manager Marc Landgraf opened the evening thanking everyone for their hard work throughout the year.
The evening included a departmental best-dressed contest. The winner was (see photo below top) Khun Naruemol Suksawas (middle), first runner-up Khun Phrirapat Srisawas (right) and second runner-up Khun Apasara Chanyaem (left). There was also a values award presented to Bellman Khun Asupol Sutamas who best represented the Thai Values “MITTRAPAB.” Lucky drawings were held throughout the evening and all our hosts enjoyed the evening very much.
LivingWell
Mind • Body • Spirit

Outrigger Laguna Phuket Resort and Villas Human Resources Manager Patcharee Chanantho (Paew) (PC) shares how she LivesWell!

SB: What type of exercise do you enjoy?
PC: Running, table tennis and badminton are the sports I enjoy when my schedule allows.

SB: Why do you exercise?
PC: Running is my main workout because Phuket is always having mini- or half-marathon races. This year I won 7 trophies and 10 medals in the half and mini-marathon. Last year I won 8 trophies and 10 medals and the year before, I won 6 trophies and 8 medals. I love to set goals to challenge myself and when I receive reach these goals, I am proud of myself and that I’m still fit and firm at 46 years of age.

SB: What kind of exercise would you like to try and why?
PC: Swimming and yoga are exercises I would love to try because they are “easier” on the body and better activities for my age.

SB: How often do you exercise?
PC: If there is an upcoming competition such as a marathon, badminton or table tennis, I workout 5-6 times a week. If there are no upcoming competitions, then I exercise 3-4 times a week.

SB: Do you strive to eat healthy?
PC: I like drinking a fruit shake of banana, mango, yogurt, fresh milk, orange juice and ice because it makes me feel good and helps my digestive system as well.

SB: What indulgence do you allow yourself every now and then?
PC: Coconut juice is my favorite drink as a natural energy or sports drink because of its high potassium and mineral content.

SB: What benefits have you enjoyed from your efforts in the area of exercise and nutrition?
PC: People always tell me I look younger than my age and like an older sister to my daughter! My annual medical checkup is always good. My cholesterol, sugar levels and blood pressure are all at acceptable levels.

SB: What “secret” that works for you would you like to share with the Outrigger ‘ohana?
PC: When I wake up, the first thing I do is drink two glasses of water and also consume another six glasses at least during the day. Water is very important for the body; drinking lots of water is good for the skin and and for digestion.

SB: How do you “de-stress?”
PC: I de-stress by chatting with my teenaged daughter, taking her out to the cinema or shopping with her.

SB: Do you have any past “moments of glory” you’d like to share?
PC: For the first time I decided to participate in a mini-marathon (10.5 kilometers or 6.5 miles). No one believed I could do it without pain or injury. I was confident and trained hard. My first mini-marathon went very well (1.2 hours). Since then, I keep training in order to win a trophy. Now I also take my daughter to the gym and we enter fun runs together.
Celebrating Our Values

“We welcome everyone with warmth and generosity at the OHANA Waikiki Malia”

By Nora Weatherwax

As we celebrate what we do, the OHANA Waikiki Malia Hotel worked on showing our artistic side featuring the spookiest, funniest and the most creative pumpkin in our second annual pumpkin painting contest.

Pumpkin painting is a common tradition in the United States on Halloween. For the Malia, it is a special celebration where we can create rich experiences that reinforce our unique creativity and imagination. Together using our basic hospitality skills, we interacted with one another and our guests through good camaraderie and team building.

This year we invited our Alaka’i from the OHANA Waikiki West and the Holiday Inn® Waikiki Beachcomber Resort to join us. It was great interacting with our fellow employees from our sister hotels as we challenged each other to see who could win in each category - spookiest, funniest and most creative.

The finished pumpkins are on display in our lobby to Nov. 2, 2013. Winners will be announced on Nov. 3.

Darnell Zablan and Pam Milligan

Talent abounds at the OHANA Waikiki Malia!

Paul Nagamine, Roy Shimabuku, Nui Kaunana, Grace Mello, Troy Boyce, Espiritu Sumibcay, Robert Hurov, Amante Castro and Divina Garcia
Our Values ... << From 5

October Means Accountability
By Bronwyn Marshall

October was Accountability month, a very important value for the Corporate Office Finance Team in Australia. We are responsible for managing and reporting the finances of our Australian operations. We rely on the principle of accountability to ensure that we not only balance the books but also our work and personal lives. We wore orange during the month of October as a fun support of Kuleana. 

Steve Rowe, Tracey Dumble, Nicky Chapman, Bronwyn Marshall, Priscila Sebastian, Holly Norbal and Jayne Budai support Kuleana

David Reed ... << From 1

front desk night auditor. He soon joined the S.W.A.T. (Solutions We Achieve Together) team and helped to design and implement our STELLEX system. After S.W.A.T., David worked as assistant night manager of operations for all our Waikiki properties and then as guest accounting manager. In 1992, he moved to Federal Way, Washington, where he worked as assistant general manager for Peninsula Management Northwest. Within two years, however, he found himself back on O'ahu and back at Outrigger as front desk cashier and manager on duty at the Outrigger Village. He transferred to the Outrigger Prince Kuhio as guest services representative and in 1999 transitioned to the technology side of the business as systems control coordinator.

It didn't take long for David to realize his niche. He steadily increased his knowledge and skills as programmer analyst I and II, senior project engineer and most recently as manager, application programming.

David's background in operations was fundamental in his involvement in the design and development of several initiatives like the interfaces for our direct connect partners, Embassy, Micros Opera and Maxial. Other initiatives undertaken were the STELLEX GUI property management system and the back end of the Outrigger.com booking engine. From application development, David has taken on information technology development and demonstrated his professionalism, adaptability and resolve in all tasks given him.

David enjoys taking weekend Harley rides and hiking with longtime girlfriend Bev Fidel and poi dog Hina. David's son Kai is a sophomore at Kalani High School. As a Falcon on the football team, Kai has taken his workouts seriously which David says has inspired him to do the same. In fact, it's become a family affair with Bev on board as well. Family is foremost to David and he enjoys spending time with them, especially Bev's granddaughter Shaynalyn who affectionately calls David “Uncle Pa.”

I am proud of David's past accomplishments that have led to this well-deserved promotion. Congratulations, David! 

Pam Cabrera ... << From 1

a wide range of functions, including all aspects of the hotel's operations for this 635-room property, food & beverage services and maintaining a high level of guest satisfaction.

Pam is a success story of our student intern program working as a front desk clerk at the Outrigger Maile Sky Court in 1990. Within two years, she began her full-time Outrigger career as employee relations and staffing clerk at the Outrigger East Corporate Office. Over the years, Pam has worked at several properties and in various management capacities: assistant manager at the OHANA Malia and the Outrigger Reef; hotel manager at the OHANA Malia, the Best Western® OHANA Surf, OHANA Waikiki Surf and Surf East; and product manager for our OHANA Hotels group and the Condominium Collection. In 2003, she joined the Condominium Collection full-time as assistant general manager of the Outrigger Luana Waikiki, and in 2006, she was named general manager.

A career highlight for Pam was her responsibility as assistant general manager for all aspects of positioning and branding the newly acquired Waikiki Terrace to the condo-hotel Outrigger Luana Waikiki and the opportunity to broaden her knowledge in the condominium arena.

Pam holds a BA in psychology from the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa and is a member of The Navy League, Friends of Hickam and Soroptimist International of Honolulu.

She enjoys Zumba®, reading and watching reality TV and loves spending time with her son Cole (14) and traveling with him to watch him compete in various sports tournaments. Pam also values spending time with her family.

Pam is a testament to learning, growing and progressing at Outrigger. Congratulations and continued best wishes, Pam!
Fifteen Outrigger on the Lagoon – Fiji (FOR) managers graduated from the world renowned FranklinCovey 7 Habits of Highly Effective People training. The course included the highly rated 7 Habits Guide to Discipline and Passion that provides tools for change and growth for individuals and organizations.

Based on the principles of Dr. Stephen Covey, the training presents an approach to being effective in attaining goals by aligning oneself to 7 Habits for personal and professional life skills.

The training, which was conducted in August by FranklinCovey training facilitator Rosie Aitkens from Australia, took seven weeks to complete.

The trainees were required to delve into and live each of the highly effective habits over the seven weeks highlighting their progress and successes in a report which was submitted to the course facilitator in order to graduate.

FOR General Manager Peter Hopgood said he is proud of his managers who remained committed to the 7 Habits course work. “The real test was whether our managers could take what they learnt and put into practice each habit over the last seven weeks and I am proud to say that they have passed with flying colours. I cannot emphasize enough about how life changing this 7 Habits training is for our team both professionally and personally. We now have a more cohesive management team which is more approachable and better equipped to lead and motivate the staff.”

Outrigger on the Lagoon – Fiji first conducted the 7 Habits training in 2011 and have trained over 60 staff to date.

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Noosa - Design for Place

By Niel Mason

In June 2013, an exhibition titled Design for Place presented a selection of works by six local artists inspired by the fauna and flora of Noosa’s six catchment ecosystems. The Noosa Integrated Catchment Association (NICA) coordinated the exhibition.

Maree Prior, one of these artists, was approached by Outrigger Little Hastings Street Resort and Spa (ANR) Front Office Manager Lynne Scanlan to be involved in the resort’s commitment to educating guests visiting within the Noosa Biosphere.

A passionate manager of natural resource projects, including practical on-ground works and community engagement and awareness raising through the visual arts, Maree has an interesting and diverse career, including her current role as project development officer for NICA. In addition to the existing ANR staff induction presentations and guest key wallet detail introduction to the Biosphere, Maree was highly supportive and quickly agreed to provide ANR the authority to use her stunning work as entered into the Design for Place exhibition.

The image, Coast Banksia (a species of tree that grows along the east coast of Australia) with Noosa Main Beach’s iconic surf break in the background, now adorns the ANR VIP and ANV (Villa and Penthouse) guest welcome cards. This undertaking by ANR has again added to the resort’s profile within the community and further exemplifies its commitment to our company values.
If it ain't broke, don’t fix it! That’s a saying I’ve heard since I was a child and it’s certainly true. With that in mind, Outrigger Hotels and Resorts partnered with FOX Sports Radio Network for the third consecutive year and this past September and October ran a promotion that gave listeners of the popular nationally broadcast radio show Petros & Money the chance to win a Waikīkī Weekend at the Outrigger Reef on the Beach with celebrity hosts Vic “The Brick” Jacobs and NFL football player Kirk Morrison.

For six weeks, the contest was promoted on air and online across the FOX Sports Radio Network and included a live call-in interview with our very own Ambassador of Aloha, Luana Maitland, to create excitement and promote the contest to listeners. The Waikīkī Weekend was posted online on the FOX Sports Radio and AM570radio.com home pages throughout the promotion, with Outrigger simultaneously working its email and social media platforms to help promote the sweepstake. Entries to the contest were conducted online. Collectively, almost 100,000 people entered to win the trip to Waikīkī.

In all, we received phenomenal coverage that included 350 twenty-second promos on FOX Sports Radio Network, 80 live national mentions on the Petros & Money show, 250 ten-second promos on AM570 FOX Sports LA, a live broadcast with Vic “The Brick” and Kirk Morrison, three live interviews, two national interviews, digital homepage takeover featuring our 30-second video spot and three banners in rotation, four emails blasts and much more!

First on the agenda was a Friday morning live broadcast of the Petros & Money show from the Kani Ka Pila Grille. The broadcast included live interviews with Director of PR Nancy Daniels and John McNamara, University of Hawaii Assistant Athletic Director. For some of the prize winners, this was their first opportunity to meet, in person, Vic “The Brick” Jacobs of the radio show. An added bonus was seeing, hearing and “rubbing elbows” with NFL player Kirk Morrison.

The day ended with an evening reception under the stars on the Voyagers Deck, with Hema Pa’a providing the entertainment, Kani Ka Pila Grille providing the delicious meal and Mother Nature providing a gorgeous Hawaiian sunset.

The following day, winners split up to enjoy spa treatments at Serenity Spa Hawaii and outrigger canoe rides in front of the Outrigger Waikiki on the Beach.

The comments during the visit and post-trip from each and every prize winner, as well as the FOX Sports Radio crew, were nothing short of superlative for the incredible experience and outstanding service they received on their short visit.

Here’s a quote from Jason Rubinstein: “I wanted to thank you and your entire staff. We had a great time this past weekend with all of the events. From the radio show, to dinner on Friday night, to the rooms, everything was perfect. I told my wife and kids about the hotel and now they are excited to go to the Outrigger Reef this summer. This time we will be staying for an entire week, if not more.”

This promotion could not have been coordinated with such a positive outcome without the help of many. Mahalo to everyone at the Outrigger Reef including Bill Comstock, Luana Maitland, Ricol Akana-Phillips, Gina Reeves, Mandy Cruz, Leigh Bulsco, Gwen Boyce, Dietrich Chillous and Richard Pacheco for all the coordination behind the scenes and for hosting the group. And thanks to our public relations and interactive commerce team for helping with this promotion!
At the same time, private insurance companies are canceling the health care insurance of millions of citizens, because, even though President Obama repeatedly promised that people could keep their existing insurance coverage if they liked it, in reality, the ACA's thousands of pages of rules, regulations and penalties made that impossible. As a result, millions of citizens might be without health care insurance just 60 days from now.

Fellow physician and writer Dr. Ben Carson says, “Rather than complain about Obamacare, it might be useful to discuss some enhancements or future alterations that can make it work effectively or provide an alternative if it fails. The first question is what do you need for good health care in America?”

Again, I am old enough to have known health care in a different era. The father of my late wife, Jane, was a general practitioner in the Northern California town of Santa Rosa. Dr. Lee Zieber had a direct, one-to-one relationship with his patients, many of whom were Sonoma County farmers. He made house calls and was often paid with a chicken or a bag of plums from a farmer's orchard. There was no middleman standing between patient and physician.

Dr. Carson feels that a good, direct relationship between patient and physician is the first thing you need for good health care in America. I agree. I have seen it work!

Since Dr. Zieber retired, health care insurance companies inserted themselves as middlemen between patients and physicians, and dictated many of the terms and conditions of the delivery of health care services. Even so, people still had a choice because they could change their physician or insurance company if they were not satisfied.

However, as of January 1, 2014, just two months from now, if you do not have health care insurance through your employer, you are probably going to have to try to access www.healthcare.gov to sign up for an expensive, government-approved individual health care plan. Many of the quotes for these new policies are coming in as much as 200 to 300 percent higher than what people have been paying for their existing policies, many of which are being cancelled because they fail to meet ACA requirements – contrary to the president’s repeated promise that “if you like your health insurance you can keep it.” Failure to sign up for one of the new ACA-approved plans will result in a substantial fine enforced by everybody’s favorite government agency, the Internal Revenue Service (i.e., the tax collector).

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, if your annual income is less than four times the poverty line (about $46,000 for individuals or $94,000 for a family of four), you may receive a subsidy to help pay those higher insurance premiums. Subsidies are projected to be worth an average of $5,548 per household, which would effectively discount the price of insurance by two-thirds, on average.

Those subsidies are paid for by taxes on the individuals and families whose incomes exceed $46,000 and $94,000 respectively. Also, they are paid for by the young people in your insurance pool whose premiums are nearly as high as those of much older people who are more likely to incur significant health care costs. (I told you in the first paragraph to watch your pocketbook!)

Aside from increased costs, under ACA, you will also have a more limited relationship with your physician. His/her payment for services provided to you will come from your insurance carrier, Medicare, Medicaid, Workers’ Compensation or one of many other government programs.

I believe it is time to again seriously offer a better way to get health care insurance – through Health Savings Accounts (HSAs).

Government-approved Health Savings Accounts allow you, your employer or your government to put the pre-tax income that you might otherwise have paid (or which your employer might have paid on your behalf) to a health care insurance company as premiums instead into a designated HSA account to buy (1) low-cost, high-deductible “catastrophic” health care insurance that would cover surgery and hospitalization, and (2) routine physician services, most lab tests, x-rays and prescription drugs. If you are careful with your health care purchases and maintain a healthy lifestyle, there is a significant chance you will have a surplus in your HSA account, which may be returned to you under defined conditions, perhaps to supplement retirement, pay off a mortgage, etc.

If you have an HSA you can compare prices on services, lab work, x-rays, etc. and get the best price from competing labs, clinics and pharmacies. Health care providers are grateful to receive cash on delivery of services (much preferable to reams of paperwork from
Obamacare ... << From 9

insurance companies and government) and will cut prices even more, just as gas stations, supermarkets and even hotels do for cash.

You can use some of your HSA funds to assist in the care of a child or an aging parent. There would be no middlemen!

If you receive federal or state subsidies for your health care insurance premiums, they could be paid into your HSA account.

In short, HSAs would re-establish the direct physician-patient relationship! What a concept!

If there are enough HSAs in our health care system, the benefit of the free market system will return to health care and costs will come down as surely as if they are pulled by gravity.

Health Savings Accounts are permitted under the ACA – but, unfortunately, not in Hawai‘i, where they are forbidden by state law. If this strikes you as crazy, I suggest you contact your state senator and representative. If HSAs are ever allowed in Hawai‘i, Outrigger will be one of the first companies to offer this great health insurance option to our ‘ohana.

There are many other things that can be done to improve the delivery and cut the cost of health care, which I have often addressed in Saturday Briefing. Now is the time to push that agenda forward because right now, under Obamacare, “the flaw is in the law!”

1 Representative Ken Brady (R-Texas) during this week's Congressional hearings on ACA implementation.
4 Saturday Briefing – “Rx For Health Care” by Dr. Richard Kelley, July 11, 2009.

18th Annual XTERRA World Championship
By Nancy Daniels

Athletes from 23 countries and 36 U.S. states converged on Maui last weekend to take on XTERRA's toughest and most grueling competition – the XTERRA World Championships, a 1.5-kilometer rough water swim, a 32-kilometer mountain bike that climbs 3,000 feet and a 10-kilometer trail run within the beautiful resort destination of Kapalua Resort. Outrigger Hotels and Resorts has been a longtime sponsor of this exciting XTERRA event.

More than 800 endurance athletes – both professional and amateur – competed under a blazing sun, with temperatures nearing 90 degrees during the race. Crossing the finish line first – and claiming the men's title of World Champion, was Ruben Ruzafa from Spain, who went the distance in 2 hours, 34 minutes, 34 seconds. Nicky Samuels from New Zealand proved that the first time's a charm, as she took the women's World Champion title in her first appearance with an impressive finish of 2 hours, 57 minutes, 48 seconds. Ruzafa and Samuels each received $20,000 for their respective victories!

For many, participating in such a physically grueling and mentally challenging race is something we can only dream about doing. How about participating in TWO equally grueling and challenging races within a few weeks' time? This year, 13 amateur athletes did just that, “surviving” the Ironman World Championships held on the Big Island on October 12 then doing the same at the XTERRA World Championships just 15 days later. Congratulations to Martin Flinta from Sweden and Kathryn Taylor from Hawai‘i who were the top amateurs in the Outrigger Hotels and Resorts “Double” award competition. Flinta received a 6-night stay at The Kapalua Villas for his finish and Taylor won a 6-night stay at the Outrigger Napili Shores for hers.

While the XTERRA World Championships are meant to challenge the heartiest of athletes, the XTERRA race weekend starts on Saturday with a selection of “fun” runs to encourage community participation, including Kimo's XTERRA Keiki K (free for kids 12 and under), Duke's Beach House XTERRA 10K and Hula Grill XTERRA 5K. What's cool is the 5K and 10K competitors get to run on the same XTERRA World Championship run course. This year, we had a number of Outrigger staffers who laced up their shoes and hit the trail participating in both the 5K and 10K runs. Congratulations to Teri Orton (10K) and Ruby Balagso, Stephanie Parilla and Momi Alconcel (5K).

Want to find out more about XTERRA? Log on at www.xterraplanet.com. And if you've been inspired to become an XTERRA athlete, you have another chance to do just that when XTERRA comes to O‘ahu for the XTERRA Trail Run World Championship Nov. 24, 2013, at Kualoa Ranch. Outrigger Hotels and Resorts is a sponsor of this trail run event and we have a small number of race entries that can be used for the 21K, 10K or 5K runs. If you're interested in signing up, email me at nancy.daniels@outrigger.com.