



MH's adults only cabin

THE decision by Malaysia Airlines to ban children from the top deck of its A380 aircraft will surely be music to the ears of many travellers.

An age limit bars youngsters under 12 from entering the top deck which holds 70 economy class and 66 business class seats.

No longer will people forking out for expensive premium tickets not be able to sleep because of crying babies.

Malaysia Airlines' first A380 service will be between Kuala Lumpur and London, with a second route to Sydney set to launch in September.

Malaysia's first class on its 747s is already baby-free.



Please flood Fiji with relief



IN the aftermath of Fiji's severe recent floods and with things returning to normality, InterContinental Fiji Golf Resort & Spa reports is it now fully operational, after their reconnection to water mains and power has allowed them to reopen all outlets and services, including restaurants and the spa.

While InterContinental Fiji and most of the other resorts did not suffer any damage during the cyclonic weather, those in many of Fiji's villages were not so lucky.

In this regard, IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group) the management company behind InterContinental Fiji, has called on its global charity for

assisting disaster-affected regions around its hotels and resorts, *Shelter In A Storm*, to help.

According to InterContinental Fiji general manager, Scott Williams, the best way for the Australian and New Zealand travel industry to show their support is to continue to send their guests to Fiji as the recovery effort will rely heavily on the tourism industry bouncing back.

In another initiative, the Fiji Visitors Bureau have asked **BEN** and the PCOs attending a Fiji fam in early May to come prepared with stationeries such as pens, pencils, colouring books, markers, chalks, rulers etc for schools badly affected around the Sigatoka and Nadi areas.

Luisa Finiasi, Fiji Tourism's regional marketing officer said that even the worst affected areas are almost back to normal but it is the schools and the school children that need help.

"Fijians by nature would not ask for help.

"My suggestion is that if any of **BEN's** readers who plan to be in Fiji in the next few months want to help, please bring useful school things with them, such as stationery and books and give them to the public relations manager at their hotel.

"They in turn can pass them on to local villages and schools most in need," Finiasi said.

Have your say!

MEA is inviting members, regardless of their 2012 MEA Conference registration, to join Tim Parker, Infrastructure NSW, Gary Thomas, Infrastructure NSW, Linda Gaunt, ceo, Meetings & Events Australia, Lynn Lewis-Smith, ceo BESydney, for an indepth "free of charge" update during MEA's National Conference.

Hear about work already undertaken and most of all have "your say" on Tuesday 24 April, 7am-8.30am at the Parkside Auditorium on Level 1, Room 110A at the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre.

For additional information or to register your interest contact Cherell Anom on 02 9929 5400 or email - conference@mea.org.au by Friday 20 April.

Another Lucky winner

CONGRATULATIONS to our Friday winner, Julie Smith from Hamilton Island, Great Barrier Reef Australia who has won a double pass to the new movie *The Lucky One* courtesy of Warner Bros. & Village Roadshow.

This week **BEN** is giving away a book featuring the '88 Essential Secrets for Achieving Greater Success at Work'.

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Sandra Chiles

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Greater Success at Work' courtesy of Strategic Resources International (SRI).

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To win one of these books be the first to answer the question to -

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ACCORDING to Visa's annual Cash Access Survey, Australian travellers are the highest users of ATMs in the Asia-Pacific region.

More than half of them withdrew cash from an overseas ATM during their travels instead of bringing money from home.

One-third of the 3073 respondents preferred being able to access cash from anywhere, while 23% did not feel safe carrying large sums of cash.

Over the ditch it is much the same story with, 49% of Kiwis also preferring to withdraw money from ATMs.

WHAT next?

Coca-Cola has come up with a solution for people who love a sugar hit and feelings - a vending machine in Singapore that responds with hugs.

High flying golf



HERE'S a good idea to boost a reward program or surprise golfing high achievers.

Skysafari, in conjunction with Paradise Palms Resort and Country Club in Cairns have created the ultimate day tour which takes in three of North Queensland's top golf courses.

Golfers are flown by helicopter over breathtaking views on their

way to 27 holes at three distinctly different courses - Paradise Palms Resort and Country Club, Sea Temple Port Douglas and Cooktown Golf Links at Walker Bay.

Departing from either Port Douglas or Cairns airfield in a state-of-the-art, five-seater, R66 Robinson helicopter, Des Shearer, the director of golf at Paradise Palms Resort & Country Club, described the experience as "extraordinary," adding that he had never seen North Queensland in that way.

"There are waterfalls that are absolutely breathtaking and we even saw a manta ray and bull sharks around the Great Barrier Reef from the helicopter.

"The best thing is we got to see all this in between doing something we love, playing golf".

Based on a minimum group of three passengers, the day tour is fully inclusive and priced at \$1440pp.

For more information email - sales@paradisepalms.com.au.

Caps off to the DCC

GENERAL manager of the Darwin Convention Centre (DCC), Malu Barrios expressed her delight when the Centre received one of the major awards in the prestigious Meetings and Events Australia (MEA) Industry Awards, being declared the Northern Territory winner in the prime category, *Meeting Venue – 500 Delegates or More* (see pic below).

Barrios said that winning one of the highlight awards was a very rewarding achievement and recognition for the Centre and the Centre's staff for their commitment.

"This award is an acknowledgement of the Darwin Convention Centre team's unwavering commitment to our vision for the Centre and Darwin to be on par with the world's best."

Barrios said the Centre is a major supporter of and key player in the Business Events Industry.

"Business events are an increasingly important element in the economic fabric of Australia.

Our goal has always been to establish the NT as a competitive business events destination for the continuing benefit of Darwin and the Territory," she said.



WIN A TRIP FOR TWO TO HAWAII



During April and May, *Business Events News* is giving one lucky reader the chance a win an amazing holiday for two people to Hawaii, courtesy of **Hawaii Tourism, Hawaiian Airlines** and **The Kahala Hotel and Resort**.

The prize includes Hawaiian Airlines return airfares from Sydney to Honolulu, and five nights accommodation in an Ocean View Room at The Kahala Hotel and Resort.

Over 6 weeks, we will feature a different question in every *Business Events News* issue. There will be 15 questions in total, which will also be posted on our website. At the end of the month the subscriber with the most correct entries and the most creative response to the final question will win this fantastic holiday to Hawaii.



What type of sea creatures (that live in The Kahala's lagoon) can be incorporated into a meeting program?

Hint! Visit www.kahalaresort.com

Email your answers to: hawaii@businesseventsnews.com.au

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Kunkler joins Minor Hotel Group

MINOR Hotel Group (MHG), with a portfolio of 75 properties across ten countries, has announced the appointment of Robert Kunkler as senior vice president hotel operations.

Kunkler, from Freiburg, Germany, who joins MHG from Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts, will be responsible for the performance of all operating and openings of Anantara properties worldwide.

A veteran of the hospitality industry, Kunkler worked in Germany, the UK, Singapore, the Philippines, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates before joining Jumeirah in 1999 as a member of the pre-opening team for the iconic Burj Al Arab.

Since then, he has held the role of GM at three of the group's hotels and Area general manager before being promoted.



The making of a SITE winner

WHEN Dragonfly Africa was chosen as a 2011 Worldwide SITE Crystal Award in the category of 'Best Destination Based Experiential Travel Program,' for their Fuji Xerox Top Tier program, **BEN** was curious, what gave the program its jeune ne sais quoi?

There was a breakfast with elephants, a walk with lions to a traditional village, to meet the chief; helicopter and microlite flights over the Victoria Falls, abseiling and gorge swinging and a bungee jump from Victoria Falls bridge.



Special guests enjoyed a six course silver service dinner on the Royal Livingstone Vintage Steam Train to the Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Park.

They crossed into neighbouring

Firstly, it was leading Sydney based conference, event and incentive management company Conference Focus who instigated the Fuji Australia high performers incentive which was titled *Destination: Victoria Falls and Livingstone, Zambia*.

As a third world country, Zambia with limited road & communication networks meant that Dragonfly Africa had to overcome language barriers, transportation challenges and legal hurdles.

Challenges made easier through Dragonfly's solid relationships and years of experience.

It was a program that began at the Royal Livingstone Hotel on the banks of the Zambezi River with cocktails and a walk to view the spectacular Victoria Falls.

A colonial dinner followed on the hotel's lawns with the rumble and spray of the Falls just metres away.

Chobe National Park in Botswana, for a cruise on the Chobe River and a safari in search of elephants, lions, rhinos, hippos crocodiles and antelopes.

A special day dedicated to social upliftment included the group repainting a local primary school for orphaned children.

Books and clothing were given to share with the community, while time was spent reading to the children, playing soccer and sharing their stories.

There was lunch set up by the Maramba River in Bedouin tents, a gala dinner in the open reed enclosure of the Mukuni Boma with African warriors who performed a mock attack and regaled them with song and dance and local craftsmen displayed their wares.

The final farewell was held at sunset onboard the *African Queen*, on the Zambezi River.

New Sebel Premium

BRISBANE's largest hotel, The Sebel & Citigate, King George Square and also the city's largest conferencing and event hotel with two grand ballrooms and 10 private meeting rooms, has unveiled a new room concept, the Sebel Premium.

The new Sebel Premium rooms, designed with the business and corporate market in mind, replace the Sebel Business Floor which was situated on floors 10-15 of the Sebel tower.

All the rooms in colour palettes of charcoal and white hues, have dedicated workspaces with internet access, natural light, city views and Philips Digital LCD TVs.

Bathrooms have been redesigned and the décor, bedding and chairs have all been refreshed.

Other services exclusive to the Sebel Premium rooms include daily buffet breakfast, daily bottled water and fruit, a turn-down service and one complimentary mini bar item per night.

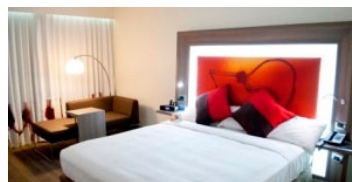
The hotel is moments away from the Brisbane Convention Centre.

Novotel's concept

AN innovative room 'Novotel Next' concept, will be introduced when Novotel Wellington completes a major renovation project to all 139 rooms by the end of August.

The new rooms, designed to reflect the arts community of New Zealand's capital, have new beds, designer headboards with bright splashes of colour, bold feature artwork, and red glass splashbacks in the bathrooms to give a wow factor to the clean, white interiors.

GM Philip Hilton said the refurbishment was important for Wellington tourism: "Our hotel has been one of the leading 4-star hotels in the capital since it opened and we are fortunate to have one of the city's best locations, so after a decade it's time to give the hotel a fresh new look, state-of-the-art communications and our innovative new room design."



Club Sapphire Merimbula to host the 2012 South Coast Tourism Awards

CLUB Sapphire Merimbula is a regional venue with state of the art offerings for any business event wanting to go to the South Coast of NSW.

Even the South Coast Regional Tourism organisation are holding their prestigious annual awards at the venue.

South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation CEO Lori Modde encourages businesses to look outside the square and come to some fabulous South Coast spots ideal for great events.

"Business tourism is growing on the South Coast and we have seen a growth in tourism for the area of close to 10% on the previous year" Modde says.

With regular Rex services and being half way between Melbourne and Sydney it is an ideal destination for companies wanting to get away from the office environment for a productive team building event.

Offerings range from Merimbula Aquarium's boutique rooms or Tathra Beach House which caters for up to 25 delegates to Club Sapphire's 300 for dinner or classroom style conference or 500 in a theatre style with an additional four breakout rooms.

There are eight designated conference facilities in the Merimbula area alone.

Activities are numerous for incentive groups ranging from Race Days at the turf club, bike hire and cycle tracks, Oakland Farm Trail Rides, Scenic Flights, Aquarium, Magic Mountain, Animal Sanctuary, Whale Museum or tours of Bega Cheese...there is something for every group in Merimbula!

PCOs visit the Hunter

OVER the next few days, eight influential business event planners from New Zealand will get the red carpet treatment as they are shown around the Hunter Valley.

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