

The Classic New England B-&-B
1107 Main Street, Prodigious Hilltops NH
Info & Reservations XXX-XXX-XXXX
www.MonumentHouse.org



Monument House

Find and Experience Life

Business Plan

First iteration created, May 2015
Adapted to corporate concept, June 2015
Sent to Berkshire Hathaway, June 21, 2015

1. BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY AND VISION

Monument House is the classic New England bed-&-breakfast, offering magical service at reasonable prices, and allowing customers to transcend the ordinary, so that they may find and experience life.

Each Monument House is set in the woods, near the water, in storied buildings, with a gussied-up barn for events, and grounds big enough for trails, gazebos, and solariums, and where people come for dances, movie nights, yoga, banquets, weddings, and other life moments.

Monument House will go beyond “eat, sleep, and be happy,” as service and demeanor are really the only ingredients that will inspire brand loyalty. There is always another B-&-B eager to snatch away a customer whose experience at MH is anything less than magical.

Monument House will lead a phenomenon it will define as “life-cams,” in which cam feeds from designated areas – including the kitchen, dining room, and events in the barn – will be streamed online and throughout the inns, to satisfy a stimuli-driven, highly-competitive consumer market, and to push up attendance at dances, festivals, and in the restaurant and room bookings.

Monument House will actively recruit veterans in hiring, and exercise every possible chance to comp rooms and meals for active-duty military personnel, and combat veterans, not only because it is a good thing to do, but with millions of service personnel returning from war, they and their families will bond with Monument House. Ours may be the only B-&-B they patronize.

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MH's growth will come by expanding into a bed-and-breakfast chain, where management and staff are centrally trained, sites run independently while offering signature features, and our locations serve as regional hospitality hubs, drawing visitors for a coordinated season of festivals and events.

Monument House will be known for the sense of frisky-&-wholesome intimacy found in its rooms, a vigorous events schedule, a dedication to honoring veterans, amazing desserts, and preparing food with fresh-catch local seafood, and home-grown, local, and organic ingredients, where no birds or mammals are cooked and served.

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2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (in the form of a letter)

June 21, 2015

Warren Buffet
BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY, Inc.
3555 Farnam Street
Omaha, NE 68131

Re: MONUMENT HOUSE

Dear Mr. Buffet:

This business plan is in its third iteration. I wrote a first version last month to clarify a vision that then manifested itself as a 200-word essay. An instructive exercise – 60 pages to find 200 words.

I enlarged the concept, to create **MONUMENT HOUSE**, a string of inns, originating in New England, but growing into a regional chain where sites are run independently, and serve as hospitality hubs, drawing visitors for a coordinated season of festivals and events. Each MH will be in the woods; near the water; with a gussied-up barn, for weddings, barn dances, yoga, movie nights, and other life moments.

MONUMENT HOUSE will become known for a sense of frisky-&-wholesome intimacy found in its rooms, a dedication to honoring veterans, amazing desserts, and food prepared with fresh-catch local seafood, and home-grown, local, and organic ingredients, where no birds or mammals are cooked and served.

I write to ask that **BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY** engage in discussion toward an agreement under which your HomeServices unit would make available a New England property to become the first **MONUMENT HOUSE**. An operational agreement would keep **BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY** whole, and stipulate that title would transfer only after strategic investments have been made by the Principal, and that measurable growth goals are achieved by the corporation.

My proposal does mean HomeServices would lose the opportunity to make an *immediate* sale of a high-end property, likely from your “Resort Properties International” or “Luxury Collection.”

But **BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY** would gain...

- An ironclad lien, under an agreement that will ensure your company is made whole, either by a finalized sale within a defined period, lease terms, or return of the property.
- Participation in a business that carves a niche within the high-end hospitality market by focusing on service of such perfection, food so amazing, and a seasonal calendar so vigorous, that guests transcend their expectations, to experience magic.

- The opportunity to take part in the growth of the chain, including possible replication of the initial contract such that it might be a model for property acquisition.

Here's what I want to create...

- A hotel-&-restaurant hospitality operation, in classic New England B-&-B format, that starts with the franchise model, and leads to other independent inns aligning with MH.
- A corporation that helps with cost savings, staff training, events management, and strategic investment, while the inns offer signature MH features, operate within our chain's guidelines, and share in the cost of veterans discounts.
- A business that will be a good player in hiring veterans, and comping rooms and meals for active duty military personnel and vets, while remaining vigilant against stolen valor.
- Ambitious investment in the model franchise on signature attributes MH sites will share – a solarium, gazebo, and a marked-&-graded trail, accessible on foot or wheelchair.
- An operation that services the lifestyle spending choices of Xers and Millenials – namely, large-scale festivals that take time to reach and may cost a little money, but which offer the transcendent moments that create long-term connections.
- A set of “life cam” websites that will take the form of live-action food theatre and the streaming of MH's monthly barn dances. Quirky, but with sure-fire (likely viral) appeal.

If my business plan plays out, we would kick off the 2016 Season with a luncheon on the spring equinox, open the restaurant several weeks later, and offer a 32-week schedule of yoga, movies, barn dances, sit-downs meals, festivals and events. Investment on signature improvements to the grounds will be completed within a decade, during which time several selected inns will have been recruited by the Principal to join MH.

I am no MBA, but I know how to create magic, and lay it out for others. I can't do it on my own, though, and so I ask that you give this proposal to one of your HomeServices agents, with the instruction to help find the right place and creative terms to create the first **MONUMENT HOUSE**.

I thank you for the kindness of considering my proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Orton". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bill Orton
Principal

3. OPERATIONAL DETAILS

A. WORKFORCE

(i) Organization, benefits, and structure:

- Monument House is comprised of the corporation, a string of independently-run country inns, and an events production unit that will coordinate events and festivals for all locations.
- Each MH is made up of the inn's owners; the restaurant, hotel, and operations teams.
- The inn owners will contribute to a cafeteria plan, to help subsidize health, dental, vision, insurance, and pension coverage for all workers.
- Exemplary performance will be met with ad hoc bonuses, and a corporate *Full Season Reward* will go to each staffer who works 150 days, between April and November.
- The corporation and owners will work with employees to unionize, if they wish to pursue that, or to move towards employee ownership via a profit-sharing arrangement.

(ii) Workforce Development:

- The owners will meet regularly with each staff member, to learn their background, desires and ideas for growth, and to explore skills and abilities.
- The owners will meet regularly with staff, to go over assignments, and lay out operational goals.
- Staff will group into the hotel, restaurant, or operations teams, to work together on efficiencies that drive down costs, and conceive of new ways to serve customers.
- Being a small staff, assignments are driven by skill needs, and so workers may be trained on tasks that may have little to do with their other duties, such as the Host/Hostess doubling as the person who handles streaming online content.
- The reason skills are spread around, is that life happens, and someone might move, or be deployed, or need to stop working. When someone leaves, the skills and knowledge vested in them go as well, and our capability to keep pace, and grow, diminishes. Team members watch out for one another. Think of Pete Rose, the baseball player (and problem gambler)... during an All-Star game, a game that didn't even count in the standings... when a NL colleague dropped an easy pop-up, Rose was inches away, dropped down, and made the catch. Life always happens, and hopefully with the best outcomes for all, but strategic skill sets will not be vested in just one person, and that includes owners.

B. PERSONNEL

(i) **Inn Owners**

Because each Monument House will be running a hotel and restaurant, while also producing an extensive calendar of events, inns will split ownership responsibilities, one focusing on hospitality operations and the other on events. Multiple owners will also provide for continuity.

Inn Keeper

Responsible for all executive action at their inn, keeps units directed, handles local publicity, works with site investors and with MH corporate on plans for growth,. The Innkeeper is the principal breakfast cook. Works with the Chefs to create the menu, and supervises restaurant finances.

Barn Keeper

Responsible for the events calendar. Supervises event set-up, recruits for yoga, handles dance logistics (including hiring musicians), runs movie nights, and maintains the property. Principal handyman and groundskeeper. Assists in planning festivals and events.

(ii) **Operations**

Operations Manager

Full-time, year-round

Responsible for all accounts payable and receivable, supervising the hotel operation, vendor relations, and inventory. Manager during absence of the owners. Assists in growth planning.

Bookkeeping, Tax & Audit

Corporate professional service.

MH Corporate will provide financial services, assisting Owners and Operations Managers with overall books, tax, audit, vendor referrals, and other professional services.

Grounds & Maintenance

Independent Contractor, as needed. Reports to Operations Manager.

Task-driven, local vendor for overflow grounds work not handled by owners. MH Corporate will assist with a horticulturalist, as garden-fresh ingredients and home-canning will be signature attributes of each inn. Corporate will also assist in strategic improvements, like gazebos, solariums, bicycle and boat houses, and creating marked-&-graded trails.

(iii) **Restaurant**

The two Chefs report to the Innkeeper.

All other restaurant staff report to the Chef who serves as the restaurant manager.

Growth in the restaurant will lead to raises, more hours, and bonuses, before hiring more staff.

Chefs-in-Residency

Two, seasonal, room/board/stipend/airfare

Only by creating magic can this operation transcend standard expectations, to become the hidden gem that every guest wants to rave about on social media and product/service review sites. For that magic to happen, our Chefs need to be empowered, vigorous, and aspire to greatness.

MH will partner with *Los Angeles Harbor College* culinary arts program to identify two people who will spend seven months as Chefs-in-Residence. (Giovanni Delrosario, the program director at LAHC, was formerly head chef at the Belagio, in Las Vegas. Among the hallmarks of Chef Gio's program are the diversity of fare, and the attention paid to dessert.)

One Chef will run the kitchen's operation, as restaurant manager. The other Chef will run the food end, as the principal cook. The two will work together with the Innkeeper to create the menu, determine specials, cook, and run the restaurant. Mid-season, they'll switch.

MH will pay round-trip airfare for each, provide room and board, and pay a monthly stipend. Each MH will also donate the proceeds of two sit-down dinners, to welcome and bid farewell to the Chefs, to supplement the stipends.

While in the kitchen, the Chefs will work while several web cams focus on them, and stream that content online, and to flat screens mounted throughout the inn. Odd that someone sitting in a dining room would eschew conversation to instead watch their food being prepared, but people are stimuli-driven, and so we give them real-time food theatre.

After the season has closed, the Chefs will be welcome to bring family to stay for a week or two, to see first-hand the setting of their loved one's experience. MH will pay for one additional flight for each Chef, so someone can join them. Others are welcome to come, on their own dime.

Chefs, and their loved ones, will spread word of a magical place in the country, unlike anything they've ever known, and somewhere down the line, that will lead to an immense good. It could be a reputation bump that prompts media attention, or others wanting to be a Chef-in-Residence, or starting a prominent career, or simply producing inspired creations that leave patrons (and food editors) amazed.

Host/Hostess

One, seasonal, wage, plus training bonuses

In addition to managing seating, transacting payments, and keeping the register, this person will be the toggle-director for a multi-camera feed streaming from the kitchen and dining room, and going out live over www.TheKitchenCam.com. This "life-cam" feed will allow MH to partner with other eateries for a web service that allows viewers to watch live food theatre from a growing list of participating eateries. The skills gained by the host/hostess as the live-stream maestro will be used as well with www.BarnDanceCam.com.

Waiting Staff

Two, Seasonal, wage, plus tips (shared with Tablekeep)

In addition to table service, one will be the wine steward, and the other will tend bar. Wait staff will transact payments, working with the Host/Hostess. Each will staff festivals and events.

Tablekeep

One, seasonal, wage, plus tips (shared with Wait Staff)

In the beginning, there will be one tablekeep bussing, with the owners assisting.

(iv) **Hotel**

– House staff reports to the Operations Manager, who is hotel supervisor

Concierge (keep guests happy)

One, seasonal, wage and tips.

Hired for knowledge of the area, sincerity, and enthusiasm. Arranges client bookings, like boat or bicycle rentals, tours, and hikes. Works with desk manager on anticipating and fulfilling client desires. Assists in planning festivals and events. Works with guests claiming veteran discounts.

Desk Manager (keeps business moving)

One, seasonal, flexible schedule, salary.

Controls customer information flow, from booking to departure. Keeps the guest book, runs the front office, transacts payments, and works with the Barn Keeper on planning guest events. In the beginning, this work will likely be split between the Operations Manager and Innkeeper, with a hire for this position being the first priority for business growth in the hotel.

Housekeeper (keeps it clean)

One full-time, or two part-time, seasonal, wage.

Responsible for upkeep of interior public spaces and guest rooms. Works with the Desk Manager and Concierge on guest requests. Maintains linen cabinet and cleaning supplies.

(v) **Corporate Office**

On a day-to-day basis, individual inns will operate almost entirely on their own.

The MH corporation will provide economy-of-scale buying opportunities and other efficiencies for site owners, coordinate workforce development, help organize festivals, run strategic marketing and advertising, establish signature operations at each site, and share (with inn owners) in the cost of veterans discounts, and long-term improvements to the physical stock.

The MH corporate office will start and remain small, and be focused on the success of the inns. Growth in the corporation, itself, and the corporate office will be driven by new inns coming into our orbit, based on the formula that corporate helps with cost savings, staff training, events management, and strategic investment, while the inns offer signature MH features, operate within our chain's guidelines, and share in the cost of veterans discounts.

Chief Executive Officer

One, full-time

Responsible for all executive action of the corporation, which includes property acquisition, reaching agreements with independent inns to join MH, recruiting and working with investors and partners, identifying areas for growth, and serving as the company's chief spokesperson.

Chief Operating Officer

One, full-time

Responsible for the day-to-day operation of the corporation. Oversees chain management, strategic marketing and advertising, delivering economy-of-scale savings to individual inns, and arranging for staff development.

Chief Fiscal Officer

One, full-time

Responsible for the fiscal well-being of the corporation. Works with the Owners and Operations Managers from all sites to establish standard accounting practices, and manages vendor relations with firms providing financial and other professional services to individual inns.

Chief Productions Officer

One, full-time

Coordinates event production and promotion for the chain's calendar of festivals and events. Plans and budgets for each event, works with individual inns to secure cooperation agreements with area businesses and local government on regional festivals, and manages event logistics.

Chief Counsel

One, full-time

Responsible for all things legal. Reviews contracts, cooperation agreements and legal documents. Recommends insurance and other protection for the corporation and inns. Works with inns and local government on zoning and land-use. Likely to begin as an attorney on retainer.

C. GROWTH – *Bringing in members and expanding into events*

(i) *At Inception:*

The Principal will reach out to Berkshire Hathaway, to seek their partnership in identifying a property – in the woods, near water, with a large barn – to serve as the first Monument House, and to then discuss terms for an operational or purchase agreement.

The initial property will serve as the franchise model, with targeted growth of three-to-five inns coming into the MH orbit within the first decade. Locations will be within a 200-mile radius, to maximize regional ad buys, and to coordinate major events. The MH corporate office will be sited in this initial location, and will guide long-term capital into property acquisition, and growth-driven strategic priorities listed in this plan.

MH properties will share signature attributes. Each will be in the woods, and near the water, to allow for outdoor recreating. Each will offer a coordinated and vigorous calendar of events, including barn dances, yoga, movie nights, and ongoing festivals and events. Each will have a garden gazebo, solarium, and a bicycle house. A marked-&-graded, ADA-accessible “Lilac Trail” will allow guests to visit the woods no matter the weather. The trail will lead to a ceremonial platform, for events in the forest. Each inn will sponsor their local historical society, and be active in the chamber of commerce.

Properties will be extensively wired for an IT infrastructure that will include footprint-wide wifi, a series of web-cams and flat screens throughout the inn that offer MH-generated content, and a live-stream of the restaurant and barn dance operations. A guest who takes their laptop into the forest to use the footprint wifi still got outside. We are all at our own level of personal evolution.

(ii) *Member Inns*

Monument House’s growth as a chain will come by currently-operating B-&-Bs agreeing to abide by our guidelines, which include offering signature features on the grounds, coordinating with other MH sites on a master events calendar, showing a dedication to hiring veterans, and sharing in the cost of veteran discounts.

In exchange, the corporation will help inn owners with cost savings through economies-of-scale and efficiencies, provide consistency of accounting and other professional services, help with investment in the physical stock and grounds, provide workforce development and incentives, and work together on events, marketing and advertising.

Member inns will be able to add “Monument House” to their name, while still keeping their own identity. The corporate affiliation will identify theirs as an inn with magical service, reasonable prices, a commitment to veterans, and with food and entertainment so amazing that guests transcend expectations.

(iii) *The Barn and Garden*

Every Monument House will have a historic barn on the property, which, most likely, will be unprepared for use as an events venue. MH corporate will work with individual inn owners on identifying capital and creating plans for upgrades to the barn's interior, to allow for its regular use throughout the year as a site for barn dances, yoga seminars, weddings, and other life moments.

Each inn will make extensive use of surrounding grounds, and so properties should each have many acres of thickly-forested woods. Since most B-&Bs focus on their hotel and restaurant operations, creating the signature features will involve extensive enhancement of the grounds. Every site will offer a marked-&-graded trail, so that guests can enter the woods, whether on foot, or in a wheelchair. The Lilac Trail will lead to a Ceremonial Platform in the forest, for weddings and other events. Solariums to use as greenhouses, and to offer protected sunshine even on frigid days, will help assure the fresh ingredients that will make MH's culinary reputation. The gazebo will be the focal point of the garden. Taken together with the barn, the grounds will allow each property to go far beyond just the hotel and restaurant, to become a recreation-and-events complex that is a center of energy for the region.

(iv) *Why events?*

Hotels are an exercise in arriving, seeing local sites, and leaving. Monument House will be a destination, where people settle in for a few days to find and experience life to its fullest. Dances, movie nights, yoga, festivals and events, all on a common calendar, and available simultaneously at multiple locations, will prompt longer stays, repeat visits, and family brand loyalty.

The explosion of high-priced, multi-day, live-music festivals shows that Xers and Millenials will spend hefty sums on experiential entertainment. For us to make headway into this market segment, our operation must go well beyond "eat, sleep, and be happy."

As to the power of events for a local inn, consider the tiny mountain community, of Julian, California. Small in population, and hard to get to, leaders in Julian put all they had into their annual Apple Festival, offering live music, food, a quaint, old town, with its historic cemetery... and thousands of visitors each year. There were some rough years, and crowds thinned, but Julian kept up with the Apple Festival, and businesses still rely on that weekend to stay alive.

People will drive a *very long way* for events, if they know that it will offer a magical experience. People want to **find and experience life**. Good entertainment, a safe setting, plentiful food, and happy people are the ingredients for a transcendent, magical hospitality experience. Disney pulls off that combination everyday. Our job is to let people know that we're here, and what we're doing. "We," as in the MH sense, and, also, as in the "we, us here, in our town" sense.

D. CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(i) Ongoing:

(a) YOGA IN THE GARDEN

One Yogista, independent contractor/entrepreneur.

MH will offer a free yoga session every Saturday morning from April to Oct. A post-yoga spread – tea, coffee, juice, fruit, veggies, muffins – will be provided, initially at no charge, and later priced to cover cost. This series is meant to create a traffic flow of visitors, who may come for one thing, but who, upon seeing our operation up close, may book a room, reserve a table for dinner, ask about booking the barn for a yoga seminar rental, or just take our calendar home to circle dates of interesting events.

This group is a key source for word of mouth. A practitioner able to drive to MH for yoga is someone of the leisure class, likely controlling a not-insignificant level of discretionary spending. Bringing them for yoga – or them, plus a buddy – puts them in a safe, idyllic location, where they can spend the rest of Saturday eating, shopping, and basking in a transcendent life experience.

The Yogista who runs the Saturday sessions will be encouraged to book private one-day sessions and multi-day yoga seminars, which will, in turn, drive hotel occupancy, and boost food sales. Extensive investment in the barn to make it usable on even the most frigid days is intended to allow a guru and followers to fill the building during the off-season with group bookings for a multi-day yoga seminar.

(b) BARN DANCE SERIES

MH will host a monthly Barn Dance, from May through October, each of which will feature live music. A five-dollar “Dance Card” is your ticket of admission, and will have space to mark in partners for the 15 numbers that will be called that night. One can buy dance cards – individually or for the entire season – at the door, by phone, or online. The monthly dances will be streamed live and on-demand over www.BarnDanceCam.com. The low cost “Dance Card,” free popcorn and lemonade, reasonable prices on food, and freshly-made gelato are meant to create a magical experience, that encourages guests to visit again for festivals, movie nights, more dances, or for vacation stays. Budgeted pay for musicians and event staff will be offset by sale of dance cards, food and liquor sales, and tips. Additional income, from event ad revenue, sponsorships, and partnerships on the “life-cam” websites will start slowly, but will grow. It is not inconceivable that the “life-cam” sites could well exceed the value of the hotel and restaurant operation itself.

(c) MOVING PICTURE MONDAYS

Between April and October, MH will host a weekly movie night, always showing a cartoon, a newsreel, two shorts, and a feature. MH will record box office take and pay royalties. Box office will be supplemented by food and beverage sales.

(d) SIT-DOWN SERIES

Each year, MH will sponsor four sit-down meal events, with proceeds going either to the town's historical society, or to supplement the Chefs-in-Residence stipends. Tickets can be bought as a package, or as one-offs.

The first – always on the Spring Equinox – will be the “**Women's History Springtime Luncheon**,” where guests will hear from politicians, academics, activists, and other leaders. The luncheon will be prepared by the Innkeeper, and serves as a deadline to make the house ready for the season. This event is meant to fill the restaurant with likely future patrons, so that attendees can whet their appetite by looking around at updates made to the hotel and restaurant. Several weeks later, the hotel opens, yoga and movies begin, and the first barn dance happens.

The second sit-down – always on April 15th – will be prepared by the Chefs-in-Residence, as their introduction to the season. All proceeds from the **Chef's Welcome Dinner** – and a companion **Chef's Farewell Dinner**, on Oct 15th – will supplement the Chefs' stipends. These sit-downs will drive the restaurant's calendar. The Chefs arrive at the start of April and can leave at any time after the Farewell Dinner, but are invited to stay as guests of the owners, through Thanksgiving, if they wish. But dinner service starts and ends with these two sit-down events.

A third sit-down – the **JFK 'Ask Not' National Mission Speech & Thai Food Dinner** – will always occur on July 20th – the day on which humans first stepped foot onto the Moon. This historical-themed lecture will explore what once was commonly known as America's “national mission.” The writer most associated with this theme – Thurston Clarke, author of *Ask Not* – will be invited to give the initial address. This signature event is meant to draw politicians from across the state, region and nation, to explore ways in which Americans can cross the deep divide that we have allowed to separate us. As New Englanders are inclined towards such thought, this event should find resonance. Proceeds go to the local historical society.

(ii) FESTIVALS & EVENTS

In addition to the ongoing events, MH will work with others on multi-sponsor festivals and events:

Since Monument House locations will be really out of the way for most guests, it is to our advantage to work with neighboring businesses – in a Chamber-of-Commerce-like fashion – to coordinate festivals and events, so people have good reason to drive out.

- (a) **EARTH DAY:** Always on April 22nd, the event will highlight work MH is doing on its grounds, and be an acclamation of a core principle – sustainability – guiding our operation. Vegan and vegetarian lunch will be served. Ribbon cuttings will mark completion of a bicycle house, a composting operation and fruit orchard, and construction of a gazebo and greenhouse. Each major step in creating a Lilac Trail through the woods at each site will be celebrated, leading to completion of the forest ceremonial platform.

- (b) **MEMORIAL DAY:** Harking back to the original nature of the holiday, when it was known as “Decoration Day,” MH will lead and feed volunteers who come with gardening tools, to pretty-up the graves of military personnel buried in local cemeteries. Active-duty military personnel and veterans will pay nothing for a night’s stay or meal on Memorial Day, or on November 11th. Active-duty personnel in dress uniform, or a guest who earned a “Combat Action Badge” eats for free at any time during the year. Room comps are up to the owner.
- (c) **MIDSUMMER FESTIVAL AND BONFIRE:** Always the weekend of the Summer Solstice, the festival will include live music, a chili cookoff, a BBQ, a banjo-fiddle-&-guitar contest, and the signature Midsummer’s Eve Bonfire. Organized by MH productions unit, with buy-in from area businesses.
- (d) **HIGH SUMMER FESTIVAL:** Late August, featuring the “Monument House Rowboat Regatta,” in which contestants vie for “not insignificant prizes” in distance races. Live music will be by a Ramones cover band, which should create an ideal (and also *surreal*) online stream, with YouTube videos showing rowboats underneath MH signage and a Ramones number. The best marketing is people having fun. Videos showing that sort of magic will go viral. (And many will show our warning sign: “Drunken rowing = automatic disqualification.”)
- (e) **AUTUMN FESTIVAL:** Late October, focusing on a chowder cookoff, baking contest, and picnic games, like sack races, a rope pull, and a carnival. Like the first two festivals, the attendees should be left with the desire to return. The festivals should fill the region’s rooms, and result in heavy restaurant and pub traffic.
- (f) **MH’s ‘CANDY DANCE’:** The last weekend of October will be the final dance of the season, which will be aimed at kids. A Candy Dance Prince and Princess will be crowned. Several times during the dance, the Prince and Princess will declare, “Let there be candy!” and sweets will rain down upon guests. Initial attendance is likely to be just locals, but this should be an event that takes on a life of its own. Again, video is likely to go viral. But even if this one stays purely as a local event, a whole generation will grow up with Candy Dance royalty and memories.

Taken together, the three festivals, barn dances, movie nights and yoga, sit-downs, and a pair of early-season holiday events – nearly 80 events in all – should leave visitors with the impression of a hospitality operation whose staff understands *service*. Visitors should say, “*Wow, that was great! I’m definitely coming back!*” Achieve that year after year, and bookings will pick up, room pricing can rise, restaurant seats will fill, and people will select MH for their weddings, banquets, and other life events.

E. COMPS – *Dreamers and Veterans*

(i) *Who Can Comp:*

The Innkeeper and Barn Keeper are the only people who can give things away in the restaurant. The Innkeeper, alone, can comp rooms.

(ii) *The Dreamers:*

Monument House will redeem the ***essay contest receipt slip*** from the *Center Lovell Inn* or the *Blue Hill Inn* essay contests. It is not simply because the Principal took part in these contests, but because of the passion for B-&-Bs shown by this group, which will be called “**Dreamers.**” They could represent as many as 10,000 comps. But since it is unlikely they will travel alone, their redeemed slip is more akin to “buy 1 get 1.” Likely to show the highest inclination to visit, and if they like us, the highest propensity to return. We will treat them like **ROYALTY.**

A Dreamer must hand over their entry receipt slip to be comped. If they are sharing a room, then the other person will pay their share, but not the Dreamer. Multiple entries; multiple comps. No slip, no comp. Some people won’t hand over the memento, but most will. Getting contact data for a Dreamer is worth the cost of the comp, as we want to touch this group each year.

Every Dreamer’s slip will be signed by the Innkeeper. A control system will be created to log all such redemptions, to prevent fraud, and track which Dreamers visited. Staff will be trained to recognize the slips, and a master MH database of redeemed entries will be kept. The corporate office will work with member inns on lost revenue, if a Dreamer’s contact info is captured.

(iii) *Veterans:*

On **Memorial Day**, and on **Veterans Day**, any active-duty personnel or veteran eats for free. Any veteran staying in the hotel those days is comped.

Throughout the year, anyone who earned a “Combat Action Badge” (CAB) or is in military dress uniform eats for free. Personnel need only show a DD-214 to receive the instant comp. If they don’t have their Department of Defense form, the Concierge or Innkeeper may accept other evidence, including images clearly showing the individual in uniform and a combat setting.

We may roll this back to just Memorial Day and Veterans Day, if the numbers start to swamp us, but that’s doubtful. Going beyond just saying “thank you for your service” is something that the Principal feels strongly about. And with millions of Americans having served in our nation’s recent wars, MH will do well, by doing good.

MH will prosecute on grounds of “stolen valor” against those masquerading as active-duty military personnel, or a veteran. We will always seek the lost room or meal cost, plus one dollar, an apology and lawyer’s fees, but individual cases will differ in how much we seek.

F. MARKETING

- (i) **Creation story interest.** Huge marketing opportunities for the story of... *unemployed novelist sends off business plan to Warren Buffet, and they convert the dream into Monument House.* That will be enough for most reporters, but enterprising journalists will write in-depth features recounting how the Principal entered an essay contest, and prepared the original business plan as part of that exercise, before enlarging the concept and sending it off to Berkshire Hathaway. The coverage of the *Center Lovell Inn* essay contest was a genuine phenomenon, as readers are hungry for stories of ordinary people whose dream comes true. But poor media handling at the end of the contest fizzled their opportunity for widespread coverage of the transfer. But readers still want to believe that dreams can come true, so the human interest in an unemployed novelist convincing America's richest man to help create a business should draw heavy coverage by television and other media. To juice the story, the Principal has created a media database of the travel editors at the nation's leading newspapers, magazines and websites (by circulation). MH will reach out to the Bangor Daily News, Boston Globe, Yankee, the Associated Press, and media across New England, on the broader plan to create a New England hospitality-and-events chain. Once major investments have been made to the barn, MH will contact *Good Housekeeping*, *Redbook*, and *Ladies Home Journal* to pitch a major feature in these outlets, which are seen by millions.
- (ii) **Printwork.** Each Innkeeper will generate posters, fliers, postcards and other print pieces, based on common MH artwork and the master events calendar. Some printwork – like postcards promoting the barn dances – will be sent in bulk direct mail to all contacts on the inn's client list. Other pieces will be physically posted locally. Brochures will be driven around by the owners, as a calling card, for display in the tourist literature display racks found in every hotel lobby. All print will be done using a union print shop. PDFs of all artwork will be available online. Artwork will be made available in advance to the press.
- (iii) **Newspapers.** MH will advertise extensively in local weekly papers. Some, but not so much, in dailies. January will see a major ad for that year's season, and smaller ads throughout the season will promote barn dances, yoga, and movie nights. Promotion of regional festivals will be coordinated with other businesses and MH corporate.
- (iv) **Facebook.** Thousands have "liked" the page promoting the Blue Hill Inn essay contest. This on the heels of 8000 likes for the Center Lovell Inn contest page on FB. That universe represents thousands of dreamers, who will be wooed over to MH by the business decision to redeem an essay contest entrant's original receipt slip from either contest for either a night's stay, or a free meal. The dreamers who invested their hearts and money in these essay contests represent countless potential future bookings and dinner reservations. It is unlikely that an essayist will visit alone, and so redeeming a contestant's entry slip for a room or meal is akin to a "buy one, get one free" coupon. The reward is when an essayist tells their social network of the transcendent experience at MH, getting a personal tour by a fellow essayist, and forming a lasting relationship that bonds the dreamer to us.

- (v) **Twitter, and all other social media.** In addition to FB, MH will be on all major social media. Marketing growth will be driven by the skills, energy and motivation of staff, to vigorously spread our content online, and to work the ensuing relationships.
- (vi) **Yelp.** Product/service review sites are the lifeblood for MH. If the service is perfect, the food is inspired, and the room stay is magical, then there is no worry about the reviews. This returns us to the *Business Philosophy and Vision*, in which service and demeanor are described as the only real difference between MH and other hospitality operations. Get it right, and virtually every review will be exemplary. Get it *just slightly less* than perfect, and reviews will be tepid. Fail to produce magic and transcendence, and we doom our own operation to gasping mediocrity, where rooms must stay discounted, restaurant chairs fill at other places, and no one has reason to drive to the countryside.
- (vii) **Radio and podcasting.** MH will work with public radio stations locally and in key media markets around the country to offer room-&-meal packages, as high-end premiums in fundraising drives. On-air buzz amounts to advertising directed at sophisticated consumers, paid for with rooms and food. The barn-dance will be made available for radio rebroadcast, in the style of “Grand Ole Opry.” The National Mission speech will be made available to the Pacifica radio network. All content will be made available on podcast.
- (viii) **Life-Cams.** Ours is a stimuli-driven society, and people now experience life through their wireless devices. One way in which MH will embrace that is streaming content from the kitchen, as well as a designated-space in the dining room. In addition to online streaming, the cams will feed flat screens in the dining room and throughout the inn. All marketing materials will guide people to the cams. MH will eventually work with other restaurants on a business model for these “life-cams” that allows other eateries to join in the stream. This will generate fees, advertising, and capital investment. Within a decade, the value of the life-cams could well exceed MH’s entire hospitality operation.
- (ix) **Cooperation over Competition.** Prosperity for the region is good for MH. By working with neighboring businesses – including other B-&-Bs – to create a flood of visitors, we can stop competing for bodies, and instead create strategies to market the entire stock of the region’s rooms and eateries. Growing the flow, so as to fill every room should be the goal, and if we do so, then MH will not have competitors, but long-term partners. To this end, MH’s productions unit will work closely with neighboring businesses and chambers of commerce on the Midsummer, High Summer, and Autumn festivals.
- (x) **Word of Mouth.** The most important ingredient in our success will be guests going back to their world and speaking with rapture about the experience they had at MH. It will play out on social media, at cappuccino bars, at the dinner table, and around the water cooler. Word-of-mouth is organic. No amount of marketing can make someone believe that they had a transcendent experience. Only magic can make that happen, and once it is earned, the harvest will last as long as the magic continues. This is the most valuable asset MH can earn, and it all comes down to service and demeanor.

G. THE HOTEL OPERATION

The hotel should give customers the best night's sleep they've ever had, in a space that encourages frisky wholesome intimacy, while engendering a sense of returning home.

“How can I serve you?” is the mindset that should guide all communication with guests, whether if it is the initial contact, finalizing a booking, arranging for a guest's vacation desires, or dealing with a guest on site.

(i) INITIAL CONTACT

The first contact for most people will be by telephone or email.

Telephone contact:

– A human being will answer the phone, preferably by the second ring. “Monument House... How may I help you?” Be helpful and polite.

– *Nothing* is more important than giving one's fullest attention to the person at the other end. Answer every question. Inquire about the guest, where they live, have they visited our website. Always ask, “Are you a veteran?” The person is calling because they're interested. They are a *warm lead*. It is our job to gently sell MH to this interested party. That's why they're calling.

– If the person is lost while driving, do everything you can to help them. Show genuine concern, and sympathy. They could just as easily turn around and abandon the booking. Helpfulness over the phone should make for a guest who expresses gratitude upon their arrival.

– If they sound like they want to bite, but money seems to be an obstacle, work with them, and then speak to the Innkeeper about discounts that might seal the deal. Almost certainly, the Innkeeper will sacrifice a few dollars to build a bridge to a potential long-term guest. And once they're here, the guest is just as likely to spend what they saved on food or other offerings.

Email contact:

– Just as with telephone contact, always be helpful and polite. People are delivering themselves to us, as warm leads. Do not squeeze them hard, though, as a hard sale leaves a bitter taste.

– Write in complete sentences. They don't have to be long. There doesn't have to be many of them. But an email with less than one complete sentence is off-putting.

– Answer all questions asked. If you don't know the answer, ask the OM or Innkeeper.

– Ask if the person has seen the website, which has printable fliers about our upcoming season, our menu, podcasts of live music, and information about discounts for veterans.

(ii) **FINALIZING A BOOKING**

A guest should feel great about every step of their stay, starting with the initial contact, and continuing as they finalize their booking. We exist in a highly-competitive hospitality market, and it is a huge show of confidence for someone to spend their money at our place.

Use the communication method that the guest prefers. If they call, it's probably because they are comfortable on the phone, so handle communication on the phone. If they email, use email.

– *Again, always be polite and helpful.*

– *Ask if the guest has any ADA issues.* If they cannot climb stairs, why would we put them on the second floor, if they can be in a more accessible room? ADA accessibility will be a major factor in asset acquisition consideration.

– *Ask if the guest is vegetarian.* If so, tell them that no birds or mammals are cooked or served, and that all breakfast and dinner items containing animal products are clearly identified. Recipes showing menu items and descriptions of how food is prepared are available online. Most of the dinner menu consists of vegetarian and vegan soups, salads, sandwiches, appetizers, and entrees. The only animal products are fresh-catch seafood, and cruelty-free eggs and dairy.

– *Ask if the guest wishes to book other services, like a boat rental or tour.* If so, ask if they would like for the Concierge to call them to make advance arrangements, or if they wish to wait, to make arrangements when they arrive.

(iii) **UPON ARRIVAL**

Every hotel guest will have driven to MH, and most will have come quite some distance, and so we are the end of one leg of a long journey.

The initial reception they receive will set the tone for their entire stay.

(iv) **AT THE FRONT DESK:**

– *Be polite and helpful.* These are the two most important traits in our work. Thank them, when they hand over identification, or a credit card, and again when you hand them back. “Thank you. I am done with your drivers license and credit card. Here you are.”

– *Don't rush.* Make the person who you are serving your sole focus.

– *Treat each person with respect.* Everybody gets treated the same. Refer to every guest with their name. “Mr. Jones, if you would sign here....” Patiently walk them through the booking. “Ms. Smith, I just need one more bit of information....” If you can't be respectful to *every* person who spends their money at Monument House, then this probably isn't a good line of work for you.

– *Explain what they must know.*

- “These are your room keys. You have two. Your room is inside this main building, on the second floor. We will walk you upstairs in a moment.”
- “Your room is wifi enabled. Our signal is called MH.”
- “Breakfast is served in the dining room, in the 8 o’clock hour.”
- “All rooms are smoke-free, although you are welcome to smoke outside. If you are a pharmagreen patient, please use a non-smoke form in the building, or step outside.” This second part is important, because while we will not advertise the fact that we welcome pharmagreen patients, simply mentioning medical marijuana use at the front-desk clears the air (so to speak) as to how that issue is handled.
- “There is a binder in your room, next to the fruit basket, listing our services, showing our menu, and describing sites and attractions in the area. The Concierge can work with you on arranging boat rentals, tours, and the like.” Or, if they *have already* made arrangements, repeat them back. “I see you already made arrangements to go boating tomorrow and to visit a pub. Here are your boat coupons and a map to the boat rental. Your reservation is for 11 o’clock. If you wish to not drive to the Pub, please let us know, so we can arrange a ride.”
- “If you need anything, please simply call the front desk.”
- “Thanks for choosing to stay at Monument House.”

– ***NEVER*** use the word “policy.” It has the effect of brushing someone off, and people know it. As a word, “policy” has only negative connotations. No one smiles when you say, “*Oh, we have a policy....*” We don’t have *policies*. We have an attitude about service. Our mission is to fulfill the desires of guests, not to make them tow some arbitrary line.

– *Don’t take things personally.* Depending on distance traveled, a guest may be wiped out, or frustrated, or stressed, or in a bad mood. There could have been traffic, or some unforeseen reason that delayed them. In most cases, these dark clouds will clear in short order. There will be the rare instance when you deal with someone who is truly unpleasant. That’s when you say, gently, “You know, I think the Innkeeper is the person you want to talk to about that,” and then extract yourself, and get one of the owners.

(v) **SHOWING A GUEST TO THEIR ROOM**

MH will always be short-handed, but that should not mean that a guest is left to themselves to get to their room.

At the Front Desk:

- “Okay, we are done here. Let’s get you to your room.”
- People believe in a front desk bell. Use it gently. Either the Innkeeper or Barn Keeper should be within earshot. Or if the Desk Manager or Concierge are free, they can walk the person up.

If they are a first-time guest:

- Give a history of the house, but not too much. “This house was built when Andrew Jackson was president.” And then turn conversation back to the guest. “Did you travel far to get here?” Assume that most people follow this line of thought: “*Enough about you... let’s talk about me.*”

If they have been here before:

- “I know you’ve been here before, so you know that the house was built when Andrew Jackson was president. Is there anything that you didn’t get to last time that you’d like to try now? Boating? Hiking?”

(vi) Upon arriving at the room:

- *Have a genuine conversation. Listen.* If they ask something you don’t know, then tell them. “Gee, I have no idea. Let me ask about that.” And then promptly get back with an answer.
- *Explain what they must know.*
 - “Your reservation is for two nights.”
 - “Check out time is 11 am.”
 - “Breakfast is served in the dining room in the 8 o’clock hour. Your breakfast ticket shows tomorrow’s selections. You can bring the ticket downstairs, to enjoy the buffet, or you can mark your selections and leave the ticket with the Front Desk, and we will prepare a tray and bring it to your room.”
 - “There is no smoking indoors. Pharmagreen patients are encouraged to use edibles, or a non-smoke form inside. Guests wishing to smoke are welcome to step outside.”
 - “All of the fruit in this courtesy basket is grown on site. Much of what we cook and jar comes from our own gardens.”
 - “This binder includes our event calendar, dinner menu, attractions in the area, and a list of films and other products available at the Front Desk, including adult items.”

- “The menu shows items that are vegetarian, vegan, heart healthy, and gluten-free.”
- “The binder also shows the farmers & fishermen who we buy our produce, eggs, grain, and fish from. We do not cook or serve birds or mammals.”
- “We do not use any foods containing genetically modified organisms.”

– *Ask if there is anything else you can do, to be of service.*

– *If not, wrap up.* “Thank you again for choosing Monument House. We want you to have a magical experience here.”

– *Do NOT linger for a tip.* If they give one, that’s fine, but waiting for someone to give money voids the idea of magic. If the customer is happy, they’ll tip. If they feel bad for having not tipped when shown to their room, they’ll make it up later, but let them be the masters of their money. Focus on fulfilling the guest’s desires, so your interactions don’t hinge on money. There will be opportunities for a guest to be generous, including at check-out, where the bill will include space to mark down a tip for a specific worker.

(vii) *In the normal course of the day:*

– Greet people, if only to say “Good morning.”

– Ask, “Is there something I can help you with?”

– If a guest has not visited the dining room for breakfast by 8:45, call the guest’s room, to ask if they wish to have a breakfast tray prepared, to enjoy either in the dining room, or in their room. Breakfast is included in the booking, so no one should be short-changed just because they weren’t downstairs in time for buffet service.

– When guests depart for a trip to the lake, a hike or drive, offer them a five-dollar box lunch. Advance notice allows for the box lunch to be made to the guest’s wishes. The lunch cost can be added to the bill, or paid with cash.

– Freely offer baked goods, fruit and cheese, and other treats.

– Keep carafes of regular, decaf, and flavored coffee filled and fresh at all times.

– Introduce guests to the Chefs, if they’re at hand, and explain: “We work with Los Angeles Harbor College on a Chef-in-Residence program. If you enjoyed dinner, the Chefs are with us throughout the restaurant season, which runs from April 15th through Oct 15th. You might want to come for the annual Chef’s Farewell Dinner, on Oct 15th.”

(viii) Upon a guest's departure:

- If the guest is not downstairs for check-out by 11:00, call their room and ask if they would like to extend their check-out time to twelve noon.
- At the desk, ask with sincerity: “How was your stay?” Look them in the eyes. Listen to them. If their eyes show rapture, then you can feel good. Show your satisfaction at their happiness, with a warm, genuine smile, and say, “I’m very happy to hear that.”
- If, as you look in their eyes, you see *hesitation*, followed by: “Oh, it was fine.” then they’re not happy.
- Ask as a follow-up, “Is there something that could have gone better?” Leave it open-ended, but give them space to air any beef they may have. And, again, don’t take it personal.
- Uncomfortable as it is, follow-up: “You know, the Innkeeper talks a lot about magic... how we want every guest to experience magic while they’re here.” Then pause briefly, while you keep looking at them. Then, gently, say: “It sounds like you didn’t have a magical time.” Then give them space to reply. If it sounds like something deep, get the Innkeeper.
- If they don’t want to go further, then let it go. “Well, we’re just all concerned that people have an amazing time here.” Maintain professionalism and respect. Stay polite and helpful. This brief exchange may be hard, but it may also be the most important moment, in terms of an on-going business relationship. The way we handle it should help the guest to see that we care about more than just their money.
- If they had a less-than-magical time, and it looks like we don’t care, that it’s just about money, then we may as well flip them the finger, and tell them never to come back. *Because they won’t.*
- Walk through the bill, item by item. “This shows your room charge, and the local hotel tax, and sales tax. These are items you rang up during your stay. There are spaces next to the names of staff, if you wish to specifically tip someone.”
- If they pay cash or traveler’s checks, count back change. If they pay by personal check, explain that checks are deposited for immediate payment, but can take up to a week to clear. If they pay by credit card, run the card as they are at the desk.
- Send every person off with a gratis boxed meal, as, again, every person will be driving. In the box, include cutlery, and a napkin, as well as the MH print piece with the full event calendar, and postcards for the barn dance series and movie nights.

(ix) Within a week of a guest's departure:

- The Innkeeper will type a note of thanks, on a manual typewriter. The personal nature of hospitality is not served by impersonal mail. People understand getting a postcard advertising an event, but an impersonal thank you card does not build goodwill. It just wastes a stamp.

(x) **FINANCIALS**

(a) **Transacting payments:**

The Desk Manager transacts routine room payments.

Count back cash, verbally. “You gave me \$200. You bill is \$112.50. Here is fifty cents, which makes one-hundred-and-thirteen, and one-two, to 115, and five to 120, and... you get the picture. Cash registers figure all that out, but just handing someone a wad of bills and coins is less satisfactory than taking those few extra seconds to transact change. People will take note.

If a credit card is declined, and no easy resolution is at hand, get the Operations Manager or Innkeeper. The OM is the first line of action, but don't let someone depart unless they've talked to the OM or Innkeeper, who may waive charges, or reduce them, or demand payment. Only the Innkeeper can give rooms away.

(b) **Balancing the drawer:**

A register tape will be run each night, and be compared against payment instruments in the drawer. Small discrepancies happen, but any shortage or overage in the whole dollars should be reconciled immediately, or an explanation be given.

(c) **Nightly Record:**

The register tape sum and the drawer balance will be recorded each night. That nightly record will be the basis for all bookkeeping, and so accuracy and consistency are critical.

(d) **Into the Safe:**

Aside from the active register drawers in the restaurant and hotel, all cash and other forms of payment will be dropped into a safe that only the owners have a combination to, until a manager makes a bank run.

(e) **Bookkeeping:**

The Desk Manager will enter hotel and restaurant night record numbers into an accounts spreadsheet. This will feed the data that will comprise part of the overall books.

The Operations Manager will keep the full books.

The owners will discuss numbers with the Operation Manager each week and look at a printed spreadsheet during the first week of each following month, to track income and spending.

A quarterly assessment will be conducted to compare where the budget-to-date stands versus the drafted budget. Quarterly reports will be shared with MH corporate.

Annual budget preparation for the Fiscal Year (beginning Jan 1st) and subsequent tax filings will begin in November, and will be the focus of the Operations Manager until a finished draft of each is accepted by the owners. Work on the budget will be collaboration between all teams. Copies of tax filings and the annual budget will be filed with MH corporate.

(f) Deposit:

The owners or Operations Manager will carry cash and other payments for deposit to the bank, and return with the receipt, which will be archived chronologically on a spike.

(g) Petty Cash:

Management will retain a petty cash fund, not to exceed a thousand dollars on hand, for emergencies. Those funds will be stored in the safe, and recorded as a line item on the books.

(h) Returned and declined payments:

Receiving payment from someone who has already slept in your bed, and eaten your food, is a dance in which graciousness goes a long way.

Even *not* getting paid can be okay. If someone is at the Front Desk, and their payment has been declined, graciousness will cut through the embarrassment of the moment.

Only the Innkeeper can give away room stays, so if someone is truly unable to pay, then get the Innkeeper may well say, “Sounds like you’re having a tough time. I know you came a long way... I hope you had a magical experience here.” If that’s where things end, the person later may not remember the details of that visit, but they will never forget our graciousness.

On payments declined after the person has left, it will be the Operations Manager who calls the guest, to state that payment was returned. “How would you like to proceed?” Then work something out. The Innkeeper will stay above what could be a difficult exchange, until an impasse is reached. It’s a good-cop/bad-cop sort of thing.

If it becomes clear that someone is stiffing us, the Innkeeper is likely to fall on the side of letting it go, unless that person is blatantly playing us as fools. We will maintain a list of scofflaws, and if they show again, they’ll be refused service.

Monument House will press charges on grounds of “stolen valor,” against those who can be proven to be masquerading as active-duty military personnel, or a veteran. We will always seek the lost room or meal cost, plus one dollar, an apology and lawyer’s fees.

H. THE RESTAURANT OPERATION

The restaurant should give customers an incredible vibe, an inspired menu, amazing food, and an eating experience that makes them *need* to come back, and to tell others.

– All ingredients will be *organic, homegrown, or locally sourced*.

– The *specials and entrees* will be driven by what is in season. The nightly selection will always include at least one vegetarian entrée. We will not cook or serve birds or mammals.

– At its core, the menu will be built like a deck of cards, with four categories – like suits in a deck – being *salads, sandwiches, soups, and appetizers*. These are broad, and meant to be stretched. Every suit will include vegetarian, vegan, heart-healthy, and gluten-free items. The two jokers will be a starch and a vegetable that can be added to any item to comprise a multi-course meal.

– We will not use any food item containing *GMOs*.

(i) MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

The work of pulling off magic in a restaurant is labor intensive. Everyone already works hard in a stressful environment, where things don't always go right, customers are sometimes unpleasant, and there is never enough time.

But to achieve magic, everyone must go beyond those realities, to realize how critical each person is to the operation.

Showing up on time, taking ownership of your space, controlling your own mood, and delivering service that goes beyond expectation is what will fill the seats, drive up the prices, lead to better tips, and result in bonuses, and more staff.

Failure to pull off magic means that ours is just another nice restaurant, where some will love us, and others will just never come back, or remember us, because we left no lasting impression.

(a) The Chefs:

The principal cooks for dinner service will be the two Chefs-in-Residence, who come to MH for one season, are paid with room-&-board and a stipend, and who will work with the Innkeeper on the menu, and restaurant operations. They will work Tuesday through Saturday.

The Chefs will each come from the Los Angeles area, via the culinary arts program at **Los Angeles Harbor College**, located in Wilmington, California. The LAHC program is run by Chef Giovanni Delrosario, who was head chef at the Belagio, on the Vegas strip. Chef Gio went over to LAHC as a way of giving back, and his graduates are hired world-wide. His reputation as a mentor and culinary arts thinker is nationally known.

The two Chefs will be of humble means, as a way of “paying it forward.” The Chefs will be starting their careers, and hungry to make a name for themselves, and that’s the spirit we want.

Each Chef will be provided round-trip airfare, for arrival in April, to stay through the full season. A pair of sit-down dinners mentioned earlier will start and close the restaurant’s season, which will run from April 15th to Oct 15th. Proceeds from the Chefs’ Welcome and Farewell sit-down events will supplement the monthly stipend that is paid to the Chefs.

Chefs’ Duties:

- One Chef will lead the management of the restaurant, under the supervision of the Innkeeper. This will include scheduling of personnel, tracking inventory, and working with staff on ways to improve the operation.
- The other Chef will be the chief creative person and cook, in the kitchen.
- The two Chefs will switch roles during the season, so that each gains experience at running a restaurant, and leading the creative side.
- Both Chefs will work with the Innkeeper to conceive specials, entrees, standard menu offerings, and desserts.
- Both Chefs will prep and cook, with the Innkeeper as backup.
- The Chefs will accompany the Innkeeper or Barn Keeper, to farmers markets, to visit growers, the fishing fleet, and specialty shops. The ingredients we use are the biggest factor in how a meal will come out, and we will be incredibly selective.
- Each Chef will take an active role in the gardens and orchard, working with the Barn Keeper. Homegrown is always the preference.
- Both Chefs will work with the Innkeeper on making gelato and sorbet, which will serve as palette cleansers during meals.
- Both Chefs will help with home-canning. Canned goods (like tomatoes, peaches, and jam) will be available for sale to guests, and used to supplement in-season produce.

(b) The Innkeeper:

The Innkeeper will start the day baking bread, and then shift over to cooking breakfast. After clean-up, he will bake sweets, and spin gelato and sorbet.

The Innkeeper will work with the Chefs on the menu, specials, entrees, and desserts.

The Innkeeper will work with the Host/Hostess on greeting, and seating guests.

Where needed, the Innkeeper will wait tables, bartend, and bus.

(c) Wait Staff:

The two factors that leave the deepest lasting impression of a restaurant are food and the service. People will cope with slightly high prices, and a long-ish wait. But they will not return if the food is less than amazing, and if they don't like the service.

It's hard enough pleasing customers in a business as intimate as serving food, but our staff must rise to the absolute top of the craft, when waiting a table.

Be polite. Take your time. Listen closely. Repeat back the order, if you have *any* questions. Once you've recorded the table's entire order, run through it again, for correctness, including notes of any special requests. Smile, naturally.

If you're having a tough moment, ask for a break, and the Innkeeper will step in to cover for you. Most nights, we will have two people waiting tables, so when it gets busy, you'll feel a lot of pressure. It's okay. Make each person count, and they will tip accordingly.

Always start by asking if anyone wishes to order a drink. If someone declines to order a drink, ask, "Would you like water?"

Upon returning to the table with beverages, and getting each to the right person, only then do you describe the entrees and specials. "Tonight, in addition to our menu, which includes a number of vegetarian, vegan, and heart-healthy items, we have entrees and specials." And then quickly run down each, using the descriptions prepared by the Chefs.

A meal can be as simple as a single ala cart item, or a multi-course (highly priced) extravaganza. Each order is important.

No person is more important than another. Everyone is treated equally. It doesn't matter how much someone spends or whether one party had reservations, and another showed up out of the blue. Once they are seated, everyone is treated absolutely the same.

We serve in courses, based on instruction from the Chefs.

A course is followed by a palette cleanser. It could be sorbet or gelato, melon, or a sliced vegetable. Then another course. And another palette cleanser. Then an entrée. And a cleanser. After the meal, we encourage coffee and dessert.

We may not be in New York, or Los Angeles. But we can create magic. And though our service, product, and setting, we control every aspect of that moment.

(d) Tablekeep:

Initially, there may be only one person to bus tables, and to help with clean-up in the kitchen. Sometimes, it won't even be one. Growth in the restaurant will result in more people to spread the work around, but at times, clearing tables may fall to the wait staff, or Innkeeper.

Bussing – like serving – is done one guest at a time. It is an intimate moment when you lean in and whisper, “May I take your plate?” You are inches from their ear. Showing up at a table and stacking plates and glasses in front of the guest destroys that sense of intimacy. Each person is served, and when they are done, each serving is taken away. It's okay if it takes two or three trips to clear a table. It's about service, not the speed.

A table should never be strewn with debris. If there are sugar packets or cream containers, then pleasantly step forward, and say in a quiet tone, “... pardon me, while I clear this.” Do that several times, and people will realize the attentiveness we display.

If a table quickly empties, it can be cleared in swift order, which includes stacking, but it should be done quietly, quickly, and indiscreetly. By the time a table is vacant, it should be mostly clear anyway, owing to the attentiveness of our service.

(e) Host/Hostess:

The first person that a customer will meet will be the Host, or Hostess. Like everyone else in the restaurant, this person will be incredibly busy. Not only will they be handling reservations over the phone, and maintaining the reservation book, but they will greet arriving guests, showing people to their table, and also serving as the toggle-director of the kitchen cam.

A guest's initial impression, then, will be from this very busy worker.

Most guests will have driven a long way to get here. The H/H will ask each, “Did you come far?” If so, follow-up, “Can I bring anyone water?” It's a simple courtesy, but it starts things on the right tone. *It's all about tone, and demeanor.*

Helpfulness and concern about the guest will mellow a person out. If they have to wait a long time, but know that the H/H is “on their side,” then that wait is not so bad.

Give people updates on the wait. Know who each party is, so you can look at them, and say, “You are the next table.” If they have reservations, work with staff to make sure a table is ready. If they don't have reservations, and are on the wait list, treat them exactly the same as guests with reservations. No one gets treated differently. Everyone is important.

The web cam may wind up being one of the most memorable aspects of the meal. The H/H will toggle through the cam feeds, as director of what amounts to real-time food theatre, and guests will watch on flat screens or their wireless device as their own meals are prepared.

Americans now experience life through their wireless devices, and so it will become standard to have a table filled with people, with many of whom staring at their phone, watching as someone 40 feet away cooks their meal. As off-putting as this may be to some people, others will crave it.

At least one designated table in the restaurant will be on a cam. This will be designed so as to be clearly different than all others, such as using a Sheik's Tent feel. Some people waiting for a table who see that table free will ask, "What about that one?" People need to be informed, by telling them, "That table is part of our online web cam stream, and so you will appear on our website." If the table is not otherwise reserved, and they still want it, let them have it.

(ii) **WORKFLOW**

(a) Dining room:

Hotel Guests and Dinner:

When someone books a room, staff will ask, "Would you like to reserve a table for dinner?" If the guest has declined initially, staff will ask again at check-in. If they say no, that's fine. If they wish to join those waiting without reservation, that's up to them.

Because no restaurant customer is more important than another, hotel guests do not "bump" people off the waiting list.

Hotel guests can order from the menu, and have food delivered to their room. We do not offer room service, but if they want to order dinner, that's why there is a menu in their room.

Reservations:

Staff taking reservations by phone will ask for the name, size of the party, and a contact number. When taking a call, write down the number shown on caller ID, and then repeat it back, asking, "Is xxx-xxx-xxxx the best number to reach you at?" We get phone numbers so that we can call the night before, to remind them of their reservation, and check if the party will be arriving.

Reservations will also come in by email, and social media. That information is routed to the H/H.

Every seated customer is equally important:

There is no difference between people with, and without a reservation, except that booking a table means you get a table. No one gets better service just because they have a reservation.

The H/H will say, "Welcome to Monument House. . . . Do you have a reservation?" to those entering the restaurant. But again, no one gets better service just because of a reservation. A sure way to draw fire online from a patron is to treat a party differently, just because they did not have a reservation. The only advantage a reservation gets someone is a table at a specific time.

Someone without a reservation who is made to feel that they are a second-class patron owing to no reservation will flame MH on Yelp, and actively work against us, with bad word of mouth.

Seating:

The H/H or Innkeeper will greet, and seat customers. Even if the restaurant is empty, no one will be told, “Just sit anywhere.”

The meal:

We serve in courses, with palette cleansers in between.

Simple, unpretentious elegance is what we are looking for.

The wait staff will explain with each course what is being served, followed by, “Please, enjoy.”

No one is rushed.

If someone is effusive in their praise, go tell the Chef, so they may come out to greet their patron.

Coffee, drinks, and dessert:

Except for water, or fountain drinks, wait staff will prepare beverages, including cocktails and espresso drinks. The Inn or Barn keepers may be on hand to help. Dessert is presented on a tray, to show selection. Coffee is encouraged with dessert. If someone brings a bottle of wine, we will uncork and pour.

Smoking:

There is no smoking inside the restaurant. There is no exception.

Clean-up:

Done throughout the meal, as earlier mentioned, clearing is done one person at a time. When a party leaves, we wait until they have all stepped away from the table to clear it and change linen.

Never hover over a table, just waiting for someone to leave. No one gets rushed out.

Unless someone just had coffee, the linen is changed.

Paying the bill:

Make it as easy as possible. If they wish to pay at the table, transact it there. If they go to the front, that’s okay. If they chase down a staff member, smile as you take their payment. Count back change. Thank them for choosing MH.

Tipping:

Tips are shared between the wait staff and tablekeep. If there is no tablekeep, and the Innkeeper is filling that role, tips stay with the wait staff.

If the wait staff and tablekeep want tipping to be built in to the bill, we can go that way.

(b) Kitchen

Shopping, prep, webcam, and clean-up:

A day in the kitchen starts with shopping and gardening.

Each Chef will take part in trips to the farmers market, to local growers, to the fishing fleet, and specialty shops.

Both Chefs and the Innkeeper will do prep.

Each Chef will work with the Innkeeper on making gelato and sorbet.

The kitchen will be wired for live webcam streaming, and so the Chefs should be aware that they will be online, and that the feed will be portaled to flat screens mounted throughout the building. An odd reality that we live life through wireless devices, but we gotta go with what people know. And while it does impinge on the secret world of the kitchen, it also can create star power, as the website – www.TheKitchenCam.com – is intended to grow exponentially, and thus there could be hundreds, or thousands of people tuning in. Most useful is that the Chefs can tell family and loved ones how to watch them at work.

The kitchen cams will be placed so that there are several blind spots, as the Chefs and any worker in the kitchen will need private space. But for the most part, just as personal privacy seems to be a thing of the past, so, too, is the workplace entering a new reality, and life-cams are just the entertainment aspect of that new paradigm.

The Chefs will work with the tablekeep on clean-up.

(c) Opening and closing:

Opening:

The Chefs arrive in the kitchen in the 3 o'clock hour, to determine the entrees and start prep.

The Innkeeper will fill the register drawer at 5 pm, and note the sum on the nightly record.

The H/H arrives at 5 pm, to chalk the entrée board, work with the cam feed, go through the reservation book, and take any incoming calls. The H/H will call reservations for the next day, reminding people that they have a reservation for the next night. Some will say, “I won’t be able to make it,” allowing for the reservation book to be updated, and therefore closely reflect people likely to show up the next night. That will help us keep seats full, while also showing customers that we look forward to seeing them.

Wait staff and tablekeep arrive at 5:30. During high season, at least one of those workers will come in at 5 pm, so as to help the H/H with the next-day confirmation calls.

Seating begins *exactly* at 6pm, and so all staff should be in place and ready.

Closing:

Once the final bill has been transacted, the H/H will run a register tape, and deliver the counted drawer to the Innkeeper, to be entered in the nightly record. All cash beyond the fixed drawer amount will be put into the safe.

The tablekeep and Chefs will clean the kitchen.

The wait staff can sign out, upon the last guests being served, and tips being divided.

(iii) **THE KITCHEN CAM**

As mentioned, MH will stream content from the restaurant operation through a live webcam, that will be sited at www.TheKitchenCam.com. The website *would* have been just *kitchencam*, but that domain is owned by a high-end eatery in Boston. We will reach out to them on the concept, to see if they wish to join in a partnership. If so, then both domains will stream content that includes the two eateries, as their URL is easier to remember. If they don’t wish to take part, then it’s just us.

The owners will reach out to venture capital sources to develop this concept, but no matter the evolution of the site, this move into “life cams,” that capture aspects of life, like food and dancing, could explode virally. *It is not impossible to imagine that the value of the life-cam sites could be greater than that of the MH operation itself.* We might wind up running a restaurant and holding barn dances for the purpose of feeding content to the cam, instead of the other way around.

The stream from each of the kitchen cams will feed into the H/H’s workstation, where software will allow that person to toggle from one cam to another, essentially making them the director.

Growth in the webcam operation again could be explosive, and so an entrepreneurial attitude from the H/H to take ownership of the concept behooves everyone. The Barn Keeper will also be directly involved in the cam operation, both as owner, and the person running events. Together, the H/H, and the Barn and Inn keepers form the webcam team.

(iv) **FOOD SOURCING**

Organic. Homegrown. Local. In that order.

We will not cook or serve birds or mammals. Animal products we do use will be cruelty-free.

We will not use any ingredient containing GMOs.

(a) *The gardens and greenhouse*

As much as we can, food should come from our own gardens. The Chefs and Barn Keeper will tend to the garden. MH corporate will work with inn owners on the investment capital to pay for construction of a solarium that will serve as a sitting area for guests, and a greenhouse, for tomatoes, chiles, spices, and other items not easily grown in New England.

(b) *Farmers markets*

When we do buy dairy, eggs, grain, and produce, it will first be from the farmers market, local growers, and specialty shops. We will know the people who produce our ingredients.

(c) *Specialty shops*

Cheese, wine, and gourmet food shops are among places we will frequent, though again it will all be organic and no GMOs.

(d) *Shipments*

Some things will be shipped, like citrus or avocados, but even those will be from farmers we know.

(e) *Eggs, meat, fish, dairy, and grains*

What we use determines how a meal turns out.

We will know the people who raise the eggs, dairy, and produce that we do not ourselves grow.

Eggs

We will buy a lot of eggs, and so we will meet a lot of chickens. Our preferred vendor is raising birds free-range, on organic feed, and only for egg production.

Meat

As to meat, the owner is not inclined to enter a farm where, just because he showed up, an animal got killed. So we will not cook or serve birds or mammals.

That said, there is no “policy” about meat, or no meat.

If someone asks, “What? Do you have some *policy* about no meat?” then just respond, “Actually, no, the owner doesn’t believe in *policies*. But he doesn’t want to show up somewhere, and an animal gets killed, just because he arrived.”

If we are to create a better world for animals, than restaurants like ours should go out of their way to support humane treatment of livestock, and that starts with where and how we buy.

But it continues in the wording we use to articulate this to guests.

Everyone is in their own state of personal evolution. No one is to feel judged on where they stand, relative to where we-or-you-or-me stand, on anything. If someone wants meat, and we don’t serve it, fine, we just don’t serve it. It’s not because they’re a bad person. If they ask, you can say the Innkeeper eats meat. We just don’t serve it.

The irony will not be lost on vegetarians and vegans, of seeing someone navigating on how a meat substitute can be added to their meal, since they typically negotiate their own meals at virtually every restaurant.

Fish

There will be a lot of it. The New England fishing fleet is world renowned, and what we prepare will be freshly caught. There will be no farmed fish.

Yes, taking a creature from the sea leads to its death, but that is different than the slaughterhouse. Fish live in the wild until they are caught. Farm animals are raised for slaughter. One lives free, and is then caught. The other never knows freedom. Somehow, that’s different, at least to the Principal.

All staff will spend July 4th on a staff retreat, in the form of a picnic on the coastline. If we are to understand fish, then we need to see the sea. Part of the adventure for the Chefs is to see things like that, for New England is as far from Los Angeles as one can get, without falling off the edges of America. That is true is just about every sense.

Dairy

Dairy will be from local farms, where the cows or goats can graze, and are not killed for food.

Grains

As much as possible, all bread we serve will be baked on-site, and so we will likely form a vendor relationship with organic grain farmers. If there is a New England farmer, we will make the drive for bulk, top-end sacks of milled flour. Baking bread will start the Innkeeper’s day.

(f) Canning

The restaurant season runs from April to October, and the Maine soil is very rich. Much of what we will need will be freshly available. *But not always.* And there will be hotel guests all the way through to New Year's Eve, so we will want to have the highest-quality tomatoes and peaches and pears and such, often when those are not available at the farmers market. The best route is to can our own goods. The Chefs will work with the Barn Keeper on home canning, including jams, marmalades, and jellies. Depending on the volume, these goods will serve as give-aways to guests, and items in the dining room. But most of all, when it is snowing outside, there is nothing more evocative of warmer times than to have a tomato or a peach that you picked and canned.

(v) **THE DINNER MENU**

(a) Entrees and specials

There is the menu, which is a series of ala carte items, and then there are the *entrees* – in which the Chef creates a multi-course culinary match-up – and *specials*, where a non-menu feature dish can be matched to a starch and vegetable, or any cards from the deck.

Everything is driven by what ingredients are in season.

The Chefs and Innkeeper will work together to create the selections.

The H/H will chalk a board with that night's selections.

Specials will likely run between fifteen and twenty-five dollars, and *Entrees* between twenty and forty dollars.

(b) The Deck of Cards – Soups, salads, sandwiches, and appetizers

As mentioned before, the basic menu will include appetizers, soup, salads, and sandwiches, but these categories are meant to be stretched.

To take the deck concept further of those four categories being suits in a deck of cards, we can look at the individual cards.

- The jokers are the starch and vegetable of the day, which are offered with the special, or available with any other item, or by themselves.
- The Ace is Lobster, so there will be a lobster appetizer, a lobster soup, a lobster salad, and some form of a lobster sandwich. One month, the sandwich might be Danish open-face. The next month, it might be lobster salad on toast. The actual dishes will vary, depending on ingredients available, and inclinations of the Chefs.
- Picture cards are fresh-catch seafood.
- The Ten is always vegetarian.
- The Nine is vegan.

- The Eight is Italian, or other European.
- The Seven is Thai, or other Asian.
- The Six is Mexican, or other Latin American.
- The Five is local comfort food.
- Two, three, and four are the kids' menu.

A printed menu will always be there, but someone can just say Ten of Clubs, and they will get the Good Earth Sandwich. Two vegans ordering the tofu pad Thai, Hungarian tomato stew, open-face vegan finger sandwiches, a chopped salad, plus that day's starch are ordering four nines and a joker, and are sharing a \$50 or \$60 meal.

If a card game breaks out, that is more engagement than many people experience in a restaurant. Reviewers will mention it, as an example of our place being a little quirky. If the idea takes, then we can print the menu in the form of a deck, as souvenirs.

It's a little gimmicky, but it's also an ice breaker. It will get noticed. And people will remember it. If it doesn't work, we drop it. Never be married to an idea, just because it's yours.

(c) *Vegetarian, vegan, and heart healthy*

A growing percentage of diners want vegetarian and vegan. If we do not make those a priority, we will not only fail to stay relevant, but we will be (rightfully) bashed online. If we embrace it, then we lose no customers, and gain many.

Heart healthy is partly about sugar, salt, and fat, which are leading factors in the epidemic of hypertension and obesity in America. It's partly about cholesterol. But mostly it is about being deliberate in how we prepare food. We don't need a whole lot of salt to make fresh ingredients flavorful. They already are. Spices are meant to bring out flavor, not replace it. So the Chefs will practice a light touch on sugar, salt, and fats, and will look for ways to make food more fit. Heart healthy is not at the same level of consumer awareness as is vegetarian, but since the Principal is someone who had heart surgery, he'd like to be able to eat a healthy dinner at his restaurant.

(d) *Organic, local, no GMOs*

After growing something yourself, the best way to get ingredients is to shop from the people who grow them. You can ask about their practices, visit their farm, and feature them in literature and the website, so customers get a sense of where their meal came from. That is part of the appeal for the slow food movement, and we are *firmly* in the slow food camp.

There is developing now a critical mass among consumers against the giant agribusiness firms like Monsanto over genetically modified organisms. The Principal has a long history of activism on this question, and so *under no circumstances* will MH be a GMO consumer. As simple as that.

(e) Bartending, wine & espresso

Bartending will likely fall to the Barn Keeper. Staying behind the bar is too confining for the Innkeeper, who will be needed all over the place, and so there needs to be someone pouring drinks. As the Barn Keeper will be one of the owners, the art of tending bar will be in good hands.

Multiple staff will become wine experts. Their growth in this field will lead to performance bonuses, and also trips, to Napa, France, and other places we will want to visit as wine buyers. Part of the reason to own MH is so we can visit the Rhone river region, to buy cases of Chateaneuf du Pape, or make other such expeditions in the off-season.

Coffee is coffee, and coffee is great, but espresso is espresso, and when someone wants cappuccino, they don't want a cup of black coffee and creamer. They want steam pushed through espresso, with steamed-and-frothy milk. Espresso is an art that everyone will want to practice, since it means being able to make your own lattes.

(f) Gelato, sorbet & palette cleansers

A soup comes, and you love it, and then you're done. Next comes a starch. Two big sensory trips for the tongue. How will the second course pair well with the first? One way to help that pairing is the gentle cleansing of the palette.

Ideal for this are gelato or sorbet. Each is light – one made with milk, the other with water. An ideal gelato or sorbet needs almost no sugar, because the fruit is so perfect that a tiny amount of sugar frees that flavor. Watermelon sorbet, made with 48 parts fruit, 6 parts water, and one part sugar... what's that going to taste like? Probably like watermelon, in a form that melts on your tongue and washes through your mouth. That is what cleanses the palette. After a meal, as you have pistachio gelato with a caffe latte, you will forget about the drive back.

Florence, Italy – home to perhaps the world's greatest ice cream – is a great place to visit in the off-season, to take a seminar at a gelateria. One runs a place like MH because you want everyone – including staff – to find and experience life.

(g) Pricing in the Restaurant

Specials, fifteen-to-twenty-five... *entrees*, twenty-to-forty. *Add Coffee? Dessert? Wine? Staying?* We're talking real money, here. So while we will offer some entrees that hit forty bucks, we cannot ignore that times are still hard in America. The deck is meant to be affordable for anyone's budget, so all of the standard a la carte menu items will be under fifteen, and many under ten.

Remember people can pair up, so while a soup, appetizer and salad may each be eight or ten, suddenly they're ordering a \$25 or \$30 meal. We'll make our money on both ends of the price spectrum, but everyone is treated the same, whether they spend ten dollars, or five hundred.

(vi) **FINANCIALS**

Most of this follows the same procedures as for the hotel.

And, again, perfect service is more important than money. A sterling reputation will bring rewards far beyond money lost on scofflaws.

(a) *Transacting payments*

A restaurant customer can hand money to any staffer. So long as we get paid, it's all good.

All payments will route through the H/H, so if someone hands the check and payment to the Wait Staff, or Innkeeper, or whomever, it will then go to the H/H to be rung up, for cashflow control.

(b) *Balancing the drawer*

The H/H will run a register tape after the last payment has been transacted, and reconcile the balance in the drawer against the register tape. Again, small shortages happen, and so pennies or dimes are not a big issue, but if the register is short or over in whole dollars, the H/H will note that, and then deliver the drawer to the Innkeeper.

(c) *Nightly Record*

The Innkeeper will enter restaurant sales into the nightly record, which will drive the data that feeds the overall bookkeeping.

(d) *Into the Safe*

After entering the sales figures into the nightly record, the Innkeeper will replenish the drawer, and put all other money into the safe, for later bank deposit.

(e) *Bookkeeping*

Each morning, the Operations Manager will take figures from the nightly record and add them into the overall books, which track all income and outflow.

(f) *Deposit*

The OM or owners will make a daily bank deposit of funds stored in the safe.

(g) *Petty Cash*

The restaurant operation will maintain a separate petty cash fund, for purpose of cash payments for shopping. The sum and procedures will be worked out between the owners, Chefs, and OM.

(h) *Returned and declined payments*

We won't get too many returned payments from restaurant sales, as very few people write checks, and they should be discouraged for food sales. The same procedure as used for the hotel applies.

Declined payments – particularly for a large party – will immediately involve the Innkeeper. Most people will be mortified that they cannot pay their bill, and some of them who we let slide will send a payment to us once they get home.

But there will be some scofflaws who know their card will be declined, or they hear that MH is run by softies. Whatever the case, the Innkeeper is likely to let most instances of declined cards pass, unless it's a huge bill. Thirty or fifty bucks that we don't get likely will come back to us in the form of positive word of mouth, or return business. Someone who is truly mortified and lives close by will likely come back again to clear their name.

If someone is bold enough to eat twice with a bum card, then we ask them to not come back, but even that is a matter of demeanor.

Cases of "stolen valor" will be prosecuted, as mentioned earlier.

4. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

A. PERSONNEL

(i) Strengths:

MH's greatest strength, as service and demeanor are really the only ways to set ourselves apart from every other bed-&-breakfast. MH can offer growth in skills, pay, and benefits, for the small group that begins this adventure with the initial inn, and with the Monument House corporation. The vigor and creative thinking of each Innkeeper and Barn Keeper will power our growth, as owners of B-&-Bs know they will be working incredibly hard.

(ii) Weaknesses:

The greatest weakness is a revolving door of personnel. It's easy to view this as just another job. The work is hard. The pay is probably not going to be great at first. That weakens the resolve of workers to stay, and to grow into new roles. An entrepreneurial spirit isn't easy to create.

(iii) Opportunities:

Expansion into events and life-cams could potentially result in dramatic growth at the inn, something only possible with total buy-in from personnel. Buy-in and empowerment are not always compensated up front, but the success stories are plentiful enough that people get the concept of a start-up. In a real sense, MH offers "content" that can stream into people's lives, whether they are on-site, want to come, or just find the life-cams quirky and compelling. Staffers at one site can grow into managers or owners of added locations.

(iv) Threats:

Inability to thrive will mean not only no growth, but the risk of failure, which undermines worker commitment. Virtual every factor can be seen as working against MH's expansion. Where are the bodies? Where's your advertising budget? It's too cold. It's too hot. There's a B-&-B closer. The economy tanked. There's always going to be headwinds. But we can tack our way into the wind, if the workers are on board. An erosion in the good vibe from workers will make magic and transcendence impossible.

B. COMPETITION

(i) Strengths:

If workers are on board, the inn owners stay clear-headed about challenges and opportunities, and the corporation paces its growth, then our competition is not with other B-&-Bs in the area, but with the broader consumer marketplace and vagaries in the economy.

(ii) Weaknesses:

Other businesses aren't going to give up, just because someone won an essay contest, or give deals to vets. Competitors are just as good or better than MH, with modern facilities, better amenities and people who are just as committed – or more so – than are we. Even those businesses that work alongside us on regional festivals are doing so for their own purposes. So we'll always have competitors breathing down our neck.

(iii) Opportunities:

Regional cooperation over competition is the greatest opportunity for MH sites. Regional events convert our towns – with their collections of one-off B-&-Bs, each with small numbers of rooms – to instead be an idyllic location where all available rooms are filled through large-scale tourism. Taking inventory of rooms, eateries, recreational offerings, and shops, and then marketing them together makes MH towns prosper by putting aside competition. Festivals that begin as a Saturday-only event can become weekends, and then long weekends. People who visit in person, or virtually can be enticed with packages. The productions unit working with chambers of commerce on festivals formalizes cooperation.

(iv) Threats:

Competition is always a threat. It means we have to constantly stay on our toes, find new ways to serve customers, and show existing patrons that we treasure them, because there are always other places people can spend their money. Even cooperative efforts can be a double-edged sword, as we may bust our chops putting together festivals that other business may be do little toward, but will rub their hands with glee when the crowds come.

C. CUSTOMERS

(i) Strengths:

The initial MH will be an existing B-&-B, and will thus have longstanding clientele, many of whom return regularly. When people come, it is for happy reasons, and so the customer base is a smiling one. And as the inn converts from its former self to Monument House, many guests will see it as a place they want to continue supporting. It is a direct path to satisfy a customer – they say what they want, you give it to them. Rarely does one have the chance to provide such direct satisfaction in life. Customers are forgiving. They will let a small glitch go.

(ii) Weaknesses:

Customers are not fickle. They'll make a long drive, but they want their money to buy something truly amazing. Magic isn't easy to pull off, but if we get it wrong, we'll never see that guest again. If they feel slighted – even if they (or we) don't realize it – they'll never come back. If their experience was anything less than magical, they're gone for good.

(iii) Opportunities:

Frankly, growth opportunity with customers is boundless. The physical stock at the first inn will limit room stays, but we will maximize bookings and, in so doing, allow prices to rise. Same with the restaurant. Attention to quality and relevance to the modern consumer should allow us to fill chairs and build reputation. Festivals and events allow for food and liquor sales, cover charges and deepened loyalty. If we can reach the customers, and convince them that our place is worth the effort, they'll come. Do that consistently while we hunt for the right locations for growth, and the signature elements and vigorous events calendar will prompt many guests to try the other location. If we consistently offer the same high level of service and produce magic at each inn, then growth in our customer base should drive our growth.

(iv) Threats:

The last decade in America overturned the apple cart. Even highly-satisfied former customers faced the fears that all Americans experienced during the Great Recession. So threats to our customer base can be huge, like the economy tanking. Or the threat could be high gas prices, making a drive to the countryside unattractive.

D. LOCATION

(i) Strengths:

Each MH location will be located in beautiful countryside, in the woods, near the water, in a quaint small town where one can get lost in antique shopping, food and hotels, as they are on the road between here and there. The inns will be located on a main road, so even if snow piles up around us, the road in front of our building will be clear.

(ii) Weaknesses:

We're far away, even for many in New England. MH towns will be tiny, and thus limited in attractions. Outdoor life is great, but are customers going to put down their smart phones to row? Our restaurant will earn a great reputation, but is someone in NY or Boston or Montreal going to drive to our town for lobster?

(iii) Opportunities:

People want a place to go. If it is a few hours' drive and they know it to be safe and beautiful, they'll make the trek. And once someone is here, what else have they got to do? The water is a huge marketing asset, and each inn will have a Bicycle House, stocked with rowboats, canoes, kayaks, and paddle boards. Every season has something to offer. So between festivals and dances and movie nights and yoga and foliage and fun on the water, the content to pitch is all there.

(iv) Threats:

Foul weather keeps people away. Four- and five-dollar gas discourages long drives. Even when gas is reasonable, we are hours away from most big cities. People will make a five-hour drive to Las Vegas, but we ain't Las Vegas. And our size spotlights the converse side of tourism – namely, crowds and traffic – potentially souring people's experiences.

E. THE PHYSICAL STOCK

(i) Strengths:

The first inn will be in old, storied buildings, with thickly-wooded grounds, a prettied-up interior, with a modern kitchen, and extensive plumbing and electrical work.

(ii) Weaknesses:

The storied buildings will be as much as 200 years old. Even a resourceful handyman isn't enough to contend with catastrophic failure of a building. The first inn will have unimproved grounds which offer no center of energy, for weddings, or to read a novel while relaxing under the lilacs.

(iii) Opportunities:

The physical stock is where we separate ourselves from the competition. Building a gazebo and surrounding it with a hedge of lilacs creates a focus of energy in the garden. Expanding the fruit orchard, dropping a thousand bulbs into the soil, and building a greenhouse creates harvests. Creating a Lilac Trail on each site means that even in the depth of winter, guests will have a marked-&-graded ADA-accessible way to go into the forest. If MH can acquire land on the waterfront, we can construct a boathouse, and stock it with the rowboats, canoes, kayaks and paddle boards that start their life in the Bicycle House.

(iv) Threats:

The physical stock is so old that catastrophic failure is not an unreal threat. The pipes can burst. The roof can collapse. Inadequate electrical may chase away the modern customer. Guests may wonder on Day Two what else there is to do, after poking around. Constant attention will be required for upkeep, and extensive investment needed for expansion. The threats in this item are what most demand a hefty strategic reserve, deep insurance, and corporate partnership.

F. THE ECONOMY

(i) Strengths:

The rich are doing great. Customers able to afford high-end discretionary spending, like a B-&-B, have a lot of money, and so the "luxury sector" is doing well in the economy. While wages are

stagnant for much of the middle class, there is still enough widespread prosperity to support our sort of business, a sea change from just a few years ago. Recessions will come and go, but downturns like the world saw between 2008 and 2013 are atypical.

(ii) Weaknesses:

Vagaries in the economy hit you like a broom in the face. People feel pain, before economists say we are hurting, and so the drying-up of business in a downturn will happen quietly, at first, and we may not see it coming. Core inflation appears tamed, but the stagnant wages means many people are still necessarily tight with money. Factors beyond our control hit us in the pocketbook. Does a potential customer go on vacation? Or make a loan payment? Xers and Millenials are buckling under student loan debt so profound that economists worry about delays in people getting married and starting families, or buying a home. If growth is to occur, how do we bring Xers and Millenials to the countryside?

(iii) Opportunities:

Even in these still-hard times, people have enough money to drive somewhere for a magical time. Xers and Millenials have shown that they will spend big chunks of money on multi-day festivals, like South By Southwest or Coachella. If we can draw a crowd with music and food and the water, then that person is likely to show up again, with friends. And as they have a family, they'll bring their kids. Times remain challenging for millions of Americans, and so our opportunity is to create a whole range of price niches for people to come and enjoy themselves.

(iv) Threats:

The economy tanks again. People get scared, and hold on to every dollar. Higher taxes brought on by government dysfunction consume personal discretionary spending. A jobless recovery and a driving-down of worker pay by increased robotization of the workplace means fewer good jobs, lower overall wages across the economy, and lots of workers displaced. (Jobs moving overseas and robotization bode ill for all businesses in America, not just in the hospitality sector.)

G. CAPITAL AND CREDIT

(i) Strengths:

The Principal, while spotty on his credit history, has cleared his own personal debts, in part by cashing out his pension savings. Even while struggling in earlier years, the Principal stuck with the habits drilled into his head by mother, to pay bills first. The Principal can reach out to family, friends, and private capital, on the strength of an acquired asset, as someone who pays his debts, and with a clear-headed business plan. The Principal is highly capable of creating agreements upon which capital and credit will be based, for the initial Monument House location, and for subsequent capital and credit needed for growth planning.

(ii) Weaknesses:

On paper, the Principal is not a top credit customer. FICA scores will draw chuckles. He has money to speak of, and while he cashed out \$30,000 in pension savings, that went almost entirely to clearing debt.

(iii) Opportunities:

If the Principal can come to terms with Berkshire Hathaway, or another major property holder, on an operational or purchase agreement for the initial Monument House, then the Principal will be able to immediately put this business plan into place, serving as Innkeeper for the model inn and as CEO of the fledgling corporation. The operation of the initial inn and stabilization of cashflow so as to meet terms of any capital agreement are the first priorities, but all other dollars raised can be used for investment, strategic reserve, and growth planning. Since most investment dollars can be routed into the priorities listed in (5)(B), a return will begin with the 2016 season. Not only does most capital go directly to growth priorities, but the earned media will drive interest in ways that magnify the value of investments.

(iv) Threats:

The greatest threat is that nobody invests, and no property holder puts up real estate in the hands of the Principal. Investment at an inadequate level limits what can be done to such a degree that expansion into events and recreation is problematic, and the vibe of magic is just not possible to create.

5. ASSET ASSESSMENT

A. CHARACTERIZATIONS – *What is this thing?*

(i) Valuation:

This language is from the original iteration of this plan, when thinking focused on an asset offered through an essay contest. This block is included to give insight as to the thinking of the Principal:

“A range of the estimated value of the prize runs from the high-\$300,000s to the \$905,000 figure offered by contest organizers, with no attributed source of substantiation. Against these highly-conflicted numbers is the inability recently of the Innkeeper to secure a buyer, on a straight sale, in which the price was adjusted downward multiple times. Health issues are said to have prompted the offering, though no such details are needed. Suffice it to say that valuation is a matter for further examination, as the figure will determine opportunity for mortgage finance.”

(ii) Claims against asset:

In multiple accounts, the asset is presented as being mortgage-free, and with no existing tax debt.

(iii) Initial walk-through

What does it look like?

(iv) Fair Disclosure:

What does the outgoing owner state is wrong?

B. PERFORMANCE – *How’s it done?*

(i) Last 12 months:

As operated by the previous owner, the inn was open for hotel guests year-round, though numbers will show precipitous seasonal fluctuations, to reflect the intimacy of the New England winter.

Figures for the period of January 1st, 2014, through the most current available numbers:

CHART

(ii) Preceding 60 months

A five-year picture of activity at this bed-&-breakfast largely mirrors the slow-and-steady climb out of the terrible hole into which the economy fell during the Great Recession.

CHART

(iii) *During the Great Recession*

Looking back at years ten-through-six is the heart of the Great Recession, and shows the obvious pain suffered in the segment of the economy that relies upon discretionary spending.

CHART

(iv) *Prior to the Great Recession*

Performance during the 1990s/2000s, decades in which historic levels of discretionary spending rippled throughout the upper- and middle-classes – MH’s customer demographic.

CHART

C. LIABILITIES

(i) *Transfer:*

- (a) For tax purposes, valuation has been declared as \$X, by the local tax authorities.
- (b) Based on the stated valuation, the sum of \$Y is being assessed, as tax on the transfer of the asset. A payment in the amount of \$Z is due on Date.
- (c) Other costs relative to the transfer are...

(ii) *Immediate obligations*

- (a) Additional Taxes
- (b) Contracts, agreements, or promises
- (c) Fees
- (d) Utilities
- (e) Lawsuits & Judgments
- (f) Unpaid bills
- (g) Business shortfall
- (h) Personnel related

- (i) Shareholders, sponsors, or partners
- (iii) Debt
 - (a) Mortgage, liens
 - (b) Unsecured debt
 - (c) Govt Debt
 - (d) Shareholders, sponsors, or partners

D. INVESTMENT, DEBT, AND PARTNERSHIPS

(i) Need for capital

When the Principal wrote this business plan, he had been unemployed for six months, cleared his debts by cashing out pension contributions, exhausted all personal funds, and holds no reserve savings, or other investment capital.

The Principal will need to reach creative terms with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices on the acquisition of the first Monument House, and must immediately thereafter approach private capital, or institutional lenders to borrow, to cover start-up costs, and to then selectively target long-term investments.

(ii) Investment priorities

- (a) Immediately...

Franchise Model

- Any costs originating from property acquisition, and incorporation of Monument House.
- Design and installation of adjustable hardwood flooring that makes the barn suitable for yoga seminars, banquets, dances, weddings, and other life ceremonies. Flooring will be removable, so as to create storage niches below for banquet tables and chairs. The effect of a vast, unbroken sweep of highly-polished hardwood, dominated by historic timbers will be to create a reverential space that makes people gasp at its beauty and majesty. The design is meant to attract earned media, as well as the attention of architects and historians. The barn's majesty should be suited for feature pieces in *Architectural Digest* or *Smithsonian* magazines, as well as regional media.

- Internet infrastructure. Plans to extensively stream content will necessitate an intricate IT infrastructure, which will include multiple static and moveable cams, cabling, routers, a server, and software. All hotel rooms will be wifi. Flat screens fed by the cams and which a guest can plug their wireless device into will be installed throughout MH.
 - Kitchen and dining room upgrades to ensure it is professionally capable and telegenic. Also purchased will be high-end culinary specialty items, including juicers, gelato maker, cappuccino machine, flatware, table linen, and French coffee presses.
 - Tools, paint, hardware, wallpaper, and any other supplies needed for long-term restoration.
 - Contract-rate advance purchase of a comprehensive 2016 advertising plan, emphasizing local community newspapers across New England.
 - Advance payment for heating and cooking fuel, sufficient through calendar 2016.
 - A strategic reserve of one quarter of any borrowed capital, to assure adequate cashflow and on-time debt payments.
- (b) 1st Five Years...

Franchise Model

- Replacement of beds, comforters, and linen not up to par.
- A geothermal loop, to heat and cool all structures. Extensive plumbing work will also include insulation of all pipes, so as to minimize bursting in winter. The loop should reduce the need for heating fuel.
- Hedges of lilacs, an orchard of fruit trees, a thousand flower bulbs, and expansive plots for vegetable and flower gardens.
- Bicycle House, plus bicycles, rowboats, kayaks, a canoe, and paddleboards, and several hand-pulled trolleys for transport. This will eventually be supplemented by a Boathouse. The designer will be commissioned to also draw plans for a gazebo, greenhouse and ceremonial platform, each of which will be built in years 5 through 15.

Corporate

- In the first years – while establishing the franchise model – money will be spent related to adding inns to the MH orbit, and determining the best conceptual framework and contractual structure for franchises.

(c) 2nd Five Years...

Franchise Model

- Garden Gazebo, wrapped in lilacs, large enough for weddings and ceremonial events, and inviting for couples, book readers, and daydreamers.
- Greenhouse, for flowers and vegetables, and to double as a solarium.
- The start of the Lilac Trail, a marked-&-graded pathway through the thick woods on the property, accessible by foot or wheelchair. This will be cut by hand, at times using groups of veterans in a barn-raising spirit. The experience of creating the path is as important as its later enjoyment. Many guests will return with their kids to show them the path they helped build. Liability waivers and insurance must be iron-clad.
- A boathouse, and an easement that allows guests a clear trail to it. This will hold the rowboats, paddleboards, kayaks, and canoes that will start off living in the Bicycle House. This will likely entail the purchase of property.

Corporate

- Shared investment in signature features at added MH locations, using the existing plans for a bicycle house, gazebo and greenhouse. The corporation will share costs of the Lilac Trail at other sites, paying for the labor of vets, but that will be in the second decade.

(d) 2nd Decade...

By the second decade, we will move from a B-&-B with a busy events calendar, to become an environmentally sustainable resort, that leads the hospitality sector in our bond with veterans. What should be a loyal clientele will hopefully have grown economically so that room rates rise as we move into resort mode. The commitment to veteran discounts and comps remains.

Franchise Model

- A Ceremonial Platform in the forest, linked to the completed Lilac Trail, for weddings and other events in the woods, and constructed in the same barn-raising spirit as the trail.
- Creation of “MH Spa” features – hot tub, dry heat sauna, steam room, bodywork area.
- Possible addition of an additional residential structure to be moved onto the grounds, should the inn prove to be highly successful. An added structure could then be booked as a vacation house for large groups coming in for reunions, weddings, and other events, and sealed during the winter.

Corporate

- The corporation will share in the cost of paying vets to work on construction of signature features at other MH sites, with the goal that the first franchises complete the Lilac Trail (with Ceremonial Platform) by Earth Day of the 15th year. The spa features will be paid for by the individual locations, with corporate picking up the cost of marketing the added signature items (*participation may vary*).

(iii) Sources of capital

- (a) Owners
- (b) Private investors
- (c) Mortgage debt
- (d) Venture capital
- (e) Supplemental borrowing
- (f) Private Shares

(iv) Return on investment

- (a) Schedule of Debt
- (b) Fiscal Performance Expectations
- (c) Share value and dividends

(v) Partnerships

- (a) Life-Cams
- (b) LA Harbor College

6. BUDGETING

A. FISCAL YEAR – DEFINITION

The fiscal year shall run from January 1st to December 31st.

B. FY 2016 BUDGET – OUTFLOW

- (i) People
- (ii) Benefits
- (iii) Maintenance and supplies (hardware, paint, windex, linen, etc.)
- (iv) Equipment and décor (kitchenware, tools, IT infrastructure, wallpaper)
- (v) Food and beverages
- (vi) Heating and cooking fuel
- (vii) Transportation
- (viii) Taxes, fees, and licenses
- (ix) Memberships and subscriptions
- (x) Advertising, printing, postage, promotion, and contributions
- (xi) Utilities (power, phone, internet, water, sewage)
- (xii) Chef-in-Residency program (airfare, stipends, room and board)
- (xiii) Reserve, Savings and Investment Capital
- (xiv) Legal and professional services
- (xv) Pension funds
- (xvi) Debt service and dividends
- (xvii) Bonuses and profit-sharing
- (xix) Events and Festivals

(xix) Rowboats, canoes, kayaks, and bicycles

(xx) Insurance

(xxi) Return to Owners

C. FY 2016 BUDGET – INCOME

(i) Hotel

(ii) Restaurant

(iii) Products (Movies, adult, jarred goods, gift baskets)

(iv) Rentals

(v) Guest events

(vi) Moving Picture Mondays

(vii) Yoga in the Garden

(viii) Barn Dances

(ix) Midsummer

(x) High Summer

(xi) Autumn Harvest

(xii) Sit-Downs

(xiii) Life-cams

(xiv) Liquor and pharma-green

(xv) Investment and Borrowing

7. DOCUMENTATION AND ATTACHMENTS

A. FINANCIALS

- (i) MH tax filings
- (ii) MH financial statements
- (iii) Transfer documents
- (iv) Deed
- (v) Parcel map
- (vi) Characterization by government
- (vii) Other binding documents

B. MARKETING

- (i) Media

Huge marketing opportunities for the story of... *unemployed novelist sends off business plan to Warren Buffet, and together they convert a dream into Monument House.*

- (a) Releases

This release never went out, as the Principal did not win the Center Lovell Inn, but it gives a sense of how the Principal would pitch the story. Again, the release below was *speculative only*, written for a phone call that never came.

June 6, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 525 words

CONTACT: Janice Sage at (207) 925-1575

OWNER OF NEW ENGLAND B-&-B ANNOUNCES WINNING ESSAYIST

(LOVELL, ME.) – Two decades ago, Janice Sage wrote an essay that changed her life, and won for herself a country inn and restaurant, located on Maine’s western border with New Hampshire.

Martha Stewart Living, and countless others, praised Sage’s Center Lovell Inn, as one of the finest bed-&-breakfasts in New England.

When Sage wanted to hang up her keys, she opted to also hold an essay contest, to “pay it forward” and give someone else of humble means a chance to change their life, and win a thriving hospitality business.

Thousands sent their best 200 words – and a \$125 entry fee – explaining why they wanted to own and operate a country inn.

Today, Sage announced that Bill Orton, an unemployed novelist, living in Long Beach, California, will be the next lucky essayist to take up ownership of the 210-year-old mansion, which sits on 12 acres across from Maine’s Lake Kezar.

“My answer was ‘yes,’ no matter the details,” said Orton, following today’s phone call with Sage, in which she gave him the news that an independent panel had selected his essay from a pool of finalists that Sage had winnowed from the thousands of original submissions.

Orton urged fellow entrants to hold the numbered slip that Sage sent to each contestant, as he will redeem each for a free night’s stay, or dinner.

Why give away thousands of free room nights or meals as his first business decision?

“I believe in dreamers,” said Orton, who will travel to Maine later this month, to meet with Sage, the staff, and his new neighbors, and to sign papers transferring ownership.

The biggest priority, said the new owner, will be adjustable hardwood flooring for the property’s massive 38’-by-100’ barn, so it can be used for barn dances, yoga seminars, weddings, events, and banquets. Orton – a history graduate – promises any restoration will preserve the historical integrity of the barn, built during President George Washington’s second term in office.

Other long-term plans include sponsoring seasonal festivals, and adding a bicycle house, a gazebo, a fruit orchard, a greenhouse, and a walking trail through the property’s woods. Orton plans to spend 2015 cooking, greeting guests and learning the rhythm of the business, while he organizes the festivals, barn dances, yoga sessions, and a rowboat regatta for next year’s season.

Is Orton ready to go from southern California, to the life of running a New England inn?

“I’ll need warmer clothes, but I’m debt-free, unattached, and my daughter’s in college,” said Orton. “If there ever was a time to throw myself into a dream, this is it.”

What won it for Orton, 53, a former barista and farmers market director, whose writing background stems from day jobs as a political aide and PR guy?

Sage won’t say. The essays – and the collected fees – remain hers, as she plans her retirement.

“I’ll miss those mountains and the people,” said Sage, who spent 22 years as Innkeeper, “but I’m glad that I could make someone else’s dream come true.”

CENTER LOVELL INN is located on Maine’s State Route 5, across from Lake Kezar. For more information about the contest or inn, visit www.wincenterlovellinn.com.

End

(b) Media list

In preparation for the call that never came, the Principal built a database of travel editors for the following outlets:

<i>AARP Magazine</i>	<i>Columbus Dispatch</i>	<i>La Opinión</i>
<i>Akron Beacon Journal</i>	<i>Conway Daily Sun</i>	<i>Ladies’ Home Journal</i>
<i>Albany Times Union</i>	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	<i>Lancaster Intelligencer Journal</i>
<i>Albuquerque Journal</i>	<i>New York Daily News</i>	<i>Las Vegas Review-Journal</i>
<i>Allentown Morning Call</i>	<i>Dallas Morning News</i>	<i>Legion Magazine</i>
<i>American Legion Magazine</i>	<i>Daytona Beach News-Journal</i>	<i>Lexington Herald Leader</i>
<i>AP Augusta</i>	<i>Deadspin</i>	<i>Lincoln Journal Star</i>
<i>AP Boston</i>	<i>Denver Post</i>	<i>Long Beach Press-Telegram</i>
<i>AP Portland</i>	<i>Des Moines Register</i>	<i>Los Angeles Times</i>
<i>Arizona Republic</i>	<i>Deseret News</i>	<i>Louisville Courier-Journal</i>
<i>Arkansas Democrat-Gazette</i>	<i>Detroit Free Press</i>	<i>Mashable</i>
<i>Arlington Hghts Daily Herald</i>	<i>Detroit News</i>	<i>Memphis Commercial Appeal</i>
<i>Asbury Park Press</i>	<i>El Paso Times</i>	<i>Miami Herald</i>
<i>Atlanta Journal-Constitution</i>	<i>Family Circle</i>	<i>Milwaukee Journal Sentinel</i>
<i>Austin American-Statesman</i>	<i>Fort Worth Star-Telegram</i>	<i>Minneapolis Star Tribune</i>
<i>Baltimore Sun</i>	<i>Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel</i>	<i>Mobile Press-Register</i>
<i>Bangor Daily News</i>	<i>Fresno Bee</i>	<i>Nashville Tennessean</i>
<i>Baton Rouge Advocate</i>	<i>Gawker</i>	<i>New Castle News Journal</i>
<i>Bergen County Record</i>	<i>Good Housekeeping</i>	<i>New Haven Register</i>
<i>Birmingham News</i>	<i>Hackensack Record</i>	<i>New Orleans Times-Picayune</i>
<i>Boston Globe</i>	<i>Hampton Rds Virginian-Pilot</i>	<i>New York Post</i>
<i>Boston Herald</i>	<i>Hartford Courant</i>	<i>New York Times</i>
<i>Buffalo News</i>	<i>Honolulu Star-Advertiser</i>	<i>Newport News Daily Press</i>
<i>BuzzFeed</i>	<i>Houston Chronicle</i>	<i>Newsday</i>
<i>Charleston Post and Courier</i>	<i>Huffington Post</i>	<i>Northwest Indiana Times</i>
<i>Charlotte Observer</i>	<i>Hunterdon County Democrat</i>	<i>Oakland Press</i>
<i>Chattanooga Times Free Press</i>	<i>Indianapolis Star</i>	<i>Omaha World-Herald</i>
<i>Chicago Sun-Times</i>	<i>Jacksonville Times-Union</i>	<i>Orange County Register</i>
<i>Chicago Tribune</i>	<i>Jezebel</i>	<i>Oregonian</i>
<i>Cincinnati Enquirer</i>	<i>Kansas City Star</i>	<i>Oprah Magazine</i>
<i>Cleveland Plain Dealer</i>	<i>Knoxville News Sentinel</i>	<i>Orlando Sentinel</i>
<i>Colorado Springs Gazette</i>	<i>LA Daily News</i>	<i>Palm Beach Post</i>

<i>People</i>	<i>Salt Lake Tribune</i>	<i>The Evening Journal</i>
<i>Philadelphia Inquirer</i>	<i>San Antonio Express-News</i>	<i>The Oklahoman</i>
<i>Pittsburgh Post-Gazette</i>	<i>San Diego Union-Tribune</i>	<i>Trenton Times</i>
<i>Pittsburgh Tribune-Review</i>	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>	<i>Tulsa World</i>
<i>Providence Journal</i>	<i>San Jose Mercury News</i>	<i>USA Today</i>
<i>Raleigh News & Observer</i>	<i>Sarasota Herald-Tribune</i>	<i>Ventura County Star</i>
<i>Reader's Digest</i>	<i>Seattle Times</i>	<i>Wall Street Journal</i>
<i>Redbook</i>	<i>South Jersey Times</i>	<i>Warren Reporter</i>
<i>Refinery29</i>	<i>Spokane Spokesman-Review</i>	<i>Washington Post</i>
<i>Richmond Times-Dispatch</i>	<i>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</i>	<i>White Plains Journal News</i>
<i>Riverside Press-Enterprise</i>	<i>St. Paul Pioneer Press</i>	<i>Wichita Eagle</i>
<i>Roanoke Times</i>	<i>Tacoma News Tribune</i>	<i>Wisconsin State Journal</i>
<i>Rochester Democrat & Chronicle</i>	<i>Tampa Bay Times</i>	<i>Woman's Day</i>
<i>Rockford Register Times</i>	<i>Tampa Tribune</i>	<i>Worcester Telegram and Gazette</i>
<i>Sacramento Bee</i>	<i>Taste of Home</i>	
	<i>Toledo Blade</i>	

(c) Earned media

The creation story should yield scores of pieces across the nation, priming interest in the opening of the first site. If Mr. Buffet attends the ribbon-cutting, then coverage of the dedication and the follow-up features would likely number 100+ pieces in the first year. Eyeballs drive minds.

(ii) Advertising

(a) Modular half-page tabloid ad

Prepared by the Principal as a brainstorming tool to refine his essay for the CLI contest, on the thinking of, "Okay, if I win, what will I be marketing?"

(iii) Printwork

(a) Printable flyer for website

The artwork is under the masthead and footer created for CLI, but because the piece is modular, minor tweaks to the logo art makes this ad and all printwork easily customized to the individual inns, retaining the look and swapping the picture in the right corner, and the addressing info. Potential guests will print this at home, put it on a tack-board or the refrigerator, and stare at it for months, before deciding to visit.

(b) Dance series tickets

The Dance Card is the entry into the monthly barn dances, and will be sequentially numbered, with stubs, for fraud avoidance. Meant to invoke an earlier time.

(c) Comprehensive calendar print piece

An oversized piece on glossy card stock, meant as a comprehensive annual schedule and mailer. The events on the calendar would be replicated across the chain, allowing our production unit to organize multiple events at once, and to centralize printwork creation.

(iv) Website and social media

Content will be sited at www.MonumentHouse.org. The dot com version is in use by a couple in Ohio, who perhaps could be later enticed to surrender the domain. The Principal also owns the two “life cam” domains – www.TheKitchenCam.com and www.BarnDanceCam.com.

C. PEOPLE

(i) Resumes and biographies

(a) Bill Orton, Principal

A resume is attached, but briefly...

In his teens...

Worked fast food, for a hot air balloonist, and as a janitor.

In his 20s...

Worked his way through college as a typesetter, and later was a newspaper editor, paste-up artist, art director, and operator of two coffeehouses.

In his 30s...

Staff aide to four members of the lower house of the California legislature, an office manager, and website programmer.

In his 40s...

Public relations professional covering southern California for an international client, and deputy to a state Senator.

In his 50s...

Published first novel, at age 50. Has written two more since. For purposes of disclosure, Berkshire Hathaway is mentioned several times in the third book, as a lien-holder on a character's home.

(ii) Credit history

Available upon request.

(iii) 200-word essay

The final iteration of an essay entered to win the Center Lovell Inn, located in Lovell, ME.

Prompt:

Why I would like to own and operate a Country Inn.

Essay:

Running a country inn fulfills dreams of prospering through my love of people, and my food background, and offers this history graduate the thrill of investing for the long future.

I've decades dreamed of my own restaurant. Feeding people is what makes me happiest. I can create and follow menus, cook and bake, clean ahead, make gelato, keep coffee flowing, prepare food economically, and present with a splash. I've operated two coffeehouses, run a farmers market, and owned a PR/typesetting business. To prepare for Day One, I've created a media list, advertisements, fliers, and a business plan.

I am self-reliant, resourceful, and hard-working. I like people, and am a talented conversationalist. I'll preserve CLI's historical integrity, while upgrading the barn for dances, ceremonies, banquets, and yoga seminar rentals. As a novelist, I treasure solitude. Organizing rowboat regattas, barn dances and seasonal festivals, enjoying lilacs and a certainty in the order of things outshine winter's intimidation.

I crave the work of turning dreams into bounty. I will commit myself completely to running an incredible hospitality operation. I'll preserve CLI's history, while positioning it for a thriving future. I'll glow while helping guests at my own inn to find and experience life.

(iv) References

Betty Karnette, *State Assemblymember* (ret.) & *State Senator* (ret.), Long Beach, CA

Sally Havice, *State Assemblymember* (ret.), Cerritos, CA

Raymond P. Atwood, Jr., *President*, Atwood, Holsten, Brown, Deaver & Spier Law Firm, P.C., L.L.O., Lincoln, NE

Joeann Valle, *Chamber of Commerce president*, Harbor City, CA

Louis Dominguez, *Teacher* (ret.), decorated Vietnam Veteran, US Army, San Pedro, CA

SSgt **Mark Woodhead**, *Veteran*, US Air Force (1999 to 2005), Lycoming County, PA