

LEISURE & HOSPITALITY INTERNATIONAL

Your destination, event & lifestyle magazine

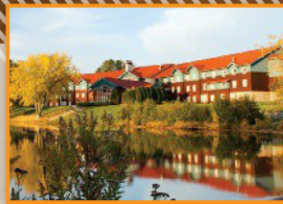
Experience the **NEW ORANGE**

The Orange County Convention Center continues to evolve into one of the world's premier facilities. **PAGE 14**



TACO CASA

Taco Casa experiences rapid growth throughout Texas while staying true to its founding principles. **Page 42**



LAKE OF THE TORCHES RESORT CASINO

Lake of the Torches Resort Casino has developed the right formula to thrive. **Page 62**

PLUS



SUCCESSION PLANS

President and owner Ken Weber (middle) now runs the business with his sons, Brian (left) and Michael (right).



Family Loyalty

WEBER'S RESTAURANT AND HOTEL DEFIES THE ODDS, MAINTAINING A STRONG SUCCESSION PLAN FOR THE PAST 80 YEARS.

My father, Herman Weber, began his career in the hospitality industry in the 1930s as a dishwasher at a local restaurant. He had planned to use the money he saved to buy a car, but instead leased a bankrupt diner that had come onto the market. At only 25 years old, Weber was in business for himself.

More than 75 years later, my father's legacy lives on at Weber's Restaurant and Hotel in Ann Arbor, Mich., the establishment my parents founded in 1937. It was first an eatery before a hotel, which was recently ranked among the best hotels in the country by CollegeRank.net and the world by Expedia.com. Today, I serve as president, and two of my sons, Michael and Brian Weber, are vice presidents of the hotel and restaurant, respectively.

My sister and I growing up heard about the daily happenings at Weber's while we sat around the family dinner table every night. We were at the restaurant constantly, getting to know the staff and later working there ourselves. As I grew up and started my own family, I knew my future was the family business, as did my sons.

After graduating from Michigan State University's School of Hospitality Business, I felt that for myself – and later for Michael and Brian – that it was imperative we be comfortable in the industry outside of Weber's. Each one of

us individually ventured out of Michigan – from Chicago to California – to work in top-notch restaurant and hospitality establishments. Doing so provided us with tremendous educational opportunities and varying views of the industry.

Working outside of Weber's reaffirmed our pride in the company and its brand philosophy of always being a high-quality, forward-moving landmark destination in Ann Arbor. The culture at Weber's is focused on ensuring our employees are successful and happy in what they do. Doing so has provided consistency for us in the market, and made each member of our family and our employees proud to be a part of the company.

One thing in particular we have done for our employees is profit-sharing. This was something my father instituted in the 1960s at a time when this was unheard of in the industry. He gave people who were earning average salaries the opportunity to stay with Weber's, build a career and understand that when they retired, they would have benefits saved up in addition to social security. As a result, we have a strong employee base, many of whom have been with the company for decades.

IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY

Nowadays, family operated hotels are fewer and far between. The industry has moved more to real estate investment

