



**By Jay Rathburn**

*Publisher, Resort Management*

# The Resort Operators' Role

Millions of dollars are spent each year by States, communities, resort associations, travel bureaus, travel agents, and others to attract the public to America's vacation lure, to seek adventure, to see the natural beauties and scenic wonders, to relax and play among congenial people, in clean, comfortable resort accommodations with diversified recreational facilities.

It is the resort owner who must expend his energies and his investment to supply a "product" which gives the vacationist value for his vacation expenditures. It is the resort owner who is responsible for the physical comforts and pleasures, the peace of mind, and all the intimate details that make up an enjoyable vacation.

The resort operator is comparable to the housewife expecting company. He must consider order, neatness, cleanliness, hospitality, food, comfort, and entertainment. He must be prepared as a businessman and as an individual to fulfill the role of the good host and hostess. He must so treat his guests that they will want to return for another vacation. Fundamentally, American resorts hold the key to the progress of the travel industry.

As such an important and vital factor in the travel industry, the resort owners and operators merit the cooperative effort of the travel industry as a whole. They must be helped to do a good job. Their importance should be acknowledged by the Nation, the States, the areas, and the communities. They must be given tangible evidence of the fact that they are doing a big job in the industry. They must be bolstered in their operational expansions. Their continued operations at high levels of efficiency, with constant improvement, are important to the economic welfare of their respective areas. Resort owners are contributing to the economic and social development of the Nation.

The resort owners and operators are progressive, alert businessmen. They know that the postwar picture of the vacationist accepting any accommodations just to fish

and hunt and enjoy a brief respite from daily cares has changed. They know that people have returned to normal living and have developed more discriminating tastes; that vacationists are "shopping around" and expect more for their vacation dollars.

To meet these new demands, resort owners have carried out extensive resort modernization and rebuilding programs. They are keeping pace with the trends in vacation travel and are equipping their facilities to meet the new public demands.

The trend in the industry is to eliminate the shabby, ill-equipped resorts, and those whose rates are inconsistent with quality and service offered. They are slowly but surely diminishing from the American scene.

It is the well-operated resort, with rates reasonably adjusted to the services offered, which will continue to contribute to the continued success of the travel industry.

Economic conditions, of course, enter into the picture. And, in this vein, rates should be considered. A point to be made is that resort operation, as a business, provides far more than just a place to sleep or eat. A resort operator must invest his money, give his efforts, thoughts, business acumen, personality, and executive ability to provide the accommodations and entertainment which vacationists seek. With such a contribution he is entitled to a fair return on his investment and his efforts. It is only reasonable then that his rates be such that he is compensated in some measure for these expenditures. Many resorts must be maintained year around to provide 3- to 5-month accommodations in season. Of necessity, the rates must be compatible with operating costs.

The resort operators' role in the travel industry is a vital one. Peace, freedom, and true hospitality are his stock in trade and are as welcome to the traveler-vacationists as the scenic wonders in his community and its recreational resources.