

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Golden Gate Restaurant Association Announces New Programs and Services

New Leadership Brings Enhanced Member Benefits and New Association Events

SAN FRANCISCO (October 26, 2004) -- Kevin Westlye, the recently appointed executive director of the Golden Gate Restaurant Association (GGRA), has teamed with Ken Zankel, this year's president of the GGRA Board of Directors, to initiate programs that will expand GGRA member benefits, improve member and community communications and launch exciting new association events.

"When I joined the GGRA four months ago, we set an ambitious goal of revitalizing the group by expanding our member benefits and raising our profile through events and outreach," said Westlye. "I am thrilled that we have made so much progress in such a short time. By enriching our benefits to members and raising our visibility, we hope to strengthen the entire Bay Area restaurant community."

Westlye and Zankel's accomplishments to date include:

- **New Financial Savings.** Reduced credit card processing rate and discounted payroll service for members lower overhead for restaurant owners, which in turn, benefits consumers by keeping meal prices down.
- **Improved Communication.** A new phone system allows callers direct access to GGRA executive office staff, which promotes the quick resolution of both member and consumer inquiries.
- **Expanded Education Programs.** GGRA members will now have access to a series of seminars on topics of interest to the industry. Beginning in the first quarter of 2005, GGRA will present a seminar on sustainable and organic farming and product choices as well as one on messaging through internal and external marketing for restaurants.
- **Toast of the Town.** GGRA hosted the first ever "Toast of the Town" event in the newly renovated Ferry Building. More than 500 people enjoyed food and cocktails provided by 25 Bay Area restaurants and vendors. The event honored Mayor Gavin Newsom and Past GGRA President Mariann Costello.

"The restaurant industry is a vital part of the Bay Area economy. We are proud to represent one of the most celebrated communities of dining establishments in the world," noted Zankel. "The GGRA is committed to helping the entrepreneurs who have built this community not only survive, but thrive. These new initiatives support that commitment."

In addition to the new benefits and programs listed above, Westlye and the Board of Directors are working to offer members discounts on property, casualty and liability insurance; employment practices insurance; music licensing; advertising with regional publications; and soda systems equipment, installation, and syrup. Further, Westlye is forging a relationship with a well-known national law firm to provide members with a special labor law consultation program. Finally, all members of the GGRA will be

included in the 2005 Dining Guide, which will be printed and distributed by *Where Magazine*, helping area restaurants connect with out-of-town visitors and hotel concierges.

The Golden Gate Restaurant Association is also launching a new Website to serve its members and the public with information on the industry and a searchable San Francisco Dining Guide. The Website will include a new format with user-friendly architecture and new content.

Westlye joined the GGRA after spending more than 34 years in the Bay Area hospitality and restaurant industry, ranging from large and small organizations, such as the Kimpton Group to the Franciscan Restaurant. He has also served as president of the Golden Gate Restaurant Association and been a member of the Board of Directors of the San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau, on the Fisherman's Wharf Merchants Association Board of Governors, and the Tenderloin Task Force. He was the Muni Citizen of the year in 1994.

Zankel is the owner of the Grove-Chestnut and the Grove-Fillmore. His fellow Board members include chefs, restaurant owners and managers from small successful companies such as Pat Kuleto Restaurants to family owned operations such as Tia Margarita.

About the Golden Gate Restaurant Association: The GGRA is a collective non-profit trade organization that promotes, extends and protects the interests of the restaurant industry in the San Francisco Bay Area. Founded in 1936, the GGRA is a central source of unbiased information and effective representation covering all aspects of the restaurant industry. Today the GGRA includes more than 700 members and is governed by a Board of Directors elected from the membership at large.

Membership is open to the entire Bay Area food service industry, including restaurants, catering operations, bars and taverns. Associate memberships are available for supplier organizations. The GGRA continues to meet the increasing need for industry unification and representation through a network of communication and activity and welcomes input and assistance from industry members to ensure that the San Francisco Bay Area restaurant industry continues to flourish.

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