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**JAMAICA'S JOSEF FORSTMAYR, ROUND HILL HOTEL AND VILLAS,  
HONORED AS 2007 CARIBBEAN HOTELIER OF THE YEAR**

MIAMI, Florida (June 19, 2007) – Joseph Forstmayr, managing director of the Round Hill Hotels and Villas, in Montego Bay, Jamaica, was recognized by his peers with the 2007 Golden Conch Award as Caribbean Hotelier of the Year, during a special Gala Dinner closing the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Conference 2007, in Miami. Each year, a winner is chosen who exemplifies the highest standards of leadership and commitment to the continued success of the Caribbean hotel industry. “Josef is a man who knows what it means to lead, to aim for nothing short of excellence in hospitality, and to give back to the community generously - clearly deserving of this award,” said Peter Odle, President of CHA and a winner of the Caribbean Hotelier of the Year Award in 2000.

The annual tribute is sponsored by Yesawich, Pepperdine, Brown & Russell and American Express.

Forstmayr, an Austrian native, treated himself to a vacation in Jamaica after long hours spent at Tourism School. As he relaxed at the Coconut Grove Resort, he fell in love with the island son, and restless, soon began helping around the resort. The manager at the time, Gille Byles, saw his potential and invited him to lease the Tryall Hotel, which had been closed for 5 years; through hard work, Forstmayr brought the resort back to life. In between seasons, he pursued graduate studies in tourism at Cornell University.

In 1989, opportunity beckoned to bring him to his current position at Round Hill Hotel and Villas. The 100-acre resort was built in the early '50s on a former sugar and coconut plantation and catered over the years to celebrities of the caliber Clark Gable, Alfred Hitchcock, John and Jacqueline Kennedy, and Ralph Lauren.

Josef Forstmayr positioned Round Hill as a five-star hotel, which he credits to exceptional staff training and motivation.

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Forstmayr's ongoing human resource agenda includes a "Train the Trainer Program," through which department heads and supervisors are trained and given the tools to continue and maintain the process with their respective teams of personnel. As complement, the hotel keeps a training calendar year-round with external trainers, which allows for third-party objectivity.

Hand in hand with training and development, Josef Forstmayr recognizes the value of providing staff members with opportunities and incentives. As a result, he has introduced the Round Hill/Hocking degree program and created the Round Hill Cooperative Credit Union for all employees.

Proof of the effectiveness of his philosophy are Round Hill's many prestigious awards, which include "Best Caribbean Hotel of the Year" by Classic Custom Vacations; World Travel Awards' "Best Villas" for six consecutive years; triple A's "Four Diamond Award of Excellence;" the Brass Key Award for "Most Romantic Resort," and Conde Nast Traveler's one of the "Top Ten Resort Spas in the Americas."

According to him, "the awards reaffirm our philosophy of providing our visitors with the best Jamaican experience on one hand and stylish and very focused, personalized attention on the other."

Beyond the boundaries of the Round Hill Hotel and Villas, Josef Forstmayr supports the wellbeing of the surrounding community. Among other efforts, Round Hill Hotel and Villas is a regular sponsor of fundraising events, such as the annual traditional Sugar Cane Festival, to benefit the Associated Hanover Charities - the largest charitable organization in Western Jamaica, which brings together more than 65 schools, churches, and other organizations in the Hanover parish. Round Hill Hotel and Villas raises over \$120,000.00 annually to benefit the local community through Hanover Charities.

Josef Forstmayr is also involved actively in Jamaica's tourism industry at large, serving consecutive terms as President of the Jamaica Hotel & Tourism Association (JHTA) and earning the Jamaica Hotelier of the Year award twice, in 1993 and again in 1996. Under his leadership, he helped enact an insurance plan for small hotels and their staff. Using the concept of "pooling," the JHTA offers health and life insurance benefits at much lower rates than would be available to individuals. His work was recognized in 2005 by the Jamaican government with the "Order of Distinction" for his outstanding contribution to Jamaican tourism.

He is an active, outspoken member of the CHA Board of Directors in representation of Jamaica. He has been quoted saying: "Culturally I am Austrian, but my loyalty and love is for Jamaica."

### **A Tradition of Excellence**

"The Caribbean Hotelier of the Year Award" was established by the late Jim Pepperdine, of Yesawich, Pepperdine, Brown and Russell (YPB&R), to recognize those hoteliers who are working within CHA to help promote industry growth. The Golden Conch honors individuals who have maintained a successful hotel operation and participated in CHA, while showing dedication to both their local hotel and tourism industry.

Forstmayr joins the ranks of those outstanding executives whose accomplishments and leadership foster new standards in hospitality in the Caribbean. Previous recipients of the 'Hotelier of the Year Award' are: Ike Cohen, Aruba (1978); Howard Hulford, Antigua (1979); George Myers, Bahamas (1980); Heinz E.W. Simonitsch, Jamaica (1981); Jag Mehta, Jamaica (1982); Osmund Kelsick, Antigua (19883); Lorette Resch, St. Thomas, USVI (1984); Richard Williams, Barbados (1985); Hugh Andrews, Puerto Rico (1986); Ken Kennedy, Jamaica (1987); Dick and Joyce Doumeng, St. Thomas, USVI (1988); Alfred Taylor, Barbados (1989); John Jefferis, Bermuda (1990); Sir Royston Hopkin KCMG, Grenada (1991); Butch Stewart, Jamaica (1992); Betty Sperber, St. Croix, USVI (1993); John Issa, Jamaica (1994); Ralph Taylor, Barbados (1995); Ed Malone, Aruba (1996); Stephen Sawyer, Bahamas (1997); Frank Rainieri, Dominican Republic (1998); William Aguiton, Trinidad (1999); Peter Odle, Barbados (2000); Robert Sherman, Antigua (2001); Ewald Biemans, Aruba (2002); Berthia Parle, MBE, St. Lucia (2003); Robert Dubourcq, St. Martin (2004); Eustace Guishard, Anguilla (2005); and Anthony Bowen, St. Lucia (2006).

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