

Salem Hotel is Grand & Green

By Beth Casper

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The Grand Hotel is a fixture in downtown Salem but nothing about this business' green practices is fixed.

That's because Director of Sales Kristi Reed and a staff of 45 people are constantly striving to do more to reduce The Grand Hotel's environmental footprint.

The Grand Hotel earned its EarthWISE certification in 2008. The EarthWISE program is a free business environmental assistance program of Marion County. EarthWISE staff helps businesses recycle, save energy, reduce waste and much more. The Grand Hotel is one of more than 150 businesses to earn this certification.

Since then, all of the hotel's practices and products have continued to be scrutinized with an eye for the eco-friendly.

They are almost done upgrading to the most energy efficient lighting available—LEDs. They are making this change despite having saved \$800 a month for the last 3 years by switching to more efficient lighting in each of the 193 sleeping rooms, the lobby

and hallways.

"LEDs last over 10 years," Reed said. "We expect to see an immediate cost savings in our utilities but also with the money being spent on bulbs."

Lighting is only one way The Grand Hotel illuminates its green practices. The hotel's recycling programs are some of the best in the industry.

The Grand Hotel was the first hotel in Oregon and the only one in Salem to participate



Grand Hotel Lobby

in Clean the World's soap recycling program. Used soap and shampoo is collected by hotel staff and shipped to Clean the World's Las Vegas facility, where it is purified and made into new soap. The new soap is delivered to domestic homeless shelters and impoverished countries.

By participating in this nonprofit's program, the Grand Hotel eliminates a huge volume of waste. For 2014 alone, The Grand Hotel collected 1,219 pounds of shampoo, soap and lotion. Clean the World created more than 3,800 bars and recycled 375 pounds of plastic (from the shampoo and lotion containers).

Housekeeping staff also purchases all of their environmentally friendly cleaners in bulk buckets that can refill smaller bottles. This eliminates the waste associated with ordering 10 one-gallon jugs of cleaner that have to be trashed after cleaning a handful of rooms.

The items left for trash in rooms often find their way to Kristi's desk, where she finds a way to reuse it instead of sending it to the landfill. She's donated plastic bottle caps, wine corks and bottle caps to the Straub Environmental Center for student projects.

Lost-and-found clothing items that remain unclaimed are donated to the Marion County Reentry Initiative which helps recently incarcerated individuals and their families with clothes and other basic necessities as they start a new chapter in their lives.

Another recent change has saved on rolls and rolls of paper towels and stacks of napkins. In the break room, those paper prod-



Grand Hotel General Manager Scott Snyder next to Director of Sales Kristi Reed

ucts were ditched for red shop towels that are washed and reused.

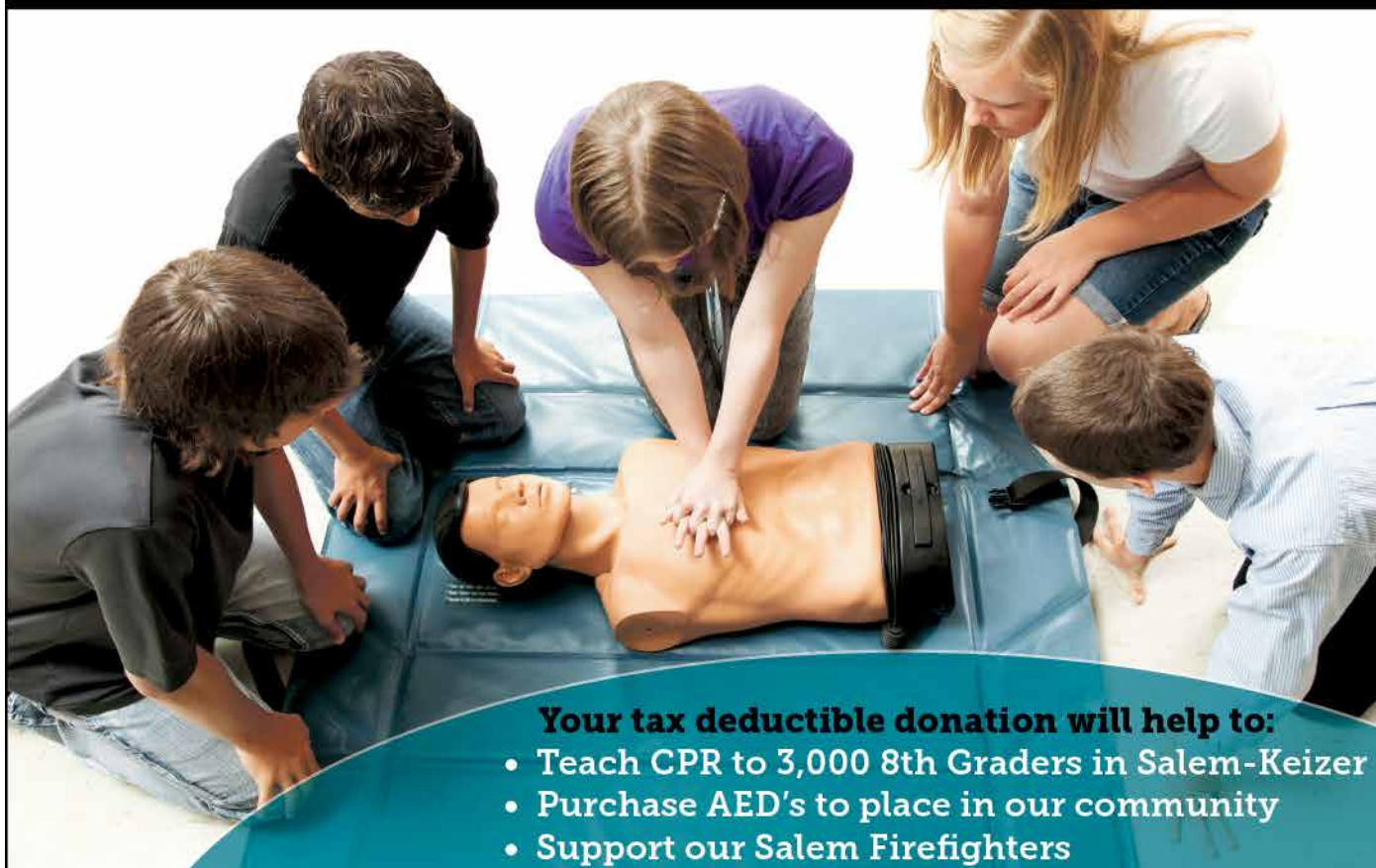
"We save everything," Reed said. "We are as creative as possible with items we find and with our own processes. We are always striving to provide the best quality to the guests as well as being the most cost efficient and environmentally friendly. We are proud of what we've accomplished and we are always looking for other ways to improve."

For more information about the EarthWISE program, go to www.mcEarthWISE.net or call 503-365-3188.

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