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GENERAL MANAGER/COO PROFILE: THUNDERBIRD COUNTRY CLUB RANCHO MIRAGE, CA

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THUNDERBIRD COUNTRY CLUB

Thunderbird Country Club is a modern golf, tennis and country club experience in all aspects, with a fascinating history. The Club was established in 1951 and had the mystique of having no role model after which to pattern itself. It was the first, the original, and consequently was itself THE role model for the scores of Coachella Valley country clubs to follow.

Early on, golf-playing Hollywood flocked with glee to Thunderbird. Bing Crosby and Bob Hope each purchased lots edging the golf course. Upon opening, more celebrity couples purchased homes and brought their cachet with them. Desi Arnaz and Lucille Ball; baseball star Ralph Kiner and his tennis star wife Nancy Chaffee; and composer Hoagy Carmichael were among the charter homeowners.

However, it wasn't just the entertainment contingent that firmly imprinted Thunderbird with prestige. Rosters of members during the club's first decade are studded with names of corporate presidents, political leaders and major manufacturers; active and retired. For every Clark Gable and Randolph Scott, there was a Leonard Firestone. Golf, of course, was and is today the soul of the country club.

Often it is mere moments that in a second or two impact the history of an organization. One of those moments was when President Dwight D. Eisenhower began his friendship and association with Thunderbird Country Club. President Eisenhower (Ike to his Thunderbird friends) first visited the Club in 1954. Ike was just the beginning of Thunderbird's friendship with 7 American Presidents three choosing to become members.

The club's first pro-member tournament soon developed into the Bob Hope Desert Classic, the granddaddy of all celebrity charity tournaments in the valley. In 1955, the prestigious Ryder Cup that features the very top competitors between teams of American and British pros was hosted by Thunderbird Country Club. After two days of what "Golf Life" described as "par-smashing golf," America won with Sam Snead as its star.

Another Thunderbird first was the development of the motorized golf cart, now as familiar on courses as grass. Eddie Susalla, assistant to the club's first pro Jimmy Hines, observed motorized vehicles being used as transportation for the handicapped in Long Beach. Susalla got together with the "autoettes" manufacturer, and the upshot was a motorized golf buggy. Now golfers around the world scoot about in these slick electric conveyances, but Thunderbird members were first.

The club also has a sentimental and proprietary interest in another vehicle. Ernest Breech, a Thunderbird member, was chairman of Ford Motor Company, and was deeply involved in the creation of a new sports car to compete with the recently released Chevrolet Corvette. Breech asked the club's permission to name the new model with its sleek and sporty design after the club. Permission was granted and in 1955 the first Ford Thunderbird rolled off the assembly line.

Thunderbird today has grown and matured without losing its youthful exuberance. But the club is not about names, politics, importance, money, government, or business; it's about setting standards, establishing lasting friendships, and the power and sentiment of tradition. Thunderbird Country Club distinguishes itself with a proud tradition of uncompromising quality, service, and friendly atmosphere for which the very finest private member-owned clubs in the United States are known.

Amenities

Thunderbird's beautifully maintained Golf Course is a source of pride for the membership along with a 48,000 square foot clubhouse and 6,600 square foot Fitness Center. The Club also has a dynamic and socially engaging Tennis & Pickleball program. Members and their guests also enjoy the opportunity to stay at the Club's Cottages with room service and daily housekeeping.

The Club was recently selected as a Platinum Club of America®

The Club is entering four years of capital improvements to the clubhouse and that also includes a complete rebuilding of the Club's 12 Cottages.

THUNDERBIRD COUNTRY CLUB BY THE NUMBERS:

- 400 Members, all categories
- \$10M Gross volume
- \$6.5M Annual dues volume
- \$1.7M F&B volume
- 120 FTE; 20 PT

Thunderbird Country Club website: www.thunderbirdcc.org

GENERAL MANAGER/COO JOB DESCRIPTION (GM/COO)

The General Manager is the Club's senior-most staff executive, serving as its Chief Operating Officer and reports to the President of the Club. The GM/COO is expected to provide professional leadership and a positive upbeat image for the Club ensuring that members enjoy premier service, a quality product and an exciting calendar of events. He or She is responsible for the success of all aspects of the Club goals and activities and is expected to devote full time and attention to operations, planning and staff performance and coordination.

The GM/COO is to be the quintessential hospitality professional. In collaboration with the Board, Member Committees and Senior Staff is able to define and execute plans to ensure that Thunderbird maintains its reputation as one of the premier country clubs in the desert, as well as highly regarded in the country. The GM/COO must be a sophisticated, highly respected and respectful leader who epitomizes the understated, fraternal culture of Thunderbird.

Having full operational responsibility for the Club, the GM/COO will be responsible and accountable to develop, monitor and manage the Annual Operating Plan and Budget and Capital Strategy managing appropriate analysis tools. Of primary importance is ensuring high levels of membership delight, and ensuring that member communications and services are continually evaluated and enhanced.

DIRECT REPORTS:

- Controller
- Events Coordinator
- Executive Chef
- Fitness Director
- Food & Beverage Manager
- Front Office Manager
- Golf Course Superintendent
- Head Golf Professional
- Head Tennis Professional
- Maintenance Manager
- Membership Director

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

The Club is looking for a “take-charge” person who will have a genuine passion for service excellence in all areas of operation. The candidate will have 5-7 years of progressive General Manager/COO experience at a similar full-service quality country club community.

The GM/COO must have a natural and intuitive style of engagement, visibility, approachability and respectful communication and must ensure appropriate staff acquisition, retention, orientation, training and evaluation.

The new General Manager/COO will possess exceptional financial and budgeting acumen. Demonstrated skills in food and beverage operations and quality are essential. The candidate must have a proven record of strong operational management skills and will have an impeccable career path ensuring the highest standards of operation and attention to detail.

The General Manager/COO will oversee all departments and must have solid knowledge of every area of club operations. The candidate will be a dedicated team leader and will provide leadership and guidance to an established and loyal group of department heads and employees.

The ideal candidate will have proven skills in Membership Marketing and family programming as the Club has a successful program in place that will not only need to be maintained but could even be enhanced.

This individual will embrace traditional values and foster a spirit of respect and decency among the employees and members. He/She must have excellent marketing skills and a proven record of membership recruitment, satisfaction and interaction.

He/She must possess the ability to work well with the Board and Committees providing visionary leadership and sound guidance. Integrity, visibility, creativity and energy are of the utmost importance to this membership, along with outstanding interpersonal and communication skills.

Capital Improvement, Construction and Strategic Planning skills are considered very valuable.

The candidate should be active and well respected in his or her local and national CMAA organization.

This position is available immediately.

EDUCATION

A Degree is highly desirable, preferably in Hospitality Management or Business. In lieu of the degree, substantial private club or hospitality experience will be considered.

Credentials from the hospitality industry, recognizing on-going involvement and commitment to lifelong personal and professional development are desired.

SALARY & BENEFITS

Salary is open and commensurate with qualifications and experience. The club, along with the typical CMAA benefits, offers an excellent bonus and benefit package.

INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO APPLY

Please upload your resume and cover letter (in that order) using the link below. You should have your documents fully prepared to be attached when prompted for them during the online application process.

Your letter should be addressed to **Mr. Randolph Heartfield, President and Search Chairman**, and clearly articulate why you want to be considered for this position at this stage of your career and why Thunderbird Country Club and the Rancho Mirage area will likely be a “fit” for you, your family and the Club if selected.

IMPORTANT: Save your resume and letter in the following manner:

“Last Name, First Name Resume” &

“Last Name, First Name Cover Letter”

(These documents should be in Word or PDF format)

Note: Once you complete the application process for this search, you are not able to go back in and add additional documents.

For directions on how to upload your resume and cover letter [visit this page](#).

[Click here](#) to upload your resume and cover letter.

If you have any questions please email Holly Weiss: holly@kkandw.com

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