



## **HOW C.A.R.E. STARTED**

BY: Kathleen Gallardo

*In 1983, I was working in the contract office of Avenue Plaza. An owner called and said that he wanted out of his contract with us because he had promised his son that they would take him to see Mickey Mouse and the exchange company had not been able to get him an exchange there. After asking if this was the only reason he wanted out of his contract, I asked him if I could get him an exchange week in Kissimmee, would that make him happy with his purchase.*

*I called several resorts and asked if they would trade me a week at their property and I would give them a week at Avenue Plaza--thus making my first exchange. This started happening more and more and each of us developed a network of resorts we traded reservations back and forth with. C.A.R.E. was started by a group of us who thought wouldn't it be fun to meet with the people we were talking with day to day.*

*Gary Carter working with Costa Vida Resort in Puerto Vallarta said he had enough space to host us all. Sixteen people attended this meeting. The reason my developer sent me was and I quote "Kathleen has been working hard and wants to go on a vacation at my expense. But since she has been doing such a good job and I could deduct it as a business expense I said yes."*

*Avenue Plaza hosted the next meeting in New Orleans. We had 64 people attend this meeting and this is where C.A.R.E. was actually named and the organization started.*

*The next meeting was hosted by SunBay Resort in Hot Springs, Arkansas. This is the first meeting we allowed the major exchange companies to attend. We actually had people leave the conference when they heard that the exchange companies were going to be there because we were all doing these exchanges "behind the back" of our exchange companies and some developers were afraid that if caught doing this horrible thing the exchange company might pull their affiliation.*

*I was C.A.R.E.'s first President serving from 1985 until 1990. Nancy Meyer of Vacation Brokers served as our next President and this is when we decided to join ARDA and have a booth at their conventions. We snowballed Michelle Huber from American Resorts into making the directory we all enjoy. Nancy was followed as President by Dave Stoenner of Trading Places. Dave was followed by Terry Wilson of Donita's Vacations Unlimited. We then elected Melanie Gring for two terms as President.*