March 2007

Fellow Orange County Chapter Members,

As I sit on a crowded jet to finish this letter I started a few months ago, I realized we have completed the first half of the chapter year. There have been a number of changes this year: three new executive board members and a new association management service (Gail Stewart & Associates) being the most significant. There has already been a number of successes we can be proud of: The annual golf tournament headed up by Tony Soriano and his fabulous committee, the CFM Exam Review Class coordinated by Betty Friedrichs and instructed by Bill Conley, and we continue to have outstanding monthly programs put together by Trish Secor, Helen Vesperman and their hard working committee. I would like to thank our past president Herb Chatterton for leading us through another successful year and two former executive board members Trish Secor and Bill Leas, who, over the past few years, have helped make this chapter strong and positively positioned for the future. And last but certainly not least, to an outstanding group of associate members who continue to donate their time and sponsorship dollars to ensure the success of this chapter.

Why is our chapter successful? One of the main reasons is participation and we need continued participation to keep things going. IFMA is a volunteer organization and it relies on its members to run the chapter. How do you get the most out of IFMA membership? Participation, get involved to whatever level your life can accommodate. Join a committee: from a leadership position to just making a few phone calls a month, every volunteer is important and needed. When was the last time you attended a chapter function? Attend a chapter meeting, study group or event, or sponsor a monthly meeting. You will find it fun and enlightening. Invest in your career. Things are changing constantly in our field and if you don't want to be the one "let go" when there is a merger or downsizing, or you want to be promoted when there is an opportunity, you need to invest in yourself throughout your career. IFMA provides these opportunities specifically for the facility management field and the contacts you make and the things you learn can provide you career success as well as future opportunities.

Facility Managers, how many IFMA-Orange County members do you contract with? They are a great source of knowledge and they have a vested interest in seeing you succeed. They also have a lot to lose, since most chapter FM's talk to check references or ask for recommendations. Associate members who aren't reliable, competitive, and honest don't last long in this chapter. Support your associate members by giving them an opportunity when you have a project or service out to bid. I encourage you to attend events like the Winterfaire and WESTFAC to see what these companies offer without the high pressure sales environment.

A membership survey was recently e-mailed to all members with a low response rate. We need to get your input on the chapter. We will be basing our strategic planning session on this survey, so we can plan to provide what our membership wants for programs, education, tours, ect. Please take this opportunity to help shape the direction of our chapter, it only takes 10 minutes.

Please click on the link included with this communication to be directed to the survey site. If you did take the time to complete the survey already, thank you, your responses have been documented and you don't need to take the survey again.

In closing, I look forward to a successful second half of the chapter year as there are a strong list of program events planned to entice you to come out and see what is going on and at the same time have some fun with us. We would love for you to join us for a tour, good food, great people and a little education and knowledge to make you grow in your field.

Sincerely,

Mike Darger, CFM
IFMA OC Chapter President
Director, Corporate & Restaurant Facilities
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