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President's Message by Jean Kass

Summer 2008

CFMA President's message 6-30-08

It is an exciting time to be part of the Southeast Louisiana Chapter of CFMA and an exciting time to be your President. For the past few years, our Chapter has been the recipient of many national awards for its excellence. It is through the able leadership of our past presidents and the participation of our members that we have been able to achieve such awards. This year presents another opportunity for our members to learn, network with peers and participate in community events with the added benefit of affording our Chapter national recognition.



The Board of Directors and the Committees will meet over the next couple months to review the strategic plan and update its goals for the upcoming year. There are five standing committees: Membership, Program, Public Relations, State Conference and Website. During the planning process, each committee will review its goals to make sure they are effective

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Sign up Now for the Sixth Annual LA Joint Conference, August 21st & 22nd, 2008

The annual joint conference registration is currently underway and we encourage you to attend!

You will enjoy two days of quality speakers and timely topics as well as the opportunity to earn up to 10 continuing professional education credits. Even if CPEs aren't a requirement for you, the focus on accounting and areas of interest in the construction industry are unmatched! We guarantee you will find value and ways to do your job better.

The conference begins Thursday afternoon, August 21st with a "Project Management Seminar" followed by a cocktail reception hosted by Enterprise. It picks up again Friday morning with a full line up including a lunch sponsored by Paperless Environments.

The Loews Hotel located at 300 Poydras Street, Downtown New Orleans is the site this year. Be sure to take advantage of the preferred rate of \$139.00 by mentioning the "Sixth Annual Joint LA CFMA Conference Block." The discounted rate is offered until July 21st.



A detailed schedule was emailed earlier this month along with a registration form. If you would like additional information or have any questions, please contact Heath Wahden at 504-569-3134 or HeathW@barriere.com.

Get to Know - Beth Johnson, F. H. Myers Construction

Every newsletter we will highlight one of our local chapter members so we can "Get to Know" them.

Name: Beth Johnson

Family: Husband of 20 years, one son, two dogs, a cat and a goldfish!

Grew up: New Orleans, LA

First paying job: GMAC, worked 30 years and retired in 2002 as Operations Manager of the Commercial Lending Department in Dallas, TX

Currently Employed: F. H. Myers Construction Corporation—Controller

Join CFMA Why: Availability of educational resources and

financial analysis tools along with local business association

Like Most: Knowledge database on website with links to additional resources

Assistance: Same as above

Personal Interests: Gardening, interior decorating, beach-going, movies

Person that has had the most influence on your life: My Dad who was one of the most honest, loyal and generous individuals I have ever known. He taught me the importance of respect, dignity, independence and a good work ethic.

Favorite Quote: "When you start expecting, you quit deserving" - Unknown Author

What you might have missed

Our **March** meeting was held at Benedict's on the Northshore. A panel of member CEOs and CFOs (Barriere, Insulations and Gallo) interacted with attendees in sharing "What CEOs expect of CFOs. This was our highest attended meeting of the year and we especially want to thank David Branton and Jack Biven with Insualtions for their willingness to participate on such a short notice.

Jeff Matney of Innovative Captive Strategies conducted a "Captive 101" power point presentation at New City Grill for our **April** meeting.

Our **May** featured speaker was Janet Speyrer of UNO. She presented "Local Economic Outlook - Issues of the Moment," at Austin's in Metairie.

Rina Tikia, Tikia Consulting, used power point slides to present, "Health Care Update—Sick and Sicker," for our **June** meeting held at The Red Maple on the Westbank.

May 17th—May 21st – **2008 Annual Conference & Exhibition**, Orlando, Florida.

If you were unable to attend, contact Christina Chifci (cchifci@laporte.com) to obtain a copy of the presentations. (We don't want you to have to rely on this column to see what you might have missed, so don't miss out...attend the meetings!)



Member News

Brian Cooney, Barriere Construction Co., LLC, was a featured speaker at CFMA's 2008 Annual Conference & Exhibition in Orlando on May 17 - 21, 2008. He presented a class on "Equipment Data Collection Techniques."

Our Chapter appreciates Brian's involvement at the National Level—Thank you, Brian!

The SELA Chapter took home two awards from the National Conference in Orlando: The Chairman's Excellence Award and Communications/Public Relations Award (56 - 90 Members).



Ideas include special recognition for member companies, promotions, achievements, unique projects, etc. This is a newsletter for our members...to keep our members informed and involved in the construction industry, so submit your information!

Contact Information



For membership information contact Jerry Larriviere at 504-482-1146 or jlarriviere@frischhertz.com or join online at www.cfma.org

2008 Board of Directors

- **President**—Jean Kass, jkass@kassbros.com
- **Vice President**—Heath Wahden, heathw@barriere.com
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- **Program**—Melanie Stern, mstern@ctl-inc.com
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 - Frank Cestero—Walton Construction
 - Gene Chauff—Gallo Mechanical
 - Christina Chifichi—Laporte, Sehr, Romig & Hand
 - Kathy Gootee—Gootee Construction
 - Jerry Larriviere—Frischhertz Electric
 - Ed Methe—Gibbs Construction
 - Pam Tucker—Cory, Tucker & Larowe
 - Don Wheat—Rebowe & Company

Consider volunteering for a committee or a leadership position in your local chapter or CFMA National. Member participation is always appreciated!

Welcome new members!

Our local membership continues to change and we've recently added the following new members...please be sure to welcome them to the SELA Chapter the next time you talk with them!

The following are new 2008 members. Make sure to introduce yourself to them at the next meeting.

- Thad Akers, Griner Drilling Service, joined 3/18/08
- Jay Greiner, CPA, Durr Heavy Construction, joined 4/24/08

- Candace Hoffpauir, CPA. Citadel Builders, joined 3/3/08
- Beth Johnson, F. H. Myers Construction, joined 5/7/08
- Michael Owens, Willis of LA, joined 5/12/08
- Pamela Wesley, H. Rocker Electric, 3/18/08

The addition of these members brings us to 74 members strong.

Member Companies

Aparicio, Walker & Seling, Inc.
Baker Ready Mix
Barriere Construction Co., LLC
C.F. Bean, LLC
B & G Crane Service, Inc.
Boh Bros. Construction Co., LLC
Bowen, Miclette, & Britt of LA
Brice Building Company, LLC

Thanks to all our
member companies
for their participation
in and support of
CFMA

Caterpillar Financial Services
Chubb Surety
Citadel Builders, LLC
Cory, Tucker & Larrowe, Inc.
Cycle Construction Co., Inc.
Denton-James, LLC
Donahue Favret Contractors, Inc.
E.C. Durr Heavy Equipment, Inc.
Ericksen, Kentrel, Canton, Laporte
Wallace C. Drennan, Inc.
Ellis Construction, Inc.
Ellsworth Corporation
Enterprise Fleet Management



Ericksen, Kentrel, Canton, Laporte
Pamela C. Flucke, CPA, LLC
Frischhertz Electric Co., Inc.
Arthur J. Gallagher of LA, Inc.
Gallo Mechanical, LLC
Gibbs Construction, Inc.
Gootee Construction, Inc.
Ryan Gootee General Contractors
Griner Drilling Service, Inc.
Guaranty Savings Bank
Gulf Industries, Inc.
Hard Rock Construction, Inc.
Hartford Bond
Insulations, Inc.
Intrepid Enterprises, Inc.
JaRoy Construction, Inc.
Kass Brothers, Inc.
King & Company, L..P.
KPMG, LLP

LaPorte, Sehrt, Romig & Hand
LeGlue & Co., CPAs
MCC Group, LLC
F.H. Myers Construction
M.R. Pittman Group, LLC
Pontchartrain Materials Corp., LLC
Postlethwaite & Netterville
Rebowe & Company, CPAs
H. Rocker Electric Company, Inc.
Roof Technologies, Inc.
Shields, Mott, Lund, LLP
Simon, Peragine, Smith & Redfearn
Southern Synergy, LLC
Byron E. Talbot Contractor, Inc.
Tikia Consulting Group, Inc.
Travelers
Walton Construction Co., LLC
Wegmann - Dazet & Co., CPAs
Willis of Louisiana, Inc.
Carl E. Woodward, Inc.
Zurich North America Surety

If you have a suggestion for a new member, be sure to invite them to a meeting as a guest or contact a board member and we'll make sure they get prospective member information to them!

Peter Schwartz Named as New CEO of CFMA

After a comprehensive search, the CFMA Succession Committee is proud to announce that Peter W. Schwartz has been unanimously selected as the new C.E.O. of the Construction Financial Management Association. Peter brings to CFMA his 25+ years of experience in leading and growing not-for-profit organizations. Peter also brings to CFMA and ICCIFP an entrepreneurial spirit, as well as strong financial, strategic planning, and governance acumen. Quoting Steve Tenney, a member of the Succession Committee, "Peter Schwartz has the experience, passion, and commitment to continue the tradition of quality leadership for our Association."

Below is a brief synopsis of Peter's background:

From 2001 to May 2008, served as Chief Executive Officer of the Home Builders Association of Greater Chicago, with 2,100 members, a staff of 14, and a budget of \$4.2 million.

From 1997-2000, served as President and Chief Executive Officer of Raybourn Group International (Chicago) Management Co., a management firm for not-for-profits.

From 1995-1997, served as Executive Vice President of the National Apartment Association, with 26,000 members, 157 state and local chapters, and a staff of approximately 30.

From 1982-1995, served as Executive Vice President of the American Supply Association, managing a staff of 25 and \$3.5 million in association assets, representing the plumbing, heating, cooling, and piping distribution industries.

Peter, his wife, and their children are relocating to the Princeton area. Peter will join us in Orlando and officially begin his leadership role at CFMA after the Conference. In addition, Peter will become a non-voting Board Member of ICCIFP.

The process was best summarized by Kevin Schlueter, who said, "This was the most strategic, cohesive group of CFMA leaders, but with significant diversity of perspective and opinion, working on a single, complex, and critical task, with nothing but the greatest and most visionary interests of CFMA and ICCIFP in mind. Of all of the leadership opportunities and chances to serve that I have had in the last two decades, this has been the most gratifying, because I can see the collective vision in our decision-making process and its results. We are very proud of our work on behalf of our membership, and, most importantly, to have created the opportunity that now allows Peter to lead CFMA into our future!"

Committees:

Finance (Co-Chair), Executive (Co-Chair), Leadership Development (Co-Chair), and Strategic Planning (Co-Chair)

Peter can be reached at 609-452-8000, ext. 223

Please be sure to introduce yourself to Peter and welcome him to CFMA.



Send your ideas and submissions to Editor, Jill Tucker at jtucker@ctl-inc.com or President, Christina Chiffici at cchiffici@laporte.com

President's message...continued

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and valuable to the success of the committee and ultimately the chapter.

There is a lot of work and planning that takes place on the committee level as the committees are responsible for much of what happens throughout the year.

The State Conference Committee has already planned the Sixth Annual Louisiana Joint CFMA Conference, which will take place in New Orleans on Thursday, August 21st and Friday, August 22nd. Once again, the committee has been successful in providing timely topics with first-rate speakers; please check your email for a copy of the brochure. I would encourage everyone to attend this event.

The Program Committee will meet during the summer months to plan the meeting topics and select speakers for the upcoming program year, which will run from September 2008 through June 2009. If there are any topics you would like to see covered, please contact Melanie Stern at mstern@ctl-inc.com and keep on the lookout for the new agenda.

As you can see, we have a lot to look forward to this year. The Board of Directors and the committees will continue working hard to ensure our chapter another great year. Please take advantage of the opportunities to enhance your knowledge and network with your peers—the opportunity begins in August at the Joint State Conference!



Cutting Costs with Preventive Maintenance



"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." And, when it comes to cutting costs with preventive maintenance for a company's fleet of vehicles, this expression has even more significance. From taking the time to monitor levels and condition of transmission fluid, washer fluid, brake fluid and coolant levels to checking the pressure and condition of a vehicle's tires, being diligent about preventive maintenance upfront can help avoid more costly repairs and loss of productivity due to down time.

One way to implement a preventive maintenance program is to follow the manufacturer's recommended preventive maintenance schedule. However, since there can be substantial variations in each manufacturer's schedule, it is important to continually check the owner's manual for individual vehicles.

Some companies make their drivers responsible for remembering and scheduling their own oil and filter changes and other routine maintenance work. Unfortunately, they may forget or postpone it for too long, resulting in more costly repairs. Alternatively, some drivers feel they're helping the company by changing their own oil or performing other

routine maintenance, but this also can be counterproductive because failure to complete and maintain detailed records of regularly scheduled maintenance can often end up compromising the vehicle's warranty.

Based on extensive experience, Enterprise Fleet Management details the categories for cost savings that proper preventive maintenance can have on a business' fleet operations. Among them:

- Cutting expenses by preventing big ticket repairs.
- Extending a vehicle's service life and improving its trade-in value.
- Reducing downtime and the risk of an employee having to delay or cancel a sales call or delivery.
- Ensuring conformity to U.S. Department of Transportation and other requisite inspections.
- Providing a maintenance history and cost analysis report for each vehicle.
- Improving fuel efficiency and enabling older models to run on regular unleaded for a longer period of time – thereby providing a double fuel savings.
- Improving driver morale, and reducing driver's concerns about the vehicle's condition and reliability.

Cutting Costs with Preventive Maintenance...continued

While there certainly are additional considerations, the bottom line is that the cost-saving benefits of preventive maintenance are so widespread that they're often difficult to fully measure.

Structuring a Preventive Maintenance Program

There are many ways to structure a preventive maintenance program to suit an individual company's budget and needs, including those that have medium-size fleets. One of the most cost-effective ways is to outsource to a professional fleet management company that specializes in serving companies with similar size fleets.

To help maximize savings, a professional fleet management company may use a service interval guide that considers the optimal timing for preventive maintenance to stay within warranties for all makes and models. Their expertise may also help direct drivers take advantage of opportunities to combine service with the replacement of various components that may be covered by warranty, to further reduce costs.

A fleet management company can also be a watchdog. For example, if a repair shop recommends new spark plugs for a vehicle with 60,000 miles, the fleet service company will question the shop about why the tune up is needed. Unless there is a drivability problem, spark plugs in most vehicles are good for 100,000 miles.

In addition to overseeing and authorizing service and repairs, maintaining good records, and consolidating invoices, a professional fleet management company may have the technical expertise to negotiate better prices on maintenance and repairs, facilitate out of warranty assistance claims, and secure available rebates. Often, this negotiating ability can mean that you can avoid paying for unnecessary repairs or those that may be already covered by warranty.

- Jay de la Houssaye, Area Sales Manager for Enterprise Fleet Management/Louisiana

"Point me to Orlando"

AND THE WINNER IS...Melanie Stern!

Melanie earned six chances to win free registration for the national conference plus a \$500 travel allowance by attending various CFMA meetings and events.

Melanie said, "When my number was pulled I was shocked and thrilled...I never win anything!"

The "Point me to Orlando" contest successfully increased involvement of existing members, gained new members, and stressed the benefits of the CFMA National Conference.

Melanie enjoyed quality speakers, topics and over 75 exhibitors. She chose from over 50 sessions for the opportunity to earn up to 36 continuing education credits. Melanie also joined the festivities at the luau/water show at Sea World sponsored by Zurich.

