



Copper State Ledger

Valley of the Sun Chapter

Summer Edition

Summer Edition

July 2009

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from the President . . .

Hello again, summer is officially here. As I attempt to write this we are having 110+ degree temperatures. Once again residents of the Valley are looking for a cool place to escape to on any given weekend. Just a few months ago we had another very successful CFMA national conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. Once again, there were outstanding choices of classes to attend for three days and an opportunity to talk to people from all over the country. About 25 Valley of the Sun members attended. We were also able to have a little fun and saw an outstanding show. Next year's conference is in Hawaii, so make your plans now to attend.

In June our local chapter put on a one-day seminar, Contractors Strategic Boot Camp. It was held at the Phoenix Airport Marriott, which was a great place to spend the day and learn

about the current state of contracting locally. Not much of the news was good, but it's important to keep our members up to date on what's happening around us. I hope I don't sound like a broken record, but this is how we continue to add value for our members, by continuing to have opportunities for them to educate themselves and make each of us more valuable to our organizations. (I realize I just dated myself since a certain portion of our organization has never seen a record.)

As I said earlier, at our June seminar, not much of the forecast was good. It's no secret that these are tough times and the bottom is not here yet. In times like these, I think CFMA can be even more valuable to our members. It's relatively easy to be a manager during the good times we had for at least a decade prior to when residential contracting went



Tom Lawless

bad in 07. Now the challenge is to truly add value and leadership to our organization.

This is where CFMA becomes a valuable asset. Our various committees are a great opportunity to get involved and make the Valley of the Sun Chapter a better and more valuable organization. We have been a great chapter for many years, but our challenge is to keep it fresh. That's where we need your help. We need all of you to join a committee and get involved; we need new and fresh ideas. I would like to challenge all of you who are not currently involved to change that.

Stay cool this summer and continue to lead your organizations.

Mission Statement

The Valley of the Sun Chapter of the Construction Financial Management Association (CFMA) is a broad-based organization of professionals committed to serving

the construction industry.

We are dedicated to member service by providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and a source of educational programs directed to

their specific needs.

We strive to invest in our community through involvement in industry-related issues and charitable endeavors.



Program Schedule

CFMA VOS Programs

August 20, Employee Free Choice Act: What it means and how employers can prepare for new union activity, Dona Nutini, Polsinelli Shughart

September 17
New President, New Congress, New Employment, New Challenges, Julie Pace, Ballard Spahr

October 15, monthly lunch

October 21, CFMA VOS 2009 Annual Golf Tournament

November 19, monthly lunch

December 10, Holiday Charity Event

CFMA VOS August Lunch Meeting Topic

CFMA VOS meets monthly, usually on the third Thursday of the month. Lunches are held at the Doubletree Guest Suites, 320 North 44th Street, Phoenix.

The August meeting will focus on the Employee Free Choice Act: What it means and how employers can prepare for new union activity...

You've got questions – we've got answers. The EFCA is one of the pressing issues being generated by our legislators, and it is making its way through Capitol Hill.

The proposed legislation would dramatically change the collective bargaining process – from the very basics of union organizing to the methods allowed for employee

elections and balloting.

Your VOS Legislative Committee is watching its progress for us. You can learn much more and ask questions at the next VOS CFMA luncheon on August 20th. The guest speaker will be Dona Nutini from Polsinelli Shughart. See you there!

CFMA Valley of the Sun Officers, Directors, and Committee Chairs

Officers

President, Tom Lawless,
Pulice Construction

Vice Pres., Kris Roe
McCarthy Building Cos.

Secretary, Diedre Aldous,
Haydon Building Corp

Treasurer, Helen Spencer,
Johnson Carlier

Past Pres., Michelle Giesen
Wespac Construction

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Jim Bracy
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Hagen Business Systems

Tony Hakes
CBIZ & Mayer Hoffman McCann

Ken Kellaney
National Bank of Arizona

Chelie Lacrosse
Smith-Manus

Dave Miller
Jokake

Gina Nelson
HireResolutions

Lynne Pace
Wespac Construction

Jeff Robertson
AAA Landscape

Leanne Scheub
SNK Development

Committee Chairs

Budget, Helen Spencer

Career Services, Greg Gross

Database, Cindy Lee

Education, Marj Weber, Lynne Pace

Construction Exec of Year, Tony Hakes, Jim Bracy

Golf, Jared Asay, Moni LaLonde

Legislative, David James

Membership, Keith Bieber, Annette Johnson

Newsletter, Russ Kimberlin, Lisa Autino

Programs, Bob Cummings, Debbie Ludington

Salary Survey, R. Colletti

Scholarship, Leanne Scheub

Succession Plan, Lisa Autino

VOS Leaders

Close Encounters of the “Vegas” Kind

by David James, FNF Construction, Inc.

Hooo, Brother . . . do CFMAers know how to: Put on excellent programs/Partay/Network/Partay/Educate the blue blazes out of you/Partay/Exhaust you . . .

Any more, sessions begin on Saturday, continue through Wednesday . . . Jeez, if I had wanted to work that hard, I'd have stayed at my job!

Not only has the time frame exploded, but so has the course offerings: from half-day sessions on cash management, to hour long crash courses on leadership – and everything in between! Course offerings included learning tracks on risk management, HR, technology, accounting & finance, and alternatives for specialty and heavy/highway members. Something for everyone! Why, there was even the CCIFP overview course for those wise ones wishing to become a CCIFP! The general sessions were not as “feel good” as they have been in years past – rather provided more practical insights to weather these turbulent times. Me, I am a TRIANGLE, and proud of it (those of you who were there know exactly what this means)! If you are a CIRCLE – you have already passed this article along to 20 friends. If you are a SQUARE – you have already started circling any typos or linguistic errors in the article. If you are a SQUIGGLE – you have no clue what I am talking about.

Sunday, as is customary,

was highlighted by the annual board meeting - - attended by Tom Lawless (he had to be there), and John Corcoran (he always goes) and our very own nominee for incoming chair of the ICCIFP, Marj Weber (GO Marj!). Tom almost fell asleep, but didn't; John almost stayed silent, but didn't; Marj almost didn't get elected (meeting snafu), but DID!

Sunday evening, just following Marj's inaugural parade as new ICCIFP chair (complete with half naked “slaves” – John, put the toga back on and keep fanning our new ICCIFP chair with palm fronds . . .), the welcome reception got underway out by the main pool at Caesars. Was a great time to greet fellow Valley of the Sun attendees, reacquaint with other CFMA friends from across the country and watch the Yoga Dudes doing all sorts of weird contortions on little pedestals around the pool.

Monday was work. . work. . work. . . from class to class; from exhibitor to exhibitor; annual luncheon; non-stop learning and networking - - - exhausting!

A very special Monday evening event sent many of us to the Beatles Circ de Soleil “Love” show next door at the Mirage . . . what a show! I felt like I was young again and was transported back to the 60's/70's - long hair(yes, real HAIR), bell bottoms, peace, love . . . until the show ended and I got up from my seat and my back and legs had stiffened

up. I scratched the skin on my head - - and all of a sudden, I was back in 2009 – so I went and had an adult beverage! Just following the show was a fund raiser for the ICCIFP, during which I learned:

- ⇒No, the cast was not going to make an appearance
- ⇒No, they don't need any 55+ Circ de Soleil performers
- ⇒Yes, CFMA has some dedicated (almost fanatical) Beatle fans
- ⇒No, even if a fanatical fan – it does not mean you can sing the tunes (sorry, Marj)

Tuesday started off bright and early (for some of us) . . . with the 18,448th Annual Showcase Awards Breakfast. Valley of the Sun chapter was honored to receive the Chairman's Excellence Award and a Showcase presentation. (Editors note: time to “pick it up” and have VOS Chapter take center stage at the 18,449th breakfast program!) The breakfast was entertaining as always, and featured a star studded cast; including “High Plains Drifter” (a.k.a. John Corcoran) who looked a bit like a recycled Poncho Villa . . . after escaping from some Mexican prison.

Tuesday evening found several of the local members enjoying one another at the Palm restaurant . . . and some folks were actually admitting to playing hooky from class sessions (amazing what a glass of wine or two will do). But since I promised not to snitch on Kris Roe, I won't . . .

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What happened in Vegas is reported in the Copper State Ledger!

Consider participating
on the Membership
Committee

Mysteries of Membership Committee Revealed!

by Myrna Membrila, DB Data, Inc.

Who ensures the Valley of the Sun CFMA Chapter remains fresh and full of eager faces? Just who will be able to pump up the current membership number of 292 into the 300's? That's right. The Membership Committee can and will and does. It's all them baby!

During their June 9, 2009 meeting, the same barrier kept coming up. What can they do to punch through the very real economic barrier so many are unable or unwilling to leap? People are cutting corners and one of those corners appears to be their VOS CFMA memberships. One 20-year-member says he just can't financially swing it this year. Another

says maybe next year, thanks for calling.

That is the challenge they dearly want to overcome. Right now, the Membership Committee is trying something new. **Idea cards.** You will find them on your table at the luncheons. Jot down your thoughts and at the end of the lunch your idea may just win a raffle prize. The prizes will vary but getting something for free is ALWAYS fabulous, no? Other thoughts include asking members for referrals and introductions, then getting them engaged as soon as possible. Remember, members who make referrals get one free pass to a lunch!

Co-Chair Keith Bieber reported his research indicates the economy is by far the main reason many are not renewing their membership. Another is that some do not perceive the value of what they receive in return for their local dues.

Over a quick lunch, the group of eight sat inside a spacious conference room at Lovitt & Touché, enjoying a lovely view looking past the Light Rail and south into Tempe. All collectively scratch their heads wondering what more can be done to grow the membership. Hmmm. Think, think, think.



Congratulations to Michelle Giesen, VOS Immediate Past President, and her husband, Tom, on the arrival of Lukas, born June 5th, at 5:18 p.m., weighing in at 8 pounds, 6 ounces, and 21 inches long. We look forward to receiving his VOS membership application in a few years.

More on
Vegas . . .

Vegas . . . continued from page 3

During the evening at the Palm I witnessed:

- ◆ True confessions (Kris, I know you felt better after your confession)
- ◆ Elvis in the bathroom . . . yes, he is still among us; and is the restroom attendant at the Palm!
- ◆ Some guy running into the bathroom upchucking (I gave Elvis a \$5 tip as I left and said he would be really earning this tonight!) . . . pretty gross
- ◆ A patron who had a heart attack and was taken out by paramedics (I never heard

the result – hoping and praying she was OK)
Only in Vegas . . .

Wednesday was back to class again, trying to take advantage of more great course offerings, making sure not to miss any topic that I wanted/needed in order to perform at my peak (no comments!) . . . but soon the realization set in: THIS WAS OUR LAST DAY . . .

So then came the sadness and the tears . . .

* So sad the conference was over (I love to learn stuff . . .)

- ☹ So sad 25 did not “hit” on roulette
- * So sad to leave friends from all across the country
- ☹ So sad that 32 did not “hit” on roulette
- * So sad that it will be another year before CFMA convenes in Hawaii
- ☹ So sad that 12 did not “hit” on roulette

Next year will find CFMA surfin', learnin', partyin' and networkin' in HAWAII . . . so pack up those swim fins, suck in that gut, and get ready for a Island Style get together!

Aloha for now

CFMA VOS Scholarships Awarded – and available

by Leanne Scheub, SNK Development, Inc.

CFMA's VOS Education Committee awarded three \$2,500 scholarships – to Joshua Dixon, Chase Swanson, and Cynthia Barela.

Joshua is interning over the summer for PENTA Building Group and attending the Del E. Webb School of Construction at ASU. He is on track to graduate in early 2013. He hopes to work in the construction industry as a project manager or an estimator. Joshua is well on his way, and I'm sure we will be hearing from him in the future.

Chase Swanson is currently an intern/Estimating Assistant with Sundt Construction, Inc. He also is enrolled, as a junior in the Del E. Webb School of Construction at ASU; he is scheduled to graduate in May 2010. He anticipates growth in Sundt as a result of his efforts. K. Michael Berry, Preconstruction

Manager/VP of Sundt, writes: "His ability and willingness to work part time and continue with his academic endeavors confirms his commitment to excel and succeed." We welcome Chase to the construction industry.

Our last recipient, Cynthia Barela, is enrolled in the Del E. Webb School of Construction at ASU. Her goals are to be heavily involved in her community and be a mentor to women in the construction industry. Her aunt, Yvonne Barela, Construction Supervisor for Habitat for Humanity, writes: "Her above-average performance in high school is a direct result of her hard work, strong focus, and dedication." Cynthia is on the right track, and I'm sure we will see her efforts in the future as well.

Congratulations to Joshua, Chase, and Cynthia!

The Education Committee will offer scholarships for the fall semester. Applications must be received by October 1, 2009, to qualify. Application requirements and forms are located at our website at <http://www.cfma.org/ValleyOfTheSun>.

CFMA VOS acknowledges that one of our primary goals is education. We acknowledge the need for qualified employees in the construction field. These needs will be filled largely by students graduating from our area schools. We hope these scholarships will prove to be an investment in the Arizona field of construction by providing promising construction professionals with some financial assistance while completing their studies. Please spread the word about CFMA VOS.

Construction
Scholarships

Getting to know our members . . .

by Myrna Membrilla, DB Data, Inc.

By Day, **Rayleen Colletti** crunches numbers; but, in her off time, she dedicates herself to helping mold young women into strong, independent forces of nature. *Wings to Fly* promotes life-long self esteem by holding week-long camps for girls between the ages of 12 and 17. They are now expanding their vision by developing an

after-school program that will allow *Wings to Fly* to reach even more young girls. Learn more at www.wingstofly.info.

Wink Ames asserts he is "not Clark Kent" but he did have a great Christmas trip, fishing in Chile with his daughter, Leslie, and his son-in-law, Brett. A nice change of pace from his 9-to-5 job as an insur-

ance, surety, and risk services advisor!

Here's something juicy. It seems one of our members REALLY is Clark Kent. Ken Zylstra wrote to tell us that **Sam DeRosa** has actually been anointed as the red-caped super hero by some of his peers. There must be more to this story!

Golf Classic – October 21 – McCormick Ranch

The 19th Annual CFMA Valley of the Sun Golf Classic, presented by CBIZ & Mayer Hoffman McCann, is fast approaching. This year the

event is being held at the McCormick Ranch Golf Club on October 21st. You're sure to want to attend to be a part of all the fun and net-

working opportunities associated with this event. Visit www.cfma.org/ValleyOfTheSun to register.



Wilson Electric Intern



This is a story about a student needing real-life construction experience, a passionate plea for a paid-internship, and a committee member with a fresh idea.

Jessica Metler is a sophomore at ASU. Metler describes herself. "I am the type of person who likes to see something go from nothing to something and say I had a small part in it. That is really cool."

Her enthusiasm and love for the construction industry motivated an ASU Student Recruiter with the Del E. Webb School of Construction to write a heart-felt letter. In it, Jodi Menees asked CFMA VOS for help in placing a very exuberant intern. Menees is part of a program called *Advancing Women in Construction*. She thought Jessica was a perfect fit.

"We found that a lot of employers like having women because they think differently

than men in the industry." Menees adds, "Women think different, they're multi-taskers, and they just add a different element that helps better the job site."

At the same time, VOS CFMA member Rob Dyer had suggested offering a stimulus incentive for Construction Interns, an idea the Legislative Committee immediately embraced says Chair David James. "The intern financial assistance program was financially viable for the organization, did meet our chapter goals, and was blessed by the Board so, done deal!" They earmarked \$2,000.

Wilson Electric Vice President of Operations Todd Klimas says when he read the impassioned letter Menees wrote, he knew right then he wanted to be involved. Klimas' goal is to ensure Jessica gets as much hands-on experience as possible. "We try to make our internships a great learning experience."

It's an approach Jessica ap-

by Myrna Membrila, DB Data, Inc.

preciates. "I really like the fact that I get to work on a bunch of different things. Todd has me doing different things which is great. I thought I might just help answering phones."

Not on Klimas' watch. He is making sure that by the time her internship ends in August, Jessica will have a thorough understanding of the construction industry. Klimas adds, "We do think a lot of the success we've had over the years has been because of the group of people who work here and work together. This is our way of giving back to the industry."

As for Jessica – and the role women play in construction – she says the fact that it is a male-dominated industry only encourages her. She finds it empowering. "Just because I'm a girl doesn't mean I can't do it. A lot of women are very capable. It's kind of empowering, too. You're surrounded by all these guys, and they have to answer to you, and that's very interesting to me."

VOS offers successful
training - and CPE credit

Contractors' Boot Camp Big Success

by Lynne Pace, Wespac Construction

On June 23rd CFMA VOS Chapter held its first annual "Contractors' Strategic Boot Camp" at the Phoenix Airport Marriott. The all-day seminar featured a dynamic program that included topics ranging from "Insurance – What You Don't Know Can Hurt You" to "12 Strategies that Enhance a Contractors Cash Flow".

Speakers were John Wescott, FMI; Steve Richman, Denise Troy, William Novotny, Mariscal, Weeks; Dennis Tsonis, Lovitt & Touché; Blake Johnson, Minard-Ames; Scott Thomas; Steve Lords, Martin Harris Construction; Tony Stagliano, CBIZ & MHM; and keynote

speaker, Elliott Pollack.

Pollack, noted economist and CEO of Elliott D. Pollack & Co, presented an informative and realistic picture of the outlook for the future of the construction industry. The presentation was powerful, and everyone agreed the information, while not entirely encouraging, was useful and educational.

The 60 attendees included members and non-members as well as some VOS members some have not seen in awhile. We had a few from outside the Phoenix area, including Tucson and Northern Arizona. Consensus was that the day was informative, and we should continue

to schedule programs of this type at least on an annual basis.

Co-chairs Marj Weber and Lynne Pace thank the committee members: Kevin Burnett, John Corcoran, Michelle Giesen, Tony Hakes, David James, Pam Johnson, Glenn Kroemer, Tom Lawless, Erin Mulvaney, Jan Smith, and Scott Thomas for their hard work. The success of the seminar was due to the teamwork and dedication of the committee. If you attended the seminar and would like to address any comments to the committee, they can be sent to Marj (marge@irontree.net) or Lynne Pace (lpac@wespac-construction.com).

around the Chapter



As I write another “around the chapter”, I can only recall words Jason Henley, National Chair of CFMA said to me on his recent visit: “Your Chapter is run like National”. And, of course, I had to agree.

At the July luncheon that Jason and Mike Molaro, National Director of Chapter Services attended, Jason told the attendees how impressed he was by all of the things our Chapter does, and how well we do them. He mentioned several Chapter members that are involved on a National basis (myself included) and also talked about many of the programs our Chapter does so well. I must say I agree with all of his comments – I can only expand on it and recognize in this column those individuals, both past and present, who have made such enormous contributions to our Chapter and CFMA. Most of my past columns have highlighted our many programs and events – it is now time to celebrate those members that have made all of our successes possible.

First, I have to recognize John Corcoran, our first Chapter President. One of the founding members, John stepped up to take leadership in the very beginning, and that leadership has never faltered. John has always been there to support our Chapter in all of its endeavors. His involvement on a National basis never overshadows his loyalty to the Valley of the Sun Chapter.

Which brings me to Dave James (President #10 – another “old-timer”) who continues to contribute through the Legislative Committee and his participation on numerous other Chapter committees and events. He was editor of this

publication for far longer than even he would like to remember.

Our Program Committee literally “got on the map” through the efforts of Deb Dubree, Past President #11. Under Deb’s leadership our Programs reached the WOW factor and have continued today with notable speakers and record attendance.

Membership in our Chapter is at an all time high, averaging over 300 – more than any other Chapter in the nation. Our first major jump in membership occurred under the leadership of Ted Rarrick – serving twice as Membership Chair. His first term brought us over the elusive 200 mark more than 10 years ago.

The Golf Tournament is our Chapter’s first major event and continues to be the template used by every other Chapter, though none are as successful as ours. Lloyd Brown, Chapter President #5, led the charge for this enormously successful event. With help from too many others to list here, the Tournament has grown substantially from a modest beginning to net almost \$35,000 in 2008. It has raised thousands and thousands of dollars for Construction Education and Chapter Educational Programs over the past 18 years.

Our Chapter’s other main event was organized during my tenure as President #14 and Carol Knott’s, #15. The VOS Construction Executive of the Year Banquet and Awards, an event originally envisioned by John Corcoran, just celebrated its 9th year with a sellout one month before the event. I must mention David Beer, President #17, and Greg Gross who were instrumental in truly

bringing this event to a level that even I was skeptical it would reach.

Another “thing” that impressed Jason was our Chapter website, which he called awesome, and I must agree. And we told him all credit goes to our Chapter Professional Administrator, Glenda Whitten. But it is not only the website she handles so well, it is all those e-mails she sends out for all of us; it is handling all of the chapter event registrations; and the Newsletter masthead and layout is all hers! As someone said the other day “Glenda has taken ownership of her job – and the Valley of the Sun Chapter benefits!!

Most of all I would be remiss if I did not mention the late Joe Quigley, President #3. If you ask any of the Chapter Leaders from the 80’s and 90’s, they will tell you that Joe organized it all and sent us on our way to be the largest and most successful CFMA Chapter in the Nation. The rest of us have just followed in his very large footsteps – and for that all of us should be very grateful. His leadership skills were so outstanding that his efforts were recognized by National in the creation of the Joe Quigley Memorial Award, an award given to a Chapter Leader who demonstrates extraordinary leadership and contributions at the Chapter level.

Since I am so closely involved in our Chapter and at the National level, I sometimes forget that not all of our members are aware of the very special Chapter that the Valley of the Sun has been and continues to be. I am just proud to be a part of it all and the fun I have had in the journey!!



Thanks to Marj Weber, Irontree Construction, for *around the chapter*

**VOS celebrates
special members**

Note: For those of you that don’t know, the Valley of the Sun Chapter is the only CFMA Chapter that has never recycled a President or Officer. And is only one of a few Chapters that has never had an Associate member as President. Plus, our terms continue to be one year. For a listing of all Chapter Presidents, check the website www.cfma.org/TheValleyOfTheSun under Officers, Board and Committees.

Copper State Ledger is the official publication of the Construction Financial Management Association, Valley of the Sun Chapter. CFMA is a non-profit association dedicated to the financial person in construction. Membership information is available on the web at www.cfma.org/valleyofthesun/index.htm, click on How to Join.

Interested in participating on the Membership Committee?



Co-chair Annette Johnson, Taylor Brockbank, and Kris Roe meet to discuss Membership.



Co-chair Keith Bieber and Lisa Vaglio intently study options for attracting new members.

