



Copper State Ledger

A Quarterly Publication of the
Valley of the Sun Chapter of CFMA
Winter 2007



from the President . . . *Cindy Lee, Haydon Building Corp*

As we go to press, I realize that the time is almost up on my term as your president. This will be my farewell President's Message. Soon, I will be promoted to Past President, and I will get a new little ribbon thingy to hang off of my name tag. I will be able to eat my salad at the lunches with the rest of you. Hopefully, in the court of public opinion, history will be kind to me. I hope you will all look back on my term as president as a time when you had a lot of fun.

It has been a good time to be president of our CFMA chapter. The economy is strong, and everyone is employed. We have a strong and active membership base. In some ways my job has been very easy. You did all the work, and I have enjoyed working with everyone. I agreed to be President mostly out of a sense of duty. I have enjoyed the benefits of membership for many years now, and I felt that it was time for me to take a turn. Perhaps others of you feel the same way. If so, I encourage you to take a turn and get involved in a leadership position. And I think that I have proven that we do not all have to be marching in lock-step in a group as diverse as ours.

We have accomplished a lot during the year. We revamped our whole scholarship program to

include larger scholarships and more qualified applicants. We are just about to put the finishing touches on our new database. It should be ready to roll out just before I leave office. I believe it is going to be useful to our whole membership, and especially the membership committee, for many years to come. It proves yet again that our chapter is on the cutting edge. John Corcoran has quoted me correctly; we most certainly do have our "sh**" together!

We had our most successful golf tournament ever. We have been fortunate to have several associate members step up to be event sponsors of the Golf Tournament and the upcoming Executive of the Year Awards Banquet. We have created a Strategic Plan for our chapter, and our newly formed Succession Planning Committee has already started to look for future leadership for our chapter.

Finally, we are preparing to host the 2007 CFMA National Conference in May. I hope that you will attend. With the scholarships that we have set aside for that purpose, money cannot be a legitimate objection or barrier. If you have never attended a CFMA national conference, you will not be disappointed! I hope to see you all there!

VALLEY OF THE SUN MISSION

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.

CFMA Valley of the Sun

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Committee Chairs

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Programs Mike Specht, *Minard Ames*
Helen Spencer, *Johnson Carlier*

Salary Survey Phil Taylor, *Taylor, Duffy*

Succession Planning .. Dennis Tsonis, *L&T*

Web Site DB.. Peggy Hughes *Campbell Dev*

Plan to Attend These Upcoming CFMA Events!

by Mike Specht, Minard-Ames Insurance Group

The CFMA Program Committee has been busy arranging high-quality programs for its members. Over the next six months, we have the following events planned:

February 15 – Scott Lewis, with Winning Technologies, will be back to present on **Making the Most of Your Technology Budget**. With the on-going advancements in technology, it will be nice to have some direction in this area.

March 15 – Our topic for this month is **Hiring and Firing in a Challenged Market**. **Lyrin Edmunds** and **Bess Cadwell** of **MRI of Scottsdale** will be presenting on this issue. Please be sure to put this luncheon on your calendar as it is a very relevant topic for all of us.

April 19 – Joint meeting with ABA, ASA, and NAWIC

May – The **Construction Executive of the Year Banquet** is being held **May 3** at the Wrigley Mansion. Then from **May 19-23** the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort and Spa is the site of **CFMA's National Conference and Exhibition**. You are sure to want to attend both events.

June 21 – Have you every wondered about **The Life of a Lobbyist**? **Mark Minter**, the Executive Director of the **Arizona Builders Alliance**, will speak to us on this topic. Mark is a strong advocate for the construction industry, and he is an entertaining speaker. Please join us in June to learn about the life as a lobbyist.

Helen Spencer of Johnson Carlier and Mike Specht from Minard-Ames Insurance Group are Co-Chairs of the Program Committee. They are always looking for people to join the committee. If you have an interest, please contact Helen at 602.275.2222 or Mike at 602.393.3431.

CFMA Arizona Construction Executive of the Year Banquet and Awards Ceremony – MAY 3, 2007 WRIGLEY MANSION

by David R. Beer

As the current Co-Chair of the 2007 CFMA Arizona Construction Executive of the Year Banquet Committee, I want to personally encourage you to attend the 7th annual event this year. Greg Gross, Co-Chair, and our hard-working committee are diligently working on planning the best event yet.

The banquet and awards ceremony recognizes the Arizona Construction Executive of the Year, selected from nominations from the CFMA membership, as well as other industry related associations, such as ABA, ASA, AGC, and NAWIC.

We also recognize a deserving individual with The Pioneer Award for their life-long contributions to the Arizona construction industry. Finally, we congratulate the outstanding General and Associate CFMA member from our Chapter for their contributions to the Chapter during the past year.

This year's banquet will to be held on May 3, 2007 at The Wrigley Mansion. We are excited about the new location - it adds yet another reason

to attend, with the Mansion's historic value and awesome views of the city lights.

Nominations for the Executive of the Year are being received through February 15th. You can find nomination forms, sponsorship forms, and invitations on the CFMA Valley of the Sun website at the following link: www.cfma.org/ValleyOfTheSun. All of the forms are downloadable and can be printed from your desktop. Please take a few minutes to visit the website and peruse the information.

Our goal this year is to have the largest turnout of CFMA members at any banquet to date. Encourage your boss to come, and be sure to get a ticket for yourself and your significant other. Remember this event showcases CFMA and its services to construction company owners and executives, while it also serves as a "pat on the back" to our Chapter for a job well done!

Public Relations - Can an Accountant Do That??

You bet!! A new Public Relations Committee has been formed and the Co-Chairs – Doug Singer and Christi Christensen – are looking for other Chapter members to help in the endeavor.

This committee has had several false starts over the years, so let's step up to the plate and make this time a success! If you see this committee with your name on it, contact Doug Singer at 602-393-3501 or email Dsinger@minardames.com or phone Christi Christensen at 602-776-1123 or email cchristensen@kforc.com.

2007 Golf Tournament

The CFMA Golf Tournament for 2007 will be presented by CBIZ & Mayer Hoffman McCann P.C. to benefit formal or vocational education in support of the construction industry, taking place on Wednesday, October 24th at the prestigious Orange Tree Golf Resort.

This will be another sell-out tournament and the entry fees will remain at the same as the 2005 and 2006 price of \$200 per individual.

The CFMA Co-Chairs for the tournament will be Chelie Lacrosse of Smith Manus Surety and Jared Asay of CBIZ & Mayer Hoffman McCann P.C. Please contact either Chelie or Jared if you are interested in joining the golf committee for 2007 or sponsor opportunities. Chelie is clacrosse@smithmanus.com or Jarad is jasay@cbiz.com.

Holiday Fundraiser Raises the "White Elephant" Bar

by Cindy Lee, Haydon Building Corp

A big thank you goes to all of you who attended our December lunch and participated in the White Elephant Gift Exchange to raise money for UMOM, the homeless shelter! We had just over 40 in attendance, and yet we raised over \$1,200 (\$1,220 to be exact) in the space of about 20 minutes!

That's an average of \$30 per person, and an average of \$60 a minute. Taking it one step further, if we could get those kinds of results at the office, with 480 minutes in an 8 hour day, we could be making \$28,800 daily. Taking into account weekends, holidays, and an occasional vacation, with 250 days in the year, that would be \$7.2 million.

Now, don't get all excited and quit your day job. We can't expect to get these results consistently, but it is amazing what a few people can accomplish for a worthy cause. I thank you all for getting into the spirit and bringing your white elephant gifts and your spare cash.

For those of you who missed it, we tried something new this year. Everyone was asked to bring a wrapped gift in the \$20 range. It could be new or gently used. It could be serious or fun. It could also require adult picture ID, as in the case of the \$80 bottle of wine that John Corcoran took away. (He told me that it was very tasty.) We

placed all the gifts on a display table where we each selected one in turn. We all then returned to our respective tables, where by tossing a "ten-spot" into the pot, we could "steal" anyone else's gift from those seated at our table. For another ten-spot, they could steal it back. And so on, until one of them ran out of cash.

We were in uncharted territory, and we didn't have a lot of rules. Luckily, we have creative people who were able to improvise, and we didn't have to vote anyone off the island, so to speak. I am happy to report that there was no fighting like you often see at places like the Last Chance Discount Outlet or even Wal-Mart.

We were lucky to have a representative from the UMOM shelter give us a brief presentation about the shelter. She showed us a video that very movingly told the story of the residents of the shelter and some of the good things that the shelter does for them. For example, one of the programs at UMOM trains residents for jobs in the food industry. They have a catering business that is available to anyone in the community (perhaps our next CFMA social event???) and is staffed by shelter residents. I think we all concluded that our dollars would be well-spent. Thanks to all who participated!

Valley of the Sun Chapter of CFMA Awards Scholarship

A \$2,500 educational scholarship was awarded to Jonathan Cheek by the VOS Education Committee at the Chapter luncheon on January 18, 2006.

Flanked by his parents, Jonathan thanked them, Hope Levin of US Bank (a long-time CFMA member who recommended him), and the VOS Education Committee for providing him this opportunity.

Jonathan, a graduate of Mountain Ridge High School and currently a student at ASU, has applied and been accepted at the Del E. Webb School of Construc-

tion for the Spring semester. His near-term goal is to work for a large construction company "already on the map", as he says. However, his long-term goal is to own his own home-building company, building one-of-a-kind custom homes in areas such as North Scottsdale and Paradise Valley.

With the progress he has already made and being the 2006 recipient of the VOS CFMA Education Scholarship, he has scaled one more rung on the ladder to his success. Congratulations, Jonathan!!

2006 Holiday Lunch



And a good time was had by all -
with lots of \$\$ raised for charity



See story, previous page

Tucson Sonoran Pueblo CFMA Valley Of the Sun Satellite Chapter

Tucson has a satellite chapter of CFMA - the Sonoran Pueblo Chapter. Andy Karic, Owner and CEO, Triumph Builders SW in Tucson, has taken the lead to get this satellite chapter off the ground.

They have monthly lunch meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at the Old Pueblo Grill, 60 North Alvernon Way (corner of Broadway) in Tucson.

The program on Tuesday, February 13, at noon is Bonding and What Bonding Companies are Looking for. The topic will be presented by Patsy Stump from Compass Insurance.

Jim Bracy, a member of the VOS Chapter, coordinates a carpool each month to attend the Tucson meeting. If you would like to go, contact Jim at jim@straightlineutilities.com or phone him at 480/471-7076. The group usually meets at 10 a.m. at the Fry's Electronics at I-10 and Baseline.

Reservations are made by e-mailing Nancy Hunter at nhunter@finaco.net and are due by the Friday before the meeting. The lunch cost is \$20, payable in advance.

Check out the Tucson Sonoran Pueblo chapter when you are in Tucson on the second Tuesday.

around the Chapter



I know the saying, When h*ll freezes over! . . .

but is there one for when it snows in Mesa?

For those of you that don't get out to NE Mesa very often and/or don't watch local news, this reporter can testify that not only did it snow but about a one mile area near Recker and McKellips received so much snow (over one inch) that they had to scrape the parking lot of a strip mall! Anyway – I am blaming the blizzard for the "tad tardy" volume of the Copper State Ledger and this column.

First and foremost, we must congratulate the Valley of the Sun members who passed the Certification Exam on December 9th at the Westin Kierland Resort as part of the AICPA Construction Conference. Those new CCIFP's are Jennifer Ayers, Mel Frost, Tony Hakes, Scott Morrison, and Lynn Reid.

Our Chapter programs continue to get better every month – *Kudos* to the Program Committee. In November, Leslie Bloom of the Partnership for a Drug Free America raised awareness of the continuing drug problem and offered suggestions on how our members could help by identifying abuse problems, even in their own families.

After last year's very successful December

fund raiser auction, I thought that would be a very tough act to follow. Well, again – I was *wrong!* This year's event to benefit UMOM was more successful and – yes – even more fun. If you were unable to make it – you missed otherwise professional and refined CFMAers throwing money and shouting "THAT'S MINE!!!" for simple items that might have cost less than \$10!!! I caught a certain Chapter officer digging pennies from the bottom of her purse to secure a toy Santa! This reporter can only guess what is in store for next year.

The January program on the Section 199 Manufacturing Deduction was very timely with many of us right in the middle of year-end closures and tax time.

Your Executive of the Year Awards and Banquet Committee has chosen the Wrigley Mansion as the site for the event to be held Thursday, May 3, 2007. The venue alone should be all the reason you need to attend.

And of course, the big event of the year is the National Conference here in Phoenix for the first time in 12 years!! Ask if we are excited! As you should know by now, the Education Committee has set aside \$40,000.00 to assist Valley of the Sun members with their registration fees. The program is set – so check out the website www.cfma.org for all the details.

See you next time with news from around the Chapter.

Arizona Construction Industry Compensation Survey

by Phil Taylor, Taylor, Duffy & Associates, P.C.

How does one determine fair and competitive compensation for administrative and management employees? Most construction owners and managers have a good idea of industry compensation levels for field personnel, but determining compensation for accountants, bookkeepers, estimators, and project managers is more challenging. The results of the annual Arizona compensation and benefits survey sponsored by Valley of the Sun Chapter of CFMA are based on input from approximately 1,000 Arizona companies that participated in this year's survey.

In addition to providing information regarding base compensation levels for 32 different management and support positions, the survey provides an analysis of various types of employee benefit programs. Results are further broken-out by the following industry segments: 1) building and industrial, 2) heavy highway and utilities, and 3) residential.

The most significant percentage compensation

increase for the current year involved field supervision and estimating positions, all of which had double-digit increases over 2005. Conversely, accounting salaries slowed their rate of growth after three years of significant increases. These are industry-wide changes, and it's interesting how much variation there is among the industry segments.

If you spend a few minutes reviewing the results affecting your particular segment of the industry, you can compare the survey results with individual compensation in your company. You may discover a few surprises. The survey can be especially useful when filling a vacated position or creating a new position in your company.

The survey has been mailed to those companies that participated in this year's survey. For those who did not participate, copies of the 2006 compensation survey are available for sale for \$60 each. Order your copy from Taylor Duffy & Associates, PC 602-265-7011.

The Largest CFMA Chapter and Still Growing!

As our membership number nears 300 and we still remain the largest chapter in the nation, the challenge facing the VOS Membership Committee is to keep all members connected.

New Member Breakfast

One of the ways that the Membership Committee stays "connected" to new members is to hold a New Member Breakfast. Members that joined our Chapter during the past year are invited along with a few of the Officers and Board members. Those "old timers" are invited to make the "newbies" feel welcome and answer any questions they might have about CFMA and the Valley of the Sun Chapter. The next breakfast is scheduled for

February 7th, just as this publication goes to press. Diedre Aldous, Co-Chair, says, "The breakfast gatherings have been very successful to date by keeping them small and intimate." If you have joined in the last few months to one year, and have not attended a breakfast, contact Diedre or Ted Rarrick for an invitation.

New Chapter Database

The Membership Committee is excited about the new Chapter database nearing completion. This database will help the Committee track all Chapter members, guests, and prospects. Watch our member base continue to grow as the Committee uses this important addition.

and now — from Princeton, NJ . . .

by Marj Weber, CCIFP, Irontree Construction

Well, not really (from Princeton, that is)! On the evening of November 8, 2006 I landed in Orlando, Florida, to participate in the CFMA National Executive Committee meeting. The meeting would take place over the next two days and be attended by members of CFMA from around the country.

CFMA's National Executive Committee is the governing board for our Association. It is populated by the National Officers and other carefully selected CFMA members. I was very honored to be asked to serve on this Committee two years ago. There are three face-to-face meetings held a year. For this fiscal year, we met in Princeton in July; Orlando in November, and will meet in Denver, CO on February 8 and 9. Members of the Executive Committee represent Chapters from Indiana, Ohio, Georgia, Nebraska, Colorado, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Minnesota, California, New Mexico, and Hawaii.

The agenda for our two-day meeting was two-fold: first, to review our Association Committee and Task Force reports; and second, to provide CFMA staff members feedback. We reviewed the Finance Committee reports that provided us with second quarter results, 2007 projections, and a five-year Forecast Report. We heard about Chapter Resource, the Education Committee, and Association Leadership as well as Association Structure (Committee vs. Task Force). Jim Bartsch, Director of Marketing Services, gave the group an update on CFMA's new marketing plan in addition to the Strategic Planning Report. The Leadership Committee unveiled a new mentoring program. This Committee has identified eight emerging leaders of our Association and, through various testing methods, are in the process of matching those eight with past and present National Officers as mentors.

There were reports on the status of the Institute (CCIFP) and the National Conference being held in Phoenix in May. The redirection of hold-

ing exams in connection with Industry Conferences is working well, and Certification for our Association is on track or ahead of other certification programs. The National Conference is full steam ahead with the program set.

On Thursday evening we adjourned to Emeril's Tchoup Chop Restaurant (in our hotel) for a Dutch-treat dinner with the entire group. What fun! And yes, Joey, there were adult beverages involved. Let's just say the question was asked, "Your top 3?" Answers included "a big truck". I will let the reader fill in the blanks. After dinner (and right before we were going to get kicked out of the restaurant) we adjourned to a lovely bar and meeting area where we continued our dinner "conversation". Kevin Schlueter, National CFMA Chair, mentioned the next day what a great time it was, and how he enjoyed sitting around with fellow CFMA'ers enjoying each other's conversations. I said he needed to come to some meetings at the Valley of the Sun Chapter as we do that on a regular basis.

On Friday, after we finished the other Committee and Task Force reports, we formed three Focus Groups and went from table to table with our believe-it-or-not, sought-after opinions. The Focus Group objects were: Marketing – direct mail campaign; the new Dashboard product (as part of the Chapter Affiliation agreement); and On-Line Learning. Feedback, then and since, has been that both sides learned a lot, and our opinions and suggestions helped the CFMA staff tremendously.

As we gathered our luggage to leave for home, and said goodbye to our friends from around the country, we concluded that we had accomplished all we had come for and maybe a little bit more. Clearly we had forever sealed our friendships!

Next time – an in depth look at CFMA CEO Bill Schwab . . .