



CFMA VoS Chapter News

October 2019

2019 Southwest Regional Conference Recap

September 15-17, 2019 - Long Beach, CA

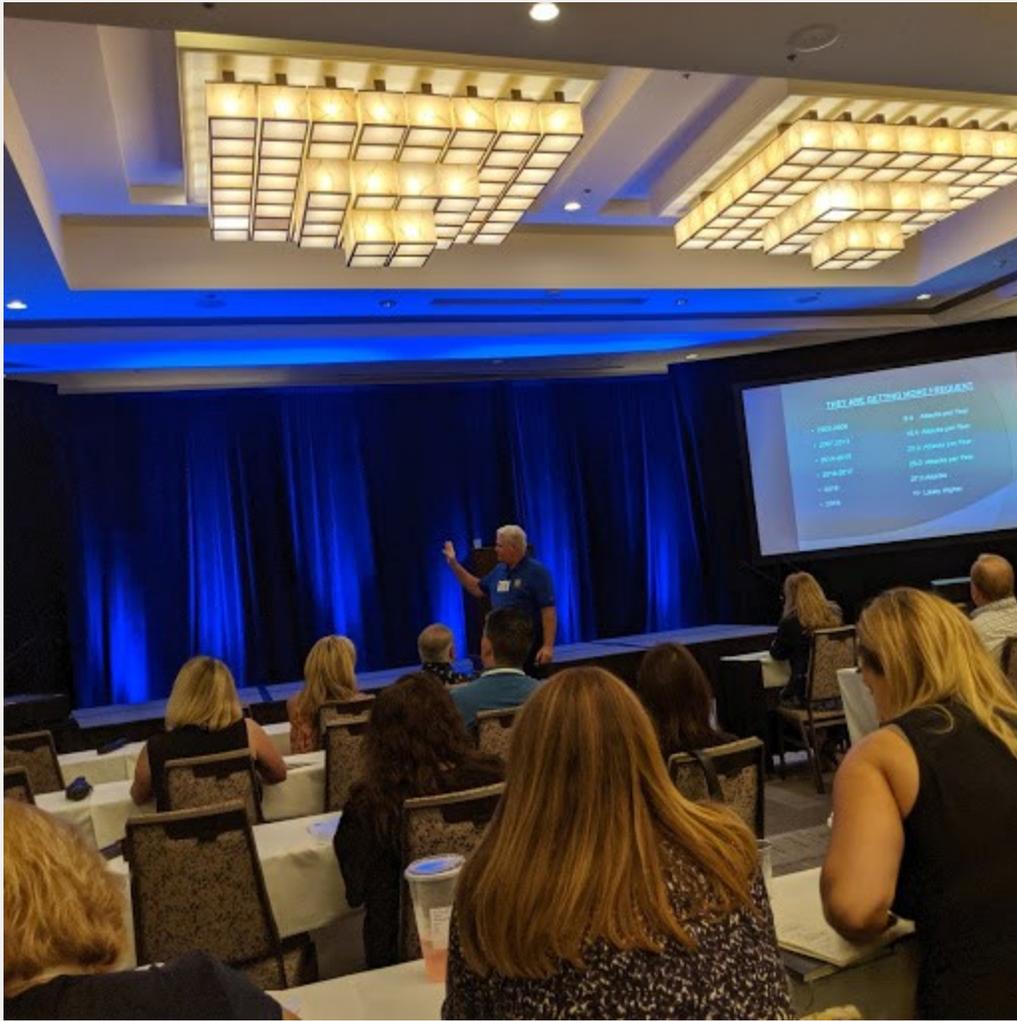
"De plane! De plane!" shouted Tattoo excitedly; "Yes, Tattoo" noted Mr. Roarke, "Our Guests are arriving. They are CFMA members, and have come from far and wide to gain knowledge, wisdom and CPE credits here at our beautiful island paradise. Let us go welcome them . . ."

By David James, CPA, CCIFP

For those of you too young to remember the TV series Fantasy Island - ask your parents. This opening greeted them and the rest of us more seasoned CFMA members weekly, as guests to the island paradise arrived to work through a whole host of problems both personal and business. And while the 'CFMA guests' did not really come from "far and wide", they did come from far reaching areas of the southwest to attend the 5th Annual Southwest Regional CFMA Conference in Long Beach! And, while Long Beach is not technically an island, it does have an ocean to the west, close enough! And certainly, they all came to address business needs and critical education topics, while rekindling old personal friendships and creating new ones! Gaining "wisdom" might be a push, however But let's not get bogged down on that, and move ahead to talk about our amazing island adventure in Long Beach!

Each time I attend one of these conferences, I am amazed at the quality of programs and speakers. Certainly this is a reflection of outstanding committee efforts by Orange County, Valley of the Sun, Las Vegas, San Diego, Inland Empire and Albuquerque Chapters. Folks - - job well done!!!

The sessions started coming at attendees as early as Sunday afternoon, even before the welcome reception. Sounds like a national conference schedule! But it was well worth getting there a bit early to hear David Spotts speak on Active Shooter scenarios and how to integrate into your safety protocols. It is a sad state of affairs to have this topic even required, but it is, and David provided great information and ideas!



The Welcome Reception was exceptional; especially if you were 'into' Mac'N'Cheese - yum! And it provided a great opportunity to reconnect with CFMA friends. I must say food across the board was good, from receptions, to lunch to breaks and even breakfast. Although I could live long and happy without egg white breakfast burritos!



Early Monday, the sessions began. Topics ranged from HR, to accounting (do I hear Rev Rec, again?), to fraud, to technology as well as effective communication. The speaker on "Communicate like a Leader" was Anthony Huey, who also spoke at the SW Regional here in Phoenix. One of his wise tenants that he noted in Phoenix and again in Long Beach is that those to who you are communicating with only retain 20% of what is said. So for most of you, you can skip to the bottom of this article, as you'll only remember the 20% to this point, and you'll forget the rest of the material anyway!

The session on "Teamwork and Technology" provided some interesting insights into software we all have available under our existing systems that provide connectivity and security to our offices. And was a good transition into our session on cyber security and ransomware attacks. For VOS attendees, the highlight of all the sessions had to be our very own Kevin Burnett who addressed "Strategic Relationships through Prequalification". This is a topic that always stirs emotions among GC's and Subs - and this session was no exception. Prequalification at all levels is important: GC's prequalifying subs and up chain to Owners; Subs prequalifying GC's; and all levels have the potential to strain relationships. No one likes to open their financial doors and expose themselves, but those in the construction chain do need to have a way to determine financial risks to their company. Kevin did a masterful job of walking the line here . . . and to his credit, NONE of the attendees came to blows, and he was not tarred/feathered nor tossed in the ocean! Kevin's toughest challenge was that he was

LAST session of the day Tuesday and people were scrambling to catch flights and yet he still retained most attendees and a high level of interest and interaction among the group. Great job Kevin!!



The planning committee should be complimented on the high quality sponsors represented at the conference. These folks were active and involved with the attendees and offered some great services to CFMA members. I actually forwarded several contacts to my past employer (FNF for those who have been hiding in a cave since I retired in January), which was unusual, but spoke well of the sponsor group! Among this exquisite sponsor group, was our very own Carol Hagen (Hagen Business Systems) - thanks Carol, you are always there for CFMA; and John Corcoran (Foundation Software), when will John ever NOT be there at a conference!! Thanks guys - great to see you at the Long Beach Island!



Sponsors all had cool give-a-ways, and my suburban is now totally restocked with fountain pens!! All attendees were given a Jokake Bag at check in (pronounced "Joe" "Ka"(as in "Ha") "Key" - back to the Island theme), so we had a great place to store our goodies. The bag, being black and orange will make for a great candy collection bag when I hit the streets on the 31st (yes, I believe when you hit 65, you are allowed to trick or treat again - the 'circle of life' thing). I was a little taken aback however, as there were some goodies in the Jokake Bag when we registered, including a stress ball. But in MY bag there were TWO stress balls . . . didn't they hear I'm retired? What's up with the double stress balls????



For all CFMAers, this conference is a must to put on your educational schedule! It is shorter than a national conference for those short on time, fewer people so you get to know one another and network more, less expensive for those penny pinchers (ALL of us!), easily accessible by car or plane and offers GREAT educational subject matter!

So mark your calendars for 2020; the SW Regional conference will be held September 20-22 on the island of San Diego. Let's get a planeload of VOS members at the 2020 conference to let all know that Valley of the Sun is BEST Under the Island Sun

A sad commentary as I conclude this article. I actually Googled how the series typically ended each week (looking to end the article similarly) and found that Tattoo (Herve Villechaize) died by suicide in 1993. Four years ago, I likely would not have thought to mention this fact. Today, I cannot do that. So one more time, we all need to be our brother's keeper, and protect everyone we come in contact with. We must move this needle