The last two years seem to have disappeared very quickly. I suppose that is determined by the events that have transpired since I took office -- 9/11, economic hard times in West Michigan, job loses and other maladies. But the future of the West Michigan Chapter looks bright.

There is a new board taking office in July and you will have had the opportunity to vote for those new members and new positions. Mel Kantor is leaving the board after years of faithful and dedicated service. We greatly appreciate Mel’s leadership and guidance as president and past president and wish him the best. I will slide over to the past president’s chair for the next two years as Dave Kuiper takes over as our new president. I look forward to Dave taking charge. You will find him to be an enthusiastic, hardworking, supportive, positive and creative leader. The new web page is Dave’s creation and has been very successful in attracting new interest in our chapter. John Morrison is moving from treasurer to secretary. John has been doing yeoman’s work at a challenging job. In two years John will become the chapter president. Lastly, we welcome Michael Johnson to the board as our new treasurer. John has left large shoes to fill and I have every confidence that Mike can step up to the challenge.

So, there is your new board. Greet them when you meet them at chapter meetings and events. Get active and stay active; there is a full slate of interesting and informative programs coming up with something for everyone. Without your participation and involvement there is no West Michigan Chapter.

Wayne Veneklasen
OK, So What’s Next?

As we move into the next year I would like to take this opportunity to share with you as to what I consider to be the three main items to concentrate on this year. This can be put together in three words: Attraction, Retention and Promotion.

During the last strategic planning session in February we had the opportunity to meet with Linda Beverly and Jeff Tafel. At the end of the session we as a board are committed to adding 10 people or 10% to our chapter. I would like to surpass that number and up that to 15 or 15%. How do we plan to do this? This is where you come in. We will be outlining a membership campaign in the late summer that will reward our members for bringing their colleagues and friends to our meetings. If these people join, we will reward you for referring them to us. More details to follow. We will also do a mass mailing to companies in the Grand Rapids/Holland area to introduce them to IFMA and share the value it has to its members.

The second piece is retention. First of all we need to make sure our members are getting what they need. If they are satisfied, the retention part suddenly becomes easier. I would see the board put in place a process that has an early warning when people are no longer active. This would give the opportunity to connect with them to find out why they are leaving, and maybe fix the issue.

The third piece of this is promotion. We have already started with this by developing a website–http://www.ifma-wm.org. This site was put in place to create a spot where our members can get information 24/7. We are being very deliberate to make sure this site does not become static. Our chapter can make changes quickly because we don’t have to go through an outside source to make them. The site includes several different pages that will assist with questions that you may have. As a board we are also looking at other ways to promote the chapter. In the near future you will see members wearing some West Michigan IFMA wear “logo’d” shirts etc. We will also be very diligent about putting articles in the local business journal and newspapers that outline the accomplishments of our chapter and members. We need to get that information out there.

This year promises to be a good year. We have new blood on the board with some great ideas. We plan to build on the ideas and programs from the past, and be a better service to you, our membership. If you have any questions about the chapter, please give me a call or e-mail me.

Thanks!!

Dave Kuiper / President Elect

Are We Having a Great Time or What?

Since our last newsletter we have enjoyed some pretty interesting programs. Brian Slade gave us an update on OSHA safety standards in April, (although he practiced way too much selling). On May 21st Paul Funk from Midwestern Consulting gave a tremendous presentation and live demonstration of how new technology can contribute to your bottom line by showing us his new 3D laser scanner hardware and software. And member Patrick Gor-enchan gave us an interesting and informative tour of the new College of Engineering down at WMU on June 18th.

So what exciting events do we have planned for this summer? On July 23rd we have reserved seats at 5th 3rd Park to see the Whitecaps play. Game starts at 7pm. Tickets are $5 each and seating is limited. Email me at rjvande@sbcglobal.net to reserve a seat for the game. Be there for a fun time! Also, make sure you clear your calendar on August 20th for the IFMA-West Michigan golf outing at Boulder Creek. We’ve got a great committee working on this and if anyone else wants to volunteer or offer prizes and sponsors for hole in one contests, etc, please call me. More details will follow in other chapter communications.

I do appreciate those of you who have taken the time to comment and provide ideas. Our goal remains to provide you with informative, educational and even fun programs and tours. Enjoy your summer!

Rick VandeKerkhoff

When you’re ready, we’ll meet you half way.

When you’re ready, we’ll meet you half way.
Camp Lexington Recap
In May 2003, IFMA and the Bluegrass Chapter from Lexington Kentucky sponsored the annual Chapter Leadership Workshop in Lexington. The Bluegrass Chapter called this event “Camp Lexington” and the overall theme was an outdoor camping experience, like when we were sent to camp as kids. Over 50 chapter leaders from around the country came to share best practices and chapter experiences… the overall goal to improve the operations of our respective chapters. The West Michigan Chapter sent four of our board members to the camp: Dave Kuiper/Secretary-Presidet Elect; John Morrison/VP Finance-Treasurer; Rick VandeKerkhoff/VP Programs; and, Jim Corby/VP Public Relations.

The workshops were a focused one-day learning environment. The camp counselors were the Bluegrass chapter members and they facilitated five main activities during the 7 hour day:

- Survival Skills, learn how to survive as a chapter, share Best Practices and learn tips on avoiding hazardous traps;
- Fire Building, share ideas on how you can build a fire under your members and get them motivated
- Relay Racing, race to find out what your chapter counterparts are doing to succeed in their leadership role
- Obstacle Course, FM session on Ethics in the Workplace
- Sailing & Archery, become a tightly kit crew and build a chapter that makes for smooth sailing

Overall the event was very educational for the chapter board members and we learned many tips and techniques on what can be done to help the chapter. These ideas are now action steps in the overall board plans and you can see these steps happening in the new committees, the improved chapter web site, the newsletter, and more efforts to communicate with chapter members. If you are interested in participating on one of our chapter committees or have feedback on the chapter, please email me the information.

Jim Corby

Welcome New Chapter Members
We are pleased to have you join us and look forward to your involvement and participation in the IFMA West Michigan Chapter:

Erik M. Bauer - Stevens Worldwide Van Lines
Mr. Eugene A. Bradley - Benteler Automotive
William D. Gurn - Haworth, Inc.
Eiko Kondo - Haworth, Inc.
Lawrence Lebster - Aramark Corporation
Karman Wallace - Grubb & Ellis/Paramount Properties Mgt.

Our Chapter Mission:
The West Michigan Chapter of the International Facility Management Association (IFMA) is a professional association to promote the advancement of the facilities management profession at the local level by providing opportunities for education and creating an environment that encourages its members to share knowledge and experiences.

West Michigan Board 2003-2005
Past President Wayne Veneklaas wvenekla@attbi.com
President Dave Kuiper dave_kuiper@hermanmiller.com
Secretary John Morrison jmorrison@grofficefurniture.com
VP Finance/Treasurer Mike Johnson michael.johnson@priority-health.com
VP Membership Marilyn Gould mgould@ameritech.net
VP Public Relations Jim Corby jcorby@steelcase.com
VP Programs Rick VandeKerkhoff richard.vandekerkhoff@gm.com

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We are a client-driven and service-driven organization dedicated to helping business achieve their strategic goals through the use of people, space, processes and equipment. Call us today to see how we might help you.

Jim Watrous:616.490.4781 or Wayne Veneklaas 616.890.8211
Upcoming Events

July 23 at 5th/3rd Ball Park at 7:00pm
- Whitecaps Game—Reservation Required

August 20 at TBA
- 1st Annual Golf Outing!

September 17 at GRCC ATC at 3:30pm
- Leadership in Facility Management
  - Jim Hickey, CFM, and FMA Fellow

October TBD

November TBD

December 10 location TBD
- Toys for Tots Breakfast