

# THE BOARD TABLE



## Greetings from the IFEA World Board of Directors!

The board last met in April of this year, in Louisville, KY in conjunction with the Kentucky Derby Festival's "Thunder Over Louisville" fireworks extravaganza event. On behalf of the board, I want to say thank you to Mike Berry and the entire Derby Festival team and to Doug Taylor and the Zambelli Fireworks family for the gracious hospitality extended to us in Louisville. If you have not been to "Thunder," be sure to put it on your list of must attend events. I have seen plenty of great firework shows over the years, but nothing compares with the "Thunder Over Louisville" experience. It was, truly, an experience! Even more so, a destination experience that draws visitors from near and far. On my flight from Atlanta to Louisville, I overheard a young lady across the aisle from me telling the stranger next to her that she was coming from Florida to see the "Thunder Over Louisville" show. For 20 minutes or more, two strangers talked about fireworks and events that they had attended. What a great testament to the power of festivals and events.

We all know festivals and events drive tourism and economic development. But sometimes we all need a little help in blowing our own horn regarding quantifiable economic impact to our communities. And what better source for that information than the global leader in festivals and events, the IFEA's cost effective economic impact studies. If you have not looked into this program with the IFEA, I highly recommend it. Additionally, the IFEA World Festival & Event City Award, created last year, is also an excellent way to showcase the value, contributions and impact that events have on a destination. Recipients from the inaugural year have used their award to highlight the significance of events on their communities

and to strengthen partnerships with governments, tourism agencies, sponsors and more. If you're not already considering entering the IFEA World Festivals & Event City Award for 2011, I encourage you to consider entering your city in this new award program.

An alarming trend among many U.S. States I've noticed this year, is to cut marketing and advertising funding to State Tourism Agencies. I can't quite understand the logic involved in cutting funds to an industry that generates so much return on investment. However, as state tourism agencies lose advertising dollars to market destinations, the importance of festivals and events in showcasing destinations increases. We all know the value and importance of festivals and events, but do our local, state and national leaders? The IFEA can be a valuable resource for economic impact data, for education and training and for recognition. Be sure to take advantage of these benefits.

As you read this, summer is now upon us. I hope the summer season brings better weather conditions to all our festivals and events. Spring was tough for many communities across the United States. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the people in communities that were destroyed by tornados and where flooding forced several major festivals to have to move locations days or hours before events. It's not an easy task to move a festival, but again it speaks volumes to the importance of events on a community. The event industry is rallying around these communities to hold fundraising events to help rebuild what was lost, and we'll be there to help these communities in celebration when the task of rebuilding is complete.

Returning to our Board Meeting held this past April, the IFEA is pleased to welcome two new members to the IFEA World Board: Guy Laflamme, Vice President, Capital Experience, Communications & Marketing at the National Capital Commission in Ottawa, Canada and Cindy Lerick, Executive Director at Cultural Festivals, in St. Louis, MO. Both were elected to new terms and bring considerable experience and knowledge to the table. I am confident that they will be valuable additions to the board. Additionally, the board is excited for the "Fund For The Future" campaign which is moving forward with the full support and participation from both the IFEA World Board and the IFEA Foundation Board. If you too would like to show your support, please consider making a contribution to the "Fund For the Future" campaign. For more information on the 'Fund For The Future Campaign' please contact the IFEA office or just stop one of the IFEA Board or Foundation Board Members in the hall at the IFEA's 56th Annual Convention & Expo this October 3-5, 2011 and they'll be happy to share some information with you! I wish you a safe and successful summer event season and look forward to seeing you all in Fort Worth soon!

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