



A TIME TO BE **THANKFUL**

The leaves are turning beautiful, bright colors and covering our lawns. The temperatures are dropping and we are pulling out our sweaters and coats to wear on a daily basis. The sun is setting before we have a chance to finish dinner with our families. This can mean only one thing...it is November, the one month more than any other when we take time to be thankful.

Let me be one of the first to express my gratitude to you, the IFEA membership. During this crazy year of festival and event postponements and cancellations, it would have been easy for you to take IFEA for granted. Well, that was certainly not the case with IFEA Day and let's be honest, we're consumed with our own events as we all continue struggling financially.

IFEA Day was created to serve two main purposes: 1) an educational platform to share the results of the various COVID-19 Task Forces and 2) an avenue to fundraise for IFEA and its Foundation. Thanks to your overwhelming support, IFEA Day was a huge success on so many levels.

Participation with the individual Task Forces was outstanding. Many of you spent hours discussing with your peers the impact of the pandemic and what the future may bring. After contributing your time and energy to the task forces, registration for the actual IFEA Day far exceeded anyone's expectations.

Just as important, you recognized the importance of IFEA and stepped up financially to support the world's leading festival and event organization. Many of you did this by making a personal donation since IFEA Day was offered for Free. I would be remiss, if I did not mention you can still donate to IFEA for the 2020 tax year.

To have some fun while we were raising funds during IFEA Day, we "produced" an hour-long segment called the IFEA Foundation Celebration. Hosted by Alison English, Cassie Roberts-Dispenza, Keli O'Neil Wenzel, CFEE and yours truly, the IFEA Foundation Celebration provided the perfect vehicle to share the mission of the IFEA Foundation. Featured was an interview with former scholarship recipient Mairin Petrone, now with the Pittsburgh Irish Festival. Mairin talked about the importance of the scholarship and the networking opportunities IFEA offers.

We also got to pop in on our dear friend Janet Landey, CFEE in South Africa. She stayed up past midnight just to participate in all the IFEA Day activities. The fun did not stop there as we gave away a free registration to next year's IFEA Convention & Expo just for attending IFEA Day. Daphne Dickens, Production & Program Manager with the Des Moines Arts Festival was our winner.

We also drew for the Ultimate Experience Getaway during the IFEA Foundation Celebration. Fifteen members helped secure packages for the Ultimate Experience Getaway. Since we did not have events to be the focal point of the trips this year, these packages included such destination spots as South Padre Island, Gulf Shores, Santa Barbara, Fort Lauderdale, Pigeon Forge and Traverse City to name a few. Our lucky winner was Joyce Miller, President and Founding Member of the Artisan Art Walk in Odessa, Texas. She will be enjoying four nights in the Rocky Mountains at Bruce and Linda Erley's vacation home in Colorado.

The Online Silent Auction generated record revenue this year. With over 100 items, 97 unique bidders participated. Still, there were bargains to be had including outdoor items such as grills, smokers and fire pits; household items like ceiling fans, light chandelier, and ring doorbell; recreational items like golf bags and coolers plus items for your children and pets.

IFEA Day concluded with a Happy Hour Hop. Cindy Lerick, CFEE was our greeter and made sure everyone was able to hop from Zoom Room to Zoom Room hosted by Ira Rosen, CFEE, Annie Frisoli, CFEE, Sam Lemheney, CFEE, Kat Paye, CFEE, Erin Fortune, CFEE, David Knutson and Carrie Ring, CFEE. The hosts played fun games and shared their favorite COVID-cocktails. It was such a great way to meet new friends and re-connect with those we missed by not having the Annual IFEA Convention & Expo.

At the end of the day...IFEA Day, you helped us raise almost enough money to cover the "pre-COVID" budget amount for the Foundation. That is amazing and the IFEA staff, IFEA World Board and IFEA Foundation Board cannot express our appreciation enough.

If I had to summarize an incredible IFEA Day and our IFEA membership, I would reference an old Chinese proverb:

"People in the same boat should help each other."

Members of IFEA, we are all in the same boat. In addition, we have always been an organization that helps one another. IFEA Day was just another great example. For that, I am thankful.

Kevin Grothe

IFEA Foundation Board Chair
Vice President of Sponsorships
Memphis in May International Festival
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