

DECADES OF MEMORIES AND THANKS

Jim Vicar, Executive Director

As I prepare to bid my final farewell to the South Carolina School Plant Management Association (SCSPMA), I would like to take a moment to share some history and personal thoughts.

Back in 1980 when the conversation first began regarding the need for a professional association to provide information and resources I was privileged to be involved. It was determined that we needed to establish an association to represent the interests and advancement of the professionalism of school facility personnel throughout the great State of South Carolina and thus the SCSPMA was born. Our first four conferences took place in Charleston at what was at the time called Baptist College. The next ten years Clemson University was our conference site, we then moved around a bit to sites located in Beaufort, Charleston, Spartanburg and others. We ultimately settled on Myrtle Beach as our annual site. Membership and attendance have fluctuated over the years and even after all these years the SCSPMA is a valuable resource for facility professionals throughout the State.

Our very first President was Kasler Hughes who I had only met one year previous and he opened our bank account with his own funds. The first conference had 28 vendors (all the space could hold) and about 165 attendees. In the early years we were still learning how to best assist our membership and I think we did well. The groundwork had been laid and subsequent years have always improved upon it.

I have been honored to serve as the third and eleventh President as well as Secretary and Executive Director at various times over the last 40 years. I have met countless people over the years that shared my passion for the profession and count many of them as personal friends even to this day. I have also had to bear the pain of losing many Association friends who have passed on.

I am duty bound to mention some special vendors that have assisted us in achieving our goals over the years. Handi-Clean Products was a Charter vendor and attended the first 25 Conferences. There was a change in ownership, and they have since moved on. Spartan Chemical got involved very early and remains active today. School Dude (Solutions) has been with us from almost the start and has taken a very large role in our success. They still provide training, support and personnel to assist our membership. Mr. Josh Peach is always available to our Board and Membership and has provided countless hours of presentations and behind the scenes work.

I leave the Association in February at the Annual Conference (joint with the NSPMA) with great memories, high expectations and great trust in the current leadership. I will always be a fervent supporter and ambassador for the SCSPMA. When I reflect about my involvement, I would like to think I made a positive difference. I will always treasure the awards I've received, but most

especially, the Cornerstone Award and my Honorary Lifetime Membership. Time always takes a toll on folks and I'm no different; I feel that the industry has passed me by and it's time to step aside. I do so with no reservations and much anticipation.

Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this great Association. I wish all of Gods Blessings upon each member as well as the Association in general. Farewell my friends.