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## **IFMA Boston president's message: The facility management story - by Tom Palange**

October 04, 2019 - Owners Developers & Managers

Tom Palange

PBS recently began airing a new Ken Burns documentary about the history of country music in America. As I watched I grew more and more fascinated by the way the subject matter permeated society, resonated with so many and influenced people from all walks of life. The documentary got me thinking about the concept of shared experiences. The connection that people feel when they realize that others are seeing/feeling something similar or going through the same experience, can be very powerful. And while it may be a strange leap from country music to facility management, I believe these relatable moments are exactly why people join organizations such as IFMA.

The ability to share best practices or “war stories,” the opportunity to further one’s career through education or certification, and the overarching need to belong to a tribe of others who understand, are driving factors behind our members’ participation. Our chapter leaders recognize the importance of enabling conversations and shared experiences across the IFMA calendar and are actively expanding these opportunities in 2019-2020 by finding new ways to “build a better meeting.” In the end, the overall makeup of the IFMA calendar may look different than it has in the past, but it is all to help encourage member engagement in positive, new ways. Exclusive roundtables, interesting podcasts, pop-up gatherings and our signature, second-year event, FM Forward, the industry’s only one-day FM conference, are just a few of the things we’ve got planned.

Ken Burns’ documentaries are so compelling because he is an expert storyteller. He conducts his research, identifies the unifying themes and threads the story together in a way that is both clear and relatable to the audience. Here in New England, it is our organization that tells the story of the Facility Manager. It is a story of opportunity, adaptability, skill, technology, and most of all, people, and we remain committed and excited to tell that story. To do so, we need your involvement, feedback and ideas. Join us!

Tom Palange is the 2019 IFMA Boston president.

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