



A Salute to Capt. Larry White |

BY JEFFREY C. THOMSON

We all know what it's like to return home from vacation, don't we? The home mail, 90% of which we trash. The office mail and e-mails, with all of the "replies to all" waiting and the "out of office" message ignored. What does this have to do with the title of this piece, you ask? Although I was just back from vacation, I very much

wanted to attend the ceremony honoring Captain Larry White, CMA, CFM, CGFM, CPA, on his retirement from the U.S. Coast Guard after 28 years of service to his country.

I didn't attend the ceremonial events and reception in any official IMA capacity. Nor, I suspect, did two fine gentlemen I ran into there who have contributed mightily to IMA in leadership positions over the years: James Romesberg and Frank Homburger, CPA. I attended because, when you are part of a community and you have friends whom you respect and admire, you do everything in your power to support them.

Since I accepted the position of president and CEO, I have put forth themes such as "Creating Value Through Values." I firmly believe that high integrity is a foundation of high performance and that if we are to

grow membership and create value for members, we must do it through values. That includes integrity, ethics, and respect for all in our community. That includes reaching out to other accounting and nonaccounting associations within our scope of service. That includes being there for our chapters and councils, who are the passionate spokespeople and the local voice of our global members. And, finally, that means that every individual in our community should be afforded the appropriate level of respect and support.

But this is about Larry. Who else has "CMA_CFM" on his license plate? Who else lists "Management Accounting" in his bio as one of his favorite hobbies? Who else shouts at the top of his voice, in front of hundreds (yes, you guessed it), "I LOVE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING"?

No one but Captain Larry White, who exemplifies the values I mentioned. When he retired with merit and commendations on July 11, 2008, the ceremony was special and made you proud that honor and tradition still mean something. Larry's wife, Sherry, an accomplished artist and wonderful person; his children, Heath and Heather; and both sets of parents watched with honor and admiration for Larry's service and achievements.

That's why I attended. For his service to his country. For the fact that I greatly admire such a wonderful family man. For his passion and service to IMA over the years (including serving as IMA Chair). And, yes, because I hope that he remains an active part of the IMA community. We need him to help grow this business and serve our wonderful global community of management accounting professionals. But mostly I attended because he is my friend. Captain Larry White, now U.S. Coast Guard (Ret.). Just a few words, just a few (!) credentials, but a lifetime of memories and service for many. Thank you, Larry, from your thousands of friends in the global IMA community. ■