



The International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association is a not-for-profit trade association open to investor-owned and member-owned fitness, racquet, and athletic facilities. Associate memberships are available to manufacturers or suppliers of products and services of use to IHRSA members.

800-228-4772 USA & Canada  
617-951-0055 International  
617-951-0056 FAX  
ihrsa.org  
healthclubs.com  
E-mail: info@ihrsa.org

IHRSA Board of Directors

**Bill McBride: Chairperson**  
Club One  
415-477-3000

**Kay Yuspeh:** Elite Sports Clubs  
262-786-0880

**Richard Bilton:** Companhia Athletica  
+55 11-5188-2000

**Carol Nalevanko:** DMB Sports Clubs  
480-609-6979

**Brent Darden:** TELOS Fitness Center  
972-458-2582

**Scott Gillespie:** Saco Sport & Fitness  
207-284-5953

**Christian Pierar:** De Fitness Organisatie  
+32 9-232-5036

**Jasmin Kirstein:** My Sportlady Fitness  
+49 89-201-4248

**Robert Brewster:** The Alaska Clubs  
907-337-9550

**Molly Kemmer:** MediFit  
303-525-5392

**Mark Stevens:** Houstonian Hotel, Club and Spa  
713-685-6888

**Ervin Zubic:** Lifestyle Family Fitness  
727-456-3100

**Art Curtis:** Ex-officio  
Curtis Club Advisors  
203-314-9264

## Members “Delight” in the Details

Recently, for a three-month period, I had the opportunity to get actively involved in the opening of a new club, which we launched in late December. I rolled up my sleeves and got a little dirty to reconnect with the manifold aspects of our business in a way that I hadn’t done in years.



**Bill McBride**  
IHRSA Chairperson

During the brief presales period and subsequent launch, I immersed myself in every detail. I took phone calls from prospects, arranged furniture, cleaned up, folded laundry, trained staff, managed projects, conducted tours, sold memberships, wandered around talking to everyone, and made decisions about the tiniest aspects of the new operation.

This was one of the best learning experiences I’ve had in years. It reminded me of the importance of the smallest things. We’ve all heard the old adage, “The devil is in the details.” Well, I say, “Our industry *lives* and *dies* by the details.”

If a light bulb is out, members will think one of two things: you’re incompetent for not having replaced it, or you simply don’t care.

The number of individual items that need to be addressed when opening a club and creating an efficient and rewarding workout environment is too extensive to list. But the only way to deliver what your members want—to elicit member *delight*—is by keeping a keen eye on everything—*every* little thing.

Your clients really do care about minutiae—e.g., if coffee sweetener is available; where the trash cans are placed; if there are shelves in the showers; if you have a specific piece of equipment that they like; if your class times dovetail neatly with their schedule (right after they drop their children off for school).

It seems that, more than ever before, we, as an industry, have been spending most of our time on marketing and sales. Consumers, however, are spending their time “using” and “experiencing” our product.

After emerging from this recent tour of duty down in the trenches, I’ve been thinking a lot about the many things that we sometimes leave up to chance. The process has reheightened my awareness.

This grand opening reminded me of what former Secretary of State Colin Powell once said: “Never neglect details. When everyone’s mind is dulled or distracted, the leader must be doubly vigilant.”

Here’s to the hundreds of details that add up to great fitness facilities providing great member experiences! —

— Bill McBride; [Bill.McBride@ClubOne.com](mailto:Bill.McBride@ClubOne.com)