

Monthly Footnotes

A monthly publication of the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of the Association of Government Accountants

2004

Vol. V, No. 6

Luncheon Meeting

SPEAKER: Bart A. Halderson, CPA

TOPIC: Annual Tax Update

DATE: Thursday, January 27, 2005

COST: \$10.00 Members
\$12.00 Non-Members

REGISTRATION: 11:30 a.m.

LUNCH: 11:45 a.m.

PLACE: Imperial Garden East (4214 E. Washington Ave, across from East Towne Mall)

MENU: Traditional Banquet served family style, includes egg roll and hot tea

- ◆ Shrimp with Pea Pods
- ◆ Hunan Pork
- ◆ Governor's Chicken
- ◆ Beef with Broccoli
- ◆ Vegetable Fried Rice

RESERVATIONS: Please call the office of Sherri Voigt by 10 a.m. on Monday, January 24, 2005 with your name, menu selection and membership status, 267-9818 or e-mail:

sherri.voigt@dnr.state.wi.us

NEW MEMBERS FIRST LUNCHEON MEETING

If you are a new member and this will be the first luncheon you are attending, please note that when calling in your reservation. Your first chapter luncheon meeting is FREE!

BRING YOUR SUPERVISOR TO LUNCH ON AGA

One of the benefits of belonging to our Chapter is that you can bring you Supervisor to lunch once annually to show your appreciation for his/her support of your participation in AGA. Why not invite them to this months meeting. When making luncheon reservations make sure you mention that you are bringing your Supervisor to lunch.

About This Month's Speaker

Bart Halderson, CPA, is a tax manager in the Commercial Services Group in the Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP Madison office. He has been associated with the firm since 1996 and had three years of tax preparation experience prior to joining Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP. Mr. Halderson has experience in preparing and reviewing income tax returns for various levels of clients from small individuals to multi-million dollar corporate returns. He performs a wide base of tax consulting services, from year-end tax planning to planning for the sale of a business. He earned his BBA in Accounting from the UW-Madison.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Sherri Voigt, Chapter President

Hello all! We have adjusted the newsletter publishing slightly since there is no December luncheon meeting. Mark your calendar now for the annual tax update meeting on January 27; it is our most popular luncheon of the year. Also, the food drive starts with the January lunch. Any food donations you have will be welcomed and delivered to local food pantries.

We had a fabulous speaker at the November 18 lunch. If you get a chance to hear Marshall Cook speak, please do. He had a list of great stress myths and tips. I was most struck by his fundamental law of time management (related to truth 3 and tip 6): *When you take time, you do not create more time. You must take it from someplace else.* The obvious need to make a conscious decision about what the time trade-off will be really stood out as I read it, yet I am quite aware I add new projects without that step. As Professor Cook said, when no decision is made you are most likely to take it away from sleep time by default.

There was some interesting, late-breaking news at the national level. Please read the article below about the name change issue. It has been settled and you won't need to learn a new meaning for the AGA acronym. We will continue to be the Association of Government Accountants, and our mission will continue to include Advancing Government Accountability.

Best wishes for a safe and happy new year!



From the National Office

Name Change Focus Group Recommends No Change to AGA Name, NEC Accepts Findings

Association of Government Accountants is here to stay—for now anyway. The Name Change Focus Group, convened by National President Bobby A. Derrick, CGFM, recommended no change to AGA's name and that recommendation was accepted by the National Executive Committee (NEC) at its Dec. 10 quarterly meeting. The seven-member focus group, chaired by Past National President Richard V. Norment, CGFM, CIA, was designed to represent all corners of the AGA membership after a vote was taken calling for further study into the matter at the annual National Board of Directors meeting in July. The issue was first raised at the end of the 2002-2003 Program Year by then-Immediate Past National President William J. Anderson Jr., CGFM, who wrote "Looking to the Future," suggesting AGA change its name to "Association for Government Accountability."

The focus group worked hard to include the AGA membership and the AGA chapters in its deliberations, requesting feedback through an article in TOPICS and other outreach efforts. Members from all corners of the Association replied, expressing a variety of opinions on the issue. The focus group recommended to the NEC that the Association keep its current name—AGA (Association of Government Accountants)—and that the matter of changing the name be tabled at this time. In reaching its recommendation, the focus group's discussion focused in on two important factors:

1. There is no groundswell of support among the membership for the name change. The member feedback was split for and against changing the name, and if we changed what is the right name for our Association. Changing the name is likely to cause divisiveness among the members.

2. There is no empirical evidence to support the notion that changing the name will cause a big influx in new members. However, there has been some evidence to show that some existing members would leave the Association if the name changes. With these factors considered six of the seven members voted to recommend no change be made to AGA's name at this time.

On Friday, the NEC accepted the focus group's recommendation, with two members dissenting.

"I appreciate the hard work of the focus group," said President Derrick, after the NEC's vote to accept the recommendation. "I know what a difficult issue this was for everyone involved. As I have traveled to numerous AGA chapters and talked to many members in recent months, I have come to realize that the focus group's decision was correct based on the sentiments I have heard. I am convinced that this is the right thing for the time period.

"I know this will be a disappointment for some, and others will be relieved," President Derrick continued. "Along with our executive director and the NEC, I like to think we are moving in all kinds of directions directly related to our mission and our strategic plan; unfortunately, some will be disappointed that this did not include the name of our great Association. We have a name people are proud to be associated with, and partners want to work with, it's more important that we deliver by accomplishments. As AGA endeavors to be the leader in advancing government accountability, our accomplishments will bring recognition and establish the momentum for our future endeavors. I am proud to be a member of AGA, Association of Government Accountants, dedicated to serving our members, our country and our profession."

To read the full text of the focus group's final report, go to www.agacgfm.org.

From Bobby A. Derrick, CGFM – National President

Have you ever been to Albuquerque, New Mexico? If not, and you want to see and feel the warm sunshine and have a wonderful time, I suggest that you plan a visit to New Mexico as soon as you can. Albuquerque combines a unique blend of multiple cultures, natural beauty, profound historic attractions, and spectacular climate with four distinct seasons, museums, galleries and shopping to create a distinct and unforgettable visit. [Click here to read more about President Derrick's trip to New Mexico.](#)

ORDER NOW!

A Primer on Internal Controls and Auditing: Crucial to Government and the Economy

By: Wanda A. Wallace, Ph.D., CPA, CMA, CIA

Internal control has never been optional, and now an easy-to-read resource directed to a wide audience is available to understand both what is meant by "internal control" and how an "audit" is conducted. [Click here to order your copy.](#)

Education Corner

Improving Government Performance: Financial Managers Take Center Stage

AGA welcomes you to its Third Annual National Leadership Conference (NLC), February 7 – 8, 2005, at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, D.C.

Sound financial management is more important than ever. Governments are grappling with a growing list of homeland security issues—how to keep our cities and our nation safe, and how to pay for it. In this environment, financial managers will take center stage, confronting these challenges and the difficulties of balancing the many competing demands on taxpayers' money. At the same time, governments are focusing more intently on performance to ensure that every dollar is spent wisely, and can be accounted for later. These developments are bringing financial managers into the spotlight.

With the theme "Improving Government Performance: Financial Managers Take Center Stage" the NLC will bring together the top leaders in federal, state and local government financial management, all of whom are struggling to make ends meet while providing an unprecedented level of services to the citizens they serve. This conference is a must for top government leaders.

Learn From the Top Leaders in the Government Financial Management Industry

- **Joanna Crane**, Identity Theft Program, U.S. Federal Trade Commission
- **Karen S. Evans**, Administrator of E-Government and Information Technology, Office of Management and Budget (invited)
- **Bettina Gregory**, Former ABC News Senior Correspondent
- **Helene Heller**, Senior Director, Project & Information Management, Office of the Chief Information Officer, New York City Housing Authority
- **William H. Hudnut III**, Mayor, Town of Chevy Chase, MD, former Mayor of Indianapolis, IN
- **Paul C. Light, Ph.D.**, Senior Fellow, Governance Studies and Director, Center for Public Service, The Brookings Institution
- **Edward L. Long Jr.**, Chief Financial Officer, Fairfax County Government, Fairfax, VA
- **Andrew B. Maner, MBA**, Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- **Samuel T. Mok**, Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Labor
- **Patrick P. O'Carroll**, Acting Inspector General, Social Security Administration
- **Paul Tibbits**, Director of Business Modernization and Systems Integration, U.S. Department of Defense

Reasons to Attend

The National Leadership Conference promises to be an excellent learning and networking opportunity for government financial managers and accountability professionals. We have planned an outstanding conference program that will give you the chance to:

- **Earn 14 CPE hours** at outstanding educational sessions
- **Learn** from nationally recognized leaders in the profession
- **Network** with the best in the accountability business
- **See** the latest technological advances in financial management
- **Increase** your promotion potential
- **Renew** your professional energy and gain ideas as you talk with experts and colleagues across government who are who fighting—and winning—the battle to make government work.

Early Registration Deadline: January 14, 2005

More information about the conference arrives soon in your mailbox! [Click here if you can't wait for the mail to arrive.](#) [Or, register online now with a credit card and save \\$25!](#)

Don't miss this opportunity to network with your peers and learn from the best in the government accountability business. Get ready to take center stage—register today!

See you in Washington!

REGIONAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Have you checked out our Chapter's website? There is information on our Chapter and the opportunities it offers as well as a link to the National website. Check it out!

Information on our Chapter, meetings, and other events can

Be found on our website at:

www.aga-wis.org

A wealth of information can be found on the North Central Region Website at:

<http://www.adpc.purdue.edu/NCREGAGA/NorthCentral.html>

FINANCIAL SPECIALIST PROGRAM SUPERVISOR

Job Announcement Code: 04-02533

**Career
Opportunity**

Dept. of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection – Bureau of Finance

Location is Madison; Full -Time 40 hours/wk

Pay is between \$31,565 - \$50,608 plus excellent benefits (paid vacation and sick leave, health insurance and paid holidays). A one-year probationary period is required upon appointment.

Are you well-versed in accounting or auditing transactions? Are you seeking an opportunity to become a supervisor? Then read on to find out more about the career move we have to offer you!



Job Duties, Knowledge and Skills

- Supervise a staff of financial specialists and provide guidance to financial staff throughout the Department.
- Process and/or approve a variety of state financial transactions; prepare fiscal reports.
- Perform grant accounting activities by reviewing and reconciling all federal financial reports and requests for reimbursement.
- Knowledge of business management & financial principles, including financial reporting & documentation.
- Knowledge of data processing tools, including spreadsheets (e.g., Excel).
- Effective oral and written communication skills.



Well-qualified candidates will have experience with electronic financial or accounting systems. Professional training in accounting or auditing such as that which would be acquired by earning a two-year associates degree in accounting or auditing or commensurate experience and training is required.

Application Process

Apply with an **Application** for State Employment form (OSER-MRS-38) which can be obtained at <http://oser.state.wi.us/application.asp>, a **current resume** and a **typewritten paper** limited to three pages addressing the following four items:

1. Describe your education and/or recent work experience related to accounting or auditing.
2. Identify your years of experience working with electronic financial or accounting systems as well as the specific types of systems.
3. Describe your years of experience and responsibilities as a lead worker, project leader or in a supervisory role (e.g., prioritize/assign tasks to others, establish project timelines, hire staff, etc.)
4. Identify your experience working with federal grants stating if you have prepared financial grant reports, reviewed grant reports prepared by others or tracked grant data.

Be sure to address each number/skill area separately, labeling each one in your paper. Deadline is 4:30 p.m. on Monday, January 3, 2005. Send Application materials to: DATCP; Bureau of Human Resources – 3rd Floor; 2811 Agriculture Drive; P.O. Box 8911; Madison, WI 53708-8911. Recruitment questions may be addressed to Alison Scherer at (608) 224-4761.

CGFM Corner



The Mark of Excellence in Government Financial Management

Getting Ready to Take the Exams? New CGFM Offers Tips for Success

John Savash, CGFM, sounds a bit like a professor before a roomful of students when he talks about how he passed the three rigorous CGFM Examinations. “My advice would be, ‘You’ve got to put the time in to these exams if you want to pass them,’ “ he said. “On-the-job experience won’t get it done.” Savash, who is an assistant professor of Accounting at Elmira College in Elmira, NY, knows something about studying and taking exams. As a CPA with a master’s degree in finance and four years of local government experience, Savash turned to the CGFM as a way to learn more in-depth information to share with his governmental accounting students. Because the CGFM preparatory classes were offered far from his home base, Savash decided to study on his own using the two [CGFM study guides for Exams 2 and 3](#). He took [AGA’s online Governmental Environment course to prepare for Exam 1](#). Along the way, he developed some strategies that worked well for him, helping him to pass the three examinations on the first try and earn his credential in September. [Click here to read more of Savash's tips for success.](#)

AGA’s Professional Certification Board Welcomes Richard Bunce, CGFM

Dick Bunce, CGFM, sees the CGFM certification as a kind of Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval for accounting and auditing professionals. “The certification demonstrates a significant level of professional competency, knowledge and commitment,” he said. “Our clients may not know all the details involved in obtaining the CGFM, but they do recognize that we have obtained a certification established by experts in the field, so the CGFM provides us with some instant credibility. That allows us to quickly move beyond the question of whether we know what we’re talking about, to the real issues of solving problems for our clients.” [Click here to read more about Dick Bunce and his plans for his PCB tenure.](#)

CGFM Profile: Teresa Barth

Teresa Barth had 25 years of banking experience behind her, but it wasn’t enough to understand the particulars of working in a government environment. College courses, a few temporary positions and conversations with a U.S. Department of State budget analyst, who carpooled with Barth, were about the extent of her exposure to the world of government financial management.

When Barth’s employer announced that the bank would move its financial functions to Chicago, she decided to take a different path. She began the new phase of her career as a senior consultant with Booz Allen Hamilton seven years ago, and now works with the General Services Administration, preparing their monthly income and expense statements. [Click here to read more about Barth's journey to the CGFM.](#)

Congratulations to the New CGFM’s!

Gary Bruggenthies, CGFM, Scott County, Jordan, MN; John D. Cewe, CGFM, CDFM, U.S. Department of Defense, Fairfax Station, VA; Roberta C. Creamer, CGFM, State of Maine, Augusta, ME; Charles O. Egu, CGFM, CPA, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Washington, D.C.; Cheryl D. Hall, CGFM, U.S. Department of Air Force Civil Engineering, Peterson AFB, CO; Wayne Richard Hart, CGFM, School Board of Polk County, Lakeland, FL; Scott R. Montgomery, CGFM, U.S. Department of Commerce - NIST, Gaithersburg, MD; John A. Savash, II, CGFM, Elmira College, Elmira, NY; Joyce A. Stroschein, CGFM, City of Pocatello, Pocatello, ID; Rosemarie T. Sullivan, CGFM, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C.; and Lyn J. Tontz, CGFM, Riverside County, Riverside, CA.

Earning the CGFM Certification

CGFM Program Celebrates 10 Years of Success

When Jeffrey C. Steinhoff began planning for his 1993-1994 term as AGA National President, a new certification program was not on his priority list. Steinhoff, who is managing director of the Financial Management and Assurance Team at the Government Accountability Office, testified quite often before congressional committees at that time. One particular hearing stands out. "During the hearing, Senator James Sasser, the chairman, really asked a lot about my professional credentials and made a pretty big deal about me being a CPA, and that added a sense of greater reliability, and greater reliance on whatever I was saying," Steinhoff recalled. "I really didn't think those skills and that exam I passed quite some time before that was all that applicable to the issues I was discussing at the hearing."

Chairman Sasser had unknowingly planted a seed that would bloom into AGA's CGFM Program, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. Steinhoff saw a strong need to recognize the "very rich portfolio of knowledge and skills" that are unique to government financial managers, who are dealing with complex issues that are quite different than those of the private sector.

The National Executive Committee and AGA's chapters. Before he even started, though, he was warned by his colleagues at GAO that he already had a strong plan in place for his presidential term. They said he didn't need to take the risk of Steinhoff looked at the many previous discussions and studies AGA had spearheaded on the subject. In 1992, a task force recommended dropping the idea, but he found the sentiment to be split nearly 50-50, so he began planning to introduce the concept to launching an initiative that was destined to be rejected by the membership. "I felt strongly that we were viewed as second-class citizens by some in the profession. We have special and unique skills and we shouldn't be second to anyone," Steinhoff said. "There was really nothing that recognized government financial managers out there at all."

Steinhoff generated interest in the concept and received a broad mandate from the membership to pursue it. He introduced the program at the 1994 Professional Development Conference. He hoped 4,000 would apply for CGFM status during the initial certification period, when the CGFM was granted based on education and experience. "There were those who said I'd have trouble getting 500," he said. Then began the deluge of mailbags to the AGA National Office. More than 13,000 became certified. Also, AGA's membership shot up by 7,000 over a few short years, and attendance at the annual PDC skyrocketed. The CGFM is considered AGA's most successful undertaking.

AGA's Professional Certification Board, which oversees the CGFM Program, developed a training program of three courses that help prepare CGFM candidates for the three examinations. The exams were computerized from the start, and the board has gone through the rigorous process of updating them to keep the material fresh and relevant to the issues financial managers face every day. Board members, who are experts in state and local government, federal accounting standards, the Yellow Book and more, have dedicated hundreds of hours of volunteer time to the CGFM Program. Many board members, who serve today, including Steinhoff helped develop the program 10 years ago.

Steinhoff is heartened by the growing list of governments that recognize the CGFM, but he also recognizes that establishing a new credential takes many years of effort at the grassroots level. The CGFM will become a more sought-after credential over time, as Steinhoff sees a future of continuing growth. "The CGFM is a mark of achievement, an indicator of excellence in our chosen field and it will only grow in value," Steinhoff said.

By Christina Camara

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN - MAKE SURE YOU HAVE YOUR CPEs

Over 4800 active CGFM holders need to meet their Continuing Professional Education (CPE) requirement this year – that is to say, you need to have 80 CPEs earned within the two-year period of January 1, 2003 and December 31, 2004.

How do you know if this is your year to make sure you have earned 80 CPEs? If you have received your CGFM in 1996, 1998, 2000 or 2002, then your current two-year CPE cycle ends on December 31, 2004. If short, you can take advantage of the grace period of January 1 – March 31, 2005 to catch up on your CPEs (these hours then cannot be counted towards your next cycle of 2005-2006).

If you have not yet reached your mark, you still have time. What you have to do is remind yourself that every activity might serve a dual purpose. If you are earning a graduate degree, if you are teaching or writing, or if you are earning CPEs for another certification, you might be able to count these CPEs towards your CGFM certification requirement. Review the opportunities available to you for earning CPE hours, and you will realize that there are many ways in which you can maintain your CGFM certification without undue cost or time demands.

For example:

- Online CPE availability includes "Journal CPE Online Program" that offers CPEs for reading The Journal of Government Financial Management and taking the relevant quiz and online courses offered through Micromash and SmartPros, two educational organizations in partnership with AGA (www.agacgfm.org/education/educationdefault.aspx).
- Federal Government employees have free access to E-Training through the Gov Online Learning Center (www.golearn.gov).
- CPEs sponsored by AGA chapters, state CPA or other government finance officer societies and other organizations.
- Instructors can earn CPE hours for teaching a course (not to exceed 40 CPEs in any two-year period); writers who publish an article or book that contribute directly to CGFM's professional proficiency can earn up to 20 CPEs; and students who are earning their Masters degree can receive 45 CPEs by completing a 3-credit college course that relates to government financial management.

For more detailed information about earning CPE hours, what topics and subjects qualify for CPEs and answers to commonly asked CPE questions, please go to the AGA website (www.agacgfm.org), click on "CGFM Certification," "How Do I Maintain a CGFM," and "CPE Requirements." If you have questions on CGFM CPE requirements, you can also contact AGA National at 800.AGA.7211, ext. 313.

Become a Certified Government Financial Manager

Visit our website at www.agacgfm.org or send an email to ksilver@agacgfm.org to start on the pathway to CGFM certification. The Chapter will reimburse the exam fees for first four chapter members each year who pass all parts of the CGFM exam. Contact Eric Busse for details.

Other News of Interest

CHAPTER RECOGNITION PROGRAM (CRP) 2004-2005 National Points

CRP 2nd Quarter Results (Year-to-date)

Chapter	Goal 2004-2005	% of Goal	Total Points	Chapter Leadership, Planning and Participation	Education & Professional Development	Certification	Communications	Membership	Community Service	Awards
				3,000 Credits	4,000 Credits	4,000 Credits	3,000 Credits	3,000 Credits	2,000 Credits	1,000 Credits
Southern Wisconsin	10,000	114 %	11,412	2,775	1,800	2,575	3,637	225	200	200

FMSB Comments on FASAB's Guidance on SFFAS 23

AGA's Financial Management Standards Board (FMSB) has commented on the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board's (FASAB) proposed Guidance for Implementation of SFFAS 23, *Eliminating the Category National Defense Property, Plant, and Equipment Classification of Items Formerly Considered National Defense PP&E (Proposed Staff Implementation Guidance 23.1)*. In an Oct. 28 letter, Chair Russell W. Hinton, CGFM, wrote that the FMSB agreed with the proposal that assets recognized under SFFAS 23 "should be categorized based on currently effective asset definitions in SFFAS 6 and other standards, and not be limited in classification to general PP&E." The letter also said, "It also agrees that any items not properly classified as general PP&E should be valued in a manner consistent with the general principles established in SFFAS 23 implementation guidance and the specific measurement guidance provided for the asset class." The FMSB also made suggested changes to three paragraphs to clarify them. [Click here to read the entire letter.](#)

FMSB Comments on Plan for NIAF

AGA's FMSB has made a number of comments and suggestions on the draft Strategic Plan for the National Intergovernmental Audit Forum (NIAF). The FMSB applauded the task force for taking on the task of developing the forum's first strategic plan, and gave the forum four pages of suggestions to improve the draft. [Click here to read the entire letter.](#)

FMSB Takes Stance on GASB Proposal

AGA's FMSB has sent comments to the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) on its proposed Technical Bulletin, *Recognition of Pension and Other Postemployment Benefit (OPEB) Expenditures/Expense and Liabilities*. In a Nov. 11 letter, the FMSB said that the answers given in the technical bulletin are generally "consistent with past standards for modified accrual accounting and for accrual accounting for pensions and OPEB." It also offered several suggestions, including the idea that GASB could include additional examples of "conversion of unpaid differences to pension- or OPEB-related debt." [Click here to read the entire letter.](#)

FASAB Publishes SFFAS 26

FASAB has issued Statement of Federal Accounting Standards 26, called *Presentation of Significant Assumptions for the Statement of Social Insurance: Amending SFFAS 25*. The amendment reclassifies significant assumptions as basic information rather than as required supplementary information (RSI). RSI is not part of the basic financial statements and is usually presented separately. The standard is effective for periods beginning after Sept. 30, 2004. [Click here to read the entire statement.](#) [Click here for more information on FASAB.](#)

IRS Brings New Accounting System Online

The IRS has switched on its new Integrated Financial System (IFS) to handle core accounting, post debits and credits, and manage the budget. "A lot of the focus of the initial implementation will be with the chief financial officer's organization to do their year-end close and their first monthly financial report cycle," said Robert Albicker, deputy associate commissioner of modernization for systems integration. In September, the IRS began assembling its fiscal 2004 report using the legacy Automated Financial System. After processing all the necessary transactions, the agency converted data and production information from the 2004 close and fiscal 2005 start into IFS so it could complete the end-of-year report and first month's statement, both due this month. "We have very detailed charts that show day by day, hour by hour, what we've had to do from the middle of September until Nov. 10 in order to put the system into live production he said. "Beginning next month, the IRS will use the new system to produce W-2 and 1099 forms for employees and contractors to accompany 2004 tax returns". —Mary Mosquera, *Government Computer News*. [Click here to read more.](#)

GAO Debates New Auditing Rules

After Congress enacted the 2002 Sarbanes-Oxley Act, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) was left with a question: Should it change the standards for government auditors? GAO's Advisory Council on Government Auditing Standards, a group of auditing experts from the public and private sectors, met Nov. 8 to debate that proposition. GAO sets governmentwide auditing standards through the Yellow Book, which was last updated in 2003, and is considering changes for its next revision. "It started to look like there was a risk of everyone going off in their own direction and that would not have been good at all for the profession," said Jeanette Franzel, director of Financial Management and Assurance at GAO, *Government Executive* reported. Audits, she said, should follow certain standards, regardless of whether the auditor is examining a publicly traded company, not-for-profit or government entity. [Click here to learn more about Government Auditing Standards.](#)

Survey Shows Voter Support of Federal Workers

The majority of American voters believe the country needs a positive view of the federal government and its workers, according to a study released Nov. 4 by the Partnership for Public Service. "The post-election buzz is about values and how they divide us, but one value that unites Americans is a belief in the potential of government as an instrument for good," said Max Stier, president of the Washington-based partnership. "The majority of American voters say they want our leaders to lay out a positive vision for improving government, rather than engaging in bureaucrat bashing." According to the Election Day survey, support for the government and for federal employees is evenly spread across party and ideological lines. — David McGlinchey, *Government Executive*. [Click here to read more.](#)

OPM Launches Minority Recruitment Program for SES

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) today will begin accepting applications for a special governmentwide recruitment program designed to broaden opportunities for minorities, women and people with disabilities to become federal executives. The Senior Executive Service Federal Candidate Development Program, or Fed CDP, will prepare people for leadership jobs in government through rotational assignments, mentoring and performance assessments, OPM said. The Senior Executive Service (SES), the government's corps of senior managers and technical experts who oversee day-to-day operations at many agencies, had 7,078 members as of June. Of that total, 14.7 percent were minorities and 26.6 percent were women, according OPM. Gilbert Sandate, chairman of the Coalition for Fairness for Hispanics in Government, said agencies, which will bear much of the program's cost, will control which applicants are selected for training and then promoted into the SES. To achieve fair represent action, he suggested that OPM and the agencies work together to ensure that minorities serve on screening panels and that they set goals for minority participation in the program. —Stephen Barr, *The Washington Post*. [Click here to read more.](#)

Federal Agencies Show Modest Management Gains

Ten federal agencies earned better grades on this quarter's scorecard from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) than they earned in the previous ratings. Under OMB's scorecard, green indicates success, yellow means mixed results and red means unsatisfactory. Six agencies improved on at least two measures. The Department of Labor earned green scores, the highest rating, for its financial performance and e-government initiatives, both of which were rated yellow, the middle rating, in the June quarter results. The Department of State went from yellow to green for its e-government and budget and performance efforts. The General Services Administration improved from yellow to green for its competitive sourcing and from red, the lowest rating, to yellow for its e-government and budget and performance integration efforts. The quarterly scorecard measures 26 major agencies' progress on President Bush's five main initiatives: strategic management of human capital, competitive scouring, improved financial performance, expanded electronic government, and budget and performance integration. —Kimberly Palmer, *Government Executive*. [Click here to read more.](#)

GASAC Hears Reports on GASB Fund-Raising Efforts

The Governmental Accounting Standards Advisory Council (GASAC) heard updates on fund-raising efforts and other projects of the GASB at its Nov. 5 meeting at the GASB offices in Norwalk, CT. Sharon R. Russell, CGFM, AGA's GASAC representative, reported that Steven Getz of the Financial Accounting Foundation told members that about \$120,500 has been raised from 100 cities and seven counties under the Fair Share Assessment Program. This is compared to \$95,500 raised last year from 28 respondents. The Bond Fee Program, another fund-raising effort, has a goal of raising \$1.3 million. Although the Bond Market Association has contributed \$500,000, collections under the program have been slow, Getz said. In other action, GASB staff announced that work is under way on a new user guide on note disclosures and supporting information. The guide is expected to be released by early 2005.

GASB Sets New Deadline for Intangible Assets Survey

Technical difficulties have hampered the collection of data through an online survey on existing practices for reporting intangible assets. The deadline for completion of the survey, intended to support the board's upcoming project on accounting and reporting of intangible assets, has been extended to Dec. 17, 2004. If your government or client has intangible assets, please complete the survey at the GASB's website. [Click here to complete the survey online.](#) Respondents have the option to complete the survey online or to print the survey and submit it by mail.

ARE YOU MOVING?

If you are moving, or have already moved, please be sure to advise AGA National of your change of address. You can update your address online at: www.agacgfm.org/membership/form_address.htm. Also, don't forget to notify your local chapter.

Southern Wisconsin Chapter Calendar of Events for 2004-2005

September 23, 2004 – Luncheon Meeting, Jay Heck, WI Common Cause - "The 2004 Elections-- More Expensive and Negative than Ever--Why?" (J.T. Whitney's)

October 12, 2004 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

October 28, 2004 – Luncheon Meeting, Carol Brown, Indian Gaming Compact (Coliseum Bar)

November 4 2004 – Half-day Training Session, *Reporting Performance Information*, Wilson Campbell, CGFM, Union South

November 9, 2004 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

November 18, 2004 – Luncheon Meeting, Marshall Cook, 10 Truths, 13 Tips, and the Fundamental Law for Managing Your Time And Saving Your Sanity (The Concourse)

No December Luncheon Meeting

January 11, 2005 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

January 27, 2004 – Luncheon Meeting, *Annual Tax Update*, Bart Halderson, CPA, of Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP

February 8, 2005 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

February 24, 2005 – Luncheon Meeting, Dave Carlson, School Financing

March 8, 2005 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

March 17, 2005 – Luncheon Meeting, Topic and speaker to be determined

April 12, 2005 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

April 14, 2005 – Luncheon Meeting, Topic and speaker to be determined

April 28, 2005 – *Annual Spring Symposium*, Various speakers and topics to be determined, Tripp Commons, UW-Madison Memorial Union

May 10, 2005 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

May 19, 2005 – Luncheon Meeting, Topic and speaker to be determined

June 14, 2005 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

Note: Community service, VITA and social events will be announced during the year.

2004-05 Chapter Officers & Board Members

President – Sherri Voigt, CPA, DNR, sherri.voigt@dnr.state.wi.us, 608-267-9818

President Elect – Vacant

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CGFM Chair – Eric Busse, DPI [[mailto: Eric.Busse@dpi.state.wi.us](mailto:Eric.Busse@dpi.state.wi.us)]

Awards Chair – Vacant

Early Careers Chair – Vacant

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