

Monthly Footnotes

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

2005

Vol. 5, No. 2

Luncheon Meeting

SPEAKER: Jerry Landmark, Assistant Director of the DPI School Finance Team

TOPIC: School Funding Formula

DATE: February 24, 2005

COST: \$ 8.00 Members
\$10.00 Non-Members

REGISTRATION: 11:30 a.m.

LUNCH: 11:45 a.m.

PLACE: Dayton Street Café (at The Concourse, 1 West Dayton St)

MENU:

- ◆ **Key Lime Chicken Wrap** – Low-carb wheat wrap filled with chicken marinated in lime juice, tarragon, and onion. Served with cheese wedges.
- ◆ **Wisconsin Cheddar Burger** – Hamburger topped with aged cheddar cheese on a fresh kaiser roll, served with lettuce, tomato, and Dayton Street fries
- ◆ **Salad Bar** – Features more than 20 salad selections, 4 homemade soups, fresh bread, and assorted cookies/dessert bars

RESERVATIONS: Please call the office of Sherri Voigt by 10 a.m. on Monday, February 21, 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 your Supervisor to lunch once annually to show your appreciation for his/her support of your participation in AGA. Why not invite them for this month's meeting. When making luncheon reservations make sure you mention that you are bringing your Supervisor to lunch.

ABOUT THIS MONTH'S SPEAKER

Jerry Landmark has been with the Department of Public Instruction since 1996, starting as a School Finance Consultant. He has also been Director of the State Schools for the Deaf and Blind. Jerry received a Master's degree in 1996 from UW-Madison in Educational Administration, with a School Business Manager Certification. He is married with two grown children, and has competed in triathlons and marathons the past several years.

From the National Office

2004-2005 Recruitment Campaign—Resolve to Recruit in 2005

AGA's National President, Bobby A. Derrick, CGFM, is challenging every member to recruit at least one new member into AGA before the close of the membership year, April 30, 2005. And, he is challenging AGA leaders to do even more—to recruit five new members each before the close of the membership year, *5 by 5*. This group includes the National Executive Committee, Regional Vice Presidents and Elects, Regional Coordinators, national board and committee members, chapter presidents and chapter membership chairs. *Are you up to the challenge?*

"I believe the best marketing tool for membership is our own experiences," Derrick said. "My presidential theme, *Leadership for the Future*, includes in its message, sharing the AGA story with others through the personal touch. I am talking about a quick call, a conversation at a meeting, or an e-mail. A little investment in your time will go a long way in terms of helping to strengthen AGA. We know your time is valuable, but in as little as five minutes, you can help a colleague or friend achieve their professional goals by sharing the AGA advantage." By recruiting members, you can also win prizes or earn AGA Dollars, which can be used for a number of AGA activities. [Click here](#) for a list of top recruiters. [Click here](#) for a list of AGA Dollars earned. Questions? Contact AGA membership at 800.AGA.7211 and/or e-mail [Catena Sanders](#). Happy Recruiting! [Click here](#) for a copy of AGA's membership application.

AGA Recognizes Federal, State and Local Government Leaders with Prestigious Awards

AGA will present its Federal Leadership and State & Local Government Leadership Awards in conjunction with the Third Annual National Leadership Conference in February. AGA is pleased to honor this year's group of distinguished recipients. To view a list of recipients, [click here](#), and then click on "NLC Award Recipients" in the right-hand box. Congratulations to all the award recipients!

RVP-Elect Designee Candidates Added to National Officer Slate

Two Regional Vice Presidents-Elect Designee have joined the 2005-2006 slate of candidates, due to take office on July 1, 2005. Riley Shaull, a member of AGA's Oklahoma City Chapter, has been nominated Texas-Oklahoma Regional Vice President-Elect designee. Deborah Davis, CGFM, a member of AGA's Chattanooga Chapter, has joined the slate as the Southeastern Regional Vice President Designee. As outlined in the Association's bylaws, AGA will accept independent nominations from AGA members via petition until Feb. 15, 2005. At that time, if other candidates are nominated, the Bylaws and Procedures Committee will conduct an election to determine the officers. However, if no other nominations are received, the committee's slate will take office effective July 1, 2005. [Click here to view the complete slate of nominees](#). Contact [Rosanna Ortiz](#) with questions.

AGA's Governing Body Plans for the Future

AGA's National Executive Committee took several actions at its December meeting to position the Association for future growth. The NEC reviewed the financial position of the Association and projects an excess of revenues over expenses at year-end greater than the budgeted amount. The final fiscal year 2006 budget will be presented at the Feb. 4 NEC meeting, set for the J.W. Marriott Hotel in Washington, D.C. During a conference call on Jan. 6, the governing body also approved hiring a public relations firm to boost AGA's image within the government financial management industry, the public and media. The NEC also approved one new staff position—a research assistant to help AGA accomplish its various research projects—and reinstated another—the membership marketing manager. In other action, the NEC:

- Adopted the recommendation of the Name Change Focus Group to keep AGA's name, the Association of Government Accountants, at this time. [Click here to read more](#).
- Approved formation of a new chapter in Columbus, OH.
- Determined that the chairs of the Professional Certification Board and the Corporate Partner Advisory Group should serve as official representatives to the NEC.

AGA Taps Longtime CGFM Supporter as New Director of Professional Certification

AGA welcomes **Peter V. Aliferis**, CGFM, as its new director of Professional Certification.

An AGA member for more than 20 years and one of the earliest supporters of the CGFM credential, Aliferis is looking forward to spreading the word to professionals and their employers about the benefits of certification.

"I've been a proponent of a specialized certification for government financial managers from the get-go and now I'm getting to walk the walk since I've been talking the talk."

Aliferis joins the AGA National Office after a long career at the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), holding several management positions, including director of the Special Projects Office and director of Operations at the Accounting and Information Management Division. While he served as director of the Office of International Audit

Organization Liaison, GAO colleague Jeffrey C. Steinhoff, CGFM, who was then AGA's National President, introduced the CGFM Program. "I was one of those people that went to Jeff behind the scenes all the time and said it was a wonderful thing." In fact, Aliferis was one of AGA's first CGFMs, with certificate No. 151. [Click here to read the entire article.](#)

Education Corner

Join AGA's March 2 Audio Conference on Fraud or Take Journal Quizzes Online

Looking for a convenient way to earn CPE hours? [Click here](#) to find eight Journal CPE Online quizzes, which are each worth 3 CPE hours. Read the Journal of Government Financial Management and take the corresponding quizzes. It's easy to earn a total of 24 CPE hours at your own convenience.

Here's another convenient, inexpensive educational opportunity—AGA, in conjunction with NASACT and the National Association of Local Government Auditors, is producing an audio conference, worth 2 CPE hours, called, "Key Reasons Why the Breakdown of Internal Controls Contribute to Fraud," set for 2–3:50 p.m. EST March 2. This audio conference will describe how specific "soft control" failures contribute to internal controls not working as intended. It will also focus on how "strong controls" can sometimes leave the door open to fraudulent activities. Included will be specific case examples and suggestions that all accountability professionals can use to reduce future frauds. John Hall, a private consultant and nationally known speaker, and David Hancox, CGFM, a state audit director and nationally known speaker and author, will join forces to describe their experiences in examining and lecturing on internal controls and fraud for many years. For a cost of merely \$249 per telephone line, your chapter, agency or firm can provide 2 CPE hours to as many people as can fit in a room. [Click here to register.](#)

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.](#)

Computer-Based Auditing Tools & Techniques—A Special Supplement to the Summer 2005 Journal

Auditors everywhere rely on a variety of computer-based tools and techniques to get their jobs done. The supplement will be bagged and mailed along with the Summer 2005 Annual Technology issue of the *Journal of Government Financial Management*. [Click here for more information.](#)

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>




PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
Sherri Voigt, Chapter President

I would like to take this opportunity to announce our 3 new members this month: Gwendolyn Jordan with the WI Department of Workforce Development and Roger Ingebritson and Todd McMillion with the HHS Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Welcome to you all.

Our annual tax update luncheon was held January 27. Once again, over 50 attendees enjoyed a variety of Chinese dishes and learned about the latest round of major tax changes from Bart Halderson, tax manager with Virchow, Krause, & Company. His highlights included the current tax brackets, itemized deductions (including the new sales tax option and donated vehicle valuation), health savings accounts, and a few depreciation changes.

Related to the tax topic, tax preparation season has begun! A number of chapter members and active non-members are involved with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA). The site is located at the Villager Mall, 2300 Park Street, and is open to anyone with lower income or less complex returns (for example, no Schedules C, D, or E). The hours are 1-6 Mondays and Wednesdays and 9-3 Saturdays through April 15. The site offers free electronic filing.

It's hard to believe it, but the Spring Symposium is just around the corner! Mark your calendar for Thursday, April 28. It promises to be another diverse program, with something for everyone.

<p><u>CGFM Corner</u></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"></div> <p style="text-align: center;">The Mark of Excellence in Government Financial Management</p>
<p>Earning the CGFM Certification</p>
<p>CGFM Exam 3 Study Guide Now Available!</p> <p>Be sure to order the new Study Guide for CGFM Exam 3: <i>Governmental Financial Management and Control</i> to help in your preparation for the examination. Click here to learn more.</p> <p>Survey: Professionals with Certifications Earn 30% More</p> <p>Data from more than 2,800 survey respondents in the U.S. accounting, finance and banking professions shows that workers with a professional credential of some type earned 30 percent more in 2004 than those working without any kind of credential. The average annual salary for CPAs participating in the survey increased just over 2 percent from 2003 to \$73,295. CPA salaries were</p>

not broken down by career longevity, but three-quarters of all respondents had been working in their current position for less than five years. Professionals with a credential of some kind (about half of the respondents) were earning \$70,096 compared to those without any kind of credential who were earning only \$53,748. The survey also showed men are 25 percent more likely than women to hold a professional credential but women with a credential are earning 31 percent more (\$60,942), than their female counterparts. —AccountingWEB. [Click here to read the entire article.](#)

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.

Former Chapter President Pavelko Now Assistant Dean at University of California

Best wishes to former Chapter President Jim Pavelko. Jim accepted the position of Assistant Dean for Finance and Administration at the University of California - Irvine, Graduate School of Management. Jim started his new position in July.

Jim began his career as an Auditor with the Legislative Audit Bureau in 1986. In 1990 Jim transferred to the University of Wisconsin, School of Business as an Accountant and later served as the Director of Financial Management and Assistant Dean of Financial Management for the school. The past 3 years Jim also taught Governmental Accounting at the school.

Jim noted the transition has not been easy for his family but things are settling well. Jim has a daughter, who is a freshman at Mount Mary College in Milwaukee, and a 4-year old son, but so far everyone is doing okay and he is looking forward to the challenges ahead. The Graduate School of Management is poised to grow with a new building in the works, top ranked faculty, excellent fund-raising potential, and a vibrant and growing business community.

Jim told me he visits Madison often and is keeping his football season tickets. He also mentioned he appreciates his AGA connection and remembers fondly his participation as Chapter President especially the networking opportunities he made along the way.

Best wishes to Jim in his new position!

HHS Secretary Thompson's Farewell Message

Health and Human Services Secretary and former Wisconsin Governor Tommy G. Thompson delivered the following message to HHS employees before he left the Department.

Dear Friends,

As I prepare to depart as Secretary of Health and Human Services, with great pride and some sadness, I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for serving with me over the past four years.

These have been challenging years filled with unexpected tragedies and unprecedented opportunities. Yet, we successfully seized these opportunities to turn tragedy into triumph and problems into solutions, making our country and the world healthier, safer, and stronger.

Consider for a moment all that we achieved over the past four years:

- * We delivered on our promise to modernize Medicare with prescription drug coverage - the most historic improvement to Medicare since it was created in 1965. Now seniors and the disabled will get significant help paying for the modern medicines and preventive services that extend and enhance their lives.
- * We increased spending on medical research to its highest levels ever. This investment will enable us to develop new medicines and treatments that improve the quality of life for millions of Americans.
- * We invested in our long-neglected public health system, making our nation better prepared to fight disease or biological attacks. We've also taken steps toward developing the new medicines and vaccines that will protect our citizens from the threat of bioterrorism.
- * Our children are healthier than ever, with health coverage and immunization rates at record highs and teen drug abuse on the decline.
- * We waged a bold global war against HIV/AIDS, committing unprecedented resources toward eradicating this insidious disease. And families in Afghanistan and Iraq - especially women and children - have hope for a healthier future after decades of neglect under brutal regimes.
- * Finally, perhaps my most proud achievement is that we turned America's attention to disease prevention and motivated our fellow citizens to eat better and exercise more in order to improve their health and quality of life.

Friends, we can be very proud of all we've accomplished together. We've lived up to our reputation as the Department of Compassion by helping to spread hope and opportunity to those who need it most in America and around the world. This work truly is a noble calling, and I urge you to continue to pursue it with seriousness and great humility.

I've said on many occasions that HHS is home to the finest public servants in the Federal government. And I mean that with all my heart. It has been my honor and privilege to serve with each of you in this dynamic Department, and I will miss you more than you can ever know. I will forever cherish your friendships and will always be inspired by your talent, passion, and dedication. Please do not hesitate to call on me if I can be of any assistance to you.

And I would be remiss if I didn't remind you to take care of your own personal health. Be sure to exercise and eat responsibly, and don't smoke!

Thank you, and God love you all.

With friendship and gratitude,

Tommy G. Thompson

Long Time Members Recognized

Please join with AGA and the Southern Wisconsin Chapter in recognizing and thanking the following individuals who will have maintained their membership for 10 or more years as of the end of the current membership period, March 31, 2005. (Former chapter presidents are identified with an asterisk.)

10-14 Years

Kathryn Skiera
Julie Gordon *
Diane Schroeder
Nancy Eilkes
Rhonda Hunter
Renee Booker
Carrie Konrath
Joseph Stertz *
Dwan Schuck
Gary Ingvalson
Lois Schepp
Kathleen Nordness
Steven Henke
Roger Birkett
Hal Bauman *
Beverly La Flex
Donna Halleran
Barbara Wolfe

15-19 Years

Delena Spink
Deborah Durcan

20-24 Years

Greg LaFond
Donald Hein
Gail Ostler
Sherri Voigt
Mary Voltz
Stephen Censky
Linda Wald *
Daniel Oakland
David Veith *
Marc Messina

25-29 Years

Jim Hoelzel *
Donald Brinkmeier
Donald Dent *
Stephen Gauger
Edward Tuecke

30-34 Years

John Rogan

35 or More Years

David Mellem *

Board Meeting Minutes

November 9, 2004

Education Update

- 21 attended the November 4 GASB training. We will send a \$250 donation to the Sloan Foundation for the speaker.
- The Ethics telephone conference training can be purchased on a CD. Our chapter can award CPE if we offer facilitated sessions. The plan is to purchase the CD and offer free training sessions at various sites in February and March.
- Initial Symposium topics/speakers were discussed.

Membership Update

- 3 new members so far this year, 1 transferring to Lansing, several on suspended list.

Newsletter Length

The newsletter ran about 8 pages under the paper system and has been averaging 12 pages electronically. Three pages are set aside for the lunch announcement, calendar of events, and board list. The board members present discussed what length is appropriate. Those who have viewed other chapter websites found ours to be on par with other newsletters. The decision was to continue with our current length to keep a variety of information for all types of members. We will revisit this periodically to avoid any information overload.

Board Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2005

Meeting Date Change: The February board meeting will be held on Thursday, February 10.

Membership Update: One new member this week.

CGFM Update: New director of professional education hired. March is CGFM month nationwide. We will offer a lunch discount to CGFMs at the March luncheon.

Treasurer Update: 12/31/04 balance of 18,993.15.

Education Committee: Discussed possible Symposium topics. Carrie and others will start contacting speakers to firm up the schedule.

Newsletter Articles

Bush Nominee Wants States to Get Medicaid Flexibility

President Bush's nominee for secretary of health and human services, Michael O. Leavitt, believes that states could provide health insurance to more people, at no additional cost, if they had "greater flexibility" to reshape the Medicaid program and trim benefits. "We have a substantial obligation to care for the poor," Leavitt told a Senate committee reviewing his nomination last Tuesday. "We can expand the number of people served with quality basic care by giving states additional flexibility." Medicaid spending has shot up 63 percent in the last five years. Lawmakers of both parties and administration officials said Medicaid was likely to be a focus of budget-cutting efforts this year. As governor of Utah, Leavitt said, he devised a program that offered a limited set of health care benefits to people who had no insurance, and he suggested that Utah's experience could be a model for other states. In 2003, the Bush administration proposed to give states a fixed amount of Medicaid money each year, with new

latitude to control costs and reduce or eliminate benefits for some recipients. In 1997, Leavitt strenuously resisted a similar proposal, complaining that the federal government was trying to balance its budget "on the backs of the states." Governors today express the same concerns about proposals being developed by the Bush administration. —Robert Pear, *The New York Times*. [Click here to read the entire article.](#)

Opportunity to Improve Accountability for Grant Funds

On behalf of the Comptroller General's Domestic Working Group, EPA Inspector General Nikki Tinsley is leading a group of federal, state and local auditors that is developing a guide to improve grant accountability. "With nearly \$400 billion of the United States' budget going to grant programs, it is absolutely essential that these dollars deliver the intended results. That has not always been the case in the past." The guide will assist financial and program executives improve grant accountability and include examples of practices that benefit organizations. Auditors from 18 federal agencies, four states and one local agency have joined together on this project. [Click here to read the entire article.](#)

'Think Outside the Box' and Find a New Phrase

Companies claiming to create "synergies" in an effort to develop a "value-added" "paradigm" that leads to new "solutions" may consider another strategy: avoiding bloated, cliché phrases and industry jargon. A recent poll of 150 senior business executives listed the above phrases as some of the most overused buzzwords in the workplace. Other annoying phrases: "at the end of the day," "metrics," "take it offline," "redeployed people," and "win-win." The survey, conducted by Accountemps, polled executives in human resources, finance and marketing departments of the nation's 1,000 largest companies. Part of the motivation to use buzzwords can be attributed to a desire to demonstrate your expertise, but this can often backfire, said Accountemps Chairman Max Messmer. "Even though the terms you use may be clear to you, other people must understand them if you hope to communicate your point effectively," he said. "For instance, instead of saying a project was a 'win-win,' explain why it was successful." —*SmartPros*. [Click here to read the entire article.](#)

Fed Bank President Says Growing Deficit is Risky

A top Federal Reserve official has urged the White House and Congress to restrain the U.S. budget deficit, warning that its continued growth poses risks to international financial markets. Current "troubling" projections of the deficit's growth threaten to shake the confidence of international investors, who might become less willing to finance the nation's burgeoning debt, Timothy F. Geithner, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, said Jan. 14 in New York at a business forum on global financial risk. "It is important that the United States work to build more confidence that it will act on the fiscal front to achieve a better balance between our commitments and our resources," Geithner said. Geithner, chief of the regional Fed bank that most closely monitors risk in global markets, made his remarks as President Bush prepares to present his budget for the coming fiscal year. —Nell Henderson, *The Washington Post*. Go to <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A8199-2005Jan13.html?referrer=email> to read the entire article.

Congress Spends Billions on Unauthorized Programs

In its annual report to lawmakers on appropriations for unauthorized programs, the Congressional Budget Office said Congress appropriated \$170.4 billion in fiscal 2005 for programs with lapsed authorizations. That is up \$80 billion from 2002 because of several large authorizations that expired in the last two years, according to the Jan. 14 report. The \$170.4

billion comprises 167 different expired authorization laws, with the largest being programs that authorize veterans medical care, Section 8 housing assistance, NASA and the National Institutes of Health. —*CongressDaily*. [Click here to read the entire article](#).

White House Expected to Lay Out Lean Budget Plan

The fiscal 2006 federal budget President Bush will formally propose next month is likely to be the most austere in years, and will recommend eliminating funding for poor-performing programs, according to Bush administration officials. Bush has promised to halve the deficit by 2009. "We'll send a tough budget up, that really says to the American people: 'We're going to be wise about how we spend your money,'" he said in an interview with USA Today last week. "And part of being wise about how we spend your money is, we're not going to increase money on programs that aren't working. We're results-oriented people." Some programs "won't be getting any money at all" if the White House has any say, the president added. — Shawn Zeller and Amelia Gruber, *Government Executive*. [Click here to read the entire article](#).

Simplified Financial Management Reform Bill in the Works

U.S. Rep. Todd Platts, R-PA, chairman of the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Government Efficiency and Financial Management, plans to introduce a comprehensive financial management bill that would replace the hodgepodge of current law. Instead of forcing federal financial managers to wade through 800 pages of text from the past 20 years of financial management law, Platts wants to create a new, streamlined law. His latest effort follows a string of initiatives to increase accountability and efficiency in the federal government. "There's no use generating reports if they just sit on the shelf and aren't looked at," he told *Government Executive*. While the new bill still is in its nascent stages, Platts said he should be ready to introduce it by early fall. —Kimberly Palmer, *Government Executive*. [Click here to read the entire article](#).

Expert Says No Performance System is Perfect

The Government Performance and Results Act. The program assessment rating tool to improve performance. They are systems that try to solve performance problems—and reflect the never-ending search by government officials to find the ultimate performance system, Harvard University lecturer Robert D. Behn says. Unfortunately, Behn says, "the magical performance system doesn't exist. Even a good performance system doesn't exist. Systems don't improve performance; leaders do." The idea of creating systems is alluring and seductive, Behn writes in this month's issue of his "Public Management Report," because "a system is like an engine. You push the start button, and the system does the work." But there is no start button for performance systems, Behn argues. Almost all performance systems come loaded with rules and paperwork requirements, and rule-driven approaches are unlikely to be very effective, he contends. If systems fall short of what they promise, as Behn asserts, then the answer is "performance leadership"—efforts by agency leaders to motivate employees "to produce more, or better, or more consequential results that are valued by citizens." Performance leadership is the opposite of performance systems, Behn says. "Once you have started it, you have to keep doing it. You can't stop. To improve performance, you have to keep working at it." —Stephen Barr, *The Washington Post*. [Click here to read the entire article](#).

OMB Orders Agencies to Tighten Internal Controls

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has released new auditing rules that require agencies to review their internal controls over financial management, fix potential shortcomings and submit an annual report on their activities. In the wake of the 2002 Sarbanes-Oxley Act,

which calls for publicly held companies to obtain audits of their internal controls, government auditors and financial managers have debated whether they should follow suit. The Government Accountability Office is in the midst of rewriting its auditing guidelines, some auditors have expressed concern that tightening federal auditing practices was unnecessary and resource-consuming. But senior GAO officials supported strengthening internal control audit requirements, and OMB sided with them. OMB Controller Linda Springier said in a statement that effective internal controls were "the foundation of reliable financial reporting." GAO offers guidelines on auditing standards, while OMB's rules are legally binding. —Kimberly Palmer, *Government Executive*. [Click here to read the entire article.](#)

COSO Names New Chairman

Larry E. Rittenberg, Ph.D., CPA, CIA, has been named the new chairman of the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations (COSO) of the Treadway Commission. Rittenberg, who is currently one of COSO's five board members, replaced John J. Flaherty, CIA, CPA, as of January 1, 2005. "The commission is thrilled to have Dr. Rittenberg assume the role as COSO Chairman," said The Institute of Internal Auditors President Dave Richards. "He has spent his career dedicated to promoting the business ethics and practices COSO stands for and he will provide a strong voice for the organization." Prior to accepting the role of COSO chairman, Rittenberg served as vice president of research and president of The IIA Research Foundation. He currently teaches courses and conducts research at the University of Wisconsin in Madison that focuses on auditing and corporate governance. As chairman, Rittenberg will lead COSO's efforts investing in conceptual frameworks designed to enhance the understanding and management of risk and control. Under his leadership, the organization will provide guidance for cost-effective small business application of COSO's landmark document, *Internal Control — Integrated Framework*. The IIA FASAB Publishes SFFAS 28

EPA's IG Nikki Tinsley Looks Beyond Enforcement

The sofa in Nikki Tinsley's office in the Environmental Protection Agency sports one of those fluffy little pillows with needlepoint lettering that you expect to say "Home Sweet Home." A closer look reveals something much saucier: "If You Obey All the Rules, You Miss All the Fun." This is not the watchword one expects from an inspector general, whose job it is to make sure her agency follows federal rules, laws, regulations, ethical codes and budgets. So is this a joke of some kind? "No, it's not a joke. It's really me. We are not just about following rules," said Tinsley, the EPA's inspector general since 1999. "We want to know if the rules make sense." — Dale Russakoff, *The Washington Post*. [Click here to read the entire article.](#)

Keeping New Year's Resolutions at Work Takes More Word Power than Willpower

According to a recent VitalSmarts survey, 69 percent of people are setting New Year's resolutions relating to things they want to change at work. Almost 86 percent said their path to success was currently blocked by a conversation they were either avoiding or not handling well. And while most want to make some significant changes, 95 percent have no idea how to speak up to get what they want. Some common problems include: unrealistic expectations, an unpleasant boss, an unreasonable workload, not knowing how to ask for a raise and a lack of opportunity. "The right skills make all the difference. The people who routinely solve touchy problems at work know what to say and how to say it—they are masters at crucial conversations," says Joseph Grenny, co-author of *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When the Stakes are High*. "When you learn how to talk through tough issues with your boss, peers and senior management, you can resolve almost anything that has you bothered at work." Surprisingly, even though an overwhelming number of those surveyed thought they would fail in

dealing with tough issues at work, 69 percent said they were going to try anyway. "Don't take a cue from the desperate," says Grenny. "Before you step into a high-stakes conversation, you need to prepare." —AccountingWEB. [Click here to read the entire article.](#)

Financial Execs Call SOX a Good Investment

A majority of financial executives (57 percent) say Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) compliance was a good investment for stockholders, according to a report released this month by Oversight Systems, the 2004 Oversight Systems Financial Executive Report On Sarbanes-Oxley Compliance, a nationwide survey of 222 financial executives. Of those surveyed, 79 percent report having stronger internal controls as a result of SOX compliance. Nearly three quarters (74 percent) say their companies realized a benefit from SOX compliance, with 46 percent saying SOX compliance ensures the accountability of individuals involved in financial reports and operations. However, when asked about the impact of SOX compliance on shareholder value, the view was mixed. Although a clear majority (81 percent) think Congress needs to revisit SOX legislation, most would still include the sections that require the CEO and CFO to sign off on financial reports (Section 302); increased documentation and monitoring of internal controls (Section 404); and the timely disclosure of material changes (Section 409). [Click here for more information about the survey.](#) —SmartPros.

CFO Council Launches Public Website for Financial Metrics

The U.S. Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Council has unveiled a Metric Tracking System, a website designed to provide federal financial managers, taxpayers and others information on federal agencies' financial operations. The [website](#) is intended to assist in improving federal financial operations by giving information on agency performance using a series of key financial management indicators. The system has gone through an extensive testing process to prepare for its public rollout. Users will now find an easy-to-navigate system that contains key information about how various government agencies score on financial indicators including reconciling cash balances, clearing suspense accounting, collecting delinquent accounts receivable, paying vendors electronically, paying vendors on time, reducing interest penalties paid, and reducing travel and purchase card delinquencies. —CFO Council. [Click here for more information.](#)

FASAB Publishes Statement on Identifying and Reporting Earmarked Funds

The Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB) has issued *Statement of Federal Financial Accounting Standards 27, Identifying and Reporting Earmarked Funds*. A primary objective of the project is to clarify the meaning of the term "trust fund." According to FASAB Chairman David Mosso, "Trust funds included in the federal budget normally are not of a fiduciary nature. Most of the assets held by such 'trust funds' represent government-owned assets earmarked to finance or help to finance specific federal programs. This proposal distinguishes earmarked funds from traditional trust or fiduciary activities and requires that financial statements present the cumulative amount earmarked for specific programs." — FASAB. The standards in SFFAS 27 are effective for periods beginning after Sept. 30, 2005. The statement is available on the [FASAB website](#).

Employment Opportunity

Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction: Auditors for Iraq Reconstruction

Annual Salary Range: \$62,886 - \$135,136

Overtime, Foreign Post Differential and other premium pays may apply

The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) is seeking United States citizens to fill multiple performance Auditor positions to include senior-level Auditors, Audit Managers, and Senior Audit Managers. Fax resumes to 703.428.0818. [Click here for more information.](#)

Do you have some interesting news that your fellow chapter members may be interested in? If so, please submit an article to the Newsletter Editor at radivl@dhfs.state.wi.us. Deadline for submission of articles is the 25th of the month.

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 Compacts (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, 2005 – Luncheon Meeting, *Annual Tax Update*, Bart Halderson, CPA, of Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP (Imperial Garden)

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

February 24, 2005 – Luncheon Meeting, Jerry Landmark, DPI, School Funding Formula (Dayton Street Café)

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*, 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

Immediate Past President – Carrie Ferguson, CPA, LAB, Carrie.ferguson@legis.state.wi.us, 608-259-9839

Chapter Recognition – Rita Klawitter, CPA, LAB, rita.klawitter@legis.state.wi.us, 608-266-2818

Secretary - Dennis Dombrowicki, CGFM, DHFS, dombrdh@dhfs.state.wi.us, 608-266-3057

Treasurer - Roger Birkett, CPA, jabirk@charter.net

Historian - David Mellem, CGFM, CIA, CISA, US DHHS, OIG, david.mellem@oig.hhs.gov, 608-264-5415 ext 25

Membership Chair - David Mellem, CGFM, CIA, CISA, US DHHS, OIG, david.mellem@oig.hhs.gov, 608-264-5415 ext 25

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Webmaster - Scott Thornton, scott@goochpages.com

Community Service Chair - Julie Gordon, CPA, LAB, julie.gordon@legis.state.wi.us, 608-259-9811

Research Coordinator & Liaison w/Other Profession Organizations – Vacant

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

Awards Chair – Vacant

Early Careers Chair – Vacant

Directors -

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