



SOUTHERN
WISCONSIN
CHAPTER

Monthly Footnotes

NOVEMBER, 2008

VOLUME IX, ISSUE 4

Luncheon Meeting

Welcome Members and Non-Members

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TOPIC: The Northern Mendota Parkway: The Agricultural Perspective

SPEAKER: Pete Nowak, Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies

DATE: Thursday, November 13, 2008

REGISTRATION: 11:30 a.m. **LUNCH:** 11:45 a.m.

COST: \$5 for Members, \$10 for Non-Members

PLACE: Dayton Street Café (inside The Concourse-1 West Dayton)

MENU: All meals include soda, coffee, or tea

- * **Salad Bar** - variety of salads, toppings, soups
- * **Herb Marinated Chicken Breast Sandwich** – applewood smoked bacon, romaine lettuce, fresh mozzarella, avocado, vine-ripened tomato on ciabatta bread, served with fries
- * **Traditional Burger** – Fountain Prairie Farms dry-aged burger, served with fries

RESERVATIONS: Please contact **Sherri Voigt** by **1 p.m. on Monday, November 10, 2008** with your name, meal choice, and membership status, (608) 267-9818 or e-mail: sherri.voigt@wisconsin.gov. If you need help getting a ride to the lunch, please contact Sherri for car-pooling information.

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?

ABOUT THIS MONTH'S LUNCHEON SPEAKER

Pete Nowak received his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota's College of Agriculture in 1977, and was an assistant and associate professor at Iowa State University before joining the faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1985. Here he holds a dual appointment as a Professor of Environmental Studies in the Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, and as a Soil and Water Conservation Specialist in the College of Agricultural and Life Science's Environmental Resources Center. Pete's career has focused on understanding why farmer adopt or reject conservation practices.

His work has been published in a variety of journals and books. He is a Fellow of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, served as Associate Editor for the Journal of Soil and Water Conservation, and serves on the Editorial Board of the Journal of Precision Agriculture. In the recent past he has worked with the National Academy of Science's Board on Agriculture, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and a National Blue Ribbon Panel examining the effectiveness of USDA's conservation programs.

Who says there's no free lunch?

Members who attend 3 Training Sessions September to February

Earn a Free Lunch

Coupon Valid at the March, April, or May Lunch

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Sherri Voigt, CGFM, CPA

I would like to thank everyone who donated to the **Passionately Pink for the Cure** promotion for breast cancer awareness. Between on-line donations and the donation bucket at the lunch, **we raised \$155.10!** The AGA-Southern WI Chapter will send a donation to increase that total. Our chapter attendees continue to be generous even with the uncertain economic issues facing us all.

We have another hot topic for this month's lunch meeting: issues related to the proposed "North Beltline." The speaker will address the impacts to the agricultural community.

Susan Schilz, DATCP, spoke at the October lunch on how to prevent identity theft. Apart

from a few hiccups with the location, the presentation was extremely beneficial. I pulled together some notes and highlights from the presentation. These were sent out to attendees, but I will include them below since there were some new (but easy) steps people can take. One big reminder is that the credit score is not just used to determine your interest rate on a loan...it is also a factor in things like insurance rates.

I would like to invite people to submit topic and/or speaker suggestions at any time. You can contact me or our education co-chairs: Carrie Ferguson and Mary Laufenberg. We are always looking for lunch and training ideas.

CHAPTER NEWS

Highlights and Related Information from 10/23/08, Identity Theft and Fraud, presentation by Susan Schilz, DATCP

- Susan had a handout with information on how to request your free credit report information. The main point is you can do this the suggested 3 times per year by getting a report from each of the 3 companies. If you space the requests out to every 4 months, you can best monitor the information. The free site is: www.annualcreditreport.com/cra/index.jsp
- The top items to check on the credit reports are:
 1. The correctness of your name, including middle initial, and addresses listed
Synthetic identity theft includes applying for an account with a real SSN but slightly different name (Miller v. Mills)
 2. The accounts listed are ones that you remember applying for
This can be difficult if you often apply for a store card to get a discount and then don't use it again
 3. The credit lines listed are what you expect
Some thieves will raise your credit limit on existing accounts in order to steal a much larger amount
- If you have a lot of \$0 balance credit cards on your report, do **not** cancel them all at once. This will affect your credit score (which looks as closeouts and the amount of open, unused credit.) The credit score affects the rate you pay on loans, mortgages, insurance rates, and many other items.
- Consumers can freeze their credit with each of the 3 credit reporting agencies (\$10 fee on each unless a victim on identity fraud, but TransUnion may do it for free.) This prevents anyone from opening credit in your name. Including you. You receive a PIN so it can be

altered, but this step should be carefully considered.

- If you have minor children, it would not hurt to check their credit report and contact the SSA for earning information. If their SSN is stolen, you may not discover it for years.
- Identity theft is the fastest growing but most underreported crime today. When a bank tells us our credit card was compromised, most of us ignore it since we are made whole. If you file a police report, it is on record. If you ever do file a police report, keep a copy around for at least 7 years.
- Medicare/Medicaid cards still use the SSN. This is starting to cycle out starting 10/1/08, but most cards still have the number.
- Shred catalog pages with your name, address, and account number. Don't forget the inside order page! The bar code may include your zip code info, but also your customer number. The address sticker for magazines would hold the same caution (may be tied to a credit card auto-renewal)
- An audience member suggested www.CatalogChoice.com to opt out of receiving catalogs you don't want.

Other information:

<http://www.privacy.wi.gov/> This is the WI site for privacy issues. The article about debit cards ("Paper or Plastic") has some good cautions about using your debit card. This site has dozens of great topics related to privacy and information protection.

<http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/cp/consumerinfo/cp/factsheets/index.jsp> Fact sheets from Consumer Protection on an array of topics, including credit issues

NATIONAL NEWS



From the National President

By: Samuel T. Mok,
CGFM, CIA, CICA

As Americans, we have been brought up to believe that we are all born equally. That conception, however, is not really true. For example, not all of us look like Brad Pitt, and most of us do not have the physical prowess of Michael Phelps. Very few of us are as smart as Marie Curie, or as artistically talented as Claude Monet. I think you get the drift.

However, we are all indeed equal in one way. All of us, from President Bush to Comrade Putin--including Joe the Plumber, have the same 24 hours. How we spend these 24 hours each day largely determines our quality of life, and the degree of success we have in achieving our personal goals. Many people go through life "doing time" instead of "making time." Often we meet people who tell us that they cannot wait to retire, or that they truly dislike their job, personnel or boss. They put up with their situation because they do not have enough resources or years to retire, get promoted or do something more interesting. They wait in this process; they waste their lives. Time is a non-renewable resource that once consumed, is

gone forever. Most people have very little appreciation of how precious time is. I never get mad or angry with people who waste money, but I have very little patience for people who squander time. The key to achieving personal success and a high quality of life is to use time wisely and not to allow others to waste your time.

In considering the importance of time, how much time does one need to serve as National President of AGA? [Read more.](#)

Campaigning to Recruit

We know the best form of recruitment comes from personal referrals. AGA looks forward to advancing the Association by engaging the best and the brightest individuals in the government accountability field. No one else is better suited than *YOU* to help recruit those new members. It is time to focus on recruitment in AGA's **The Big Easy** Member-Get-A-Member Campaign.

The Big Easy campaign is Big for the association and Easy for you to participate in. All you have to do is recruit one member to benefit from **The Big Easy** campaign. By recruiting one member you will earn an AGA sponsor pin, be recognized on the AGA website, strengthen your chapter and the Association--making this campaign a win-win for everyone. Members who sponsor six or more new members from May 1, 2008 - January 31, 2009 will earn free membership dues. Do you want

to have your 2009-2010 AGA membership dues paid for you, too? It's **Big** and **Easy!** Recruit six or more new members by January 31.

Our goal is to continue the positive net growth in membership. Be sure to reach out to those early career members--individuals just starting out in their careers, with fewer than three years of experience.

Remember to steer them to [AGA's Tomorrow's Professionals website](#)--chock full of useful information.

There are so many ways to win during the 2009-2010 *The Big Easy* campaign. [Check out the campaign details](#) and start campaigning for recruitment today!

Registration & Housing Now Open for AGA's National Leadership Conference!

Make plans now to attend AGA's Seventh Annual National Leadership Conference to be held February 19-20, 2009 in Washington, D.C.

Government financial managers are deeply committed to producing timely, reliable and useful financial information, with the goal of running government programs more efficiently. At AGA's National Leadership Conference (NLC), those sentiments are more than just words.

The NLC brings together the top minds in the industry to share best practices, leadership secrets, the newest management techniques, and the most recent information on always-changing standards and regulations. Sessions will cover important topics and issues facing government financial managers,

such as leadership, transparency, accountability, and examine affects of political transitions and what the future holds.

The NLC also features an exposition filled with the latest resources, products and services available from your partners in the private sector. Visit the Exhibit Hall to find pace-setting tools and technology that will help you do your job faster, more efficiently and more effectively. The Exhibit Hall is a hub of activity and offers an environment dedicated to networking and the sharing of ideas. This is the perfect place to mix and mingle and connect with industry professionals from around the country. Some companies will conduct raffles--stop by and you may become a winner!

As you can see, AGA's National Leadership Conference offers outstanding technical training, dynamic speakers and plenty of opportunities to network with colleagues and friends.

Information about the conference agenda, speakers and sessions are coming soon. Stay tuned to the website, www.agacgfm.org/nlc, for more information. But don't wait. Show your commitment to excellence--register today!

- [Register Online and Save!](#)
- [Download Registration Form](#)

From the National Office



The AGA staff is pleased to welcome **Rodneikka Freeman** as the new membership manager. She replaces Kim Ferguson who left AGA this summer to pursue a nursing degree. Rodneikka, a native of Georgia, grew up in California and graduated from high school at age 16. She earned a full Division I basketball scholarship to the University of Kansas and later Arkansas State University. At Arkansas State University she earned the honors of Athletic Directors Honor Roll, WNIT Finalist, Sun-Belt Conference Championship, Vice-President of the Communications Research

Committee and a graduate assistantship with the Student Affairs Department at ASU. She holds a bachelor's in Journalism Public Relations with a minor in History and a master's in Mass Communications (both from Arkansas State University). She enjoys traveling and has been to 43 of the United States and Territories and seven countries. Prior to joining the AGA team she managed four programs at an association for English language teachers and worked as a special education teacher.

"At AGA my major goal is to increase the AGA network and benefits while maintaining the standards set by the Association's mission," she said.

"Since I've been at AGA I've found that it is a very complex and exciting Association with a warm team of individuals who are dedicated to the success of the Association." She can be reached at extension 318 or via e-mail at rfreeman@agacqfm.org.

CGFM Corner

Take the CGFM Examinations before the NLC

Don't miss the opportunity to take the CGFM Examinations and earn your CGFM before the annual National Leadership Conference (NLC) in Washington D.C. AGA is offering a two-day Intensive Review Course on Monday, February 16, and Tuesday, February 17, 2009 and an opportunity to take CGFM Examinations on February 18-19, 2009. The cost of the course is only \$249 for qualified participants, and it offers 18 CPE hours. Special Bonus: the CGFM Examinations are offered at no cost to course attendees.



This course is designed as a supplement to previous preparation for the CGFM Examinations, so this is a perfect opportunity for those individuals who have already attended GFM training courses or have been preparing by using the CGFM Study Guides. Enrollment is limited and participants must first apply and be accepted into the CGFM Program, so don't delay.

More information and a registration form for this event are available on [AGA website](#).

Why Certification Matters. Why CGFM?

**By: John Radford, CGFM, CIA,
CFE, Oregon State Controller;
Member, AGA National Executive
Committee**

People often ask me why certification is important. I tell them it's all about accountability.

Employers prefer staff members who are certified because they have undergone a rigorous testing procedure, proving they have specialized skills and knowledge. Certification also shows that the employees are committed to continuing their professional education and upholding high ethical standards--requirements for maintaining their credential. [Read the entire article.](#)

Attend the CEAR Reviewers' Training

Are you interested in being a reviewer for the Certificate of Excellence in Accountability Reporting Program? If so, attend the free training on Dec. 8 at the Department of Education auditorium on Maryland Avenue and receive 3 hours of CPE. Space is limited and you must register by Dec. 1. Reviewers will receive information on how best to review a Performance and Accountability Report or Pilot Program Report. [Visit our site for more information,](#) or contact [Lynn Hoffman.](#)

Articles

FMSB Comments on Two GASB Exposure Drafts

AGA's Financial Management Standards Board (FMSB) has issued a comment letter on two Exposure Drafts of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB): *Codification of Accounting and Financial Reporting Guidance Contained in the AICPA Statements on Auditing Standards and The Hierarchy of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles for State and Local Government.* The FMSB believes that moving the hierarchy of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles from the auditing literature to a GASB statement is a wise decision and one that is especially appropriate in light of the Financial Accounting Standards Board codification project and the convergence of international with national standards. Including in GASB guidance the three issues discussed in the codification Exposure Draft--related party

transactions, subsequent events and going concern considerations--would help to more appropriately place presentation of principles used in the preparation of financial statements in accounting and financial reporting standards, the FMSB stated. [Read the letter.](#)

Watchdog Unveils Government Reform Priorities for Next Administration

The next presidential administration should focus on making the government operate more effectively and with greater accountability, openness and honesty, a Washington watchdog group said in a set of recommendations published last week. The [seven-page priority list](#) was the first of its kind issued by the Project on Government Oversight. The nonprofit has sent a copy to the transition teams of Sens. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Barack

Obama, D-III. The recommendations center on beefing up the size and scope of the civilian workforce and improving the operational and management capacities of agencies. For example, the watchdog group said oversight offices throughout the government have been underfunded and co-opted by political appointees with a partisan agenda. The report recommended that all organizations with oversight responsibilities--from inspectors general offices to the Defense Contract Audit Agency--be "afforded the resources, authority and incentives" to complete their missions. --Robert Brodsky, *Government Executive*. [Read more.](#)

States Face New Budget Shortfalls

The moribund economy is drying up tax revenues more dramatically than expected, forcing 22 states, including California, to confront growing budget gaps. Some states have already eliminated jobs and services--and more cuts are likely. The new shortfalls -- totaling at least \$11.2 billion--come just months after numerous states enacted belt-tightening measures while writing their yearly budgets. Officials also adjusted their revenue projections downward to account for the slowing economy. But in many cases, the actual revenue for the first quarter of the fiscal year, which began July 1, has proven to be even lower. The gaps "will almost certainly widen" as tax revenues continue to disappoint, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a Washington think tank that compiled the state data in a report this month. Economists and other observers fear the numbers may signal the onset of a historic fiscal crisis for state governments. --Richard Fausset and Nicholas Riccardi, *Los Angeles Times*. [Read more.](#)

Experts: Reorganize Financial Regulatory Agencies

Reducing the number of government regulators overseeing the financial industry while better defining their responsibilities may help strengthen marketplace oversight, scholars told House lawmakers last Tuesday. "The number of regulators could be less than we have now; there's a lot of duplication," said Alice Rivlin of the Brookings Institution and Georgetown University, and former director of the Congressional Budget Office at a hearing before the House Financial Services Committee. "We need a regulator of the financial behemoths, making sure they adequately understand and are monitoring their own risk. We've not had that in this crisis." U.S. Rep. Paul Kanjorski, D-Pa., agreed. "We need to consolidate regulation in fewer agencies, but maximize the number of cops on the beat to make sure that market participants follow the rules. We must additionally ensure that these agencies cooperate with one another, rather than engage in turf battles." Manuel Johnson of financial advisory firm JohnsonSmick International said there must be coordination between overseers and industry. Better communication among regulators can help alert the government to any possible crises. --Rebecca Neal, *Federal Times*. [Read more.](#)

RI State Auditor and AGA Member Leading AICPA

Rhode Island Auditor General **Ernest A. Almonte, CGFM**, has been elected as chairman of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Almonte, a member of AGA's Boston Chapter, was sworn in last Tuesday in a ceremony in Tuscon, AZ. He is the first government official to serve in this volunteer position since the organization's founding in 1887. His term is one year. Almonte is responsible for auditing the \$6-billion

Rhode Island comprehensive annual financial report, the \$30-billion federal single audit, municipal oversight, performance audits, fraud audits and oversight of quasi-public agencies. He also manages a staff of 46 and has more than 29 years of experience in the accounting profession. As chairman of the AICPA, Almonte said one of his top priorities will be continuing to advance the professional's role in promoting financial literacy in the country . Almonte also announced the establishment of the AICPA Leadership Academy to groom members between 25 and 35 to become stewards of the profession, serving on Institute committees and acting as mentors. --AICPA and wire reports. [Read more.](#)

FASAB Issues New Statement of Federal Financial Accounting

The Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB) has issued Statement of Federal Financial Accounting Standards (SFFAS) 33, *Pensions, Other Retirement Benefits, and Other Post-employment benefits: Reporting Gains and Losses from Changes in Assumptions and*

Selecting Discount Rates and Valuation Dates. The standards in SFFAS 33 require:

- Gains and losses from changes in long-term assumptions used to estimate liabilities for federal employee pension and other retirement benefits, and other post-employment benefits to be displayed as discrete line items on the governmentwide entity's and the component entities' statements of net cost; and
- Components of the expense associated with such liabilities to be disclosed in notes to the financial statements. SFFAS 33 also provides standards for selecting the discount rate assumption and the valuation date for such liabilities.

Practices have varied regarding the discount rate for such liabilities and SFFAS 33 establishes one consistent approach for such rates for these liabilities. The standards prescribed in SFFAS 33 are effective for periods beginning after **Sept. 30, 2009**. The statement is available on the FASAB [website](#).

SHARE YOUR NEWS

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 radiojevich@co.dane.wi.us. Deadline for submission of articles is the 25th of the month. Feel free to send in topic suggestions or features to include.

COMMENTS

We would love to hear feedback on the newsletter changes. Let us know what you like, what you hate, what we can do better! Contact the Newsletter Editor at radiojevich@co.dane.wi.us or the Chapter President at sherri.voigt@wisconsin.gov.

ARE YOU MOVING?

If you are moving, or have already moved, please notify both your chapter and AGA National of your address change. You can update your address online at the national website:

www.agacqfm.org/membership/form_address.htm.



Southern Wisconsin Chapter Calendar of Events for 2008-2009

August 4, 2008 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

September 8, 2008 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

September 25, 2008 – “The Elections of 2008: More Money Than Ever Before and Why is it Ruining Politics?” Jay Heck, Common Cause in Wisconsin (Concourse)

October 6, 2008 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

October 23, 2008 – Identity Theft Prevention, Susan Schilz, DATCP (Great Dane Hilldale)

November 11, 2008 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison **note date change******

November 13, 2008 – The Northern Mendota Parkway: The Agricultural Perspective, Pete Nowak, Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies (Concourse)

December 2, 2008 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

January 6, 2009 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

January 22, 2009 – Annual Tax Update (Imperial Garden)

February 3, 2009 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

February 26, 2009 – luncheon topic and location to be determined

March 3, 2009 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

March 26, 2009 – luncheon topic and location to be determined

April 7, 2009 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

April 13, 2009 – A-87 Class: *Cost Principles and Cost Allocation Rules and Regulations for Federally Funded Grants and Contracts* (Concordia University-Mequon)

April 23, 2009 – luncheon topic and location to be determined

May 3, 2009 – MS Walk

May 5, 2009 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

May 12, 2009 - *Annual Spring Symposium – topics to be determined, UW-Madison Memorial Union*

May 21, 2009 – luncheon topic and location to be determined

June 2, 2009 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

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

Association of Government Accountants Southern Wisconsin Chapter 2008-2009 Officers and Directors

President – Sherri Voigt, CGFM, CPA, DNR, sherri.voigt@wisconsin.gov, 608-267-9818

President Elect – Vacant

Past President – Eric Busse, DPI eric.busse@dpi.state.wi.us, 608-267-9199

Chapter Recognition – Dolly O’Laughlin, olaughlin@co.dane.wi.us, 608-242-6314

Secretary – Vacant

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 – Eric Thornton, ethornton@bus.wisc.edu, 608-265-2006

Newsletter Editor – Lillian Radivojevich, Dane County, radivojevich@co.dane.wi.us, 608-284-4801

Education Co-Chair – Carrie Ferguson, CPA, LAB, carrie.ferguson@legis.state.wi.us, 608-259-9839

Mary Laufenberg, CGFM, CPA, DOR, mary.laufenberg@revenue.wi.gov, 608-266-1670

Webmaster – Scott Thornton, scott@goochpages.com

Community Service Chair – Sherri Voigt, CGFM, CPA, DNR, sherri.voigt@wisconsin.gov

Research Coordinator & Liaison w/Other Profession Organizations – William Raftery

CGFM Chair – Eric Busse, DPI eric.busse@dpi.state.wi.us, 608-267-9199

Awards Chair – Vacant

Early Careers Chair – Vacant

Directors -

Julie Gordon, CPA, UW System, jgordon@uwsa.edu, 608-263-4395

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RVP North Central Region – David Mellem, CGFM, CIA, CISA, US DHHS OIG,

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