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# Monthly Footnotes

JANUARY, 2010

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## January Luncheon Meeting Welcome Members and Non-Members

**TOPIC:** Annual Tax Update

**SPEAKER:** Mardee L. Blattner, CPA, MST,  
Manager, Baker Tilly Virchow  
Krause, LLP

**DATE:** Thursday, January 28, 2010

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

**COST:** \$6 for Members, \$12 for Non-Members

**PLACE:** Imperial Gardens

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

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

### RESERVATIONS

Please call **Sherri Voigt** by **10 A.M. on Monday, January 25, 2010** with your name and membership status, (608) 267-9818 or e-mail: [sherri.voigt@wisconsin.gov](mailto:sherri.voigt@wisconsin.gov). If you need help getting a ride to lunch, please contact Sherri for car-pooling information.

**\*\*Please note that this luncheon does not earn CPE credit under the CGFM certification guidelines\*\***

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AGA Southern Wisconsin: [www.aga-wis.org](http://www.aga-wis.org)

### **NEW MEMBERS FIRST LUNCHEON MEETING**

If you are a new member and this is your first luncheon, 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 the Southern WI 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**

Mardee L. Blattner, CPA, MST, Manager with Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP has been with the firm since 2001. She specializes in serving manufacturing and/or distribution companies and their owners with accounting, tax and consulting services.

#### Specific Experience

- Experience with all areas of tax preparation, including corporations, partnerships, and individuals.
- Broad experience with tax planning for companies and individuals.
- Tax planning and preparation for multi-state companies and individuals.
- Assists clients with off and on site bookkeeping services.

#### Industry Involvement.

- American Institute of Certified Public Accounts
- Wisconsin Institute of Certified Public Accounts
- American Women Society of Certifies Public Accounts

#### Education

University of Wisconsin, La Crosse . Bachelor of Science in Accounting

University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee . Masters of Science in Taxation



### **WHO SYAY'S THERE'S NO FREE LUNCH!**

Members who attend 3 Training Luncheon Sessions  
September through February

### **EARN A FREE LUNCH**

Coupon Valid at the March, April, or May Luncheon

## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Sherri Voigt, CGFM, CPA

We have a full spring of inexpensive training lined up for the Madison area. The January and February lunches are set up and the May 11 Symposium is in full planning mode. Please see the note at the bottom of page 5: we are actively seeking topics and the Education Co-Chairs are listed.

The January lunch meeting will include a food drive for the Southern Wisconsin food pantries. Bring non-perishable food items or a cash/check donation. Second Harvest can extend a \$1 donation into 7 meals.

Bookmark May 2 for the MS Walk 2010. More information on the event and joining (or donating to) the AGA team will be published next month.

John Koskinen, State Economist, spoke at the November lunch. For those who couldn't make the meeting, he had some positive news for recovery in the next couple of years. The Department of Revenue web site contains many of

the reports he discussed:

<http://www.revenue.wi.gov/report/e.html#economy>



*John Koskinen, 11/19/09*

Some of the reports have been updated since then, so you may want to take a look even if you were at the luncheon. The Executive Summaries are a good way to get the information without all of the detail, but the full Economic Outlooks are there for those who love the statistics and graphs.

## Chapter Board Meeting Minutes – January 5, 2010

In attendance: Tom Scheidigger, David Mellem, Dolly O'Laughlin, Sherri Voigt, Lily Radivojevich, Carrie Ferfuson, Mary Laufenberg, Eric Busse

Membership-Member drive 11/9-23; 2 people joined. We will offer this promotion again in the spring

CGFM-All CGFM books are currently out on load. March will be designated CGFM Month. We will get a governor's proclamation and offer a free lunch to anyone with the certification.

Newsletter - Deadline 1/28 for February

Education – February lunch speaker scheduled; Symposium topics discussed

Other Items

-Officers/Board members for next year  
-Lunch prices: Roger sent info related to the ever-increasing cost of subsidizing lunches. Discuss further at February board (price increase, beverages)

**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN PLATTEVILLE (UWP)**  
**One of Two Finalists in the**  
**Third Annual AGA Government Finance Case Challenge**  
*Submitted by David Mellem, HHS/OIG Office of Audit Services*

A student team from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville (UWP) was selected as one of two finalist teams in AGA's Third Government Finance Case Challenge. The winning team will be announced at the awards luncheon, AGA's National Leadership Conference, February 18-19, 2010 in Washington D.C. Prizes will be awarded to the winning team. AGA's Southern WI Chapter would like to thank Assistant Professor Gias and his student team for seizing this great opportunity. We wish them success in February in Washington, D.C.

The UWP finalist team consists of Kevin Opgenorth (student team leader), Alisa Antonelli, Brock Walker, and Travis Houg, UWP Business & Accounting students and Sharif Gias, Assistant Professor of Finance at UWP Business & Accounting Department. This is the first time UWP participated in the challenge.

Assistant Professor Gias stated the following:

The UWP student team was required to collaboratively analyze and offer a written response to a case centered on how a U.S. city government implements a performance management system.

Kevin Opgenorth, Alisa Antonelli, Brock Walker, and Travis Houg committed to working with me on the Government Finance Case Challenge 2009-2010. The case challenge involved better reporting for citizens that was less complex and understandable. The case UWP received was approximately 50 pages and the challenge required the team to produce a 4-page report by incorporating the AGA Citizen-Centric Reporting Model.

Kevin Opgenorth, Alisa Antonelli, Brock Walker, and Travis Houg sacrificed a little over two weeks to complete this case challenge. During that time they spent their evenings, nights and weekends working in a meeting room across from my office while they also had homework to finish, exams to attend, and projects to submit in Bank Management and Financial System Analysis classes. All of the students brought ideas and energy to the discussion table. Their diverse academic backgrounds and internship experiences allowed them to contribute to this case challenge. The students demonstrated great time management, teamwork, and leadership role every single day during the case analysis. They submitted their case solution in October 2009. AGA announced the finalists a month later.



## **CHAPTER MEMBER RECRUITMENT STIMULUS OFFER MARCH 17 - 31, 2010**

In case you missed the chapter member recruitment stimulus offer in November, you will have another opportunity to take advantage of this offer March 17 to 31, 2010. Watch future chapter newsletters for the dates. Last November was the first time we tried this incentive and several members expressed interest after the recruitment period had passed. Our November offer yielded two new chapter members. We are promoting our next recruitment stimulus offer farther in advance to allow more time for members to hear about it.

The offer works as follows. **Earn \$10 for each new chapter member you recruit up to a total of three new members.** Only current chapter members are eligible for this recruitment incentive. In addition, **each new member recruited in this stimulus event will receive a \$10 rebate on their first year's membership.** This membership recruitment stimulus offer will run for about 2 weeks from Wednesday, March 17 through Wednesday, March 31, 2010.

In these days of stimulus packages to get the economy going again, we thought we would offer a stimulus package to grow our chapter's membership. This package is patterned after the Indianapolis Chapter's member recruitment campaign that was held for only 1 hour and yielded 32 new members. The high result in such a short time was partly the result of the chapter consisting of almost all one-employer civilian military employees located in a military installation and having a large membership to start with.

By contrast, the Southern Wisconsin Chapter has members from many different employers from throughout the state. We believe that our geographic dispersion and number of different employing entities make it difficult to have a 1-hour recruitment event. We are, therefore, extending this stimulus offer to a longer recruitment period.

So, if you are a member, start planning to recruit and if you are not a member, the stimulus recruitment period in March 2010 will be a great time to join. AGA membership applications and information is on the national website [www.agacgfm.org](http://www.agacgfm.org). AGA dues depend on the various membership categories. The local chapter has no additional dues.

**Planning for the 2010 Annual Spring Symposium has begun! If you have suggestions for speakers or topics, please forward them to the Education Co-Chairs:**

**Carrie Ferguson, [carrie.ferguson@legis.state.wi.us](mailto:carrie.ferguson@legis.state.wi.us), 608-259-9839**

**Mary Laufenberg, [mary.laufenberg@revenue.wi.gov](mailto:mary.laufenberg@revenue.wi.gov), 608-266-1670**

# National News

## From the National President



### Make Plans Now to Attend AGA's National Leadership Conference

Join us in our nation's capital, **February 18-19, 2010**, to hear from high-level government officials and industry experts, participate in timely and informative sessions, learn about the latest research, share best practices, discover innovative management techniques and see the technological tools that can aid efficiency and improve effectiveness.

Get the up-to-the-minute information about issues that impact you! Technical education sessions will focus on hot topics in government financial management and accountability, current issues relating to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, strategic priorities, the effects of political transitions and what the future holds. The NLC also features an exhibit hall showcasing the newest tools and innovations to help agencies do their jobs more easily and effectively.

In addition to an outstanding technical education program, and the ability to earn 14 CPE hours, AGA's NLC is packed with opportunities to network, make professional connections and learn from your colleagues. [Visit our website](#) for more information. Show your commitment to a more accountable future: [register by fax](#) or [online today!](#)

### Dream. Learn. Achieve... And Get Ready for AGA's PDC 2010

Mark your calendar and make plans now to join us in sunny Orlando, Florida for AGA's 59th Annual Professional Development Conference & Exposition-- *the* premier education and networking event for government financial managers and accountability professionals.

Worth 24 CPE hours, the conference covers the latest research and information about the American Recovery Act, the constantly changing rules and standards, new management techniques, technological advances and practical tips for bringing greater efficiency to government operations. The PDC offers a comprehensive program, captivating speakers, lively discussions, top-quality education sessions, and equips you with knowledge and skills you need to be more effective leader.

While the PDC has long been respected for offering the best training in the profession, it also offers a number of networking events to help you make new contacts, exchange ideas and collaboratively work on solutions to common problems. Exhibitors are also available to demonstrate the newest products, tools and cutting-edge technology available to help your agency achieve its mission.

**Registration fees are \$800 for AGA members and \$1,000 for nonmembers until June 11, 2010.** Early registration saves you money and increases your chances of obtaining accommodations at the conference hotel.

- [Register Online Now](#)
- [Print Registration Form](#)

**Hotel Accommodations:** We reserved a block of rooms at the Orlando World Center Marriott to accommodate PDC attendees. The rate is \$108 per night (plus tax) until **June 18, 2010**, or until the room block is sold out. *Reservations received after June 18, or after the room block has been filled, will only be made on a space-available basis, and may be subject to significantly higher rates.*

- To make a reservation, please call the Marriott at 800.621.0638 and mention the "AGA PDC" to receive the discounted rate. You can also [reserve a room online](#).

Information about the agenda, speakers, travel discounts and tours is coming soon. [Stay tuned to the website](#) for more information...See you in Orlando!

### **Citizen-Centric Reports Provide Path for Government Involvement**

A farmer in Benton County, WA, glanced over a pamphlet while waiting in line to ask County Treasurer Duane Davidson a question about agricultural taxes. What she read surprised her.

The resident, who runs a Grade A goat dairy, had no idea that such a large chunk of local property tax dollars--about 55 percent--was dedicated to education, recalled Davidson. The pamphlet, the department's four-page annual report, prompted an enlightening conversation about state and local taxation in the county, on both sides of the counter.

[Read more.](#)

### **Update your Member Profile and Win**

AGA is committed to ensuring that your AGA membership is as valuable as possible. Our Association represents a solid, evolving group of government accountability professionals who are striving to reach their full potential. To that end, we are approaching another renewal season and look forward to you [updating your profile](#) to ensure that we have proper contact information. By updating your profile by **Dec. 31**, you will be entered into a drawing to win one of three Sony Webbie Camcorders. Thank you for being a member of AGA and for your contribution to building a more diverse and inclusive financial management community.

### **AGA Grants Management Training Available**

Are you receiving ARRA grant funds and struggling with the accounting and financial requirements? AGA's on-site Grants Management training course may help. The course provides a general overview of grants management, including preparation, review and submittal of proposals; negotiation and acceptance of grants; post-award financial and administrative management; closeout and audit; and relevant compliance issues. For more details about this and other AGA-sponsored training courses, including pricing and availability, please contact AGA Education Director [Joe Jozefczyk](#) at 800.AGA.7211, ext. 307, or [Lynn Hoffman](#) at ext. 342.

"As a single footstep will not make a path on the earth, so a single thought will not make a pathway in the mind. To make a deep physical path, we walk again and again. To make a deep mental path, we must think over and over the kind of thoughts we wish to dominate our lives." Henry David Thoreau



## CGFM Corner

**The next CGFM Intensive Review Course will be held after the National Leadership Conference on Feb. 22–23, 2010 with CGFM Examinations on Feb. 24–25, 2010. [Learn more.](#)**

### **Bring the Government Financial Manager Courses to your Chapter**

You've heard of CGFM chapter promotion...now we are introducing the GFM chapter promotion. To celebrate March as the CGFM month, we want to encourage you to bring the Government Financial Manager (GFM) courses to your chapter. If your chapter holds a GFM course through AGA National during the month of March, the chapter will receive 10 free CGFM Examinations that can be used by the course participants. That's a \$1,090 value! If the chapter holds all three GFM courses, it will receive 30 free CGFM Examinations—a \$3,270 value. For more information on this promotion and GFM courses, please contact [Katya Silver](#) at 703.684.6931, ext. 305.

## Articles

### **Two Universities Selected as Finalists for the AGA Government Finance Case Challenge**

North Carolina State University and the University of Wisconsin-Platteville were selected as the finalist teams in AGA's Third Governance Finance Case Challenge. We received entries from 23 universities. Each team constructed a four-page Citizen-Centric Report for a fictional U.S. city. The finalist teams will attend AGA's National Leadership Conference, Feb. 18-19, 2010 in

Washington, D.C. to offer a final presentation about their reports to a panel of judges. Stay tuned!

### *State and Local News*

### **After Spending Billions, Calif. Remains Hampered by Unreliable Computer Systems**

California may be known as the cradle of computer innovation, but several state agencies can't get their computers to perform essential functions despite hundreds of millions of dollars in cost overruns for repair and upgrade work. Although taxpayer money has been flowing to corporate consultants and software overhauls, some computer systems are on the verge of collapse, and some replacement projects are years behind schedule or have been scrapped because they didn't work. The antiquated systems have even been cited by top finance officials as a contributing factor in the difficulty the state has managing its money. A lack of shared databases results in a sluggish information flow that can hamper financial decision-making. Budget officials may have trouble obtaining accurate, up-to-date numbers, and the information lag can hinder purchasing and investment decisions. "It's embarrassing," said Tracy Weston, chief executive of the Center for Governmental Studies in Los Angeles. "If California can't get it right, who can?" --Patrick McGreevy, *The Los Angeles Times*. [Read more.](#)

### **Maryland Lost Nearly 30 Percent of Millionaires Last Year**

Maryland's chief tax collector reported that the number of millionaires in the state plunged 30 percent last year to the lowest level in four years and that some wealthy residents might have

moved. The analysis from the comptroller's office is expected to stoke a debate over the General Assembly's decision to raise an income tax rate for millionaires, a budget-balancing move it enacted in 2008. While the comptroller's office makes no conclusions about the data, lawmakers on both sides of the aisle are likely to seize on the findings. --Laura Smitherman, *The Baltimore Sun*. [Read more.](#)

### *Federal News*

#### **New Consensus Sees Stimulus as Worthy Step**

Now that unemployment has topped 10 percent, some liberal-leaning economists see confirmation of their warnings that the \$787 billion stimulus package President Obama signed into law last February was way too small. The economy needs a second big infusion, they say. No, some conservative-leaning economists counter, we were right: The package has been wasteful, ineffectual and even harmful to the extent that it adds to the nation's debt and crowds out private-sector borrowing. These long-running arguments have flared now that the White House and Congressional leaders are talking about a new "jobs bill." But with roughly a quarter of the stimulus money out the door after nine months, the accumulation of hard data and real-life experience has allowed more dispassionate analysts to reach a consensus that the stimulus package, messy as it is, is working. -- Jackie Calmes and Michael Cooper, *The New York Times*. [Read more.](#)

#### **Feds Target Misuse of Stimulus Cash**

Federal prosecutors are investigating a dozen cases of possible fraud involving the \$787 billion stimulus package, a *USA Today* review of government records shows. There are an additional 88 active investigations of potential misuse of that money, according to

reports filed by internal watchdogs at 29 federal agencies managing stimulus funds and the congressional U.S. Government Accountability Office. Separately, GAO criminal investigators are reviewing nine cases, acting GAO head Gene Dodaro has said. The agency reports, which are required under the stimulus law to be filed monthly by the inspectors general, do not provide details on the investigations. However, Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board Chairman Earl Devaney said the allegations involve contract and grant fraud and include filing false statements and attempts by ineligible firms to get funding. --Matt Kelley, *USA Today*. [Read more.](#)

### *U.S. Fiscal Condition*

#### **Wave of Debt Payments Facing U.S. Government**

The United States government is financing its more than trillion-dollar-a-year borrowing with i.o.u.'s on terms that seem too good to be true. But that happy situation, aided by ultralow interest rates, may not last much longer. Treasury officials now face a trifecta of headaches: a mountain of new debt, a balloon of short-term borrowings that come due in the months ahead, and interest rates that are sure to climb back to normal as soon as the Federal Reserve decides that the emergency has passed. Even as Treasury officials are racing to lock in today's low rates by exchanging short-term borrowings for long-term bonds, the government faces a payment shock similar to those that sent legions of overstretched homeowners into default on their mortgages. --Edmund L. Andrews, *The New York Times*. [Read more.](#)

## **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 [radivojevich@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:radivojevich@co.dane.wi.us). Deadline for submission of articles is the 25th of the month. Feel 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 [radivojevich@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:radivojevich@co.dane.wi.us) or the Chapter President at [sherri.voigt@wisconsin.gov](mailto: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](http://www.agacqfm.org/membership/form_address.htm)



## Southern Wisconsin Chapter Calendar of Events for 2009-2010

August 4, 2009 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

September 1, 2009 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

September 24, 2009 - Retirement System Update, Sari King, Constituent Relations, Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF), Great Dane-Fitchburg

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

October 22, 2009 – State of Wisconsin Strategies for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), Susan Crawford, Chief Legal Council to Governor Doyle, Babe's Restaurant

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

November 19, 2009 – Wisconsin Economic Update, John Koskinen, Chief Economist, Wisconsin Department of Revenue

December 1, 2009 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison (meeting cancelled)

**January 5, 2010 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison**

**January 28, 2010 – Annual Tax Update, Mardee L. Blattner, CPA, MST, Manager, Virchow Krause & Company – Imperial Garden Restaurant**

February 2, 2010 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

February 25, 2010 – The Funding and Impact Regarding Health Care  
Professor Eugene Farley, UW-Madison, location to be determined

March 2, 2010 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

March 25, 2010 – luncheon topic and location to be determined

April 6, 2010 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

April 22, 2010 – luncheon topic and location to be determined

May 2, 2010 – MS Walk 2010 (community service event)

May 4, 2010 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

May 11, 2010 – *Annual Spring Symposium*

May 20, 2010 – luncheon topic and location to be determined

June 1, 2010 – Board Meeting, Old Country Buffet, Madison

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

# AGA Southern Wisconsin Chapter 2009-2010 Officers and Directors

**President** – Sherri Voigt, CGFM, CPA, DNR, [sherri.voigt@wisconsin.gov](mailto:sherri.voigt@wisconsin.gov), 608-267-9818

**President Elect** – Vacant

**Past President** – Eric Busse, DPI [eric.busse@dpi.state.wi.us](mailto:eric.busse@dpi.state.wi.us), 608-267-9199

**Chapter Recognition** – Dolly O'Laughlin, [olaughlin@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:olaughlin@co.dane.wi.us), 608-242-6314

**Secretary** – Vacant

**Treasurer** – Roger Birkett, CPA, [jabirk@charter.net](mailto:jabirk@charter.net)

**Historian** – David Mellem, CGFM, CIA, CISA, US DHHS OIG, [david.mellem@oig.hhs.gov](mailto:david.mellem@oig.hhs.gov), 608-264-5415 ext 25

**Membership Chair** – Eric Thornton, [ethornton@bus.wisc.edu](mailto:ethornton@bus.wisc.edu), 608-265-2006

**Newsletter Editor** – Lillian Radivojevich, [radivojevich@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:radivojevich@co.dane.wi.us), 608-284-4801

**Education Co-Chair** – Carrie Ferguson, CPA, LAB, [carrie.ferguson@legis.state.wi.us](mailto:carrie.ferguson@legis.state.wi.us), 608-259-9839  
Mary Laufenberg, CGFM, CPA, DOR, [mary.laufenberg@revenue.wi.gov](mailto:mary.laufenberg@revenue.wi.gov), 608-266-1670

**Webmaster** – Scott Thornton, [scott@goochpages.com](mailto:scott@goochpages.com)

**Community Service Chair** – Sherri Voigt, CGFM, CPA, DNR, [sherri.voigt@wisconsin.gov](mailto:sherri.voigt@wisconsin.gov)

**Research Coordinator & Liaison w/Other Profession Organizations** – Vacant

**CGFM Chair** – Eric Busse, DPI [eric.busse@dpi.state.wi.us](mailto: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](mailto:jgordon@uwsa.edu), 608-263-4395

Thomas A. Scheidegger, CPA, [thomas.scheidegger@bakertilly.com](mailto:thomas.scheidegger@bakertilly.com)

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

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