

The Philadelphia Penn

Association of Government Accountants – Philadelphia Chapter

Volume 32, Issue 22

December 2006

LUNCHEON MEETING

There will be no Chapter luncheon meeting in December. The next luncheon meeting will be held on January 17, 2007, at Maggianos. The topic will be announced at a later date

AUDIO CONFERENCE

An audio conference on Internal Controls will be held on February 28th. It will be free to members and the cost to non-members is \$20. See page 5 for additional details.

SOCIAL OUTTING

A survey will soon be posted soon on our website regarding your interest in a Philadelphia venue scheduled for Spring 2007.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

We need a volunteer to perform an audit of the Chapter's financial records. If interested, please contact Dennis Zawacki or Bob Coyle for details.

AGA AWARDS

For the latest AGA awards information go to National AGA web page (Membership/Award & Scholarship Section), by accessing our Chapter's web page at www.agaphil.com.

IMPORTANT NEWSLETTER NEWS

Because just about everyone is now connected to the world wide web, we are posting the monthly chapter newsletters to our web site www.agaphil.com. We will also email a copy of the newsletter to those individuals that provide their email addresses. If you want to have your copy of the newsletter e-mailed to you, send your e-mail address to coyle.robert@oig.dol.gov.

NATIONAL AGA NEWS

For the latest National AGA News visit our web site at www.agaphil.com and link into the AGA National homepage.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Annual membership renewals were due to be paid by March 31, 2006. Did you renew?

CGFM STUDY PROGRAM

Anyone interested in a local CGFM study program should contact Vince Gallo (215-814-5773 or via email at gallo.vince@epa.gov) or John Carlucci (215-861-4496 or via email at John.Carlucci@oig.hhs.gov).

ALERT OTHERS TO YOUR AGA MEMBERS VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

If you would like to share your volunteer efforts with other AGA members, email a summary of the efforts to coyle.robert@oig.dol.gov for inclusion in the monthly newsletter. Consider adding pictures.

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Chapter Activities

Executive Board Meetings

The Board met on November 15, 2006, to plan activities for the upcoming year. The Board discussed: future potential luncheon speakers, various administrative items, selection of officers, potential social events, and plans for the upcoming Professional Development Conference in May 2007.

Financial Position

Dennis T. Zawacki, Treasurer, reported the chapter finances for the current fiscal year from May 1, 2006 to October 30, 2006.

Balance Sheet

As of October 30, 2006

Cash in Bank	\$15,607.34
Prepaid Expenses	<u>1,000.00</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$16,607.34</u>
Liabilities and Equity	
Retained Earnings	\$11,848.23
Net Income	<u>4,759.11</u>
Total Liabilities and Equity	<u>\$16,607.34</u>

Tax Seminar

The annual Tax Seminar was held on Thursday, November 30, 2006. The Chapter awarded 8 hours of CPE to attendees.

Audio Conference

The Chapter sponsored a well attended audio conference on November 8, 2006. The topic of discussion was the New Yellow Book (Government Auditing Standards). The Chapter awarded 2 hours of CPE to attendees.

November 2006 Luncheon



Setting up before the luncheon



The long awaited unveiling



Members picking up tips



Put those quarters away. Don was only demonstrating



Inside the slot machine



Passing the monkey



Get the cuffs. Only Bob would have the audacity to gamble with the PA IG in the room



Harry thanking Don for his presentation

UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

Luncheon Meetings

The next monthly meeting will be on January 17, 2007. The topic and speaker will be announced at a later date. As usual, the luncheon meeting will be held at Maggiano's, directly across the street from Philadelphia's famed Reading Terminal Market at 12th and Filbert Streets.

The luncheons for the remainder of the Chapter's year will be held on:

January 17, 2007

- February 20, 2007 This is a TUESDAY. Luncheon moved up one day because of Ash Wednesday.
- March 21, 2007
- April 18, 2007

Professional Development Conference

The Chapter's annual Professional Development Conference is scheduled for May 11, 2007.

Audio Conferences

February 28, 2007 – Internal Controls

March 28, 2007 – Procurement Fraud

Details on the Next Audio Conference

The Philadelphia Chapter is hosting the Audio Conference on February 28, 2007 at 2:00 PM in Suite 415 of the Public Ledger Building. It will be free to members and the cost to non-members is \$20. This is the same location where we have the Tax Seminar and have held other Audio Conferences. Register before noon on February 23rd at www.agaphil.com. The audio conference, worth 2 CPE hours, is designed to help participants understand how a risk-based audit approach can be an important tool for evaluating program compliance, economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Refreshments will be served. Please Call Dennis Zawacki at 215-861-8576 for late reservations or to cancel reservations.

State Sponsor Numbers

Pennsylvania State Board of Accountancy Sponsor Number - PX-000052-L

New Jersey State Board of Accountancy Sponsor Number - CE-00547

President's Message

Hello and Happy Thanksgiving to you all! Sincere thanks to everyone who attended this past month's AGA – Philadelphia Chapter meeting and our audio conference. Like I've said before our organization continues to go strong with all the support from our members, new and old, and especially our board.

On November 30th we will be sponsoring our annual all-day tax seminar with two guest speakers: Mr. Al Brindisi and Mr. Richard Furlong. It is free to members and \$75 for non-members. Breakfast and lunch is included and will be serviced by COSI (9th & Chestnut Streets). Our third audio conference, scheduled for February 28th, is titled "Internal Controls." It is also free to members and \$20 for non-members. Light refreshments will be served. Both the tax seminar and the audio conference will be held at the Public Ledger Building (6th & Chestnut Streets) in Room 415. Please see our website for more information and sign up early to reserve your seat.

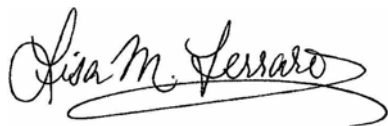
Our third monthly speaker was Mr. Donald L. Patterson, Inspector General of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. His fascinating and jovial speech provided us with an in depth knowledge about internal controls for casino operations. It was our pleasure to have a very distinguished and kind gentleman providing us with the "inside eyes" to checks and balances of a casino and especially the 'prop', which was an added bonus. Our next monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 17th and our guest speaker will be announced on our website once we have confirmation.

If you were unable to attend the November luncheon, it was mentioned that we will be sponsoring a social event somewhere in the Philadelphia Metro area in the Spring of 2007. We will post a survey on our website listing the possible venues. Please check the website and let us know what you would be interested in attending. We certainly would like to sponsor an event, but it can only happen if we have your input. So please, send us your thoughts if you are interested and if you have any ideas yourself, send us an email at agaphiladelphia@comcast.net.

As always, if there is a topic that you think would be interesting, or a person you think would be an excellent speaker, please send us an email with your suggestion or drop by one of our monthly sessions at Maggiano's Little Italy. Any help is appreciated.

Thanks again for supporting our organization.

Yours truly,



Lisa M. Ferraro
Chapter President

Earning a Certified Government Financial Manager Designation A Step-by-step Guide.

Interested in the CGFM designation? Want to know where to start or what happens next?

Here is a step-by-step guide on how you can earn the CGFM designation:

Step 1 - Applying for the CGFM Program. Submit an application form for the CGFM Program via internet, fax or mail, including the application fee of \$85. Fax or mail a copy of your transcript from an accredited college or university. The transcript must show that a degree (bachelor's or higher) was awarded and must list at least 24 credit hours of courses in financial management or related topics. Your name and the name of the college or university must appear on all transcripts.

Step 2 - Eligibility Letter. Once your application, payment and degree documentation are received and processed, the Office of Professional Certification will mail you an Eligibility Letter with instructions on how to purchase your CGFM Examinations. Your eligibility for taking the CGFM Examinations expires in three years from the date your CGFM application was processed.

Step 3 - Work Verification. Submit a Verification of Government Financial Management Work Experience form as soon as you have at least two years of professional-level experience in the government financial management field. You do not have to submit this form before taking the examinations, but the experience requirement must be met before the designation can be granted.

Step 4 - Studying for Examinations. You have several options, including classroom courses, study guides and a reading resources list. You may also want to contact a local AGA chapter to find out if there are any study groups or other support available to help you prepare for the examinations.

Step 5 - Examination Purchase. Following the instructions on your Eligibility Letter, purchase CGFM Examination(s) through the AGA website and print the Test Authorization Letter. Examination fees are \$109 for each of the three examinations.

Step 6 - Taking the Examinations. Follow the instructions on the Test Authorization Letter to schedule a testing appointment at a Prometric Test Center near you. Show up at the testing center on your appointment date (be sure to read and follow the testing procedures described on the Test Authorization Letter).

Step 7 - Score Reporting and Retakes. After you complete an examination at a Prometric Test Center, you will immediately receive a pass/fail score on the computer. Numerical scores are not provided. If you did not pass your exam, there is a 30-day waiting period before you can repurchase and retake that examination. If you fail the same exam more than once, the waiting period is 90 days.

Step 8 - Award Letter. Once you pass all three CGFM Examinations, and your Verification of Government Financial Management Work Experience form has been submitted and accepted, the Office of Professional Certification will send you an award letter announcing your new CGFM designation. You can start using the "CGFM" after your name only after you receive the official award letter from AGA.

Step 9 - CGFM Certificate. A CGFM certificate will be mailed within a few weeks of issuing the award letter.

An excellent source of additional information on the CGFM Program is the AGA website (www.agacgfm.org, select "CGFM Certification" on the navigational bar). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Office of Professional Certification at 1.800.AGA.7211, ext. 306 or 305.

Katya Silver

Director of Professional Certification Administration AGA - Advancing Government Accountability

2208 Mount Vernon Avenue

Alexandria, VA 22301-1314

Phone: 703.684.6931, ext. 305

Toll Free: 800.AGA.7211, ext. 305

Fax: 703.562.0361

ksilver@agacgfm.org

www.agacgfm.org

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER CGFM STUDY PROGRAM

Anyone interested in a local CGFM study program should contact Vince Gallo (215-814-5773 or via email at gallo.vince@epa.gov) or John Carlucci (215-861-4496 or via email at John.Carlucci@oig.hhs.gov.)

TAKE THE CGFM EXAM BEFORE THE NLC

AGA is once again offering a great opportunity to take the CGFM Examinations and earn your CGFM before the annual National Leadership Conference (NLC) in Washington D.C. Whether you've been thinking about earning your CGFM or have enrolled but found it difficult to find time to complete the three exams, this is your chance to get it done!

To help you reach that goal, we are offering a two-day Intensive Review Course on Thursday, February 8, and Friday, February 9, 2007 and an opportunity to take CGFM Examinations on February 10-11, 2007. 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 - http://www.agacgfm.org/nlc_2007/cgfm_exam.htm. If you have any questions, contact Katya Silver at 703-684-6931 ext. 305 or ksilver@agacgfm.org.

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE YOUR CPEs

Are you one of the CGFMs who received their designation in 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002 or 2004? Then you need to have at least 80 Continuing Professional Education (CPE) hours earned within the two-year period of January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2006.

If short, you can take advantage of the grace period of January 1 - March 31, 2007 to catch up on your CPEs (these hours then cannot be counted towards your next cycle of 2007-2008).

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

Consider:

-- Online CPE opportunities, including AGA's "Journal CPE Online" that offers CPE hours for reading The Journal of Government Financial Management and taking the relevant quizzes and online courses offered through Micromash and SmartPros, two educational organizations in partnership with AGA (www.agacgfm.org/education/educationdefault.aspx).

-- CPE offered by AGA chapters and state CPA or other government finance officer societies and other organizations.

-- Opportunities to earn CPE hours for teaching a relevant course (not to exceed 40 CPE hours in any two-year period), publishing an article or book that contribute directly to CGFM's professional proficiency (up to 20 CPE hours) or taking applicable college courses.

Not all CPEs can count towards the CGFM designation. The hours earned must be in government financial management topics or related technical subjects applicable to government financial management areas. Applicable CPEs would need to maintain or enhance your professional proficiency in government financial management, and you have to keep back-up documentation of the completed CPE for at least three years. This documentation may be requested by AGA if you are selected to be audited; however, CGFMs should not automatically send information on their CPE hours to AGA at the time of renewal.

For more detailed information about earning CPE hours, what topics and subjects can qualify for CPEs and answers to commonly asked CPE questions, please visit www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/maintain/cpe_requirements.aspx. If you have any additional questions, contact AGA's Office of Professional Certification at 800.AGA.7211, ext. 305.

Katya Silver

Director of Professional Certification Administration AGA - Advancing Government Accountability

2208 Mount Vernon Avenue

Alexandria, VA 22301-1314

Phone: 703.684.6931, ext. 305

Toll Free: 800.AGA.7211, ext. 305

Fax: 703.562.0361

ksilver@agacgfm.org www.agacgfm.org

CHAPTER OFFICERS		
Office	Officer	Phone Number
President	Lisa Ferraro, HHS	215-861-4501 x 2006
1 st Vice President	Harry Snyder*, DCAA	215-597-7462
2 nd Vice President	Danielle Brown-Buzan, DOL	215-446-3705
Treasurer	Dennis T. Zawacki, U.S. Attorney	215-861-8576
Secretary	Janet Ward, DOL	215-446-3726
Past President	Paul C. Teti, HHS	215-861-4505 x 2027
COMMITTEE DIRECTORS		
Committee	Director	Phone Number
Bylaws and Procedures	Jennifer Varvel, DOL	215-446-3725
Web Master	Bob Peterson, DCAA	215-597-7457
Public Service	Rosemarie Mariebello*, TIGTA	215-516-3120
Research	Paul Sager*, City of Philadelphia	215-686-1149
Education	Vince Gallo*, EPA	215-814-5773
Membership	Cara Lindsey, City of Philadelphia	215-685-6058
Professional Certification	John Carlucci*, HHS	215-861-4496
Newsletter Editor	Robert Coyle*, DOL	215-446-3720
Awards	Teri Lewis*, ED	215-656-6276
Recognition	Fred Warren*, EPA	215-814-5154
Historian	Charles Hoeger, DoD (Ret)	215-322-7190
	* CGFM	

UPCOMING FEDERAL HOLIDAYS

December 25, 2006: Christmas Day
 January 1, 2007: New Year's Day
 January 15, 2007: Martin Luther King Day
 February 19, 2007: Presidents Day
 May 28, 2007: Memorial Day
 July 4, 2007: Independence Day