



FEATURES

Member News 2
Auditing Standards..... 2
CGFM Update..... 3
GAO Report..... 3
Fundraiser 4

COLUMNS

President's Message 1
Treasurer's Report 5
The Bottom Line..... 5
Government News 7
Tech Talk 8

OTHER

Chapter Officers..... 2
Chapter Calendar 4
Upcoming Events 6
Quote of the Month 8

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well, February is here. Two more months and I'll be writing my last President's message. It's hard to believe that another program year has almost ended. Now begins the time when I must decide what it is that I want to do after I end my term. As of yet I haven't fully decided what I am going to do, only that I will continue to remain involved in the AGA and this wonderful chapter.

As I have stated previously, I truly believe we have one of the most excellent chapters in all of the AGA. Our chapter has excelled in all that we have done. I could go on and on about how we have excelled, the records we've set, and everything else but I shall forebear. Instead I prefer to look forward to where we are going.

All that we have done and all that we will accomplish together as a chapter are a result of the dedication of our membership. I never cease to be amazed that as one Director or Officer completes his or her term, there is another individual there ready to fill the vacant position. Some chapters suffer due to a lack of participation in chapter leadership. We, fortunately, do not bear that burden.

Are you interested in helping to continue our history of excellence? Are you willing to step up and take a more active role in our chapter? If so, now is the time to start thinking about becoming a Director or running for an Officer position.

Every April we hold Officer elections. There are always three positions to be filled – President-Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary. If you think you may be interested in one of these positions then chat with the officer that currently fills that position to get an idea of what the position entails.

If your interested in becoming a Director, then chat with one of our current Officers or Directors about the positions that are becoming at the end of April.

Help us continue to make this an excellent chapter. Get more involved.

Ken

CHAPTER OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

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Member Spotlight

Name: Matthew Rhyan Little

Length of AGA membership: 8 Months

Certifications: none

Agency/company: DECA

Position/ Rotation: DECA Agency Reporting

Length of Service: 8 Months

Alma Mater: Capital University

What are some of your responsibilities and highlights from your current position?

During my current rotation in DECA Financial Reporting area, my tasks consist of monthly reporting responsibilities such as the Undistributed Report, the BRAC and MILCON, SF133 and AR1002. In addition, I am responsible for maintaining Journal Voucher logs for the Working Capital and General Funds.

How has AGA positively affected you and your job?

The benefits of AGA membership in my opinion are both tangible and intangible due to the effectiveness of the immediate contacts made, and the potential benefits of long-term professional bonds created through networking. Being an active AGA member creates opportunities to practice better time management skills by attending meetings regularly and adjusting my work schedule to avoid losses in productivity. Furthermore, AGA aids in the development of professionalism, and offers a forum to direct career focus by aligning the interests of members with the successful experiences of others.

What are some personal accomplishments or highlights you would like to share with other AGA members?

The personal accomplishments that I would like to share with AGA members began within my five years of employment with Chase Home finance, five of the six positions held at Chase were in developing departments. In addition, through the course of a year as an Insurance Operations Associate Auditor, I produced nine operating procedures. Second, I have obtained a Life Health and Variable Annuities license to help reach my future goals following retirement.

During my senior year, I served as the BISK CPA review representative for the Accounting majors at Capital University graduating in 2001. Furthermore, as a student at Capital University, I participated in football to encourage more productive studying time. Finally, I am an alumnus of the INROADS internship program affiliate located here in Columbus.

What are some of your future plans/goals (personal and professional)?

My professional goals are to complete the Masters in Business Administration at Ohio Dominican University, graduate from the Leaders

CHAPTER OFFICERS (CONT)

CERTIFICATION

BOB OSBORNE, CGFM
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EDUCATION

KATIE ALFERA
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WAYS AND MEANS

KEVIN BRUNS, CPA
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NEW MEMBERS

Angelina Blasé (DFAS)
Sponsor: Justin Sponseller

Natasha Conley (DFAS)
Sponsor: Justin Sponseller

Michael Moore (DFAS)
Sponsor: Justin Sponseller

Lowell Spencer (DFAS)
Sponsor: Justin Sponseller

Joseph Swartz (DFAS)
Sponsor: Rachel Swartz

Lacey Gochneur (DFAS)
Sponsor: Jim Gillenwater

in Motion program, and obtain the Certified Government Financial Manager certification. Next, my personal goals are to obtain a series 7 and 66 licenses and pursue a personal finance advisory business after retirement.

CEC Spotlight

Name: Katie Alfera

Length of AGA membership: 2 Years

Certifications: none

CEC Position: Education Co-Director

Agency/ company: DFAS

Current Position/ Rotation: Acquisition-AM&C-General Ledger

Length of Service: (Provide military and civilian): 3 ½ years

Alma Mater: The Ohio State University

What are some current responsibilities and highlights from your CEC position?

The education committee is responsible for finding speakers for the monthly luncheons, the PDC in December and the PDO in March. We also facilitate the AGA National Audio Conferences for our chapter. The December PDC is one of the highlights. We worked really hard to coordinate the federal topic speakers and the conference was a success.

What are some personal accomplishments or highlights you would like to share with other AGA members?

I am in my third year of the LIM program and I was recently permanently placed into my current position. Completing the LIM program will be a considerable personal accomplishment and I have really enjoyed my time in the program and the many opportunities it has provided me.

What are your future plans/goals (personal and professional)?

I plan on beginning an MBA program next fall.

March is CGFM Month

If you are interested in studying for the CGFM, the training is coming to Columbus! This class fills up quickly so see below on how to self-nominate.

ID: CF-CGFM

Title: Certified Government Financial Management Training

Location: Columbus

Date: 03/10/08 thru 03/14/08

General Prerequisites: None.

Employees should review the eligibility requirements listed on the CGFM Certification website at <http://www.agacgfm.org/cgfm>

Please review the course catalog on the ePortal for a complete description of the course along with any course prerequisites. If you are still interested in attending this course, please follow the instructions below.

To self-nominate for this course:

1. Go to your Home Page on the ePortal.
2. In your My Training portlet, under Centralized Training, click on the Class Schedule link
3. Find this course in the list and click on the Self-Nominate link under the Status column
4. Follow the instructions to complete the self-nomination.
5. Your nomination must be approved by your supervisor and then confirmed by the Registrar Services Office.

You will be notified by the Registrar Services Office approximately 14 days before the start date of the course on your enrollment status.

If you are interested in more information about the CGFM and the benefits of obtaining the certification or any other concerns, please contact the Certification Directors, Aubrey Martin (Aubrey.Martin@dfas.mil), or Bob Osborne (osborner@ohiodominican.edu).

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released the following reports and correspondence:

Report

1. Audits of Public Companies: Continued Concentration in Audit Market for Large Public Companies Does Not Call for Immediate Action. GAO-08-163, January 9.
<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-08-163>
Highlights - <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d08163high.pdf>

Related Product:

1. Audits of Public Companies: Survey of Public Accounting Firms and Public Companies (an E-supplement to GAO-08-163). GAO-08-164SP, January 9. [Internet only]
<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-08-164SP>

February 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Notes: Community Service: VITA Means: Undetermined Event Presentation at LIM meeting				Ways and Early Careers:	1	2
3	4	5	6 Education: Audio Conference	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 Programs: Monthly Luncheon	15 Communications: Submit Newsletter Items	16
17	18	19	20	21	22 3rd Annual AGA Charity Euchre Tournament	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	Notes:

Fundraiser

During the Professional Development Opportunity (PDO) Conference on March 20th, our chapter will be selling Gold Canyon Candles and Dutch Mill Flower Bulbs.

The Gold Canyon Candles are long lasting and feature double wicks for a clean and even burn. There are 15 different aromas ranging from elegant florals, supple fruits, and warm spices – all available in three sizes.

The Dutch Mill Flower bulbs are high in quality, but at below-market cost. There are 17 annuals and perennials offered for spring planting that will bloom in the summer. Each bulb includes planting instructions and is guaranteed to bloom.

If you are unable to come to the PDO and interested in purchasing these items, please contact Joyce Maleski at 693-1334 or joyce.maleski@dfas.mil. Joyce has samples and pricing for the candles and flower bulbs. These will make great presents for yourself, friends, and family. Help support your chapter!

The Bottom Line

January a tough month for TSP returns

By Brittany R. Ballenstedt

www.govexec.com

The three riskier funds in the Thrift Savings Plan funds experienced significant setbacks in January.

The international investments represented in the 401(k)-style federal employee retirement plan's I Fund experienced the most losses for the month, falling 8.52 percent. But the fund experienced 12-month returns of 0.62 percent.

The S Fund, which invests in small- and mid-sized companies by tracking the Dow Jones Wilshire 4500

Index, dropped 6.27 percent in January. The fund also posted losses of 4.13 percent for the year.

The C Fund, composed of common stocks on the Standard & Poor's 500 Index of the largest domestic companies, fell 5.98 percent. It has dropped a total of 2.26 percent over the past 12 months.

The F Fund, which invests in fixed-income bonds, posted the largest gains for January, growing 1.76 percent. The fund also posted the biggest long-term gains, earning 8.98 percent over 12 months.

Treasurer's Report

By Jason Haskins, Treasurer

The G Fund, which is made up of short-term Treasury securities specially issued to provide a higher return than inflation without any serious risk from market fluctuations, grew 0.33 percent last month. Its 12-month gains were 4.76 percent.

The TSP also has life-cycle (L) options, which are a blend of the five basic funds that automatically grows more conservative as investors near retirement.

All of the five L Funds experienced losses for January.

L 2040, intended for employees with a target retirement date around the year 2040, dropped 5.37 percent; L 2030 fell 4.71 percent; L 2020 lost 3.90 percent; and L 2010 went down 2.07 percent. The L Income Fund, designed for employees with planned retirements in the very near future, lost 0.97 percent in January.

All the L funds posted gains for the year, however. The L 2040 Fund experienced the slowest long-term growth, coming in at 0.06 percent over 12 months. L 2030 grew 0.67 percent in that time, L 2020 gained 1.46 percent, L 2010 earned 3.27 percent and L Income made 3.89 percent.

<u>As of January 31th, 2008</u>		
<u>Checking Account</u>		
Beginning Balance		2173.17
Deposits		384
Expenditures		411.95
Transfer to Savings	\$	-
Ending Balance	\$	<u>2,145.22</u>
<u>Savings Account</u>		
Beginning Balance	\$	8,438.46
Transfer from Checking	\$	-
Interest Eamed	\$	-
Ending Balance	\$	<u>8,438.46</u>
<u>Total Balance</u>		<u>\$10,583.68</u>

Upcoming Events

Audio Conference – Using Internal Controls to Improve Operations **6 February 2008, 2:00pm – 3:50pm**

AGA, in conjunction with the National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers and Treasurers (NASACT) and the Association of Local Government Auditors (ALGA), is pleased to announce an increasingly important topic to our audio conference schedule – using internal controls to improve financial and program operations.

Good internal controls can be used for far more than just making sure we have the right numbers in the financial statements. Good controls can improve accountability, prevent problems and most importantly, improve the delivery of services to the public. For example, one area is grants management. In this audio conference, find out how one State is using controls to improve its grant management process to provide better oversight and accountability for grants all the way down to the sub-recipient level.

Further, too often government professionals focus on the budget cycle or a mayor's, governor's or President's term. Projects come and go. How does an organization build and sustain a strong internal control environment that does not fall into complacency? Hear how one Federal agency is integrating its internal control program with its enterprise risk management program and business modernization activity.

But what would any discussion of internal controls be without including the COSO framework and understanding its concepts? Listen as one of our presenters discusses controls as a motivator. The primary focus of this segment of the audio conference is applying four very important conceptual models: COSO Integrated Framework of Internal Control; Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs; Herzberg's Hygiene and Motivator Factors; and the Situational Leadership Model. This unique approach to applying human behavior concepts to internal control applications should be quite interesting and thought provoking.

To share their expertise in internal controls are Janet Hayes, MBA, CPM, CICA, Director of the Management Services and Nongovernmental

Compliance Division, Office of the State Auditor, State of North Carolina; Michael L. Piazza, MBA, CICA, Principal Associate and lead consultant of Professional Development Associates and Director of Program Development and Training for the Institute for Internal Controls; and Martha J. Stearns, Central Site Director, Cleveland Center, U.S. Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

Please join us for two hours of lively discussion about this important and timely topic. In addition to the speakers' commentary, there will be approximately 20 minutes for Q & A so that the participants can ask the speakers questions and share their own experiences.

The audio conference will be held in the DFAS-CO Conference Center in the room C-146 (Kansas City Room). Cost: FREE to members, \$25 for non-members. Two (2) CPE credits will be offered in the Auditing field of study. Please contact Diana Kaufman (3-0370) or Rachel Swartz (3-0592) if you should have any questions.

February Luncheon

Speaker: Mr. Mike Bernstein, Acting Chief, Metrics & Initiatives Office, Standards & Compliance)

Topic: DFAS Balanced Scorecard

Date: 14 February 2008, 11:30am – 1:00pm

Location: DFAS-CO Conference Center C-141 (Cleveland Room)

Speaker Bio:

Mr. Bernstein graduated with a BA in Public Administration from Wilkes University, and was commissioned upon graduation in the USAF. He served seven years in the USAF as a Munitions Maintenance Office at several locations across the world, including a one year tour in South Korea. Mr. Bernstein started with DFAS in January 1993 as an Accounting Technician processing Interfund credits and debits. He has also worked in the Fuel and Stock Fund Entitlement Payment Areas, as well as the Performance Metric POC for the Commercial Pay Business Line.

Mr. Bernstein has been working with the DFAS Balanced Scorecard program since initiating the program in 2001, and was promoted to a GS-13 in

Government News

Pentagon seeking \$20 billion to increase size of Army, Marine

By Lolita C. Baldor

www.govexec.com

WASHINGTON (AP)-- The Pentagon is seeking more than \$20 billion in its 2009 budget to increase the size of the Army and Marine Corps as the military struggles to fight wars on two fronts, according to documents obtained by The Associated Press.

The proposed budget, which will be unveiled Monday, will call for \$15.5 billion to boost the size of the Army by 7,000 soldiers, to a total of 532,400. And it will propose spending \$5 billion to add 5,000 Marines to the Corps, for a total of 194,000.

Separately, the budget will call for nearly \$11 billion to cover the costs of training, recruiting and retention.

Both services have been strained by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, prompting Pentagon leaders to seek money to increase recruiting and bonuses in a broad effort to add soldiers and Marines.

The funding is part of the Defense Department's overall \$515 billion request for the budget year beginning Oct. 1 that President Bush will send to Congress. That is a \$35 billion - or a 7.5 percent increase over this year's funding level.

Service members would get a 3.4 percent pay raise as part of the budget plan. Army personnel costs would eat up more than a third of its proposed budget, or nearly \$52 billion.

Plans are to increase the number of the active duty Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve by 74,000 overall, with the active duty force growing by 65,000 to a total of 547,000. Army leaders plan to complete the increase by 2010, and about half of the 65,000 has already been achieved.

The Pentagon budget would fund a force of 2.2 million in the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines. And it also calls for \$70 billion as an initial down payment to cover the costs of the war for the fiscal year.

Spending on aircraft, weapons, and research and development defense-wide would total close to \$184 billion, an increase of less than 5 percent over the current year. The Army alone is requesting \$24.6 billion for weapons and aircraft programs, an increase of \$2 billion over its current spending level.

Funding will also be sought for one Virginia Class submarine, an aircraft carrier, a destroyer and several other combat and cargo ships for the Navy; a broad array of unmanned aircraft, and \$10.5 billion for missile defense.

The Army's total budget request for 2009 is \$140.7 billion, up from \$130.2 billion in this current year.

Increasing the number of soldiers will also boost construction costs for the Army. More than \$3.7 billion of the Army's proposed \$6.8 billion military construction and family housing budget would be earmarked for facilities to accommodate the growing force.

Aircraft and weapons funding in the Army's proposed budget include:

\$3.6 billion for the Army's top priority, the Future Combat System, which includes robots, unmanned aircraft and other computerized systems designed to transform the service's war fighting abilities.

\$1.9 billion for ammunition.

Nearly \$1.2 billion for 119 Stryker armored vehicles.

\$1.1 billion for 63 Black Hawk helicopters.

\$1.2 billion for 23 Chinook cargo helicopters.

\$1 billion for 108 advanced Patriot missiles and other system components.

\$947 million for more than 5,000 Humvees.

\$945 million to buy nearly 3,200 medium tactical trucks, including 2.5-ton and 5-ton trucks.

The Army's proposed spending on research and development programs would be essentially the same as this year, about \$10 billion.

TECHTALK

Let soldiers blog, post YouTube videos, general says

By Greg Grant
www.fcn.com

To compete in the global information war played out on Web sites and e-mail, soldiers in Iraq should upload videos of their experiences in the combat zone to YouTube and post their personal stories online, a top Army general said recently -- a recommendation that appears to run counter to Pentagon policy.

Digital age warfare requires that the Army change its "attitudes and the organizational culture," which has discouraged soldiers from posting to YouTube or blogging, said Army Lt. Gen. William Caldwell in a recent post on the Small Wars Journal Web site.

Insurgents in Iraq frequently post videos of roadside bomb and sniper attacks on Web sites for propaganda purposes. "The first images broadcast become reality to viewers," Caldwell said. "We have to get our images out first." He suggested that unit leaders be given camcorders to document combat operations and daily life.

Caldwell said recent experiences in Iraq demonstrated the importance of being able to immediately access an audience of millions after commanders there "broke through the bureaucratic red tape" and started posting gun camera and other combat videos to YouTube. They were among the top 10 videos for weeks. "Using YouTube -- part of the new media -- proved to be an extremely effective tool in countering an adaptive enemy," he said.

He blamed the perception that media coverage of the war has been overwhelmingly negative not on the media but on an American public that has a "voracious appetite for the sensational, the graphic and the shocking." Soldiers should actively seek out and talk to reporters to tell their own stories, as the public yearns to hear those personal sagas, he said.

The Army must move beyond its prevailing "zero defect" and "risk averse" culture, Caldwell added, to compete in the information domain. "Unfortunately, the culture is such that the first time a subordinate makes a mistake in dealing with the media and gets punished for it will be the last time anyone in that organization takes a risk and engages with the media," Caldwell said. Leaders should "allow subordinates the leeway to make mistakes."

An August 2006 Pentagon memo forbade personnel from placing any information on public Web sites unless it was reviewed for possible security violations and approved for distribution by commanders. The directive said personal blogs "may not be created/maintained during normal duty hours" and could not contain comments on "daily military activities and operations, unit morale, results of operations," or other information that might be useful to an enemy.

Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts.

~Winston Churchill

June 2005, managing the Commercial Pay Business Line Balanced Scorecard. He was recently detailed as the Chief of the Metrics and Initiatives Office for Standards and Compliance last September. The MIO Office is responsible to develop, implement and manage the Deputy Director for Operations BSC each year.

Mr. Bernstein is married with two daughters and one granddaughter, and loves to be out on the road riding his Harley!

**Audio Conference – Environmental Fraud
5 March 2008, 2:00pm – 3:50pm**

AGA, in conjunction with the National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers and Treasurers (NASACT) and the Association of Local Government Auditors (ALGA), is pleased to announce a new audio conference addressing Environmental Fraud.

The audio conference will be held in the DFAS-CO Conference Center in the room C-146 (Kansas City Room). Cost: FREE to members, \$25 for non-members. Two (2) CPE credits will be offered in the Accounting (Government) field of study. Please contact Diana Kaufman (3-0370) or Rachel Swartz (3-0592) if you should have any questions.

**Spring Professional Development Opportunity (PDO)
Sponsored by AGA and ASMC
20 March 2008**

The AGA Greater Columbus Chapter, in association with the American Society of Military Comptrollers (ASMC) Buckeye Chapter, would like to invite you all to the third joint Sprint Professional Development Opportunity (PDO) to be held at the Riverfront Club at Confluence Park, located at 679 W. Spring St, Columbus, OH on Thursday, March 20, 2008. Since still in the planning stages, the theme of the conference, potential topics and speakers are still to be determined. More details to follow in the coming months. Please contact Diana Kaufman (3-0370) or Rachel Swartz (3-0592) if you would like to volunteer to help.

**Audio Conference – Emerging Issues at FASAB and GASB: The Landscape is Changing
26 March 2008, 2:00pm – 3:50pm**

AGA, in conjunction with the National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers and Treasurers (NASACT) and the Association of Local Government Auditors (ALGA), is pleased to announce a new audio conference addressing Emerging Issues at the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB) and the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

This audio conference offers a unique opportunity to hear from two key officials of the Federal, State and local accounting standards board on evolving concepts that drive accounting standards. The speakers will discuss:

- the conceptual frameworks being developed at the two boards;
- what future standards may arise as a result of new concepts;
- how the new standards may affect preparers, auditors and users;
- the impact of international accounting standards on the two boards; and
- the progress being made in financial and performance reporting during the last ten years and the goals for the next ten.

To discuss these issues are Wendy M. Payne, CPA, CGFM, Executive Director of FASAB, and David R. Bean, CPA, Director of Research and Technical Activities at GASB.

Please join us for two hours of lively discussion about these important and timely topics. In addition to the speakers' presentations, there will be 20 minutes for Q & A so that the participants can ask the speakers questions and share their own experiences.

The audio conference will be held in the DFAS-CO Conference Center in the room C-146 (Kansas City Room). Cost: FREE to members, \$25 for non-members. Two (2) CPE credits will be offered in the Accounting (Government) field of study. Please contact Diana Kaufman (3-0370) or Rachel Swartz