



Volume 4, Issue 2
March 7, 2008

We're on the Web at
www.ozarksaga.org

AGA Ledger

President's Message

As we move into March we are feverishly planning the Spring Seminar scheduled for Wednesday, April 23 at Cooper Tennis Complex. The seminar will be an all day, 8 hour CPE event with the fee being \$80 for Members and \$100 for Non-Members. Lunch will be provided for an additional charge or you may enjoy lunch on your own.

Presenters include the following:

- **Jeff Roberts with BKD on Recent Fraud and Embezzlement Cases**
- **Regina Walters from Drury speaking on Effective Communication**
- **Jeff Coiner and Nichole Plowman from the City of Springfield with a Technology Update**
- **A Special Audio Presentation on Citizen Centric Reporting - 2 hours (see article on page 3 of the newsletter)**
- **Tony Migliaccio, Special Investigator with Wal-Mart's Fraud Investigation Division with a special presentation on developing a Fraud Prevention Plan for your Organization - 2 hours**
- **Bob Wilson from LAGERS on Plan Funding & Reporting, the future of the program and plan details**

On March 11, Ms. Linda Charles has arranged for Mr. Earl Newman, a Transportation Engineer with the City of Springfield Public Works Department, to speak to us on



Chapter President
Jerry Mitchell, CPA, CGFM

the implementation and impact of the City's "Right Light Camera System". This should be an informative and interesting discussion regarding this "controversial" subject.

On March 22, Ms. Deb Gillenwaters will be hosting a retreat at her residence from 9 am to approximately Noon to discuss future Chapter events, presentations, community service and overall planning of our Organization. All are welcome to attend. The retreat will be at her resi-

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dence. Please RSVP to Deb at 864-1986. A mid morning Brunch will be served.

Finally, on Tuesday we will need to appoint a committee chair to lead next fall's student scholarship campaign.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Top of the Tower next Tuesday, March 11.

Thanks
Jerry

Ozarks Chapter February Educational Event

Tuesday, March 11, 2008, 11:30 am to 1:30 pm
The Tower Club, 21nd floor

Earl Newman, P.E., Asst. Dir. Of Public Works, Traffic Engineering Division
City of Springfield, Missouri

Topic: Springfield's Red Light Camera System

One hour CPE available
Price: \$18 - lunch is included

RSVP: Cindy Stein 868-4120
cstein@greencountymo.org
by Monday, March 10 at 3:00 PM

Meeting Minutes for February 19, 2008

At 11:30, Mara Campbell with the Missouri Department of Transportation spoke on performance measures and how MoDOT began their "Tracker" system and how it is utilized.

Jerry Mitchell called a short business meeting to order at 12:25 pm. The December meeting minutes and financial reports were approved by voice

vote. An officers meeting was set for Tuesday February 26th in the Health Department conference room.

The spring seminar was brought forward for discussion. Jerry brought forward extending the seminar to an 8 hour session, instead of a 4 hour session, at Cooper Tennis Complex. It was brought to a vote and

passed by voice count. List of speakers/topics will be finalized in the officers meeting.

The officers will have a retreat at Deb Gillenwaters house to discuss the plans that need to be submitted to the national AGA office for the upcoming year, 2008-09.

At 12:40, our second speaker, Brenda Putman from City Utilities of Spring-



field spoke about the responsibilities and requirements of the Internal Auditor and her duties at City Utilities. The meeting adjourned at 1:30.

Chapter Executive Committee Meeting Minutes Feb 29, 2008

Officers, Jerry Mitchell, Deb Gillenwaters, Deb Fraley, Justin Hill, Linda Charles, Vickie Frankie and Teresa Allen were in attendance.

There will be an audio conference presented by National AGA on Citizen Centric Reporting on Wednesday April 23. It was brought to a vote to move the Spring Seminar back one day so this 2 hour presentation could

be included in the seminar, it passed by voice count. Teresa Allen will check the set up for the audio conference to make sure it will be functional.

It will be 8 hours of CPE at Cooper Tennis Complex atrium from 8am-5pm on Wednesday April 23rd. We will provide an option for a box lunch from a local restaurant if participants want to eat at Cooper Tennis Complex or they can do

lunch on their own. The fees will be \$80 for members; \$100 for non-members and \$8 for the box lunch option. Speakers, topics and order of the meeting were discussed.

Deb Gillenwaters wanted dates that officers could meet at her house for the retreat in March. The date will be Saturday, March 22nd from 9-Noon. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME please let Deb

know if you are interested in attending.

Future community service opportunities were brought forward. At this time, Weller Elementary will continue to be the community service focus.

Two-hour CPE sessions are more advantageous for the State Auditor employees. We will try to provide more 2-hour sessions in the coming months.

Meet Our Speaker: Earl E. Newman, P.E.



Earl E. Newman, P.E.

Earl graduated with a BS in Civil Engineering from the University of Missouri in 1967, has a Master of Engineering Degree in Civil Engineering from Pennsylvania State University, 1972, and has a certificate as an Accident Reconstruction Specialist from Central Missouri State University, 1986.

Earl's professional engineering experience includes a total of 12 years as a Transportation Engineer with the consulting firms of HNTB

(Kansas City), Wilbur Smith Associates (Houston), and George Butler Associates. Earl has worked for the City of Springfield, Missouri, for 27 years in the Department of Public Works (18 years as City Traffic Engineer plus the last nine years as Assistant Director of Public Works in charge of Traffic Engineering).

Earl is a registered Professional Engineer in the states of Missouri and Ar-

kansas and is certified as a Professional Traffic Operations Engineer (PTOE) by the Transportation Professional Certification Board.

Earl served as the 2007 International President of the Institute of Transportation Engineers and is currently serving as International Past President of ITE. Earl is also a member of the National Society of Professional Engineers, and the American Public Works Association.

Future Educational Events

April 23, 2008

The Ozarks Chapter Spring Seminar is set for April 23, at Cooper Tennis Complex. It will be an 8 hour seminar with the option of ordering a box lunch or having lunch on your own at a nearby restaurant.

May 13, 2008

Tour of Springfield Underground.

Springfield Underground leases space in underground facilities formed by limestone mining activity. They are able to customize the precise environmental conditions required by a broad range of customers.

They provide clients with facilities that are secure from storms & theft. Watch for further information in future newsletters. Box lunches will be provided on-site. Cost: \$18.

May 14, 2008

"Mr. Excel will be back at the Oasis Convention Ctr. Eight hours CPE

July 27-30

AGA's 57th Annual Professional Development Conference & Exposition at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis located at 265 Peachtree Center Ave.

Room rate is \$129, guaranteed until July 6. Agenda info available soon on the AGA website.

Sept 18-19

Heartland Regional Council of the IMA
8th Annual Education Conference
University Plaza Hotel, Springfield, MO **Hosted by:** Heartland Regional Council of the IMA and Missouri State University, School of Accountancy



Get the scoop on Springfield's Red Light Camera System March 11 at the Tower Club

Audio Conference Set on Citizen-Centric Reporting

April 23, 1:00 - 2:50 pm

This audio conference will address the need for governments to improve how they report financial information to taxpayers. Americans want transparent financial management information, but are frustrated with what they are currently receiving

across all levels of government.

According to a new AGA/Harris Interactive® poll, of the 1,652 survey respondents--89 percent believe that as taxpayers, they are entitled to transparent financial management information.

Providing readily accessible

information that is detailed, yet understandable, will narrow the expectations gap. AGA's *Citizen-Centric Government Reporting Program* encourages governments to publish an annual "state of the government" report that is no more than four pages long. The reports, designed to be visually

appealing and easy to read, provide information to citizens about the performance and financial condition of the government, as well as demographics and future challenges that answer the question, "Are we better off today than we were last year?"

Economists Pushing Fed Not to Risk Inflation

The question that has been pre-occupying the Federal Reserve for the past several weeks and months is "how much is enough and how much is too much?" Since last September when the whole financial market was shaken by the predictable fallout from the sub-prime crisis, the Fed has been slashing interest rates in an attempt to jump start the economy or at least to keep it from falling. This was made possible by the fact that inflation rates were generally low – especially at the core level. That situation no longer exists and inflation

has become an issue again – so much so that the dreaded stagflation concept is now being bandied about again. The National Association of Business Economists has taken a poll of its members and discovered that most of them are now suggesting that the Fed restrain itself from further rate cuts unless it wants to contend with some real inflation challenges later. This is, however, not a universally felt opinion as many have made the observation that most of the inflation in the current system is still coming from a narrow range

of inputs – food and fuel.

Analysis: *The Fed is almost committed to an interest rate cut this month as the financial markets have already essentially priced it in and failure to keep pump priming now would almost certainly result in a massive and unpleasant reaction. That said, there is deep debate over what the Fed does from here. If the Fed makes a quarter point or half point reduction in the next couple of weeks but accompanies the act with a stern lecture on the evils of inflation, the markets may well take that as a signal*

that Bernanke has gone about as far as he dares given the potential for some inflation spikes. On the other hand, if his comments are more focused on continued downside risks the message will be that the Fed is prepared to risk inflation in order to keep the economy from dragging bottom for much longer. There isn't a lot of consensus on what the Fed will cut but much agreement that it will either be a quarter point or half point. Few think the Fed will stand pat this time. -Chris Kuehl Armada Corporate Intelligence

Cell Phones Distract Drivers as Brain Function Alters

Most of us have already noticed that people driving while talking on their cell often engage in the most annoying and erratic behaviors. Now a study from Carnegie Mellon University has provided some research to back up these perceptions.

They have taken brain scans of people talking or listening to their phones and it was revealed that the brain's performance was significantly lowered during the conversation. Almost the entire focus of the brain was on the conversation and function as it related to driving fell dramatically. The impact would be the same as driving while legally drunk. This is one of those observations that almost doesn't need to be made as we have all seen what driving

while talking looks like and if we are honest with ourselves we know that we are more than a little distracted by these calls.


The issue is whether anything needs to be done about the usage of phones while driving.

Analysis: *This is one of those issues that cause no end of conflict in terms of attitudes and beliefs. The imposition of yet another set of laws prohibiting this behavior strikes many as more unwarranted intrusion by the government, more make-work for the police and another reason for courts to be clogged. On the other hand the dangerous driving by people pre-occupied with their cell en-*

danger the life and property of everyone they are around. It would seem that common sense would prevail at some point and people would exercise some restraint by talking as little as possible, waiting for ideal conditions and the like.

Observations indicate that common sense is playing no role in this debate. It is nearly inevitable therefore that new laws and regulations will be passed and people will soon find themselves the

recipient of fines and penalties while everyone loses the ability to use this technology responsibly. - Chris Kuehl, Armada Corporate



Editor's Note: Having come very close to becoming a victim of a cell-phone user's errant driving, this subject is of special interest to me. With the possible exception of a health emergency, nothing is so important that it needs to be discussed while driving. You are putting yourself and those in the vehicles around you in danger. You will always know if you are driving behind me. I am the one with the bumper sticker that says: DRIVE NOW - TALK LATER

March is CGFM Month

AGA's CGFM Program was specifically designed to help meet the critical need for greatly increased emphasis on the professional qualifications and stature of

government financial managers. This professional designation recognizes the unique skills and special knowledge required of professionals who specialize in

government financial management. We want to congratulate all of the CGFMs for earning this important certification. You've made the right

investment in your professional development. The CGFM's reputation as the "gold standard" in government financial management continues to grow.

Ozarks Chapter 2nd Annual Spring Seminar Set For April 23

The Ozarks Chapter is pleased to present our **Second Annual Spring Educational Seminar**. It will be held Wednesday, April 23, 2008 at Cooper Tennis Complex Atrium Room. The list of presenters is just about finalized (see Jerry's message).



2331 E. Pythian, Springfield, Missouri

8 Hours CPE Available

Members: \$80, Non-members: \$100

Box lunches available for a small fee or

Enjoy lunch on your own at a nearby restaurant

The seminar will be eight hours this year and will include five in-person presenters and one 2-hour web presentation on Citizen Centric Reporting. (See article on pg.5)

Mark your calendars now for April 23rd, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at Cooper Tennis Complex.



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Ozarks Chapter of The Association of Government Accountants
Deb Fraley, CPA, Editor
Deadline for articles: Friday-eleven days prior to meeting date
Send articles to: dfraley@springfieldmo.gov

**ASSOCIATION OF
 GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTANTS,
 OZARKS CHAPTER**

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Notes & Reminders

IT'S TIME TO SPRING FORWARD!!

Don't forget to move your clocks and watches one hour forward to adjust for daylight savings time.

The Missouri State Board of Accountancy has added the Missouri AGA chapters to its website. Here's the link:
<http://pr.mo.gov/accountancy-related-links.asp>

Renew Your AGA Membership! Annual dues are due this month. You may pay online at:
<http://www.agacgfm.org/membership/join/>

FASAB and GASB Emerging Issues Topic of March 26 Audio Conference

Coming Soon! AGA's Web Blog Starts April 1

Looking for a forum to dialogue with your colleagues? AGA will sponsor a daily web blog where participants can post a brief essay on a government financial management or accountability issue and check back during the day to answer questions posted by readers. Join the fun by e-mailing mforce@agacgfm.org, director of communications, to get on the schedule.

