

From the Ozarks



The Ozarks Ledger



Ozarks Chapter
Volume IV, Issue 8
September 4, 2008

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

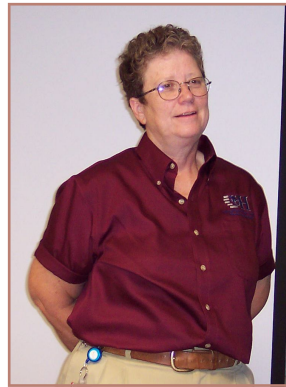
President's Message

Hello everyone,

School has started and the weather has begun to change. Many of us used the Labor Day holiday as our last hurrah for the summer. It was good to take a small break, but now we are back. Our September meeting is taking a different format and should prove to be very enlightening for many of us.

On Wednesday September 17th we will have a two hour meeting at Cooper Tennis Complex from 10 AM to Noon. Steve Gorcester will be speaking to us regarding using Dashboards for performance measurements. Steve is in town to speak at the IMA conference later in the week, so we are most fortunate to have him for this month's meeting. He has an incredible story to tell and weighs in with practical evidence on why we should all be looking at performance measurements, particularly in governmental accounting. The transparency afforded by dashboards will be evident with his presentation.

We have a four hour seminar coming on October 14th, again at Cooper. We have a speaker discussing the practical concerns with implementing a code of conduct within an organization. Another speaker will be telling us about process improvement within the Social Security Administration. And our final speaker will spend time discussing issues surrounding the implementation and security involved with purchasing card systems. It looks



Deb Gillenwaters, CGFM

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to be an interesting, useful and practical seminar. More about it as we near the date.

Also in October AGA will be sponsoring a CPA day with Paul Koehler speaking for 8 CPEs. This project is being coordinated by our own Jerry Mitchell. In conjunction with the CPA seminar there will be a charity golf tournament with all proceeds going to our community service for Weller School. The proceeds will be part of the matching funds for a grant Ms Monroe (Weller's principal) is writing for "Math Advantage" kits for each of the classroom teachers. It is appropriate that we as accountants encourage the kids to improve their math skills and the "Math Advantage" program does just that.

See you on the 17th.

Steve Gorcester to Speak on Sept 17 on Dashboarding

TWO-HOUR LIVE CONFERENCE

Topic: Dashboarding: A Tool For Performance Management

Speaker: Steve Gorcester, Executive Director of the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board, Olympia, WA

Time: 10:00 AM - Noon, Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2008

Place: Cooper Tennis Complex Atrium Room

Cost: Members \$15, Non-members \$20, CPE: 2 hrs

To make conference reservations please email or call Deb Gillenwaters at:

dgillenwaters@springfieldmo.gov

Phone: 864-1896

Please RSVP by 3:00 PM, Tuesday, Sept. 16

Ozarks Chapter Most Dedicated Members - 2005 to 2008



Linda Charles working at The Kitchen
Ozarks Chapter Community Service-Dec 2006

It all started when I received a call from an AGA member. They needed me to draft a memo proving their attendance and CPE earnings for 2007 to a third party. I found that although we had this information, it was not in a format that we could extract information from very easily. After consulting with the other officers, we concluded that it was necessary to compile attendance records in a spreadsheet for the last three years.

As I was compiling the information, I thought it would be fun to have a contest to see who has attended the most meetings, events, community service

projects, etc... When everything was tallied up, there was a two way tie. I worked with others to find events that I had missed, but everything we added to the list had two things in common; **Linda Charles and Deb Fraley** had been in attendance! We could not break the tie no matter how hard we tried.



Deb Fraley thinking about the next AGA newsletter while vacationing in Florida-Feb 08

I would like to recognize them for their dedication. They have officially been identified as the two most dedicated members for AGA over the past 3 years!!! We recognize them not only for their faithful attendance, but also for their hard work that goes in behind the scenes at all our functions. Also, as Webmaster (Linda Charles) and Newsletter Editor (Deb Fraley), they both strive for perfection.

I would also like to make honorable mention of a few other dedicated members that were just a few tally marks away from making the tie:

Deb Gillenwaters
Vicki Franke
Jerry Mitchell
Teresa Allen

Much thanks to all of these dedicated folks that make huge contributions to our chapter. We all benefit from your tireless efforts.

Oh, and by the way. You, dear reader, make a substantial contribution too for every meeting you attend...

Submitted by:
Justin Hill

Meet Steve Gorcester - Putting Performance Measures to Work



Stevan Gorcester
Executive Director
Washington State Transportation Improvement Board
Olympia, WA

Steve Gorcester serves as the Executive Director of the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board where he is responsible for managing over \$400 million in grant obligations to city and county transportation projects. He used performance management to drive recovery of an agency that has allocated nearly twice its funding capacity to far too many projects.

He now speaks nationally on government performance management, particularly the use of software dashboards. Steve is a graduate of the University of Washington.

With its programs nearly 100 percent over-allocated, the TIB was slated for elimination by the Senate Transportation Chairman. In 2001, a new management team used performance data to breathe life back into the programs, establishing a strong fiscal position and restoring legislative support.

Steve will demonstrate how the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board manages agency performance using its innovative data dashboard.

Chapter Executive Committee Minutes July 15, 2008

The Ozarks Chapter of AGA held a board meeting on July 15, 2008 in the new conference room at the Springfield-Greene Health department.

The items discussed were:

Meetings:

No meeting is scheduled in the month of August due to the summer vacation season.

A two-hour audio conference is scheduled in April 2009.

There is a possibility that there will be a two-hour seminar in the month of May 2009.

Steve Gorcester will speak at the Cooper Tennis Complex from ten to noon on September 17, 2008. The topic will be "Dashboards."

On October 14, 2008, a four-hour seminar will be held at Cooper Tennis Complex. Scheduled speakers are: Mark Bailey, a Director of the Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General in Kansas City, Missouri; Michelle Holland, Staff Auditor for Jackson County, Kansas, speaking on Purchasing Cards and p-card fraud; and Ruth Shryack from Jordan Valley Community Health Center, will discuss how to implement a code of Ethics. Sarah Steeleman, Republican candidate for governor of MO has been contacted to speak; Deb Fraley made a motion to charge \$60 for four-hour seminar to AGA members and \$80 to non-members.

Jerry Mitchell will be conducting a CPA seminar on October 23rd at the Lake Springfield Boathouse with Paul Koehler of Lincoln, Nebraska as the speaker.

The IMA is planning to conduct a seminar on April 22, 2009.

One of the speakers will be Excel expert Bill Jelen.

Other Issues:

Justin Hill reported that Deb Fraley and Linda Charles are tied for first place for having attended the most meetings in the last three years. Deb & Linda have both been present at thirty-three meetings during the last three years.

A call for a motion was made and Stephanie Teasley moved that Linda Charles be given a \$100 scholarship to sit for the CGFM exam. Teresa Allen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Deb Gillenwaters suggested a walnut bowl to be purchased for the annual AGA conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Jerry Mitchell, who will be representing the Ozarks Chapter, would be responsible for taking the gift to the conference.

The first article of the bylaws was approved. A motion was made by Deb Fraley and seconded by Teresa Allen to retain the chapter's name as Ozarks Chapter of AGA. Articles II, III, and IV will be discussed at the next board meeting. Teresa Allen, Stephanie Teasley, and Deb Fraley were each assigned one article to discuss next time.

Jerry Mitchell will be in charge of contacting Marilyn Monroe, the principal at Weller School, to discuss continuation of our chapter's community service program which began last year. Deb Fraley will obtain information on the Backpack program and taking pictures at Weller School.

Submitted by,
Linda Montgomery Charles

Chapter Executive Committee Minutes August 19, 2008

The Ozarks Chapter of AGA held a board meeting on August 19, 2008 in the Springfield-Greene Health department's first floor conference room.

The items discussed were:

The cost of the two-hour presentation, from 10-12 by Steve Gorcester will be \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members. The cost of the speaker, Steve Gorcester, will be underwritten by the Springfield-Greene Health department. Mr. Gorcester will speak to the Health department administration on the afternoon of the 17th of September. Teresa Allen and Deb Gillenwaters will verify the internet connection at the Cooper Tennis Complex on September 16, 2008. Participants can purchase soda from vending machines during the presentation.

It has been announced that the GFOA is starting a Chapter in the Ozarks area. The Ozarks Chapter of AGA is planning a membership drive in the coming months.

Mugs will be presented to Deb Fraley and Linda Charles for having highest attendance record of the Ozarks Chapter's members. A correction to July 15, 2008 minutes -- A motion had been made by Deb Gillenwaters and seconded by Teresa Allen to award a CGFM scholarship to Linda Charles in the amount of \$100. The scholarship will be applied against the testing fee of one of the sections of the CGFM exam. Stephanie Teasley was asked to purchase the revised edition of the CGFM study manuals to assist members in studying for exams.

The Article II & III of the Bylaws were read and revised. The last sentence of second paragraph of Article II was omitted from the bylaws. A motion was made by Teresa Allen and seconded by Stephanie Teasley to accept the bylaw revisions for section II and III.

Jerry Mitchell, who is underwriting the cost, is planning and hosting a CPA seminar on October 23, 2008. A post-seminar golf tournament will be held at Rivercut Golf Course on October 24th. The proceeds will be donated to Weller Elementary School to purchase MATH Advantage Kits for Weller School classes. The Ozarks Chapter's community service project is supporting Weller School. The project is to purchase thirteen MATH Kits, which cost \$600 each. These kits would aid the teachers at Weller School in developing the math education program. Marilyn Monroe, the principal at Weller School, has applied for a matching grant for the Math Kits. The Chapter is also planning to invite the 5th grade students from Weller School to the Tower Club in December 2008 and January 2009. The board members were urged to participate in the garden project at Weller School.

The board members present were Deb Gillenwaters, Teresa Allen, Justin Hill, Stephanie Teasley and Linda Charles.

Submitted by,
Linda Charles
Ozarks Chapter Secretary

AGA's Second Government Finance Case Challenge



The best undergraduate accounting/financial management/business students in the country are invited to compete in AGA's Second Government Finance Case Challenge for undergraduate college students, which runs **Oct. 6-14.**

Student teams will collaboratively analyze and offer a written response to a case centered on how a U.S. city government implements a performance management system. The registration deadline is **Friday, Oct. 3, 2008.** All members of the two highest-scoring teams will receive a scholarship to attend AGA's National

Leadership Conference, set for Feb. 19-20, 2009, in Washington, D.C. Teams will present their solutions before a panel of federal/state/local government leaders, corporate partners and CFOs on Thursday, Feb. 19, 2009.

The winning team will be announced at the awards luncheon on Feb. 20, 2009. Cash prizes will be awarded to the winning team, and each student participant will receive a free one-year membership to AGA.

The experience promises to challenge students' moral reasoning, raise their awareness of the importance of government accountability and open doors to a future career in government.

Four Keys to Completing the CGFM

By: Amy Abbott, CGFM, CFE
AGA's Nashville Chapter

I was very happy to complete the CGFM examination process last year. Hopefully, some thoughts from my experience will help you to complete the process as well.

Commitment



The first and foremost requirement to pass the exam is commitment—this process will take a commitment on your part. The best way I found to make that commitment was to schedule a test for a future date, giving myself a goal to work toward. I decided to schedule all three exams over a period of four months; this gave me a target to work toward for each exam. For me, finding a place to study was also very crucial. If I am at home, there are too many things that serve as a distraction. I made the commitment to spend time studying at the library and I found it easier to concentrate and focus in that type of environment. Setting aside a designated time each week to study may also help you make a commitment that you can live with. The bottom line is find a time and place that work for you, come up with a schedule, and stick to it!

Guide

The study guides that have been developed by AGA are very helpful. However, for my own personal learning, I developed outlines that helped me focus on the main topics and principles described in the study guides. I found that if I spent too much time on the examples and case studies in the study guides, I might lose focus on the main principles. If you understand the main concepts and principles in the guide, you should be able to apply that to any situation given on the exam. I also highly recommend using the chapter review quizzes that are at the end of each section; these will help you apply the principles and concepts that are in the text in a way you will have to do for the actual exam. Exams 1 and 3 also offer a true/false test, which I found to be another helpful study tool. The glossary in the back of each study guide will help you learn the terminology and are great to review before taking the exam. I also recommend highlighting main topics and concepts in the study guide—this will be helpful when you review the material and will help you focus on the main ideas rather than re-reading the entire text. Everyone learns differently so there are lots of different approaches. Find the way that works best for you. If outlines are helpful to you, I would definitely recommend developing one—or contact me and I'll be glad to share mine with you.

Focus

I studied and took the exams in numerical order. I found this helpful because some of the information on Exam 1 was repeated on Exam 2 and some information on Exam 2 helped me understand material on Exam 3. I don't think taking the exams in numerical order is necessary for success. If there is an area you feel particularly strong in, maybe you will want to take that exam first to build your confidence. The main point is to decide on an order that will work best for you and focus your attention on taking the tests in that order. Concentrating on one exam at a time will help you focus your efforts on the material that is necessary to pass that exam. Developing a study guide will also help you focus your attention on the material that you need to understand and know for each exam.

Motivation

Everyone has a reason for wanting to take this certification. You have to find what will motivate you to start and complete the process. Maybe your office offers a salary increase for certifications or maybe you will be more likely to receive a promotion with a certification—or maybe you want to have the certification for your own personal development. Whatever your reason, find out what motivates you and use it to help you successfully complete the process.

I hope these thoughts will help you be successful in obtaining the CGFM. If I can be of any help, please feel free to contact me at amy.abbott@state.tn.us.

Future Educational Events

Sept 17, 2008

The Ozarks Chapter presents Steve Gorcester from Olympia, Washington. He will speak at Cooper Tennis Complex from 10:00 AM to noon. The topic will be "Dashboarding."

Sept 18-19, 2008

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.

PMC Set for Seattle Oct. 27-28, 2008

Join government professionals who have a keen interest in government performance in Seattle on Oct. 27-28, 2008, for the Fourth Annual Performance Management Conference.

October 14, 2008

The Ozarks Chapter Fall Seminar will again be held at Cooper Tennis Complex. Four hours CPE. Watch for an email flyer with details soon!

Oct 23 & 24

The Ozarks Chapter is sponsoring "CPA Day." This will be an 8 hour seminar on Thursday for practicing CPAs to be held at the new **Lake Springfield Boathouse and Marina.** Paul Koehler, CPA will discuss the revisions to the ten Generally Accepted Auditing Standards. A charity golf tournament will follow on Friday at 12:30 at Rivercut golf course with an awards banquet afterward at "Riverhouse." Proceeds from the golf tournament will benefit Weller Elementary School.



Feb. 19-20, 2009

National Leadership Conference, Ronald Reagan Building, Washington, D.C

June 21-24, 2009

Professional Development Conference, New Orleans Marriott, New Orleans, LA



TREASURER'S REPORT			
June 2008 - August 2008 Activity			
June 1, 2008			4,958.13
Receipts:			
	Audio Conference	198.00	
Total Receipts			198.00
Disbursements:			
	Audio Cost	(95.95)	
	Scholarship	(100.00)	
Total Disbursements:			(195.95)
August 31, 2008			4,960.18
Checking Acct Balance		4,960.18	
Savings Acct Balance		25.00	
Total Cash in Bank			4,985.18

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Jefferson Street Bridge



Ozarks Chapter of AGA

*Ozarks Chapter of The Association of Government Accountants
Deb Fraley, CPA, Editor*

Deadline for articles: Monday-eight days prior to meeting date

Send articles to: dfraley@springfieldmo.gov

ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT
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CHAPTER

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Notes & Reminders

Accountants Remain in Demand, Despite Recession

According to a report by Jobfox, accounting and finance executives and accounting staff were 4th and 5th in the top five recession-proof jobs. The report identified the Top 20 professions that are best equipped to weather the effects of the weakened U.S. economy on the employment market. More information on the Jobfox website:
<http://www.jobfox.com/Site/Employer/pdf/TopJobsJuly08.pdf>

CGFM Examinations Update Completed

To ensure the CGFM designation remains the first-rate certification and reflects the current government financial management profession, the CGFM Program just completed a comprehensive update of all three CGFM Examinations, including a [Job Analysis study](#) of the role of the Certi-

fied Government Financial Manager. The new CGFM Examinations went live on Aug. 15.

It has been a big undertaking and we could not have done it without our [subject matter experts](#)--CGFMs who volunteered their time to serve on the Job Analysis committee, be a question writer or participate in a cut score study. Our deepest thanks to our subject matter experts who worked on the CGFM Examinations update.



Happy Birthday to all those celebrating in