The Washington Connection

ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTANTS
WASHINGTON D.C. CHAPTER

Issue 10 • June 2011

In This Issue

"The price of greatness is responsibility."
- Winston Churchill

JUNE

Snapshots

Click below to view pictures from May's events:

- **Cinco De Mayo**
- **Dance Lessons**
- **Habitat for Humanity**

See Snapshots

Save The Date

60th AGA's Professional Development Conference and Exposition

July 10-13 in Atlanta, Georgia

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AGA
WASHINGTON DC, CHAPTER

Beyond Checking the Box It's *Not Enough* to Do *Just Enough*...

Note From the Editor

by Jorge Asef-Sargent, Editor

Welcome to the June edition of the Washington Connection! On July 10-14, AGA will be hosting its 60th Annual Professional Development Conference & Exposition (PDC) in Atlanta - this is the premier education and networking event of the year. At the PDC, you can hear from dynamic speakers, make new contacts, and experience all the culture that Atlanta has to offer. This is the last newsletter of the 2010-2011 year. We will take a break for the summer and resume with the September issue. I wish everyone an enjoyable summer and hope everyone is able to take a break and enjoy the sunshine. On a personal note, it has been my pleasure to be the editor of the newsletter this past year. I have truly enjoyed working with everyone, and want to thank everyone who contributed articles to the newsletter this past year.

This newsletter is only made possible because of the contribution of articles from the chapter's members. Thank you for all who submitted articles- these articles reflected the depth of knowledge and experience in this group, and the newsletter team is fortunate enough to review and publish these articles. We hope that you enjoy the newsletter and find it helpful for keeping up to date on events in the chapter and in AGA. Our team strives to produce a high quality newsletter notifying AGA D.C. members of Chapter and National events and services. And, if you are not already a member, we encourage you to join the AGA D.C. Chapter and enjoy the many benefits it offer, in particular the high quality luncheon series, learning opportunities, and conferences.

Do you have any comments or suggestions regarding the newsletter? Do you have an article you would like to see printed? Have you developed a time-saving process or procedure on the job? Have you traveled to any interesting locations? The Washington Connection requests that you submit any and all items of interest to our federal, state, and local members including: reviews of recently published books related to financial management; unique travel experiences or assignments; lessons learned on roll-outs of new systems; appointments or promotions; employment opportunities; and noteworthy accomplishments by our members. We also welcome digital photos that accompany your submission. Your articles, comments, and ideas are what make this newsletter go and we welcome all input!

Sincerely,

Jorge Asef-Sargent

Jorge Asef-Sargent, CPA, CGFM
AGA D.C. Chapter Newsletter Editor

Newsletter Team

Jorge Asef-Sargent, Editor

Erwin Solbach, Graphics

President's Message

by Doug Glenn

AGA DC Chapter,

Last Saturday (June 4th), I had the pleasure of enjoying our Chapter's annual awards gala. It was my first time 'hosting' such an event and it was truly an honor. It was much more than an opportunity to dress up in my tux, have a nice dinner with friends, and give out awards. It was an evening to thank people, network with leaders who have been in our industry for decades longer than I have, and recognize the service of folks who have volunteered their time and efforts to our industry. I can't speak for you, but my days are filled with constant prioritizations on how to devote my time. I am finding that time is becoming my most important commodity and the folks that were recognized at last Saturday's award dinner clearly demonstrated that spending time helping our industry was a priority for them which I consider truly award worthy.

In the middle of the evening, I reflected on my year as the AGA DC Chapter President and I figured I would share some of the topics I discussed.

I reflected on my initial challenge to the chapter to find ways to expand the value that our industry provides. Four great ideas came out of that effort:

1. Producing a Schedule of Costs and Benefits which shows the cost of a given program (which we already produce) and the benefits of that program so that a reader could start to make a cost-benefit analysis of that program. As we anticipate future budget reductions, a schedule like this could become highly relevant.
2. Producing Secretary/Administrator and CFO videos. We should be sitting down with our Agency leaders and giving them opportunities to communicate financial and performance highlights in our Performance and Accountability Reports and Annual Financial Reports (i.e., PARs and AFRs) in short videos. If you're looking at a PAR/AFR on the web and could click on a link to see a video about what is important in the 100+ page document, wouldn't you click on it?
3. Using interactive charts, tables, and graphs. Reading Agency level pie charts of expenses is boring. What if you could click on the pie slices for detailed breakdowns of those expenses (e.g., by object class)? Wouldn't that be a little more informative? Some agencies have started these kinds of efforts but there is a lot of room for innovation and improvement. I can easily see a younger, software savvy, accountant out there finding ways of communicating financial information in versatile ways. This type of person would quickly make a name for him/herself as an industry leader in this regard and would quickly rise through the ranks.
4. Using social media like Facebook and Twitter to communicate our information. We often question who our financial statement and annual report readers are. If we blasted out our information to the folks who specifically signed up to receive it, then we'd start to have a pretty good idea wouldn't we?

President's Message (cont'd)

Also, I acknowledged what I considered to be the two biggest challenges our industry is facing:

A Federal Unqualified Audit Opinion

During the evening, I was talking with a highly respected audit partner who informed me that KPMG was able to subsequently render an unqualified audit opinion for the Department of Labor (kudos to Jim Taylor!). I am highly confident that Terry Bowie's leadership will result in an unqualified audit opinion at NASA this year which only leaves DHS and DOD. Yes, there are major challenges to be tackled at these Departments before they see unqualified opinions. However, they have some very bright people working for these Departments and I am sure management at those Departments would like to avoid being the bad apples ruining the bunch. Also, if the other Departments lend a hand wherever they can (e.g., taking a lead effort in reconciling their intra-governmental transactions with DHS & DOD), then I'd like to think unqualified opinions for all of the CFO Act agencies is a very real possibility. I have day dreamt many times about watching the evening news one night and hearing; "for the first time in recent American history, the United States government received the best audit opinion possible." That is a day where all of our hard efforts will be tangibly evident to the American people and a day that we call all be proud of. I hope we all get to see that day sometime soon.

Finding and Providing Useful Information

A couple weeks ago, I was at one of the best CEAR award dinners I can remember. Federal accountants, auditors, and consultants are not known for humor but everyone was laughing out loud at the last CEAR dinner. Also, I was grateful to see that AGA and the CEAR group are continuing the practice of giving "Best in Class" type awards. On a separate note though, I have to admit that for all of the effort that goes into producing our PARs and AFRs and if I compare those efforts to the number of folks that actually read them, I start to question their value. Don't get me wrong, I fully understand and appreciate the internal control and teamwork that these documents foster, but it just seems that we could/should be producing financial and performance documents of greater interest to the American people. The Department of Interior is looking into producing the Schedule of Costs and Benefits mentioned above. I encourage other Departments and Agencies to explore new schedules, statements, reports, and information communication methods in the hopes of finding better ways of reaching the American people with information they find useful.

We have all heard about the projected Federal fiscal picture and the forecasted cutbacks and/or tax increases. I have to believe that the information our industry produces will become more and more critical in the years ahead. If we're ready with quality and easily digested information that people find useful, it will be a better reflection on all of us.

President's Message (cont'd)

Finally, as I conclude this last letter, I want to impart a final thought that you are more than just an accountant in a reporting branch, or a consultant or an auditor at the Department of X, or a manager in a Financial Management Division. WE are the Federal Financial Industry. That includes auditors, consultants, management staff, and operational staff and given the commitment and capability of the folks that I've enjoyed working with over the last twenty years, I have NO doubt that we can tackle the challenges noted above as well as any others we encounter along the way. Working together, we will all be able to enjoy hearing: "for the first time in recent American history, the United States government received the best audit opinion possible."

Good luck and thank you for a fantastic year!

Sincerely,

Doug Glenn

Doug Glenn, CPA
President
Washington DC Chapter

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Welcome, New Members!

MEMBERS NEW TO AGA DC

Mabel Adjei	*ATF*
Carole Banks	*Dept. of the Treasury*
Traci Beaubian	*US House of Representatives*
Walter Beckman	*AMTRAK*
Robert Bergmann	*AMTRAK*
Russell Blakley	*Dept. of the Treasury*
Kate Broderick	*Deloitte and Touche LLP*
Debra D. Brown	*KPMG LLP*
Kevin Buford	*NASA*
Cathy A. Collins	*USAID*
James Edward Conklin	*DHS/Science & Technology Directorate*
Jeanne Maire Conklin	*USEPA*
Ronald W. Cook	
Victoria A. Cordial	*Maryland Aviation Administration*
Christina R. Crussiah	*FEC*
Ryan Curran	*PwC*
Jennifer Dent	*GAO*
Katrina Derricotte	*KPMG LLP*
Erika Elko	*KPMG LLP*
Patrick S. Ezzell	*Clark Kennedy & Co*
Jonathan Fegler	*Deloitte & Touche LLP*
Edward C. Fontaine, Jr.	*Clifton Gunderson LLP*
Eric Fraint	*Your Part-Time Controller*

Welcome, New Members!

MEMBERS NEW TO AGA DC (cont'd)

Kathryn M. Gillis	*Dept of Defense*
Ronnie A. Goode	*PwC*
Patricia M. Greiner	*US Mint*
Anil Gunaratne	*AMTRAK*
Melissa A. Hamilton	*Hamilton Enterprises LLC*
Nazim Y. Hamilton	*Hamilton Enterprises LLC*
Raymond R. Hart	*National Institutes of Health*
Timothy Edward Hayes	*KPMG LLP*
Wail M. Higazi	*EEOC*
Jessy Joseph	*Dept of Inspector General - PBGC*
Louise C. Kefelian	*US Air Force - CAOC/FM*
Michael Kennedy	*AMTRAK*
Jacques M. Kouta-Lopatey	
Deepak Kumar	*Hitachi Consulting*
Charles B. Laster	*Dept of Education*
William Leibach	*US House of Representatives*
Mark Little	*AMTRAK*
Jason R. Matthews	*Dept of the Interior*
Maria Meek	*Harper, Rains, Knight and Co, P.A.*
David Motl	*United States Mint*
Snehai Nanavati	*Peace Corps*
Meghan V. Nigborowicz	*DFAS*
Carolyn L. North	*TASC, Inc*

Welcome, New Members!

MEMBERS NEW TO AGA DC (cont'd)

Chidilim Okonkwo	*NASA Headquarters*
Frances L. Outland	*Dept of Education*
Robert Owens	*GAO*
Gerald W. Patterson	*Dept of Agriculture*
James Pendleton	*AMTRAK*
Taylor Powell	*Clifton Gunderson*
Kathleen O. Remener	*Dept of the Interior OIG*
Norma Alicia Rich	*United Service Administrative Co*
Sean G. Ryan	*Dept of Treasury*
Jeanette Santana-Gonzalez	*KPMG LLP*
Waynette Shellman	*NABF*
Jacob Trewe	*Dept of the Treasury OIG*
Rajan Trivedi	*Grant Thornton LLP*
Lawrence Unger	*NIH*
Didetsa Vazquez Soto	*NASA - Goddard Space Center*
David R. Warren	*AMTRAK*
Angela M. Watkins	*Veterans Health Administration*
Tamara West	*NASA*
Chappell Wilson	*Williams Adley and Co LLP*
Wesley Yon	*Clark Kennedy and Co*
Raymond Zhang	*AMTRAK*

Request for Newsletter Submissions, Comments, or Suggestions

Do you have any comments or suggestions regarding the newsletter? Do you have an article you would like to see in print? Have you traveled to any interesting locations? The Washington Connection requests that you submit any and all items of interest to our federal, state, and local member including: reviews of recently published books related to financial management; unique travel experiences or assignments; lessons learned on rollouts of new systems; appointments or promotions; employment opportunities; and noteworthy accomplishments by our members. We also welcome digital photos that accompany your submission.

The deadline for submitting articles to appear in the **September 2011** issue is **August 21, 2011**. Please send your comments and contributions to **Jorge Asef-Sargent**, the newsletter editor for the 2011-2012 program year, at jasef-sargent@kpmg.com.

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Early Careers Corner

Thanks to all the Early Careers who attended the Cinco de Mayo celebration on 5/4. We had quite a fiesta! Check out the pics in the 'Snapshots' section of the newsletter.

Coming up next is…..**MINI-GOLF**…..Are you up for the challenge?

Please join DC Early Careers as we battle out for the mini-golf world championship. Represent your team with pride as we play 18 holes of mini-golf at East Potomac (Haines Point). The date of this championship is **Saturday, June 11 from 11 am – 2 pm**. Afterwards, we will venture into DC for eats and drinks. Our battle will be with NOVA and PG/MC Early Careers, so don't miss out!

Directions will be provided when you RSVP to Stephen Wills at sgwillsusa@yahoo.com

Thanks for a fantastic year and have a great summer!

Lena Lewis & Stephen Wills

DC Early Career Committee Directors

WANT TO HELP?

If you're interested in being a liason or joining the mentor program, as either a mentor or mentee, please contact Kesha Pendergrast at 202-351-8636 or: Pendergrast_kesha@pendergrastconsulting.com.

Connect to the World of Government Accountability

AGA serves government accountability professionals by providing quality education, fostering professional development and certification, and supporting standards and research to advance government accountability.

Click on the link below to view a short AGA video:
http://www.agacgfm.org/downloads/agaweb.wmv

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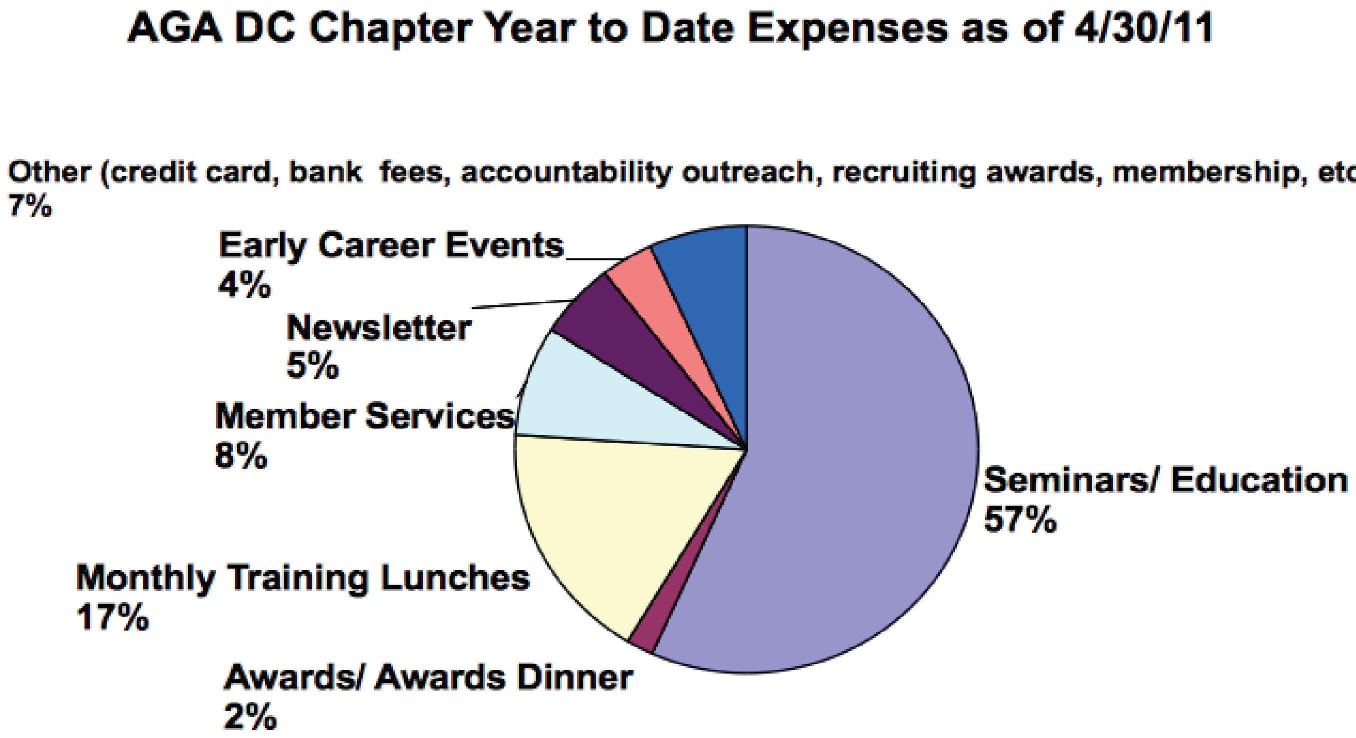
Per The Treasurer: Christy Beck



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Want to Make a Difference?

Consider a Career in Government Financial Management

Are you, or someone from your chapter planning to attend a career fair, or an event for college students? AGA now has an eye-catching brochure that offers information about government financial management careers and answers questions for aspiring government financial managers regarding the qualifications and skills needed to get started. It also includes a bookmark for students that directs them to the Tomorrow's Professionals website for more information. To order free copies of the brocure, please submit the collateral order form found in the Members Only section on the AGA national website www.agacgfm.org or contact **Jessica Jones** at JJones@agacgfm.org.

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- *VSCPA Home Page (Virginia)*
- *GWSCPA Home Page (D.C.)*
- *AICPA Home Page*

New Members And Recruiter

Recruiter

At the May 2011 luncheon, Doug Glenn congratulated Keith Taylor, CEO of 2ndWave LLC, for recruiting a new member to AGA-DC and presented him with an AGA-DC lapel pin.

New Members

Doug Glenn welcomed the following new members at the May luncheon and presented them with an AGA-DC lapel pin.

- **Erika Elko** - KPMG
- **Robert Hinds** - U.S. Coast Guard
- **Gail Matthews** - Dept of Education
- **Aliza Margolies** - NASA

Left to right: Keith Taylor and Chapter President Doug Glenn

Left to right: Robert Hinds, Erika Elko, Chapter President Doug Glenn, Aliza Margolies

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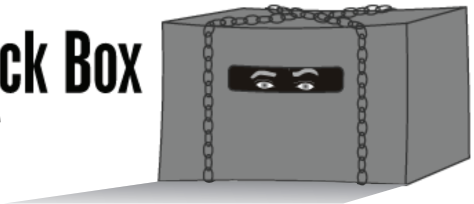
Inside the Black Box
by Simcha Kuritzky, CGFM CPA



Classifying Expenses

The financial statements of private-sector companies and even most non-profit organizations center around the Income Statement and expenses. Expenses describe the activities of the organization, what it did to earn its income or justify its budget. While this is also true for the federal government, the Consolidated Financial Report (CFR) displays expenses very differently from most companies and non-profit organizations.

The CFR's Statement of Net Cost shows just Gross Cost, Earned Revenue, and the resulting Net Cost for 36 departments or major agencies, plus a catch-all line for all the smaller agencies. The Statement of Operations which immediately follows in the CFR lists nine kinds of revenue (mostly taxes) but only lists net cost as one line (unless you count intragovernmental interest which is then backed out for the consolidated net cost). However, what I find interesting is that there is no break out of the kinds of costs. A reader can get some inkling of the types of costs by looking through the Reconciliation of Net Operating Cost and Unified Budget Deficit, but only non-budgetary costs such as increases in benefit liabilities, and depreciation and revaluation of fixed assets.

There are two types of expense classification in the federal government. The most basic form is the cost object defined by the Office of Management and Budget and Treasury. They both agree on the two-digit level, but differ on the third digit, so just the 16 two-digit codes are given below.

11	Personal Compensation
12	Personnel Benefits
13	Benefits for Former Personnel
21	Travel and Transportation
22	Transportation of Things
23	Rent, Communication, and Utilities
24	Printing and Reproduction
25	Other Contractual Services
26	Supplies and Materials
31	Equipment
32	Land and Structures
33	Investments and Loans
41	Grants, Subsidies and Contributions
42	Insurance Claims and Indemnities
43	Interest and Dividends
44	Refunds

Inside the Black Box (Cont'd)

However, cost objects are used in the budget and hence only for funded expenses. The Standard General Ledger breaks out expenses differently. There are 18 different expense and 8 different loss accounts, but most spending occurs in 6100 Operating Expenses/Program Costs. Interest expense (object code 43) is split out into four SGL accounts, 6400 Benefit Expense (object codes 12 and 13), and 6900 (object codes 13, 32 and perhaps others) should be the only other funded expense. Account 6500 Cost of Goods Sold (object code 26) is funded if the agency directly expenses inventory rather than recording it as an asset when purchased. The other 10 expense accounts are unfunded, and so would not have an object code. The SGL lists most loss accounts as funded except for 7300 Extraordinary Items and 7600 Changes in Actuarial Liability. Most losses would probably use object codes 26, 31, 32 and 33, though 7500 Distribution of Income - Dividend should use 43. The funded/unfunded division does play a role in which accounts appear on which line of the Statement of Financing (now note 42), but otherwise agencies don't report funded costs separately from unfunded.

6100	Operating Expenses/Program Costs
6190	Contra Bad Debt Expense - Incurred for Others
6199	Adjustment to Subsidy Expense
6310	Interest Expenses on Borrowing from the Bureau of the Public Debt and/or the Federal Financing Bank
6320	Interest Expenses on Securities
6330	Other Interest Expenses
6340	Interest Expense Accrued on the Liability for Loan Guarantees
6400	Benefit Expense
6500	Cost of Goods Sold
6600	Applied Overhead
6610	Cost Capitalization Offset
6710	Depreciation, Amortization, and Depletion
6720	Bad Debt Expense
6730	Imputed Costs
6790	Other Expenses Not Requiring Budgetary Resources
6800	Future Funded Expenses
6850	Employer Contributions to Employee Benefit Programs Not Requiring Current-Year Budget Authority (Unobligated)
6900	Nonproduction Costs
7210	Losses on Disposition of Assets - Other
7211	Losses on Disposition of Investments
7212	Losses on Disposition of Borrowings
7280	Unrealized Losses
7290	Other Losses
7300	Extraordinary Items
7500	Distribution of Income - Dividend
7600	Changes in Actuarial Liability

Inside the Black Box (Cont'd)

Conclusion

The CFO Council is currently developing a Statement of Spending for agencies, which will probably be based on budgetary outlays. The Financial Reporting Model Task Force Report to the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB) has already recommended that it reconcile budgetary outlays to net cost, much like the Statement of Financing does now. The task force also recommended changing the Statement of Net Cost to split out costs by governmental function (program) and relegate the organizational break-down to required supplemental information. I recommend they look into adding a cross-reference, showing (at a minimum) which organizations are responsible for which functions, and perhaps even show how much was spent and collected by each organization within each function. While the task force's interview of citizens showed that they were more interested in functions than on the agencies supporting that function, if a particular function sparks some interest, they may want to know who reported those numbers and then look at that agency's financial report or budget. I also wonder if a breakdown of expenses by object class or some combination of object class and general ledger account, at least on a governmentwide basis, would be more meaningful to citizens. That would more closely mirror what is found on private sector statements. Type Code (BETC), but many agencies have found it useful to break down their Fund Balance with Treasury by a higher-level activity than BETC.

Simcha Kuritzky

Simcha Kuritzky, CGFM CPA

Comments and critiques, as well as specific questions or suggestions for future topics, are always welcome. Send them to Simcha.Kuritzky@CGIFederal.com, and not to the AGA.

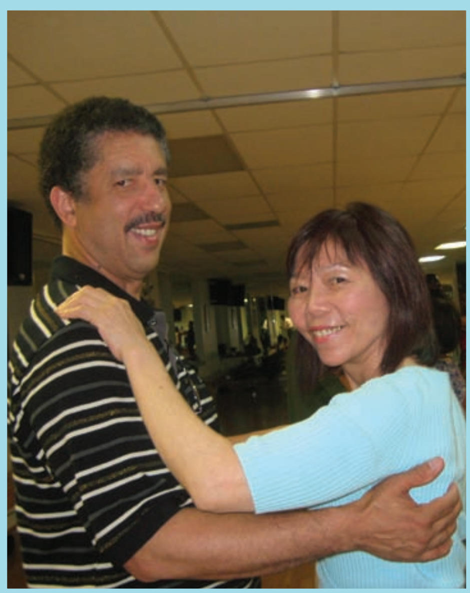
This column is provided as part of a free exchange of ideas in federal accounting, and is not reiewed substantively before publication.

Snapshots

CINCO DE MAYO

Snapshots

DANCE LESSONS



Snapshots

DANCE LESSONS (CONT'D)

Snapshots

DANCE LESSONS (CONT'D)

Snapshots

HABITAT FOR HUMAINTY: NEW ORLEANS

AGA DC Chapter Members Virginia Robinson, Christy Beck, and Evelyn Brown in front of the Musicians' Village Habitat for Humanity Center for Music which is under construction.

Success!

Paul Ambrozewicz and Christy Beck cut wood to create steps for the Habitat House.

Snapshots

HABITAT FOR HUMAINTY: NEW ORLEANS

Evelyn Brown, Christy Beck, and Doreen Shute install siding on the back of the Habitat House in New Orleans.

New Orleans habitat house under construction.

Member Services

Hello from Member Services! It is that time of year again... the annual Wine Tour event. This year's tour will be held with the NOVAGA Chapter on June 25 and the tour includes stops at the following potential locations: Hume, Phillip Carter, Chateau O'Brian at North Point, and possible Linden (there are several buses so not all will be visited by every bus). An email and web sign-up will be posted shortly. Also, we are planning on hosting a final happy hour at the W Hotel to celebrate another great year for AGA.

In May we had two very fun events. The first included cheering on the hometown Washington Nationals as they beat the Pittsburgh Pirates. The second event was an evening of dance lessons to help everyone prepare for the Annual Gala, as seen on the ***Snapshots*** page. Both were great events and we thank everyone who attended!

Crystal L. Heitman

Co-Director,
Member Services

Meetings Team

Ryan Bolz

Mark Kandra

Mark and I would like to thank everyone for all their support this last year. EVERY SINGLE luncheon has been SOLD OUT (days before the event). This is a true testament to everyone's hard work, the line up of speakers we have been fortunate to have, as well as our DC Chapter AGA leadership. Clyde's has been great, too!

We have tried to accommodate everyone's dietary needs and we thank you for your patience. It has not been easy to juggle 150 lunches, but I have had a great team led by Mark Kandra; along with Reid Mueller, Rob Marsh, and Derek Thomas. We are looking forward to having another successful year starting in September. For those we won't see at the June Gala or in Atlanta, enjoy your summer with your friends and families and see you in the Fall.

Best Regards,

Ryan Bolz and Mark Kandra

Ryan Bolz, Mark Kandra
Meeting Team

Calendar of Events - 2010/2011 Program Year

Month	Luncheons	Community Service	Education / CGFM	Membership Services	Early Careers	CEC Meetings
	4	9	8		11	14
June	**Awards Gala** ***Location:*** *JW Marriott* *1331 Pennsylvania Avenue* *Northwest Washington D.C., D.C. 20004* ***Time:*** *6pm*	**Lyons Club** **Eye Glass Collection** ***Location:*** *TBD*	**Brown Bag Lunch -** **"SECRETS UNVAILED FOR CAREER SUCCESS"** (Mentorship Program) ***Location:*** *Grant Thornton, DC Office 1250 Connecticut Ave NW Washington, DC 20036 (in the lower level conference center);* ***Time:*** *12-1:30pm*		**Mini-Golf World Championship (TRI-Chapter Event)** ***Location:*** *East Potomac Golf Course (Haines Point)* ***Time:*** *11am - 2pm*	Teleconference #: 888-283-7402 Access code:2809637 12:00 - 1:00pm
July						

2010/2011 Officers and Directors

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