

Gerald Murphy

AGA Washington D.C. Chapter President 1973-1974

AGA National President 1977-1978



- **How did you get started in your government career?** I started my government career on active duty with the US Army. Upon my discharge, I went down to the Civil Service Commission (now the Office of Personnel Management), took a clerk typist exam and two weeks later started my civilian career as a GS-3 at the Department of the Navy. Two years later I applied for a management training program at the Department of the Treasury and I must have liked it because I stayed for 39 years.
- **How did you get involved with AGA?** Like many others, I had a boss at Treasury who was an AGA member and he suggested that I join. Of course, in 1964 it was called FGAA — the Federal Government Accountants Association. The Washington, D.C. Chapter was by far the biggest chapter and the annual “symposium” (now PDT) was held in Washington every year. Later, that was changed to every other year to give other chapters a chance to host the premier annual training event. The national office staff consisted of a part-time Executive Director in an office downtown. But, the Association started growing and rented space on 23rd street in Arlington to house a small national office staff, including a full time Executive Director, a Publications Director and an Education Director. Later, as more state and local government employees joined, the name of the Association was changed to AGA and many new chapters were set up in state capitals.
- **How do you feel that AGA helped you in your career?** The opportunity to interact with so many professional financial managers from various federal agencies and state governments was invaluable. It provided a “safe laboratory” to hone a variety of leadership skills — communications, negotiations, public speaking, etc. And, it seemed that as I took on more responsibilities in AGA, I was also moving up in my government career. It was almost uncanny. After serving as AGA D.C. Chapter President in 1974, I was selected to attend the Federal Executive Institute and was promoted to Assistant Commissioner of a Treasury Bureau. In 1975, I was promoted to Deputy Commissioner. After serving as AGA National President in 1978, I was appointed to the National Council on Governmental Accounting and a year later I was appointed Deputy Fiscal Assistant Secretary. Coincidence? I don’t think so.
- **What did you enjoy most in AGA?** Attending the annual national training event (symposium, PDC, PDT). I always felt that there were two groups of AGA members — those who had the opportunity to attend the premier event and those who never got the chance — and that their views of AGA were very different. Those who participated had a far more positive view of the national Association, understood better what we’re all about and took pride in our accomplishments.
- **How do you feel you helped AGA?** Probably the best thing I did was hire Mort Dittenhofer as Executive Director when I became National President. Mort had many

contacts in state and local government and we set out to create many new chapters in state capitals. I remember flying down to Tennessee to meet with Frank Greathouse when he created the Nashville Chapter. Total membership went over the 10,000 mark. We also hosted a meeting in Miami with financial officials from Latin American countries to form the International Consortium on Governmental Financial Management. Being the National President was quite an honor. I visited over 20 chapters that year and gathered memories to last a lifetime.



In 1977, receiving the gavel from Don Scantlebury.



In 2018, accepting Washington Chapter award on behalf of Doris Chew.

One of the many things I learned from AGA was to always “drive” the podium with two hands. That way they don’t shake. ;)