



AGANewsletter

MAINE
CHAPTER

December 2008

Calendar of Upcoming Events

December 9th

Chapter Meeting

Guest Speaker – Ed Karass
“Leadership in the Financial
Community of State
Government”

December 10th

Audio conference

21st Century Financial
Managers: A New Mix of
Skills and Education Levels

December 16th

Training

Ethics

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President’s Message, from Bill Fox

Seasons Greetings,

The holiday season is upon us. It is a wonderful time of the year.

It is also a stressful time of the year for some and a potentially very challenging season for many. Revenue forecasts are being revisited and projected revenues are less than previously planned. Such an environment can create stress and many challenges. It also creates opportunities. Now is a good time to re-think some of our programs and services. Can we provide the services more efficiently? Is there a better way of delivery? Can we combine or modify programs to improve controls and reduce administrative costs? We may not be able to change the forecast, but we can change how we respond to the challenges. Keeping a positive attitude is very important. Increased communication may provide additional information which, in turn, may allay fears and calm many situations. There is much we can do to make things better. Leadership is one area in which we can shine.

Ed Karass, State Controller is our guest speaker at our breakfast meeting, scheduled for December 9, 2009 at the Senator Inn in Augusta. His topic is Leadership in the Financial Community of State Government. Registration is from 7:00am to 7:30am. The first 50 people through the door may enter a drawing to be State Controller for a day. Please join us for this informative presentation.

We continue offering an energetic training schedule. On December 10, an audio conference is scheduled. The topic is 21st Century Financial Managers (Workforce Planning). Please contact Suzanne Hammer at (207) 623-6747 for additional information. On December 16th, Jody Breton, CGFM and Director of the Natural Resources Service Center will conduct ethics training. This is an important class which counts towards certification needs for many attendees. Thank you, Jody, for conducting this training. And, on January 21, 2009 we offer an audio conference – “XBRL to Improve Financial and Performance Reporting”. Suzanne Hammer can provide additional information on this audio conference.

December Chapter Meeting

Join us for this month's guest speaker – State Controller **Ed Karass**. Mr. Karass will be talking with us about his assessment of the direction of the state government financial community.

Check-in begins at 7:00, and breakfast will be served at 7:30.

Chapter Training

On December 16th, the Chapter is offering Ethics training. Jody Breton, Director of the Natural Resources Service Center and the Transportation Service Center, and former Chapter President, will be conducting the class. CPEs are offered. The class is free to Chapter members, and is \$25 for non-members. At this time, the class is full. If there is interest, an additional class may be offered in the spring. Please contact Sue Hammer to express interest.

Upcoming Meetings

If you have any suggestions on a topic that you'd like to hear about, please contact Connie Warren at 287-8640 or at Constance.Warren@Maine.gov.



Upcoming Audio Conferences

All audio conferences run from 2:00-4:00, and are held at the Central Maine Commerce Center, in the Frances Perkins Room. 2 CPEs are earned at each conference. For members, the cost is \$30 per session; or, \$200 for all ten. Non-members are charged \$40 per session.

To register, please contact Sue Hammer at 623-6747 or at Suzanne.Hammer@Maine.gov.

21st Century Financial Managers: A New Mix of Skills and Education Levels; Wednesday, December 10th

Is there a talent crisis looming in government financial management? Do government agencies now require or will they require a financial work force with a new set and mix of competencies to work effectively in the 21st century? Is there increased demand for people with more analytical and decision-support capabilities? Learn about the results of an AGA-sponsored research study and what colleges are doing to prepare students for the work force of the future. Hear about the ongoing challenges of recruitment and retention at all levels of government and how inadequate work force planning can negatively impact an operation. Learn what the drivers are of these work force changes.

To share their practical and educational experiences is John J. Radford, CGFM, CIA, CFE, Controller, State of Oregon, Member of the AGA National Executive Committee; Kenneth Smith, Ph.D., Professor, Arkinson Graduate of Management, Willamette University; and John D. Webster, CGFM, CPA, Former Chief Financial Officer, Library of Congress, Chair of the AGA Audit Committee.

Adopt At-Risk Youths for Christmas

The Chapter, through DHHS, has been provided the following information for two families. The event is for the collection of items for the children, but anyone interested in donating items for the mothers is welcomed to.

Family 1: 20 year old mother with two little girls ages 2 years old and 10 months old. The 2 year old wears 2T and the 10 month old is size 18 months. Mom has recently moved into a new apartment and began a new job. She could use baking dishes, pots and pans, silverware, cleaning supplies, towels, sheets, and (crib & toddler bed size). She could also use gift cards to Wal-Mart, grocery stores. She needs new curtains and may be able to get some with a gift card. When the mother was asked what she could use, she said that just toys and clothes for her daughters, that she would be okay for herself. But, she would love to have a camera to take pictures of her daughters.

Family 2: A mother with two young ladies who are 16 and 14 years old. The 16 year old is in a size 16 pant and the 14 year old is in a size 13 pant. They could both use clothes. They both like make-up, jewelry, and hair stuff. They also like music from 92 Moose and have CD players. When the mother was asked what she could use, she said she could use some help with gift cards to grocery stores and Wal-Mart or whatever.

Donations will be collected at the next AGA meeting – just look for the box. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Donna Ferenc.

Community Service Corner

By Donna Ferenc

Good day all: Just wanted to remind you that the December Community Service Event is "Adopt at-risk youths for Christmas". Details and list of items have been provided and it is hoped you are able to pick-up donation items as you shop for Christmas. These donations will be collected during the upcoming AGA breakfast meeting being held December 9th. If you have any questions or are unable to get your donations to the meeting, please contact me immediately for information or to make pick-up arrangements (Donna 624-3038). Final delivery of donations will be made Friday December 12th. It would be appreciated if items were wrapped with name tags attached. Gift certificates should be placed in envelopes with names noted on the front.

Hopefully through our giving hearts these youths will have a Christmas filled with wonderment!



Also, as in the past, it has been decided that the Chapter proceeds from the December meeting 50/50 Raffle will go to a charity. This year the Bread of Life Ministries has been selected as the charity to receive the funds. So, please don't forget to purchase your raffle ticket!!!



Thank you all!.....-D



AGA's *Big Easy* Membership Campaign

Welcome to AGA's *Big Easy* Member-Get-A-Member Campaign—your opportunity to share the value of an AGA membership with your friends and colleagues, and earn BIG rewards in the process!

Every time you sponsor a new member you enhance AGA. A growing AGA means a greater appreciation of the government accountability profession, improved educational and networking opportunities for all members, and the advancement of government financial management nationwide.

This year with the *Big Easy* Campaign we've made referring colleagues to AGA easier than ever!

How the *Big Easy* Works:

1. Download a membership application at <http://www.agacgfm.org/membership/downloads/membershipapplication.pdf> You can also order applications by calling the Customer Satisfaction Center at 800.AGA.7211 and/or e-mailing agamembers@agacgfm.org.
2. Tell your peers and co-workers about AGA. Simply encourage them to fill out AGA's membership application or complete the application online. Be sure to include your name in the sponsor's name category on the application.
3. You will be eligible to receive a sponsor pin when your first referral joins.
4. After six of your referrals join (prior to January 31, 2009) you earn free dues during the 2009–2010 membership year.
5. The *Big Easy* Member-Get-A-Member Campaign will end on April 30, 2009; the grand prize winner will be announced shortly thereafter.

Big Easy Prizes

Everyone Wins! Recruit **ONE** or more members, receive a *Sponsors Only* lapel pin and get recognized in *Topics* and on the AGA website

Sponsoring Two or More -- Recruit **TWO** members and start earning *AGA Dollars*. You'll earn five AGA Dollars for each new member that joins. Recruit two members, earn 10 AGA Dollars, recruit four members, earn 20 AGA Dollars and so on. AGA Dollars are like cash and can be redeemed towards publications, membership dues renewals and national conference registrations.

Sponsoring Six or More -- Recruit **SIX** members by January 31, 2009 and receive next year's membership dues renewal **FREE**.

Sponsoring 10 or More -- Recruit **10** or more members by March 31, 2009 and be placed into a fishbowl drawing for **Sony Blu-Ray DVD player** (valued at \$300). After 10, each new member is another chance at the drawing. Recruit 10 members, get one chance at the drawing, recruit 16 members, get seven chances and so on. The more members recruited the more chances to win.



November and December mark one of the busiest, most important holiday seasons of the year around the world. With such major holidays as Thanksgiving Day, Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and New Year's Eve, November and December are full of revelry, celebration, and solemn religious occasions. For more information on these, and other holidays, visit:

http://www.worldbook.com/wb/Students?content_spotlight/holidays/holidays

Christmas is a Christian holiday that celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. No one knows the exact date of Christ's birth, but most Christians observe Christmas on December 25. On this day, many go to church, where they take part in special religious services. During the Christmas season, they also exchange gifts and decorate their homes with holly, mistletoe, and Christmas trees. The word *Christmas* comes from *Cristes maesse*, an early English phrase that means *Mass of Christ*. The story of Christmas comes chiefly from the Gospels of Saint Luke and Saint Matthew in the New Testament. According to Luke, an angel appeared to shepherds outside the town of Bethlehem and told them of Jesus' birth. Matthew tells how the wise men, called Magi, followed a bright star that led them to Jesus.

Hanukkah (pronounced *HAH nu kah*) is the Jewish Feast of Lights or Feast of Dedication. The Hebrew word *hanukkah* (also written *Hannuka* or *Chanukah*) means *dedication*. The Hanukkah holiday begins on the eve of the 25th day of the Hebrew month of Kislev (approximately December) and lasts eight days. During Hanukkah, gifts are exchanged and contributions are made to the poor. On the first evening, one candle is lighted in a special eight-branched *candelabrum* (candlestick with several branches) called a *menorah* or *hanukkiyah*. Beginning on the second night, one candle is added every night until the total reaches eight on the last night. The candles are lighted by a separate candle called a *shamash*.

Kwanzaa (pronounced *KWAHN zuh*) is an African-American holiday that begins on December 26 and lasts for seven days. The word *Kwanzaa*, sometimes spelled *Kwanza*, comes from the phrase *matunda ya kwanza*, which means *first fruits* in *Kiswahili*, an East African language. The holiday was developed in 1966 in the United States by Maulana Karenga, a professor of Pan-African studies and a black cultural leader. The holiday centers on the *Nguzo Saba*, seven principles of black culture developed by Karenga. These principles are *Umoja* (unity), *Kujichagulia* (self-determination), *Ujima* (collective work and responsibility), *Ujamaa* (cooperative economics), *Nia* (purpose), *Kuumba* (creativity), and *Imani* (faith).

Ramadan (pronounced *ram uh DAHN* or *rahm uh DAHN*) is an Islamic holy month when Muslims may not eat or drink from morning until night. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic year. Because the Islamic calendar is lunar, Ramadan falls at different times of the year. Muslims celebrate Ramadan as the month during which the prophet Muhammad received the first of the revelations that make up the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam. Fasting during Ramadan is the fourth of the five Pillars of Faith, the chief religious duties of a Muslim. All Muslims must fast if they have reached puberty and are of sound mind. Exceptions are made for some groups, such as the sick, the elderly, pregnant women, and travelers. Those who are able, however, must make up the missed fast days at a later time. A Muslim who deliberately breaks the fast must atone by fasting for two continuous months or feeding the poor.

2008-09 Maine Chapter Officers and Directors

President Bill Fox Dept. of Health & Human Svcs. (207) 624-7935 Bill.Fox@Maine.gov	Director of Bylaws and Procedures Suzanne Hammer Security & Employment Svc. Ctr. (207) 623-6747 Suzanne.Hammer@Maine.gov	Director of Education Suzanne Hammer Security & Employment Svc. Ctr. (207) 623-6747 Suzanne.Hammer@Maine.gov
President-Elect <i>Open</i> <i>Please contact Bill Fox</i> <i>if you are interested</i>	Director of Communications Kimberly Smith Security & Employment Svc. Ctr. (207) 623-6740 Kimberly.A.Smith@Maine.gov	Director of Membership Bert Batchelor Dept. of Health & Human Svcs. (207) 287-4568 Bert.Batchelor@Maine.gov
Immediate Past President Jenny Boyden Dept. of Health & Human Svcs. (207) 287-5270 Jenny.Boyden@Maine.gov	Director of Community Service Donna Ferenc Dept. of Transportation (207) 624-3038 Donna.Ferenc@Maine.gov	Director of Prof. Certification Jeffrey Toothaker, CGFM Bureau of the Budget (207) 624-7814 Jeffrey.Toothaker@Maine.gov
Secretary Donna Wheeler Dept. of Health & Human Svcs. (207) 287-1860 Donna.Wheeler@Maine.gov	Director of Early Careers Darryl Stewart, CIA Dept. of Health & Human Svcs. (207) 287-5499 Darryl.Stewart@Maine.gov	Director of Programs/Technical Meetings Connie Warren Dept. of Health & Human Svcs. (207) 287-8640 Constance.Warren@Maine.gov
Treasurer Shirley Browne Office of the State Controller (207) 626-8457 Shirley.Browne@Maine.gov		



Many thanks to webmaster Angela Dickinson, Office of the State Controller.

Thanks to GWI for sponsoring the Maine Chapter's website. Visit GWI at www.gwi.net.



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Do you like working on websites? If so, the Maine Chapter could use your help! Angela Dickinson is leaving us to go back to school. I wish her the best!

If you are interested in picking up maintenance of the website, please let Angela or I know. I would appreciate your help tremendously!

Kim Smith – Communications Chair