



January 2005

Volume 27, Number 5

**President's Message,  
Melinda Parton**

**Do you have a New Year Resolution?**

Christmas will soon be here and gone . . . time to reflect on the past year and the future. As we all reflect on the past year, we generally focus on accomplishments or significant events that have impacted our lives.

As I began to think back on the past year, I asked the question . . . what have we as a Chapter accomplished this year? Did you know our chapter produces a report each year that provides us with our Chapter accomplishments on our website at <http://www.nashvilleaga.org/AGAHistory2004.pdf>. Who produces this report? This report is produced by our Finance Committee. This year's Chair, Melvin Jones, Jr. and Co-Chair, Georganne Martin have spent a tremendous amount of time gathering this information on behalf of the Chapter for us. I hope each of you will spend some time reading this historical report or reflections on the past year.

Looking at our chapter's history report, some examples of such accomplishments this past year include our Program Committee providing quality speakers to our members that discussed timely issues that impact us through our work or on a personal basis at our monthly meetings. Our Education Committee provided our members 50 hours of CPE for Certified Government Financial Managers (CGFM) to assist them in meeting their continuing education requirements. We participated in several community service activities reaching out to and supporting our community. We established a Strategic Framework for our Chapter to build upon into the future. I could list many more accomplishments; however, I would be taking away the opportunity for you to read these accomplishments yourself in our History Report for 2004.

What are some things to come for our Chapter into the 2005 year? Our President-Elect, Dianne McKay, has been working with each committee chair to develop a strategic plan that supports and builds upon our Strategic Framework with goals and strategies that will be updated each program year. Our Internet Committee is also working on a redesign of our Chapter Website.

What have you accomplished personally and professionally in your life this past year and what would you like to accomplish as we enter the 2005 year? For those that would like the opportunity to grow professionally and develop your skills in the art of leadership, serving as an officer, director or committee member is a great opportunity to reach that accomplishment. I encourage each you to participate in a leadership role in our organization as we begin our search for officers and directors for the next year.

On behalf of the Chapter Executive Committee, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Hope to see each of you at our January Chapter Meeting.

**Chapter Recognition Points YTD  
(through December 2, 2004)**

Leadership	3,525
Education	7,800
Certification	8,525
Communication	4,050
Membership	275
Community Service	1,025
Awards	700
<b>Total Points YTD</b>	<b>25,000</b>
<b>Chapter Goal</b>	<b>10,000</b>

**CHAPTER MEETING**

Thursday, January 6, 2005

11:30 a.m.

**Speaker**

**David Manning**

**Nashville City Club**

**COST: \$10.00 per member**

Make your luncheon reservation online at <http://www.nashvilleaga.org>.

If necessary you may call  
**(615) 747-5219**  
by 6:00 p.m. Monday,  
January 3, 2005

**Look Inside!**



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## January Speaker David Manning

*Director of Finance, Nashville and Davidson County*



David Manning began his career in state government in June of 1974 as a budget analyst in the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration. During his five years in the Budget Office, he had responsibility for many of the major budgets within the government including higher education, mental health and correction.

In May of 1979, Mr. Manning joined the staff of State Treasurer Harlan Mathews, becoming Mr. Mathews' top assistant in 1980. In that capacity, he worked closely with the state's legislative leadership, including then Speaker of the House Ned McWherter. In January of 1987 when McWherter became Governor, Manning was appointed Commissioner of Finance and Administration, a post he held during both of Governor McWherter's terms.

After leaving state government in 1995, Mr. Manning served as a Senior Vice President of Columbia/HCA Healthcare Corporation and as a healthcare consultant.

In September 1999, Mayor Bill Purcell appointed Mr. Manning as Director of Finance for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County.

Mr. Manning holds a B.A. in political science from the University of Alabama and a Masters in Public Administration awarded jointly by the Universities of Alabama, Kentucky and Tennessee.

Congratulations!

Have you or someone you know received an award, promotion, or certification?

Well...don't keep it to yourself. Let us know about it!! We are proud of our members and would like the opportunity to express our congratulations and make sure you are recognized for your achievements.

### MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS!

New Member	Join Date	Sponsor
Melinda McClary	10/1/04	Gerry Boaz
Carrie Blair	11/1/04	Ann Collet
Teresa Hall	11/1/04	
Rusty Lacy	12/1/04	Melinda Parton

# STOP!!!

HAVE YOU RECENTLY CHANGED JOBS, MOVED TO A NEW ADDRESS, OR GOTTEN A NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS? HAVE YOU RETIRED OR ARE YOU PLANNING TO RETIRE?

If so, PLEASE LET US KNOW ABOUT ANY CHANGES. WE WANT TO KEEP IN TOUCH SO YOU DON'T MISS OUT ON GREAT CPE OPPORTUNITIES, COMMUNITY SERVICE, OR SOCIALIZING. PLEASE DROP AN E-MAIL TO

BETH.PENDERGRASS@STATE.TN.US

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## News From National

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### DHS Delivers \$2.5B in Grants to States, High-risk Areas

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on Friday awarded \$2.5 billion in grants to state and local governments, targeting more money than ever to areas with the greatest risk of attack. The overall amount of grant funding available to state and local governments for 2005 is actually less than 2004 due to cuts to other grant programs. But a revised funding formula means that cities and urban areas with the greatest security needs will get more money than ever this year. DHS manages two primary grant programs for state and local governments. About \$1.66 billion in grants will be distributed in 2005 through the State Homeland Security Grant Program, which is intended to create a baseline of preparedness across the nation. About \$855 million will be distributed through the Urban Area Security Initiative, which targets grants to areas with the greatest security needs based on population, critical infrastructure, threat information, and law enforcement investigations and enforcement activity. The amount of funding available through the UASI program is the highest it's ever been since the program was started three years ago. —Chris Strohm, *Government Executive*.

For more visit <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/1204/120304c1.htm>

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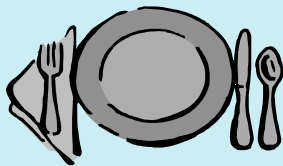
### What's SOX? Workers Largely Unaware of Act

Accounting and finance professionals are all too familiar with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (SOX). However, despite the tremendous effect it has had on corporate accounting, 80 percent of U.S. workers and 76 percent of employed investors have never heard of the groundbreaking act, according to a Hudson survey measuring its impact in the workplace. In addition, only 9 percent of U.S. workers say they have been asked to do something differently in their jobs as a result of SOX, suggesting only accounting and finance workers are affected so far. Among working investors, defined as owning at least \$5,000 in stocks, bonds and mutual funds, only 7 percent indicated that Sarbanes-Oxley had increased their confidence as an investor. Likewise among this group, only 7 percent said it had increased their confidence in the leadership of public companies. Dee Lonn, executive vice president of Hudson Financial Solutions, said, "Despite massive investments of corporate resources, public relations is lagging and the workplace impact has not extended much beyond those directly responsible for achieving compliance." Companies are spending an average of \$3 million in the first year to comply with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, according to Financial Executives International. —*SmartPros*. For more visit <http://www.smartpros.com/x45952.xml>

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### Survey: Lack of Timely Data Makes Forecasting Difficult

More than half of corporate financial officers say that their biggest challenge is the amount of time it takes to collect appropriate data for accurate forecasting, according to a study by Accenture that calls on companies to re-examine traditional data collection tools and processes. Accenture interviewed 200 executives in the United States and United Kingdom responsible for financial, treasury and cash management decisions of their organizations. When asked to select the area that poses the biggest problem for forecasting, the greatest number of respondents—51 percent—selected "time required to collect data" as the area that poses the biggest problem for forecasting. The next two biggest problems identified were "getting agreement on objectives and what needs to be done" and "inadequate data capture tools," cited by 45 percent and 44 percent of respondents, respectively. Similarly, when asked to select from a list of elements of the budget and forecasting process they would most want to change or improve over the next 12 months, 58 percent of respondents cited "time it takes to collect data" among their top three concerns. The others were "data gathering tools" and "process by which data is collected," each cited by 48 percent of respondents. —*SmartPros*. For more visit <http://www.smartpros.com/x46018.xml>



### Lunch Reservation and Cancellation Reminder

Lunch reservations and cancellations must be made no later than 6:00 p.m. on the Monday before the luncheon. A member can send someone in their place to the luncheon. If none of the above occurs then the member must pay the \$10. (See full reservation instructions on page 10)



## **Name Change Focus Group Recommends No Change to AGA Name, NEC Accepts Findings**

*Association of Government Accountants is here to stay—for now anyway.*

The Name Change Focus Group, convened by National President Bobby A. Derrick, CGFM, recommended no change to AGA's name and that recommendation was accepted by the National Executive Committee (NEC) at its Dec. 10 quarterly meeting.

The seven-member focus group, chaired by Past National President Richard V. Norment, CGFM, CIA, was designed to represent all corners of the AGA membership after a vote was taken calling for further study into the matter at the annual National Board of Directors meeting in July.

The issue was first raised at the end of the 2002-2003 Program Year by then-Immediate Past National President William J. Anderson Jr., CGFM, who wrote "Looking to the Future," suggesting AGA change its name to "Association for Government Accountability."

The focus group worked hard to include the AGA membership and the AGA chapters in its deliberations, requesting feedback through an article in TOPICS and other outreach efforts. Members from all corners of the Association replied, expressing a variety of opinions on the issue.

The focus group recommended to the NEC that the Association keep its current name—AGA (Association of Government Accountants)—and that the matter of changing the name be tabled at this time. In reaching its recommendation, the focus group's discussion focused in on two important factors:

1. There is no groundswell of support among the membership for the name change. The member feedback was split for and against changing the name, and if we changed what is the right name for our Association. Changing the name is likely to cause divisiveness among the members.
2. There is no empirical evidence to support the notion that changing the name will cause a big influx in new members. However, there has been some evidence to show that some existing members would leave the Association if the name changes.

With these factors considered six of the seven members voted to recommend no change be made to AGA's name at this time.

On Friday, the NEC accepted the focus group's recommendation, with two members dissenting.

"I appreciate the hard work of the focus group," said President Derrick, after the NEC's vote to accept the recommendation. "I know what a difficult issue this was for everyone involved. As I have traveled to numerous AGA chapters and talked to many members in recent months, I have come to realize that the focus group's decision was correct based on the sentiments I have heard. I am convinced that this is the right thing for the time period.

"I know this will be a disappointment for some, and others will be relieved," President Derrick continued. "Along with our executive director and the NEC, I like to think we are moving in all kinds of directions directly related to our mission and our strategic plan; unfortunately, some will be disappointed that this did not include the name of our great Association. We have a name people are proud to be associated with, and partners want to work with, it's more important that we deliver by accomplishments. As AGA endeavors to be the leader in advancing government accountability, our accomplishments will bring recognition and establish the momentum for our future endeavors. I am proud to be a member of AGA, Association of Government Accountants, dedicated to serving our members, our country and our profession."

To read the full text of the focus group's final report, go to [www.agacgfm.org](http://www.agacgfm.org).

## December CEC Meeting

Submitted by Penny Austin, Chapter Secretary



The Nashville Chapter's Executive Committee met on Monday, November 29, 2004, in the 11th floor conference room of the Andrew Jackson Building. President Melinda Parton called the meeting to order. Chapter Executive Committee (CEC) members present were Melinda Parton, Dianne McKay, Amy Czerwinski, Penny Austin, Gerry Boaz, Melvin Jones, Georganne Martin, and Kevin Huffman. Committee chairs or representatives present were Brian Derrick, Donna Duarte, Karen Hale, and Clare Tucker.

### Welcome

Melinda Parton welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### November CEC Minutes

The November CEC minutes were published in the November newsletter. Georganne Martin made the motion to approve these minutes. It was seconded by Dianne McKay and the motion passed.

### Committee Reports

#### Finance

Melvin Jones reported that the IRS Form 990 has been mailed.

#### Treasurer

Amy Czerwinski distributed financial statements for the period ended November 30, 2004. Total net assets at the end of the period were \$39,591.12. She reported that there were fifteen members who did not attend the last luncheon but failed to cancel their reservations. They have been billed in accordance with the cancellation policy published in the newsletter.

#### Meetings and Attendance

Kevin Huffman reported that so far 50 members are signed up to attend the luncheon. Another e-mail reminder will be sent today. CGFM ribbons or stickers to be placed on members' name tags were discussed. Kevin will contact Tammy Thompson to see where we stand on acquiring these.

#### Program

Brian Derrick reported that John Morgan had to cancel as speaker of the December luncheon. Instead, Steve Adams will speak. Mr. Adams told Brian that he would discuss the lottery or could discuss another topic if we felt this would be repetitive since he spoke on the topic last year. After discussion, it was agreed that the lottery was relatively new at the time of his last presentation and information concerning its growth would be interesting to the membership. Brian also reported that 35 individuals have signed up for the spring social.

#### Education

Karen Hale reported that there were still a few items to be mailed regarding the October seminar. The chapter should clear a small amount from this seminar. She also reported that there are currently 81 people registered for the Nashville Business Tax Seminar. Thirty-seven have registered in Memphis. The low turnout in Memphis is most likely attributed to the late mailing of the brochures by the Department of Revenue. Melinda Parton suggested that the CEC might want to consider dropping the Memphis location next year.

Karen also discussed the Winter Seminar. Dr. Janet Kelly and Margaret Ann Pritchard have agreed to speak. Other speakers and topics will be determined later. Tentative dates for the seminar are February 16 and 17, 2005.

Karen also informed the committee of a need to offer free entry level courses for our early careers members. Gerry Boaz suggested that Karen talk with Dan Willis about the possibility of coordinating with classes already offered by the Department of Audit. Karen also reminded everyone to pick up their CPE certificates at the luncheon meetings.

#### Newsletter

Nichole Curtiss was unable to attend but asked Melinda Parton to report that the deadline for submissions for the newsletter is Friday, December 3. Melinda stated that she would also like to include our strategic plan framework in the newsletter.

#### Membership

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## Meeting Minutes

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Beth Pendergrass was unable to attend but asked Melinda Parton to report that we have two new members this month. Melinda also mentioned that National AGA has challenged each member of the chapter leadership to recruit five members.

### CGFM

Gerry Boaz reported that the committee will be meeting soon to begin preparations for the free training for Exam 2 which will most likely be held in April. They also plan to offer free training for Exam 3 later in the year. Gerry also stated that he is waiting for a call from a contact at National AGA concerning CGFM emblems and pins that will be used to promote the certification.

### Community Service

Clare Tucker reported for Tammy Farley. She reminded everyone that the gifts for the Salvation Angel Tree and Little Soldiers are due Thursday. They can be brought to the luncheon but she would prefer to make arrangements to get them to her office prior to Thursday. We will also be participating in the Channel 8 membership drive on November 30 as well as the Coat/Hat/Glove drive in January and February.

### Internet

Melinda Parton reported for Dan Willis. Nathan Abbott is currently redesigning the website. A recommendation on the design should be presented in January.

### Early Careers

Melinda Parton reported for Randy Kinnersley. She reminded everyone that students from area colleges will attend the luncheon meeting on Thursday. She and Gerry Boaz will speak to the students about AGA and the CGFM certification.

### Awards

Donna Duarte distributed a draft of the scholarship applications. Scholarship applications will be available at the luncheon meeting and will be e-mailed to area schools. The application will also be available on the website. The deadline for applications is March 4, 2005.

### Chapter Recognition

Dianne McKay reported that there will be a large increase in our chapter recognition points due to the six-day training event we recently sponsored. Also, she has responded to the National AGA request for suggestions regarding ways to improve the chapter recognition program.

### **Strategic Plan**

Dianne McKay stated that she has met with most of the committee chairs regarding the committee plans. After meeting with the remaining chairs, she will meet with Melinda and hopes to get something out to everyone in December.

Melinda Parton adjourned the meeting.

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### **December Chapter Meeting**

*Submitted by Penny Austin, Chapter Secretary*



The Nashville Area Chapter held its monthly meeting at the Nashville City Club on Thursday, December 2, 2004. President Melinda Parton called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance. Melvin Jones offered the invocation. The minutes of the November Chapter meeting were approved as printed in the December newsletter. Guests and new members were introduced and welcomed. Randy Kinnersley offered a special welcome to students from area colleges. Along with attending the luncheon, the students will hear from various representatives of state agencies. Melinda Parton and Gerry Boaz will also share information about AGA and the CGFM certification.

Brian Derrick introduced the guest speaker, Steve Adams. Mr. Adams is the Chief Administrative Officer of the Tennessee Education Lottery Corporation. He spoke about the various lottery games.

Melinda Parton reminded everyone of our recent participation in the Channel 8 pledge drive and the business tax seminars held in Memphis and Nashville. She also reminded everyone to deliver their gifts for the Salvation Army Angels today. The Winter Seminar will be held February 16 and 17, 2005. We will also be participating in the Coat/Hat/Glove drive. Beth Pugh can be

## Chapter Meeting Minutes cont'd.

contacted for more information.

Beth Pugh announced that we will again give away two scholarships. Applications were provided on the tables and are also available on the website. The deadline for submitting applications is March 4, 2005. Any questions should be directed to Donna Duarte.

Two door prizes were awarded. One prize was given to Lynn Wright, AGA member, while another was given to Chris Hawkins, one of the college students in attendance. Ron Anderson provided the answers to the monthly puzzle.

The meeting was adjourned.



### CGFM DESIGNATION - IT'S NOT JUST FOR ACCOUNTANTS

written by Pete Rose

Government financial management is broad in scope. Consider the diversity of AGA's membership: while many are accountants and auditors, AGA members are also budget analysts, program analysts, internal auditors and other financial management professionals. The common goal of our membership is interest in government financial management and advancing government accountability.

The Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM) Program reflects the diverse range of knowledge required of government financial managers. Look at the content specifications of CGFM Examinations [<http://www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/exams/>]. A CGFM needs to have knowledge about how the government works, how governments are financed, ethical considerations, management techniques, financial analysis, internal controls, budgeting, cost accounting, cash management, investment management, procurement, inventory systems, credit management and financial management systems.

One of the strengths of the CGFM certification is the combination of the detailed knowledge of governmental accounting coupled with a general understanding of other government financial management practices, such as budgetary accounting and cost accounting. A CGFM has to know about the requirements at all levels - federal, state and local. Much of the knowledge required by a CGFM involves theory - why things are done the way they are done. Only a small portion is devoted to practice - the actual entries that are needed for specific transactions.

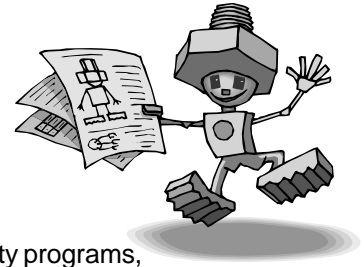
The CGFM designation demonstrates a person's knowledge, skills and abilities about government in general. If you are in any type of position in government financial management, the CGFM should be at the top of your list as a preferred certification.

On occasion, we are asked how the CGFM compares to the CPA. In a sense, there is no comparison. The CPA is more than a certification - it can also lead to obtaining a license. If your goal is to practice public accounting - the review and audit of financial statements in order to render an opinion - then you must have a license from a state board of accountancy. To get a license, you have to pass the CPA examinations. That is why the CPA is unique among certification programs.

The CGFM designation, coupled with a CPA, can be a powerful tool in your arsenal. Not only do you possess the knowledge, skills and abilities to practice public accounting, you also have knowledge, skills and abilities about the unique aspects of government.

If you are in a profession that does not require a CPA, then you need to consider obtaining a certification that sets you apart from your peers. If you are in government, as a budget analyst, program analyst, grant manager, or in any other financial management position, then the CGFM should be your first choice for a certification program.

**Association of Government Accountants  
Nashville Area Chapter  
Strategic Plan Framework  
August 2, 2004**

**MISSION**

The Nashville Area Chapter of the Association of Government Accountants provides quality programs, offers services and educational opportunities, fosters leadership and professional development and promotes certification to government accountability professionals.

**VISION**

To advance government accountability and create leaders in the government accountability community.

**VALUES**

**Accountability** – Promoting and advancing accountability in government.

**Communication** – Providing opportunities for members to learn and grow through education, meetings and networking events.

**Diversity** – Respecting the ideas and perspectives of all members.

**Integrity** – Fostering the highest professional standards of ethical conduct and behavior, and exemplary services to all levels of government.

**Leadership** – Providing experience to members to advance leadership roles in government.

**Service** – Attending to the needs of our members, the governmental financial sector and the community.

**STRATEGIC GOALS**

**Service** – Provide members with quality programs, products and services.

- Attract and retain a diverse and growing membership.
- Provide members with opportunities for networking such as meetings and social events.
- Provide services to others to demonstrate the chapter's commitment to improving the quality of life in our community.
- Provide scholarship programs to provide financial assistance to members and develop future governmental accountability professionals.
- Maintain fiscal responsibility of chapter financial resources.
- Provide effective communication to members.

**Education/Certification** – Provide continuing education to meet the changing needs of the government accountability profession.

- Provide quality, affordable training events.
- Promote CGFM.
- Providing speakers at meetings to discuss current events and other topics of interest to our members.
- Promote accountability, integrity and competence in government.
- Generate revenue to support other chapter activities.

**Leadership/Professional Development** – Provide opportunities for members to serve the chapter and gain leadership experience.

- Promote involvement in chapter governance.
- Promote active participation by early career members in chapter activities.
- Promote involvement of members in national leadership roles and award opportunities.
- Acknowledge contributions made by members to enhance chapter and national activities.
- To maintain or improve our chapter's leadership position at the regional and national levels.

## Committee News

### Awards Committee

#### Points for the Chapter Service Drawing

The drawing for the 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Professional Development Conference in Orlando, FL, July 10 – 13, 2005, will be held at the May luncheon meeting. To be eligible for the Chapter Service Drawing, you'll need 20 points. For each point you have earned, you'll receive one chance in the year-end drawing. Good luck!!

#### ***This is how to earn points:***

Luncheon attendance	2 points
Attending chapter sponsored training	1 point
Sponsor a new member	2 points
Service on a chapter committee	2 points each
AGA community service projects	1 point per hour served (10 pt. max.)
Newsletter article	
(Financial topic)	8 points each
(Nonfinancial topic)	4 points each
Obtaining CGFM certification	8 points upon completion
Attending chapter sponsored social event	2 points
Sponsoring a Luncheon Guest	1 point for each guest (10 pt. max.)

#### Member of the Year Award

The Awards Committee meets in April to determine the Member of the Year Award. This is usually awarded to the member who has the most points and has participated in the widest variety of activities when the Committee meets. In the event of a tie, the Awards Committee's tie-breaking vote will be final. The prior year's winner and Award Committee members are ineligible for this award.

#### Points Spreadsheet

Check the Points Spreadsheet on our website monthly to make sure your points are up to date for both the Chapter Drawing and Member of the Year Award. If you find discrepancies, please contact first Donna Duarte at 741-9681 and she will direct you to the Committee Chairperson who will make the corrections. Members of the Awards Committee do not update the spreadsheet.

### CGFM Committee News

#### **Win Financial Assistance toward CGFM Exam Fees**

The CGFM Committee congratulates the following CGFM exam fees subsidies winners: LaShawn Barber, Karen Hale, Rosalyn Pope, and Sharon Wahlstrom. The committee will reimburse the three winners the entire exam fee of \$327. The winners must register for, pay for, and take all three exams before September 30, 2005, to receive reimbursement (based on proof of registration and payment). Please email Gerry Boaz, Committee Chair, at ([Gerry.Boaz@state.tn.us](mailto:Gerry.Boaz@state.tn.us)) or Rebecca Barr, Co-Chair, ([Rebecca.Barr@state.tn.us](mailto:Rebecca.Barr@state.tn.us)) between now and **September 30, 2005**, regarding completion of the requirements for reimbursement.

#### CGFM Exam Study Group

A CGFM exam study group has been formed. Former CGFM Committee member Rosa Jennings and current CGFM exam fee subsidy winner Rosalyn Pope are heading the study group. The group typically meets on different days each month at 12:00 on the 13<sup>th</sup> floor of the William Snodgrass/Tennessee Tower Building. If you are interested in joining the study group, please notify Gerry Boaz ([Gerry.Boaz@state.tn.us](mailto:Gerry.Boaz@state.tn.us)) or Rebecca Barr ([Rebecca.Barr@state.tn.us](mailto:Rebecca.Barr@state.tn.us)) via email of your interest in participating.



### Free Lunch for Those Passing the CGFM

The CGFM Committee is continuing its program to congratulate those individuals passing the CGFM exams by offering lunch certificates that are good for a free lunch at any AGA luncheon meeting. If you passed the CGFM exams during January 2004 – December 2004 and have not received a lunch certificate, please contact

Gerry Boaz  
([Gerry.Boaz@state.tn.us](mailto:Gerry.Boaz@state.tn.us)) or

Rebecca Barr  
([Rebecca.Barr@state.tn.us](mailto:Rebecca.Barr@state.tn.us)).

## Committee News Continued

### Meeting and Attendance Committee

Come join us for the January Chapter meeting scheduled for January 6 at 11:30 a.m.

The luncheon price will be **\$10.00** this year for AGA members. The monthly luncheons will be held at the **Nashville City Club on the 20<sup>th</sup> Floor of the SunTrust Bank Building, 201 Fourth Avenue, North.**

### To Make a Reservation Each Month (2 options)

1. On-line Reservation: Go to the Nashville Area Chapter's website at <http://www.nashvilleaga.org/> click on "Make your lunch reservation on-line" and follow the instructions.
2. Phone Reservations: Call Tammy Thompson at (615) 747-5219.

**Please make your reservation on the Monday before the meeting by 6:00 p.m. NOTE: If you do not cancel a luncheon reservation by this deadline, you will still be charged for the meal unless someone comes in your place.**

### To Make a Standing Reservation

With a standing reservation you will not have to call every month to reserve your seat for lunch—it will be **automatic**. If you are unable to attend the luncheon any particular month, just call and cancel your reservation for that month. If you would like to make a standing reservation or at any time you would like to be taken off of the standing reservation list, please contact Tammy Thompson at 747-5219 or e-mail at [Tammy.Thompson@state.tn.us](mailto:Tammy.Thompson@state.tn.us) with your name and telephone number. If for some reason you cannot attend a monthly luncheon please contact Tammy Thompson at 747-5219 or e-mail at [Tammy.Thompson@state.tn.us](mailto:Tammy.Thompson@state.tn.us) **by 10:00 a.m. two days before the luncheon, which would be Tuesday (see cancellation Policy below).** **Even if you were on the standing reservation list last year, you will still need to renew it for this year.**

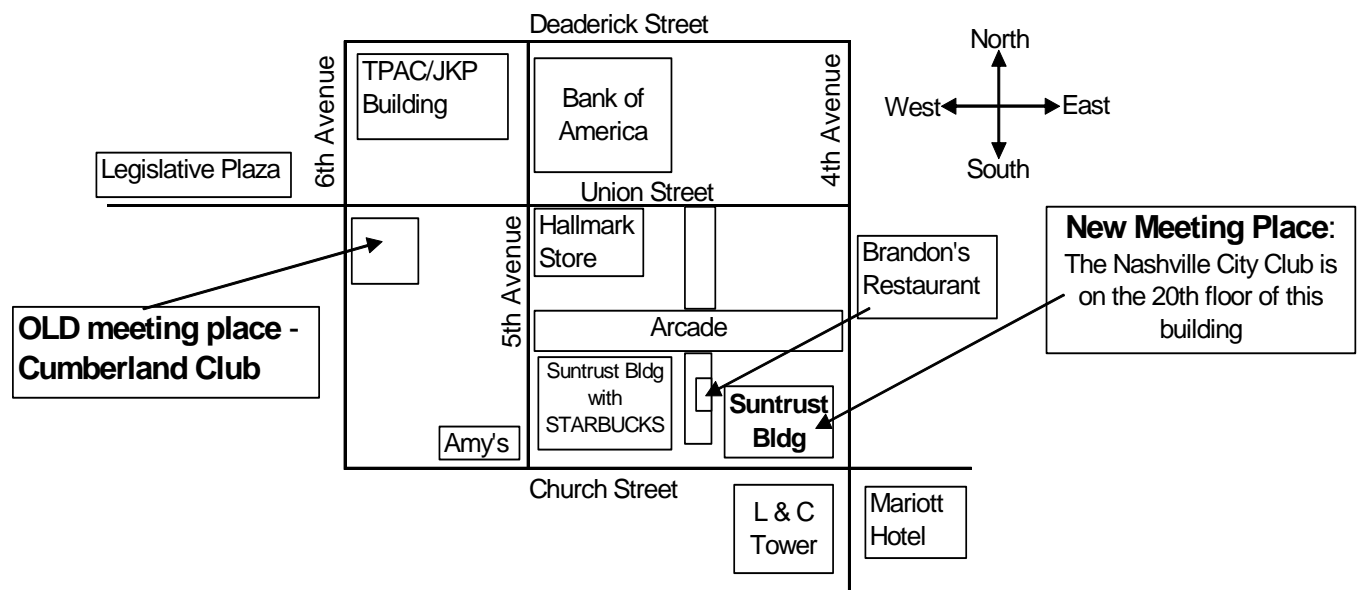
### To cancel a Reservation

If you are unable to attend the luncheon please call Tammy Thompson at 747-5219 or e-mail at [Tammy.Thompson@state.tn.us](mailto:Tammy.Thompson@state.tn.us) to cancel your reservation.

### Cancellation Policy

Will be voted on at the next CEC meeting.

## Map to the Nashville City Club





**Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM)**  
**Exam Study and Sitting Experience**  
by Georganne Martin



The Nashville AGA Education and CGFM Committees recently offered a review course for sections 1, 2 and 3 of the CGFM exam. This 6 day review course was a great opportunity for those looking for guidance in studying for the CGFM exam. Even though there were many questions concerning the material, there seemed to be endless questions concerning the exam itself.

I thought I would share my experience in taking the CGFM exam. I will start from the beginning so you can understand my anxiety level.

I applied for the CGFM certification under the grandfather clause, where I would be granted the certification based upon my education and experience without having to take the three tests. I was not granted the certification so I had to study and take the tests.

Next I applied for the AGA Tennessee Chapter fee reimbursement drawing and I won. The Nashville Chapter gives you one year to use the subsidy drawing if you win, so I was thinking "Cool, I have a year to study and sit for these exams."

But as luck would have it, the National Office offered a 3 month promotional for a discounted exam fee. With the National discount and the local chapter subsidy drawing I was going to have to pay very little out of my pocket, but I only had 3 months to study literally tons of material.

Nobody I knew had sat for these exams because everyone I knew who was interested in the CGFM certification had been grandfathered in. Therefore, my anxiety level was mounting from not knowing what to expect on the exam. What type of format? What type of questions? Did it take the whole 2 hours allowed? Were the questions case study type questions?

I took the Management Concepts review course for all 3 parts. Three days of the 6 days and I was completely lost. I knew the instructor was speaking English, but what did all that stuff mean? I knew then I was going to have to hit the books hard.

Pushing onward and hoping for the best. I called to register for the exam because I had heard slot times were limited due to it was also the time of year that real estate agents and nurses take their license exams, which were also held at Sylvan Learning Centers. Once again, my anxiety is rising thinking I might not get the days or times that I want. How am I going to get all this done in 3 months?

Once on the phone with the Sylvan Learning Center, I learned the closest location to me was 25 miles from home, therefore it would be best if I took the exams on a Saturday or right after work. I ran through the three tests I wanted to take and the days I had open. The young lady came back and stated you are registered on the following dates. I asked her to repeat the confirmation numbers and dates and location. In her repeating the information for me, I discovered she registered me to take part 3 first, part 1 second and part 2 last. How did this happen? She tried to switch it around and lost the first day. Now I had to take an earlier date and still take part 3 first. Am I panicking or what? Part 3 first, have I lost my mind?

So I began reading book 3 and discovered I could understand the material. I read the book through once, underlining additional text as I went as I had underlined some of the text during the review class. I then went back through the material and made flash cards with all of the acronyms. For example: CGFM is for Certified Government Financial Manager.

I am out of time and go sit for exam 3 and pass. Whew... One down - two to go. I begin studying book 1. I read through the book and made flash cards for the acronyms. I took the exam for part 1. I pass.

In taking this exam I learned several things:

1. You can mark an answer and you can also mark the question for review later. If you run out of time the answer you chose stands. At the end of the exam, if time remains, the computer starts going through the questions marked for review.
2. A question may have multiple answers. For example: What are the three parts of government? The possible answers are: (a) Senate, (b) House, (c) Legislative, (d) Executive, (e) Judicial, (f) Federal, (g) State, or (h) Local.
3. Some questions are listings and you have to pick out the items that do not belong.

Next it is time for the large book (part 2) and very little time to comprehend it all. I started reading and read every spare moment I could find. I read and read, sometimes falling asleep. I did not finish reading book two test time came around. No flash cards and no notes, just reading and trying to comprehend as much as possible.

I went with a full case of apprehension and anxiety. I had not even read the entire book! I read no supplement books. I did not look at any of the web sites. I flat ran out of time.

I got to Sylvan to discover that they had lost the keys to the lockers to lock up my purse. Normally, I would get a key and the

*Continued from Page 11*

moderator would have a second key to a locker that you put your personal items during testing. However, I had to leave my purse in a locker for which only the attendant had a key. Also, he had trouble finding a calculator for me to use. You cannot use your own calculators. The room was packed and two people were having trouble with their machines. Could anything else go wrong? Could my anxiety get any higher?

I sat down to the test and the first few questions I recognized as material from studying for exams 1 and 3. Ok, take a deep breath and read carefully and slowly and keep on moving. I finally made it through all the questions. I had marked several questions for review and I was going back through these when the computer stopped. I am out of time. I picked up my scrap paper, pencil, and calculator and walked to the registration area to get my purse and my score sheet (which I am confident will state FAILED or at best politely state TRY AGAIN.) Instead the moderator said congratulations and I was nearly in tears.

I passed all three parts the first time and with no extra materials read, no web sites reviewed, and anxiety sky high. I had read the study guides (not completing the second one), attended a review seminar, and had previously read the yellow book. I cram studied and became a nervous wreck and still made it. That is not to say if I had it to do over, I wouldn't look at some of the web sites, read supplement materials, or talk to folks that have taken the exam.

**Pointers:**

1. **Don't** over study.
2. You **don't** have to take the exams sections in order. (I didn't)
3. You **don't** have to review every Federal and State web site recommended.
4. You **do** need to know the acronyms.
5. You **don't** have to memorize large math equations.
6. You **do** have to understand concepts and be able to pick out of a list the characteristics of that concept.
7. You **don't** have to go broke buying study guides. The Nashville AGA – CGFM Committee has study guide books you may check out for free.
8. The Nashville AGA – CGFM committee has subsidy drawing to help with exam fees.
9. Some departments give a step raise for passing the exam.
10. You **don't** have to be a CPA to take the exam.

**Good Luck!!**

## AGA Hat, Coat, and Glove Drive



Donations are going to Community Care Fellowship here in Nashville at 511 South 8th Street and is for all ages as Community Care needs those items for both children and adults. Community Care Fellowship is a day shelter for the homeless and poor in Nashville. The mission of Community Care Fellowship is to relieve the suffering among the homeless and poor and to assist them in various ways to improve their lifestyle and standard of living. They serve the homeless Monday through Friday between the hours of 9:00am and 3:00pm. providing laundry, showers, counseling, personal hygiene items, and serves four meals a week. The "Dare to Dream" Enrichment Program tutors/mentors children from the Kirkpatrick Elementary School. The age group is Pre-K through the fourth grade. The hours of the enrichment program are 3:00pm until 5:00pm Monday through Thursday.

**Drop sites for hats/coats/gloves:**

- 1) Todd Liebergen ([todd.liebergen@state.tn.us](mailto:todd.liebergen@state.tn.us)) - Rachel Jackson State Office Building
- 2) Mary Anne Queen ([mary.anne.queen@state.tn.us](mailto:mary.anne.queen@state.tn.us)) - Polk Building, 14th Floor
- 3) Amy Sharp ([amy.sharp@state.tn.us](mailto:amy.sharp@state.tn.us)) - Andrew Johnson Tower
- 4) Rosalyn Pope ([rosalyn.pope@state.tn.us](mailto:rosalyn.pope@state.tn.us)) - 13th floor of the TNTower
- 5) Beth Pugh ([beth.pugh@state.tn.us](mailto:beth.pugh@state.tn.us)) can be contacted if the items can not be delivered to any of these sites.



**We will also be collecting the items at both the January and February meetings.**

# Mark Your Calendars

## Meeting Dates

### AGA Nashville Chapter

*(All Chapter meetings will be held the First Thursday of the Month, except as noted below)*

Thursday, January 6, 2005  
 Thursday, February 10, 2005  
 (Second Thursday)  
 Thursday, March 3, 2005  
 Thursday, April 7, 2005  
 Thursday, May 12, 2005

### Chapter Executive Committee

*All CEC meetings will be held on the Monday before the chapter meeting, except as noted below)*

Tuesday, January 4, 2005  
 Monday, February 7, 2005  
 Monday, February 28, 2005  
 Monday, April 4, 2005  
 Monday, May 9, 2005

## Other Professional Organization Training Opportunities

### Nashville Area Chapter of the Institute of Internal Auditors

**January 24, 2005**  
*Government Auditor Seminar*  
 Willis Conference Center  
 8 hours CPE

More details will follow soon. For more information, visit the Nashville Area Chapter website at  
<http://www.theiia.org/chapters/index.cfm?cid=119>

## AGA Nashville Chapter Training Information

Coming soon... **AGA Winter Seminar**  
**16 CPE hours**  
 To be determined  
 Nashville, Tennessee



### Training Opportunities Relevant to the CGFM

#### CGFM Exam 1 Study Course – online

AGA website: <http://www.agacgfm.org/cgfm/prepare/onlinecourses.aspx> anytime

#### CGFM Exams 2 and 3 Training Classes

The CGFM Committee is planning to offer FREE continuing professional education (CPE) for exams 2 and 3. Participants will earn 8.0 CPE hours for each class. The committee plans to offer exam 2 training and exam 3 training tentatively in March and April 2005, respectively. Also, once AGA releases the exam 3 study guide during 2005, the committee will also offer exam 3 training. The training classes will be based on each exam's study guides. The classes will only be offered based on membership interest. Those of you interested in taking the exam should contact

Gerry Boaz ([Gerry.Boaz@state.tn.us](mailto:Gerry.Boaz@state.tn.us)) or

Rebecca Barr ([Rebecca.Barr@state.tn.us](mailto:Rebecca.Barr@state.tn.us)) by February 4, 2005.

The Department of Personnel includes the CGFM certification in the list of certifications eligible for a one-step salary increase. A salary increase **may** be granted to employees of the State of Tennessee if the certification is obtained by passing the exams. To be certain that you qualify for the salary increase, obtain approval from your supervisor and the Department of Personnel **before** sitting for the exams. For specific details see the Department of Personnel Policy #90-031 (10/10/90) amended March 23, 1999.

I stopped believing in Santa Claus when I was six. Mother took me to see him in a department store and he asked for my autograph.

- [Shirley Temple](#)

## 2004-2005 Nashville Chapter Leadership

### **Officers**

#### **Melinda Parton, CGFM**

President  
(615) 401-7747  
[Melinda.Parton@state.tn.us](mailto:Melinda.Parton@state.tn.us)

#### **Dianne McKay, CGFM**

President-elect  
(615) 741-9743  
[Dianne.McKay@state.tn.us](mailto:Dianne.McKay@state.tn.us)

#### **Phil Carr, CGFM**

Immediate Past President  
(615) 862-6100  
[Phil.Carr@nashville.gov](mailto:Phil.Carr@nashville.gov)

#### **Penny Austin**

Secretary  
(615) 401-7838  
[Penny.Austin@state.tn.us](mailto:Penny.Austin@state.tn.us)

#### **Amy Czerwinski**

Treasurer  
(615) 401-7743  
[Amy.Czerwinski@state.tn.us](mailto:Amy.Czerwinski@state.tn.us)

### **Two-year Directors**

#### **Kevin Huffman**

Meetings and Attendance Co-Chair  
(615) 401-7843  
[Kevin.Huffman@state.tn.us](mailto:Kevin.Huffman@state.tn.us)

#### **Susan Irby**

Program Co-Chair  
(615) 532-8349  
[Susan.Irby@state.tn.us](mailto:Susan.Irby@state.tn.us)

#### **Georganne Martin**

Finance Co-Chair  
(615) 741-2677 or 253-4503  
[Georganne.Martin@state.tn.us](mailto:Georganne.Martin@state.tn.us)

#### **Mike Wall**

Membership Co-Chair  
(615) 862-6100  
[Michael.Wall@nashville.gov](mailto:Michael.Wall@nashville.gov)

#### **Dan Willis, CGFM**

Webmaster Chair  
(615) 747-5247  
[Daniel.Willis@state.tn.us](mailto:Daniel.Willis@state.tn.us)

### **One-year Directors**

#### **Gerry Boaz, CGFM**

CGFM Chair  
(615) 747-5262  
[Gerry.Boaz@state.tn.us](mailto:Gerry.Boaz@state.tn.us)

#### **Melvin Jones, CGFM**

Finance Co-Chair  
(615) 741-3436  
[Melvin.Jones@state.tn.us](mailto:Melvin.Jones@state.tn.us)

#### **Beth Pendergrass, CGFM**

Membership Chair  
(615) 747-5294  
[Beth.Pendergrass@state.tn.us](mailto:Beth.Pendergrass@state.tn.us)

#### **Allen Staley**

Membership Co-Chair  
(615) 862-6693  
[Allen.Staley@nashville.gov](mailto:Allen.Staley@nashville.gov)

#### **Tammy Thompson**

Meetings and Attendance Co-Chair  
(615) 747-5219  
[Tammy.Thompson@state.tn.us](mailto:Tammy.Thompson@state.tn.us)

### **Committee Chairs**

#### **Nichole Curtiss**

Newsletter Chair  
(615) 747-5329  
[Nichole.Curtiss@state.tn.us](mailto:Nichole.Curtiss@state.tn.us)

#### **Brian Derrick**

Program Committee Co-Chair  
(615) 532-8552  
[Brian.Derrick@state.tn.us](mailto:Brian.Derrick@state.tn.us)

#### **Donna Duarte**

Awards Chair  
(615) 741-9681  
[Donna.Duarte@state.tn.us](mailto:Donna.Duarte@state.tn.us)

Visit the Nashville Area Chapter's web site at <http://www.nashvilleaga.org>.

Also, visit these other AGA sites:

AGA National Site	<a href="http://www.agacgfm.org">www.agacgfm.org</a>
Southeastern Region Site	<a href="http://agaservp.tripod.com">agaservp.tripod.com</a>
Atlanta Chapter	<a href="http://www.mindspring.com/~agaatl/agaga.htm">www.mindspring.com/~agaatl/agaga.htm</a>
Central Kentucky Chapter	<a href="http://www.ckyaga.com">www.ckyaga.com</a>
Chattanooga Chapter	<a href="http://www.aga.taxpro.net">www.aga.taxpro.net</a>
Columbia Chapter	<a href="http://www.columbiaaga.com">www.columbiaaga.com</a>
East Tennessee Chapter	<a href="http://www.kornet.org/etaga/">www.kornet.org/etaga/</a>