Columbus Area Chapter
The buck starts here!

Columbus Chapter Chat

Volume 2 Issue 1 January/February 2007



2007 Kicks Off to a Great Start…

Chicago Bears kicker Robbie Gould takes aim in SuperBowl XLI amidst a downpour in Miami

…and I hope it keeps going!

The President's Letter by Robyn Maslouski CPP – President, Columbus Area Chapter

Okay…so maybe it didn't start off that great! I mean…I did spend New Year's Eve watching my Chicago Bears lose at home to the Green Bay Packers. Anyone but the Packers! But, that's okay. I got over it, knowing that they were saving it for the post season and that was quite alright with me.

I took time New Year's weekend watching the funeral of President Gerald Ford. It brought back memories of when President Ronald Reagan passed away. It amazed me how much I would and could just sit and watch C-Span, televising people walking around the rotunda paying respects to the former leader of our country. I think in essence I sat and reminisced…pondered about the president's role of our country and realize they came from sometimes similar backgrounds of you & me and then grow to hold the most powerful position in the world.

January 2nd—I'm sure—marked the beginning for many of you for year-end processing. Did you find yourself feeling unorganized and unprepared? If you did, I hope you were able to overcome it and still get everything out on time. Later in 2007 you may want to consider attending one of APA's Preparing for Year End classes. By far…one of my favorites!

Another big day for me in 2007—and I bet none of you even knew about it—was January 19th. On that day President Bush hosted President Adamkus of Lithuania. Lithuania? Yes. Most people think that my last name indicates a Polish background, but in reality I am of Lithuania descent. In fact, if you trace my family roots back into old world Lithuania, you'll find that I am a descendent of Lithuanian royalty.

Of course, nothing compares to January 21. If you recall, in the September 2006 edition of Columbus Chapter Chat I mentioned how excited I was about football season and how I spent my Sundays with NFL Sunday Ticket so that I could switch between my two favorite football teams: the Chicago Bears and Indianapolis Colts. Know where I'm going, huh?

Watching the Bears clinch the NFC was a nice game: good Rex showed up, points were scored, a victory was had. And then I watched the Colts game. I was actually in Chicago that weekend at the house of friends of mine and actually left at halftime to travel to another area of the city for a meeting the following day. Yes, I left at halftime and didn't turn the game back on until about five minutes left in the game. I'm not your typical fair-weathered fan and I apologize to Peyton nightly for turning my back on them that night. The end of the Colts game was a great end to a wonderful day! Needless to say, February 4th was a good day for me. It's been a long time since I've been that jazzed for a Super Bowl.

Hope you're having & will have a great 2007!



2007 has had a great beginning.

Recognition of a President who never intended to be President

Year end is behind us…or possibly still continuing for those tax returns due in February and March.

My favorite Super Bowl match-up ever!

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Community Corner

In 2007 you can help support the Ronald McDonald House and the Susan G. Komen for the Cure

At the January 2007 Columbus Area Chapter Board of Directors meeting, the officers of the chapter decided to maintain the same two charities as in 2006.

Again in 2007 you will have opportunities to make contributions to the **Ronald McDonald House** and the **Susan G. Komen for the Cure**. The **Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Ohio** work to support the Ronald McDonald House, a home-away-from-home for families of seriously ill children staying at a nearby hospital. In addition, they provide programs which improve the quality of life for children of central Ohio.

Formerly known as the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, **Susan G. Komen for the Cure** is celebrating its 25th anniversary of striving to end breast cancer forever.

More details will be published throughout the year on your opportunities to help support these wonderful causes.

Around the World Wide Web

By Brad Patterson, CPP – Technology Officer, Columbus Area Chapter



Enhanced website functionality allows for a better value for annual membership dues and an automated process for membership renewals

During the 2007 membership renewal season we were able to utilize some new features of our website. Each member has been setup with a membership expiration date. Given the complexities and administration overhead of prorating membership dues or tracking 12-month memberships, the Columbus Area Chapter—through 2006—had always offered calendar year memberships. Regardless of when a member became active in the chapter, the membership expired on December 31st. Leveraging the new functionality that our website offers, we are able to activate a member and the website can automatically track when that membership should expire 12 months later. As a result, for those individuals who become members in the middle of the year, they'll be able to experience a 12-month membership versus a calendar year membership.

What makes the mid-year membership activations possible is an automated way in which the website tracks the expiration of the membership. When someone becomes active or renews his/her membership, the website automatically enters an expiration date 12 months out. In addition, the website will automatically send you email reminders about your membership expiration four weeks, two weeks, and one week before your membership expires. If you fail to renew your membership by the expiration date, your membership will be automatically set to inactive in seven days.

Check out the toolbox for updated forms for 2007

In addition, I've spent some time significantly updating and expanding our **toolbox** to give our members ready access to some more common used forms. Check out our toolbox by going to our home page at www.apacolumbus.org. From the left-hand menu, select CAC Library and then Payroll Toolbox to get to these forms. In the toolbox, you will find some forms already updated for 2007 as well as a collection of forms and publications from 2006. Not interested in tax? That's okay because the toolbox also has forms/notices for child support in addition to links to the Department of Labor and the Social Security Verification System.

Enjoy our most recent updates!



Chapter Dashboard

Fuel:	Speed:	Oil:	Horsepower:
$9,745.08	157	13 New	62 CPPs
$3,735 in receivables	Members	Members	19 FPCs

2007 Monthly Meeting Frequency Set

Those of you who were members last year may remember that we had canceled the meetings a few months during the year. We realized that there were some months that were less ideal for having a meeting due to conflicts that a number of our members experienced.

The officers discussed the meeting frequencies during the January board meeting. It was determined that the Columbus Area Chapter will have monthly meetings eight times a year. The four months of the year during which there will not be a monthly meeting are as follows:

- January
- The month of Congress
- The month of the Ohio Conference for Payroll Professionals
- December

As with prior years, we did not have a meeting in January 2007 and we will also not have meetings in May (Congress), September (OCPP) and December. As meeting details are finalized, they will be published in the Calendar of Events and an email sent to all active members.



Chapter members enjoy listening to Marcia Aamodt discuss tips to Understand and Reduce Your Payroll Costs *in September 2006.*

No meetings in January, May, September and December 2007

Survey Out on Certification Classes

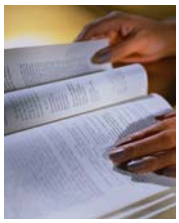
A survey was recently sent out to all active chapter members asking for feedback on the need and format for FPC classes. Chapter members were asked if they were interested in attending FPC classes and if they would be interested in an on-line study course.

On-line study groups are becoming popular among chapters. Essentially, all materials are provided to study group members via the web. The materials include tutoring materials in addition to sample problems. Weekly, a study group facilitator hosts a conference call and web conference during which problem simulations can occur and study group members can ask questions to the facilitator.

Of the respondents who indicate they attend for RCHs, they wish for the classes to continue. Of the respondents who indicate they would attend to prepare for the exam, they were very interested in an on-line study course.

More details to come on the 2007 certification classes.

Potential to study at your own pace…& in your PJs!



2007 Statewide Payroll Conference

The Columbus Area Chapter will once again host the Ohio Conference for Payroll Professionals in 2007. Coming off of a successful 2006 *Payroll Rocks* conference in Columbus, the OCPP planning committee met a couple weeks ago to begin planning the 2007 conference, *The Super Bowl of Payroll*.

The 2007 conference will be a half day conference on Thursday and an all day conference on Friday. Thursday evening will be great fun as conference attendees enjoy a tailgate party with their fellow Ohio payroll professionals.

Mark your calendars now for this year's conference, which will be held September 27th and 28th at Cherry Valley Lodge in Newark, Ohio.

September 27 & 28
Newark, Ohio

Should You Accept?

Tips on Job Offers - Courtesy of Accountemps

Trying to decide what to focus on when assessing a job offer? Chief financial officers (CFOs) polled in a recent Robert Half International survey were asked to name the most important considerations prospective employees weigh when evaluating employment opportunities. The top responses were salary (27 percent), company stability (24 percent), and the work environment and corporate culture (22 percent). Following are tips for assessing these factors when an employer extends an offer to you.

Compensation Do your homework to determine if the salary is in line with what payroll professionals in similar positions in your area are paid. You can turn to the American Payroll Association and other professional organizations, industry publications such as the *2007 Salary Guide* from Robert Half International, and the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics and similar resources. In addition to base salary, factor in bonuses, health coverage, vacation time, tuition reimbursement, training opportunities, telecommuting options and other perks.

If the initial offer does not meet your needs but you like the organization, try negotiating a more attractive package. Given the tight hiring environment, employers may expect to have to negotiate. The firm also may consider re-evaluating your salary after several months if you join them, perform well and meet predetermined objectives.

Stability Review the organization's website, promotional materials and annual report to get a sense of the firm and its leaders. You also might consult with members of your professional network who have worked for – or with – the firm. Resources such as investor websites and local business journals can provide further information about the company's past and projected financial performance.

If job security is your top priority, accepting an offer from an established firm with a track record of stability and prosperity may be a better career move than taking a higher-paying job with a start-up company or an organization that's recently faced financial or legal turmoil.

Corporate Culture

Pay attention to the corporate culture and think about how well you align with it. Do the prospective employer's values and ethics mirror your own? Is the work environment frenetic or casual?

Also reflect on how you related to employees you met during the interview process. Did you establish rapport? If you took part in a group interview, how well did staff members interact with one another? Put simply, make sure you'll enjoy working with the team.



Be there at Congress when your question is answered – it's May 22 – 26 in Las Vegas!

Submit Your Payroll Puzzlers

One of the most popular and well-attended events at APA's Annual Congress is always the **Forum on Federal Payroll Issues** workshop. During this session, APA members do their best to stump top experts with some of the trickiest payroll questions possible. The answers are provided by a panel of high-level representatives from federal agencies: IRS, SSA, OCSE, DOL, USCIS, & ICE.

The questions come from you, our members. So, send the APA your most difficult payroll question – this is your chance to solve that payroll mystery that's been nagging you for months. Or maybe there's a topic that seems to be explained a different way every time you read up on it, and you'd like to get an authoritative answer.

The questions are provided to panelists about one month in advance to allow time for research and to ensure a complete answer. **Send your question by March 23 to** smezistrano@americanpayroll.org

Correction to Newly Certified Members

In the November/December 2006 edition of Columbus Chapter Chat a list of newly certified members of the chapter were listed. We sincerely regret omitting the recognition of **Lisa Johnson, CPP**, who also passed the exam in the Fall of 2006.

Congratulations, Lisa, on your accomplishment!

January Birthdays

Pam Coley – Plastic Suppliers Inc.	Jan 4
Clarence Williams, CPP – Nationwide	Jan 11
Susanne Schwier, CPP – USi	Jan 16
Mary Iseminger, CPP – Pacer Global Logistics	Jan 20
Vivian Duff – Children's Hospital	Jan 26
Glenda Scamyhorn – Capital University	Jan 26
Debbie Miller, FPC – Alliance Data Systems	Jan 29
Brad Patterson, CPP – Hewitt & Associates	Jan 29
Lisa Johnson, CPP – Nationwide Insurance	Jan 30
Lisa May, FPC – Installed Building Products	Jan 31

February Birthdays

Leslie Brungarth – Bruner Corporation	Feb 1
Donna Peterson – Capitol Tunneling, Inc.	Feb 1
Lydia Hoagland, FPC – Sterling Commerce	Feb 3
Doris Greenwell, CPP – Nationwide Insurance	Feb 7
Lynn Menda – Klingbeil Capital Management	Feb 8
Verdonna Slaughter – Bob Evans Farms, Inc.	Feb 18
Mary Jane Grace, CPP – T Marzetti Company	Feb 23
Margie Davenport, CPP	Feb 26

Upcoming Events

For more info, visit our calendar at http://www.apacolumbus.org/calendar.cfm



Puzzled about paychecks and it's your job to know? Take APA's newest course on the nuts and bolts of every kind of pay. Learn everything from A to Z when it comes to "**Calculating Paychecks**" on Wednesday, March 14th.

Our **next monthly meeting** will be on Thursday, March 15th. Details will be available soon.

Hear about the latest and still-developing legislative and regulatory issues that affect your operations from government insiders in our nation's capital. Attend the APA's **Capital Summit** March 22 – 23, 2007 in Washington, D.C.

Are you a multi-state employer? Then APA's "**Payroll Issues for Multi-state Employers**" is a must on your 2007 training curriculum. It will be offered in Columbus on Tuesday, April 3rd.

New Member Rollcall



Please extend a big welcome to the newest members of the Columbus Area Chapter!

Lisa May, FPC – Installed Building Products
Debra Bates – Children's Hospital
Barbara Schumacher – Children's Hospital
Lisa Clark - OCLC
Shawn Richard – Palmer-Donavin Manufacturing Co.
Ginger Keller – Scotts Miracle Gro
Lee Ann Lynn – Performance Site Company
Barb Camp, CPP - Sequent
Terri Sternick - Sequent
Drema Scott – Dupont Liquid Packaging
Lesley Maier – Ajilon Finance

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