

# The "Ally Mo" News



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1st Quarter

March 2008

## Quarterly Quotes



*All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them...* **Walt Disney**

*Submitted by:* Christy Witzel CPP, President Elect

*Don't take life (or yourself) too seriously...* **Unknown**

*Submitted by:* Patti Callahan CPP, Speaker Coordinator

*We can do no great things: only small things with great love...* **Mother Teresa**

*Submitted by:* Elvira Cervantes CPP, Membership

*Strength lies in differences, not in similarities...*

**Stephen Covey**

*Submitted by:* Valery Noakes CPP, Public Relations

*If you have a quote you would like to share, please e-mail us at [gov\\_liaison@apasanantonio.com](mailto:gov_liaison@apasanantonio.com)*

## Member Spotlight

*The Alamo Chapter would like to recognize Lorraine Hellums CPP in the quarterly member spotlight.*

*Lorraine works for Clear Channel Worldwide. Clear Channel is known mostly as a Radio & Television Broadcasting Company but they also provide Outdoor, Airport and Taxi-top billboards. She holds the position of Payroll Tax Master for Compliance and has been there for 7 ½ years.*

*Her main responsibilities are filing payroll taxes in all fifty states except South Dakota. This includes federal and state withholding, federal and state unemployment and all local taxes withheld. They currently file approximately 900 returns each quarter!*

*Lorraine attended Southwest Texas State and has earned her CPP.*

*Lorraine has been happily married for 43 years. She has 2 daughters, 2 sons and 14 grandchildren ranging in age from 4 months to 17 years old.*

*In our January 2008 Luncheon, Lorraine won the 2007 Annual Perfect Attendance and the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Perfect Attendance awards.*

*Her hobbies are spending time with her family, gardening, reading and crocheting.*



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## 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2008 New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new members to the Alamo Chapter,

Belinda R Arechinga  
Zachry Construction Corporation

Margie Liz Bermudez  
San Antonio Area Foundation

Brian Campbell  
Accounting Principals

Carlos Sarmiento  
Merrill Lynch & Co

Dotty J Camp  
YMCA of Greater San Antonio

Mark Goldman, CPA  
MGR Personnel, LLC

Kristie Holzworth  
San Antonio Area Foundation

We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting!

## 2008 FPC/CPA Preparation Class

The Alamo Chapter is starting its 2008 FPC/CPA Preparation Class beginning June 5<sup>th</sup>. The class will meet every Thursday through August 28, 2008, 13 short weeks. After that, if you choose, you will be able to attend an additional 4 weeks of Review.

The class will be held at:  
Execupay  
510 Portland  
San Antonio, TX 78216

Directions will be on your confirmation email once you register for the class.

We are pleased to announce that last year out of 22 class members, two students decided to sit for the exam and both passed.

Please use the link below to visit our website for more information on the class schedule, CPA requirements for qualifying to sit for the exam, and on-line registration. Please register using the May 2nd date (closing date for registration) for the class beginning on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

<http://www.apasanantonio.com/displaycommon.cfm?an=1>

If you have questions please contact:

Patti Callahan, CPA  
Alamo Chapter FPC/CPA Coordinator  
Phone #: (210)581-0671, or  
E-mail: [pcallahan@missionpharmacal.com](mailto:pcallahan@missionpharmacal.com)

## Accounting and Finance Salaries on the Rise

There's good news if you plan on seeking a new job next year. The current supply of payroll professionals is lagging demand, according to the recently released 2008 Salary Guide from Robert Half International. In addition to the talent shortage, business expansion and recurring compliance mandates also are fueling competition for top candidates. These factors are expected to boost the average starting salaries of financial employees 4.3 percent in 2008, according to the annual guide.

Following is a snapshot of other key findings:

- Payroll managers at midsize firms (organizations with \$25 million to \$250 million in sales) are forecast to receive a 4.3 percent increase, to between \$41,500 and \$55,750 annually.
- Average starting salaries for payroll managers with large firms (more than 250 million in sales) can expect a 4.1 percent gain, to a range of \$49,500 to \$70,500.
- Payroll managers at small firms (up to 25 million in sales) also can anticipate a 4.1 percent boost, to a range of \$36,250 to \$45,750.
- In regard to credentials, businesses are particularly interested in payroll candidates who possess the certified payroll professional (CPP) designation.

It's also worth noting that employers are offering perks such as signing bonuses, incentive compensation, tuition reimbursement and plentiful vacation days to secure job seekers with the most in-demand skills. In short, given today's employee-driven market, it's likely that you can negotiate more than just dollars and cents when you're at the bargaining table with hiring managers.

Article provided by Accoutemps, February 2008

## Compliance Update

### Changes in FMLA

On January 28, 2008, President Bush signed into law H.R. 4986, the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 (NDAA). Among other things, section 585 of the NDAA amends the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) (<http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/fmlaAmended.htm>) to permit a "spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin" to take up to 26 workweeks of leave to care for a "member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness." Additional information and a copy of Title I of the FMLA, as amended, are available at [http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/NDAA\\_fmla.htm](http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/NDAA_fmla.htm)

Source – Department of Labor, January, 2008

### Federal Minimum Wage Changes

The Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 increases the federal hourly minimum wage rate to \$6.55, effective July 24, 2008

Source – Department of Labor, 2007.

## **Economic Stimulus Bill**

*Starting in May, the Treasury will begin sending economic stimulus payments to more than 130 million individuals. The stimulus payments will go out through the late spring and summer.*

*The vast majority of Americans who qualify for an economic stimulus payment will not have to do anything other than file their 2007 individual income tax return to receive their payment this year. They will not have to complete applications, file any extra forms or call the Internal Revenue Service to request the payment, which is automatic. The IRS will determine eligibility, figure the amount and issue the payment.*

*Stimulus payments will be direct deposited for taxpayers selecting that option when filing their 2007 tax returns. Taxpayers who have already filed with direct deposit won't need to do anything else to receive the stimulus payment. For taxpayers who haven't filed their 2007 returns yet, the IRS reminds them that direct deposit is the fastest way to get both regular refunds and stimulus payments.*

### **Basic Eligibility**

*The IRS will use the 2007 tax return to determine eligibility and calculate the basic amount of the payment. In most cases, the payment will equal the amount of tax liability on the return with a maximum amount of \$600 for individuals (\$1,200 for taxpayers who file a joint return) and a minimum of \$300 for individuals (\$600 for taxpayers who file a joint return).*

*Even those who have little or no tax liability may qualify for a minimum payment of \$300 (\$600 if filing a joint return) if their tax return reflects \$3,000 or more in qualifying income. For the purpose of the stimulus payments, qualifying income consists of earned income such as wages and net self-employment income as well as Social Security or certain Railroad Retirement benefits and veterans' disability compensation, pension or survivors' benefits received from the Department of Veterans' Affairs in 2007. However, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) does not count as qualifying income for the stimulus payment.*

*Low-income workers who have earned income above \$3,000 but do not have a regular filing requirement must file a 2007 tax return to receive the minimum stimulus payment. Similarly, Social Security recipients, certain Railroad retirees, and those who receive the veterans' benefits mentioned above must file a 2007 return in order to notify the IRS of their qualifying income.*

*The IRS emphasized that people with no filing requirement who turn in a tax return to qualify for the economic stimulus payment will not get a tax bill. People in this category will not owe money because of the stimulus payment.*

### **Limitation**

*To be eligible for a stimulus payment, taxpayers must have valid Social Security Numbers. Anyone who does not have a valid Social Security Number, including those who file using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), an Adoption Taxpayer Identification Number (ATIN) or any other identification number issued by the IRS is not eligible for this payment. Both individuals listed on a married filing jointly return must have valid Social Security Numbers to qualify for a stimulus payment.*

*Eligibility for the advance payment is subject to maximum income limits. The payment amounts will be reduced by 5 percent of the amount of income in excess of \$75,000 for individuals and \$150,000 for those with a Married Filing Jointly filing status.*

*Individuals who pay no tax and who have less than \$3,000 of qualifying income will not be eligible for the stimulus payment.*

### **Additional Payments for Parents and Others with Qualifying Children**

*Parents and anyone else eligible for a stimulus payment will also receive an additional \$300 for each qualifying child (subject to income phase-outs). To qualify, a child must be eligible under the Child Tax Credit and have a valid Social Security Number.*

*Anyone who is not eligible for the basic payment amount due to the phase-out provision or any other exception will not be eligible for this additional amount for children.*

*Source – Internal Revenue Service, February 2008*

## American Payroll Association's 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress

May 13-17, 2008  
Austin, TX

APA's Congress is the PREMIER educational event for payroll professionals and one that you cannot afford to miss. The most respected industry leaders have been assembled to cover vital topics in payroll, accounts payable, human resources and benefits, payroll-related technology, and management. Explore the largest payroll and finance exhibit hall and find payroll and finance related products and services that could help your organization succeed. Congress is the best way to get the most up-to-date education and news on recent legislative and regulatory changes.

Congress is the place to be for professionals and organizations looking to increase efficiency, ensure compliance, and boost productivity and cost-effectiveness.

What are you waiting for? Register today at [www.americanpayroll.org/congress/](http://www.americanpayroll.org/congress/)

### Alamo Chapter Calendar

#### *Special Event*

APRIL 17, 2008      *Spring Cleaning Clothing Drive*  
*Benefiting the Battered Women and Children's Shelter*

#### *Monthly Luncheon*

APRIL 17, 2008      *Steve Smith – Ultimate Software*  
*Topic: Payroll Conversion*

MAY 22, 2008      *Christa Arocha-De Leon – Office of the Attorney General*  
*Topic: Electronic Wage Withholding and EFT*

JUNE 19, 2008      *Jon E. Morse, MBA, CLU – Center for Success*  
*Topic: Employee Assessments and New Hire Pre-screening*

### 2008 Alamo Chapter Sponsors

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