

# The “Ally Mo” News



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2nd Quarter

July 2011

## 2011 Alamo Chapter Sponsors

### Alamo Sponsor



### Riverwalk Sponsor



### Armadillo Sponsor



## Alamo Chapter Calendar – Monthly Luncheon

JULY 21, 2011

*Meredith Brown: Ernst & Young*  
*Topic: Preparing for an Audit*

AUGUST 18, 2011

*Mike Mohr & Scott Bankart: TALX*  
*Topic: To Be Announced*

SEPTEMBER 8, 2011

\*\*\*\*NPW CELEBRATION\*\*\*\*

## 2nd Quarter 2011 New Members

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

Jennifer Robinson – SWBC  
Ramfis Monzon – Texas Biomedical Research Institute  
Crystal Coe – Texas Power Systems

Stephanie Cloud – K Partners Hospitality Group  
Kelly Gonzales – K Partners Hospitality Group  
Arnold Cardenas – K Partners Hospitality Group  
Alma Rosa Cruz – Sirius Computer Solutions, Inc.  
Anita Schisler-Hickok – Sirius Computer Solutions Inc.

Arcy Silcox – Sirius Computer Solutions, Inc.  
Dareth Fater – Sirius Computer Solutions, Inc.  
Jim Goble – Sirius Computer Solutions, Inc.  
Shelley Sommers – Sirius Computer Solutions, Inc.  
Sandra Huizar – Siruis Computer Solutions, Inc.  
Vickie Arcos – CPS Energy

*We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting!*

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## *APA's 29th Annual Congress Experience!*

The American Payroll Association (APA) 29th Annual Congress "Competency, Compliance, Community" was held at the Salt Lake City Convention Center in Salt Lake City, Utah, from May 24th through May 27th. Congress is the largest educational conference that brings together payroll and accounts payable professionals and offers over 170 workshops in the fields of payroll, accounts payable, finance, HR, and benefits.

On Tuesday, Pre-Congress kicked off. Two workshop sessions were held in the morning that offered 10 different topics each. During the "Making Payroll Connections" luncheon, a panel of three experienced leaders and a moderator offered informative insights into the importance of relationship-building, tips for establishing contacts, and networking opportunities with fellow attendees. Attendees used a voting card to respond to moderator questions and received immediate results. The free Congress 2011 smartphone app was unveiled as a wonderful new tool for networking with fellow attendees, checking your class schedule, and even locating your class. Five topics were offered during the Power Hour Workshop Session following lunch. The final workshop session of Pre-Congress offered another 10 topics.

As in 2009, the Congress experience began on Tuesday with the Opening General Session following Pre-Congress Workshop Session 3. Pre-show entertainment was provided by The Flying Aces All-Stars who performed stunts on trampolines to the amazement of the audience. Tim and Kris O'Shea entertained the audience with their Olympic challenge and antics. Executive Director Dan Maddux, Past-President Linda Obertin, CPP and incoming President Jane Holmes, CPP officially opened Congress. The keynote speaker was Giovanni Livera. His message provided inspiration to attendees by reminding everyone to be open to the realization that "Anything Is Possible" and that 'impossible' resides only in our minds.

On Wednesday morning in the first Workshop Session, AC-APA Secretary, Valery Noakes CPP co-presented the "2010 Workforce Management/Performance Study Results" workshop with Brian Koniuk from The Hackett Group and discussed her company results as compared to last year's study results. Two more Workshop Sessions were held throughout the day.

The 2011 Payroll Man and Woman of the Year Awards were announced, followed by the 2011 APA Chapter of the Year Awards. The Alamo Chapter again received Honorable Mention for our Chapter of the Year submission. The APA, Global Cash Card, and Kronos Payroll Education Grants were also awarded.

Luncheon entertainment was provided by The Water Coolers with comedic skits on "office and everyday life" and Tim and Kris O'Shea brought us an Olympic update. During the Chapter Exchange, the Alamo Chapter also received 2nd place for the Chapter Pictorial Contest, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place for Best Chapter Website and 1<sup>st</sup> Place for 2011 Dream Theme "Taking the Mystery Out of Payroll" with all of the other Texas chapters. The Congress Expo had its Grand Opening that afternoon followed by the Dessert Reception.

The fun and learning continued on Thursday with three more Workshop Sessions throughout the day. During the General Session, Nina Olsen, US National Taxpayer Advocate of the IRS gave the government address followed by the keynote speaker, Mary Lou Retton, who shared her story of Olympic success with attendees. The O'Shea's "went for the gold" with their comedic Olympic competition and clearly showed how payroll professionals team together to achieve positive results. A networking luncheon was held in the Expo as well as the Cocktail Reception after the final workshop session. The evening ended with the Mike Rayburn & Friends Dance Party -- a fun evening of magic, music and laughter.

On Friday, four more Workshop Sessions were held. At the Awards Luncheon, the 2011 Meritorious Service, Special Recognition, Government Partner, and Special Friend Awards were presented. Chapter Secretary, Valery Noakes, CPP, was the recipient of a Meritorious Service award from APA. The day closed with a General Session. The Commissioner of the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, Department of Health and Human Services, Vicki Turetsky, provided the government address. The conference and general session closed with a motivational message from keynote speaker Mike Rayburn and his topic "What If...?".

AC-APA members attending were Christy Witzel, CPP – President, Harland Clarke Corp ; Valery Noakes, CPP – Secretary, Tesoro Companies, Inc.; Don Barham, CPP, Clear Channel Communications; Rosie Morales, CPP, Harland Clarke Corp.; and Narlen Morales, CPP – Valero Energy Corp.



## **Karen's Wonder-full World!**

It's the simple things in life that can give you pleasure. I want to tell you a story about my son, Justin, who learned a lesson all on his own. A week or so back, I picked my son up from his work, which is downtown. He was in the best mood and kept telling me how good he felt. It turns out that a gentleman came into his business to ask for directions. No one could help because the gentleman was deaf. He didn't read lips well and could not speak clear enough for anyone to understand.

My son started working with him and discovered he needed directions to 281 and Loop 410. Justin tried drawing him a map on paper showing him how to get there, then decided a regular map would be better. He bought the man a map and showed him where he was and how to get to where he was going. He felt that indescribable joy in helping someone. Even though he has been raised to help others when at all possible, he learned on his own just what a great feeling you get from showing just a little kindness to another person.

Along the same lines, I received an email from a close friend, Cindy, who wanted to let me know that "you never know what an impact your words and actions can make on another person's life". Cindy's father, Garland, used to come to San Antonio from Illinois every year around Fiesta. Cindy would take him to the parades, music shows, and different Fiesta events in the hopes of showing him a good time. One year when he came he didn't want to do all of the Fiesta things again; he wanted to do something different. I suggested they go to the zoo and feed the Lori's. That particular year her sister came in from Hawaii also so off to the zoo they went.

When I got the email from Cindy I had to think a long time as to what exactly she was talking about, then I remembered what she was referring to.

Garland passed away a couple of years ago and Cindy's sister found a picture of their time at the zoo and said it was one of her favorites and forwarded it on. This picture is one of their happy memories of their dad and the trip to the zoo. They remember laughing so hard they had tears in their eyes.

That little email meant the world to me too; it brought back my own memories of this sweet man. My favorite, if he found money on the ground it went into a special pocket. It was always separated from his other money. His rule was that he never spent the "found money".

Remember it's the little things that can mean a lot to another person, giving someone directions, making a suggestion that turns out to mean the world to others, or even the email that allowed me to share in their memories. It's those little acts of random kindness that can bring peace to your heart.



In loving memory of Garland Fieser, East Moline Illinois.

## Compliance Update

provided by American Payroll Association

### FUTA Surtax Set to Expire June 30

The 0.2% Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) surtax is set to expire on June 30, 2011. The permanent gross FUTA tax rate is 6.0%. The 0.2% surtax was added in 1976 and has been in effect since then. The last time it was extended was from January 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011, under the Worker, Homeownership, and Business Assistance Act of 2009. Before expiration of the 0.2% surtax, the net FUTA tax employers pay after taking credit for up to 5.4% of state unemployment taxes paid is 0.8%. After expiration, the net FUTA rate will be reduced to 0.6% on FUTA taxable wages paid beginning July 1, 2011 (0.8% - 0.2% = 0.6%).

At this time, we know of no plans in the U.S. Congress to push legislation through to extend the surtax before it expires. However, it is possible the surtax will be extended retroactively as part of legislation to increase the federal government's debt ceiling before it is reached on August 2, 2011, as part of comprehensive unemployment insurance reform efforts, or as part of a tax extender bill later this year.

With the surtax expiring, employers will need to separately track FUTA taxable wages paid before July 1, and FUTA taxable wages paid after June 30. It is expected that Form 940 for 2011 would be revised to require separate reporting of wages subject to the surtax and those not subject to the surtax. With no surtax in effect for the third quarter of 2011, employers may determine their FUTA tax liability and deposit requirement for the quarter based on a net FUTA rate of 0.6%. Because of the possibility of a retroactive extension, however, employers may consider it prudent to continue to accrue FUTA tax at a rate of 0.8% until the third quarter FUTA deposit is due on October 31.

### IRS Announces Mid-Year Mileage Rate Increase of 4.5 Cents

The IRS has announced an increase in the optional standard mileage rates for the final six months of 2011 [IR-2011-69, 6-23-11; [www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=240903,00.html](http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=240903,00.html)]. Citing "recent gasoline price increases," the IRS has increased the standard business mileage rate from 51 cents to 55.5 cents a mile for all business miles driven from July 1 through December 31, 2011. The rate for deductible medical or moving expenses is increased from 19 cents to 23.5 cents a mile. *Note:* The rate for providing services for charitable organizations is set by statute, not the IRS, and remains at 14 cents a mile.

The mileage rate may be used to compute the deductible cost of operating a passenger car (also vans, pickups, or panel trucks) for business purposes. It may also be used by employers to reimburse employees for business use of their personal vehicles and to determine the amount that needs to be imputed to an employee's income for personal use of certain company-owned or leased non-luxury vehicles.

#### Mileage Rate Changes

| Purpose        | Rates 1/1 through 6/30/11 | Rates 7/1 through 12/31/11 |
|----------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Business       | 51                        | 55.5                       |
| Medical/Moving | 19                        | 23.5                       |
| Charitable     | 14                        | 14                         |

## *How to Make Your Resume Resonate*

Presented by Robert Half

*Don't let a weak resume keep you out of the running for a job.*

Most chief financial officers are feeling confident about their firms' prospects for business growth in the coming months, according to the latest [Robert Half Financial Hiring Index](#). The hiring outlook is expected to improve slightly as well. With hiring managers receiving so many resumes, what can you do to make sure yours stands out? Whether you're a new graduate or a seasoned professional, the following tips will help you create a resume that can help you move one step closer to the interview process.

**Fill gaps in your employment history.** If your resume is vague or incomplete about your work history, a hiring manager may think you're deliberately trying to conceal information. Many people have been unemployed for a long period due to the recession, and employers understand this. But it's important to explain what you've been doing while out of a full-time job. For instance, if you've been working part-time or as a consultant; volunteering; or taking classes, include that information.

**Provide clear job descriptions and show results.** Explain the responsibilities you had in a previous job and how your work contributed to the company's overall success. If you provide scant or foggy details about your former duties, a potential employer may think your experience isn't relevant for the job you're applying for.

**Watch typos and misspellings.** Even the most experienced professionals have made careless – and costly – mistakes when submitting their job application materials. Don't be among them. Research by Robert Half shows many executives are not inclined to hire a candidate who submits a resume with even just one or two typos in it. Also, if your resume is disorganized or otherwise sloppy in its presentation, you could come across as lacking both professionalism and good communication skills.

### **The finishing touches**

Another tip: Take time to tailor your resume to each job you're applying for. Positioning the information in your resume in a way that shows how your skills and experience are well matched for a particular role makes it easy for a hiring manager to understand why you could be a strong candidate.

And don't forget to include a well-written cover letter, if you have the opportunity. This is not always possible when applying for jobs online, but when you're able to include a short paragraph or two within the body of your email or the space on a job application allotted for "comments," go for it. The cover letter allows you to expand upon your strengths and accomplishments and express why you believe you're the best person for the job. It also can shine a spotlight on your communication skills, which many employers greatly value and specifically look for in candidates today when hiring for accounting and finance roles.

*Accountemps is the world's first and largest temporary staffing service specializing in the placement of accounting, finance and bookkeeping professionals. The company has more than 350 offices worldwide and offers online job search services at [www.accountemps.com](http://www.accountemps.com)*

## **Quarterly Quotes**



*We aim above the mark to hit the mark.*  
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Clear your mind of CAN'T.*  
-Samuel Johnson

*Tomorrow belongs to the people  
who prepare for it today..*  
-Malcolm X