

# Alamo Chapter of the APA Newsletter

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1st Quarter

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## How To Be A Winner...



- ... Makes time
- ... Says "Let's find out"
- ... Is not afraid of losing
- ... Wants to
- ... Is part of the solution
- ... Does it
- ... Makes commitments
- ... Works harder
- ... Learns from others
- ... Says "I'm good, but not as good as I can be"
- ... Says "I'll plan to do that"
- ... Listens
- ... Catches people doing things right
- ... Says "I was wrong"
- ... Says "There ought to be a better way"
- ... See opportunities
- ... Celebrates others
- ... Feels responsible for more than his/her job
- ... Translates dreams into reality
- ... Expects success

That makes a winner!



## Chapter Reminders

### Don't Mess With Texas Trash-Off (04/01/06):

Show your pride in our beautiful Lone Star state by participating in this Alamo Chapter event! Contact Michelle Kemmerling, CPP, if you can join us on Saturday, April 1st, from 8am until 11am.

### Spring Seminar - "May Flower Power— A Fiesta of Benefits" (05/04/06):

Half-day seminar will be held Thursday morning at Embassy Suites Northwest. Brochures will be mailed soon. Register early to reserve your seat.

### APA National Congress (05/21 - 05/25/06):

We would like to ensure that all Alamo Chapter members planning to attend Congress know which fellow members are attending. If you are planning to attend the 24th Annual Congress, please e-mail our President, Valery Noakes, CPP at [vnoakes@tsocorp.com](mailto:vnoakes@tsocorp.com). She will compile a list of our attendees and e-mail it to each of you. Our Chapter has again entered the Chapter of the Year, Chapter Website, and Chapter Pictorial contests. Please plan to attend the Awards presentation!

### National Payroll Week (09/04 - 09/08/06):

Sharon Garis, CPP has volunteered to chair the 2006 NPW Celebration. Thank you, Sharon. More details to be announced soon!

### Texas Payroll Conference (09/21-09/23/06):

Join us in The Woodlands, Texas for the latest and greatest educational Payroll-related topics as well as the Friday Night party! Don't forget to mark your calendars!



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## Introducing the 2006-2007 AC-APA Chapter Officers!

### **President: Valery Noakes, CPP**

Valery has been the Manager of Payroll for Tesoro Companies, Inc., an oil & gas refining & marketing company based in San Antonio, since September 2001. Tesoro pays over 4,300 employees bi-weekly for 10 Federal EINs and 19 states in-house on SAP software. She has a BBA in Accounting from the University of Texas at San Antonio, will complete her MBA in e-Business from the University of Phoenix Online by June 2006, and obtained her CPP certification in April of 2001. She has been an active member of the American Payroll Association since 1993, served as Treasurer for the CenTex Chapter of the APA in Austin in 1999 and 2000, served as the 2001 President/Chairperson of the Texas Payroll Conference Board of Directors, and served previously as Government Liaison and then President-Elect for the Alamo Chapter since 2002.

### **President Elect: Dana Mirabelli, CPP**

Dana is a Senior Payroll Technical Support Specialist for the South Central Region of Automatic Data Processing, Inc. and has worked for the company over 18 years. Her responsibilities include keeping up with the statutory changes and communicating those changes to the Client Services (CS) associates. Dana earned her CPP designation in October 2001. Serving as Government Liaison for the Alamo Chapter in 2004 and 2005, she has been a active member since 1999.

### **Treasurer: Emma Jackson, CPP**

Emma is the go-to woman for North East Independent School District where she is the Senior Payroll Services Manager. She successfully manages the payroll process for NEISD's 9,100 plus employees. Not only does Emma know Payroll, she has the education and the experience to back it up. Emma holds a BBA in Accounting from Southwest Texas State University and she became a CPP in 1996. Emma has been an active member in the Alamo Chapter since 1995 and has previously served as the President, Vice-President and Secretary .

### **Secretary: Sandra Selvidge, CPP**

Sandy began working for KCI in November 1989 as an Accounts Payable Clerk. In 1990, she joined the Payroll Department as a Payroll Clerk and eventually became Payroll Supervisor. In January 2005, she accepted her current position as Payroll Tax Accountant. While providing general support to the Payroll Department, Sandy's responsibilities also include filing all payroll-related tax returns in 49 US states and Puerto Rico. Sandy received her CPP designation in April 1999. Sandy previously served the Alamo Chapter as Government Liaison, President-Elect, and then President since 2001.

### **Public Relations: Bernita Helberg, CPP, CPA**

Bernita has been with Carneiro, Chumney & Co., a public accounting firm, since November 1980, where she is a Manager in the tax department and a Payroll Tax Specialist. In 1993, she became a CPP and passed the CPA exam in 1999. She is a member of the American Payroll Association and the Alamo Chapter. She has been the Public Relations Officer since 1999 and continues to serve in that capacity. Bernita has been involved with the Alamo Chapter not only as an officer and past President, but also as a volunteer to assist with the CPP Study Group, a speaker at area high schools during National Payroll Week, and other chapter community service events.

### **Membership: Risa Tynmann, CPP**

Risa has worked in payroll for 19 years in many capacities. She managed a payroll department for 12 years. Risa is currently at USAA where she has worked in the Payroll Accounting department for 7 years. Risa has a BBA in Accounting from Southwestern University and became a CPP in October of 2003. In addition to serving as Membership Officer in 2005, Risa has helped with the CPP Study Group and is currently an alternate on the Board of Directors for the Texas Payroll Conference.

### **Government Liaison: Gloria Schillo, CPP**

As the Director of Payroll for West Corporation, Gloria is responsible for the payment of wages to nearly 29,000 employees in 12 different states, across 4 countries. She has over 18 years of payroll and management experience. Gloria earned her CPP in September of 1995, achieving her recertification in 2000 and 2005. Gloria continues to actively augment her experience through various payroll-related functions and by attending countless seminars. She previously served in many roles in the Chapter, including President, Treasurer, and mostly recently as Secretary in 2004-2005.

## Other Chapter News!

### Pay through PayPal and avoid the lines at the registration table!

Starting with the April monthly meeting, a separate registration line has been created to expedite your "check in" to the meeting.

*No more waiting in long lines to get seated!*

At the lower entrance to The Show Room:

- ❖ pick up your door prize ticket
- ❖ a Chapter officer will "check you off" the list (to verify meal count).

**It's that easy!** Thank you for using PayPal.

### APA's Chapter Leadership Seminar

President-Elect, Dana Mirabelli, CPP and Treasurer, Emma Jackson, CPP attended the American Payroll Association's Chapter Leadership Seminar in San Antonio on Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup>. APA initiated their Chapter Leadership Seminar in 2004 and has continued to offer three separate one-day sessions in San Antonio each year. APA Chapter officers nationwide are invited to attend. The seminar provides networking opportunities with board members from other chapters throughout the United States, guidance on chapter operations, chapter Web site design, attracting new members, and much, much more. Both Emma and Dana gave glowing reports on the information that was shared.



## Member Spotlight

This quarter's Member Spotlight is on Stephanie Brown. Stephanie works as a Payroll Manager for West Corporation where she has been employed for over eight years.

Stephanie's primary responsibilities include managing and monitoring a garnishment team, which oversees an estimated 1,000 garnishments, spread over 52 ADP company codes! She also oversees an escheat team responsible for identifying and maintaining uncashed checks for all 52 company codes. She is currently developing a Check Management System that will manage escheat reporting, manual check controls, and voided or stop payment checks.

Stephanie also monitors and maintains the annual SUI rates for the 52 company codes across the U.S., processes W-2C forms, and is responsible for filing or overseeing the filing of International Tax Returns in Jamaica, Canada, and the Philippines.

Stephanie has a degree in Accounting and has been a member of the Alamo Chapter for about one year, just after she moved from the West Accounting department to the Payroll department.

Having been married for 25 years - **WOW** - Stephanie has two children. Frances will soon be 21 and is currently working on obtaining her RN. Matthew will soon be 19 and he is in college on a baseball scholarship hoping to become a professional ball player or a fireman.

Stephanie plans to continue her active participation in our chapter.



## AC-APA Chapter Survey Results We Heard You!

Many thanks to those who participated in our 2005/2006 Alamo Member APA Survey! Here are some general results of the survey:

Total Number of Responses: **58**

### Meetings

Most feel that both the meeting location and food at D&B is at least good or acceptable. Some common comments include:

- Too crowded (several comments)
- Too cold (numerous comments)
- A little far
- Construction at IH10 and Loop 410 makes it difficult to get back on expressway
- Tired of chicken
- Avoid boned chicken
- Do not like the buffet
- They (D&B) run out of food

Everyone feels that the A/V equipment at D&B is acceptable, good (most), or great.

All but two responses think the speakers in 2005 have been good or great.

The Alamo Chapter APA Board of Directors hears you loud and clear! We too have continuously expressed the same concerns regarding the overcrowding, temperature, and the chicken on the bone. D&B has recently changed their management team so we have reiterated our concerns again and they promise to make more room between tables and raise the temperature in the Show Room. Additionally, D&B promises that last month was the last time for chicken on the bone! Unfortunately, in order to keep prices low, offering beef at our luncheon would absolutely be a rarity. Many people either have food allergies or simply do not eat seafood, so chicken is basically our only option available.

It is extremely difficult to find banquet facilities at an affordable price in San Antonio. Six of you said you would be interested in serving on a meeting location steering committee but we have not yet heard from you. Two of our current board members are beginning the search for other options but we need your help too! Please contact Valery Noakes ([vnoakes@tsocorp.com](mailto:vnoakes@tsocorp.com)) if interested in serving on this committee.

### Seminars

The feedback on the seminars was truly mixed. It was split about half-and-half for full vs. half-day and once vs. twice per year. About 75% of you like motivational speakers. Those who don't attend have scheduling conflicts or just have not had the opportunity. Your favorite seminar would include payroll laws and regulations for all states, small business laws, and/or benefits.

The Alamo Chapter APA is offering our first 2006 half-day seminar on Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, at the Embassy Suites Northwest. We have scheduled a motivational speaker and the educational focus will be on benefits. More information will be forthcoming about our "May Flower Power...A Fiesta of Benefits" seminar.

### CPP Study Groups

Again, the results were about 50/50 in favor of an instructor-led (with a fee) vs. a led by participants (without a fee) as well as June - August vs. February - April for the CPP study group. Most want to meet once per week, during the week, with 2-hour meeting times. Nine respondents stated they are already a CPP.

Look for more information shortly on this year's CPP study group.

## AC-APA Chapter Survey Results – Continued!

### Community Service

The vast majority of you think community service projects are great for the members of our organization and our community with Toys for Tots being your favorite community service event thus far. Someone mentioned that we should work with new/small businesses to help them understand what we do and another mentioned children's or nursing homes, and the Sam Shelter. Great ideas!

Mark your calendars for April 1st, our next Adopt-A-Highway community service event – the “Don't Mess with Texas Trash Off”. The Alamo Chapter APA has adopted a stretch of highway on Blanco Road near 1604. We'll meet at Taco Cabana in the HEB shopping center at 8am for free tacos, drinks, and Chapter t-shirts. The Texas Department of Transportation might stop by for a photo opportunity around 9am. See you there for fun and community service!

### NPW Celebration

The majority of you feel that the 2005 NPW was good. Some of you feel that more recognition should be done, that we're too reserved, and we should make it a fun luncheon. Thirteen of you are interested in a once-a-year night-time celebration.

The Alamo Chapter APA Board realizes that recognition is important and, if we're not doing enough already, we want to do more. The APA has specific requirements for meetings to qualify for continuing education credits so, if we don't have a speaker at all and just have fun and games at a meeting, would you still want to attend? Even if you do not get continuing education credit, would your employer still allow you to attend? Perhaps you would want the once-a-year night-time celebration to be all fun and games? Let us know and we'll listen!

If you're interested in being part of next year's Alamo Chapter 2006 NPW planning committee, contact Sharon Garis, CPP – 2006 NPW Chairperson at [sgaris@chguenther.com](mailto:sgaris@chguenther.com). **We're getting started now!**



## Upcoming Meetings

Mark your calendars for the upcoming Chapter meetings:

- **Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Perfect Attendance Drawing)**  
**Speaker:** Connie Connor, CPP – Director of Certification, American Payroll Association  
**Topic:** APA's FPC and CPP Certifications
- **Wednesday, May 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**Speaker:** to be announced  
**Topic:** Disaster Recovery
- **Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>**  
**Speaker:** to be announced  
**Topic:** New IRS Website
- **Wednesday, July 19<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Perfect Attendance Drawing)**  
**Speaker:** to be announced  
**Topic:** Child Support, Liens, and Garnishments

### Other Upcoming Events:

- **"Don't Mess with Texas Trash Off"**  
**Date:** Saturday, April 1st  
**Location:** Loop 1604 at Blanco Road  
**Time:** 8am – 11am
- **"May Flower Power – A Fiesta of Benefits" Seminar**  
**Date:** Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup>  
**Location:** Embassy Suites, Northwest  
**Time:** 8am – Noon
- **APA 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress**  
**Dates:** Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup> through Thursday, May 25<sup>th</sup>  
**Location:** Walt Disney Swan Hotel, Orlando, FL
- **CPP Study Group (Instructor-Led)**  
**Dates:** Every Wednesday starting June 7<sup>th</sup> through August 30<sup>th</sup>  
**Times:** 6-8pm
- **2006 National Payroll Week ([www.nationalpayrollweek.com](http://www.nationalpayrollweek.com))**  
**Dates:** Monday, September 4<sup>th</sup> through Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup>
- **Texas Payroll Conference**  
**Dates:** Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup> through Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>  
**Location:** Marriott Waterway, The Woodlands
- **APA's Preparing for Year-End and 2007**  
**Date:** Monday, October 16<sup>th</sup>  
**Location:** Hotel to be determined, San Antonio

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