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## Member Feedback:

If you have any questions or suggestions for "The Leader" you can e-mail the editor at [john.craig@dfas.mil](mailto:john.craig@dfas.mil) or call (614) 693-1153. Also, please contact the editor if you or someone you know would be interested in appearing in the Member Profile.

## Message from the RVP



Greetings. I hope you enjoy this first issue of "The Leader". I'd like to thank John Craig for his efforts and leadership in establishing the Quarterly Newsletter of the AGA Ohio-Michigan Region.

We've had a busy and successful six months. The Central Ohio and Greater Columbus Chapters held another successful Regional PDC on December 4-6, 2006, with high caliber keynote speakers and break-out sessions. The Greater Lansing Chapter is planning a PDC on February 28, 2007, with the Lansing Chapter of the Institute of Internal Auditors. The Greater Columbus Chapter is hosting a March 28, 2007 Professional Development Opportunity, co-sponsored by the Buckeye Chapter of ASMC. The Greater Cleveland Chapter is planning their PDC for April 23, 2007. All active Chapters continue to hold interesting and educational events and luncheons. We are in need of volunteers to revitalize and activate the Dayton and Detroit Chapters, so if you have contacts or know of financial management professionals willing to volunteer their talents to AGA in those locations, let me know.

Our Chapters have also been actively increasing membership. Our RVP Membership Co-Chair, Stephanie Paschel, Cleveland Chapter, and James Kennedy, CGFM, Central Ohio Chapter, were mentioned in the December 2006 "AGA Insider" as top recruiters. Congratulations to them and their Chapters!

The Chapters are also very involved in community service and events. For example, in December 2006, the Greater Cleveland Chapter participated in Toys for Tots, Greater Lansing volunteered with the Humane Society, and the Central Ohio and Greater Columbus Chapter members provided clothing, supplies and toys to the Holiday Wish Program for Franklin County Children Services. Both the Greater Columbus and Greater Lansing Chapters are gearing up with training and certification in order to volunteer for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program.

Next on the AGA agenda for this quarter is the National Leadership Conference (NLC) February 12-13, 2007, in Washington, DC. The agenda looks to be another exciting professional development event hosted by AGA. For those of you who plan to attend, I hope you enjoy the event!

**Nancy**

# Columbus Hosts Regional Conference

The AGA Regional Professional Development Conference came to downtown Columbus last month. According to event organizers and attendees, it was a tremendous success. In her monthly message to members, Greater Columbus Chapter President Lori Mikesell said, "the 2006 PDC was a huge success from all aspects. Attendees were given a well-rounded variety of subjects and abundant opportunities to network with other financial management professionals. I believe all who were involved considered the PDC a success, I know I do."

Among the keynote speakers was Archie Griffin. The two-time Heisman Trophy Winner and President of the Ohio State Alumni Association gave his thoughts on leadership, accountability and motivation. "When Archie spoke, you could feel the excitement in

the room. Even if you were not a fan, you could feel his energy and be drawn in as he told 'war stories,' which he related to the importance of good leadership," said Greater Columbus AGA Member Zac Balas.

Other speakers included Brigadier General Robert Boggs, FOX News Channel's John Kasich, and Arizona State University Professor of Legal and Ethical Studies Marianne Jennings.

Those attending the conference earned up to 24 CPEs. Several workshops were available over the three days for both AGA members and nonmembers including Auditing IT General Controls, Government Accounting, HR/Payroll, Ethics Training and more. "Sometimes it is hard to find topics that fit into the Federal Track. This PDC had a great balance of both Federal and State related



**Pictured (Left to Right):** AGA's Zac Balas, Two-time Heisman Trophy Winner and Keynote Speaker Archie Griffin, and AGA's Ken George & Justin Sponseller.

topics," said Balas.

Building on the success of the Regional PDC in Columbus, Ohio-Michigan AGA members will be looking forward to both the National Leadership Conference next month and the Professional Development Conference & Exposition this summer in Nashville, Tennessee.

## 2007 NLC Heads to Washington D.C.

This year's version of the National Leadership Conference will be held just steps from the White House. The Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, will host AGA's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual marquee event on February 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>.

AGA members from around the country will convene in our nation's capital to enhance their skills, network, and earn up to 14 CPEs. The theme for this year is "Forging New Paths to Improved Accountability." The conference will feature several prominent guest speakers including David Norquist, Chief Financial Officer of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Mark Everson, Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service and Jim Cooper, U.S. Representative, 5<sup>th</sup> District of Tennessee. According to the AGA website, there will also be several award

ceremonies to "recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions to both the Association and the government financial management profession it serves."

For those interested in taking the CGFM examination, there will be a two-day Intensive Review Course offered at the NLC site on February 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. The exam can be taken on February 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, but an appointment must be made. Deadline for registration is January 31<sup>st</sup>.

Early registration for the National Leadership Conference ended January 12<sup>th</sup>, however it is not too late to sign up. Registration information and additional event resources, including the CGFM examination, can be found on the AGA website. You can also contact your chapter president with any questions.

**National  
Leadership  
Conference**

**February 12-13  
Washington, D.C.**

**"Forging New Paths to  
Improved Accountability"**



# Ohio-Michigan Update: Notes from Third Quarter Status Report

**Advancing Government Accountability** – The Central Ohio and Greater Columbus Chapters held another successful Regional PDC Dec 4-6, 2006, with outstanding speakers and break-out sessions and received tremendous amounts of compliments and record attendance (over 360). Central Ohio is now a participant of the Franklin University Advisory board. The Greater Lansing Chapter is planning a PDC for Feb 28, 2007. The Greater Columbus Chapter is co-sponsoring and planning an event with ASMC on March 28, 2007. The Cleveland Chapter is working on the PDC scheduled for April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007. They are also working with Cleveland State University and John Carroll University to establish a scholarship program. They have reached out to additional state and local entities to address one of their weaknesses.

**CGFM** - Cleveland has established a focus group and is working on a study program for interested individuals. Greater Columbus and Greater Lansing continue to encourage CGFM examination and events in their newsletter. Regional PDC for Central Ohio and Greater Columbus had an eight-hour CPE training class for one section of the CGFM. The book was included in the training and a drawing to cover the costs of the test was held for the attendees.

**Education & Research** - Chapters continue to partner with other professional organizations on educational events. Cleveland Chapter is partnering with the local ASMC and IMA chapter for the PDC. Greater Lansing is partnering with the Institute of Internal Auditors, and Greater Columbus is partnering with ASMC. The chapters have hosted several audio conferences and have gained multiple sponsors for luncheons/PDC. The chapters have also surveyed their members to gain information on improving the quality/satisfaction of membership.

**Membership Services** - Cleveland hosted an open house on January 10<sup>th</sup> and hosted several additional recruiting initiatives gaining 16 new members thus far. Both Cleveland and Central Ohio have members who were recognized as outstanding recruiters in Dec 2006 "AGA Insider". The Central Ohio Chapter attended a career fair at Franklin University.

**Feedback for the NEC** - The active chapters continue to provide interesting and educational programs for their members. The Region has re-established a quarterly newsletter.

**Other** - Cleveland hosted a social event on January 5<sup>th</sup> for members and their significant others. They have several programs in place to raise funds and have established a Corporate Communication chair position to concentrate on this area. Greater Columbus and Greater Lansing are planning to participate in the VITA program. Chapter members are also making plans to attend the NLC. The Central Ohio and Greater Columbus chapters had two joint social events – Blue Jackets Hockey evening and Holiday Reception at the Regional PDC.

## Member Profile: Heather Drake



***Chapter:*** Greater Columbus. Heather is currently the chapter's Secretary and has held the position since 2005. She is also the Chapter Development & Assistance Co-chair for the Ohio – Michigan Region.

***Position:*** Financial Management Analyst

***Employer:*** DFAS Columbus

***Job Description:*** Several rotational assignments in the Leaders In Motion program including Vendor Pay, Strategic Business Office, and Quality & Expenditures. Heather is now permanently placed in the Cash Accountability Branch. She is primarily responsible for suspense account reporting, calculating and validating statistical data, writing standard operating procedures and coordinating briefings with senior leaders.

***Life Outside of Work:*** Proud mother of two boys (9 year old and 4 month old). She enjoys going to the gym, attending sports events with the family, cooking, and playing with her kids.

***Future Plans:*** Heather is currently working towards obtaining a CGFM. She plans to continue to stay active as an AGA member and eventually become a Committee Director. Her short-term goal is to enroll in an MBA program with a focus on Risk Management and/or Human Resources.

# CLEVELAND NEWS

Visit the chapter website at <http://agacleveland.org>

## Retirement Announcement

We bid a fond farewell to long time AGA member, Mr. Ken Sweitzer, CGFM, who retired on December 15th. Besides being an AGA Cleveland member, Mr. Sweitzer was also, Director, Accounting Services-Navy and DFAS Cleveland Senior Site Representative. Mr. Sweitzer spoke at several of our luncheons (sometimes on short notice) and conferences over the past several years and always supported AGA Cleveland functions. We wish him the best!



## Cleveland Chapter of AGA Spreads Holiday Cheer - Volunteers to Help Toys for Tots

On Saturday, December 16th several members of the AGA Cleveland Chapter volunteered to help sort and hand out toys at Tower City Mall in downtown Cleveland. Duties for the volunteer activity included sorting donated toys into appropriate age groups, filling orders for other charities requesting toys, and helping to distribute the filled orders.

The Cleveland Chapter has volunteered for several years now and has enjoyed the relationship with the Marine Corps Toys for Tots program. Even though members gave up a Saturday morning of sleeping in, it only takes a few minutes before volunteers were in good spirits, helping in whatever way possible, and also reminiscing over toys they enjoyed as a child.

# CENTRAL OHIO NEWS

Visit the chapter website at <http://www.coaga.org>

# GREATER COLUMBUS NEWS

## Spring Professional Development Announcement

The AGA Greater Columbus Chapter, in association with the American Society of Military Comptrollers (ASMC) Buckeye Chapter, would like to invite you all to the second joint Spring Professional Development Opportunity (PDO) to be held at the Riverfront Club at Confluence Park, located at 679 W. Spring St., Columbus, OH on Wednesday, March 28, 2007.

The theme of the conference will be "Maintaining Excellence in a Changing Environment." Since still in the planning stages, potential topics and speakers are still to be determined. More details to follow in the coming month. Please contact Diana Kaufman (3-0370) or Jim Gillenwater (3-6907) if you would like to volunteer to help.

If you have any questions about events, or if you have special dietary needs, please contact Diana Kaufman at 693-0370 or Jim Gillenwater at 693-6907.

# GREATER LANSING NEWS

Visit the chapter website at <http://www.lansing-aga.org>

## **AGA/IIA Spring Development Conference**

Save Wednesday, February 28, 2007 for the AGA/IIA Spring Professional Development Conference, "Finding Smooth Sailing in Turbulent Times." This year's conference will again be held at Lansing Community College's popular West Campus at 5708 Cornerstone Drive just south of I-496 and east of S. Creyts Road in Lansing. Parking is convenient and free.

This is an opportunity to complete 8 hours of your continuing professional education requirements: 1 hour of ethics, 5 hours of accounting and auditing, and 2 hours of management/other. The conference includes a continental breakfast, a buffet lunch, and refreshments during break. Online registration is now available at <http://www.lansing-aga.org/events/details.php?id=38>.

The speakers for this year are especially exciting. Judge Paula Manderfield will be speaking on ethics. Sy Adler, CPA, CFE from Plante Moran will give a talk entitled "Psychology of the Fraudster." Nationally-known speaker, Ed Robinson, will be speaking on leadership in the accounting and auditing profession. If you are interested in learning more about him, you can visit his website at [www.edspeaks.com](http://www.edspeaks.com). Additional speakers are currently being confirmed. More information will be available on the AGA website.

## **Congratulations to Our Newest CGFM!**



Charlotte Roper, an Accountant with the Department of State, received her CGFM certification on November 10, 2006. Her reasons for making the extra effort to obtain the CGFM are to demonstrate her experience and skills and to enable her to be more competitive in advancing her career. In her CGFM scholarship application letter Charlotte states, "the CGFM certification has given me a sense of accomplishment for my years of experience, education, and skills." We wish Charlotte success in her career as a CGFM!

## **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Help Needed**

Yes, there will be VITA again this year. For those of you who would like to volunteer to do VITA again this year, AGA will be working together with MSU to perform this wonderful community service project. The worksites should remain the same, but there are a few changes. This year, we are using the IRS "Link and Learn" certification, which is an online tutorial with an exam at the end. Once volunteers have completed the tutorial, they must take the exam and print the certificate when they pass. A passing score is 75% or higher, and the certification is in the Basic Level. This should not be a problem for anyone that has sat through tax class, the training at MSU, or for those who have done VITA before. The online "Link and Learn" can be found on the IRS website and can be done at any pace. The certification for this coming tax season is not yet available, but stay tuned for further information.

According to the IRS, it is a requirement that anyone preparing VITA returns, regardless of experience, must be certified. Since this is a Basic Level certification, it should not be a problem for experienced VITA workers. MSU is in the process of reserving computer labs on campus for VITA volunteers to become certified, so that you may work together if you want to. However, it is possible to work through everything on your own time. MSU will let us know once they have definite dates for the computer labs. They will also let us know when the "Link and Learn" for this year becomes available. MSU needs to know if you plan on volunteering, so they can order workbooks from the IRS for you. If you have further questions, please contact our Chapters' Community Service Chair, Randy Bitner at [BitnerR@michigan.gov](mailto:BitnerR@michigan.gov).

# Defense IG finds major flaws in contracts issued via Treasury

By Jenny Mandel

[www.govexec.com](http://www.govexec.com)

A recent Defense inspector general investigation into interagency purchases placed through the Treasury Department's FedSource program uncovered major problems, including inadequate competition.

Every award examined by the IG was flawed. Other problems included missing contracting agreements, insufficient price documentation and a lack of market research.

Defense auditors also identified 21 potential violations of the Anti-Deficiency Act, which bars spending in excess of available resources. These included funds being kept after the end of the year for which they were appropriated, and spending from the wrong accounts for particular projects.

Despite these findings, the [IG's report](#) did not advocate cutting off Defense purchases through FedSource. Rather, it urged Defense officials to ensure that acquisition planning is carried out, interagency agreements are signed and funds are monitored through regular reporting.

The Defense auditors, working with Treasury's IG office, examined 61 task orders worth about \$37.8 million and completed through three FedSource centers.

Auditors found that 41 of the 61 task orders were awarded without sufficient competition as required by appropriations law, contracting regulations and agency rules. Twenty-one of the task orders, valued at \$24.6 million, were identified as possibly violating the Anti-Deficiency Act.

The investigators also found that none of the task orders included documentation of market research. Fifty-one were placed without an interagency agreement between Defense and Treasury, or with an insufficient agreement, and 58 had poor contract surveillance plans. Fifty-two had inadequate or no documentation to show that officials deemed the agreed-upon price reasonable before placing the order.

"As a result, DOD activities did not obtain the most cost-effective goods and services to meet valid operational requirements in compliance with laws and regulations," Defense officials concluded.

The IG recommended that the Defense comptroller de-obligate \$19.6 million in prior-year funds being held by Treasury's contracting shop. The department's acting deputy chief financial officer, in official comments, said such a move already was under way.

Auditors also suggested that the Defense CFO work with Treasury officials to set up a system to monitor interagency contracts in a way that would yield regular reports on uncommitted fund balances, amounts obligated and expended, expired funds, and service fees paid. The CFO office said implementation of that recommendation also was under way.

The report was produced under a requirement in the fiscal 2006 Defense Authorization Act that called on the IG to work with its counterparts at Treasury, the Interior Department, the General Services Administration and NASA to assess interagency purchasing through those agencies.

The [GSA report](#) was issued in October, and found similar problems at that agency, including possible funding violations and insufficient contract monitoring. That report also allowed Defense, GSA's largest customer, to continue doing business with GSA.

In the [NASA report](#), released in November, the IG urged Defense officials to beef up training on contracting laws and managing interagency purchases.

The report on buying through Interior's National Business Center remains in draft form, but a recent [Washington Post story](#) cited draft documents in which investigators advised Defense against continuing to buy through Interior.

# Six Technologies That Reshaped Government

By Rutrell Yasin

[www.fcw.com](http://www.fcw.com)

Advances in technology over the past 20 years brought government computer users closer to a world in which they can share information across agencies and departments and access it from almost anywhere at any time. Would we be able to search the Internet and interact with government agencies online if there weren't advances in microprocessor chip design that boosted PC performance while reducing the cost of desktop and laptop computer systems? Probably not.

Improvements in microchips and five other technologies in 20 years have transformed the way government agencies and employees work and conduct business.

## 1. x86 architecture: Making the PC a commodity

The x86 or 8086 microprocessor architecture runs like a thread through many of the other technologies on the list. Developed by Intel in the late 1970s, the x86 has dominated the desktop and portable computers and small-server markets since the 1980s. The 80386, the first processor in the family to sport a 32-bit architecture, powered many PCs from 1986 to 1994 and beyond.

The military was an early adopter of x86 processors, embedding them in special purpose systems, said Scott Overson, Intel's director of public-sector marketing. DOD and civilian agencies moved workloads off existing mainframes to client/server systems throughout the mid-1980s to late 1990s.

Twenty years ago, an 80386 processor ran at 20 MHz and contained 275,000 transistors, Overson said. An 80386-powered PC cost more than \$10,000. Today, an Intel Core 2 Duo processor runs at 2.66 GHz and contains 291 million transistors. Desktop PCs with this processor cost less than \$1,000. The technology has experienced a 1,000-fold increase in density and performance and a tenfold decrease in price, Overson added.

## 2. Microsoft Windows: Power to the People

Microsoft introduced its Windows operating system in 1985, but it was the revolutionary 3.0 version, which had the graphical user interface that made PCs easier to use. With Windows 3.1, the company introduced the mouse, which allowed users to navigate and manipulate data on the computer with one hand. Users could perform several tasks simultaneously because Windows ran multiple applications at once.

The powerful GUI helped move computing out of the data center to the user, said Curt Kolcun, vice

president of Microsoft Federal. The federal government was the first large Microsoft customer to move to the Windows operating system, Kolcun said. The Air Force chose the operating system for its Desktop II contract in the early 1990s, later standardizing the service on the platform. Government agencies helped influence the development of early versions of Windows, making it the de facto standard for desktop computing, Kolcun added.

Microsoft expanded its reach into the workstation and server market with the introduction of the Windows NT operating system in 1993. Four years after NT's debut, the operating system was making serious inroads into DOD against the Unix operating system.

## 3. Ethernet: Taking over the LAN

Ethernet might not be the most elegant networking technology. But it has emerged as the most widely used local-area network technology in the past 16 years, resisting challenges from token ring and Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM).

Government and private-sector companies started deploying Ethernet in 1987, said Dan Kent, director of systems engineering at Cisco Federal. But Ethernet finally took off in the mid-1990s when it migrated from coaxial to a 10BaseT cable infrastructure, running in the same environment as voice communications, Kent said. The move to a twisted-pair network that involved point-to-point links connected by hubs and switches helped reduce installation costs, boost network reliability and enable better management and troubleshooting.

By the new millennium, bandwidth-hungry agencies, such as the Army, were replacing ATM networks with Gigabit Ethernet over IP for ease of use and manageability and to accommodate data-intensive applications, such as videoconferencing and distance learning.

## 4. Internet: Access to the world

The Internet evolved from a unique network for DOD agencies and services to communicate with one another into a research network for universities and U.S. labs and a fundamental communications tool for the world. The Internet — a collection of connected computer networks linked by copper wires, fiber-optic cables and wireless connections — evolved during the 1990s from a high-cost, government-only function into a broadly accessible capability for the average citizen, said Warren Suss, president of Suss Consulting.

The evolution of core technology such as the x86 architecture, Ethernet and TCP/IP, and fiber optics gave the Internet a much higher speed backbone to transmit content, experts say. Then the development of the World Wide Web by Tim Berners-Lee in the early 1990s boosted the use of the Internet, said Mike Corrigan, a senior consultant at Suss Consulting and the first chairman of the Internet Engineering Task Force. The Web is a collection of connected documents known as Web pages linked by hyperlinks and URLs. "The first decade [of the Internet], we didn't have the World Wide Web," Corrigan said.

#### 5. E-mail messaging: Electronic delivery

The development of the World Wide Web also spurred the mass use of e-mail as a messaging tool, said Howard Ady, director of governmentwide acquisition contracts and the General Services Administration schedules program at BearingPoint. He previously worked as a chief information officer and chief financial officer at various government agencies.

By the mid-1990s, agencies were grappling with issues such as e-mail use policies, interagency message system interoperability and better security for e-mail gateways. Agency purchases were evidence of the growing use of e-mail as a communications tool. For instance, in the mid-1990s, the Environmental Protection Agency deployed some 26,000 Lotus Notes e-mail addresses, and the Army Battle Command System

added about 20,000 new users to the Defense Message System version of Lotus Notes running on Sun Microsystems' Solaris Platform.

However, because federal agencies are communicating major policy decisions by e-mail, they must capture those messages as public records. Agency officials must figure out how long to keep those messages and what do with them, said J. Timothy Sprehe, president of Sprehe Information Management and a Federal Computer Week columnist.

#### 6. PDF: Info at your fingertips

It's not hard to recognize the benefits of being able to view information from any application on any computer and then share it with others worldwide. That's the transformative power of the PDF.

What really sparked the use of Adobe Systems' Acrobat PDF software in the government sector was the Internal Revenue Service's decision to put tax forms in PDF files in 1993, said Pam Deziel, director of platform product marketing at Adobe. Deziel was at Adobe when it launched Acrobat Version 1.0.

The release of free Acrobat software and reader the next year enabled more people to use the files that the IRS had created, said Paul Showalter, a senior analyst at the IRS' publishing division. Another milestone was the introduction of fillable forms, which allowed users to complete forms on screen, he said.



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