

President's Message

Can you believe Halloween is already over and Thanksgiving is just around the corner? Every year I swear time slips by faster and faster, and this year is no different.

First up this month is the ASWA National Conference November 10-12 in Chicago, which promises to be a great event. We have eight members attending, so we should be able to represent our chapter well, and show our support for Christi Olsen as national President of ASWA.

Our chapter's premier event, our annual Public Relations Dinner and Educational Seminar, will be held November 17 at the Omaha Country Club. The flyer attached to this bulletin includes registration for the seminar as well as a way to reserve your spot for the Dinner. Please share this information with your coworkers and business associates that you think would be interested in attending either or both of these events. We have some great basket raffle items for our scholarship fundraiser, and room for more! Our featured Dinner speaker will be Krista Knicely Anderson, Miss Nebraska 2002. **Deadline to register for the dinner and/or seminar is November 10.**

If you would like to formally thank your employer for supporting your membership in ASWA, now is your chance. Terri Fuqua will be sending out Omaha Chapter website: <http://www.geocities.com/aswaomaha/>

thank-you letters to your employers if you so choose. You can list specific items to thank them for (payment of dues, meeting costs, time to attend the meetings, any other special ways they have contributed to our organization). Please contact Terri directly (tfuqua@fzacpa.com or 496-9100) with the contact information of your employer and any specifics. We will also have a sign-up sheet at the December meeting, with the letters to be sent out soon after that meeting.

We have an exciting month of events, so I hope all of you will be able to participate in some manner!

Kelly Martinson
President 2004-2005

November 2004 Meeting

Dinner: November 17, 2004
Time: 5:00 to 6:00 Cocktails
6:00 Dinner and speaker

Cost: \$35.00 per person
Location: Omaha Country Club
6900 Country Club Drive
Omaha, NE 68152

Speaker: Krista Knicely Anderson
Reservations: Please mail to Virginia Klug at Omaha Country Club by November 10, 2004

**Note: If you register to attend, but are then unable to make it you will be billed for the cost of the meal.

October Speaker Recap

For our September Membership Drive and Student Night meeting, we enjoyed an lunch with Tony Sorentino Silverstone Group. The topic was “Health Savings Accounts” and Mr. Sorentino presented the There were many questions regarding what is a qualified medical expense and if the health savings accounts are to-good-to be true.

DONATIONS FOR THE OMAHA FOOD BANK

A big thanks goes out to everyone who donated to the Omaha Food Bank. Linda Aust took 72 pounds of food and \$112 to the food bank. Donald Schinzel, President of the Omaha Food Bank sent a letter thanking all the ASWA members for their generosity.

Gift Wrapping in December for Special Olympics at the Westroads Mall.

Our next community event involves wrapping gifts at the Westroads Mall to benefit Nebraska Special Olympics. I have been in touch with this year's coordinator and have agreed that ASWA will again provide the volunteers to work on **Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, December 14 - 16 from 7pm to 9pm. You can work one hour or both hours.** Because the next meeting is the Public Relations dinner and not a regular meeting, please get in touch with Linda Aust at 392-2222 or laust@thinksacco.com. We need plenty of volunteers and some alternates to fill

in if someone has a last minute change of plans.

Article

Amy Derksen from Accountemps submitted the following article.

Hosting the Holiday Office Party – The Right Way

With the holidays just around the corner, are your employees looking forward to the tradition of the year-end holiday office party, or looking for ways to avoid it? According to a Robert Half International Survey, 64 percent of executives polled believe that this tradition has lost favor among employees.

For some accounting professionals, increased pressures and heavier workloads may have left them feeling less festive. For others, it may be that the office party has become just another obligation they feel compelled to squeeze into already hectic holiday schedules.

However, companies should use the holiday party as an opportunity to build camaraderie and reinforce team spirit. These events can include a formal recognition program during which top performers are publicly praised and rewarded.

The following suggestions will help increase the fun factor at your next business event:

- **Make it accessible.** Don't schedule the celebration for a day or time when your finance team may be facing a high-pressure

deadline. Be sure it's easy for people to respond to the invitation, whether by e-mail, voice mail or through your company's intranet. For off-site parties, consider providing transportation.

- **Set a light-hearted tone.** It's OK to have scheduled activities (such as a recognition program), but don't plan every minute of the event. Allow ample time for employees to mingle.
- **Recognize and inspire.** If the company executives choose to address the attendees, remember that with just a few words they can thank employees for their contributions, acknowledge their work on the recent compliance issues and motivate them to keep up the good work for the following year.

Become a Mentor

As the year progresses and we get new chapter members, it is important to welcome and meet new members. The best way to do this is to become a mentor. If anyone is interested in becoming a mentor for our new members, please contact Ruth Schneider at 964-1200 Ext. 203. This is a great way to meet our new members, answer their questions, help them get connected; not to mention get more involved in our chapter activities!

Basket Raffle

The public relations dinner is going to be here before we know it. In order to be listed in the program as a donor, we must receive donations by November

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5th. Donations can be sent to Jessica Ward or Keeley Lammers at 11837 Miracle Hills Drive. We will also arrange to pick up donations if you call either of us at 496-8800. **We would like to encourage all members to pre-sell raffle tickets for the basket raffle. Tickets are \$1 each or 6 tickets for \$5. Call either Jessica or Keeley and we can make arrangements to get you some raffle tickets.** Our preliminary list of items includes tickets for the K.C. Chiefs/San Diego Chargers game, the Omaha Symphony, and the Omaha playhouse. We have received gift certificates from Restaurants, Inc., Pasta Amore, Godfathers Pizza, and Absolute Serenity Day Spa. We also have baskets with products from Tastefully Simple, PartyLite Candles, Godiva, Bath & Body Works, The Body Shop, Gloria Jeans, Le Gourmet Chef, Yankee Candle, Paul Mitchell, and many promotional items and treats from various local businesses. A tracking sheet is attached for those members who pre-sell tickets.

Board of Directors Meeting Highlights

At our last board meeting on October 13, we made some decisions that I wanted to pass on to our members. We have some standing rules in our handbook regarding guests that state:

Guests may attend two stated meetings during the year
Guests need not be qualified for membership to attend any function
There are no restrictions on guest attendance at seminars, social functions, or work projects.

We will be following these guidelines, and therefore strongly encouraging guests to join our chapter as regular

members, especially after they've attended two meetings as guests.

The other item that was voted in effective for the December meeting is that guest meal costs will be \$1.50 higher than the regular member costs. This has been in place in past years, and is also meant to be an incentive to become a regular member.

Please keep these items in mind in the future with any guests you might invite. We want to encourage full participation in our chapter, and feel that full membership really gives the best opportunity for that.

As a reminder, we also decided to form an ad-hoc committee to look at establishing a scholarship program for non-traditional students. We already have two volunteers, and room for more, so please contact Kelly Martinson if interested in joining this committee.