



*Los
Angeles
Affiliate*

FALL 2006
VOLUME 3 ISSUE 2

Message from Sue Richman, President

Our 2006-2007 year is off to a great start! Our affiliate received the Star Affiliate Award at the National Conference for our combined efforts in reviving the Los Angeles Affiliate. I'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to the process, from answering our survey last year, to attending meetings, and especially the Board's participation and involvement!

We had a great October meeting at Bamboo Cuisine Restaurant in Sherman Oaks. Our speaker was Mark Swedelson of Goldberg, Swedelson & Associates, a pension administration firm. Mark talked about his experience and provided various tips on pension plans and 401(K) changes affecting employees and business owners.

The November Audit and Accounting Update Meeting on the 15th at the Olympic Collection was a joint meeting with ASWA, CA Society Members in Industry and IMA. Mark Dauberman returned to present an interesting and timely update.

This newsletter has a lot more information that we would like to share with you.

Look forward to seeing all of you at an upcoming event!

Sue Richman, CPA

HOLIDAY PARTY TIME ~ WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2006

**Join us for a Fun Evening with your AWSCPA Friends
At The Home of Irene Perer**

Conveniently located off the 405 between the Getty and Skirball

Bring a friend or two! We're trying to increase networking opportunities for our members, so consider inviting not only other women CPAs, but also attorneys, financial planners, or other women professionals

**Irene at iperer@aol.com
Sue at sue@rdgroup.biz**

MONTHLY LUNCH MEETINGS

Would you like an opportunity to meet and network with members and friends of AWSCPA – Los Angeles Affiliate in your area? Or just a chance to get out of the office? Come to a lunch group meeting:

- The Westside lunch group meets at noon, on the first Friday of the month at Sisley Italian Restaurant located inside the Westside Pavilion at 10800 W. Pico Blvd on the 1st floor. For more information e-mail Louise at: lteeter@adelphia.net or call (310) 823-2234.
- The Valley Lunch group meets on the third Tuesday of the month at noon. The meetings alternate between Cha Cha Cha's in Tarzana and another restaurant in Sherman Oaks (this restaurant varies). For more information e-mail Carolyn Fox: CarolynFox@gmail.com

These locations not too convenient? How about forming your own lunch group meeting in your area, in downtown Los Angeles, Pasadena, South Bay or West Valley? If you are interested in starting a group meeting, contact Louise Teeter or Sue Richman for details.



AWSCPA is rolling out a New Membership Campaign with incentives for recruiting new members:

For every new member you enlist, we will send you a \$10 gift card from Barnes & Noble.

For each new member you recruit, your name will be entered in a drawing for a \$100 Spa Finder Gift Certificate.

Campaign runs from November 1 thru January 31. Every new member you refer gains you a gift card. There are no limits and no minimums. The AWSCPA staff will ask all new members where they heard about AWSCPA to help solicit recruiter names. Gift cards will be sent at the time of new member kit being sent. So starting recruiting your colleagues and friends.

If you have recruited a new member be sure to tell the AWSCPA National Office at info@awscpa.org

FOOTNOTES – AWSCPA LOS ANGELES AFFILIATE NEWSLETTER - PUBLISHED QUARTERLY
HAPPENINGS AND EVENTS

❖ **September 2006 Joint National Conference in Las Vegas**

The annual AWSCPA/ASWA Joint National Conference was held in Las Vegas September 18th to 20th. Our annual conferences have always been known for its high level of leadership and technical training, and this year was no exception. This years JNC offered up to 23 hours of continuing education opportunities with four concurrent tracks offering sessions on a variety of Tax, Accounting, Controllershship and Professional Development Topics.

Five members of the Los Angeles Affiliate attended the JNC this year, Barbara Guerra, Johanna Zimmerman, Louise Teeter, Irene Perer, and new member Kristine Stromeyer.

This year the JNC was honored to have Selvi Stanislaus, the first woman Executive Director of the State of California Franchise Tax Board as our Keynote Speaker. Ms. Stanislaus talked about the FRB's approach to reducing the tax gap. At the Foundation Fundraising Gala Luncheon on Wednesday the raffle prizes were given out and the live auction raised money for the scholarship funds of both AWSCPA and ASWA.

One of the best parts of attending the annual Joint National Conference is the opportunity to meet and network with many of the accounting professionals, exhibitors and sponsors from all over the country.

One really gets the feeling of belonging to our organization when you get to know people from across the country and year after year there is the opportunity to renew those friendships and catch up on what is happening.

The JNC is not all serious education sessions; we had a lot of fun too. A group of AWSCPA members attended a production of Menopause the Musical. Now that was FUN we can all relate to. Several AWSCPA members got up on stage and took part the in finale, past national presidents Linda Bergen and Marilyn Huset were right up there. Nightly different groups got together and tried out some of Las Vegas' excellent restaurants. Last but not the least whatever else happened in Vegas, stayed in Vegas!

by Louise Teeter

News from Your National Organization

AWSCPA 74th Annual Joint National Conference

Next year Joint National conference will be held on October 24-27, 2007 at the Disney Coronado Resort in Florida. The ASWA/AWSCPA 2007 Inspired Solutions Joint National Conference is the single largest forum dedicated solely to women in accounting and related fields. This Call for Presentations invites ASWA and AWSCPA members, industry associates and business professionals to submit a written summary of an educational seminar for presentation at this premier conference. We encourage you to attend this event and learn more about the AWSCPA and meet your other AWSCPA members from across the country!

For more information visit the AWSCPA website at www.awscpa.org



❖ STAR AFFILIATE AWARD for Los Angeles Affiliate

Affiliates are recognized for their accomplishments each year at the annual conference, and those accomplishments become an inspiration for other affiliates. Affiliates recognized as "Star Affiliates" receive a star to add to their banner each year.

Last year AWSCPA Los Angeles Affiliate was on the verge of disbanding due to lack of volunteers to become active board members. We made an appeal to our membership and four members stepped up and volunteered to serve on the 2006/2007 board of directors. These members are Irene Perer, Inna Littwin, Usha Murthy and Karen Ton.

At the 2006 JNC in Las Vegas, the AWSCPA National Organization presented a Star Affiliate Award to the Los Angeles Affiliate. This award was for perseverance and achievement in reorganizing the Affiliate and being able to recruit an active board to continue offering programs and services to the Los Angeles membership. Thank you to everyone who stepped forward and volunteered to join the board this year.

However, in order to continue offering members the services and programs through AWSCPA we need more your help. There are still openings on the AWSCPA board and we are now planning ahead for next year. Can you spare a couple of hours a month to keep our organization alive? Contact any of the current board members for details.

Continuing Education Courses:

Interested in learning more about financial planning for individuals?

Irene Smith, CPA and certified financial planner is offering informational sessions at no cost to you, in areas of financial planning, estate planning, living trusts and more. She offers 2 hours of free CPE every 4th Thursday of the month, from 8:00-10:00 a.m. For further information and to get on her mailing list, please call Irene at (818) 587-4223 or email at Irene.Smith@axa-advisors.com.

As you may or not be aware, **Mass Mutual is a Corporate Sponsor** of this organization and because of this sponsorship you have access to many things Mass Mutual has to offer. There are approved CE courses for you, such as the Business Killers (a program designed to help clients evaluate the risk and plan for the protection of their businesses), as well as some great seminars available to use with clients, many specifically designed for women. Mass Mutual is committed to helping empower women to educate themselves on all area of finance and planning.

Sometimes we overlook the opportunities in front of us with all the chaos around us. Take a moment to check out a couple of websites to see what Mass Mutual can do to help you grow and expand your business. They are here for you as members, take advantage of the opportunities. See www.halfapaycheck.com and www.disabilitycanhappen.org . For more information you can contact **Sharon Stark** at ssstark@massmutual.com or call her at (818) 510-1015. Sharon is available to hold any of these seminars and CE courses as needed.

AWSCPA – Los Angeles Affiliate Member News

From the desk of the Editor- The AWSCPA-Los Angeles Chapter will be reaching a new milestone next year. 25 years in the making! As a new Board member, this is music to my ears! I have to sit back and think, Where was I, 25 years ago? Sure, it makes me feel young, but to those members that made this dream happen, it was no walk in the park. Some excerpts from former board members....

Spotlighting Our Members Who Have Made a Difference – 1994 Woman CPA of the Year – Shirley Dahl Cheramy (from National Newsletter archives 2002)

The **Woman CPA of the Year Award** recognizes an AWSCPA member who has made outstanding contributions to the accounting profession. In 1994, **Shirley Dahl Cheramy** was recognized as our first **Woman CPA of the Year**. The award recognized her many accomplishments and efforts on behalf of women and the profession during her 24-year career in accounting.



In Shirley's words: "My participation in professional accounting organizations started with ASWA in Seattle in the early 1970's (when I first started working at Price Waterhouse). I served on various committees and eventually became President of the Seattle chapter. "When I received my CPA certificate in 1972, I received a letter of invitation to join **AWSCPA** (there were no local affiliates at that time) and I joined. The national joint annual meeting of the two organizations was held in Seattle in 1974 and I served as the Arrangements Chair for that meeting. It was at this time that I met several members of the national board of **AWSCPA** and became active with the organization shortly thereafter. I served on the national board in various capacities, including National President in 1982-83.

"I was actively involved in various leadership roles within Price Waterhouse during my time as a partner, including serving on various committees for the Senior Partner of the firm related to women's issues. Additionally, I was the first woman partner of any Big Eight firm to serve as the partner-in-charge of an office (**I was responsible for the Century City, California office of approximately 200 people**). **I credit my leadership roles within AWSCPA with giving me the experience and capability to assume leadership roles within Price Waterhouse and the accounting profession.**"

During Shirley's tenure as national president she was instrumental in the formation of the Los Angeles Affiliate of AWSCPA and one of five women who signed the original Los Angeles affiliate application. Jean Somerville and Karen Katzbeck of the Los Angeles Affiliate remember Shirley as a leader and pioneer in opening the doors for women in accounting. Shirley left the accounting profession in 1994 and retired to Jackson, Wyoming where she and her husband built their dream house. Shirley gave these words of advice at the acceptance of her award in 1994:

- ❖ "Be confident; undoubtedly you are better than you think you are."
- ❖ "Be flexible and creative; there are many ways to achieve success. You don't have to do it the same way some one else did."

❖ "Remember your responsibility to women who are coming up behind you."

In my interview with some of the founders and former Board members, here is what they had to say:

Q: The AWSCPA-Los Angeles Chapter will be 25 years strong in 2007? As a *member of this wonderful group, what are some of your memorable anecdotes, that you can share with us?

In Karen Katzbecks' words: I think that having wonderful role models in the early days helped me to find the courage and determination to strike out on my own and start my own business. Board members like Louise Teeter and Johanna Zimmerman were instrumental in keeping me sane and helping me through the first few years in Los Angeles. They were, and continue to be, my sounding boards for various tax matters that present themselves. I have the distinction of being the first woman ever elected to the Board of Governors of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan and served as chair of the Taxation Committee. Upon my return to the US, I found it challenging to find organizations that met my need to be involved in volunteer opportunities. The AWSCPA opened the door for me. Unlike being a staff accountant at Price Waterhouse where I could just walk down the hall to ask a tax question, as a sole practitioner I had my CCH service and the knowledge base of my friends from AWSCPA. I served on the AWSCPA board as Treasurer for many years and made many friends. In fact, just yesterday, I had lunch with Jean Sommerville, currently the Director of Finance at The Colburn School. I met Jean through AWSCPA ... I believe that she was one of the founding or at least early members. I truly believe that some of the friendships will last a lifetime.

In Corinne Pleger's words: I loved the Westside lunch group in the mid to late 80's. There were about 6-10 regulars and we were in manager or other higher-level positions and still had questions or problems or solutions or funny stories we could share. **I really valued that opportunity to share** (vent, moan, complain or praise). One story/problem that stands out was one of the women (a controller of a company) had her banking services canceled with no warning because the bank management did not like the industry of the company. This CFO figures she lost hundreds of thousands of dollars (a million? I don't remember) in the week it took her to get another bank to set up the credit card and other banking services. I also remember taking my son Evan to several of the Holiday Parties as he was growing up because the women wanted to see him and I could show him off. The group was there for me when I hit a career crisis and was searching for a direction. Talking with other members (in Industry, sole proprietors etc) and then sitting next to Nancy Brakensiek (a former President) at an AWSCPA dinner meeting provided me **with a change and the start of my current path.** When Lynne Leavitt (also a former President) and I merged with Nancy, we thought we might be the only all female owned firm at that time. We were for sure the only all-former AWSCPA Presidents owned firm!

Q. If you had the chance, what is the one thing from the *past*, which you would want to bring back to the AWSCPA in its *future*?

In Karen Katzbecks' words: In the early years, we seemed to have the time to get together monthly for meetings without enduring a long commute to get to the meetings. We also used to offer an all day Saturday event at the Lawry's corporate office and restaurant facility [no longer there] that included great speakers, CPE, a fashion show, lunch and lots of time to share ideas.

In Corinne Pleger's words: I really just want the organization to be there for its members – when we need advice, education, networking, or just another woman CPA to talk to. I think the organization is a great place for younger women/CPAs to get experience in organization management, team building and presentation skills. I learned how to run meetings, set agendas and do strategic planning while on the board.

Q. Where would you like to see the AWSCPA-Los Angeles Chapter in the next 25 years?

In Karen Katzbecks' words: The need to break through the glass ceiling is not nearly as great as it was 25 years ago. It seems to me that women in their 20's and 30's should be answering this question. I suspect that their needs are much different than those of us headed towards retirement. Fresh ideas are a must if this organization wants to continue to grow [or stop shrinking].

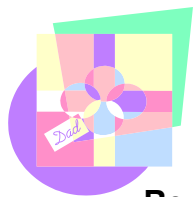
In Corinne Pleger's words: Still providing assistance to CPAs in furthering their careers and themselves.

**The AWSCPA – Los Angeles
Board of Directors
Officers for the Year 2006/2007:**

President:	Susan Richman , Susan Richman, CPA
First Vice President:	Open
Secretary:	Louise Teeter , Louise Teeter, CPA
Treasurer:	Inna Littwin , Rose, Synder & Jacobs LLP
VP Programs:	Irene Perer , Irene Perer, CPA
VP Public Relations:	Usha Murthy , Los Angeles Regional Foodbank
VP Member Services:	Karen Ton , PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

MAKING OPPORTUNITIES COUNT

The American Woman's Society of Certified Public Accountants (AWSCPA) is a national organization dedicated to serving all women CPAs. The AWSCPA provides a supportive environment and valuable resources for members to achieve their personal and professional goals through various opportunities including leadership, networking and education.



AWSCPA-LA Souvenirs and Gift Items

AWSCPA-LA cups and pins are available for purchase at our meetings or through the board members. Cups and pins are \$5 each.

Be sure to visit the AWSCPA website to see the new stock of Logo Merchandise available.

Visit the AWSCPA Virtual Mall and Logo Shop at www.awscpa.org

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Please submit items for publication to the newsletter editor, Usha Murthy at umurthy@lafoodbank.org. This NEWSLETTER is prepared for members and affiliates of AWSCPA. The articles and information in this publication are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual. All rights reserved. 2005.