

NEBRASKA CPA

ISSUE 3, 2022



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**RELATIONSHIPS
MATTER:**
BUILD CONNECTIONS
THROUGH YOUR SOCIETY

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STATE & LOCAL TAX
CONSIDERATIONS FOR
BUYING OR SELLING
A BUSINESS

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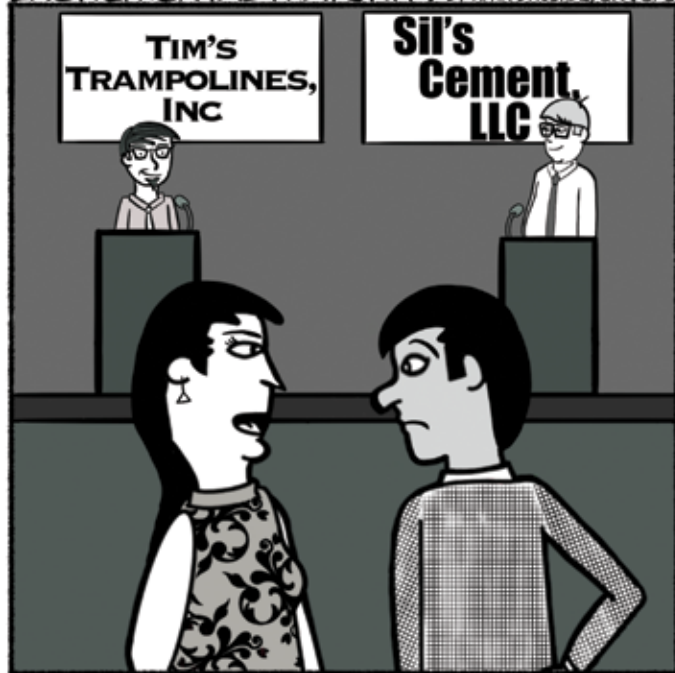
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We have been working with bankers, key partners, manufacturers, distributors, retailers and transportation companies to finance, produce and deliver better products and services to communities around the world. We have been working with family business pioneers and their other trusted advisors to transform, grow, carry on and transition the family business dream, the backbone of our great country.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY JONI SUNDQUIST, NEBRASKA SOCIETY OF CPAS



RELATIONSHIPS MATTER: BUILD CONNECTIONS THROUGH YOUR SOCIETY

If we've learned anything over the last couple of years of quarantine, isolation, and staying six feet apart, it's the importance of in-person interaction and personal relationships. While I am thankful that technology has allowed most of us to continue working, learning, and interacting, I am convinced of the intrinsic value of in-person, face-to-face communication—in building relationships, fostering engagement, encouraging collaboration, creating community, establishing trust, and inspiring creativity and innovation.

While technology certainly plays a critical role in business today, there simply is no replacement for connecting with others in person. Did you know that feeling connected and having a sense of belonging elevate feelings of positivity and self-worth, and thereby contribute to an increase in happiness? It's in our DNA—we are all wired to be in connection with others.

The Nebraska Society of CPAs has been helping you make those connections and build relationships for 94 years! From our State Senators' Reception & Dinner in January to our Two-Day Federal Tax Update in December, your Society is offering numerous in-person events and programs to bring all of us together once again in 2022. In April, we held our 4th Annual Business & Industry Conference in person, and in June, we brought you the Society's 26th Annual Not-for-Profit Conference and 41st Annual Nebraska Governmental Accounting & Auditing Conference—all at the

beautiful Hillcrest Country Club in Lincoln. Not only did we bring you a great group of speakers, but we also lucked out with three perfect days in June, which allowed us to enjoy lunch outside, soaking up the sun and fresh air between sessions while we reconnected with old friends and mingled with several first-time attendees.

Yet to come this year are a wide variety of in-person learning opportunities, including three more major conferences—two of which are brand-new, first-time events.

Women in Accounting Summit, Aug. 31



Kimberly Ellison-Taylor
Former AICPA Chairman

The Society's first-ever Women in Accounting Summit will be held Aug. 31 at the newly constructed Crete Carrier Riverview Lodge at Mahoney State Park in Ashland. (The Lodge sits on a stunning hill-top location overlooking the Platte River Valley.)

The Women in Accounting Summit will include sessions on leadership, management, and best practices to enhance the skills and potential of women leaders within the accounting and finance community. With the caliber of speakers we've lined up for this event—including former AICPA Chairman

“**People are the key in every firm, in every organization, in every profession. It’s time to make time in order to connect, or reconnect, with your colleagues and peers. What better way to do this than at a Society event.**”

Kimberly Ellison-Taylor, BPM’s Chief Transformation Officer Lindsay Stevenson, Altaba CEO Alexi Wellman, and Creighton’s Maggie Knight, among others—you are sure to leave the conference revitalized, inspired, and ready to take on the world!

Fall Conference & Annual Meeting, Oct. 27-28



Okorie Ramsey
AICPA Vice Chairman

The Society’s 22nd Annual Fall Conference & Annual Meeting will be back in person at the Embassy Suites Conference Center in La Vista, Oct. 27-28. Joining us for a look at the “State of the CPA Profession” will be AICPA Vice Chairman Okorie Ramsey, who will kick off the conference. The two-day agenda is jam-packed with hot-topic sessions on the economy, federal and state tax developments, an agricultural tax

update, fraud, workforce, auditing and accounting, data analytics, cloud-based data security, employment law, retirement plan audits, leadership, succession planning, and ethics. There will be something for everyone at the Society’s Fall Conference!

In addition, the Annual Meeting will be a celebration of leadership as Chairman Erica Parks passes the gavel to Chairman-Elect Lori Egger, and as we congratulate Foundation scholarship recipients,

welcome new CPA certificate holders, and present four special awards to honor Society members whose excellence and career accomplishments have been a driving force for positive change in the profession and in the state.

Talent Management Summit, Nov. 3



Jeremy Wortman
President, HRD Initiatives

The Great Resignation, the Big Quit, the Great Reshuffle—whatever you want to call it, COVID-19 allowed employees to rethink their careers, work-life balance, and long-term goals. The result is a tight labor market. Many employers are eager to hire yet can’t find workers to fill the roles.

What best practices should your organization have in place to attract and retain quality talent? Attend the Society’s first-ever Talent Management Summit featuring Jeremy Wortman of HRD Initiatives and put your learning into action! The summit will be held Nov. 3 at Shadow Ridge Country Club in Omaha.

Participants will be asked to complete a pre-session survey to see how your organization compares to others, and to identify areas of strength and weakness that can be targeted for action once you’re back at the office after the event. You’ll learn how to “connect the dots” between your investment in talent management activities and your organization’s revenue. Also on the agenda is retaining talent, where you’ll discover tactics to help keep your employees in place, as well as defining your culture, where you will assess and benchmark your organization’s employee value proposition. Building and leveraging talent, hiring quality talent with the use of science, and brainstorming action items to take back to your work are also on the summit agenda.

View the details and register today for any or all of these conferences at <https://bit.ly/NESCPA-Conferences>. You’ll find our other in-person events listed at <https://bit.ly/NESCPA-In-Person-Events>.

People are the key in every firm, in every organization, in every profession. It’s time to make time in order to connect, or reconnect, with your colleagues and peers. What better way to do this than at a Society event.

I look forward to seeing you, face to face, throughout the rest of the year! ◀



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CLARITY ON INCOME TAX REIMBURSEMENT FOR GRANTOR TRUSTS IN NEBRASKA

BY NATE PATTERSON & CRAIG BENSON, KOLEY JESSEN

In modern wealth transfer planning, strategies

involving the transfer of assets into irrevocable trusts are commonplace. Many of these irrevocable trusts are referred to as “intentionally defective grantor trusts” (IDGT) and are treated as “grantor trusts” for federal income tax purposes, requiring the grantor to pay all income taxes attributable to such trust despite having no access to the trust’s assets. However, for transfer tax purposes, the IDGT is treated as a separate taxpayer. This difference between income and transfer tax treatment has led the IDGT to be the wealth transfer planning vehicle of choice for many advisors.

The taxation of all trust income to the grantor is an extremely powerful wealth transfer planning tool, essentially allowing the grantor to make tax-free gifts to the trust each year of the taxes paid without the use of the grantor’s annual exclusion or lifetime exemption. However, during times of economic hardship or in tax years with an abnormally high tax bill (e.g., such as upon the sale of a closely held business interest at a premium), the income tax imposed on the grantor can present a tremendous cash flow burden. To deal with this issue, many practitioners seek to include a discretionary power allowing an independent trustee to reimburse

the grantor (or pay directly to the applicable taxing authority) for those income taxes attributable to the assets of the trust (known as Tax Reimbursement Power). A Tax Reimbursement Power does not reduce the amount of income tax due, but rather allows the trustee to shift the burden of paying the tax liability from the grantor to the trust.

Until recently, it remained unclear whether the inclusion of a Tax Reimbursement Power in the terms of a Nebraska trust caused inclusion in the grantor's gross estate following death. The risk of gross estate inclusion arises from operation of IRC § 2036(a) for transfers with a retained life estate because the grantor of the trust retains access to the trust's income through reimbursement distributions. The triggering of IRC § 2036(a) risks total inclusion of the trust's assets, regardless of the amount of income tax liability or distribution made to the grantor for any particular year.

In Revenue Ruling 2004-64, the IRS clarified that although a mandatory Tax Reimbursement Power causes gross estate inclusion, a discretionary Tax Reimbursement Power on its own does not. However, when paired with other factors, inclusion may still be a risk. These factors include, but are not limited to:

- an understanding or pre-existing arrangement between the grantor and trustee to make reimbursement distributions;
- a power retained by the grantor to remove the current trustee and appoint a successor trustee; and
- local law subjecting the trust assets to the claims of the grantor's creditors.

Pursuant to the Revenue Ruling, state law is also determinative on the gross estate inclusion issue. If, under applicable state law, the incorporation of a Tax Reimbursement Power causes the trust to be subject to the grantor's creditors, or to become "self-settled," then the mere insertion of a Tax Reimbursement Power in the trust causes gross estate inclusion following the grantor's death.

Koley Jessen, PC, LLO prepared the draft legislative language and testified before the Banking, Commerce, and Insurance Committee of the Nebraska Legislature in favor of LB 707, which clarifies under Nebraska law that a Tax Reimbursement Power on its own will not cause gross estate inclusion following a grantor's death in accordance with Revenue Ruling 2004-64. The Nebraska Legislature passed LB 707 on April 12, 2022, and the Governor signed the bill into law on April 20, 2022. The effective date of the new law is July 20, 2022.

LB 707 updates the Nebraska Uniform Trust Code (NUTC) to provide clarity necessary to use Tax Reimbursement Powers in Nebraska IDGTs without the risk of gross tax inclusion. The newly updated NUTC provides:

- A trustee's discretionary reimbursement power on its own will not subject the trust's assets to the claims of the grantor's creditors (NUTC § 30-3850(a)(2)(B));
- A trustee's discretionary reimbursement power on its own will not cause the grantor to be considered a beneficiary of the trust (NUTC § 30-3850(a)(2)(C)); and



The continued and repeated exercise of the power on a routine basis increases the risk of an IRS challenge, so the conservative trustee should show restraint and only exercise the power judiciously.

- Nebraska trustees have a discretionary reimbursement power, so long as that trustee is not considered a "related or subordinate party" to the grantor of the trust under the "grantor trust" rules of the Internal Revenue Code (NUTC § 30-3881(b)).

Nationally, 26-plus states have adopted similar legislation to provide clarity that the use of Tax Reimbursement Power alone will not cause gross estate inclusion.

It is important to note that the passage of LB 707 only provides advisers and trustees with the platform on which to potentially use a Tax Reimbursement Power. There are other factors to consider when deciding whether to include such a power and the form that power takes within the trust agreement. If drafted incorrectly, a Tax Reimbursement Power may still cause gross estate inclusion.

With that said, the passage of LB 707 is just one more step in modernizing the NUTC and provides advisers and trustees alike with one more tool in their toolbox to add flexibility and value to their wealth transfer planning clients. The advisability on whether a trustee should exercise the Tax Reimbursement Power is fact-specific and should only be determined on a case-by-case basis. The continued and repeated exercise of the power on a routine basis increases the risk of an IRS challenge, so the conservative trustee should show restraint and only exercise the power judiciously. ◀



Nate Patterson and Craig Benson are attorneys at Koley Jessen, focusing their practices on estate planning and administration, business succession planning, and tax. Patterson and Benson counsel business owners, families, and individuals, and work closely with CPAs in the structuring and implementation of plans to ensure wealth accumulation and protection for their clients through sophisticated tax minimization and mitigation techniques. For more information, contact them at nathan.patterson@koleyjessen.com and craig.benson@koleyjessen.com, respectively.



STATE & LOCAL TAX CONSIDERATIONS FOR BUYING OR SELLING A BUSINESS

BY NICK NIEMANN & MATT OTTEMANN, MCGRATH NORTH LAW FIRM

Buying or selling a business is one of the most significant business steps that business owners will take in their lifetime. In that process, many decisions must be made—often in a very short timeframe.

In our recently published guide, “How to Sell Your Company” (available at www.NebraskaStateTax.com), we address a variety of critical steps to be taken to sell a company.

An important area that should not be overlooked is the state and local tax and incentive impacts that come into play from buying or selling a business. Failure to consider or plan for these state and local tax and incentive impacts can have significant adverse effects.



Many incentive programs can be carried on by the buyer of a company and allow the buyer access to incentives for the buyer’s continuation of the business activities in a state.



Below we review some of the topics that all business buyers and sellers need to consider before they sign that final purchase agreement.

Potential Successor Liability

Many states, including Nebraska, have laws that can impose successor liability on the buyer of a business for sales, withholding, or income taxes that were not paid by the previous business owner. However, buyers often have the ability to request a tax clearance certificate from a state, which will assure the buyer that no unpaid taxes are due. Alternatively, if unpaid taxes are due, the state will provide that information to the buyer so the purchase price can be allocated accordingly.

Buyers should determine the states in which a business may have potential tax liabilities and then consider whether a tax clearance certificate should be requested from those states. This procedure can also help sellers, as they remain liable for unpaid taxes incurred during their ownership. Confirmation of any taxes owed—or that no taxes are due—can help bring finality for sellers.

Transfer of Incentive Projects

Many businesses have incentive projects from state and local governments based on their investment and employment in a state.

For example, Nebraska offered incentives from 2005-2020 under the Nebraska Advantage Act and now offers incentives under the Imagine Nebraska Act, as well as a variety of other programs. We've discussed some of these programs in more detail in previous articles.

Many incentive programs can be carried on by the buyer of a company and allow the buyer access to incentives for the buyer's continuation of the business activities in a state. However, those programs often have specific rules that must be followed for the project to be properly transferred to a buyer. In addition, both buyers and sellers need to be aware which of them may have potential liability for repaying incentives should ongoing requirements of an existing incentive project not be met.

Unplanned Nexus

The concept of “nexus” refers to a state's legal ability to impose tax on a company or individual. If a company or individual has “nexus” in a state, that means that such state can tax the company or individual.

Taxable nexus can be acquired in multiple ways, but the most typical is having physical presence in a state. Physical presence for companies means that the company has property or employees in that state. Taxable

nexus can also, through recent court decisions, be acquired by having an economic presence in a state.

One of the greatest changes in business over the past few years has been the rise of remote working arrangements. For many types of employees, companies are no longer limited to hiring people in their geographic footprint. They can hire anywhere and have those employees work remotely. But, this hiring arrangement may mean that such company now has taxable nexus in the state where the remote employee is located—based on the employee's physical presence in that state.

So, buyers should be sure they understand the locations where all employees work—including the seller's offices and remote employees—and the implications that the locations of those offices will have on state and local taxes. The alternative is an unexpected state tax liability.

Nebraska's Special Capital Gains Exclusion

This factor is important to business sales in Nebraska by Nebraska residents.

Nebraska's special capital gains exclusion lets owners of many Nebraska-based corporations avoid Nebraska income tax



For sales and use tax purposes, many states provide bulk sale exemptions for the sale, in one transaction, of the majority of assets used by one business.

on the sale of their corporate stock. The Legislature's goal in enacting the exclusion was to keep corporate shareholders from leaving Nebraska before the shareholders sold their corporate stock. Many owners of Nebraska-based corporations had been leaving Nebraska for non-income tax states to avoid paying Nebraska income tax on the capital gain from that sale.

There are a number of requirements that corporate shareholders must meet to qualify for the exclusion. Each individual may elect to claim the exclusion for one corporation in his or her lifetime. The shareholder must have acquired his or her shares while employed, or on account of employment, at a corporation with Nebraska operations. Another key requirement is that the corporation must have at least five shareholders at the time of first sale or exchange for which the election to claim the exclusion is made.

If possible, sellers of a corporation's stock will want to structure their sale transaction to take advantage of this exclusion. This generally takes planning to ensure all requirements for the exclusion are met.

Transfer Taxes on Sale of Assets

The decision to structure a transaction as the sale of stock (or LLC interests) or the sale of assets is a key decision, made for a number of factors. One factor not to be overlooked is the potential sales and use tax from the sale of assets.

For sales and use tax purposes, many states provide bulk sale exemptions for the sale, in one transaction, of the majority of assets used by one business. For example, Nebraska has such an exemption. However, some states, such as New York, have an extremely small exemption amount, which may lead to unexpected sales and use tax obligations for the buyer if the transaction is not properly structured.

In addition, some states impose transfer taxes on the value of qualifying assets sold as part of an acquisition. These transfer taxes may include real estate conveyance taxes, controlling interest transfer taxes, or other taxes that are attributable to a business acquisition. For example, Nebraska has a real estate transfer tax that may be applicable to the sale of real estate in a business acquisition.

Implications of a Changing Business Model

Many buyers purchase an existing business and intend to update its business model to better fit within the buyer's existing business or in an attempt to expand the existing business.

Business model innovations can have significant tax implications, including whether sales and use tax is due on the business transactions following the change and how income is apportioned between states (as apportionment methods often

vary based on the nature of the business being conducted).

Therefore, buyers should be sure they have considered the state and local tax implications from changing the business model of the existing business they are acquiring. Those buyers may now have to collect sales or use tax that the existing business was not required to collect. In addition, a buyer may have a very different income tax liability than the seller had. ◀



Nick Niemann and Matt Ottemann are partners with McGrath North Law Firm. As state and local tax and incentives attorneys, they collaborate with CPAs to help clients and companies evaluate, defend, and resolve tax matters and obtain various business expansion incentives. See their websites at www.NebraskaStateTax.com and www.NebraskaIncentives.com for more information. For a copy of their full publication, "A Guide on How to Sell Your Company" or their "Nebraska Business Expansion Decision Guide," visit their websites or contact them at (402) 341-3070 or at nniemann@mcgrathnorth.com or mottemann@mcgrathnorth.com, respectively.

2022 NESCPA COURSE CALENDAR

DATE	TYPE	EVENT TITLE	VENDOR	LOCATION	CPE/ ETHICS HOURS
JULY					
7/6	AA	Audits of Nebraska School Districts	Nebraska Society of CPAs	Ramada Midtown Conference Center, Grand Island	8
7/7	TX	Mergers & Acquisitions: A Complete Guide to Relevant Issues	Werner Rocca, Art Werner	Live Webcast	4
7/11	TX	A Practical Guide to Trust	Werner Rocca, Art Werner	Live Webcast	8
7/11-7/14	MA	AHI Staff Training - Level 1 - Basic Staff Training	AHI Associates	Live Webcast	24
7/14	AA	Advanced Audits of 401(k) Plans: Best Practices & Current Developments	Surgent	Live Webcast	8
7/15	AA	Audits of 401(k) Plans: New Developments & Critical Issues	Surgent	Live Webcast	8
7/18	IT	Microsoft Office 365: All the Things You Need to Know	K2 Enterprises	Live Webcast	8
7/19	AA	Next Generation Excel Reporting	K2 Enterprises	Live Webcast	8
7/19	TX	S Corporation Preparation, Basis Calculations & Distributions - Form 1120S Schedule K & K-1 Analysis	The Tax U, The Garvs LLC	Live Webcast	8
7/20	TX	Partnership Preparation, Basis Calculations & Distributions - Form 1065 Schedule K & K-1	The Tax U, The Garvs LLC	Live Webcast	8
7/26	TX	Social Security & Medicare: Planning for You & Your Clients	Surgent	Hampton Inn & Suites, Scottsbluff	8
7/27	TX	Securing a Comfortable Retirement	Surgent	Hampton Inn & Suites, Scottsbluff	4
7/27	ET	Ethical Considerations for CPAs	Surgent	Hampton Inn & Suites, Scottsbluff	4/4
7/27	IT	Excel Charting & Visualizations	K2 Enterprises	Live Webcast	4
7/27	IT	Hands-On With QuickBooks Online Accountant for Public Accounting	K2 Enterprises	Live Webcast	4
7/28	AA	Implementing Internal Controls in QuickBooks Environments	K2 Enterprises	Live Webcast	4
7/28	IT	Improving Productivity With Office 365 Cloud Applications	K2 Enterprises	Live Webcast	4
7/29	IT	Integrating Data for Improved Efficiency & Control	K2 Enterprises	Live Webcast	4
7/29	IT	Introduction to Excel Macros	K2 Enterprises	Live Webcast	4
AUGUST					
8/4	AA	How Accountants Create Value Via ESG	Intraprise TechKnowlogies LLC	Live Webcast	4
8/9	AA	Conquering the New Lease Standard	Real World Seminars, Co-sponsoring with Iowa Society of CPAs	Live Webcast	4
8/15	AA	Revenue Recognition: Mastering the New FASB Requirements	AICPA	Quarry Oaks, Ashland	8
8/16	AA	Leases: Mastering the New FASB Requirements	AICPA	Quarry Oaks, Ashland	8
8/17	Tax	Partnership Essentials & Reporting Basis	Van Der Aa Tax Ed LLC	Mahoney State Park, Ashland	8
8/18	Tax	S Corporation Essentials: Reporting Shareholder Basis and More	Van Der Aa Tax Ed LLC	Mahoney State Park, Ashland	8

8/19	Tax	Fiduciary Accounting and Tax Preparation for Estates	Van Der Aa Tax Ed LLC	Mahoney State Park, Ashland	8
8/23	CONF	Agriculture Conference	Iowa Society of CPAs	Live Webcast	8
8/29	Tax	Employee Stock Options	Surgent, Co-sponsoring with Iowa Society of CPAs	Live Webcast	2
8/29	MA	Annual Update for Controllers	AICPA	UNO Thompson Alumni Center, Omaha	8
8/30	AA	Governmental Accounting & Auditing Update	AICPA	UNO Thompson Alumni Center, Omaha	8
8/31	AA	1st Annual Women in Accounting Summit	Nebraska Society of CPAs	Crete Carrier Riverview Lodge at Mahoney State Park, Ashland	6
SEPTEMBER					
9/6-9/9	MA	AHI Staff Training - Level 1 - Basic Staff Training	AHI Associates	Live Webcast	24
9/16	TX	Estate Planning for 2022 & Beyond	Werner Rocca, Art Werner	Live Webcast	8
9/19-9/22	MA	AHI Staff Training - Level 2 - Semi-Senior	AHI Associates	Live Webcast	24
9/19	TX	Basis Calculations & Distributions for Pass-Through Entity Owners - Schedule K-1 Analysis	The Tax U, The Garvs LLC	Live Webcast	8
9/20	TX	Passive Activities & Rental Real Estate Income Tax Issues	The Tax U, The Garvs LLC	Live Webcast	8
9/21	Tax	Estate Tax Planning Options for Farmers	CLA	Live Webcast	4
9/28	FN	Current Developments & Best Practices for Today's CFOs & Controllers	Surgent	Live Webcast	8
9/29	TX	Traps & Pitfalls in Estate Planning	Werner Rocca, Art Werner	Live Webcast	8
OCTOBER					
10/2	MA	Management & Leadership Essentials	AHI Associates	Live Webcast	8
10/4	MA	Advanced Controller & CFO Skills	AICPA	UNO Thompson Alumni Center, Omaha	8
10/5	MA	Controller's Update: Today's Latest Trends	AICPA	UNO Thompson Alumni Center, Omaha	4
10/5	MA	Finance Business Partnering: The Changing Finance Function & Technology Impacts - NEW!	AICPA	UNO Thompson Alumni Center, Omaha	4
10/12	TX	Maximizing Your Social Security Benefits	Surgent	Live Webcast	4
10/12	ET	Ethical Considerations for CPAs	Surgent	Live Webcast	4/4
10/13	AA	Accounting, Audit & Attest Update for Practitioners With Small-Business Clients	Surgent	Live Webcast	8
10/18	TX	2022 Guide to Real Estate Tax Strategies	Larry Stein	Mahoney State Park, Ashland	8
10/19	TX	Pass-Through Entity Immersion Workshop	Larry Stein	Mahoney State Park, Ashland	8
10/20	TX	2022 Guide to Retirement, Income Tax & Estate Planning Strategies (Giving Your 60-Plus Client a Planning Check-up)	Larry Stein	Mahoney State Park, Ashland	8
10/24-10/27	MA	AHI Staff Training - Level 1 - Basic Staff Training	AHI Associates	Live Webcast	24
10/26	AA	Conquering the New Lease Standard	Real World Seminars, Co-sponsoring with Iowa Society of CPAs	Live Webcast	8

10/27-10/28	AA	22nd Annual Fall Conference & Annual Meeting	Nebraska Society of CPAs	Embassy Suites, La Vista	16
10/31	Tax	Social Security & Medicare: Planning for You & Your Clients	Surgent, Co-sponsoring with Iowa Society of CPAs	Live Webcast	8
10/31-11/3	MA	AHI Staff Training - Level 3 - Beginning In-Charge	AHI Associates	Live Webcast	24
NOVEMBER					
11/1	Tax	The Complete Trust Workshop	Surgent, Co-sponsoring with Iowa Society of CPAs	Live Webcast	8
11/1	AA	2022 Accounting & Auditing Update for the Real World	Real World Seminars	Quarry Oaks, Ashland	8
11/2	AA	2022 Preparation, Compilation & Review (SSARS) Update for the Local Firm	Real World Seminars	Quarry Oaks, Ashland	8
11/3	CONF	Talent Management Conference	Nebraska Society of CPAs	TBD	8
11/7	Tax	Key Tax Issues Facing Business & Industry	Van Der Aa Tax Ed LLC	Quarry Oaks, Ashland	8
11/8	Tax	It's Personal! Individual Tax Update 2022	Van Der Aa Tax Ed LLC	Quarry Oaks, Ashland	8
11/9	Tax	Year-End Tax Planning: Thinking Outside the Box	Van Der Aa Tax Ed LLC	Quarry Oaks, Ashland	8
11/11	TX	Federal Tax Update - Individual & Business - ONE DAY!	TaxSpeaker, Co-sponsoring with Iowa Society of CPAs	Live Webcast	8
11/14-11/17	MA	AHI Staff Training - Level 4 - Management & Leadership Essentials	AHI Associates	Live Webcast	24
11/17	TX	This Year's Best Income Tax, Estate Tax & Financial-Planning Ideas	Surgent	Live Webcast	8
11/18	TX	Estate & Life Planning Issues for the Middle-Income Client	Surgent	Live Webcast	8
DECEMBER					
12/1-12/2	TX	2022-2023 Two-Day Federal Tax Update - Individuals & Businesses	The Tax U, The Garvs LLC	Embassy Suites, La Vista, NE	16
12/7	Tax	Getting Ready for Busy Season: Key Changes Every Tax Practitioner Should Know	Surgent, Co-sponsoring with Iowa Society of CPAs	Live Webcast	4
12/12	Tax	Preparing Individual Tax Returns for New Staff & Para-Professionals	Surgent, Co-sponsoring with Iowa Society of CPAs	Live Webcast	8
12/12-12/15	MA	AHI Staff Training - Level 5 - Advanced Management & Leadership Essentials	AHI Associates	Live Webcast	16
12/12	AA	Nonprofit Accounting & Financial Reporting	Paul Koehler	Hillcrest Country Club, Lincoln	8
12/13	AA	Governmental Accounting & Auditing Update	Paul Koehler	Hillcrest Country Club, Lincoln	8
12/13	Tax	Tax Forms Boot Camp: LLCs, Partnerships & S Corporations	Surgent, Co-sponsoring with Iowa Society of CPAs	Live Webcast	8
12/14	Tax	"General Sales Tax & Nebraska Incentive Program"	Nebraska Department of Revenue	Mahoney State Park, Ashland	4
12/14	ET	Doing the Right Thing: Continuing to Refresh Your Ethical Foundation	Bryan Slone	Mahoney State Park, Ashland	4/4
12/15	TX	The Complete Guide to Payroll Taxes & 1099 Issues	Surgent	Live Webcast	8
12/19	Tax	2022 Federal Tax Update for Businesses & Individuals	Van Der Aa Tax Ed LLC	Quarry Oaks, Ashland	8
12/20	Tax	2022 Federal Tax Update for Businesses & Individuals	Van Der Aa Tax Ed LLC	Ramada Midtown Conference Center, Grand Island	8

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

STEVE LOFTIS HONORS UNCLE MAX ON A LONG, DIFFICULT TREK THROUGH THE DESERT

BY CINDY LANGE-KUBICK, LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR

Steve Loftis received a bachelor's degree in business with an accounting emphasis from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1978, followed by a master's degree in management from Doane University in Crete. He received his CPA certificate in 1979, working for Peat Marwick (now KPMG LLP) before moving into private industry. Loftis retired in 2012 as vice president, secretary, and CFO of Lester Electrical in Lincoln. He has been a member of the Nebraska Society of CPAs since 1985.

Steve Loftis set off with Uncle Max early Thursday morning.

The Lincoln man left his home on Jade Court at 5 a.m., wearing combat boots and camo and a weighted rucksack, the start of a 26.2-mile trek along south Lincoln trails in honor of Max Lockhart, the uncle he never knew.

A mile away, his neighbor and training buddy, Pat Driver, waited in the dark with a cowbell and a blast of '80s rock to send him on his way.

He was back on Jade Court at 10:46 a.m. with that bell, ringing Loftis home.

Six months of training and another Bataan Memorial Death March marathon in the books—this one virtual—in memory of Pfc. Max Lockhart, forever 23.

Loftis grew up in Tekamah, like his Uncle Max before him.

It was a patriotic town, the 69-year-old said. A proud American town.



Steve Loftis of Lincoln after the 2016 Bataan Memorial Death March in White Sands, N.M. The memorial march honors the thousands who died on the march to prisoner of war camps in the Philippines in April 1942. Loftis walks with his Uncle Max Lockhart's photo taped to the back of his heavy rucksack. Lockhart died in a POW camp.



One mile into the Bataan Memorial Death March in 2016. Steve Loftis trains for six months to prepare for the 26.2 mile march wearing combat boots and a 35-pound rucksack.

Loftis believed in serving, too. He joined the Air Force after high school. He became an Army helicopter pilot. He spent four years in active duty and served for more than three decades afterward, mostly in the Nebraska National Guard.

“The military has more to do with who I am than any other aspect of my life,” he said. “And as I developed my military understanding, Max became more of a question mark in my history. Who was he? How do I get to know him?”

The VFW in Tekamah is named for Lockhart and a pair of classmates who joined the Army and shipped out to the Philippines after basic training.

Three Nebraska soldiers out of more than 60,000 American and Filipino troops who were captured when the Japanese took the Bataan Peninsula on April 9, 1942.

The soldiers were forced to march through the jungle in the stifling heat to prison camps 65 miles away.

Many died on the days-long march, sickened by malaria, beaten by the Japanese, a torturous trek that would earn the title Bataan Death March.

Hundreds more—including Lockhart and his Tekamah classmates—died in Japanese POW camps.

Loftis heard about the memorial march at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico in the early '90s.

But he was busy then. Being a dad, working his civilian job as a comptroller, and serving in the guard as command chief warrant officer.

Then, in 2009, he retired from the military and three years later, he retired from his civilian job and put on a rucksack and started to train.

He'd long been a marathon runner. He helped start the Nebraska Guard involvement in the Lincoln Marathon and served as team captain the first two years.

He was naturally competitive. A guy who liked to push himself and his body.

And he knew a little about Lockhart, his mother's brother.

He knew Max came from a big family. He knew his loved ones called him Sam, although he didn't know why. He knew his uncle



Steve Loftis (left) with friend Dick Waller who accompanied him the last 12 miles of the 26.2-mile Bataan Memorial Death March virtual edition in 2021.

had played high school football. That he was strong. And he guessed that times were hard in Burt County when he enlisted in the Army.

“I’m suspecting he joined because there was no other way to make a living.”

Loftis spent the fall and winter of 2012 training for his first march.

He found a photograph in his aunt's family album. Max, the high school senior, smiling for the camera, his head tilted, wearing a white shirt and a polka-dot tie.

He digitized it, made a copy, pinned it to the back of his rucksack and set off for New Mexico.

He kept going back.

In 2019, shoulder surgery stopped him.

And in 2020, the pandemic canceled the march altogether.

Loftis competes in what's called the heavy military division of the march, making the 26.2-mile trek in full combat gear, carrying 35 pounds on his back.



Steve Loftis (left) and Pat Driver before the Bataan Memorial Death March in 2016. Loftis convinced his much-younger neighbor to take the challenge with him.

Training starts in October, six months before the early April event.

He's out the door at 5 a.m., wearing long, khaki pants, something on his head, gloves, combat boots.

He's getting his feet ready. Strengthening the muscles, building up calluses.

He starts with an empty pack and an eight-mile walk down Old Cheney Road.

He slowly builds. He adds miles and weight to the rucksack. Clothing and water bottles. Lead weights.

He cross-trains. Swimming, weightlifting, running. If it's icy, he heads to Madonna Proactive to work out inside.

He prefers the fresh air.

"Four or five hours on the treadmill is deadly," he says.

In 2014, Driver, his neighbor with the cowbell, started training with him.

"I remember thinking, 'You're walking a marathon? What's the big deal?'" Driver said. "Biggest understatement on the planet."

Eventually, they traveled to New Mexico together, competing in their age divisions. Sometimes winning them.

He understands the physical challenge of carrying that pack, trudging in those boots through the desert.

And he's in awe of his neighbor, a generation older.

"He's a testament to what a lifetime of physical fitness can do," Driver said. "And more than anything, he has conditioned his mind to overcome what his body says it can't do."

In 2019, when Loftis was sidelined by shoulder surgery, Driver went alone, Uncle Max on the back of his pack.

Last year, organizers offered a virtual version.

It was lonely those first miles, Loftis said.

A buddy from Madonna—77-year-old Dick Waller—joined Loftis for the final 12 miles.

His wife, Linda, was there to greet Loftis at the end of the march—a personal best time of 5 hours and 46 minutes in the relative ease of the Nebraska plains.

"I had the whole day ahead of me."

Uncle Max urges him on.

"Max always helps me through the last few miles in New Mexico because they are tough. We're a team, and knowing he and I are doing it together helps."

It's hard to explain, he says.

The same way it's hard to describe the memorial march.

The temperature in the desert. The pre-dawn cold, followed by oppressive heat. Relentless sun.

The terrain, most of it sand, sometimes deep. Steep inclines and treacherous downhills. Fierce winds.

The reason that thousands travel to the desert.

"After I did that first one in March 2013, that's when Bataan really embedded itself in my brain, and I could appreciate the role Max played in that event."

The march is just a piece of the three-day gathering in New Mexico. There are movies about the war and the death march. Question-and-answer sessions. Survivors from all over the country, fewer and fewer each year.

Loftis has met some of them.

"They could have been the last handful of people who ever knew my uncle."

It's a great history lesson, Loftis says.

"I'd like to see more people know about it. It's good for people to remember the sacrifices that people made so we could have the existence we have now."

Driver felt it, too.

On the morning of the march, there's a 30-minute pre-race sendoff.

The sun is rising, and the desert is still.

Soldiers are standing at attention. A Filipino delegation is there. American soldiers, too. Wounded warriors.

“

“I’d like to see more people know about it. It’s good for people to remember the sacrifices that people made so we could have the existence we have now.”

Young soldiers, veterans.

They start to call roll. Survivors. Those who perished.

He can see his friend and neighbor in the throng. Wearing his heavy pack with a black-and-white photo attached to the back, showing its wear after so many miles.

“He’s standing in front of me at attention, and he’s honoring his Uncle Max.” ◀

This article was originally published by Cindy Lange-Kubick in the Lincoln Journal Star on April 20, 2021, and updated May 25, 2021. The above version has been edited only to account for changes in time. Lange-Kubick is a former columnist for the Journal Star.



Max D. Lockhart of Tekamah who died in a Japanese POW camp in the Philippines in World War II. Steve Loftis wears his uncle's photo during the annual Bataan Memorial Death March in New Mexico.

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SUPERCARGE YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE WITH THE .CPA DOMAIN

BY CHRIS COMER, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, CPA.COM

Put a good idea in the hands of CPAs, and they'll find innovative ways to make it even better. That's exactly what's happening right now with the new .cpa web domain.

When .cpa was launched in fall of 2020, there were plenty of good reasons for firms to take notice. For starters, it's a practical way to enhance client trust. When clients see a firm with a .cpa domain, they know it's a firm they can trust rather than some questionable fly-by-night operation. That's because only individually licensed CPAs and licensed CPA firms can obtain a .cpa domain through a verification process managed by CPA.com, a subsidiary of the AICPA. There's also the issue of security: When firms adopt the .cpa domain, they're

better able to protect firm and client data from phishing and other security threats, since top-level domains like .cpa are more resistant to fraud than the less-regulated, more commonly used .com.

And then there are the brand benefits. When it comes to using the .cpa domain to support their brand and marketing strategies, firms have been steadily innovating and creating new opportunities and advantages that weren't immediately obvious. As a result, in only a short time the profession has seen a host of new domain strategies take flight—and they're just getting started.

If you're wondering whether your firm should make the move to a .cpa domain, here are some domain-based brand strategies (in

addition to the benefits of heightened security and trust) that your peers in the profession are already putting to work.

“Let's use this as an opportunity to rebrand.”

Rebranding is perhaps the most obvious opportunity presented by the .cpa domain. If your firm feels tethered to a name or web address that it had outgrown but couldn't find a better option in the overcrowded realm of .com domains, the .cpa domain allows the firm to start fresh. Stuck with JonesCPA.com even though Jones retired five years ago? This is a rare chance to get the website address that fits the firm's present and future ambitions.



“We need a shorter domain!”

As the internet matured, all the good domains were quickly snatched up. If you wanted to own the JonesCPA.com address, it was probably already held by some other Jones CPA, or by a squatter who bought it in the hopes of selling it at a higher price. This led to some very long domains that are virtually impossible for clients to remember. The .cpa domain offers the opportunity for firms to secure shorter, more memorable domains—a simple and effective boost to your brand and marketing efforts. That’s why Texas-based DWG CPA jumped at the opportunity to secure the DWG.cpa URL, which is easy for clients and prospects to remember and supports the firm’s branding efforts.

“Over 10 years ago, we secured dwgcpatx.com for our newly launched firm,” said Managing Director Darrell Groves, CPA, CGMA. “But as our firm grew and matured over the years, it became clear that our domain name was just too long and hard to remember. When we thought about the value of marketing our firm, and of having a shorter url, it didn’t take us long to decide we needed to make the move to a .cpa domain,” he said.

“Let’s target specific markets with our domain.”

Specialization continues to grow in importance as a tool for firms to distinguish themselves from the competition and tap into a deep well of clients. For example, some firms focus on serving the restaurant industry, or manufacturers. Others specialize in certain

types of services, such as taxes, SOC audits, or client accounting services (CAS), to name only a few. Some focus on segments such as startups. Some firms distinguish by geography and are looking to market themselves within specific towns, regions, or states. Many firms have already started to adopt domain names that reflect their specific niche, making it easier for clients to find them in online searches and reinforcing their commitment to specific markets. Acosta Tax & Advisory’s MiamiBeach.cpa is one example of this hyper-targeted strategy in action, helping the firm appear prominently in the online search results of prospective clients looking for a CPA in the area. Another is SOCAudit.cpa. Guess what they specialize in?

Firms can even heighten the impact of these URLs through a multiple domain strategy. By leveraging website redirects, they can advertise market-specific or geotargeted URLs that stand out from the competition and then redirect web browsers to a primary website. This strategy enables firms to have a primary website, such as Cromer.cpa, but also advertise with catchy, branded domains such as TaxGuru.cpa or BayArea.cpa, while not having to manage multiple websites. ◀

The .cpa domain hasn’t been available for very long, so right now is the best time to secure your firm’s top pick. It’s easy to do—just visit Domains.cpa. You’ll find all the details you need to inform your decision, including a whitepaper, case studies, and video interviews with leaders at firms that have already made the switch. In these short videos, these leaders share their tips and best practices for transitioning to a .cpa URL.



Members in the News

Two Nebraskans Receive Elijah Watt Sells Award

The American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) has announced the winners of the 2021 Elijah Watt Sells Award. To qualify, CPA candidates must obtain a cumulative average score above 95.50 across all four sections of the Uniform CPA Examination, pass all four sections on their first attempt, and have completed testing in 2021.

More than 72,000 individuals sat for the CPA Exam in 2021, with only 57 candidates meeting the criteria to receive the Elijah Watt Sells Award! Two of the 57 award winners are Creighton University graduates:



- **Colin M. Fitzgerald** (Nebraska), a graduate of Creighton University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Accounting and a Master of Accounting, is employed with Seim Johnson LLP in Elkhorn.
- **Scott Haveman** (Colorado), a graduate of Creighton University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Accounting and Finance and Master of Accounting, is employed with Deloitte in Dallas.



Both Fitzgerald and Haveman are graduates of the first accelerated Master of Accounting program at Creighton University—and were roommates as well.

“Passing the CPA Exam is a career milestone,” said AICPA Vice President, CPA Examination and Pipeline, Mike Decker. “Winning the Elijah Watt Sells Award is a very impressive accomplishment. We congratulate these candidates for their exceptional performance, with this honor that very few individuals achieve.”

The Elijah Watt Sells Award program was established by the AICPA in 1923 to recognize outstanding performance on the CPA Exam. Sells, one of the first CPAs in the U.S., was active in the establishment of the AICPA and played a key role advancing professional education within the profession. Read more at <https://bit.ly/ElijahWattSellsAward2021>.



Michael F. Berry has become a partner of O'Donnell Ficenec Wills & Ferdig LLP in Omaha. Berry graduated with a degree in accounting from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. His accounting background is in financial and performance auditing for clients in both the corporate and government arenas in addition to tax compliance and planning. In addition, Berry ran his own small business for 12 years, a landscaping company that he sold in 2011. He is a member of both the Nebraska Society of CPAs and the AICPA and volunteers as a board member and treasurer for ACLU Nebraska and on the finance committee for Nebraska Appleseed. He has also served on the Fontenelle Forest Board of Directors.



Ronald K. “Ron” Jester is serving as treasurer of the board for the Food Bank of Lincoln. He has been a member of the board since 2015, volunteering as treasurer for most of those years. Jester's public accounting career began in 1985; he's currently a partner at Labenz & Associates LLC in Lincoln. He holds a Master of Professional Accountancy from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and has also received the Certified Management Accountant (CMA) designation. Jester has served as president of the Nebraska chapter and treasurer of the North Central Regional Council of the Institute of Management Accountants and on the Isco Inc. Board of Directors. He previously served on the board of the Groundwater Foundation and on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln School of Accountancy Board of Trustees. In addition to the Food Bank of Lincoln, he presently serves on the board of the St. Paul United Methodist Church Foundation. Jester is a member of both the Nebraska Society of CPAs and the AICPA.



Anthony J. “Tony” Keller has become a partner of O'Donnell Ficenec Wills & Ferdig LLP (OFWF) in Omaha. Keller attended Wayne State College for two years before transferring to the University of Northern Iowa, where he graduated with honors. He started with OFWF in July 2000 and helps the firm's clients plan and understand tax and financial transactions to assist them in running and growing their businesses. Keller also has expertise in auditing, specifically governmental accounting and auditing. He is a member of both the Nebraska Society of CPAs and the AICPA.



Paul H. Koehler and his wife Mary Ann provided a \$1 million gift to the University of Nebraska Foundation to establish a permanently endowed fund for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Business. The endow-

ment will provide annual support to the college to make enhancements at Howard L. Hawks Hall. In recognition of their gift and longtime support of the college and its students, the College of Business named the vaulted, multistory entryway on the east side of Hawks Hall the Paul H. and Mary Ann Koehler Gallery during a dedication ceremony on May 26. (Pictured are Kathy Farrell, dean of UNL's College of Business, and Paul and Mary Ann Koehler as they prepare to cut the ribbon during the dedication ceremony.) The Koehlers have a history of funding scholarships at UNL, including establishing the Paul H. and Mary Ann Koehler Endowed Scholarship that provides annual financial support to students in the School of Accountancy who have an interest in financial accounting or auditing within the nonprofit or government sectors. They also created the Paul H. and Mary Ann Koehler Honors Academy Accounting Scholarship to support students who are studying accounting and have been admitted to the College of Business Honors Academy program. Read the full story at <https://bit.ly/KoehlerUNL>.



Megan M. McMurry has been appointed to the Salvation Army of Omaha Advisory Board. McMurry is senior vice president and relationship manager with Bridges Trust, where she serves on the financial planning team, investment management team, and executive committee. Prior to her role at Bridges Trust, McMurry was a financial adviser and wealth planning analyst at UBS Financial Services. She also spent nine years as a manager at Dana F. Cole & Co. McMurry earned a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Concordia University and a Master of Science in Accounting from the University of New Orleans. In addition to being a member of the Nebraska Society of CPAs and AICPA, McMurry is involved with the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women, Omaha Estate Planning Council, Omaha Venture Group, and Basset and Beagle Rescue of the Heartland.



Janet L. Saar has been promoted to chief financial officer of Borsheims. Saar started at Borsheims in 1997 as the controller and most recently served as controller and treasurer. She graduated from the University of South Dakota with a bachelor's degree in accounting. Before joining Borsheims, she was a CPA with Coopers & Lybrand LLP and held positions in internal audit at Mutual of Omaha.



Amy K. Shreck has been promoted to partner and is among the first class of newly promoted leaders within FORVIS, which has been created from the merger of BKD and DHG on June 1. Shreck is a member of the BKD National Public Sector Group

and BKD National Nonprofit Group and has more than 16 years of experience working with governmental entities, public power entities, nonprofits, and higher education institutions. She also leads the BKD Public Sector Center of Excellence. Shreck graduated with highest distinction from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a bachelor's degree in business administration and a Master of Professional Accountancy.



Leonard M. Sommer of Hancock & Dana, PC in Omaha is one of 14 new members of the University of Nebraska Medical Center Board of Counselors. The board—a group of 84 community and business leaders from Nebraska and beyond—advises UNMC Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold, MD in health care issues. Sommer has been assisting family-owned and closely held businesses and their owners for more than 40 years. He presently serves as a managing partner and shareholder of Hancock & Dana, where his expertise includes tax, business, and exit planning services. Sommer received a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is a member of both the Nebraska Society of CPAs and AICPA. Active in his community, Sommer has served on the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce Board, Roncalli Catholic High School Development Board, Susan G. Komen for the Cure Advisory Board, A Time to Heal Board, and Omaha Police Foundation Board. He has received numerous honors, including the UNO Distinguished Alumnus Award and the UNO Beta Alpha Psi Chapter Accounting Alumni Award.



State Senator **John P. Stinner** of Gering has received the 2022 Award for Public Service in Advocacy from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing in Washington, D.C. Each year, the National Council hosts the Advocacy Leadership Awards program to recognize select individuals who advocate for mental health and substance use treatment initiatives. Sen. Stinner received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and a Master of Arts in Economics from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He got his start in accounting at Peat Marwick (now KPMG) and is a retired banker. The senator has a long list of community and statewide involvement and has received numerous awards and honors for his dedicated service. You'll find his bio at <https://bit.ly/SenStinnerBio>.



Stefanie M. Wientjes has become a partner of O'Donnell Ficenec Wills & Ferdig LLP (OFWF) in Omaha. Wientjes graduated from Spring Hill College in Mobile, Ala., with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and the University of New Orleans with a Master of Accounting, Taxation Option. She joined OFWF in 2008 when she moved to Nebraska. Prior to joining OFWF, Wientjes pursued a career in both public accounting and the oil and gas industry. She specializes in tax planning and preparation of small to mid-sized business income tax returns and income tax reporting for related shareholders. In addition to her membership in the Nebraska Society of CPAs, she is a member of the AICPA and is a Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA).



Firms in the News

FORV/S

BKD and DHG have merged to become **FORVIS**, effective June 1. “FORVIS” is a combination of the words “FORward” and “VISion,” reflecting the firm’s focus on what is next. The new organization is a top 10 national professional services firm made up of more than 5,400 team members. Prior to the merger, BKD CPAs & Advisors ranked among the nation’s top 15 professional services firms and employed more than 3,400 professionals serving clients in all 50 states and myriad industries. With more than 2,000 people in 13 states, Dixon Hughes Goodman (DHG) ranked among the nation’s top 20 professional services firms, serving clients in all 50 states, as well as internationally.



Julie D. Bauman, CPA, PC of Falls City celebrated 20 years in business with an afternoon of family fun outside the JDB office on June 12. JDB is a full-service accounting firm licensed in Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, and Michigan.

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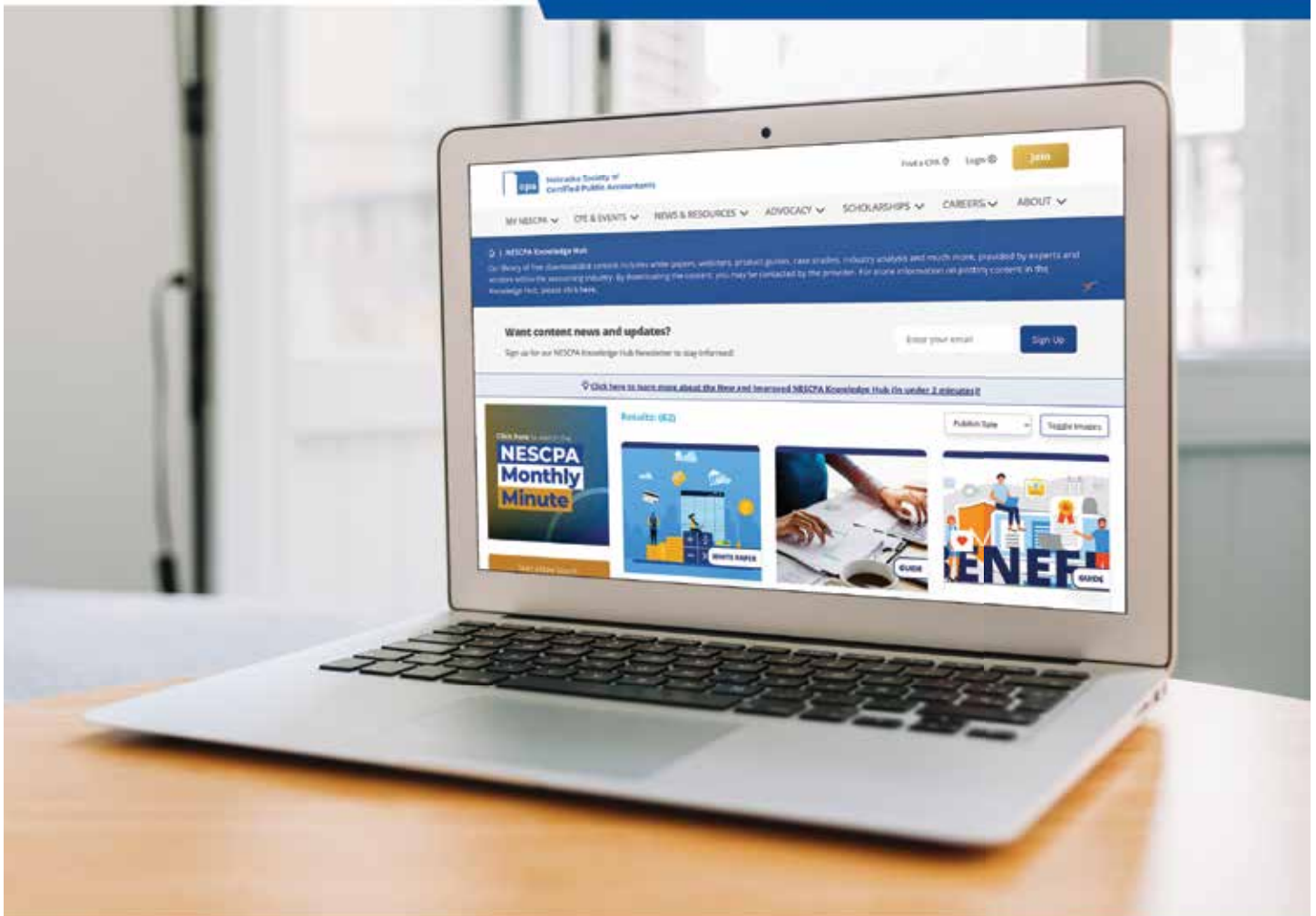
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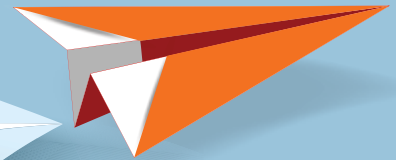
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Accounting Analyst

This position offers an optional hybrid work schedule, with three days working in the office and two days working remotely.

Are you a motivated accountant looking for growth opportunities and flexible scheduling to meet the demands of your busy life? Would you like to work in a dynamic corporate environment for a stable, publicly traded company? If so, consider a career as an **Accounting Analyst** for Great West Casualty Company!

Reporting to the Controller, the Accounting Analyst will use modern technology and analytical skills to ensure the complete and accurate recording of the general ledger. You'll have the autonomy to work independently while also having the support of the accounting team. In this position, you will have frequent interaction with our publicly traded parent company, Old Republic Insurance Group.

Responsibilities:

- Calculate and record activity for the general ledger.
- Maintain relations and coordination of banking activities.
- Administer various systems.
- Manage project work and analyze company financials to help make business decisions.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in Accounting or Finance.
- CPA certification required.
- Professional accounting work experience.
- Strong work ethic.
- Analytical prowess and penchant for problem solving.
- Good communication skills and an ability to influence.

Why work for us?

We offer you a challenging career with a competitive compensation and benefits package, including:

- Flexible schedules for a stable work-life balance.
- Company paid continuing education and monetary awards

for professional development.

- Paid time off for vacation, holidays, sick leave, leave of absence, and more.
- Opportunities to impact the organization through participation in committees.
- Support of healthy lifestyles through a wellness program and gym subsidies.

Who we are:

For over 65 years, Great West Casualty Company has provided premier insurance products and services to thousands of truck drivers and trucking companies across America. We have regional offices located around the country, and nearly 1,000 professionals are proud to call us an employer of choice. We are dedicated to the success, happiness, and wellness of our employees. If you are looking for a company where your contributions are valued, your continued learning is financially supported, and customer service is a priority, we want to talk to you. Apply today and join one of America's largest insurers of trucking companies as we help keep the nation's economy moving forward one mile at a time.

Location: South Sioux City, Nebraska

Great West Casualty Company is headquartered in a metro area that joins three states. Our corporate office is in South Sioux City, Nebraska, just across the Missouri River from Sioux City, Iowa, and North Sioux City, South Dakota, in a region nicknamed Siouxland. Recently selected as the 7th most livable small city in the U.S., Siouxland is home to more than 180,000 residents, offers affordable Midwest living, a vibrant downtown, a multitude of outdoor activities, live music, semi-pro sports, shopping, and more.

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Questions?

Contact DeeAnn Zimmerman at Great West Casualty Company at (402) 494-7726 or careers@gwccnet.com.

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COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS IN SELLING A PRACTICE

Selling an accounting practice is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for most practice owners. Because it is such a rare event, sellers need to be aware of some key misconceptions about the process.

MISCONCEPTION NO. 1: THE SELLER NEEDS TO STAY AROUND FOR YEARS TO ASSIST THE BUYER IN THE TRANSITION.

Experience with countless practice sales has shown us that a shorter transition is much more effective for both parties. For one, the buyer does not need the seller nearly as much as one would expect. In fact, the seller can be a hindrance to the transition if he or she sticks around for long after the buyer takes over the practice. It is commonly believed that the best scenario is for the seller to engage in extended and/or repeated meetings between the buyer and the clients. However, experienced buyers know that the tendency in such meetings is for the former owner and client to do all the talking and for the buyer to be an outsider. Similarly, if the seller stays around the office, clients will want to talk to the seller rather than to the new buyer. However, if the buyer meets the clients without the seller, there's a much better chance for the buyer to get to know the clients and to establish good relationships. The only way to completely avoid the issues of a long transition is to get the seller out of the office and preferably out of town.

Another reason the seller should not stay on for an extended transition may be a lack of sufficient work or money. In the typical sale of a small to medium-sized practice, the buyer usually wants to retain all staff. The buyer is energetic, hard-working, and fully capable of stepping into the shoes of the seller. This leaves nothing for the seller to do. Worse yet, there is no money to pay the seller for his or her work. Money that had gone solely to the seller in the past now must be used to pay the seller, pay the buyer, AND service the debt.

The seller has one big job and one little job. The big job is to quit. The little job is to notify the clients of his or her retirement and to introduce the new owner who is taking over the business. The former owner should endorse the new owner as a wonderful accountant with whom the clients will enjoy working and then leave the buyer alone to service them.

MISCONCEPTION NO. 2: THE BEST BUYER FOR AN ACCOUNTING PRACTICE IS ANOTHER ACCOUNTING FIRM.

While many accounting firms are willing to purchase another practice and often seek out such acquisitions, in many instances, an existing firm is not the ideal buyer of a practice. This is true for a couple of reasons. First, existing firms often do not have the time to take on another practice. In a typical sale, the seller is ready to retire. The buyer must be willing to assume the workload of an experienced owner as well as do all the extra things involved in a transition. A typical buying firm often does not have an individual available who can fill the shoes of the seller. This lack of time ties into the second reason why firms are sometimes not the best buyers for practices. Frequently, firms are only marginally motivated to buy a practice. Of course, all firms are motivated if a seller offers generous terms and agrees to continue working at a reduced rate of pay. Compare this to a potential buyer with several years of experience and someone who has dreamed of owning his or her own practice. That buyer brings to the table the willingness to devote much time and energy to taking over the workload and making the practice work. Such an individual is much more motivated than the typical firm buyer.

MISCONCEPTION NO. 3: THE AVERAGE SELLING PRICE FOR PRACTICES DETERMINES THE VALUE OF A SPECIFIC PRACTICE.

Practice owners often ask what practices are selling for; however, knowing the average selling price for accounting practices nationwide can be misleading. Assume that a person lives in Chicago and has a house to sell. Would that homeowner go to a real estate source and inquire as to the average selling price for houses in Chicago? Would he or she be interested in the average sales price per square foot for all houses in Chicago? This information would be useless. Averages such as this tell us nothing about the value of a specific house in its specific location. The same is true of accounting practices. While accountants might have the perception that practices sell for around one times annual gross, the reality is that in some locations such a price would be too high and in other locations too low. When considering the value of a practice, realize it has many unique characteristics including location, client mix, staffing, and profitability, among others. These specific qualities of a practice must be addressed to determine value, not averages.

MISCONCEPTION NO. 4: ACCOUNTING PRACTICES HAVE AN INTRINSIC VALUE THAT ALL POTENTIAL BUYERS RECOGNIZE AND AGREE UPON.

If one is selling a gallon of gasoline, this might be true. Most people need gasoline, purchase it regularly, and have a good idea of what it costs. This is not true of accounting practices. Many people in the world would not purchase a practice if it were offered to them for a dollar. A metropolitan area populated by millions might only have a couple hundred potential buyers for a particular practice. Other areas might be considerably less.

Suppose a specific practice has 100 interested, potential buyers. Would all these buyers agree to what the practice is worth? Of course not! They would not come close to agreement. If a practice is offered at a certain price, all potential buyers might step up to the plate with check in hand. On the other hand, the practice may be priced so only one or two would agree to purchase it. This is because buyers have very different ideas as to value and possess different degrees of motivation and interest. Sometimes a seller turns away a motivated and capable buyer because, for one reason or another, the seller decides the buyer is not quite perfect. His or her misconception is that a large number of buyers exist and that all buyers are equally motivated and equally willing to pay some known price. That misconception could be costly.

This same misconception comes into play when sellers think that the only trick is finding a buyer. Practice owners routinely say, "Oh, I have a buyer, or I have someone interested in buying my practice." The implication is that finding a buyer is the hard part. Their assumption is that all buyers are fully willing to pay the same price and terms. If an owner has a buyer, it is possible he or she has the one willing to pay the best price and terms, but that is highly improbable. It is just as likely that the seller may have found the one willing to pay the least. The object in selling a practice (unlike in selling gasoline) is to first locate all potential buyers for the practice and from that group determine the top 5% or 10% in terms of motivation and ability. It is from this group one must find the buyer if one is interested in finding the true value of the firm.

For more information, visit www.APS.net or contact Trent Holmes at Accounting Practice Sales at (800) 397-0249 or trent@aps.net.

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Certified Public Accountants

in Memoriam

Tommie D. Thompson

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