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President's Message 4

By Norman N. Okimoto

How Security Savvy is Your Firm?..... 6

By Jim Boomer

The Need for Tax Vigilance in 2017..... 8

By Tom Yamachika

2017 Annual Conference..... 9

Norman's Book Review..... 14

CPA Firm Microcomputer Technology... 16

By Ron Gouveia & Joy Takaesu

Y-CPA Buzz..... 17

Y-CPAs on the Road..... 18

Book Order Form 20

President's Message

By Norman N. Okimoto



Spotlight: Dr. John (Jack) Karbens

Raise your hand if you have participated in over 800 track meets, 70 Pentathlons, 70 [Pentathlon](#) Throwing Events, 60 [Decathlons](#), 35 [Scottish Games](#), completed 2 [Waikiki Rough Water swims](#), completed over 300 5k to 25k road races, 12 marathons, and at age 48 made 4 of 5 three-point shots in a half-time contest. If your hand is still raised, keep them raised if you have done a Sumo Pentathlon (where you toss 35-, 56-, 98-, 200-, and 300-pound weights) and taught accounting to over 15,000 students over the past 49 years! I sincerely believe the only person's hand still raised in Hawaii and the world is Dr. Jack Karbens. Dr. Karbens moved to Hawaii at age 21 to join KPMG as a junior auditor. He is currently the Associate Professor of Accounting and Finance at Hawaii Pacific University, and many current CPAs have taken at least one accounting class from him. I wanted to feature him in the first KALA of 2017 because he is an inspiration to me and numerous other people, and he will be retiring later this year in August.

First Impression

Greek God. Jack LaLanne. Jack Palance. Accounting Guru. One of a Kind. Mentor to Many. These are just some of the adjectives that come to my mind when I think of Dr. Karbens. In fact, a lasting memory of mine is while I was watching my son's high school baseball game at Kaiser High School one Sunday morning about five years ago, from a distance I saw a distinguished, tall and muscular

guy in white shorts and tank top practicing tossing a hammer! I couldn't believe anyone still did that at that age and was curious who that person was. After he was done he walked past the baseball field with his hammer and chain and to my surprise it was Dr. Karbens, full of sweat and greeting me with a firm handshake!

Passion For Accounting

When Executive Director Kathy Castillo and I interviewed Dr. Karbens, his passion for accounting was very obvious, and his face beamed with pride when he talked about the students he has mentored. In fact, he firmly believes everyone should take accounting, not necessarily to make it a career, but to learn about financial literacy and the importance of internal controls. For those of you doing sudoku and crossword puzzles to keep your mind active, he says put those things on the side and either do accounting for an entity or keep reading and learning about accounting. Accounting will challenge your mind much, much more! Dr. Karbens is a perfect example of this, as his mind is sharp as ever and his memory is amazing. If you want to know the history of accounting in Hawaii, ask Dr. Karbens! He credited his mom for getting him interested in accounting because he had to promise her he would take Principles of Accounting in his freshman year at Morton College so he

could have an employable skill.

Passion For Fitness

I couldn't believe he has participated in the number and variety of athletic events I mentioned earlier. At 75, he is still active in the Hawaii Masters Track Club, which he has been a member since 1971. He also still participates in organized athletic events and competes in Seniors and Masters athletic competitions. He has been a national masters pentathlon champion, competed with Brian Clay in his first decathlon, and sometimes races against the grandkids of people he competed against over 40 years ago, when local masters members compete against junior competitors.



When he retires his immediate goal is to get into peak physical condition by pumping iron and running. He plans to continue running and competing in athletic competitions. He told Kathy and me everyone's blood needs to circulate every 48 hours and the best way to do this is to push yourself and run using the Fartlek Technique. Walking is too easy on the body.

Fartlek Technique

The Fartlek Technique is when you intermix periods of fast running with periods of slower running, or for the beginner, mixing walking with jogging. Dr. Karbens will run the straight part of a track and jog the track curves for about the equivalent of about 2-3 miles. He does this multiple times in a week.



LIFE LESSONS

When asked what are the top life lessons he has learned over the years to hopefully help others be successful in the future, he came up with five lessons.

Have mentors for every phase of your life.

Everyone needs a mentor to help them be the best they can be. Dr. Karbens wants to acknowledge Ken Sumimoto, Howard Lowe, Ed Currie, Russell Taussig, Donald Corbin, and Warren Wee (who has helped him for 45 years) for being his mentors over time.

Have fun with what you are doing.

Dr. Karbens is living proof of this lesson. He has a zest for life and accounting and does his best to inspire others.

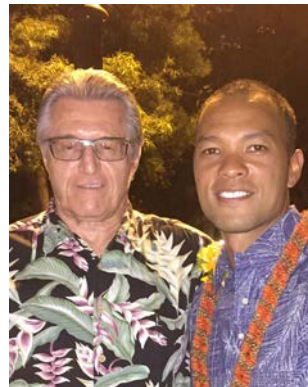
Work your tail off.

To achieve anything in life, you need to put in the time and work hard. One of Dr. Karbens' favorite sayings is, "Take on big challenges and never give up." He noted the foreign students, especially those from China, strive hard to obtain numerous professional credentials and learn as much as they can to be successful.

Have curiosity.

This trait is especially valuable for auditors. You must continually ask questions and leave no stones unturned. For

students, ask your professors and teaching assistants questions when you don't know or need clarification.



Work on your social skills.

Teamwork, networking, people skills, etc. are critical for anyone to be the best they can be and be successful, now and in the future.

Thank you, Dr. Karbens!

Despite his many athletic accomplish-

ments, Dr. Karbens is most proud of his three sons and two grandchildren. Dr. Karbens, you definitely are a once-in-a-generation type of person and I am truly thankful to have known you over the years through HSCPA, and to be able to call you a friend. You are a tireless and energetic advocate of all things accounting and being fit for life. You have made a lasting impression on the over 15,000 students you have taught, people you have met, and the athletes you have competed against. Two words come to my mind when I think of how you live your life – CARPE DIEM!!!

On behalf of the HSCPA, thank you very much for all your contributions and "Fair Winds & Following Seas" in all your future endeavors!

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How Security Savvy is Your Firm?

By Jim Boomer, CEO, Boomer Consulting, Inc.



Security continues to be a top priority for firms today. Clients trust CPAs with some of their most sensitive data and it's our responsibility to do everything possible to protect it. While most wish there was a magic bullet that would guarantee 100% security and keep the bad guys out, the reality of today's environment makes that notion unrealistic. The fact remains that even if we do everything possible to try to eliminate security risk we are only as strong as the savviness of our people.

Security Starts on the Front Lines

Whether it's securing a perimeter in a war zone or an accounting firm, the strength of defense is only as robust as the front lines. In your firm, the front line is your people who are handling sensitive client data on a daily basis. An informed and diligent workforce is your best protection against an attack.

Have you invested the proper amount of training to make sure they are prepared for that responsibility? Are they skeptical of suspicious looking links in emails? Do they report potential security issues as soon as they occur? Do they avoid over sharing on public sites and social media? If not, your firm needs to invest in security awareness training for your entire team. But where do you start?

Where to Start

The first step is determining where you are today. To do so, you probably need to bring in an outside party to perform a security assessment that includes penetration testing, social engineering and a complete review of your security infrastructure, as well as your team's knowledge.

Many of the firms we work with have had an assessment done in the last few years and the results have identified vulnerabilities that were previously blind spots. While some were the result of inadequate

technology, the majority were caused by the human factor.

Training the Front Lines

The only way to mitigate against the risks of uninformed and careless individuals is to provide them with ongoing security awareness training. Although programs may vary, here are some of the key characteristics you should keep in mind.

- **Include Everyone** – Security awareness training applies to everyone in the firm. Leadership should not be excluded. In fact, top level executives are some of the most vulnerable individuals. Criminals have become more sophisticated and regularly target those who have access to the most sensitive and valuable information.
- **Link it to Their Personal Lives** – Most, if not all, of the best practices apply to your employee's behavior in both their professional and personal lives. The more you can show how it impacts them individually through personal examples, the better it will stick.
- **Protect People from Themselves** – The more IT can do at the desktop level to not allow people to place themselves or the firm at risk, the better. Make it so people can't do the things that get us in trouble.
- **Make it an Ongoing Process** – Security awareness training is not a

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one-time event; it's an ongoing process. Make sure you are continually testing, training and reinforcing best practices.

- **Hold People Accountable** –Holding people accountable is the best way to reinforce desired behaviors and get individuals back on track if they forget or stray off course.

Risk-Based Approach

Gartner lists Adaptive Security Architecture in its Top 10 Strategic Technology Trends for 2016 and states, “Relying on perimeter defense and rule-based security is inadequate. IT leaders must focus on detecting and responding to threats, as well as more traditional blocking and

other measures to prevent attacks.” This indicates we need to think differently about security than we have in the past. Traditionally, organizations have spent the majority of the security budget on eliminating risk. In today's environment, you must balance your resources between proactive prevention and reactive response. In other words, we must view security from a risk management perspective rather than risk elimination.

Conclusion

If you are currently relying on technology alone to prevent cyber-attacks, you are likely exposing your firm and clients to unnecessary risk. Make sure you address the weakest link in most organizations – the people. Educating them on

the best practices and proper behaviors is the best way to protect yourself against the bad guys. At the same time, invest appropriate resources to prepare your firm to respond to a security event. Start the journey today to make your firm more security savvy.

Jim Boomer is the CEO at Boomer Consulting, Inc. He is also the director of the Boomer Technology Circles, The Producer Circle, The CIO Advantage and an expert on managing technology within an accounting firm. He also serves as a strategic planning and technology consultant and firm adviser to CPA firms across the country.

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TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

Hawaii's Watchdog on Taxes & Government

By Tom Yamachika, President –
Tax Foundation of Hawaii

The Need for Tax Vigilance in 2017



It's been over a month into the legislative session. The sheer number of bills related to tax or public finance

is staggering. It's much more frenetic this year than in any other year I've been in this position, and my sentiments are shared with some of the rules attorneys from the Department of Taxation who cover many of the same matters at the legislature as I do.

This year, there appear to be many different and creative approaches to public financing. For taxpayers, that means

that people are coming up with new ways for the government to get more out of your pocketbook. So, this is a year to be especially vigilant. Here are some examples of the tax bills moving through the system:

- The Honolulu rail surcharge extension bill is morphing into a strange and dangerous monster. One version of the bill now includes, in addition to a perpetual extension of the surcharge and an outright grab of part of the money to feed the Department of Transportation, a 12.5% increase in the general excise tax rate, from 4%

to 4.5%. That means the tax on Oahu would go up to 5%, and people would start seeing a tax of 5.263% on their store receipts.

- The teachers' bill for education funding includes a whopping surcharge in the real property tax for any property that is residential and is not the owner's primary home. For a property on Oahu just shy of \$1 million in value, for example, the tax due would go from \$3,500 to \$9,000. This bill can't go into effect without a constitutional amendment, so lawmakers may be tempted to let the measure pass and let the voters decide its fate.
- Another bill would quadruple the conveyance tax, which is charged whenever real property is bought and sold. Under that bill, the top rate goes from \$1.25 to \$5.00 per \$100 in price.
- There are several bills moving that would modify our individual income tax rates. Many would reinstate the 9%, 10%, and 11% rates that we just got rid of at the end of 2015. Some of these bills are tied to enhanced credits to provide poverty relief, but other bills just tinker with the rates. For some reason, the rates for corporations, estates, and trusts are all left alone, as is the 7.25% rate on capital gains for individuals.

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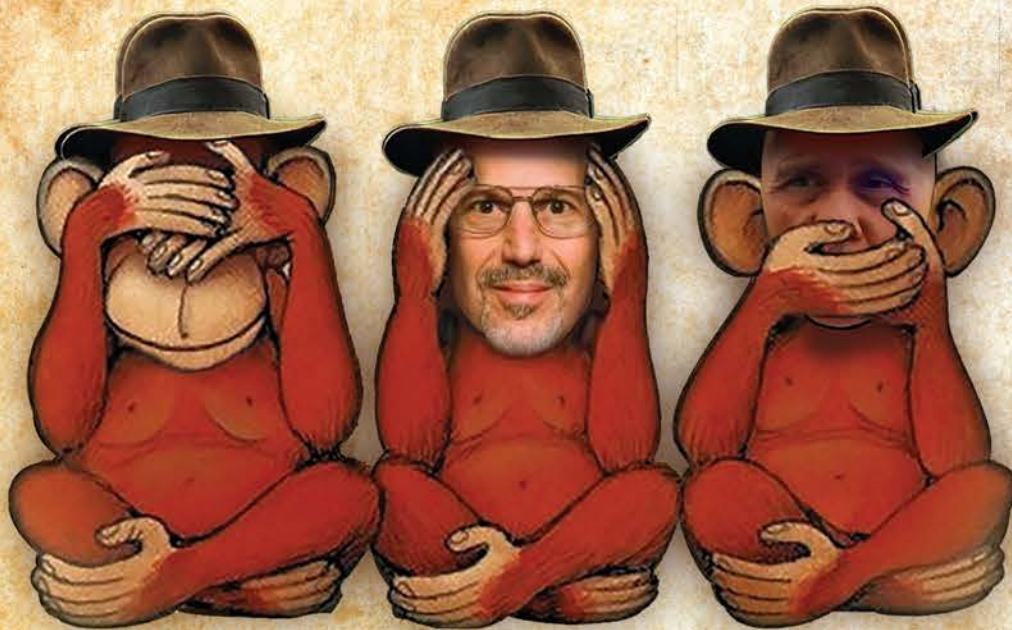
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Continued on page 18

HSCPA 57TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE



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CPAs continue to rank as one of the most highly trusted professionals – and we're very proud of that! Ethics in the accountancy profession are invaluable to accounting professionals and to those who rely on their services. A hallmark of the CPA profession is its commitment to a Code of Conduct which details responsibilities and compliance. The Code is what sets apart from other non-certified accountants. There is no compromise.

The 57th Annual Conference will encompass all that's ethical as we feature presentations on moral and business ethics. The opening update will be presented by **Mark Koziel**, Executive Vice President of Firm Services for the American Institute of CPAs. He will present the latest update on national and international issues facing today's CPA. Mark's presentation will look at macro trends, firm issues and the legislative, regulatory and standards that affect the profession.

To fulfill your mandatory CPE in ethics requirement, **Ron Heller**, Attorney/CPA with Torkildson Katz Moore Hetherington & Harris, will provide an update on the basic tenets of professional ethics, and explain recent changes in the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct and the Hawaii Administrative Rules on Professional Conduct. You will learn to identify, analyze and respond to conflicts of interest, how to apply independence rules in your practice, and key rules regarding client confidentiality. Ron will also cover recent Hawaii developments and tips to avoid malpractice claims or liability. This presentation will help you understand what ethical standards and considerations are critical to accounting professionals.

A special luncheon menu created by Chef Wong will please your palate! We're pleased to have **American Savings Bank** once again as our Corporate Lunch Sponsor. ASB has generously supported the HSCPA Annual Conference for the past 13 years! A special lunch presentation on cyber security issues with **Chris Duque**, CyberCrimes Investigator with the Department of Prosecuting Attorney's office, will captivate you. He will cover cybersafety/security risks involving social

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media and current cybercrime trends. Chris will provide tips on how to identify and report a crime, and most importantly, how not to become a victim of cybercrime.

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FEATURED SPEAKERS



Christopher Duque is a thirty-year veteran of the Honolulu Police Department and retired in February 2007. He is currently the CyberCrimes Investigator for the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney (Honolulu), and also continues to work in the private sector as a consultant. Chris's last assignment was in the HPD Criminal Investigation Division's White Collar Crime Unit where he specialized in cybercrime investigations and computer forensics. Detective Duque is considered and recognized as one of Hawaii's leading computer and Internet crime investigator. He was also HPD's lead computer forensics examiner and has worked on cases with nearly every law enforcement agency in Hawaii.



Ronald Heller, attorney and CPA, is a director of Torkildson Katz Moore Hetherington & Harris, a law corporation. Ron practices in the areas of taxation, tax litigation, business/commercial litigation (including CPA malpractice defense), and business law. He has served on the HSCPA Board since 1988 and was the Society's president for 1994-95. An active member of the Society, Ron also served as a member of the AICPA Council in 1994-96 and again in 2002-04, and served on the AICPA Accountant's Legal Liability Committee.



Mark Koziel, CPA, CGMA is Executive Vice President of Firm Services for the American Institute of CPAs. He leads the Private Companies Practice Section (PCPS), Firm Relationship Management, Small Firms, Diversity & Inclusion, Young Member Initiatives, Technical Hotline and Center for Plain English Accounting. His teams build and manage firm relations with all size firms, promoting awareness and value, including advocating for CPA firm success and ongoing relationships with public accounting influencers. Mark's team creates innovative programs and engagement strategies to engage a diverse pipeline of current and future CPAs.



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8:30 a.m. Annual Election / Membership Meeting

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American Institute of CPAs

Professional Ethics for Hawaii CPAs

Ronald Heller, Attorney & CPA
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Avoid Becoming a Cybercrime Victim

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What's
New?

Hawaii Tax Legislative Update



1 CPE
Credit hour

April 19, 2017
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Plaza Club - 20th Floor

Buffet lunch
from 11:30 a.m.
Program at
12:00 noon

What happened during the 2017 Legislative Session? Join us to hear which bills passed and the impact they will have on Hawaii taxpayers and businesses. Tom will provide an overview of the tax-related bills still alive at the Legislature. Topics of interest are the individual income tax, with the restoration of top rates of 9%, 10%, and 11% which were repealed at the end of 2015; the rail tax extension; fuel tax; and tax relief for the poor. Tom will also be able to present perspectives on some bills that did not make it through, and wound up on the cutting room floor.

Note: By the April 19th luncheon seminar, the legislature will still be in session, and conference committees will be meeting to consider bills. In addition, the Governor still may sign or veto them.

Speaker: Tom Yamachika, President - Tax Foundation of Hawaii

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Update on Hawaii Tax Measures • April 19, 2017 • Plaza Club

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Norman's Book Review

"The Heart Led Leader"

by Tommy Spaulding

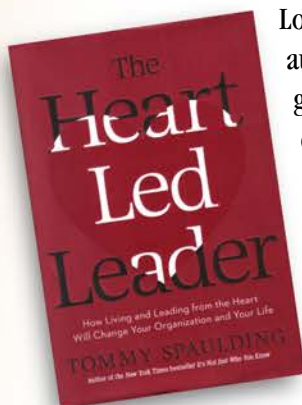
I don't know about you but there seems to be more negative news than ever before, and the "haters" of the world are not shy about sharing their opinions online. The Presidential election was very polarizing, and there seems to be a new controversy every day. With this backdrop, I wanted to start 2017 with a positive and inspiring leadership book.

My VP—Controller Wendy Cheung attended the AICPA Controllers Conference last October and raved about one of the speakers, Tommy Spaulding, a leadership guru. She gave me his book, which was amazing and contained heartwarming stories. The author convincingly shows how everyone can and should be a "heart led leader." If you lead with your heart, your life and your organization will be positively transformed forever. LOVE always wins. The following are some of my takeaways from the book. It is definitely a must read book!

18 Inches, Not 6 Inches

Most leadership books focus on the 6 inches between our ears, helping people develop the right mindset and intellect. The author feels the 18-inch journey from our head to our heart is often overlooked but is much more important. Especially in today's world, the "soft" or "people" skills are critical for sustained and above average success.

Grandfather's Toast



Looking back, the author noted his grandfather epitomized what a heart led leader should be. He was a small business owner and with his wife, they

raised four daughters and made every 14 of their grandchildren feel like the most special person in the world. Every Christmas he gave the same toast: "Never forget the three most important things in life – Family, Family and Family."

"Who" Not "What"

We live in a "what" driven society. For example, we ask kids what they want to be, what school they want to go to, etc. We ask others what they do for a living, what their job title is, etc. The author feels we should be focusing on "who" questions first, such as who am I, who do I love, who are my clients, etc. The answers to the "who" questions matter much more than the "what" questions.

Unconditional Love

"If I could take all of your pain from you, Tommy, I would." These are the words his mother whispered to him when he had an extremely painful injury as a five year old. It represents the purest form of

love, the unconditional love we give our kids. The author then asks the question, "How would our lives, organizations, and communities look if we responded to every person and every situation with our hearts rather than our heads?" His research shows "the most successful leaders are those who lead with love in their hearts."

"When you look up love in the dictionary, there is no asterisk next to the word saying, not applicable between 9 –5, Monday through Friday." (Steve Farber, friend and best selling author)

"Tell me whom you love and I will tell you who you are." (Arsene Houssaye, 19th century French novelist)

"I'm not defined by my medals and my accomplishments; I'm defined by the people who love me and those I love and serve in return." (Rod Dixon, New Zealand Olympian)

"Old School" Not Effective Today

Command and control, strategic thinking, bottom-line decision making, etc. are some of the "old school" traits which have been historically valued, but are not as effective today and accordingly are less common in the military and business. Instead, humility, transparency, selflessness, authenticity, vulnerability, etc. are more successful traits to have. "The people we lead, especially

the younger generation, value and gravitate toward leaders who care about who they are."

Servant or Self-Serving Leader Test

There is a simple test to see if a person is a servant leader or a self-serving one. The author calls it the "I/we ratio." Listen to the person speak and keep track of how many times he/she says I or we. A servant leader will use we much more than I, while a self-serving leader will be the opposite. The worst ratio the author has experienced was a Colorado politician whose "I/we ratio" was 67/3!

How Authentic Are You?

Do you know the names of all your employees? Do employees feel connected to you? Do people respect you as a person, not just your position? As the author notes, "respect begins with authenticity. When people respect a leader – the person, not the position – they enthusiastically follow – at home, at work, in the community."

Character

Without exception, a heart led leader strives to do the right thing all the time. He/she has impeccable character, which is "what you do when no one else is looking." The author shared the following excerpt from the "Cadet Prayer" that West Point students all learn, which captures the essence of character:

"Make us choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong, and never to be content with a half-truth when the whole can be won."

Leave A Heartprint

The author believes if we share our heart with others every day, we will leave behind a legacy or heartprint with others. He has also learned through his life experiences that "the best way to change the world is one life – one heartprint – at a time."

Author's Growth Formula

When asked about his insights on how to grow their business, he tells people:

"The formula isn't complicated. First you have to grow your relationships. And if you want to grow your relationships, you have to grow your heart. And if you want to grow your heart, you need to act from a place of love in everything you do and with everyone you meet."

Summary

This is an incredible book and definitely shows the benefits of being a heart led leader and the power of love. Some of the stories will move you to tears. You will see you never have to choose between love and results.

As the author notes at the end of the book, "you can't truly lead people without loving them too... people will always know the difference. Whatever the question, love is the answer."

*"It's not just who you know –
it's who you are."*
(Tommy Spaulding)

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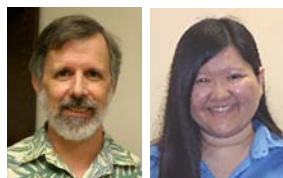
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CPA FIRM MICROCOMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

By Ron Gouveia CPA.CITP and Joy Takaesu of Carr, Gouveia + Associates, CPAs, Inc.



In September, Yahoo revealed the theft of 500 million records only to reveal in December a separate theft of one billion records. It also said that hackers were later able to get access to accounts without needing passwords after stealing the company's source code used to generate cookies.

The AICPA Cybersecurity Resource Center is available to the public on its website and brings together many of the resources available from the AICPA regarding cybersecurity. Anyone can get to this resource by entering the site name into google.

For those especially interested in protecting their system and data from being hacked see the article on penetration testing 7 Benefits of Cybersecurity Penetration Testing posted on the AICPA website. You can get to this article from

google by typing in the title. We have seen the benefits of doing shadow copies on servers several times a day. Systems hit by ransomware can be restored quickly from these shadow copies with only minimal loss of data.

We continue to see phishing emails of various kinds claiming to be an interested prospect, the IRS, a vendor, or someone you know. We continue to warn our staff not to click on links in any email without verification that the link is safe. We also use several layers of email filtering to screen incoming and outgoing email and yet some of the phishing attempts get through to our users. With the closure of McAfee's email filtering product we moved this filtering to Proofpoint Essentials from Proofpoint, Inc. We are also aware that malware can come from browsing infected web sites and that firewalls and anti-malware and virus protection together with training of staff to be careful of what websites to visit

especially when doing web searches is important. Anti-malware and virus protection software should provide an icon that tells you that a search result is safe to visit. These attacks can also involve the macOS. So users of Mac computers are not immune from these types of attacks.

Microsoft's Outlook.com Premium service has removed the 'preview' tag and Microsoft has moved it from public preview to general availability for U.S. users only. Outlook.com Premium gives users a personalized email address that can be shared among five people plus an ad-free inbox. The service currently costs \$19.95 per year, but is regularly \$49.95 per year, according to the service's web site. At the end of your first year, there will be an additional charge per year for your personalized email domain.

If you have any questions or comments call us at (808) 837-2507 or (808) 837-2517, or send email to ron@cga-cpa.com or joy@cga-cpa.com.

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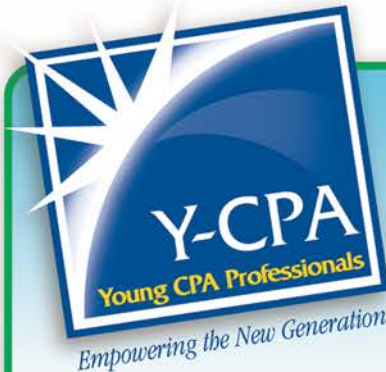
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In addition to Ethics CPE, the **HSCPA 57th Annual Conference on June 23rd** will a session on cybersecurity with Chris Duque, the CyberCrimes Investigator for the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney's Office. **Don't miss it!**



Y-CPa BUZZ!



Busy Season Tips

By Jill Ishimitsu

For many of us, we have spent much of the last two months printing 1099s, performing fieldwork, speaking with clients, chasing down information, preparing financial statements, filing tax returns, and reading accounting and tax guidance. There's been a constant flow of work coming in and your inbox is overflowing with files. You're working long hours but just can't seem to get ahead of your engagements. Your managers are getting cranky. You're tired and munching on chips, candy, or whatever else is in the lunch room and you're just feeling blah.

Let's face it ... it's busy season ... and we're right in the middle of it. Everyone has advice on how to survive the busy season. Here is my list of the top 5 tips I've received over the years that I've found most helpful:

Prioritize and Focus. Look at your workload and prioritize. Make a list of the tasks you need to complete. Break up complex jobs into smaller tasks. Sometimes it can be more motivating to complete 4 simple tasks and feel a bit of accomplishment. Then you can focus on a more complex matter. Eliminate your distractions. Check email a few times a day, not each time a message pops up. Silence your phone. It is not important to know each time your friend sends you a heart in TsumTsum or changes his status on Facebook. You don't need to see the trending topics on Twitter or the new recipe posted in Pinterest. Check it during your breaks. Yes, breaks – it is just as important to take breaks throughout the day to help you focus.

Know Your Limits and Communicate. We push ourselves to the max during busy season. We load our bodies with caffeine so we can work that extra hour or complete just one more tax return. We see our co-workers and supervisors grinding and don't want to be the first one to leave the office. We want to prove that we can do the job. But you are not helping anyone by completing 10 returns a day if your analysis is not complete and there are multiple mistakes. By rushing to turn in a job and receiving it right back with multiple review comments, you are only adding to your workload and that of your supervisors. You are more likely to burn out because your jobs are not getting off your desk while more jobs are being assigned. Burning out is not helpful to you, your family, or the firm. If you feel you are on the verge of burning out, speak up. Communicate your concerns to your supervisor. Often times when your stress level

increases, your work performance decreases. Your supervisor may already suspect you need help and can help you work smarter or can alleviate some of your workload.

Spend Time with Your Family. This should be Priority #1. If you ask what's most important to us, many of us will answer our family. Yet during busy season, our family tends to take a back seat to our clients and deadlines. That doesn't mean our family is no longer first priority. It just means that you've figured out a way to take care of them so you can focus on work. After all, work helps us support our families. Schedule time to spend with your family. Leave work earlier than normal one day a week and take your family out to dinner. Make it home in time to read to your kids. Plan a dinner (or lunch) date with your spouse. Not only will it make them feel loved and appreciated, but it will also remind you of why you work the crazy hours that you do.

Unwind – With long hours and tight deadlines, our job is stressful. Stress can lead to anxiety, depression, ulcers, and other illnesses. It is important that we unwind after a long day of work. Whether it's having a quiet evening reading a book, working out at the gym, or meeting your friends for drinks, even something simple as drinking a cup of coffee while reading the newspaper or watching a favorite TV show can help us relax and have a better night of sleep. We will be more rested and able to focus and think clearly the following morning.

Laugh and Have Fun – As Peter Margaritis mentioned in the November KALA, laughing can be a great stress reliever. It can do wonders for yourself and those around you. Happiness is infectious and accounting is fun! Remember why you decided to become an accountant, what you enjoy about accounting, why you enjoy working at your firm, and what goals you want to accomplish. Don't lose sight of that.

Hopefully these tips will not only help you survive the next few months, but will help you thrive. Busy season is an opportunity to showcase what you can do. Be smart, set boundaries, communicate, take care of yourself and your family, and we'll get through another successful busy season. Otherwise, break out a case of caffeine drinks and hot pockets.

Y-CPAs on the Road . . . VITA Service



Several Y-CPAs joined approximately 35 other volunteers and students on Saturday, February 11th from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Leeward Community College (LCC) computer labs to volunteer their time as tax preparers for the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance / Tax Counseling for the Elderly (VITA/TCE) program. Volunteers assisted over 60 individuals and families e-file their federal and state tax returns from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. when the site closed.

We worked in teams, with each team member reviewing the other's work, and each return was reviewed a second time by a third volunteer before the taxpayer signed.

The Hawaii VITA program runs through late March or early April, depending on the location, so you still have time to help! Although all volunteers must complete three online test modules covering standards of conduct and a basic knowledge exam, the IRS provides all the

knowledge and materials you will need online. Volunteer tax preparers do not sign the return and do not need to have a Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN). Volunteers are covered by the Volunteer Protection Act, which generally protects unpaid volunteers from liability for acts or omissions that occur while acting within the scope of their responsibilities at the time of the act or omission. If you are interested in volunteering, please visit www.hacbed.org/asset-building/vita-program for more information.

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Continued from page 8

- One bill would add hefty surcharges on traffic fines earmarked for law enforcement. The money is expected to go to law enforcement only, and wouldn't be available for K-12 education, natural resource conservation, homelessness, or anything else. It might not be called a tax, but the result will be more money from people's wallets going to the government. And then, our department of transportation is continuing its quest to jack up the fuel tax (this year they want six cents more per gallon of gasoline), the vehicle weight tax, and the vehicle registration fee. The latter two taxes would add \$65 or so to the annual registration cost of a small car . . . and that doesn't consider the county weight

tax and fees, which could get bumped up by county government.

- Last but not least, there is a substantial contingent of people who are so worried about Obamacare being repealed at the federal level that they want it written into Hawaii law. That would include an individual mandate, similar to the federal one, that is enforced through the Hawaii income tax system.

All of this goes to show that you probably want to be watching the legislature like a hawk this year. Remember, you won't be able to influence the result if you don't participate in the process.



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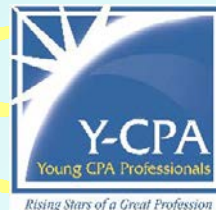
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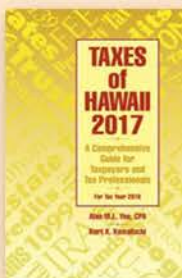
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