
MINNESOTA GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

MnGFOA NEWSLETTER

June 2005

Excellence and Leadership in Government Finance

www.mngfoa.org

Message from the President

By Tom Pepper

Those who've written these messages over the years can confirm that some months the message just doesn't show up on your mind's doorstep ... you have to go looking for it.

The first place I looked this time was St. Paul, but the legislators hadn't found what they were looking for yet either. The next place was our monthly lunch in Minneapolis, where we received a crisp, informative presentation by a clearly noble man, Jim Nobles, the Legislative Auditor. Even though (or maybe *because*) I was once an auditor, I just couldn't bring myself to write about auditing. Could you?

I decided to take my search to another area code, but wasn't sure which direction to travel. Which may explain how I ended up on Coruscant very late one night.

A couple weeks ago, my 16-year old daughter coaxed (read, suckered) me, just like she did six years ago, into taking her to the midnight opening of the new Star Wars movie. And around 2 a.m., somewhere on the planet Coruscant, amid a flurry of twirling light sabers and severed appendages, I found a message:

Things aren't always as they seem... (Pretty deep for that time of day.)

Darth Vader always seemed the epitome of evil and selfishness to me. But I never knew how Anakin Skywalker came to be Vader. It turns out Anakin gave his life over to the Dark Side purely to save his wife's life ... a selfless act of love. He wasn't really a bad guy. He'd probably admit it was a bad decision in hindsight, but he was trying to do good, trying to do the right thing.

There are people in this world and in my life whom I've viewed as difficult—I won't say evil—but sometimes I've thought they were bent on making life harder for me or others. As the years go by, evidence is mounting to the

contrary for me. People are just like you—trying to do good. Sometimes they make decisions we disagree with, or perhaps have some personal suffering they're enduring, but it's not their goal in life to make us miserable.

I'm thinking about people we work with, people employed in stores where we shop, people on the other end of the phone, people standing ahead of us in line, in-laws ☺, legislators, auditors, telemarketers, and even the people who control those metered on-ramps. Things aren't as they may seem. 99.9% of them are good people. I should think of them as such, and be kind ... that's the message.

No, there's not much in this message that is governmental or financial—you might be thinking "same planet, different world" about me. Maybe true, but I'd say we're all in this governmental, financial world together. Maybe "same world, different planet" fits better.

Whatever world you're in, whatever planet you're on, be kind to one another. It's a message I need to hear ... now I have to go re-think what I'm going to say tonight when the next telemarketer calls. ☺

June Meeting

Due to National GFOA Conference, there will not be a June program.

2005 Meeting Dates

Monthly Meetings:

July 20	August 17	(No Sept. Mtg.)
October 19	November 16	December 14

Annual Conferences:

GFOA	San Antonio, TX	June 26-29
MnGFOA	Alexandria, MN	September 21-23

Committee

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Executive Committee Update

At the May 18th meeting, the minutes of the April 20th meeting were approved. Highlights of those minutes include:

- Approval of the check registers and Treasurer's Report for April. Robin reported revenues and expenditures for the year have continued as expected
- The Executive Committee approved a contract with Government Training Service (GTS) to assist the MNGFOA in providing training events
- The Executive Committee awarded three \$1,000 Lilja Undergraduate Scholarships for 2005

Upcoming Events:

Golf Outing – July 14th at Baker National

Saints Game – August 11th at Midway Stadium

MNGFOA Logo Contest

You may have read in last month's newsletter that we're having a contest to redesign the MNGFOA's logo. The current logo was modeled after the one used by the National GFOA – a logo that has since changed. The contest is open to all members and the winner will receive a free conference registration at the Annual Conference. Members are free to select any design and color scheme they wish. Designs should be submitted by email to Chris Miller at: chris.miller@ci.roseville.mn.us, or by mail at the address noted on the back of this newsletter.

A rough sketch or rendition will suffice, but you're welcome to submit a more elaborate drawing if you like. The deadline is Friday, July 15, 2005. The winner will be notified by late August, and a new logo will be unveiled at the Annual Conference.

Meet Me in San Antonio

Many of you will be attending the National GFOA Conference in San Antonio later this month, and are making plans to meet your colleagues for various events and activities. Bonnie Burton has offered to compile a list of attendees along with which hotel they're staying at. If you'd like to let your colleagues know where you're staying, please forward that information to Bonnie at: bburton@ci.shorewood.mn.us, or give her a call at 952-474-3236.

Career Moves

Congratulations to Charlie Hansen for being named Finance Director for the City of Crystal, and Sue Iverson for being named Finance Director for Mahtomedi. Good luck Charlie and Sue!

Tee it Up



This year's golf outing will be on Thursday, July 14th at Baker National Golf Course, located at 2935 Parkview Drive, Medina. The registration form is available at www.mngfoa.org under 'Upcoming Events'. Please contact Ron Hedberg at the City of Cottage Grove at 651-458-2832 or Jim Eichten at MMKR & Company at 952-545-0424 for more information. Registration deadline is June 30th.

St. Paul Saints Tickets are Here



It's time once again for another fun and entertaining evening with the St. Paul Saints and your fellow MNGFOA members. The MNGFOA has 64 reserved seating tickets available for the Saints game on Thursday, August 11th at 7:05 p.m. If you are interested in joining your fellow colleagues at the Saints game, please fill out the enclosed form by Monday, August 1, 2005. Tickets will be mailed to you prior to the game. If you have any questions, please call Roxanne Matson, City of Roseville at (651) 792-7183.

Membership Survey – Episode II

Most of you probably remember that the MNGFOA conducted a Membership Survey last year to gauge your thoughts and feelings on how the MNGFOA can better serve the membership. The results of the survey were presented at the Annual Conference. Shortly thereafter, a Membership Services Task Force was created to review the results and submit recommendations to the Executive Committee on what changes we should make – which they did earlier this year. Now it's time to put those recommendations to action, but before we do, we need to refine the information we've gathered. The MNGFOA has partnered with Government Training Services (GTS) to create a supplemental survey that is specifically geared towards the themes expressed by the membership and the recommendations from the Task Force. This on-line survey will give us a better idea of how to structure our training programs and monthly meetings, and to identify the specific training needs of the membership. The survey was sent out on the MNGFOA Listserv to all members. But in case you missed it, you can also access the survey on the MNGFOA website at: www.mngfoa.org.

We hope everyone will take 5-10 minutes and complete the survey by June 10, 2005. We will use the results from this survey to determine what changes should be made. We anticipate implementing any changes beginning next January. Everyone that completes the survey will receive a personal promise from the Executive Committee that we won't make you take another survey . . . at least for a while. Seriously though, this is your chance to shape the MNGFOA for the future. Please consider what your participation could lead to.

MGFOA Budget Library

The MNGFOA needs current award winning budget documents to update our budget library. Please mail a copy of your budget document to Tom Kelly at White Bear Township, 1281 Hammond Road, White Bear, MN 55110. The budget library is available by request to members looking to improve their entities budget documents. To request the budget library or if you have other question please contact Tom Kelly at (651)-429-5827.

Comment on the MGFA

Last month we learned that an organization calling themselves the Minnesota Government Finance Authority (MGFA) sent correspondence to numerous cities and townships talking about a new financing program. Please be aware that the Minnesota Government Finance Officers Association (MNGFOA) is NOT affiliated with the MGFA, nor do we endorse any of its programs. We have contacted the MGFA and they will be changing their name to avoid any future confusion.

White Bear Township Receives Bond Rating Upgrade

Congratulations to Tom Kelly and White Bear Township for recently receiving a bond rating upgrade from Moody's. Citing the Township's steadily developing economy, historically well-managed finances, above average wealth levels, and a low level of rapidly retired debt, Moody's upgraded the Township from A1 to Aa3. Way to go Tom!



Scholarship Awards

At the May Executive Committee meeting, the Committee awarded two scholarships for the Advanced Government Finance Institute. The scholarship recipients were Brenda Davitt from the City of Roseville, and Fran Windschitl from Rice County. Brenda and Fran will participate in a week-long program that provides GFOA members an opportunity to enhance their leadership skills and focus on emerging trends within public finance. Congratulations Brenda and Fran!

Message from the Editor

As always, if you have any job openings, career moves, or any items of note, please forward them to me by the 20th of this month so I can put it in the next newsletter.

Thanks,

Chris Miller
City of Roseville
2660 Civic Center Drive
Roseville, MN 55113
651-792-7031
chris.miller@ci.roseville.mn.us

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2660 Civic Center Drive
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We will be grilling brats and burgers, and we'll have plenty of chips, cookies, etc. Pop and beer will be provided to quench your thirst. The cost is \$17.00, which includes one ticket, and all food and beverages. If you are interested in joining your fellow colleagues at the Saints game, please fill out the enclosed form and return to the address shown below by Monday, August 1, 2005. Tickets will be mailed to you prior to the game. If you have any questions, please call Roxanne Matson, City of Roseville at (651) 792-7183.

----- **ST. PAUL SAINTS REGISTRATION FORM** -----

Please send me _____ Saints tickets @ \$17.00 each.

Enclosed is a payment of \$_____ (Make checks payable to MNGFOA)

Name _____

Organization _____

Mailing Address _____

Please mail your registration form and payment to: Roxanne Matson, City of Roseville License Center, 2737 N Lexington Ave, Roseville, MN 55113

