



South Atlantic Area Advisory Council for Office Professionals Newsletter

Spring

2011

Meet Your Council Members

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COUNCIL SEEKING MEMBERS

Are you interested in making a difference? Do you like to help others? Wouldn't you like to make everyone's job a little easier while helping yourself? Would you like a greater sense of accomplishment? If you answered YES to ANY of the above questions, then the SAA Advisory Council for Office Professionals is for you.

The Council is currently looking to fill three (3) vacancies for the current year.

Appointments will be for a three (3) year term.

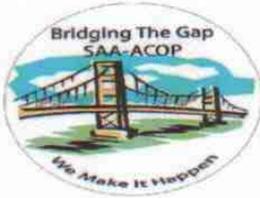
You must have a minimum of one (1) year work experience with ARS, and Currently be in the Job Series 303, 318 or 326.

The Council meets every month via conference call for approximately one hour and conducts an annual on-site meeting (date and location to be determined).

Supervisory approval will be required, if selected.

Submitted by: Jacquie McDonald

“Our vision is, to serve as a foundation to the South Atlantic Area Office Professionals, to enhance self-awareness, strengthen skills and provide leadership.”



Application for Membership
SAA Advisory Council for Office Professionals
(SAA ACOP)

Appointment to the SAA ACOP is for a three year term. Applicants must have a minimum of one year work experience with ARS and currently be in job series 303, 318, or 326.

The SAA ACOP meets every month via conference calls and an annual on-site meeting (date and location to be determined).

Submit completed form to: USDA, ARS, SAA Area Director's Office, ATTN: Melissa Harrell, 950 College Station Road, Athens, GA 30605

Name: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Fax #: _____

Supervisor: _____

Years of Federal Service: _____ Years with ARS: _____

Please describe the strengths you feel you can bring to the SAA ACOP (i.e., newsletter, website management, etc.):

Signature of Applicant

Date

Please note:

- Supervisory approval will be required, if selected.
- All applications will be kept on file for three years; new ACOP members may be selected from the pool of applications.
- New members will be notified of their selection by the Area Office.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL'S WEEK

APRIL 24-30

About Administrative Professionals Week

Since 1952, the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP) has honored office workers by sponsoring Administrative Professionals Week. Today, it is one of the largest workplace observances outside of employee birthdays and major holidays.

In the year 2000, IAAP announced a name change for Professional Secretaries Week and Professional Secretaries Day. The names were changed to Administrative Professionals Week and Administrative Professionals Day to keep pace with changing job titles and expanding responsibilities of today's administrative workforce.

Over the years, Administrative Professionals Week has become one of the largest workplace observances. The event is celebrated worldwide, bringing together millions of people for community events, educational seminars and individual corporate activities recognizing support staff.

Today, there are more than 4.1 million secretaries and administrative assistants working in the United States, according to U.S. Department of Labor statistics, and 8.9 million people working in various administrative support roles. More than 475,000 administrative professionals are employed in Canada. Millions more administrative professionals work in offices all over the world.

APW is always the last full week in April. In 2011, **Administrative Professionals Week is April 24-30** with Administrative Professionals Day on **Wednesday, April 27**.

Who Qualifies as an Administrative Professional?

Many people contribute to the workplace in a variety of settings. IAAP defines administrative professionals as "individuals who are responsible for administrative tasks and coordination of information in support of an office-related environment and who are dedicated to furthering their personal and professional growth in their chosen profession."

Research shows that many workers around the world still hold the "secretary" job title; however, many alternative titles have become more popular, such as administrative assistant, office coordinator, administrative specialist, executive assistant, and office manager.

What is the best way to celebrate Professionals Week?

According to IAAP members, administrative support personnel prefer observances that recognize and provide opportunities for learning and growth. Employers can facilitate professional development for admins by supporting:

- Tuition reimbursement to attend college classes and work toward a degree.
- Membership and participation in professional organizations.
- Reimbursement for online training programs in technology, administrative, and management skills.
- Registration for appropriate conferences, seminars, and continuing education workshops.
- Attainment of professional certification. IAAP's Certified Administrative Professional (CAP) or Certified Professional Secretary (CPS) programs are widely recognized standards of excellence.
- Supporting IAAP chapter events.

Additional gift suggestions include business-related items, such as personalized business cards, desktop name-plate, gift certificate, ergonomically correct accessories, computer hardware/software upgrade, or monetary bonus for exemplary performance.

Submitted by: Wanda Rohrer



NEW OFFICE AUTOMATION CLERK

COTTON QUALITY RESEARCH STATION CLEMSON, SC

Ms. Jane Gray has been placed into a Student Career Enhancement Program (SCEP) with the Cotton Quality Research Station in Clemson, SC. She serves as an Office Automation Clerk to the entire unit. Jane attends Tri-County Technical College in nearby Pendleton, SC and is pursuing a degree in Administrative Office Technology. Her previous work history includes 27 years of administration, finance and management in the community service non-profit sector. She first served as Fiscal Coordinator with the Head Start program and then as Project Manager of a WIA youth service program covering the tri-county area of upstate South Carolina.

Jane's passion is serving others and assisting them in achieving their personal goals in life. Her outside interests include inspirational and devotional reading, gardening, antiques, and love of animals.

Please welcome Jane to her new position with the Cotton Quality Research Station and to ARS!

Submitted by: Misty Stephens

Congratulations!

Hip Hip Hooray for Clemson

Seven employees at the Cotton Quality Research Station, Clemson, SC, have lost a total of 170 lbs. since January 1. This is an average start date since some started in November and some started after the New Year..

Keep up the good work !!!!!

Submitted by: Misty Stephens





TRAINING



The SAA Advisory Council would like to express our sincere thanks to everyone who participated on the Agreement Webinar on February 24th. Hopefully you came away knowing more than you did before you attended. A special thanks to Sharon Jett and Jan Moreno for presenting the materials on behalf of the Council. We are hopeful that this will be the first of many trainings the Council can offer. If you would like a training on any topic in particular, please notify any Council member for consideration. The Council is here to assist in making your job easier.

Also, the Council has several resources available on their website:

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=21098>

Some Items include: 2011 Task Calendar
 Travel Card Do's & Don'ts
 Presentations from the NACOP Workshop
 Powerpoint of the Agreement Training
 Screen Shots for entering an Agreement
 Screen Shots for obtaining E-Green documents
 FMMI Vendor form

Submitted by: Jacquie McDonald

INTERESTING!!!!

The words 'racecar,'



'kayak'



and

'level'



are the same whether they are read left to

right or right to left (palindromes).

There are only four words in the English language which end in 'dous': tremendous, horrendous, stupendous, and hazardous.

There are two words in the English language that have all five vowels in order: 'abstemious' and 'facetious.'

THE WATER COOLER



TIPS for CATS USERS

For those of you who have small purchase card responsibilities, there is a way to get reports from CATS to assist you in keeping track of the your total expenditures by month. If you have been given a certain delegated authority, when your purchases exceed that amount, then you must get a new authority letter.

To get a printout of your monthly purchases by date range and accounting code range.

1. Action →Credit Card
2. Click on ‘Search Screen’ icon to the left of the yellow floppy disk
3. Enter the accounting code or search via question mark (?). Enter the Date range or click on calendar icon to select a date. Your name will already be listed under credit card user. Hit the “Enter” key on your computer.
4. Results will give you a list of all your charges. To print select Action →Mark All Records.
5. All your charges will be selected and will have a check mark next to them. Then select Print →Print Listing. At this point another window will open and you will get a pdf printout of your selected charges and a total for that listing.

Submitted by: Wanda Rohrer



NETWORKING



Networking is a skill that has been around since humans have been bartering. People have always used their contacts to get what they wanted. Networking is the personal process of linking with others to exchange information, achieve a goal, receive advice, meet key contacts, and gain access to resources. Networking occurs when, for example, you ask someone where they bought their computer or if they know of a good speaker or trainer, or tell an associate about a job opening. Networking is an organized method of making links from people you know to the people they know, and of gaining and using an ever-expanding base of contacts. Men say it is comparable to the office grapevine, the “good ole boys network,” or the “women’s network.”

Networking is about who knows you, not who you know.

NETWORKING CONTINUED

Basic Networking Guidelines*

- Be open-minded – Don't stereotype people or prejudge their long-term value.
- Be prepared – Make sure you have business cards, brochures, and know what you want.
- Take the time to network and cultivate new relationships – Understand that networking is about building rapport first, not selling.
- Treat those in your network as equals – Choose network members based on information, not position.
- Don't be afraid to ask, but do not be overly demanding.
- Reciprocate the favor – If you ask for a favor, offer to return the favor and follow through if the other person asks something in return. If a person did you a favor in the past, you are duty-bound to help them.
- When someone has helped you, tell the person the outcome of the help when you thank them.
- Accept rejection gracefully – Recognize that rejection will occur. Thank the person regardless for spending the time to talk with you and move on.

Business Cards

- Business cards are a part of your overall professional presence.
- Always carry business cards and keep them in a convenient place.
- Invest in a professional-looking card.
- Never give someone a card with crossed-out phone numbers or addresses or one that is ripped or dirty.
- Exchange business cards at the beginning of a meeting, preferably the moment you sit down and before serious discussion begins.
- Exchange cards before or after a meal, not while people are eating.
- Present your card face up and turned so that the person receiving the card can read it immediately.

**From *Is Your "Net" Working?: A Complete Guide to Building Contacts and Career Visibility*, Anne Boe and Bettie B. Youngs, pp. 9-20.*

Submitted by: Wanda Rohrer

Taming Your Workload

You've got more work to do than hours to do it? You're not alone. Feeling overwhelmed can lead to procrastination. Here are some tips on how to get going and avoid getting buried in the avalanche!

Clear the decks. It's extremely helpful to calm your mind and consciously reduce the stress you are feeling. That stress reduces your productivity.

Strategize before you start. Look first at how to simplify your work. Break projects down into discrete tasks and estimate how long each component will realistically take.

Set a due date and work backwards from that, listing each task.

Practice triage, that is, set priorities. What tasks must get done? Which can be put off? Allocate and prioritize your time based on what is urgent, necessary, or has the greatest pay off.

Manage expectations. Once you know when tasks or projects will be done and have an idea what won't be done soon, communicate with stakeholders: peers, managers, and anyone affected by your schedule. Learn to say "no" when you need to and can.

Ask for help and resources. Determine what you could use help with, what information is required, and whose involvement you need. Don't hesitate to ask if someone can pitch in-or if you can delegate something to a peer.

Change the view. If you are constantly worried about your work or think about your responsibilities negatively, you will attract stress and negativity—and you will end up poisoning your achievements. Get a positive outlook on your work and try to bring a sense of satisfaction to it. Relax more and appreciate aspects of your life beyond your work.

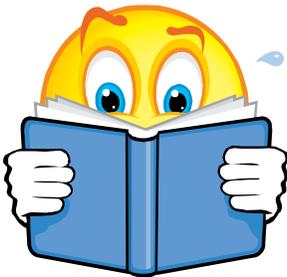
Submitted by: Deborah Osborne

Take Steps to Organize Your Digital Files

Having organized files is a big time saver. These steps may not be new to you. On the other hand, there are sure to be two or three things mentioned that you haven't kept up with.

1. Sort and purge. Sort and purge. It's a never-ending process. Assess what you have and decide what you can get rid of. Decide where to place what you save. Don't just sort and purge files and folders-also images and bookmarks.
2. Organizing bookmarks can be a worthwhile investment in time efficiency down the road. If you need help, look for your server's tutorial.
3. Every month, move the files you're finished with to a different folder or location: an archive folder, a flash drive, an external hard disk drive, or even a CD.
4. Use the "My Documents" folder. Keep all of your documents in this folder. It makes it easy to backup your computer and easy to find documents instead of looking all over your hard drive.
5. However, do not allow yourself to deposit most documents directly into the "My Documents" folder. Create subfolders and put the documents in them. Stop asking, "Where do I save this?" and ask "Where will I look for this when I need it?"
6. Create a "Downloads" folder. When your "Downloads" folder only contains downloads, it is much easier to clean out. You can just scan for items to be saved and delete the contents every few weeks. You'll need to make sure your web browser is set to automatically put downloaded files in your new folder.
7. Learn to use aliases, short cuts, and links when you need a file to exist in more than one place. You won't want to make a copy of such documents for each folder. The copy would just take up additional space, and if you make changes, you have two different versions of the same document.

Submitted by: Deborah Osborne



Recommended Books

“Think and Grow Rich” was written in 1937 by Napoleon Hill after the great depression. It is more than just how to get rich, but how to be successful. It combines real world experiences and practical exercises with positive thinking and re-enforcement. It’s probably where “The Secret” came from.

“Grown Up Digital: How the Net Generation is Changing Your World” written by Don Tapscott. The author offers compelling insight into how the Net Generation is changing the nature of work, culture, and government and what that means for anyone who wants to engage them.

Submitted by: Wanda Rohrer

USDA's Chief Scientist/Under Secretary for REE Visits ARS' Laboratory in Charleston

Written by Dr. Alvin Simmons

Dr. Cathie Woteki, USDA's Chief Scientist and Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics (REE) mission area, visited the USDA-ARS, U.S. Vegetable Laboratory (USVL) in Charleston, SC on March 9, 2011. Her responsibilities include oversight of the four agencies that comprise REE: Agricultural Research Service (ARS), National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Economic Research Service (ERS), and National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS). The purpose of her visit to the USVL was to learn about the research being conducted in this unit and to meet the people involved in this work. Dr. Woteki toured the facility and met with USVL researchers and the onsite Clemson University researchers. Dr. Woteki also had a general meeting with the ARS location personnel and onsite Clemson University personnel. She shared a synopsis of her background including her work in academia, industry and federal government. She has an extensive publication record; food safety, nutrition and health are among her research interests. She has much interest in community education and is an advocate for getting the next generation interested in studying agricultural sciences. She entertained many questions during her visit at the USVL. A news reporter with a local television station (WCSC TV, CBS) joined the tour and interviewed Dr. Woteki at the end of the tour. During the interview, Dr. Woteki remarked on the importance of USDA and its research, extension and education activities for the general public, and she noted the improvement of vegetable yield and quality that is being done through research at the USVL. Dr. Woteki and USVL were subsequently featured on that evening's local news; the focus of the news segment was on the benefits from vegetable research at the USVL for farmers and consumers. Dr. Woteki's primary visit to Charleston was for an invited speaking engagement where community development agents from across the country were gathered. She spoke at the 2011 National Association of Community Development Professionals conference. The participants were especially interested in the development of rural communities and Native American communities. During her time in Charleston, Dr. Woteki also visited the Trident Technical College; she met with administrators and staff in the programs of science and child development, and visited the Culinary Institute of Charleston at Trident Technical College.



Cathie Woteki addressing ARS and Clemson University Personnel at US Vegetable Laboratory

Submitted by: Joyce Paist

Interesting Things to Ponder



Be kinder than necessary because everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle; A sharp tongue can cut your own throat.

If you want your dreams to come true, you mustn't oversleep.

Of all the things you wear, your expression is the most important.

The best vitamin for making friends..... B1.

The happiness of your life depends on the quality of your thoughts.

The heaviest thing you can carry is a grudge.

One thing you can give and still keep....is your word.

You lie the loudest when you lie to yourself.

If you lack the courage to start, you have already finished.

One thing you can't recycle is wasted time.

Ideas won't work unless ' You' do.

Your mind is like a parachute...it functions only when open.

The 10 commandments are not a multiple choice.

The pursuit of happiness is the chase of a lifetime!

It is never too late to become what you might have been.

Life is too short to wake up with regrets.. So love the people who treat you right.. Pray for the ones who don't.

Believe everything happens for a reason.

If you get a second chance, grab it with both hands. If it changes your life, let it. Nobody said life would be easy, they just promised it would be worth it.

Friends are like balloons; Once you let them go, you might not get them back. Sometimes we get so busy with our own lives and problems that we may not even notice that we've let them fly away.

Sometimes we are so caught up in who's right and who's wrong that we forget what's right and wrong.

Submitted by: Jacquie McDonald

Keep yourself safe from donation fraud related to disaster relief

SOURCE: Taken from "Windows Secrets Newsletter, Issue 282, 2011-03-24".

Unfortunately, during times such as the earthquake/tsunami in Japan there are many who will try to deceive you into believing they are legitimate sites for donations for disaster relief to Japan and other locations. Here are good tips from "Windows Secrets" web site to help you protect yourself from donation fraud:

Make informed choices about where to donate. Before turning over the personal information needed to process your donation, visit an online watchdog site such as charitywatch.org to evaluate the receiving organization's legitimacy.

Don't click links in online forums, e-mails, or IMs that say they are from charity organizations — even well-known ones such as the Red Cross or Red Crescent, Mercy Corps, World Vision, or others. These e-mails could easily be spoofs that will direct you to a website that looks like the real thing but steals your data.

Do not respond to unsolicited requests for donations, particularly from people who claim to be victims. "Symantec has observed a classic 419 message targeting the Japanese disaster," said researcher Samir Patil in a post to the company's security blog. "The message is a bogus 'next of kin' story that purports to settle millions of dollars owing to an earthquake and tsunami victim."

To get to the website of a charitable organization you want to support, type its web address into your browser's address bar yourself — don't rely on links, however professionally designed they may look, to take you there.

When you are on a charitable site, take a moment to check the spelling of the organization's website in the address bar. Scammers often use common typos or misspellings to create URLs that fool an unwary eye.

Make sure the page where you enter your credit card or other personal information is encrypted. The beginning of the address should read **https://** instead of **http://**.

Make sure any site that you donate through has a written privacy policy.

Get your news about events in Japan from reputable news sites.

If you believe you have been a victim of a charity-related scam, contact the National Center for Disaster Fraud by telephone at (866) 720-5721, by fax at (225) 334-4707, or by e-mail at disaster@leo.gov.1.

Submitted by: Jacquie McDonald

