

## Officers 2003-2004

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Gregg Terreson, President-Elect  
Eric Teshima, Secretary  
Lee Johnson, Treasurer  
Tom Dingus, Immediate Past President

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Greg Moga  
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Grant Baumgartner  
Brad Becker  
Doug Bishop  
Peggy Figy  
Marcy Nicol

### Editorial Policy

Opinions expressed in articles or features are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Washington/Alaska Chapter, the Healthcare Financial Management Association, or the Editor. The Editor reserves the right to edit material and accept or reject contributions whether solicited or not. All correspondence is assumed to be a release for publication unless otherwise indicated.

### Publication Objective

The NW Outlook is the official publication of the Washington/Alaska Chapter Healthcare Financial Management Association. Our objective is to provide members with information regarding Chapter and national activities, with current and useful news of both national and local significance to healthcare finance professionals and to serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and information.

## President's



## Message

Robert Hinman  
Chapter President

## HFMA Region 11 Symposium Sets Attendance Record

*This year's Symposium was co-hosted by the Washington/Alaska and Southern California Chapters, and was a huge success. Numerous other representatives from all Region 11 Chapters were also involved in making the event a reality. Washington/Alaska set a new attendance record for our Chapter of 60 attendees this year (a 220% increase over our 2003 attendance).*

I want to personally thank Lee Johnson, Scott Nelson, Al Hanson, Corey Shank, Keith Mock, Joyce Gibb, Robbie Wright, and Tom Muller for all the work they did for the Symposium. Lee and Scott made numerous trips to Anaheim for Committee work, and spent countless hours pulling

together outstanding Keynote and breakout speakers. Al assisted with the Sponsorship Committee. Corey recruited, trained, and managed all of the Course Coordinators. Keith and Tom did an outstanding job managing the evaluation process for the speakers and facilities. Joyce and Robbie did an amazing job coordinating the Bingo game with the Vendor Show.

The Course Coordinators for the Symposium deserve a lot of credit for keeping the event running smoothly. The following Washington/Alaska members deserve a huge thank you for volunteering their time and incredible energy:

*continued on next page...*

[www.waakhfma.org](http://www.waakhfma.org)

## Contributing Writers

Mike De Luca  
Peggy Figy  
Jim Heilsberg  
Bob Hinman  
Scott Nelson

**THANK YOU!!!**

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Cathy Smith, Marcy Nicol, Eric Moro, Janis Simpson, Elaine Phelps, Brad Becker, Julie Meek, Jim Heilsberg, Mike DeLuca, John Nutter, Peggi Ann Rufener, Peggy Figy, and Linda McCray.

Thanks again to everyone for making this year's Region 11 Symposium a huge success!

The following is a recap of this year's meeting from the Symposium Committee:

This year's 6th Annual HFMA Region 11 Healthcare Symposium exceeded all expectations, and that of the participants.

The Symposium, already the second-largest event in the National HFMA's list of annual events opened with the traditional Sunday evening reception, with registration open for a steady flow of attendees. For the first time, presentations were also consolidated on CD. By the end of the evening over 700 attendees had registered, and the noise level in the reception area was "deafening" as old and new friends greeted and new introductions were made over sushi and other treats.

Monday began with a parade of Las Vegas show people, this time flavored by the Rio's unique Brazilian Carnivale characters. The Keynote speaker, George Will, chose *A Spectator's Guide to the 2004 Elections, Healthcare and Public Policy* as his topic; he spoke for over an hour with no notes or slides; the room hung on his every word as he reminded them that "most of America's problems are the result of success." He acknowledged that his judgment could be considered suspect since he was a Cubs fan, but his insights into the workings of Washington D.C. and the history of presidential politics were sharp and painted with wit.

Former Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber focused on ways of *Reframing the National Health Debate*,

and was buttressed by his experiences from Oregon's foray into universal health care.

Breakout sessions featured topics ranging from Medicare updates to competency-based training. Stedman Graham was a Keynote that outlined his nine-step plan for success. He posed for pictures and held a book signing that resulted in a line down the corridor.

Steve Wetzell of Leapfrog Group spoke about employer health initiatives from a very personal standpoint, as a member of his family was directly affected by the lack of data on provider quality.

The final Keynote was humorist Mark Russell; he mixed familiar tunes with topical lyrics (amazing what you can do with "16 Tons" once you remember that there were 16 WORDS in President

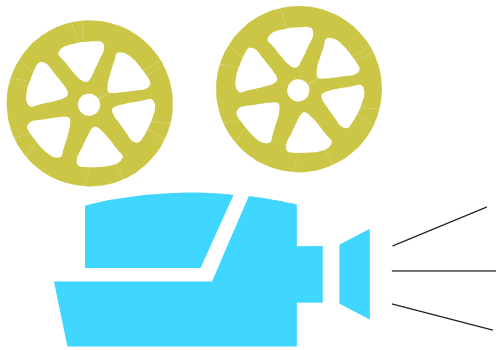
Bush's speech about Weapons of Mass Destruction). His musical hijinks skewered everyone from John Ashcroft to Monica Lewinsky. He also helped draw names for the gift basket drawings and the trip to Hawaii.

The Rio Hotel & Casino proved to be an exciting and spectacular venue for the Symposium; "catch the photos" on our website and plan ahead for next year, you don't want to miss another rewarding, educational, entertaining, networking experience.

Attendance at the conference topped 500 paid registrants for the first time, and counting all the speakers, exhibitors and sponsors, total attendance exceeded 900.

Reservations are already being taken for booth space at the 2005 Symposium trade show. NOTE: The trade show space has sold out for the past three years running. Interested parties should contact Ira Alexander at (310) 423-1760; AlexanderI@cshs.org. ■

*Thanks again to everyone  
for making this year's  
Region 11 Symposium a  
huge success!*



by Mike De Luca  
Finance Manager  
Group Health Cooperative

## Highlights from the Region 11 Symposium

Click on movie screen to see event photos!

**T**his was my first time attending Region 11, and my first trip to Las Vegas. I had an outstanding time – the quality of the program was exceptional. Although this was my first trip to Vegas, it was my second time volunteering as a course coordinator. I had the good fortune of being one of the course coordinators at the Seattle ANI. Each time, I felt that working with other chapter members added a whole dimension to my experience. I got to know folks well that I otherwise might not have. In putting together an article of impressions of Region 11, I decided to mostly rely on other chapter members who were there. At the Tacoma conference in February I interviewed a number of people and asked them what the lasting highlights of Region 11 were for them. Here are their thoughts:

**Peggy Ann:** “The first time a conference really combined fun and learning. Mark Russell and his parody on past presidents.”

**Satchel Kiefer:** “Great workshop speakers. Well run.”

**Greg Moga:** “Going to bed early. Only losing \$50.”

**Joyce Gibb:** “The keynote speakers; outstanding variety and quality – each with their own unique message.”

**Elaine Phelps:** “Kitzhaber – good handle on the right questions. Graham – inspirational.”

**Robbie Wright:** “Stedman Graham – very personable.”

**Jim Heilsberg:** “The Eiffel Tower, Paris buffet. The high quality keynote speakers.”

**Bob Hinman:** “George Will – interesting, insightful. High-quality speakers.”

**Tony Andrade:** “George Will and John Kitzhaber.”

**Brad Becker:** “The articulate message and reality from Steve Wetzell: honest perspective from purchasers, errors of the past, needs for the future. Strong keynotes complemented each other well. Good new vendor contacts too.”

**Lee Johnson:** “Stedman Graham’s ability to connect with the audience and the positive response he received.”

**Scott Nelson:** “The programming stood out – excellent general sessions covering a broad range of professional, personal and development topics. Focused breakout sessions on a wide range of topics; one of the best overall conference agendas I’ve participated in.”

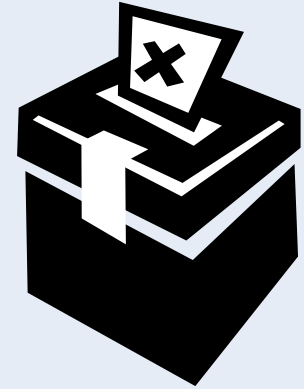
**Corey Shank:** “How well it came off. Working with a fun bunch of course coordinators.”

Of course working for Corey was a highlight for me too. He did an excellent job pulling everything together, keeping it running smoothly and making it fun for the rest of us. I’d have a hard time picking just one highlight. I was greatly impressed by the quality and the variety of the keynote speakers, and got a great deal out of some of the breakout sessions. To close though, one joke that George Will told has stayed with me: “If an 80-year old Florida retiree can manage 20 bingo cards at one time, why can’t they manage a simple butterfly ballot?”



# 2004-2005 Officers & Board Members Elected

*from Scott Nelson, Director of Finance  
Virginia Mason Medical Center*



The officers and directors for the upcoming 2004-2005-chapter year have been determined. The board ratified the results at its meeting on February 18, 2004. We are pleased that so many chapter members participated, either as part of our extremely qualified slate of candidates, or as those who took the time and made the effort to vote. The nominating committee appreciates all of those who accepted the call to run for a board or officer position, and for their willingness to follow through on a two or more year commitment. The chapter truly has its share of exceptional leaders.

**Gregg Terreson**, as current President-Elect, automatically succeeds to President. The results of the balloting are as follows:

President-Elect.....**Eric Teshima**  
Secretary.....**Lee Johnson**  
Treasurer.....**John Nutter**

Elected to two-year board terms are:

**Charles Brown**  
**Mike De Luca**  
**Greg Moga**  
**Eric Moro**  
**Dennis Stillman**

Current board members who will be serving the second year of their two-year terms are:

**Grant Baumgartner**  
**Brad Becker**  
**Doug Bishop**  
**Peggy Figy**  
**Marcy Nicol**

The nominating committee thanks those who volunteered and participated in this process, and wish them the best for the coming year.

**Tom Dingus**,  
Immediate Past President &  
Nominating Committee Chair



**hfma** washington / alaska chapter  
healthcare financial management association

# Job Opportunities

<b>POSITION AVAILABLE</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
Accounting Manager .....	Large Healthcare Center .....	Metro Portland, OR
Assistant Controller .....	Overlake Hospital Medical Center .....	Bellevue, WA
Billing Manager .....	Providence Physician Services .....	Spokane, WA
Business Services Director .....	Samaritan Healthcare .....	Moses Lake, WA
CFO .....	Mason General Hospital .....	Shelton, WA
CFO/Controller .....	Klickitat Valley Health Services .....	Goldendale, WA
Contract Manager .....	Group Health Cooperative .....	Tukwila, WA
Controller .....	230-bed Acute Hospital .....	West/Central WA
Financial Analyst (2) .....	Harborview Medical Center .....	Seattle, WA
Manager – Managed Care .....	Evergreen Healthcare .....	Kirkland, WA
Manager Dec Support & A/R .....	Greater Lakes Mental Healthcare .....	Lakewood, WA
Patient Account Manager .....	Harms Memorial Hospital .....	Harms, ID
Patient Financial Services Director .....	Tacoma Area .....	Tacoma, WA
Revenue Cycle Specialist .....	Harborview Medical Center .....	Seattle, WA
Sr. Accountant .....	Multicare .....	Tacoma, WA
Sr. Accountant .....	Providence WA Regional Svcs. ....	Renton, WA
Sr. Decision Support Analyst .....	Providence WA Regional Svcs. ....	Renton, WA
Senior Financial Analyst .....	Providence Everett Med Center .....	Everett, WA
Sr. Payer Contract Analyst .....	Providence WA Regional Svcs .....	Renton, WA
Sr. Reimbursement Analyst .....	Multicare .....	Tacoma, WA

## FOR MORE INFORMATION...

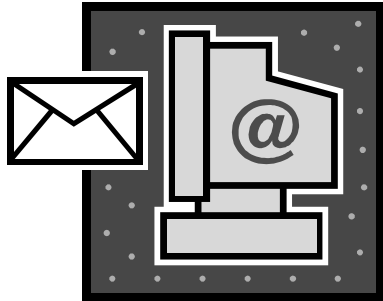
...on these listings or to include a listing, please contact

Peggy Figy, (509) 482-2160 or [figyp@holy-family.org](mailto:figyp@holy-family.org)

See also National HFMA's website ([www.hfma.org](http://www.hfma.org)) for additional job listings.

# HOW DO I CHANGE MY HFMA INFORMATION?

All of our chapter directory information including e-mail and addresses for the newsletter are received from the National HFMA database.



The easiest way to make changes is via the internet. Simply follow these steps to change any of your personal information.

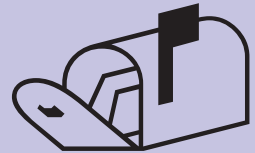
- 1. Log on to <http://www.hfma.org>**
- 2. Go to the membership section**
- 3. Log in using the username and password prompts**
- 4. Follow instructions to access your Profile**
- 5. Edit information.**

**WIN \$100.00**



You could win \$100 by writing an article for N.W. Outlook! Share your knowledge & experiences with other HFMA Members. You can help make a difference!

Please send information & articles for upcoming newsletters to:



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Mount Carmel Hospital  
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Colville WA 99114

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E-mail  
[rhoadev@mtcarmelhospital.org](mailto:rhoadev@mtcarmelhospital.org)



**Don't Miss This...**

**May 19-21, 2004**

**HFMA Workshop,  
Meeting**

**CDA Resort  
Coeur d' Alene**

**SEE YOU THERE!**

*Would you like to check  
your progress toward a  
Founders Merit Award.*

*Individual scoring records  
for the Founders Merit  
Award program are main-  
tained for chapter members  
by LCC Council III.*

*To receive a copy of your  
record,  
please contact*

**Tom Muller**

Telephone: (360) 236-4215

Facsimile: (360) 664-8579

Email: tom.muller@doh.wa.gov

**Editors Note:** Thomas D. Dingus, CPA  
PLLC was inadvertently left off the Silver  
Sponsor listing in our previous issue.

## CORPORATE SPONSORS

The Chapter would like to thank  
the following companies  
for 2003 - 2004 sponsorships:

### PLATINUM LEVEL

Bank of America  
Bennett Bigelow & Leedom PS  
Case Mix Analysis  
Merchants Credit Association  
Moss Adams LLP  
Pacific Medicaid  
Resource Corp of America  
TIAA-CREF

### GOLD LEVEL

Advanced Receivables Strategy,  
Perot Systems Healthcare  
Benefit Recovery Service  
CIT Group  
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Ogden Murphy Wallace  
Que Financial  
Parker Smith & Feek  
Protiviti  
Triage Consulting Group

### SILVER LEVEL

Audit & Adjustment  
Avega Health System, Inc.  
Michael R. Bell & Company  
Thomas D. Dingus, CPA PLLC  
The enVision Group  
Foster Pepper & Shefelman PLLC  
GSB Law  
Sheryl Kennedy, CPA LLC  
R & B Solutions  
Spencer Kinney  
Whitman Garvey Inc

# My Dad Died Today

by Jim Heilsberg  
CFO/COO  
Whitman Hospital

## My dad died today.

On 9/29/2003 my Dad died at Whitman Hospital and Medical Center in a patient room with family members near by. The focus of this article is on the impact this event has had on me as well as how the hospital handled his death.

## How Dad lived his last 10 years

My Dad suffered from Prostate Cancer that was diagnosed 10 years prior to his death. He had an operation to remove his prostate at the time of diagnosis and went through radiation that allowed him to be cancer free for 5 years. He then went through various treatments over the last 5 years of his life that allowed him to be with his family for these 10 years.

Another article could be written on the issue of whether this was an appropriate expenditure for society to make so that my Dad could be with his family those ten years.

My Dad went into the hospital 3 weeks before his death, came home and then went in a week before his death and did not come home but rather died in a hospital bed. Upon arriving for his last stay, he was placed in a semi-private room. Like many patients in this situation the family had to deal with death issues while another patient watched from the

bed next door. This is common practice in many of our hospitals. The question is, is it the best we can do for those in this situation.

The staff changed my Dad to a private room when it became clear he might not make it. This allowed the family to deal with death in a more of a private setting. The staff was caring and sensitive and did all I would have expected to help us deal with Dad's dieing process.

Upon reflection however I have found myself asking the question, are hospitals providing the right setting and process for the dieing? It feels like maybe we have room for improvement. Let me focus on several issues that if addressed, could help the family, friends and the patient better deal with the death process.

## The room

If I were going to design a room for my family and my personal beliefs the room would look much different than another person's perspective and beliefs.

Regardless of what the common belief is within the community, our patient rooms are probably not set up to allow for a dieing process that allows for grief to occur in a sensitive or healthy environment. This is part of the reason that an effort has arisen to sensitize our facilities to the death process. It is often referred to as palliative care. Part of what this effort is meant to

deal with, is designing the care and care setting so that family can deal with death with dignity, compassion and in a setting that the family will feel honored by.

We may not be able to deal with all the issues of every person's beliefs and desires, but we can make some improvements. One improvement that some are looking at involve changing the selected rooms so that they are designed to assist the family going through the dieing process. This effort involves doing simple things. Things like taking out one of the beds and putting a couch in the room. It can involve putting in a little fridge for snacks, or a recliner for family to relax in. Other things like painting the room differently and putting in a wallpaper border on the wall as well as putting up a few pictures. In general the changes would make it feel more like home. Most of these could be done with limited dollars if we set up one to two rooms. It is not intended to try and set up all rooms like this but rather some of them.

By creating this type of setting we would be able to provide the family with comforts that we all would appreciate when we go through this process. Everyone has a family or close friends. Everyone will have someone that is close to them die and the odds are that they could die in a

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hospital bed. It only makes sense to try and improve this setting. The next person that will go through a family member dieing could be you. I did not think it was going to be my Dad but it was this last fall.

My family had to deal with grief in the following setting. We were in a semi private room that had family come in and out. We had one chair in the room and another bed to sit on. We took turns sitting with dad and saying our good byes. It was not bad but it could have been so much better. If there had been room for two chairs, one on each side of the bed, we could have had two people talking/sharing with Dad at one time. Sharing with each other as we grieved. My Mom had to sleep in a hospital bed as she waited for Dad to die and was awakened to hear him take his last breaths. Again this was not bad but what if we had a setting that allowed for her to have more comfort? That would have been the right thing to do.

### **The Staff**

Another issue is can we train our staff to see death differently and deal with the process differently. This is another effort that would allow for a more sensitive environment if we were successful.

In our situation the staff was very sensitive and met our needs. More training can be done to allow staff to realize what they can and should do with those that are dieing. This includes being allowed to take time necessary with this type of patient so that needs are met.

Garfield County Hospital has a grant that is trying to look at the issues of what is necessary to deal with nursing homes so that they are more like home. In talking with them I found that they struggle with training staff to change mindsets. The mindset that we have to treat everyone the same. One example of this is that we generally make meals only one time. Breakfast is served at one time, so is lunch and dinner. What if we changed this so that breakfast for some would be served at 7, some at 8 and for those later risers 10 A.M. Upon first review this seems impossible. When they have looked further they think they can make some improvements and maybe find ways to meet financial and patient needs at the same time.

No matter which institution we are talking about, there are barriers that prevent staff from changing to a different mindset that will meet financial and patient needs. As finance managers we are part of that barrier. Until you have a family member go through this, you may not be able to think differently. I know my Dad's death has made me think differently. Before I had no clue.

### **How this event impacted me personally**

I have heard that the death of a father or a child impacts you much more than any other death.

I had no idea how true that was. I found that I was ill prepared for this event, even though I had been preparing for Dad to die for over 10 years. Here is what I learned I was not prepared for.

When my dad died I realized I

could no longer ask him a question, I could no longer get a hug, I could no longer connect with him in a personal way. I remember him often and what he meant but death has finality to it that I was not prepared for.

I had found ways to spend time with him over the 10 years so that I would not say I wish I had done this or that. I found I still wish I had done this or that but am glad I spent the time I did with him.

When he died I found the next day I was challenged to pick up anything that was his without feeling great sadness and great joy at the same time and basically just wanting to cry. I find myself wanting to cry as I type this article. The first time I went into our shop at the farm I started crying. When I got into the wheat truck he and I spent so much time in, I started crying. I basically cried a whole bunch. It made me real and my Dad real to me.

Over the next week I was able to work out much of my initial grief through an odd process I would recommend to anyone but I don't think I will do again. My Sister and I spent the 4 days following my Dad's death building his coffin. Crazy huh... As crazy as it was I will never forget it and it provided more therapy then I would have ever thought. Building the coffin allowed my sisters and me to remember many things about dad, both good and bad. Mostly good. It also allowed others that stopped by to talk about Dad while they helped cut a board or put in a nail or screw to secure the lid to the coffin. When we were done we found that we had created something to

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remember Dad. We also found we remembered and honored Dad all week. It was great.

One thing I found was that others, and I have great difficulty accepting death but time and process heals many things. If you have a loved one die, don't hide, remember the good and bad and take time to grieve. If you do, you will find great reward and memories that will carry you through to the other side.

I still miss my Dad. I find times I need his advice and I just have to remember what he would have said and it becomes OK but it is never completely OK. I hope this article will help if you have to go through a death. I hope it also helps you want to figure out how to help clinicians see that CFO's do have a heart and can care about the issues dealing with death.

The poem below was written during the hours following the death of my Dad. I hope it helps as well.

*My dad died today and its OK  
He lived a good life full of God's grace.  
He lived to serve as he saw others face to face.  
It was great to see him serve others.*

*My Dad died today and its OK  
Because he can now hear others talk (he was hard of  
hearing)  
Instead of having to read their face  
It was great to see him show God's love*

*My Dad died today and its OK  
He loved his family as he lived his life  
As he shared the talents that God gave him  
It was great to see the example he showed*

*My Dad died today and its OK  
He knows we love him so much  
He loved us each day as he used what he had for us  
It was great to learn from this great man*

*My Dad died today and it's not OK  
Because I, we will miss him  
Because we will not be able to see him  
It would be great if he were still here*

*My Dad died today and it will be OK  
What he taught us we can teach others  
What he showed us we can show others  
It is great to have had him with us*

*My Dad died today and its OK  
He showed us Christ's love  
He led us to Christ  
It is great to know Dad's Dad*

*My Dad died today and its OK  
He is with God and he can hear  
He has no more pain and can do things again  
It is great cause he can fish again*

*My Dad died today and its OK  
I will miss him but know he is OK  
I know we will be OK  
It is great to have known this man*

*My Dad died today and its OK  
My Dad died today and it will be OK  
My Dad died today and we're OK  
Dad is great because of God living through him*

*My Dad died today and its OK  
My Dad died today and its OK*



## **COMING ATTRACTIONS**

The Washington/Alaska Chapter will be celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the May meeting in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. We have plenty of surprises in store for everyone. Come and help us celebrate!

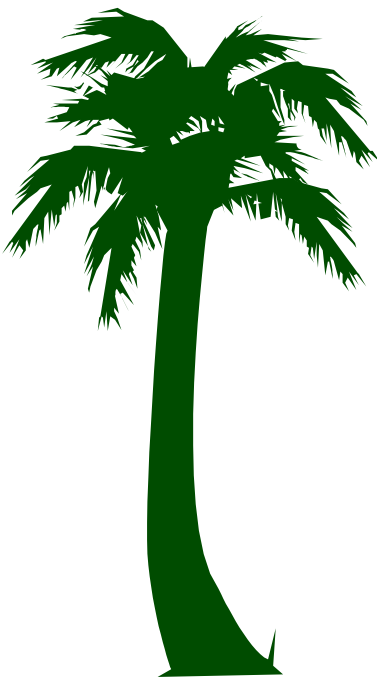
# HFMA Region 11 Symposium Snapshots

Las Vegas

Washington / Alaska was the host Chapter for the Region 11 Symposium in Las Vegas.



*Chapter members had a great time volunteering as course coordinators!*

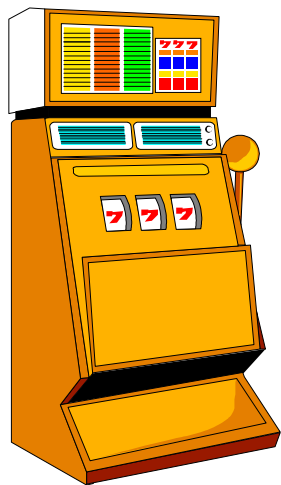


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# Region 1 1 Symposium



*HFMA and AAHAM members tested their gambling skills during Casino Night at the February Joint Meeting in Tacoma*



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*Members visited vendor booths and enjoyed dinner during the Joint Conference & Vendor Fair held February 18 through the 20th at the Sheraton Tacoma Hotel*



# Awards



Doug Bishop receives Muncie Gold Award.



Scott Nelson Awarded ANI Scholarship.

## **Welcome** **New Members**

The Washington/Alaska Chapter is pleased to announce the following new members

**Donna J. Aasheim**  
Manager, Patient Access  
Good Samaritan  
Puyallup, WA

**David Lemieux**  
Information Builders  
Bothell, WA

**Kelly Leslie**  
Human Resource Manager  
Ferry County Memorial Hospital  
Republic, WA

**Cindy J. Davis**  
Project Specialist/Consultant  
Davis Consulting, Inc.  
Gig Harbor,

**Mike C. Davis**  
Cost Accounting Specialist  
Davis Consulting, Inc.  
Gig Harbor, WA

**Cindy D. Blackshear**  
Finance Application Manager  
Providence Health Services  
Seattle, WA

**Katje K. Kaczmarek**  
Seattle, WA

**John C. Smith**  
Sales  
Legend Data Systems  
Seattle, WA

**Steve B. Salmon**  
Regional Sales Manager  
Hood River, OR

## UPCOMING CHAPTER MEETINGS

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
HFMA Workshop & Meeting .....	May 19-21, 2004 .....	CDA Resort – Coeur d’Alene
National HFMA ANI Conference .....	June 27 to July 1, 2004 .....	Opryland Hotel - Nashville
HFMA Workshop & Meeting .....	September 22-24, 2004 .....	Alderbrook Inn – Union, Wa
HFMA Workshop .....	December 2, 2004 .....	Embassy Suites – SeaTac
HFMA Region 11 Symposium .....	January, 2005 .....	Las Vegas
HFMA Workshop, Meeting & Vendor Fair .....	February 16-18, 2005 .....	Sheraton Hotel & Conf. Ctr. – Tacoma
HFMA Workshop & Meeting .....	May 25-27, 2005 .....	Campbell’s Resort - Chelean, Wa
National HFMA ANI Conference .....	June 26-30, 2005 .....	Las Vegas
HFMA Workshop & Meeting .....	September, 2005 .....	Joint Meeting w/Oregon – TBD

[www.waakhfma.org](http://www.waakhfma.org)



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