

American Taxation Association

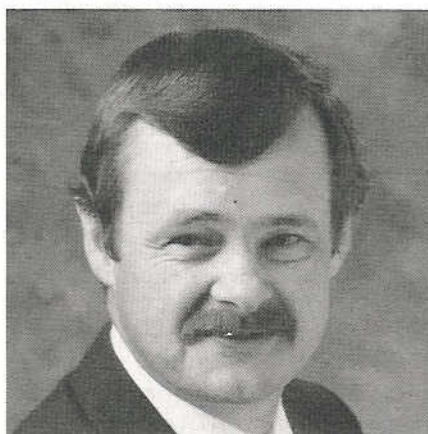
Volume 41, Summer 1997

Brian R. Greenstein, Editor

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

I hope my last letter as the ATA president finds you relaxed and recharging your batteries for next fall's influx of future tax partners. Much like fundamental tax reform, spring has come slowly to the Midwest. A few rays of sunshine, but mostly cloudy and overcast. I look forward to those languid summer evenings when I can debate the home plate umpire and not capital gains reform.

My year as president has flown by (I must have been having fun) and now it's time to turn the office over to Sandy Kramer. I imagine she is getting tired of cleaning up after me. Without taking any credit for it, I believe the ATA is as strong today as ever and remains a very important part of most of our professional lives. The sharing I see going on between members of our organization is phenomenal and speaks volumes about the quality of individuals who belong to the ATA. This sharing was never more evident than at the ATA Midyear Meeting. Although we did not surpass last year's record atten-



Edmund Outslay, ATA President

dance, our numbers were outstanding for a West Coast meeting. Dick Weber and his committee were equal to the task of delivering the high quality program we have come to expect. Special thanks once again to the committee, the presenters, San Diego State University, and to KPMG Peat Marwick for their continued financial support. The JATA Conference was well at-

tended and continued the tradition of high-quality papers and provocative discussion. Terry Shevlin, his committee and the many volunteer reviewers are to be commended for a job well done. Next year's Midyear Meeting is scheduled for Atlanta over Valentine's Day weekend (February 13-14). Our meeting hotel will be the Ritz-Carlton, a first-class hotel in the heart of downtown. The Midyear Meeting Program Committee, chaired by Fran Ayres, will provide more details at the AAA Annual Meeting in Dallas.

The Board of Trustees had a productive meeting prior to the Midyear Meeting, the minutes of which are contained in this newsletter. One issue that has come up at both the sectional and regional levels involves the AAA's role in handling the logistics of our midyear meetings. To date, we have taken care of all of the details related to hotels, meals and rooms, although the hotel contract is signed by the AAA. There was some concern voiced that the AAA might want to

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MEET YOUR PRESIDENT FOR 1997-1998

Sandra S. Kramer will become president of the American Taxation Association in August 1997. Sandy is an associate professor at the University of



Sandra S. Kramer

Florida where she has been a member of the faculty since 1979.

Sandy has served the ATA in a number of positions including editor of JATA, vice president, mem-

ber of the Board of Trustees and various committee assignments. As vice president, she chaired the committee which organized the first ATA Midyear Meeting. During her second year as editor of JATA, she chaired the committee which organized the first JATA research conference. She is a contributing author to *Prentice Hall's Federal Taxation* textbook and teaches the entities tax course. In addition, she has taught a graduate course in the taxation of flow-through entities for many years; and in the fall she will begin teaching the introductory

financial accounting course in the Florida M.B.A. program.

Sandy and her husband, Jack (the second editor of JATA and 1985-1986 president of the ATA), have four sons who range in age from 7 to 21. When she has spare time, she loves the beach and reading.

As president-elect, she has been making plans for the 1998 Midyear Meeting in Atlanta, as well as considering ATA committee assignments. As president, she is looking forward to working with all members next year.

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1997-1998 ATA NOMINEES

Nominations for officers and trustees were solicited through the Fall ATA newsletter and email to a number of members.

In addition, Chairperson Silvia Madeo mailed letters to current officers and trustees, recent former officers and trustees, and committee chairs requesting nominations. In all, more than 80 individuals were nominated by about 20 ATA members.

The committee is pleased to make the following nominations:

President-Elect: Dick Weber
Michigan State University

Vice President-Elect: Dan Murphy
University of Tennessee

Trustees:

Anne Christensen
Portland State University
Amy E. Dunbar
University of Iowa
Howard Engle
Arthur Andersen

Publications Committee:

Julie Collins
University of North Carolina
Marty Wartick
University of Missouri-St. Louis

All nominees have graciously accepted the Committee's nomination. Other members of the Nominating Committee are Rick Boley, Bryan Cloyd, Debra Hill and Chuck Swenson. The Committee wishes to thank all ATA members who participated in this important process.

President's Letter

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take over this function, although Craig Polhemus assured me that this was not the case. At the AAA Spring Meeting, which Silvia Madeo graciously attended in my place (it seems a certain airline's mechanics decided to stage a work slowdown at about the time I was ready to board my plane), there was some discussion about whether the sectional and regional meetings should be "coordinated" (interpretation: combined). I believe this suggestion indicates some concern by individuals at the national level that attendance at regional meetings has been lagging (which is consistent with the lack of enthusiasm among our membership to chair regional meeting subcommittees). I was asked by incoming AAA President Steve Albrecht to serve on the Region and Section Meetings Review Committee next year (chaired by Jane Mutchler), so I will keep the Board and you posted on what's happening in this regard.

Speaking of fundamental tax reform (or the lack thereof), we are privileged to have Mike Graetz as our luncheon speaker at the Annual Meeting. Mike is a Professor of Law and a former Treasury undersecretary for tax policy for the Bush administration. Mike recently published a book entitled *The Decline (and Fall?) of the Income Tax*, a treatise on our current tax system, the politics that engendered it, and prospects for future reform. The book has gotten rave reviews and will be part of the lunch

package (food for thought as well as food for bodily nourishment). I hope you will make every effort to attend the ATA functions at the Annual Meeting. At the business meeting, you have the opportunity to hear reports from ATA committee chairs, the JATA editor and JATA officers, as well as vote for next year's officers. This year's slate is contained elsewhere in this newsletter. Thanks to Silvia Madeo and the Nominations Committee for a job well done. Marty Wartick and her Annual Meeting Committee have worked hard to put together another outstanding group of plenary sessions. Mike Roberts and the Tax Research Methodologies Committee have organized a pre-convention session on behavioral tax research that should be very useful to researchers in this area. I note Terry Shevlin is also doing a session on microeconomic tax research. Y'all come!

I close with one last heartfelt "thank you" for entrusting me with the presidency this year. It is one of the great honors in my professional career. I look forward to serving the ATA in new ways in the future (there's apparently not much of a market for former ATA presidents in the corporate world and I'm too young to retire to Mount Vernon). Thank you for all of your support. Special thanks to everyone who chaired and worked on ATA committees; the officers, the Board and especially to Brian Greenstein for his patience in waiting for my letters. Enjoy!

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

The deadlines for submitting information to the *ATA Newsletter* are as follows:

Fall 1997 Issue
September 16, 1997

Spring 1998 Issue
December 17, 1997

Please send information to:

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Director, Tax and Financial
Planning Programs
W. Paul Stillman School
of Business
Seton Hall University
South Orange, NJ 07079

Phone: (201) 761-9428
Fax: (610) 539-1026
Email: greensbr@lanmail.shu.edu

Faculty announcements submitted to the *ATA Newsletter* are published in the Fall, Spring and Summer issues. The announcements are selected on a FIFO and space-available basis. Please send a hard copy of your announcement, as well as your announcement on a disk to the above address. Alternatively, submissions may be emailed to greensbr@lanmail.shu.edu.

THE WEST COAST MIDYEAR MEETING IS A HIT!

This year's Midyear Meeting and JATA Conference, held at the Hilton Beach and Tennis Resort on scenic Mission Bay in San Diego, February 28 and March 1, was another unqualified success. The total registered attendance was 232, including 17 students and 14 new faculty members. The meeting was again generously supported by KPMG Peat Marwick.

The meeting began with a sun-soaked poolside buffet luncheon, at which the members got to mix and mingle with each other. The new faculty were introduced to the entire group, which hopefully facilitated their meeting the other members. The meeting continued the "something for everyone" philosophy of the last few years. The members' research interests were served by the JATA Conference and the various research sessions, while the teaching interests were served by a number of sessions related to teaching tax. The use of technology was emphasized in the various meetings, especially in teaching, in line with the theme of the conference. An innovation tried in this year's meeting was an off-site, hands-on computer session at San Diego State University's computer lab, where interested participants could explore computer usage discussed at other sessions or just what was of interest to them with the help of more experienced colleagues. Sessions of particular interest to new faculty were continued from last year. Basically, there was plenty of activity and discussion for tax faculty, regardless of their interest in research and teaching and regardless of whether they were current doctoral students or senior faculty.

The (third) JATA Conference, held on Friday afternoon, focused on "Tax Policy Research." Four tax policy papers were presented and the discussion was moderated by Terry Shevlin, the current editor of JATA. The papers will be published in a forthcoming, special issue of JATA devoted to the Conference.

Concurrent with the JATA Conference, a panel of practitioners from local and national firms discussed and demonstrated the various skills that new hires need today. The emphasis again was on technology. Will



President Ed Outsley welcomes the membership to the 1997 Midyear Meeting in San Diego.



Doug Izard, Dean of the IRS School of Taxation, discusses the challenges of developing a tax curriculum for the IRS.

Yancy of Texas Christian University moderated this session.

Between the sessions and dinner, West Publishing and South-Western College Publishing sponsored a hospitality hour at which the membership had an enjoyable time socializing and seeing demonstrations of new, technology-based products. This session was followed by a south-of-the-border theme dinner.

Saturday started with two sessions. One was of particular interest to new faculty, and dealt with career

management and the impact of the ATA on those careers. The other session covered the Internet and its use in practice and the classroom. These sessions were followed by a new faculty research session at which three relatively new faculty members presented their current research and a session on the educational uses of technology. The discussion included the use of web pages, listservs, bulletin boards and email, as well as copyright issues relating to electronically stored information.

Lunch followed these sessions. At the lunch, Doug Izard, Dean of the IRS School of Taxation, discussed the challenges and rewards of running a training program in the IRS environment. Following lunch, a number of the participants went to San Diego State University to work on their computer and Internet skills.

The on-site sessions continued with Terry Shevlin, JATA editor, moderating a panel of JATA reviewers who discussed the submission and review process in general and at JATA. They also gave advice on how to maximize the chances of having a manuscript accepted. At the same time, representatives of the AICPA and Arthur Andersen and ATA members discussed the influence on

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CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

The following continuing education course is scheduled at the American Accounting Association's Annual Meeting in Dallas, Texas on Sunday, August 17.

TAX RESEARCH: A PROCESS APPROACH TO RESOURCES AND METHODS

Description/Objectives:

Tax researchers are rapidly developing unique databases and cutting-edge methodologies with roots in economics, finance and psychology. Participants will have an opportunity to learn how to develop and apply innovative sources and methods to meaningful questions about tax policy and behavior, and to apply these techniques to researchable questions of their own.

Subject Matter/Highlights:

The subject matter will include modeling of the research process by experienced researchers and a workshop format to apply economic, finance and psychological research methods to participants' research questions.

Intended Audience:

The intended audience includes: tax researchers currently engaged in cutting-edge research, doctoral students, and senior faculty interested in re-tooling.

Facilitators:

Robert H. Ashton
Duke University

Amy E. Dunbar
University of Iowa

Charles R. Enis
Penn State University

George A. Plesko
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Michael L. Roberts
University of Alabama

Robert H. Trezevant
University of Southern California

Time:

1:00 PM — 5:00 PM

MIDYEAR MEETING IS A HIT!



From left, Doug Shackelford, Beth Kern and Anne Christensen participate in the editors' panel.



Vice President Dick Weber goes over the Midyear Meeting activities with the membership.

Midyear Meeting

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tax education of the many recent changes in the CPA exam and the Arthur Andersen Tax Challenge.

The meeting concluded with a session that included hands-on demonstrations of active learning techniques used by some members. The concurrent session dealt with research perspectives and opportunities, and included small break-out

groups in which the participants could exchange ideas for dealing with shared problems.

The final sessions ended with the return of the group from SDSU and the participants scattered to enjoy the many attractions of San Diego. The weather made strolling the beaches and the Gaslamp Quarter favorite activities.

The sincere gratitude of the ATA goes to KPMG Peat Marwick for their continued support of this meeting. The Association also is grateful to Marty Dennis-Escoffier and Liz Weber, who together voluntarily ran the registration desk and took care of many other details to make the meeting go smoothly.

Don't miss next year's meeting which will be held in Atlanta on February 13-14, 1998, BYOV (Bring Your Own Valentine). Questions regarding the meeting should be addressed to Fran Ayres at the University of Oklahoma. Terry Shevlin will be running the concurrent JATA Conference. Information on both meetings will be available at the Annual Meeting in Dallas this summer and on the ATA web page maintained by Tom Omer, as it becomes available. We'll see y'all in Atlanta!

ATA/AA AWARD-WINNING WORKSHOP

Please join the ATA/AA Teaching Innovations Award winner and finalists for a discussion of their award-winning teaching innovations. The

workshop will be held at the Annual Meeting of the American Accounting Association on Wednesday, August 20, from 3:45-5:15 PM.

MINUTES OF THE ATA BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Midyear Meeting February 28, 1997

Officers and Board of Trustees Members present: Fran Ayres, Bob Gardner, Jeff Gramlich, Sanjay Gupta, Mark Higgins, Sandra Kramer, Steve Limberg, Silvia Madeo, Ed Outslay, Doug Shackelford and Dick Weber. Also present were Brian Greenstein and Terry Shevlin.

1. President Ed Outslay called the meeting together at 8:30 AM and asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the August 14, 1996 Annual Meeting. A motion was received and seconded, and the August minutes were unanimously accepted.
2. Treasurer Bob Gardner distributed and reviewed financial statements for the year ended August 31, 1996, and for the period of September 1996 through January 1997. The statements showed a cash decrease of \$2,063 which Bob attributed to:
 - a. The 1996 New Orleans Midyear Meeting which produced a net loss of \$4,166 before the KPMG contribution;
 - b. The establishment of the President's \$1,000 discretionary fund (a new expense);
 - c. The fact that the cost of publishing four journal issues was included in the 1995-1996 financial statement (due to cash basis accounting);
 - d. The new "AAA Staff" charge of \$1,129 for assistance in producing journal issues;
 - e. The decrease in dues related to a drop in membership from 1,102 in January 1996, to 1,094 in January 1997; and
 - f. The inclusion of certain expenses in the 1996 financial statement that were incurred in the prior fiscal year.

To mitigate the cost of the JATA Conference, the trustees suggested that an outside donor be approached about the possibility of sponsoring the *JATA Supplement*. The trustees asked Ed Outslay to contact KPMG in this regard, because of its past generosity in supporting the ATA Midyear Meeting. If KPMG decides to sponsor the JATA Con-

ference, the trustees agreed that KPMG should be given appropriate credit on the cover of the supplemental issue of *JATA*.

Ed Outslay will investigate why the ATA forgoes interest on its cash balance.

3. Dick Weber reported that currently 217 people have signed up for the 1997 Midyear Meeting. He also announced that the city and location of the 1999 midyear meeting has not been decided. Ed Outslay asked the committee of former vice presidents to nominate a city to the Board of Trustees.
4. Dick Weber recommended that the Board of Trustees give special recognition to Shirley Dennis-Escoffier and her husband, Marty, for the extensive help they have provided regarding the hotel arrangements and meeting coordination for the 1997 Midyear Meeting. The Board expressed its hearty gratitude to Shirley and Marty for all their efforts.
5. Ed Outslay forwarded an invitation from AAA President-Elect Steve Albrecht to have an AAA officer attend the ATA Midyear Meeting. The trustees reiterated that it would be acceptable for any AAA members to join the ATA, and welcomed attendance at the meeting by all AAA officers.
6. Silvia Madeo, Chair of the Nominations Committee, asked the trustees for suggestions for practitioners who would be valuable members of the ATA Board of Trustees. Silvia received several names from the group.
7. Terry Shevlin distributed and reviewed the editorial statistics related to *JATA*. Though the acceptance rate reported was rather low, Terry said that he thought that this number was an abnormality related to the recent change of editorship. Terry reported that 50 to 60 percent of the papers are being submitted by younger faculty. Terry said that he will handle sending ex-

tra copies of those journals to reviewers who have performed on-time reviews. His letter will provide an accompanying letter and an ATA sign-up form along with the journals.

The Trustees approved a motion to shrink wrap *JATA* issues to prevent mutilation enroute to the subscribers. Treasurer Bob Gardner said that he would investigate whether this cost is already being paid for.

8. Dick Weber reported that there have been recent problems with the AAA apparently trying to control the management of the ATA Midyear Meeting. The general sentiment was that the ATA was already doing a good job of organizing its Midyear Meeting and that no additional help was needed from the AAA. It was recommended that ATA hotel contracts being made via the AAA should specifically state that rates are non-commissionable. Ed Outslay will contact the Presidents of other sections to discuss AAA's handling of the midyear meeting arrangements. To handle registration, Silvia Madeo suggested that graduate students be given free registration to the meeting in exchange for serving some time at the sign-up desk. This would be done instead of hiring the AAA or having the vice president work the sign-up desk.
9. Brian Greenstein announced that the deadline for submission of the summer newsletter material is the first week of May. Brian said that he prefers that newsletter submissions be made to him via electronic files.

Progress is being made toward reporting newsletter-type information on the ATA web page, but Brian pointed out that one problem is that people are only submitting information right before or after the deadline and not on a steady basis throughout the year.

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ATA Board Minutes
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Attendees also considered whether pictures should be included in the electronic newsletter that will be linked to the ATA Home Page. If possible, the Trustees would like the reader to be given the option of whether to view graphic files, such as photos.

10. Doug Shackelford reported as Chair of the Publications Committee. Doug asked the Trustees to change the Bylaws regarding the membership of the Publications Committee. He asked that paragraph 12, number 5, of the Bylaws be modified to add the newsletter editor and ATA Pagemaster to the committee in order for them to serve as *ex officio* members of the committee. In addition to this change, the Bylaws should be revised to include the official position of the ATA Pagemaster. Specifically, paragraph 4, number 11, should be modified as follows:

The initial term of ATA Pagemasters is three years. The term may be extended by reappointment. Initial appointments and reappointments will be made by the President or President-Elect, based on a recommendation of the Publications Committee. The Pagemaster should be responsible for content and pub-

lications' details regarding the Home Page.

Wherever the Bylaws mention the Secretary/Treasurer, these positions should be divided into Secretary and Treasurer as separate individuals. Also, paragraph 3 should read "The regular meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held in conjunction with the annual and midyear meetings of the ATA section.

Secretary Jeff Gramlich was asked to prepare a list of revisions for the ATA Bylaws, to be voted upon by the general membership at the business meeting in August.

11. Concern was raised by the Teaching Award Committee over the issue of Arthur Andersen and Ernst & Young funding the same project for the Teaching Innovation Award. It was noted that E&Y's funding is for the development of new projects and that AA's funding is for successful completion of a project which yields particularly productive results. The trustees felt that the firms granting the awards should make the decision as to whether dual-funding is appropriate.
12. Sanjay Gupta inquired as to when a dissertation is considered "completed" for the purpose of being considered for the ATA/Price Waterhouse Dissertation Award. The trustees decided that

it is completed when the title page is signed by all appropriate university officials.

13. The trustees discussed the issue of whether to gather and list ATA email addresses on the Home Page. They approved this idea but did not support the use of listservs by the ATA.
14. This year's speaker for the Annual Meeting was announced as Michael Graetz. Though Graetz is willing to speak without a cash honorarium, he is requesting that the ATA purchase and distribute to its members copies of his current book. The trustees agreed in principle with Graetz' proposal.

Fran Ayres announced that the 1998 Midyear Meeting will be held February 13-15 in downtown Atlanta at the Ritz-Carlton. Room rates are \$146 per night and the theme will be "Beyond the Boundaries of the New Millennium."

15. Ed Outslay reported that Anne Christensen expressed her eagerness to get new faculty input for the Faculty Concerns committee via a survey of ATA membership. In particular, the survey would try to reach those members who are not attending the annual or midyear meetings. Ed Outslay, John Everett and Anne Christensen are the primary people involved with the administration of this survey.

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