

# ASWA FAX RETURN

American Society of Women Accountants — Houston Chapter No. 33 [www.aswahouston.org](http://www.aswahouston.org)

Member of *The Federation of Houston Professional Women*

VOL. 58 No. 4

## Membership Meeting October 27, 2009

Speaker: Phyllis Martin, CPA

Topic: “Pearls of Wisdom”

CPE: 1 hours Level: Update Prerequisites: Basic

Where: The Briar Club, 2603 Timmons Lane  
(corner of Westheimer and Timmons Lane)

Parking available in the member parking area across the street from the Briar Club. Valet parking is available.

Time: 5:30 p.m. Networking:  
6:00 p.m. Dinner  
6:45 p.m. Speaker (including Q&A)

Early bird reservations by Wednesday 5:00 pm prior to meeting:

Members and 1st time guests	\$30
Returning guests	\$35

Late reservations and walk-ins:

Members and guests	\$35
Returning guests	\$40

CPE portion only	\$15
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Administrative Policy: Per ASWA standing rules, if you register and do not attend, you will be charged for the regular meeting price.

[Reservations need to be made by the Wednesday preceding the meeting to Julianne Dorsett at \[meetings@aswahouston.org\]\(mailto:meetings@aswahouston.org\). Please contact Julianne with late reservations, even on the day of the meeting.](#) Special dietary requirements available upon request

## IN THIS ISSUE

Calendar of Events — p. 3  
Career Center — p. 6  
Charitable Project — p. 4  
Current Fundraiser — p. 4  
FHPW — p. 5  
Officer & Committee Chair Info — p. 3  
Speaker's Bio—p. 2  
When Letting'em Go — p.6-7

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By: Melanie Norton

### ASWA Members in the Spotlight – a Double Triple Play

We have two trios of Chapter members who are representing and benefiting the Chapter through their special activities this month. The first trio consists of members Colene Blankinship, Julianne Dorsett, and me. We are heading to Las Vegas for three fun-filled days and nights to eat, drink, and gamble attend the ASWA/AWSCPA Joint National Conference at The Palms Casino Resort from October 19-21. We will be representing the Chapter throughout the conference, but especially at the ASWA Annual Meeting where we will serve as the Chapter's delegates to discuss and vote on certain matters, such as bylaws changes and election of the National Board of Directors.

The second trio of members in the spotlight consists of Pamela Ahlers, Kristi DeNardo, and Phyllis Martin. Pamela has been nominated by NAWBO Houston Chapter as a candidate for the 2009 Woman Business Owner of the Year award. The winner of the award will be announced on the evening of Thursday, October 22 at a reception, dinner, and award presentation event at The Hotel Derek. Congratulations to you, Pamela, on your nomination, and we hope you win this award! Kristi DeNardo is slated as the Treasurer nominee on the ballot for election of the 2010 Federation of Houston Professional Women (FHPW) Board of Directors. FHPW Delegates will vote on the proposed slate at the FHPW quarterly meeting on Monday, October 26. Congratulations to you, Kristi! Finally, Phyllis Martin will be the featured speaker at our Chapter's meeting on Tuesday, October 27 and at the AWSCPA Houston Affiliate's meeting on Thursday, October 29. Phyllis will be giving a special presentation entitled “Pearls of Wisdom” sponsored by Mass Mutual Financial Group. Intended for women of all ages, ethnicities and income levels, this seminar fuses emotion, intuition and intellect into a relaxed informative setting where you can feel comfortable talking about money and related concerns with other women. By attending this presentation, you can help support the activities of the Susan G. Komen Foundation. Thank you, Phyllis, for offering this presentation to our organization!

Please consider attending as many of the aforementioned events as your schedules and budgets will permit. Our featured members deserve our support!

I hope to see you all soon at our Chapter meeting and at some of the other events!



### October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

In support of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October, we have the opportunity to facilitate educational seminars in local communities and MassMutual can make charitable donations to local cancer-related organizations on behalf of the seminar attendees. This is our 5th year doing this campaign and together we have generated close to \$400,000 in donations for cancer research and treatment around the country.



### Facts About Women

One in eight women born in the United States today will develop breast cancer at some time in her lifetime, and an estimated 192,370 women will be diagnosed in 2009.<sup>1</sup> At this time, there are about 2.5 million breast cancer survivors in the United States.<sup>2</sup> Nearly 10.1 million firms in America are 50% (or more) owned by women<sup>3</sup> and women will account for 60% of wealth by the end of the decade, 2010.<sup>4</sup>

1 Cancer Facts & Figures – 2009, American Cancer Society (ACS), Atlanta, Georgia, 2009.

2 American Cancer Society. Detailed Guide: Breast Cancer. [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org) Updated: May 2009

3 Key Facts about Women-Owned Businesses, 2007, Center for Women's Business Research

4 Resnick, Lisa. "Financial Empowerment, Financial Anxiety." Life Health and Advisor. January 2007

This month's presentation will be "Pearls of Wisdom", which is *a lively discussion around the unique financial issues women face and the possible strategies available to help create financial security...for today and in the future.*

We need a great turnout for this meeting. If we have over 20 attendees, a donation will be made to the Susan G. Komen Foundation in our Chapter's name. Please attend and bring your friends. If you are not able to attend our meeting on the 27th, you will have another opportunity to see Phyllis' presentation at the AWSCPA Houston Affiliate meeting on October 29 at the Sheraton Brookhollow Hotel, 3000 N. Loop West, Houston, TX 77092, with networking at 5:30 followed by the dinner and meeting at 6:00.

Phyllis Martin, CPA is a Financial Services Professional with Strategic Financial Group, L.L.P. She has a passion for helping her clients achieve their goals and dreams. She uses professional expertise to identify and execute appropriate strategies to obtain each client's meaningful financial solutions. Her clients include individuals and owners of small to medium sized businesses.

Phyllis received her BBA in Accounting from Stephen F. Austin State University. She was named a MassMutual *Rising Leader* for Financial Services successes for three years and a *Leader* for two years.

She was honored as a *Rising Star* from the Houston Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors in 2006.

Phyllis is a member of the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants, Houston Chapter of CPAs, Chairperson of the Personal Financial Planning Committee and a member of the Diversity Committee. She has been elected to the board of the Houston Chapter of CPAs, with her term beginning in 2010.



**2009-2010 Officers & Committee Chairs**

<b>President</b> H 281-469-0970 W 713-353-1942	<b>Melanie Norton</b> president@aswahouston.org	<b>Director</b> H W 281-884-5183	<b>Suzi Martin</b> <b>Member Relations</b> relations@aswahouston.org F 281-884-5199
<b>President Elect</b> H 281-478-0778 W 281-884-5184	<b>Julianne Dorsett</b> <b>Meeting Arrangements</b> meetings@aswahouston.org C 832-563-3840	<b>Database/Bylaws</b> H 281-894-5253 W 281-894-5253	<b>Eileen Neucere</b> <b>Career Center</b> webmaster@aswahouston.org F 281-807-1520
<b>Vice President</b> W 713-353-1962 C 713-292-6183	<b>Lien Le</b> <b>Student Activities</b> scholarships@aswahouston.org		
<b>Treasurer</b> H 281-550-3675 W 281-504-8655	<b>Kathleen Long</b> treasurer@aswahouston.org		
<b>Secretary</b> C 281-773-1530 W 713-552-2105	<b>Ursula Cornish</b> <b>Newsletter</b> newsletter@aswahouston.org F 713-622-1366		
<b>Past President</b> W 713-584-6451 F 713-935-7701	<b>Kristi DeNardo</b> <b>Membership</b> membership@aswahouston.org C 832-595-5587		

Deadline for October newsletter: November 6, 2009	
Newsletter Editor:	Ursula Cornish
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Work:	713-552-2105
Fax:	713-622-1366
Email:	newsletter@aswahouston.org

<b>Additions and changes to the mailing list should be submitted to Eileen Neucere</b>	
Home:	281-894-5253
Fax:	281-807-1520
Email:	webmaster@aswahouston.org

<p>The FAX RETURN is the newsletter of ASWA Houston Chapter 33. It is published monthly, except December. You can receive the Fax Return by email or by snail mail. <b>Please let the editor know which form you would like to receive the newsletter.</b></p>
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**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

- Oct 19-21**– ASWA/AWSCPA Joint National Conference
- Oct 26**– FHPW Quarterly Meeting– H.E.S.S.
- Oct 27**– **Membership Meeting**– The Briar Club
- Oct 27**– Board Meeting
- Nov 17**– **Membership Meeting**– The Briar Club
- Nov 17**– Board Meeting
- Dec 8**– **Christmas Party**– **Lien Le’s Home**
- Jan 26**– **Membership Meeting**– The Briar Club
- Jan 26**– Board Meeting
- Feb 23**– **Membership Meeting**– The Briar Club
- Feb 23**– Board Meeting
- Mar 23**– **Membership Meeting**– The Briar Club
- Mar 23**– Board Meeting

**Standing Reservations**

Colene Blankinship	Eunice Reiter
Adrienne Brown	Ann White
Ursula Cornish	Kathy Long
Kristi DeNardo	
Julianne Dorsett	
Suzi Martin	
Eileen Neucere	
Melanie Norton	

The Chapter will bill for reservations that are not cancelled by 5pm Wednesday prior to the meeting.

Please contact **Julianne Dorsett** to be added or deleted from the Standing Reservations List.  
832-563-3840    meetings@aswahouston.org

## Houston ASWA Memorial Fund

The Houston ASWA Memorial Fund was chartered in 1973 with the two-fold purpose of:

- Providing scholarships to deserving accounting students
- Furthering the mission of the American Society of Women Accountants -- “To enable women in all accounting and related fields to achieve their full personal, professional and economic potential and to contribute to the future development of their profession”.

The Memorial Fund receives contributions, in lieu of flowers, for members and their loved ones during times of grief. We receive contributions to celebrate special occasions and in honor of special people.

Please consider the ASWA Memorial Fund as an opportunity to honor or to memorialize the people in your lives.

Contributions should be made payable to:

ASWA Memorial Fund  
c/o Eunice H. Reiter  
5005 Woodway, Suite 200  
Houston, TX 77056-1789

If your contribution is in honor or in memory of someone, be sure to include information regarding where to send the acknowledgement.

### Charitable Project

Please remember to gather your sample toiletries when you travel and donate them to Miryam’s Hostel which is on the second floor of the Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen. It is a place where 6 – 8 women can spend the night, wash their clothes, take a shower and sleep in a bed. Then they are back out on the street. It is sponsored by Magnificent House which is affiliated with the Catholic church. They can use toiletries, towels, twin bed sheets, pajamas etc.

## ADVERTISING RATES

The ads are to be emailed to the newsletter chair no later than the 1st of the month in which the ad is to appear.

\$300/ year—full page  
\$160/ year—1/2 page  
\$ 10/ month—business card size

The Fax return is published monthly except December.

## Official National Registry Statement

ASWA is registered with the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) as a sponsor of continuing professional education on the National Registry of CPE Sponsors. State Boards of Accountancy have the final authority on the acceptance of individual courses of CPE credit. Complaints regarding registered sponsors may be addressed to the National Registry of CPE Sponsors: 150 Fourth Avenue, Nash-

## Current Fundraiser

Our chapter has been registered with the Current Fundraiser Online program. It is very simple—all you have to do is shop online at [www.CurrentFun.com](http://www.CurrentFun.com), and when you check out, select:

State: **Texas**      Organization: **ASWA – Houston**  
City: **Houston.**

Our chapter will receive a check quarterly for 50% of online sales that are attributable to our organization. Tell your friends and relatives, and help raise money for our scholarship fund. You can save some money for yourself and get some great products, and at the same time, contribute to the scholarship fund. What a deal!

**Federation of Houston Professional Women**  
**Quarterly Meeting- “Women Standing Strong and Working Together”**

Next Meeting: October 26, 2009  
Web site: [www.fhpw.org](http://www.fhpw.org)

Location: H.E.S.S. Building  
5430 Westheimer

ASWA Delegates: Kasi Wieding  
Eunice Reiter

Alternates: Melanie Norton  
Colene Blankinship

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**Federation of Houston Professional Women (FHPW)**

The Federation of Houston Professional Women is an alliance of women's professional organizations, chartered by the state of Texas as a non-profit, non-partisan business league. Each FHPW member organization, although diverse in style and structure, has professional or businesswomen members focused on education, networking, specific careers or community service.

FHPW offers quarterly events designed to bring its diverse membership together to promote a place of POWER and INFLUENCE. Quarterly events are open to both members and guests and allow Houston professional women the opportunity to network, have some fun and learn something new.

If you are a member of ASWA then you are automatically a member of FHPW.

Time: 5:15 PM Social/Networking/FHPW Table 6:15 PM Dinner/Business Meeting/ Opportunity to Network 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Program
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Our speakers will be Nancy Tucker, CEO of CanCare  
and Dr. Edward Fritsch.

Dr. Fritsch will be offering Bone Density testing

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Nancy Tucker is President & CEO of CanCare. CanCare’s mission is to improve the quality of life for cancer patients and their families. They do this by providing support to those currently facing cancer, as well as family members. Care givers are matched for one-on-one support. CanCare volunteers regularly visit cancer patients in Houston area hospitals through the Hospital Visitation Program. Volunteers help patients and their family members feel cared for, by serving as a partner to the medical team and offering emotional support beyond their medical needs.

Dr. Edward Fritsch will talk about Osteoporosis Screening and will offer bone density testing at the meeting.

Make your reservations today to join us!

## Career Center

Please remember to encourage friends and colleagues to register and that there is not cost to individuals to post their resumes. Members can help by letting their HR Departments at work know about the site. Using the site is a win-win-win-win proposition because 1) employers gain access to a pool of specialized job seekers, 2) individuals seeking employment in accounting and finance can easily connect with employers/recruiters looking for candidates with those skills, and 3) the ASWA raises funds that it uses to 4) provide scholarships to worthy individuals.

Support a worthy cause by spreading the news about the ASWA Career Center today!

## When Letting'em Go Isn't an Option: Helping Struggling Employees *He's dealing with a difficult personal situation*

Right now you need all the help you can get from your staffers. So what happens if one of 'em isn't pulling his weight for reasons that aren't entirely in his control – but you can't afford to let him go?

That's the situation Emma, a manager, faced with one of her longtime employees, who had recently become more of a burden than a blessing.

### Complicated situation

"Doug, you haven't been acting like yourself lately," said Emma. "I'm not used to seeing this kind of behavior from you.

"You show up each morning looking like you've barely slept, then you seem to sleep-walk through the day. Now I'm hearing that you've left work as much as an hour early. What's going on?"

Doug, an employee, shrugged. "I'm doing the best I can," he said. "I have a lot of things going on right now, and I'm just trying to stay focused. I think I've been doing a good job – considering the circumstances."

"What exactly do you mean?" asked Emma.

"My wife got laid off a few weeks ago," Doug explained. "So I had to take on a second job."

"I'm really sorry to hear about that," Emma said. "I understand you need to take on another job, but that can't interfere with what you do here."

### 'Already struggling'

Later that day, Emma ran into Jennie, a fellow manager who also dealt with Doug.

"I just don't know what to do about him," Emma said. "I can understand he's in a difficult position – having to work two jobs in one day can't be easy."

"But it's almost like he's not even working here anymore," Jennie pointed out. "He must be using up all his energy at his second job."

"I know," Emma said. "And this wouldn't be such an issue if we could just let him go – but we can't.

"We're already struggling, and it's not fair to leave the rest of the department with one less person."

### The big question

In better times, Emma might have just let Doug go – after all, his work was really suffering. But now wasn't such a good time – and Emma needed Doug to start stepping up.

It was true he was in a tough position, supporting his family with two jobs.

But Emma needed him to be fully present at *this* job – every day. If you were in Emma's situation, what would you do? Perhaps one of the ideas offered below might provide you with some guidance.

#### What you need to know:

Dealing with struggling employees:

- ✦ Identify the problem
- ✦ Ask what's keeping them from achieving their goals, and  
Let'em know how you can help.

## How Two Managers Would Solve the Above Communication Problem

### 1 Consider the person and the performance

For me, the most important thing would be letting Doug know he's a valued member of the team. When someone's having a rough time, simply clarifying his value can make a huge difference. Then I'd see if there was a way for us to help him out within the organization, like offering an alternate work schedule or better compensation. I'd make it clear that while I'm concerned about him and his situation, we still all have to pull together as a team – and I'm counting on him. I always try to consider the person and the performance – because if someone's personal life is affecting him, his performance will suffer, too.

*Belinda Porch, Operations Manager  
Devroux & Purnell Architects, Washington, DC*

### 2 Work together to find a solution

When I deal with struggling employees, I try to be as compassionate as possible. Obviously, Doug has a complicated situation he's dealing with right now – and that would hurt anyone's performance on the job. I'd work with him to find a way we could bring his work back up to its former level. If he's got enough vacation time, I'd encourage him to take some time off. And if not, maybe we could take some work off his shoulders for the time being and have someone else pitch in.

*Laura Wolter, Office Manager  
Prairie View, Wichita, KS*

*Article from Communication Bulletin for Managers and Supervisors*

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—Regional Director for Houston

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