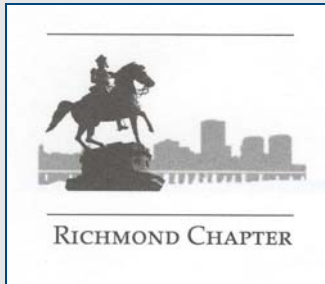




INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF CERTIFIED EMPLOYEE BENEFIT SPECIALISTS

August, 2009

ISCEBS RICHMOND CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



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President's Message

As the long hot summer days begin to wind down and the kids head back to school, it's time to gear up for a busy end-of-year schedule for our local CEBS Chapter.

I wish to thank Amy Burgoyne for a very successful half-day health and benefits session on June 11th. We had some excellent speakers; all who attended the session with whom I spoke thought it was well done and very informative.

Our next major educational session will be our full-day Retirement Fundamentals Program scheduled for Thursday, September 17th at the Westwood Club. Craig Rupert has done an outstanding job with lining up excellent speakers who will be presenting very timely topics. We are pleased to announce that we have been approved for 6 CE credits (2 for law and 4 for life and health).

This is to remind you that the Board has agreed to significantly reduce the fees for the full-day session to \$80 for members and \$120 for non-members. This is a 36% reduction for members and a 27% reduction for non-members. Fees are further reduced by 50% for any member/non-member who is currently unemployed and wishes to attend. Please RSVP to Amy Burgoyne (BurgoyneA@aetna.com) if you are able to attend the September 17th event.

As most of you know, we recently launched our new Chapter website. We are very pleased to report that the number of hits on our site have far exceeded our expectation. If you have not done so already, we invite you to visit our site (<http://iscebs-richmond.org>) to learn more about current and future chapter events.

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the National Healthcare Reform debate currently in our midst. Since the final outcome can have a significant impact on all of us either directly or indirectly, I invite you to write to your representatives in Congress and the Senate to express your opinion now prior to their return from the August recess.

I also wanted to remind you that our meetings are open to all interested benefit professionals. We encourage you to help spread the educational value of our Chapter with others in the community.

I look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events and thank you for your continued interest and support of our local Richmond Chapter.

Regards,

Gary S Powers, CEBS
President, Richmond Chapter ISCEBS

Please Join Us for the September Full-Day Educational Session!

Speakers & Topics: Rick Owens & Larry Elliott
SunTrust Bank
"Guaranteed Retirement Options in Your 401(k)"



Tom Rossi & Dick Miller
Watson Wyatt
"Retirement Plan Technologies"

Marc Purintun
Hunton & Williams
"Solving the 403(b) Puzzle—New Regulations"

Brian Fuller & Kathleen Potter
Wachovia Insurance Services
"Savings Vehicles for Retiree Medical"

Evelyn Traub
Troutman Sanders
"RIF Impact on Retirement Plans"

Amy Reynolds
Mercer
"Current 401(k) Issues"

Date & Time: Thursday, September 17, 2009
7:30 am to 3:00 pm
Breakfast & lunch served

Location: Westwood Racquet Club
6200 West Club Lane
(804) 288-6028

Cost: \$120 (\$80 for members of the Richmond Chapter of ISCEBS)
Special 50% discount for those unemployed at time of event

Questions/RSVP: Please RSVP by September 14th to:
Amy Burgoyne
BurgoyneA@aetna.com,
(804) 314-4310

Please make checks payable and mail to: Richmond Chapter-ISCEBS
P.O. Box 6513, Richmond, VA 23230
Or you may pay at the door, if you have RSVP'd.

Note: Meeting fees are non-refundable unless cancellation is received before September 14th. Unpaid no-shows will be billed!

Mark Your Calendars!

October 22nd

Breakfast Session, Compensation topic

November 12th

Breakfast Session & Annual Meeting

Report from the 2009 ISCEBS Symposium

Greetings all! The 2009 ISCEBS Symposium was another resounding success. It was held last week in Las Vegas, and the Society really did a fantastic job, as ever, of making it a very high quality experience. Joann Perkins and Jean Robinson accompanied me to the Symposium from the Richmond chapter, as well as Bett Albert of the Virginia Bankers Association whom we will be encouraging to join.

On Sunday, the Society held its usual chapter leadership session. Although I was unable to attend due to a tour I had previously scheduled, I did provide them in advance with a lengthy list of the initiatives going on in the Richmond chapter, which were shared with those at the session. A conferment ceremony was held that evening for new program grads, followed by a cocktail reception. The registration and exhibit hall was well organized and chock full of exhibitors with excellent benefit-related brochures and giveaways, many of which were Vegas themed.

Monday morning, I had breakfast with Steven Grieb, a new member of the Governing Council. Scott Boring, current President of the Society, gave the welcome address, and the educational sessions were kicked off by Dr. Reed Tuckson, Executive VP and Chief Medical Officer for UnitedHealth Group. He was a very dynamic and passionate speaker, and very entertaining. Optional sessions were available at each time interval afterward each day. At lunch on Monday, I met two reps from Employee Benefit News and Employee Benefit Advisor, who were invited to attend as guests. They consider themselves both competitors and vendors of ISCEBS, with their own benefits expo in the Fall. The Society also recognized all the chapters which had met their 2009 membership goal, which I'm proud to say included ours.

Monday evening, Joann, Jean and her husband, and I went to dinner at a former mob hangout and locals' favorite, known as Battista's Hole In The Wall, an Italian restaurant recommended to me by more than one person who lived there. It's loaded with kitschy Vegas memorabilia and has a rich history of celebrities, including the Rat Pack. The meal was delicious, and we all enjoyed a great evening which even included the house accordion player performing "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny" for us.

Tuesday was another full day of excellent educational sessions. A Fellowship Luncheon was held with all attendees welcome, and those in attendance who had attained Fellowship status (about 73) were recognized. Entertainment for the luncheon was provided by Dr. Arthur Benjamin, a math professor at Harvey Mudd College and self-proclaimed "mathemagician". He could instantly tell you the product of any two 5-digit numbers, the day of any date in any year, and create a "Sudoku-like" chart of numbers whose rows, columns, diagonals and other combinations

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of cells each added up to the sum of digits in your birth date, all in a matter of a few seconds. He absolutely stunned the audience. Google the terms "Arthur Benjamin mathemagic," and you can see him on YouTube. All new Fellows in attendance were also given a very nice gift of a leather-accented and inscribed 1-gig flash drive, with the words "ISCEBS Fellow" on it. A perfect gift (at least for a techno nerd like myself)! I re-introduced myself to Dan Graham, the Society's Executive Director. He was extremely complimentary of our chapter's initiatives and the things we are doing to promote the chapter, including the web site. He said we had a real "energy" going on here.

On Wednesday, we had another half day of educational sessions which capped the Symposium, and we were then free to experience Vegas.

"What happens in Vegas ..."

What happens in Vegas? Everything you can possibly imagine! The opportunities for entertainment are limitless, and are in your face 24/7 from the moment you step off the plane, with slot machines right in the airport. Every bus, taxi, store, hotel, magazine and street sign is, or has, an ad for some sort of entertainment venue. You are bombarded by it every waking minute. No matter what you find yourself doing, there is always a feeling that there is something else going on somewhere that's even more exciting. Whether it's singers, dancers, performing arts, night clubs, museums, swimming, sightseeing, dining or gambling, you can do it all here. And in my spare time, I was a man on a mission! I had a full agenda of things I wanted to do while there, and did almost all of it. I toured Hoover Dam, saw two different Cirque du Soleil shows, went up in both the Eiffel Tower and the Stratosphere, toured almost every major hotel on the Strip, saw the shark reef aquarium at our hotel (Mandalay Bay), rode the monorail, saw the lion habitat at MGM, viewed the magnificent fountain show at the Bellagio, went and saw the Fremont Street Experience downtown, caught the Sirens of Treasure Island show, saw the Forum Shops at Caesar's Palace, and even saw Elvis, Marilyn Monroe and the Blues Brothers out and about! All of this came at a price – exhaustion! Vegas requires a great deal of walking despite excellent public transportation, and to do all the above required about 15 miles of walking. Great daily exercise. It was even a good jaunt from the hotel lobby to the convention area.

Despite everyone saying the Vegas economy is suffering, there were precious few places that weren't packed with people no matter where one went, with the exception of the casinos which were visibly slow. Dining is unfortunately no longer the bargain it once was in Vegas, and cheap eats are tough to find now. Most places are trying to out-do each other with their

gourmet cooking from world-renowned chefs, and the days of \$6.95 prime rib dinners are virtually gone.

There is a 3-hour time difference between Richmond and Vegas, which makes for a good case of jet lag. This, on top of non-stop walking every day, the 100 degree heat ("but it's a dry heat!"), sun, late hours and early morning breakfasts before all-day educational sessions, trying to keep up with client needs, hotel noise and the sensory overload of Vegas, makes for a very physically demanding and sleep-deprived week. But, I'm sure Joann and Jean will echo my sentiments that it was well worth it (on that note, Joann's flight from Richmond to Atlanta was canceled, and after being re-routed to Newark and enduring a lengthy layover, she finally made it to Las Vegas at 1:00 in the morning on Monday).

My week was so jam-packed with activities, I didn't even get around to doing any gambling until Thursday night, when I finally sat down to play the slot machines. I inserted a \$10 bill and instantly started losing, but soon, my luck changed, and the one-armed bandit started paying off. I ended up doubling my initial investment, so I stopped. How many people get to come back winners?!

I have a camera full of about 900 pictures and videos of the week's events, and will post many of them on the web site once I get them all sorted and labeled. I am certain you will enjoy seeing them.

The week was truly amazing, and one I would not want to have missed for anything. Vegas was a perfect venue for this high quality event from every perspective. I must thank our chapter President, Gary Powers, for having a conflict which prevented him from going and enabled me to go this year! And thanks go to Joann and Jean for being great company at dinner and in class.

For those of you who have never been to a Symposium, it is a meticulously well-orchestrated event, full of cutting edge information, networking opportunities, and other valuable ways to advance yourself, your career, the chapter and the Society. I heartily encourage everyone to make it to the Symposium if at all possible. The Society does such a professional job of making it a positive experience, and every detail is well planned and executed. And although serving on the chapter's board is its own reward, this is a real privilege. Think about it! It could be you one day! Next year, the Symposium is in Charlotte, so although perhaps not as exciting as Vegas, it is close and easily accessed by each of us. So, start thinking about it now.

The content of the Symposium will be available on the Society's web site shortly, for those interested in viewing it.

I returned home late Friday evening completely spent, well educated, entertained to the fullest, mildly sunburned and with a nice big American Express bill awaiting me next month. And I wouldn't change a thing! ■ Craig Rupert