

President's Letter

September 14, 2011

I don't know about you, but I wish National Payroll Week (NPW) was this week rather than last week. I just can't get in the mood to celebrate something so big when I'm trying to do a two day payroll processing in just one day with a 2:00 pm central deadline. Not that I didn't meet my deadline, I did. But sometimes stressful situations keep me from being my normal jovial self.

Many of you aren't aware of my abilities, but I have been told I can turn into different "Barbie" characters. Last week, I was "One Day Payroll" Barbie – keeping my calm and cool exterior while keying and processing as quickly as possible. Ten years ago this week I was a different Barbie - "Disaster Relief" Barbie. Unable to tear my eyes away from the World Trade Center and the Pentagon until we realized that no flights were going to be allowed to fly the rest of that week. Realizing that every employee who had a paper check wasn't going to get their check unless we figured out how to get them throughout the United States. We found out the FedEx would "hold" the checks until flights were able to take off and land. Hold them in a container on a runway, with no access. So instead of taking that chance, my payroll service provider, ADP, worked with me to hold our checks at their Atlanta office until I could get an employee there to pick them up. And with that, the Pony Express was reinvented. Having employee's drive to meet others and deliver checks. All checks were delivered no later than Friday, our regular payday. From Atlanta, South to Florida, North to Pennsylvania and Michigan, west to Arizona and Colorado, and all stops (states) along the way. The next payday we were able to put flyers in with the checks about direct deposit. That campaign could have been more successful had we not gotten checks to employees in time, but I much prefer being able to say everyone was paid timely.

The world has changed dramatically over the past ten years. The Patriot Act has changed how we can send funds to the bank. Airport security makes our personal space feel invaded, but is clearly safer. Texting and E-mail have allowed us to not have to talk on the phone so much. The Internet has gotten faster and you can find everything you ever wanted to know but were afraid to ask. Employee's can view their check stubs and direct deposit statements. Trees don't have to die in order for us to process a payroll as everything can be stored in a file on a server. We can work from the beach, using a laptop and air-card and you too can turn into "Poolside" Barbie.

Last week many of us celebrated NPW at The Hope Lodge. What a blessing that place is to my soul. I feel better after spending two hours there than anyone has a right to. We served a

Potato Bar on September 8th to those amazing people. For those of you who aren't aware of what Hope Lodge is, the American Red Cross has sponsored a lodging arrangement for people with Cancer and their families and/or friends. We had a cancer patient say a prayer, with everyone in the dinner area and all of us payroll professionals, holding hands. Many of us helped serve. Many of us sat with our dinner guests and heard their stories of fighting for survival. Everyone one of us heard how grateful they were to us, for preparing a meal. The warmth they gave us for eating the best baked potato they had craved for all summer. For your own sake, join us next time we do this. Service does a body good.

All in all, change is change. We can't stop change. We can't stop bad things from happening. What we can do is make the best of every situation we are in. Keep laughter and light in everything we do. Make every person we touch in our lives glad we were there.

Many of you have not signed up for the 25th Anniversary Celebration. As Yoda would say "Sad, that makes me". I wasn't a part of the chapter on day one, but have been for most of 23 years. So many good people have been in our chapter, so much amazing talent. And being an involved member has allowed me to grow as much as our chapter has. You caught that word there, involved, right? Involved means talking to others at your table. Asking questions of the speakers. Involved means putting a little bit more of you out there. But involved is such an amazing thing when you do it. My wish for each of you is to involve yourself a little more in our chapter. Allow yourself to grow, allow others to watch you grow into what you can be. Let our members help you be all you can be. I'll stop being "Soapbox" Barbie...for now.