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Detroit: Aboard Welcome

Senior Accountants!





Detroit partner in charge Louis A. MacKenzie (large photo below) presents keynote address. □ New seniors (photo below) with Detroit partner in charge Louis A. MacKenzie include (seated, l. to r.) Thomas J. Whiteman, Eric P. Adamy, Thomas A. Murphy, Jr., (standing l. to r.) John M. Ricco, Leo L. Kessel, Charles A. Worthman, Phillip M. Goy, Dennis R. Diebolt, Mark T. White, James L. Ransford and Ronald H. Frechen. □ (Photo left) Practice furtherance was the subject of talk given by Dayton partner Sherrill W. Hudson.



As everyone familiar with our Firm knows, undertaking the responsibilities of a senior accountant is a major step forward in an accountant's career. But few places in Haskins & Sells pay the occasion of entering "seniorhood" the recognition that has become customary in our Detroit office.

Last November, twenty-nine seniors, including some who were promoted in June and others scheduled for promotion in December, attended the Sixth Annual Meeting of Detroit Senior Accountants. On the first evening, the newly promoted seniors and their spouses were warmly welcomed at a cocktail hour and dinner hosted by Louis A. MacKenzie, partner in charge of the Detroit office. The following day the new seniors sat down with their more experienced colleagues for an intensive, many-sided presentation of certain aspects of the Firm's practice to which they must now give thought.

Throughout the proceedings Lou MacKenzie, founder of the annual series of meetings for Detroit office seniors,

could not conceal his pride in the excellence of the group. ("A great bunch of kids!" he was heard to say repeatedly.)

Held at Raleigh House in Southfield, a northwestern Detroit suburb, the reception and dinner on the opening evening brought partner Dick Goff from the Saginaw suboffice with three of his senior accountants, and partner Paul Devore from the newly opened suboffice in Grand Rapids with one senior. Allan L. Swormstedt, Detroit administrative partner who coordinated the meeting, and his wife Gerry were among the partners, managers and their wives who joined Lou and Betty MacKenzie in greeting the guests of honor.

After dinner, Lou called each of the new seniors to the podium to receive a leather briefcase stamped with the owner's name, as a remembrance of the occasion. Then he said, in his characteristic straight talk: "If any of you think that just the passage of time gets you to the rank of senior accountant—forget it! I am confident that each of you has the ability to take on serious professional responsi-





Joseph Svec, vice president and controller of The Bendix Corporation and an alumnus of the H&S Detroit office, was one of the featured speakers.

bility, because you have already proved it. You are the lifeblood of this Firm. I expect all of you, senior accountants today, to be directing this Firm just a few years down the road, when I hope to be playing lots of golf!"

The most interesting aspect of the meeting was the variety of outside speakers and their subjects. Manager David Sidaway, training director of the Detroit office, introduced the speakers, each of whom covered subjects not normally in a staff accountant's area of major concern, but which are important to those seriously interested in personal and professional advancement.

On the first evening, with wives present, the after-dinner speaker was Marji Kunz, fashion editor of the *Detroit Free Press*. Her message: "Appearance Is Important." Revealing touches of humor that at times put her audience in stitches, Ms. Kunz stressed the importance of clothes and grooming as "a form of non-verbal communication." She urged the senior accountants to think about the effect of their appearance on others, and above all "to look credible, but not too authoritarian or severe.... Looking well in sports garb is important too. A client may ask himself if he can sponsor you as a club member."

The Friday sessions included a spokesman from the world of public relations, William McMaster, who discussed "The Public Image of CPAs." Asserting that "there is a very thin file in the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Detroit Free Press* on CPA firms," McMaster urged his listeners to "Speak up. You have expertise, knowledge that is not known to the general public.... There should be more availability of CPAs to business editors. Often

you are not available even when they come knocking at your door.... A change must come if the image of the CPA is to improve."

Joseph Svec, an alumnus of H&S Detroit office and now vice president and controller of The Bendix Corporation, spoke to the group on: "What a Client Expects of a CPA." "I expect a quality audit, not a complacent one," he said. "We want to be challenged.... I want to know about the attitudes of our people, perhaps passed on in an informal way.... We want quality communication, and quality management of the audit." In short, he urged the senior accountants to be thorough, demanding and tough.

Sherrill W. Hudson, a partner in the Dayton office, spoke on his favorite theme: "Practice Furtherance: A Way of Life." Reciting one anecdote after another, case histories of the way he and his colleagues in Dayton have sought and obtained new clients, Sherrill made it clear that participating in community and professional organizations is one of the best ways to make oneself known. Choose the right organizations, he said, ones in which you feel at home, and which you enjoy. "The test," he added, "is whether you would want to go into that association if you were not with H&S."

Dividing into groups of six or seven, the seniors held a lively hour of discussion, in which they explored some of the most important questions raised by the speakers. Perhaps the most vexing was how to promote good public relations for the Firm and the office, and take every opportunity to build the practice, within the ethical constraints of the profession. It was clear that the issues raised by the speakers and tackled in the discussion

groups defied quick solution. And although many questions were left in the participants' minds, so, too, was the stimulation to think about them.

A reminder to the senior accountants, almost all in their twenties, that their physical well-being requires attention came from Dr. Robert G. Wiencek, Associate Medical Director of General Motors. Discussing "Executive Health," Dr. Wiencek said:

➤➤➤ Now is the time in your life to establish good health habits, because it is hard to change habits after age 40.

➤➤➤ Don't wait until you are sick to find a physician on whom you can call in case of need. Find him now.

➤➤➤ The annual checkup ("your annual audit") is a necessity, because many ailments, such as high blood pressure, come on insidiously. But if symptoms are found early, they can be diagnosed and treated.

➤➤➤ Establish good eating habits. A most common disease, even among professionals and executives, is malnutrition.

➤➤➤ Regular physical exercise should be a habit, not a regimented program. One hour of exercise three times a week should be possible for busy professionals.

More technical discussions at the meeting covered analytic review, conducted by partner Richard Gabrys; report and working paper review: constructive comments, by Allan Swormstedt; and a presentation on timesharing. Altogether it was a lot to absorb. But Lou MacKenzie left the meeting wreathed in smiles, because he knows that these new Detroit senior accountants have the ability and the training to take them a long way.