



Not Your Basic Bean Counter

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NEWSLETTER

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NEWS FLASH...LIKE LAST YEAR, OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON FRIDAYS STARTING JUNE 3, 2016 THROUGH LABOR DAY.



Bragging about my staff

- I genuinely think that I have the best staff in Coos County. Really. They are awesome. Other professionals have tried to hire them away.....but they won't go!
- Did you know that the national average for turnover in my industry is 25% a year!? My turnover rate is almost ZERO. And turnover is very costly.
- My philosophy is different than most CPA firms. You can read it on our website. But, in a nutshell, I believe that if I don't pay my staff enough or treat them well enough then they *should* leave. And it's "shame on me" not "shame on them".
- Regarding training, by law we are supposed to have 40 hours of education each year. My staff often has twice that amount. Why? Because I believe in education and keeping up with all of the new tax laws. And, believe me, it isn't easy! It takes a serious commitment to training.
- As many of you know, I spent the first 5 years of my career working for the largest CPA firm in the world (Arthur Andersen & Co.). I worked with some of the brightest tax minds in the country. AND....I can tell you that my staff will hold up against ANY of them. I'm not just bragging....this is for real.
- Not only are they technically at the top of their game.....but, they are even NICE PEOPLE! Holy cow! That just isn't the case in all CPA firms. I am so blessed to have a staff that is technically brilliant AND real, caring, fun people. I can't think of a client who doesn't LOVE my staff.

Here's a rundown of how long my staff has been with me.....scary stuff!

Name	Yrs		Name	Yrs		Name	Yrs
Dawn Buxton, EA	18		Susan Watson, LTC	19		Tammie Martin, <i>Office Mgr</i>	23
Kim Phelps, CPA	14		Alisha Collins, LTP	3		Carie Curtis, <i>TEAM MOM</i>	1

AM I BLESSED OR WHAT!!!!

NEW MINIMUM WAGE EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2016

This is a very sore topic with many! Nevertheless, for us Oregonians, effective July 1, 2016, the minimum wage is going from \$9.25 TO \$9.50 per hour. Many of you have already heard this. BUT...it's not actually the whole truth.

So here's what is really happening. Oregon has broken the state into 3 geographic areas: the "standard" area, the "Portland Metro" area, and the "nonurban counties" area (we fit here). For 2016 and 2017 here are the minimum wage figures broken out by these 3 areas.....

Date	Standard	Portland Metro	Nonurban Counties
1/1/2016	9.25	9.25	9.25
7/1/2016	9.75	9.75	9.50
7/1/2017	10.25	11.25	10.00

Note that the "standard" and "Portland Metro" areas are the same until 7/1/2017 when they start moving apart. Portland will be the highest minimum wage location in the state from that point on.

The "Nonurban Counties" are listed as follows:

Baker	Coos	Crook	Curry	Douglas
Gilliam	Grant	Harney	Jefferson	Klamath
Lake	Malheur	Morrow	Sherman	Umatilla
Union	Wallowa	Wheeler		

So, the only area left undefined is the "standard" area. I guess that would be anywhere in Oregon but Portland and the Nonurban Counties!!

BY THE WAY.....you can go to www.oregon.gov and search for "minimum wage" and you will be taken to a web page that shows you all of the above AND a nice map of Oregon that color codes the 3 different areas.

THIS IS A POLITICAL HOT POTATO RIGHT NOW. I hope you appreciate that I always try to stay OUT of the current political banter...on any subject! My job is to take CRAZY GOOD CARE OF YOU. That's all I want to do. I want to equip you with seriously good tax info and stay OUT of the political arena. I hope the above information will make its way out to our local businesses.

MORE ON FRAUD AND INTERNAL CONTROLS

HOT OFF THE PRESS !!

I hope that the majority of you know, by now, that I absolutely LOVE any information about fraud and embezzlement. I eat this stuff up and read all I can. Believe it or not, it is FUN to read.

Well, one of the TOP items on my list of reading in this arena is a publication put out annually AND it just got released. Here it is.....and it is FREE.....

Title: Report To The Nations On Occupational Fraud And Abuse
Author: Association of Certified Fraud Examiners

Allow me to BRAG a little here. This is a 91 page report. I am not aware of anyone else in my industry that actually prints it out and reads it. I read it from cover to cover. Why? Because it is a hoot!!

This publication is THE authority on fraud and embezzlement happening in our country. It tells you WHO is committing it, AGES, DEMOGRAPHICS and much more.

For instance, it will break out the different methodologies for committing fraud. It will tell you which of those methods are used by women and which are used by men. It will tell you how LONG the fraud occurs before being caught. It will tell you the average SIZE of the fraud by category. It will tell you actual stories that will amaze you.

I know I sound like a used car salesman here! Trust me, I am not on any kind of commission. This report really is THAT good and fun to read.

TO ALL OF MY BUSINESS CLIENTS

~~Time to get serious for a minute. If you are reading this and you own a business, then this report is a MUST read for you. No excuses. It is a MUST read.~~

How to get it: Go to Google and type in "Report to the Nations". Click on the first hit. On the website scroll down to the bottom and in small print you will see "Download Report PDF". Click on that and it will download. It's a big file....over 5MB. Print it out....all 92 pages!

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE.....BITE THE BULLET, PRINT IT OUT AND READ IT.

IRS SENDS OUT MORE ERRONEOUS NOTICES

I guess, by now, that this kind of news should not surprise us anymore. Many taxpayers received what is called an “advance payment” on their health insurance premiums. Basically, a taxpayer contacts the “marketplace” at the beginning of a year and represents to them what they think they will earn over the year. Then, the marketplace determines if that person is eligible to receive help with their monthly premiums. One way this help is given is by them paying a portion of the monthly premium directly to the provider each month. This is called the “advance premium” method.

At any rate, at a later date when the ACTUAL earnings are known, the taxpayer may need to repay some of that if they earned more than they originally told the marketplace. This is typically done via the filing of a tax return.

However, the IRS went ahead and sent out 27,000 erroneous notices to taxpayers indicating that they did not qualify for any help and should pay it back. But these notices were wrong! To their credit, the IRS came right out and confessed.

In my experience, whenever the IRS gives us a number it is usually waaaaaay low! So, I don't know what the real number is, but I am willing to bet that it is MUCH higher than the 27,000 figure.

STILL VERY HARD TO CONTACT THE IRS

In 2015 the IRS Commissioner, John Koskinen, announced that more than 60% of taxpayer phone calls were going to be ignored during the 2015 filing season. While no stats are out yet about the tax season we just finished, I can tell you that our experience is that it hasn't gotten better. Their budget is still cut to the bone and that is having a LOT of unintended consequences for American taxpayers.



We are still finding that it is taking significantly longer to contact the IRS and resolve tax issues on behalf of our clients. And, to make matters worse, that means higher fees from us when representing a client. Not a good situation at all.

