



LESS TAXING MATTERS

By Timothy J. McCormally
TEI Executive Director

Four Visits, Four Signs of TEI's Continuing Vitality

According to the Greater Cincinnati Convention and Visitors Bureau, Cincinnatians consume more than two million pounds of chili each year, topped by 850,000 pounds of shredded cheddar cheese. As someone who enjoys eating as much as I do, it is no surprise that I have enjoyed Cincinnati's fabulous two-way, three-way, four-way, and even five-way chili (with spaghetti, chili, shredded cheese, diced onions, and beans) many times — courtesy of a wonderful chain in the D.C. area called Hard Times. Until this year, however — despite more than half a dozen visits to the Cincinnati Chapter during my tenure with TEI — I have not had the opportunity to enjoy Cincinnati chili in the city that gave the chili its name. As someone who grew up eating "traditional" beans and meat chili in Kansas and Iowa, the cinnamon and other spices in Cincinnati chili took some getting used to, but I'm glad I did.

My benefactor this year was **Fred Greenwood** of Ashland, Inc., the 2009-2010 president of the Institute's Cincinnati Chapter, who invited me not only to attend the chapter's November 9 meeting, but who also made it possible for me to "go native" in terms of eating chili. Since the chapter meeting featured an afternoon of technical presentations followed by the customary reception and plated dinner, I arranged to arrive in town early, stopping by Fred's office in time for us to join **Tom Aydt** of Kroger (first vice president), **Craig Schmidtgesling** of Givaudan Flavors (treasurer), and **Steve O'Bryan** of Macy's (chair of the Academic Committee) at a Skyline Chili restaurant. One of my brothers recently moved to Cincinnati, so I was aware that there are several chili chains in the area — Skyline, Gold Star, Dixie, and Empress — each with its own devotees. I could not really glean what set one of them apart from the others, but based on what was put in front of me, I am absolutely fine with Fred's choice.

As we sat down and ordered (I decided to forgo the beans and onions and simply order three-way chili), Tom noted that all five of us were wearing white shirts, a risky proposition (at least for me), but the waitress soon appeared with plastic bibs to keep us presentable for the chapter meeting, and we heartily dug into our lunch as we discussed the economic climate in Ohio, the fate of the Bengals and the University of Cincinnati's surprising football team, and of course the work of the chapter. The technical content of the meeting was arranged by **Mike Palm** of Nationwide Insurance and **Brian Yaussy** of Limited Stores, who co-chair the chapter's State and Local Tax Committee. They had arranged the participation of a top-notch group of professionals from KPMG to discuss "Current Developments in Multi-State Taxation."

During lunch, Steve led a discussion of the chapter's continuing outreach to the academic community. One of the reasons I wanted to attend the chapter's November meeting is that it was using the occasion to present \$1,500 scholarships to students at four different schools — the University of Cincinnati, Miami University, Northern Kentucky University, and Capital University. In addition, Steve had arranged a panel discussion with various university professors to discuss "The State of Affairs with Accounting/Tax Students." One of the professors was Barry Arlinghaus of Miami University, a long-time friend of the Institute who has contributed several articles on corporate tax management topics to *The Tax Executive* magazine over the years, and I appreciated the opportunity to catch up with him. I also enjoyed the chance to visit with members during and after the meeting and to talk with some of the students over dinner. As is often the case with TEI meetings, as good as the technical content was during the sessions, the most valuable parts of the meeting seemed to be what happened before and after those sessions.

Everything about my visit to Cincinnati was good — the camaraderie among members and *esprit de corps* among their leaders, and the educational content — and I left Ohio gratified by the hard work and commitment of Fred Greenwood and those who are working with him to continue the Cincinnati Chapter's tradition of success.

Side Trip to New England Chapter

Just before I travelled to Cincinnati, I found myself in Needham, Massachusetts, for a meeting of the New England Chapter. The spur-of-the-moment visit had not been on my calendar, but during the Annual Conference in San Antonio, **Tim Wigon** of Bose mentioned that the chapter was instituting a "new members luncheon" as part of the Institute's initiative to reach out to new members. A couple of phone calls later — to **Karen Miller** of Ocean Spray, the chapter's representative on the Institute's Board of Directors, and **Jon Kasdan** of Altra Industrial Motion, the president of the New England Chapter — and I was on my way (courtesy of a very favorable fare from Air Tran).

The technical content of the meeting was absolutely superior. The meeting on Federal Tax and Financial Reporting Issues was planned by **Steve Reed** of Orchard Brands, and the subject matter experts from PricewaterhouseCoopers and Deloitte & Touche were outstanding. In addition, the luncheon for new members was at once informal and very effective at making everyone feel at home. I commend everyone who contributed to the meeting's success. I also offer a special thank you to **Tony Paolillo** of Sapient, the chapter's treasurer, who kindly gave me a ride from Needham back into the city.

Westward Ho! ... to Orange County

The first week of December took me to the Orange County Chapter for the first time in nearly a decade, and like my visits to Cincinnati and New England, I returned to Washington from California with confidence in the vitality of TEI's network of chapters.

The program was planned by **Jay Ramirez** of Allergan, and he did an excellent job of identifying topics and speakers of interest to the members. Professionals from Miller & Chevalier discussed The Push for Greater Taxpayer Transparency, Economic Substance Developments, and Corporate Tax Developments, as well as Audit and Appeals Strategies. Their morning presentations were complemented by top-notch presentations on financial accounting topics (including codification of GAAP, valuation allowances, and IFRS) by Deloitte & Touche.

My trip to Orange County gave me an opportunity to talk with **Teri Wielenga** of Allergan, chair of the Institute's Financial Reporting Committee (who was recently nominated to be TEI's 2010-2011 Treasurer); **Karen Smarr** of Bourns, the chapter's representative on the Institute's Board of Directors; and **Feng Gao-Vogt** of St. John Knits, this year's chapter president. Equally important, I had the chance to talk with chapter members about the Institute's new website as well as TEI's recent advocacy efforts.

Ending the Year on a High Note: New York's Annual Symposium

For 46 years, TEI's New York Chapter has held an all-day symposium in December that exemplifies the best aspects of TEI: unparalleled educational content and networking opportunity at a very

affordable price. I was especially pleased to attend this year's program because it gave me an opportunity to watch **Carita Twinem**, TEI's Treasurer, present a Meritorious Committee Service Award to New York Chapter member **John Orr** for his long-time efforts in behalf of TEI's Federal Tax Committee. (Carita is the former chair of the committee.) John, whose current chapter duties include chairing the Scholarship Committee, then presented several scholarships, demonstrating that he was not one to rest on his laurels.

In addition to the award for John and the scholarship presentations, the luncheon program at this year's Symposium included a keynote address by former IRS Chief Counsel **Don Korb**, and the chapter's presentation of its Outstanding Taxpayer Service Award to **Frank Ng**, former LMSB Commissioner. All these festivities were expertly presided over by **Lori Matulewicz** of Prudential Financial, who was not only eloquent but also very generous in her words of praise for everyone who contributed to the meeting's success. I thank all of them — and her — for their efforts.

Season's Greetings

On behalf of TEI's staff, I offer all members of the Institute and other readers of *The Tax Executive* best wishes for the new year. May 2010 bring you all health, happiness, and personal fulfillment and may the world's "stocking" be filled with peace, stability in the financial markets, and sustained economic expansion and job growth.

