



THE ASSESSMENT FILES

COUNTY ASSESSORS ASSOCIATION OF OKLAHOMA

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News From the President

I really enjoyed the CODA meeting this year. The speakers did an excellent job entertaining us while providing a good message. Bingo was fun, as usual, even though my luck was bad. I heard several people say that Jeff McMahan's Fish Fry was better than ever. (I am a firm believer that you can enjoy yourself wherever you go if you choose to do so.)

Congratulations to Kathi Mask for doing a great job all year as CODA President. We are very proud of her!

We have more new assessors. Please welcome Francis Johnson, Caddo County; Leon Hurt, Delaware County; & Donna Graham, Sequoyah County. As always, we will be happy to help these new assessors in any way. I think I had neglected to officially mention months ago that Robert McAdoo and Jack O'Neal had left our ranks for other interests. Better late than never, I guess.

The Annual Conference is scheduled for October 26th-28th. We will have some new speakers and some of our regulars. And, as always, we plan to have some fun. Please send in your membership dues and registration as soon as possible. Remember, we will be able to earn 2 CEUs on Thursday. I hope you all enjoy the change in location. It is a very nice facility and everyone seems to enjoy that area of Oklahoma City. We will vote on Friday before we adjourn whether to try another year at the Clarion or return to the Biltmore.

See you soon!

Denise Heavner

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Ad Valorem Update

Sometimes you learn something by reading. Other times you learn by pure experience. About ten or eleven years ago, I was in New Orleans and out jogging/walking early in the morning in the French Quarter. (That's 6 a.m., not 3 a.m.) I came up on what I thought was a hill and I could see something that looked like a stove pipe moving behind the rise. I went up to the top of the "hill" and realized a quick lesson in geography. What I thought was a hill was a levee. What I thought was a stove pipe was the smoke stack of a huge barge. It was clear that the Mississippi River was at least ten feet above me. If it hadn't been for that levee, I would have been swimming instead of jogging. That's when I first realized how low New Orleans was and the precarious existence the city has with the water of the river, gulf, and Lake Pontchartrain.

Oklahomans are all really moved by the tragedy of Katrina. We've been through our own battles with the Murrah building bombing and tornadoes. I think everyone here understands and sympathizes with the people of New Orleans-Gulf Coast area and the Americans trying to help them.

We had a good session at the CODA meeting last week. We've continued to have a number of calls on the Veterans Exemption program. No matter how much we talk about it there are always new twists and wrinkles in the process of implementing a complicated exemption.

The State Auditor and Inspector (SA&I) Jeff McMahan's fish fry at the Governor's mansion was really nice. A beautiful Oklahoma early fall evening, a nice view of the guardian statute against the setting sun, and some great conversation and stories from all the county officers and deputies. The only thing I missed was last year being waited on by Ron Sosbee.

We've again had good evaluations and suggestions on the Annual Conference. We finally registered 454 which was down some, but understandable after all the delay on the hotel. Again, I don't think that we overdo it to remind everyone that the success of our efforts rests on the partnership of the County Assessors' Association, Center for Local Government Technology (CLGT), County Cooperative Extension, and State Auditor and Inspector (SA&I) and the Oklahoma Tax Commission, Ad Valorem Division.

Our staff is looking forward to the County Assessors' Association Convention in late October and the Oklahoma Association of Tax Representative meetings.

Finally, we appreciate all the hard work of the county assessors and deputies this year. We all share a responsibility to make the ad valorem system better than it was when it was given to us. Efforts to constantly improve taxpayer service are extremely important and we appreciate the efforts of the members of the County Assessors' Association who've made that happen.

Jeff Spelman, CAE

P.S. The famous GM Executive Alfred Sloan had a rule that if every one of his executives agreed on a decision, he would require everyone to study it again because he was worried that they were missing something. "Nothing's perfect and I need to know all the facts, not just agreement from the 'yes' men." Unlike GM, I don't think we've ever had that problem in the ad valorem system, we always have plenty of varied opinions, but that's good in the long run.

Reporter's Notes

VERY IMPORTANT!! Please take time to check the OTC Ad Valorem Division/ County Information Directory you should have received in the mail during the past few weeks. If any of the information about your office is wrong, please contact Stephens County Assessor Cathy Hokit immediately. She is working on a new assessors' directory. If you want a new picture in the directory book, please send that to her. Someone will also be available at the annual conference to take pictures of those who need them taken.

Noble County Assessor Mary Moore, chairperson for the Memoriam Committee, is requesting that all counties that have had an officer or deputy pass away in the past year please contact her as quickly as possible. Please include the deceased's name, county, position, and years of service. Mary can be reached at (580) 336-2185 or at: mary@noblecountyassessor.com

We want to pass along our condolences to Mickey Coley, who lost both his uncle, Thomas Young, and his father, Joel Coley, within the past month. Please continue to remember Mickey and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Also, the Grady County Assessor's Office still has four used computers for sale to any county that can use them. County Assessor Phyllis Ray says if anyone is interested, they can call her office at (405) 224-4361.

Just a reminder that the 4-C committee will be meeting October 4th at the OTC Ad Valorem Building at 10 o'clock followed by a Legislative Committee meeting concerning gross production matters that threaten to become an issue this upcoming legislative session.

Finally, hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable month of October. The seasons are beginning to change and we should have cool, fall weather stick around for good. Hope to see each and every one of you at the Fall Assessors' Conference at the end of the month!

Your Reporter,
Todd Mathes



September Birthdays

Cathy Hokit (Stephens)	October 1
Melissa Anderson (Rogers)	October 1
Scott Kirby (Murray)	October 4
Glenda Cypert (McClain)	October 8
Vickie Hamm (McIntosh)	October 11
Maxine Elston (Beaver)	October 16
Rosemary Neely (Blaine)	October 28

How to properly clean your toilet:

1. Put both lids of the toilet up and add 1/8 cup of pet shampoo to the water in the bowl.
2. Pick up the cat and soothe him while you carry him towards the bathroom.
3. In one smooth movement, put the cat in the toilet and close both lids. You may need to stand on the lid.
4. The cat will self-agitate and make ample suds. Never mind the noises that come from the toilet, the cat is actually enjoying this.
5. Flush the toilet three or four times. This provides a “power-wash” and “rinse.”
6. Have someone open the front door of your home. Be sure that there are no people between the bathroom and the front door.
7. Stand behind the toilet as far as you can and quickly lift both lids.
8. The cat will rocket out of the toilet, streak through the bathroom, and run outside where he will dry himself off.
9. Both the commode and the cat will be sparkling clean!



Sincerely,

The Dog

