



THE ASSESSMENT FILES

COUNTY ASSESSORS ASSOCIATION OF OKLAHOMA

APRIL
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2006

NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello Everyone

If your office is like ours, you're very busy finishing up renditions and dealing with upset tax payers who received raised notices this year. Many of them are receiving yet another 5% increase. Many of the properties are still way under market value. Trying to catch up with the increasing cost of new construction and the incredible prices people are paying for existing homes is like the race between the turtle and the hare. Even so, our protests are minimal considering the number of increase notices that went out this year.

The officers will be meeting with Jeff Spelman and the tax commission staff soon to prepare for classes for the annual state school. We will be back at our home away from home, the Southern Hills Marriott. The annual school is scheduled for August 8th through 11th this year. Be sure to mark your calendars.

The district meetings are coming up in May. I was planning on attending all of them, but I may miss the Southwest District meeting due to an important conflicting commitment. Hope many of you can attend at least one of them.

Northeast District	May 5, 2006	Tulsa County	Jenks, Ok
Southeast District	May 12, 2006	Bryan County	Durant, Ok
Northwest District	May 19, 2006	Harper County	Buffalo, Ok
Southwest District	May 26, 2006	Cleveland Co.	Norman, Ok

We have been testing the new SA&I Assessor's System for the past several months. So far, we are really impressed with it. Scott, Johnny, Carol, and Jimmy have been very helpful in fixing any glitches and adding features we find to be useful. Anytime we call with questions, they are right there to answer them and fix any problems we might have. The system has many new programs and features. I think everyone will be very pleased with this new system and how well it works with CAMA. We now have two good programs we can use in our office to help us meet the ever changing assessment process. Thanks to both SA&I and the Oklahoma Tax Commission for their continuing efforts to make our jobs a little easier. There are many long hours put in for our behalf. We really do appreciate it.

See you all soon.

Ralph Wilson

President

Ad Valorem Update

Summer got here early. I think we've missed the rains and the Red Buds. A guy I know who is a roof installer tells me that if we can make it to the last of May maybe we'll survive the stormy weather season that he hates, but it's good for his business. Either way, the Oklahoma spring is beautiful as always just a little hot this year.

We've had lots of activity this year at the Oklahoma Legislature as well as in the various counties, and the Ad Valorem Division staff is looking forward to District meetings. I appreciated everyone's help in completing the Veteran's homestead exemption survey. \$8 million was the final result and we're running a county-by county summary in this newsletter.

I had a great experience last week. I got to repeat my experience from last year and visit Harvard again. (Keep in mind, that I was as last year I was officially "across the street" from Harvard that's close enough I think that entitles me to wear the T-Shirt.) I attended a property tax seminar in Cambridge, Massachusetts, right across the street from Harvard. Lincoln Land Institute is a property tax "think tank" They sponsor several seminars each year and invite different states to attend on their nickel. I don't feel especially smarter, but I can't wait to drop Harvard in conversation.

The best line of the trip was one night, several of the seminar folks were coming back from dinner on the subway. The place was packed with thousand of people since there was a Red Sox game going on and there had been a demonstration on immigration on the Boston Common. So we're basically lost forty feet below the street in the oldest subway in the United States in the middle of huge crowd—half of them with protest signs, half of them with Boston Red Sox hats on. So we're trying to figure out how to get out of the crowd, find the right subway so we can cross the river and get back to our hotel near Harvard. As always, however, everyone was really nice and friendly to lost souls wandering underground. So finally despite our male upbringing, we stopped and asked a little tiny white haired woman with a shawl who looked like she had just come from Ireland or off the set of the "Godfather." Alan, one of the seminar folks from Idaho, asked the lady, "How do we get to Harvard?" She looked at him for a second and said, "Study, young man, study hard."

Two major points were made concerning the property tax. First, many states have spend a lot of time going through major property tax reforms and as one person put it, "They've reached an equilibrium and no one is interested in making further reforms. They're not happy with some of the reforms, but no one has the political energy to go to the original method. Second, one study indicated that property tax is now in what they called "An Era of Endlessly Tinkering." There are no major reforms underway just minor of adjustments of cap percentages or rate adjustments. Very interesting thought on the national trends.

Remember that this is a mandatory meeting with county assessors. If you have a conflict with one of your meeting dates you can always attend another district meeting. We will offer two hours of CEUs at the meeting.

We appreciate all you do for your taxpayers and all the hard work of county assessors and deputies every where. It's a tough job, but ad valorem is an extremely important part of local government in Oklahoma. We're all working to pass the system on better than it was given to us.

Jeff Spelman, CAE

P.S. "What I spent is gone; what I kept, I lost: but the good of what I gave away will be mine forever." Anwar Caddo, Ad Valorem Philosopher with credit to Ethel Percy Andrus. Anwar attended Harvard for two days so far.

Reporter's Notes

Hello Everyone:

Last month I included an article from the Enid News & Eagle, regarding the use of the sinking fund by the city. I want to give you an update on the issue. Last night the City Council voted to pay for the judgment from the storm water fund and not levy it on the taxroll. This is a huge victory for the property owners. I hope this will end the practice of placing questionable judgments on the taxroll. Never underestimate the power of education. Remember to check your sinking funds to see what judgments the property owners are paying for.

I attended the Mid-American Geographic Information Consortium (MAGIC) in Kansas City last week. I was asked to give a presentation on funding issues small jurisdictions face in funding their GIS program. MAGIC wanted to know specifically, how we generate extra money by selling data, maps, plat books, etc.

The conference was eye opening for me, because most of the people there had no idea of the data we have. Where you and I may see data, they see mapping projects and data layers and so on. One of the best classes I attended dealt with how to make an attractive map. I found it interesting, the amount of time these graphic oriented people put into a simple map. I think our association could benefit from some of the training offered at the conference. I will work with Troy Frazier and try to bring some of these concepts to Oklahoma.

The 2006 County Assessor's Directory is finished. Special thanks go out to Cathy Hokit for compiling the data and to Autry Technology Center in Enid for arranging, printing, and binding the directory. The total cost to the Assessor's Association for producing the directory was less than \$150. They will be distributed at the District Meetings this month. We printed 150 copies, with 147 reserved for counties, vendors, and state agencies. So, if you only receive one book and would like an additional copy, send me an email and, if the demand is great enough, I will have a second batch printed. Please review your information, if you find anything that needs corrected or added to the directory please let me know. I plan to use this directory as a template for future editions.

If you would like to receive updates on legislation, please contact Jerry Stone with the Oklahoma County Treasurer's Office at JERSTO@oklahomacounty.org.

Remember, "The best part of being a public servant is serving the public"

lwade@garfieldcountymail.com phone 580-237-0220 fax 580-249-5989.

God Bless,
Wade

2006 Legislative Session Update

We are still tracking the following bills:

Bill #	Status	Status	Author	Comments	Position	Other Comments
HB 2425	* Sent to Governor	Alive	Rep. Glenn & Sen. Wyrick	Moves the County Training Program under the Cooperative Extension Service at Oklahoma State University	Support	
HB 2472	** Conference granted	Alive	Rep. Perry & Sen. Gumm	Raises income limit for Ad Valorem Reimbursement for Seniors (income to \$ 20,000 & relief up to \$ 400)	Support	No Position
HB 2611	** Conference granted	Alive	Rep. Case & Sen. Garrison	Travel & commissioners hire private counsel	Support	
HB 2755	** Conference granted	Alive	Rep. Blackwell & S. Laughlin/Garsn.	State Owned Land reimbursement bill	Support	
HB 2812	** Conference granted	Alive	Rep. Denny & S. Mike Johnson	Non Profit Retirement communities exempt from ad valorem	Opposed	
HB 2845	** Conference granted	Alive	Rep. Calvey, etal & S. Gumm	changes gross income to income & removes veterans income for freeze & DBL, also certain things before BOE	??????	
HB 2904	** Conference granted	Alive	Rep. Miller (Ken) & S. Lamb	accepts post date as date of delivery or payment	Support	
HB 2986	** Conference granted	Alive	Rep. Jones, etal & S. Paddock	retirement - 2 tier systems-no longer effects our retirement - teachers only	OK	OK after Sen. amendments
HJR 1058	** Conference granted	Alive	Rep. Wesselhoft & S. Leftwich	veterans exemption based percent of disability	Opposed	
SB 1319	*** HA's Read	Alive	Sen. Brogdon & R. Smaligo	Allows Excise Board Counties to extend sessions for hearing appeals & joint county owned property	support	take out population limit
SB 1917	*** HA's Read	Alive	Sen. Barrington & R, McCarter	Excludes veterans income from double homestead income computation	Opposed	
SJR 37	*** HA's Read	Alive	Sen. Crain & Corn & R. Sullivan	Our Freeport Bill - Freeport exemption applications to be filed by March 15th	Support	
			* Sent to Governor	Will become law with Governor's signature		
			** Conference granted	Bill is going to a joint conference of House & Senate (bills can be heard anywhere,anytime)		
			*** HA's Read	Senate can accept house amendments; go to joint conference; or die from lack of action		

You can contact your legislative committee members for updates as well. Your legislative committee is Gail Hedgcoth, Ken Yazel, Debbie Collins, Wade Patterson, and myself.

Dave Herbert is always willing to help with legislators or legislation. Dave can be reached at dherbert@logixonline.com or by phone at (405)733-3345.

Sincerely,

Jim Kelley
jimkelley46@yahoo.com

IAAO Update

Have you considered attending one of our IAAO courses? Our Oklahoma IAAO Chapter is sponsoring two courses this summer knowing this will be a good time in our assessment year for people to attend. Protest hearings will be finished and the abstract will be history! It would be a good opportunity to set aside time to brush up on your appraisal knowledge. The classes promise to be interesting, educational, and enjoyable.

Course 101- Fundamentals of Real Property Appraisal will be June 26-30, 2006, in Oklahoma City. Course 102- Income Approach to Valuation will be July 17-21, 2006, in Tulsa.

The classes are filling up, so one needs to pre-register while there's still time. If you have questions, you can call or email me at Monica@alvaok.net.

Monica Schmidt
2006 IAAO Oklahoma Chapter President

News from CLGT

HB 2425, which deals with removing CLGT in the training of county officers, excluding assessors, passed the House 80 -13 and goes to the Governor for signing. The assessors will still be able to take courses in the county training program administered by the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. Hopefully, CLGT will retain the Assessor Accreditation Program as outlined in Title 68 § 2816 when funds are appropriated in the next coming weeks or days. We may need your help when we get down to convincing the legislators of the necessity of the program and the good things about the program.

We are working in a joint effort with OCES in securing the funding for both programs and it appears everybody is working towards a common goal, and that is for all county officers the continue to get the training they need and are required to achieve.

The remaining classes on the schedule are full except for a few spots in Unit 5 and Unit 7. If you need to take these classes, enroll soon.

We anticipate having the FY07 training schedule for Assessor classes out in June and we probably will not offer any classes in the month of July.

We appreciate your continued support of the program and it is an honor for Doug and me to work with such a professional and sincere group of county officers.

Doug and Gary

OSU/CLGT Upcoming Course Schedule

Unit 4 (Income Approach)	May 8-11	Tulsa
Unit 5 (Business Personal)	May 23-25	Western Hills
Unit 7 (Ag. Land Valuation)	June 8-9	Tahlequah
Unit 6 (Cadastral Mapping)	June 19-22	Tahlequah
IAAO Unit 101 (Real Property)	June 26-30	Oklahoma City
IAAO Unit 102 (Income)	July 17-21	Tulsa

You can download the registration forms on line at <http://clgt.okstate.edu> and email it to clgt@okstate.edu or you can fax the form to 405-744-7268. If you have any questions please contact Doug Warr or Gary Snyder at 405-744-6049.



May Birthdays

Charlotte Hamilton (Comanche)
Linda Kelly (Ottawa)

May 12
May 15