

The Assessment Files

Volume 5

April 2007



The only sure bulwark of continuing liberty is a government strong enough to protect the interests of the people, and a people strong enough and well enough informed to maintain its sovereign control over the government. FDR

From the President's Desk...

Hello to Everyone,

I hope everyone is having as much fun as we are at this time. (Ha ha) We mailed out over 11,000 notices and I think they all have called or come in.

I will hope to see a lot of you at the district meetings this month. It will be nice to have a break.

Our famous Pawnee Bill and Wyatt will be in Duncan tomorrow at our centennial celebration. I look forward to seeing him.

Sorry, this letter is so short, but my mind is exhausted, I can hardly think.

God Bless All of You,

Cathy Hokit

Stephens County Assessor

President, County Assessors' Association

chokit@texhoma.net

The Ad Valorem Division

We have moved to our new location at 3700 N. Classen, Suite 200, so this is a semi-historic first newsletter written from the new building. We've settled in and already had our first 4-C (County Computer Coordination Committee) meeting, which was conducted before our air conditioning was working. Our phones, computers, network, internet, email, and copier are all working flawlessly. Things are somewhat closer to chaos than order, but are gradually falling into place. We have unpacked boxes, a few heating/cooling issues, one small roof leak, and some surplus furniture, but the space is going to be great. We're lucky to have it, and the new location should help us serve our customers in a pleasant, not fancy, but professional office.

If you haven't moved lately, don't attempt it without supervision from a grown-up. If you haven't moved in eighteen years, like the Ad Valorem Division, you're going to be absolutely amazed by all the useless, outdated stuff that we all accumulate during our short time on this planet. Does anyone need a copy of a 1980 report to the Legislature?

The other memorable thing was my brilliant planning in selection of moving day. Our timing coincided perfectly with a rain that broke an all-time Oklahoma County record dating back before statehood. Three plus inches of driving rain, most of it falling the exact moment that Troy Frazier, Joe Hapgood, and Doug Brydon hoisted some 500 pound filing cabinets up on the tail gate lift.

Everyone in the Ad Valorem Division did a super job on the move, such as Rob Tigner getting OneNet, phones and wiring in shape, and moving computers and fax machines, and Carol Prewett getting the server to come back to life after the move. Kenny Chuculate got things organized and ready, while Cyndi Heath worked with OCI and drafted the original floor plan and the hundred amendments thereafter. Last, but not least, the rest of our movers and shakers and packers worked diligently. Special thanks to Russell Hulin, Catherine Belvins, and their terrific moving crew for their help. Come see us at our new office. We'll give you a tour.

We've had lots of activity this year at the Oklahoma Legislature as well as in the various counties. Many of the ad valorem measures are still alive as we approach the half-way mark of the session. We've continued to have lots of requests for ad valorem impacts for the legislative staff.

The Ad Valorem Division has enjoyed our work with the Center for Local Government Technology on developing a new data collection training class. It should be a really useful and relevant class. Thanks to the OSU folks for their assistance and direction in getting this project off the ground.

In the meantime, with the move behind us, the Ad Valorem Division staff is looking forward to district meetings next month. The district meetings, which are

organized and put on by the host counties, are an interesting experience as we visit various parts of Oklahoma.

OATR May 3th (Oklahoma City)
Southwest: May 4th (Comanche County)
Northeast: May 11 (Rogers County)
Northwest May 18 (Kay County)
Southeast: May 25 (Latimer County)

Remember that this is a mandatory meeting for 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.

Thanks to everyone for their help on the various legislative surveys. We appreciate the hard work and conscientious effort of all county assessors and deputies out there. We hope that everyone's work helps improve the Oklahoma ad valorem system and make it better than it was given to us for taxpayers everywhere. Like Tom Cusack says, "Keep in mind, we should be the guardian of fairness. Watch out for the dragons in the uncharted waters."

Jeff Spelman, CAE
Director, Ad Valorem Division
jspelman@tax.ok.gov

P.S. "We must be the change we wish to see in the world if we want it to change."
Stanley T. Cimarron, Ad Valorem Philosopher. Quote borrowed from Mahatma Gandhi.

May Birthdays
Birthstone: emerald
Meaning: love, success and happiness
Flower: lily of the valley

Charlotte Hamilton (Comanche)	May 12
Linda Kelly (Ottowa)	May 15

Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful.

Herman Cain

Legislative Report

This is the current status of the bill's as 4:50 P.M. on Thursday, April 26, 2007

Bill #	Status	Position	Author	Comments
HB 1304	Dormant		R Enns	Public Service Company's buffer strips to be assessed locally
HB 1341	Dormant		R Piatt	Expands definition of Exempt Mfg
HB 1485	Joint Conference	watching	R Adkins	Oil & Gas Exemption
HB 1562	Ref for Engr	opposed	R Denney	exempts continuum care facility - owned by a 501 (C) (3)
HB 1761	Senate amendments pending	support	R Blackwell	Reimbursement for state owned land
HB 1808	Senate amendments pending		R Terrill	exempts disabled vet's personal prop
HB 2069	Ref for Engr*	OK	R Benge	raises employer retirement contribution rate
HJR1009	Dormant	opposed	R Liebmann	Lowers cap 5% to 3% or consumer price index, whichever is lower
HJR1023	Dormant	opposed	R Wesselhoft	Relates to disabled vets and homestead, exempts same percentage of disability to 50%
HJR1028	Dormant	opposed	R Dank	removes income limit for senior freeze
SB 0044	Dormant***	support	S Lerblance	implements filing date for Freeport exemption application & provides for reimbursement from exempt mfg, double homesteads, & filter strips
SB 0072	House amendments read	support	S Garrison	deals with property sitting on county line
SB 0379	Sent to Governor	support	S Ballenger	allows newly elected officers to be reimbursed for training expenses before actually taking office
SB 0605	Failed to Pass	opposed	S Bingman	allows cities up to 10 mills for fire protection
SB 0798	House amendments read		S Gumm	Expands definition of Exempt Mfg
SB 0844	Dormant	watching	S Crain	TIF legislation - sponsored by schools, we should support
SB 1019	House amendments read		S Sykes	Sets forth various requirements for County Elections
SB 1112	House amendments read**	opposed	S Mezzei	Retirement will be various levels of services - x years as deputy & x years as Elected or appointed

*Everyone removed except justices & judges

**Only affects those coming into OPERS after 7-1-2007

***The Freeport part of this bill will be put in a clean up bill, The House leadership killed the reimbursement part

If you have questions, please call me.

Thanks for your help.

Jim

Jimkelly46@yahoo.com

Friends are God's way of apologizing to us for our families. Anonymous

Reporter's Corner

Just as a reminder, though the end of the Legislative Session is nearing, watch your emails for those last minute amendments, which sometimes appear. Some of the most damaging legislation has occurred just as everyone relaxes and thinks there is nothing to worry about. On a lighter note, it always amazes me when you think you've experienced everything, something new always seems to pop up. I think that's the part of this job that keeps all of us on our toes. I'm already looking forward to our State Meeting to hear some of the war stories from this past year.

Please remember to keep all the troops in your prayers. There are not too many families that don't have a family member or someone they know in harms way. Even our state faces another possible call up of some our own to once again put their lives on the line to protect the freedoms we all hold so dear and sometimes take for granted.

Ronnie Funck

Reporter

funckr@canadiancounty.org

ATAP (Assessor Training and Accreditation Program)

2007 Spring Class Schedule		
Unit 4 (Income Approach)	April 30-May 3	Tulsa
Unit 7 (Ag Land Valuation)	May 23-24	Western Hills
Unit 6 (Cadastral Mapping)	June 11-14	Tulsa
Mini-Storage Valuation	June 27-28	Stillwater

You may enroll at: clgt.okstate.edu or fax in your registration at 405-744-7268. If you have any questions you can call us at 405-744-6049 or e-mail us at doug.warr@okstate.edu or gary.snyder@okstate.edu.

Sincerely,
Doug & Gary



New Assessors' Orientation, February 2007

We apologize for leaving this note of concern out of last month's Assessment Files:

Eloise McCully from Kingfisher County writes to let us know about one of her field appraisers. Terry Sedlak's father, Joe Sedlak, was killed in a farming accident. She asks that we all keep Terry's family in our thoughts and prayers.

Please send your comments, suggestions, and submissions including photos from your office or event to Amy Brandley, brandleya@canadiancounty.org, 405.262.1070 x260