

The Assessment Files

Volume 12

November 2007



Fail not to call to mind, in the course of the twenty-fifth of this month, that the Divinest Heart that ever walked the earth was born on that day; and then smile and enjoy yourselves for the rest of it; for mirth is also of Heaven's making. Leigh Hunt

From the President's Desk...

Seasons Greetings and Hello from NE Oklahoma! The weather here is starting to settle into a winter pattern, but since the calendar is changing from November to December, I guess that's okay. Hope you had a joyous Thanksgiving with your family and loved ones, and future good tidings for the upcoming Christmas holiday season.

Here's to hoping your tax roll preparation period went without a hitch...it seems that every year a new wrinkle gets thrown into the mix, whether it's a new collection jurisdiction or a TIF district to take into account. If any of the new assessors who are dealing with their first tax roll have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me or one of my other fellow officers. We'd love to help you through it.

As we look to 2008, I just want to encourage anyone who would like to serve a stint on one of our many committees to please contact me ASAP. I plan on making phone calls to all 76 counties in December to ascertain as to whether or not you plan to continue on your existing committee(s) or if you would like to fill an opening that has been created in the past few months. Just let me know.

Yours very truly,

Todd Mathes

tmathes@countycourthouse.org

December Birthdays

Birthstone: turquoise

Meaning: harmony, contentment and prosperity

Flower: narcissus, holly

Glendel Rushing (Bryan)	December 5
Peggy Williams (Okfuskee)	December 10
Leonard Sullivan (Oklahoma)	December 12
Wade Patterson (Garfield)	December 12
Rhonda Pritchett (Adair)	December 22

The Ad Valorem Division

Happy Birthday, Oklahoma! One hundred years is quite an accomplishment and don't forget it will only take a few years for the state to catch up to the ad valorem system. The office of County Assessor did not come into existence until 1911, but the ad valorem system existed in Oklahoma and Indian Territory before we were granted statehood.

For those of us that are fascinated by Oklahoma history, this has been a really interesting year. Our family has attended several events and it's been an amazing experience. I've also enjoyed trying to count the number Centennial appearances by the former Pawnee County Assessor, Wayne Spears. He ought to get a state medal for all the times that he's loaded up his horse "Y" and journeyed around the state.

The County Assessors' Association Convention went very well this year. Cathy Hokit and her officers did a good job. I especially appreciated the presentation by Cherry Hefley remembering some of the past assessors.

I will not comment on or condone any of the actions in the CLGT's visual presentation on "How Not to Conduct a Good Field Inspection." Gary Snyder and Doug Warr's humorous presentation was definitely an example how seeing something done wrong really re-enforces how to do the job correctly. Gary and Doug are practically ready for the big screen.

We appreciated the efforts of Daron Frederickson in putting together the audio-visual presentation on drilling rigs and associated equipment. It was good information and useful to everyone who watched the presentation.

Week before last some of our staff attended the National Conference on Unit Value States (NCUVS) in San Diego, California. NCUVS is nearly thirty years old now, and it represents a gathering of forty states that use the unit valuation process for their centrally assessed property. It was a good conference and provided our staff an opportunity to meet with other states with similar responsibilities and challenges.

The Ad Valorem Division represented by Mike Isbell and Ata Baka attended the fall Oklahoma Association of Tax Representatives (OATR) meeting. It was a productive session.

I've included this message in the last five or six November newsletters, and it's still valid. Sometime around Thanksgiving, be sure and thank all the people with whom you work. The Ad Valorem Division has a list of people to thank and it's a great tradition. It's always nice to get a thank-you. County assessors and deputies and Ad Valorem Division should remember how much a "thank-you" can mean.

We'll see everyone at the State Board of Equalization (SBOE) meeting. The most important thing in a democracy, Tom Cusack says, is to make sure that the system is fair, not just to the person who protests but also to the person who doesn't complain. They don't always get a "thank-you", but some people who don't express their appreciation just realize how important the job is. I hope all had a happy Thanksgiving.

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

P.S. "Minds are like parachutes. They only function when they are open." Stanley T. Cimarron, Ad Valorem Philosopher borrowed from Stephen Covey.

County Training Program

Don't forget to check the County Training Program schedule for the spring on our website: www.agecon.okstate.edu/ctp. Check back often for new classes being added. We encourage County Assessors to join us for any of our classes, at no charge. For any additional information, phone 405-744-6555 or email ctp@okstate.edu.

Judy Rudin
judy.rudin@okstate.edu

***Christmas is a time when kids tell Santa what they want
and adults pay for it. Deficits are when adults tell the government what they want and their kids pay for it.***

Richard Lamm

ATAP (Assessor Training and Accreditation Program)

Dear County Assessors and Deputies,

We hope everybody is looking forward to Christmas and spending time with your families. But before the good times of Christmas, come tax bills and many happy taxpayers to your office to wish you a Merry Christmas or something. Most likely you'll get wished or told a lot of somethings. Hang in there, it will be over soon.

The ATAP Spring 2008 class schedule is about finalized. When the Spring 2008 schedule is finalized you will receive a course schedule in the mail and our website will be updated. At that time you will be able to enroll at: <http://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.

We still consider it a privilege to work with you all.

Merry Christmas!
Doug & Gary

Course	Date		Time	City	Hotel	Location
	Beg	End				
Unit 6 (Cadastral Mapping)	12/11/2007	12/14/2007	1:00 Tues 8:30 - 4:30 W,Th 8:30 - 12:00 Fri	Lake Murray	Lake Murray State Lodge 1-800-257-0322	Lake Murray State Lodge 1-800-257-0322
Unit 7 (Ag Land Valuation)	1/10/2008	1/11/2008	8:30 - 4:30Th 8:30 - 12:00 Fr	OKC	Four Points Sheraton 6300 East Terminal Dr. Okla. City, OK 405-681-3500	Four Points Sheraton 6300 East Terminal Dr. Okla. City, OK 405-681-3500

I am not alone at all, I thought. I was never alone at all. And that, of course, is the message of Christmas. We are never alone. Not when the night is darkest, the wind coldest, the word seemingly most indifferent. For this is still the time God chooses.

Taylor Caldwell

Treasurer's Report

What a great time to be alive. In spite of the negative things that have been happening around the United States, there are always things for which we can all give thanks. Sometimes we allow what we perceive to be a negative event, impact our whole day or even our life. We are to give thanks regardless of whether an event happens to be good or bad. I was reminded of that while doing some Oklahoma research of the history for our Oklahoma State Centennial. We live in a nation, which allows unparalleled freedoms, which we take for granted most of the time. We don't know what bad times are because we are surrounded by so many modern conveniences. Our predecessors had to face not only tough day-to-day survival but also all those unexpected negative events. As you go through the remainder of the Holiday Season remember to say a prayer for the troops, our national leaders, our fellow workers, our fellow workers with health and family issues, and for our nation. May each and every one of you and your families enjoy a very special and Merry Christmas Season.

Merry Christmas,
Ronnie Funck
funckr@canadiancounty.org

P.S. Canadian County probably has the distinction of having the last Centennial Celebration as we celebrated ours this past Monday, November 2007. We always like to be different. I hope you enjoy the pictures of our newly dedicated Oklahoma Centennial Clock.

Reporter's Corner

I just want to thank you for allowing me this opportunity to serve as reporter for our association. I look forward to working with the rest of the officers and doing the best job we can for you.

Thanks,
Monica Schmidt
monica@woodscounty.net

***Somehow, not only for Christmas, But all the long year
through,
The joy that you give to others, Is the joy that comes
back to you.
And the more you spend in blessing, The poor and
lonely and sad,
The more of your heart's possessing, Returns to you
glad.***

John Greenleaf Whittier

Canadian County Dedicates Centennial Clock

November 26, 2007



From left, David Radcliff, Treasurer; Don Young, Commissioner; Phil Carson, Commissioner; Phyllis Blair, Clerk; Ronnie Funck, Assessor; Grant Hedrick, Commissioner.

Volume 12 of *The Assessment Files* is Canadian County's last issue of the newsletter. The new reporter, Monica Schmidt at Woods County, will produce the next year's issues. We have enjoyed creating the newsletters and thank everyone for their contributions. Best wishes to all in 2008!

Please send your comments, suggestions, and submissions including photos from your office or event to Monica Schmidt, monica@woodscounty.net, (580) 327-3118.