



THE ASSESSMENT FILES

COUNTY ASSESSORS ASSOCIATION OF OKLAHOMA

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2006

News From the President

Hello Everyone,

I'm sure all of you are as busy as we are with personal property assessments and business renditions coming in every day. We've finished taking assessments in the small towns for this year. Doing away with household personal property has sure cut down on the number of people we meet there.

I've been busy running the interstate back and forth to Oklahoma City for meetings. I'm glad I have such efficient office help to fill in the gap when I'm gone. The ADHOC Committee has been working on resolving the issues facing CLGT's training program. Hopefully, we will have a solution in the near future.

Be sure to keep your eyes and ears open this legislative session. The Legislative Committee has been watching for new legislation that would affect the counties. There are numerous bills floating around that will exempt more property. And again this year the 5% cap is being challenged. All of these bills will lower the tax base for the counties or lower the cap rate already placed on real property. There is also legislation proposed to provide more exemptions for veterans and their surviving spouses. Watch for these bills to surface and be sure to contact your Legislators and explain to them the adverse affect that passing these bills will have on county government. We have some counties right now who have large numbers of veterans who qualified for the 100% disabled veteran's property tax exemption and will lose a significant amount of tax dollars this year. Many of our counties cannot survive if their tax base continues to decrease.

Plans are being finalized for the CODA Conference being held February 7th through the 9th, 2006. We will be going back to the Biltmore in OKC this year. The phone number to the Biltmore is 1-800-522-6620 if you haven't made your reservations. Hope to see you there.

Ralph Wilson

President

Ad Valorem Update

Happy New Year from the Ad Valorem Division. 2005 was a really terrific year and it is my hope that 2006 will be even better. Now all we need is some rain to knock down these terrible fires and provide some relief for the hard pressed fire departments in all parts of Oklahoma.

We've had Greg Harmon, who heads up a volunteer department in Major County has been out on a few calls. Cyndi Heath's husband with Harrah Fire Department has been busy, and Dwight Argo, who was working as a volunteer in Seminole County, has a broken arm as his reward for helping his neighbors. We'd like to recognize those guys in their efforts to help other people.

Speaking of recognition, the Oklahoma Tax Commission has a tradition. Every December the agency newsletter re-prints various letters or calls that we've received from taxpayers commenting on good taxpayer service. This year the publication has some really nice comments on Jerry Kirton (one of our Ad Valorem Division alumni) and Johnny Brandon for his service. I'd like to thank again the county assessors who wrote in about our field staff's help on the regional training. Several of those letters were run in the "Kudos" edition.

January is always a busy time of year in the ad valorem system. Many county assessors and deputies are out visiting the cities and towns across the state. I've always felt that the visits are a good positive experience for the county assessor, their staff and taxpayers. Name me one other level of government that goes out to meet the taxpayers in a non-emergency situation to provide assistance and support.

The new Veteran's Exemption is off to a good start. We've had some calls, but most of the hard work occurred during the fall. I think the County Assessors Association has done a good job working with the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs to keep everyone informed.

It is New Years Resolution time again. I hope everyone makes some good ones and keeps some of the best. It's not easy. I'm going continue with my usual pledges to exercise, but eat better this year. No more junk food.

Paul Greenburg, a newspaper columnist has a few good resolutions for 2006:

- 1) "Practice what you preach. Better yet, don't preach, just practice."
- 2) "If you believe you can damage things, remember that you can repair wrongs, settle quarrels, and forget grudges."
- 3) "Look up old friends. Make some new ones."
- 4) "Love creative work, do not seek to dominate others, and avoid intimacy with the ruling authorities." Pirke Avot 1:10, from the Talmud advice for journalists.

We should have a very busy and eventful legislative session. We'll be watching to see what legislation might come forward this year.

As we move forward into 2006, we're looking forward to the continued good working relations with the State Auditor and Inspector (SA&I) and Center for Local Government Technology (CLGT), Cooperative Extension, the County Assessors' Association, the Oklahoma Association of Tax Representatives (OATR). A good solid relationship between these groups helps every in the ad valorem system and provides better service for state taxpayers.

Thanks to everyone.
And Happy New Year.

Jeff Spelman, CAE Director Ad Valorem Division

P.S. "Now is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving Hades with them as usual." Anwar Caddo, Ad Valorem Philosopher loosely based on quote from Mark Twain.

Vice-President's Corner

A note from your Vice-President:

We are still working on the County Assessor's Directory. It is about ready to be printed, except for those of you that I still haven't gotten a picture of yet!!!

Wade and Tom Henry have graciously volunteered to do the printing and putting it together for us. I appreciate the help, it will save me a lot of time. Thanks guys.

Cathy Hokit

Pictures and be sent to:

**Stephens County Assessor
Attn: Cathy Hokit
101 S. 11th Street, Room 208
Duncan, OK 73533**

You can also email to chokit@texhoma.net .

Reporter's Notes

Hello Everyone:

We have a new assessor to announce. Troyce King is the new assessor in Pottawatomie County. Troyce has been the cartographer and appraiser in Pottawatomie County for 12 ½ years. Having known Troyce for several years, I know that Pottawatomie County is in good hands. We wish him the best and stand ready to assist his office with any needs. You can contact Troyce at 405-275-4740 or by email at pottawatomie@okassessor.com .

It looks like we are going to have a busy year legislatively. Every county needs to be involved in the legislative process. You need to stay in close contact with your legislators. They will depend on you to clarify what the ad valorem bill mean. Remember, when it comes to ad valorem taxation, you are the expert in your county! If you would like to receive updates on legislation, please contact Jerry Stone with the Oklahoma County Treasurer's Office at JERSTO@oklahomacounty.org .

Just a reminder, if you would like to have something published in the newsletter, please let me know by the 25th of the month.

Contact Information: lwade@garfieldcountyemail.com phone 580-237-0220 fax 580-249-5989.

Please remember, **the best part of being a public servant is serving the public!**

God Bless,

Wade

2006 Legislative Session Update

Dear Assessors,

I hope 2006 has a good beginning for you. It has been nice to see some clouds and actually a little rain with them.

The legislative season is getting off to a booming start. So far I have found between forty and fifty bills that will have an effect on ad valorem and many more that effect county government in some way.

If the House of Representatives have their way we soon won't have to worry about ad valorem taxes. There won't be anybody paying any.

Representative Calvey, the author of HB1715, during the 2005 session requested a revenue impact study done concerning the exemption of certain oil and gas equipment. Those of you that did not respond to the survey last year will be receiving a request to do so this year. I am not sure where Representative Calvey is going with the information, but if you don't respond it will go on record that exempting oil and gas equipment does not have a revenue impact in your county.

It is very important to all of us that the legislature gets good information. I know that if you haven't done an oil and gas project it is going to be difficult to get the information. Please do the very best you can.

Representative Calvey has said he does not want any of the counties that responded last year to be allowed to make any corrections on what we reported. He knows the numbers reported were low and he does not want them corrected. I know that some of us that responded have learned that our numbers were not complete. Pittsburg County is just completing our oil and gas project and we have discovered millions in omitted property that we did not report.

We are requesting that all counties be allowed to review the survey taken and be allowed to adjust our numbers to the correct information.

I will keep in touch with you as legislation develops. I hope to see you all at the CODA conference. I know it is busy for you at this time of year but we need you there.

Jim Kelley

jimkelley46@yahoo.com



February Birthdays

Janie Bellah (Washita)	February 5
Karen Perkins (Ellis)	February 14
Nancy Hill (Atoka)	February 18
Cynthia Holtwick (Creek)	February 22
Carey Parrish (Nowata)	February 26
Glenda Kirk (Roger Mills)	February 26
Ken Yazel (Tulsa)	February 27

IAAO Update

The Oklahoma Chapter of IAAO will be having our next meeting, Wednesday, Feb. 8 at the Biltmore in Oklahoma City. It will begin immediately following the assessor's breakout session at the CODA conference. I invite all of you to attend. It would be nice to have every county represented in our Chapter this year.

If you have any questions regarding IAAO, please contact me at monica@alvaok.net.

Sincerely,
 Monica Schmidt
 Woods County Assessor
 2006 Oklahoma IAAO President

OSU/CLGT Upcoming Course Schedule

Unit 1 (Intro. to the Assessor's Office)	February 21-24	Tulsa
Board of Equalization	March 7	Oklahoma City
Board of Equalization	March 9	Tulsa
Unit 2 (Real Property)	March 28-31	Tulsa
Unit 3 (Mass Appraisal)	April 18-21	Tulsa
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	Western Hills
Unit 6 (Cadastral Mapping)	June 20-23	Tahlequah

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.

Assessor's District Meetings

The following are the dates for this year's assessors' district meetings:

May 5: N.E. District (Tulsa County)

May 12: S.E. District (Bryan County)

May 19: N.W. District (Harper County)

May 26: S.W. District (Cleveland County)

Specific locations and times will be provided in the next issue of the newsletter. For additional information you may contact Cathy Gibson at the Oklahoma Tax Commission, 405-521-3178.