



THE ASSESSMENT FILES

COUNTY ASSESSORS ASSOCIATION OF OKLAHOMA

VOLUME 3
FEBRUARY
2006

News From the President

Hello Everyone,

It's almost March, spring is in the air, and the miles are climbing up on my pickup truck with all the trips I've been making the past couple of months. It's amazing how much goes on to make our local and state government agencies work properly and efficiently.

We had the CODA Conference the first part of this month. For those of you who were able to attend know we had a good conference which included a trip to the Capitol and a reception for our legislators. The Assessor breakout session had good attendance. Jim Kelley, as always, did a great job keeping us informed on all the bills affecting county government. I would like to thank Jim and the all the members of the Legislative Committee for the hard work they do keeping track of these important issues.

A big problem the Assessors are facing now is the possibility of the County Training Program being reorganized. The Commission on County Government Personnel Education and Training voted to move our training from CLGT under the supervision of the Engineering Department at OSU to the Cooperative Extension Service in the Agricultural Department at OSU.

During a breakout session at the recent CODA Conference, the Assessors took a vote whether we wanted to move our training or try to stay with CLGT. The vote was unanimous to stay with CLGT. Recently, Wade Patterson, Jim Kelley, Monica Schmidt, and I have had meetings with Dr. Bosserman at OSU, and with Jeff McMahan, Dr. Whitsett, Dr. Trapp, and Gary Sherrer at the Capitol to try and resolve the issues that face the training program if it remains with CLGT. We are getting some support, but the budget will be the deciding factor. All other county officers and deputies will be receiving their training through the Cooperative Extension Service. We will continue working to keep the training with CLGT. Hopefully, our efforts will prove successful.

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph Wilson

President, Assessors Association of Oklahoma

Ad Valorem Update

We enjoyed seeing lots of county assessors and deputies at the CODA meeting last week. I was amazed by the number of new faces as the ACCO folks joined the CODA group with a lot of attendance. I heard several county assessors saying that they felt like strangers in the group with the new additions. That's a pattern that has recreated itself several times over the years as part of county government. It is important that we continue to work with the various groups in county government to make the ad valorem system strong and reliable.

Just a thought on preparation. It helps to be with people who are prepared and know what they're doing. The other night, I attended a fitness seminar put on by a local hospital on running and exercise. It's part of the Redbud Classic, a road race, fun run, fitness fair, etc., that's held each year. The topic for this seminar was great. It was entitled: Knees and Hips Gone Bad. It's not so much fun to realize that you're not 21 anymore. But in the middle of this seminar, a highly fit marathon runner who'd just come in from a training run had forgotten to drink water/Gatorade and had become severely dehydrated. He started to sit down in the audience, but he fell backwards over a chair and passed out.

That's the bad news. The good news is that there were twelve doctors, three nurses, and two physical trainers in the audience. They had the embarrassed runner stabilized in one minute and they took him in for a check-up. So my thought for the day is if you're going to administer first aid to the ad valorem system or help taxpayers, it's great to have people on your side who are knowledgeable and know what's going on. That's why all of us—the county assessors, State Auditor and Inspector, Oklahoma State University and the Ad Valorem Division work so hard on training and education. It pays off.

It's also why it is important that we get the county assessor and Ad Valorem Division required accreditation program stabilized, so we can proceed with the critical training and education that all of us rely on. We're proud of all the training and education that Oklahoma State University has provided through the Commission on County Training. (Both Cooperative Extension and Center for Local Government Technology (CLGT) have been a tremendous assets for our Annual Conference.) In the county assessor area, the work of Gary Snyder and Doug Warr has been really excellent. We need to keep the quality of the program at its present high level and keep a good working relationship with all the Departments at Oklahoma State University.

Here's what's going on this month:

Legislature Convenes:

The 2006 Oklahoma Legislature has convened. We've seen a large number of ad valorem bills already under consideration. Under House rules set up last year, all legislation must have a revenue impact statement. We have had a great deal of questions on the Five-Year Exemption changes to the cap and other exemptions. The biggest challenge by a long shot is estimating the revenue impact for the Veterans exemption. That has been a rapidly changing set of numbers.

For those of you that missed the CODA meeting, we will be sending out a survey on the Veteran's exemption right after March 15. Thanks in advance for your help in getting good estimates to the Legislature.

Geographic Information Council Day at the Capitol

GIS Day at the Capitol is scheduled for March 15. Any county interested in showing off their mapping program at the Capitol be sure and sign up. Call Troy Frazier or Wade Patterson, the new GIS representative, if you have any questions.

District Meetings

Mark your calendars. We have a complete schedule now of the 2006 District meeting dates:

Continued

OATR May 4th and 5th (Tulsa)

Northeast: May 5 (Tulsa County)

Southeast: May 12 (Bryan County)

Northwest May 19 (Harper County)

Southwest: May 26 (Cleveland County)

Two items that were discussed at the CODA meeting that you may have missed. We will have the DVD copies of the new aerial photographs available at the District meetings in May. (Keep in mind that the May meetings are required.) Also, if you did not get a copy of the ad valorem statutes on CD at the CODA meeting, look for a copy in the mail. We sent those to any assessor who missed the meeting. If you don't have one, let us know.

We appreciate the hard work and conscientious effort of all county assessors and deputies out there working to improve the Oklahoma ad valorem system and make it better than it was given to us for taxpayers everywhere.

Jeff Spelman, CAE
Director, Ad Valorem Division

P.S. "We would worry less about what other people think of us if we realized exactly how seldom other people actually think about us." Anwar Caddo, famous Ad Valorem Philosopher, courtesy of Ethel Barrett.

Reporter's Notes

Hello Everyone:

Well, as you can see from several articles in this newsletter, the County Training Program (CTP) has been a very hot topic as of late. First, let me thank all of you for the support at the CODA Meeting. It is so inspiring to see a group so unified on our accreditation program.

I do believe that we will have a positive outcome to the entire episode. As Gary Snyder states in his article, the indication is that our training will stay under the direction of CLGT at the Engineering College of OSU. The main hurdle the CTP will face is securing adequate funding for all programs. It is so important that all programs, not just the assessor programs, continue in a positive manner. We will continue to work with CODA in support of our educational programs.

I feel our professional, matter of fact approach to the issue was well received and much appreciated. It looks like our hard work will be rewarded. If for any reason, the decision is different, we will send out an email or call everyone with the information.

To say we are going to have a busy year legislatively is an understatement. All county officers need to meet at the capital on Monday, March 6 at 8:00 to lobby against SB 1763. SB 1763 deals with the home rule issue. Every county needs to be involved in the legislative process. Please stay in close contact with all of your legislators.

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

Contact Information: lwade@garfieldcountymail.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

The session is rocking along pretty fast. We have one more week of committee meetings in the House and then a short break before the bills that have been passed on floor by the House of Representatives goes to the Senate for committee hearings and the bills that have passed on the Senate floor goes to the House for committee hearings.

HJR 1002 has passed the House. This is the bill that lowers the cap rate from 5% to 3% or the consumer price index, whichever is lower and it takes the income limitation from the eligibility for the senior freeze.

HB 2812 has passed out of committee. This bill will remove the county population barrier and allow all non profit continuum care facilities to be exempt. This was and still is bad legislation.

HJR 1061 has changed to a bill that would prevent taxing jurisdictions from suing the legislature to enforce adequate funding. I agree that the courts in some cases have exceeded their duties in what could be considered the same as writing new law, which is clearly a function of the legislature. We need to really consider this bill and what the effects could be.

HJR 1067 by Representative Morrissette is now carrying language that we have requested. It pertains to the Freeport Exemption. Currently there are no filing deadlines for applying for the exemption. This bill will allow the legislature to legislate the procedure for making application. The statutory language we need was passed in the year 2000, however it has been determined that the constitution does not support that statute.

There are still several House Bills that we need to be concerned with and they could be heard in committee this next week. Your legislative committee is working toward stopping unwanted and unneeded legislation.

We need to watch Senate Bill 1510 see where it is going. It relates to desulphurization.

SJR60 is the war veteran's bill. This bill would allow for the exemption of up to \$ 15,000 from the cash value of their homesteaded property. It is still pending at this time. Your legislators need your help in defeating this bill. I am a Viet Nam veteran and I don't feel that I need this exemption.

SB 1773 and 1774 by Senator Rabon helps with the reimbursement fund that reimburses us for the exempt manufacturing, double homesteads and filter strips. They have both passed out of committee. Let your legislators know we need their support on these bills.

Please visit and help your legislators understand the issues. Help them have reasons to support county government.

Jim Kelley
jimkelley46@yahoo.com



March Birthdays

Sam West (Carter)	March 3
Troyce King (Pottawatomie)	March 5
Dan Ashwood (Muskogee)	March 6

IAAO Update

I know all of you are going through the “fun” times about now too. In the past week I’ve survived taking the stand in court, sending out valuation increase notices, beginning informal protests, and trying to finish taking personal assessments. Isn’t it fun to be an assessor this time of year?! Very few people can relate to what we go through in our jobs. That’s what makes our group bond so closely.

That’s why we are “unique” and one of the reasons I’d like to encourage each of you to join IAAO. Membership in IAAO is a mark of professionalism. What better way to portray yourself to your constituents as a professional appraiser and administrator than to be a member of this organization that deals directly with the ad valorem taxation process?

Our Oklahoma Chapter is again sponsoring 2 courses this year. Course 101, Fundamentals of Real Property Appraisal will be held June 26-30 in Tulsa. Course 102, Income Approach to Valuation will be held July 17-21 in Oklahoma City. Anyone interested in attending these courses should contact Gary Snyder at 405-744-6049.

Good luck in the upcoming “fun” time!

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

The Assessor Accreditation classes are filling up fairly quickly. We just completed Unit 1 with 29 students, which make it rather cozy in a room that only holds around 35. But we do the best we can to see that everyone gets the help they need. If you have people needing to take classes, I would suggest you get your registrations in early. We will try to accommodate them the best we can.

The process of the changing the County Training Program to the administration of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service seems to be moving along. The **good news** is that the Assessor Accreditation Program will remain with the Center for Local Government Technology. I believe

that everyone (University deans and others) is O.K. with this decision. So in our effort to secure funding for the program, we will be making presentations to the legislature about the program and the funding required to administer the program.

We would appreciate any and all input from you all and most importantly right now we need some letters of support, importance of the program, successes that you or your employees have had as a result of the training, why it should be continued if you feel that way, your testimony, etc. If you would like to participate, then write whatever you would like to say on your letterhead and e-mail

Continued

to gary.snyder@okstate.edu or send them to CLGT, ATTN: Gary or Doug, 200 Cordell North, Stillwater, 74078. If you choose to write something, we need your letters by March 15. (You're familiar with that date anyway)

Doug and I really appreciate the support and encouragement that everyone out there has given us. Our goal is do what is best for the Assessor Training Program. Once again we say you a big **Thank You** for all you do for us.

Sincerely,

Gary

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	Tahlequah
Unit 6 (Cadastral Mapping)	June 19-22	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.

For Sale (Cheap!)

GTCO Digitizer Super L II Plus & Dakota 2 monitor stand.

We gave \$1895 for the digitizer & \$1600 for the stand in 1997.

This equipment was rarely used. We would like to give it away to any county interested, but they have to come pick it up.

Thanks,

**Kelli Minson, Craig County Assessor,
918-256-8766**