



THE ASSESSMENT FILES

COUNTY ASSESSORS ASSOCIATION OF OKLAHOMA

MAY
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News From the President

Hello Fellow Assessors & Deputies:

Summer has arrived early this year, and we are sure in need of some rain in western Oklahoma. The temperature here has already hit 104 degrees.

May is the month for district meetings and I attended the NE District meeting at the new Aquarium Inn located in Jenks. I want to thank Ken Yazel and his staff for hosting a great meeting and a fun reception the night before. The following week I headed for Durant for the SE District meeting. It was my first trip to this area of the State, and I enjoyed the scenery and the drive around Lake Texoma. Glendel Rushing and staff had a great meeting. State Auditor and Inspector, Jeff McMahan spent the entire day with us. Last week I shuffled off to Buffalo (Oklahoma) for the NW District meeting where Scotty Cosby and her staff treated us to another great meeting. I figure any meeting which includes a meal and door prizes falls into the great category. Food and prizes aside, we did have some good programs and hopefully everyone came home with a little more knowledge than we arrived with. I planned to attend all the District meetings this year, but will miss the SW District meeting in Norman due to a scheduling conflict. My wife has tickets to see the Lion King in Tulsa that Friday. Even the King has to answer to the Queen every now and then if he wants to keep his crown on.

The officers met with the Oklahoma Tax Commission to discuss plans for the Annual State School in Tulsa this August. There will be a variety of classes again this year to provide training to help us with the wide spectrum of duties we face in the Assessors' office. The Association is also planning the usual evening activities to include bowling, bingo, and dancing.

I know everyone will be busy the next few days getting the abstract done by the June 15th deadline. Then we can all turn our focus to those things we've set aside for the past five months. Contrary to most taxpayers' opinions, we really do have things to do after the assessment period is over.

Have a great summer!

Ralph Wilson,

Major County Assessor,
President

Ad Valorem Update

Ad Valorem Division Road Trip 2006

The traditional road tour for the Ad Valorem Division is complete. This year we went from Tulsa (with OATR also) to Durant to Buffalo to Norman. That's a lot of miles, but as I've said many times in the past, it is really a pleasure to get to travel around Oklahoma and see what is going on in each county we visit. The only thing bad this year was I didn't win a single door prize. I was out of the room once and the other time, I was holding Larry Rawlings ticket.

Deborah Gibson, this year's President of the Oklahoma Association of Tax Representatives invited us to their spring meeting in Tulsa, and we always enjoy meeting with OATR. They have lots of experience and knowledge in the process.

Tulsa County did an outstanding job hosting the Northeast District at the Oklahoma Aquarium, a new Oklahoma destination there in Jenks. We enjoyed Ken Yazel's comments, his staff's hard work, and the presentation by the oldest surviving Buffalo Soldier that was really interesting and inspiring. Glendel Rushing, the "Dean" as the longest serving assessor, followed up with the Southeast District meeting in Durant. I was amazed at the growth in Durant, particular around the new Casino Resort area. Bryan County really went all out with good food and program from State Auditor and Inspector and Center for Local Government Technology (CLGT). We were honored to have Jeff McMahan attend the entire session and the key legislative leadership from Bryan County also joined the group at the meeting.

Unfortunately, I missed Harper County because I was at an IAAO meeting, but Kenny Chuculate reported that the session was good and well attended. Scotty Crosby did a lot of work in hosting the evening social and the program. Cleveland County did a good job hosting the last session. For some reason, they had quite a bit of the OU Sooner theme there in Norman. I was almost expecting Denise Heavner to have Barry Switzer at the luncheon. They had an excellent program with the Norman North Jazz group. I also thought that the Doug Warr monologue on his past life working in Cleveland County might be good enough for the "Last Comic Standing" TV reality show.

The Legislative session is over, but we haven't unraveled it. No one is sure entirely how everything will end up, but some significant ad valorem bills died in the last part of the session. Several new changes were made and we're still searching and evaluating those. Nothing major so far. We'll get everyone up to date on new legislation in a week or so.

We'll send out reminders on the abstract submission dates later this month. Abstracts are due on June 15. Statutes are strict on the deadline so please let us know. We'll be sending a bulletin reminder out shortly. The State Board of Equalization (SBOE) has scheduled June 19 (We said June 20 in the Ad Valorem Forum) for its regular meeting which should give everyone time to complete their abstracts.

Ralph Wilson, County Assessors Association President, and his officers and Legislative Committee members met with the Ad Valorem Division before the Bryan County meeting. As you may be aware, the Annual Conference planning is in progress. We'll be at the same hotel again and we should have a notice out on the room arrangements in a week or so. We discussed various plans

for the conference and had some good input from everyone involved in making the annual conference a good event.

Bob Behn, a lecturer at the JFK School of Government, wrote a recent column on improving management in government. He quoted President Andrew Jackson's thoughts on government jobs: "The duties....ought to be so plain and simple that men of intelligence may readily qualify themselves." In other words, he thought that almost anyone could do a *government* job. Jackson of course was interested in appointing lots of his friends and supporters to jobs so he didn't want a lot of training requirements, but as we all know in the ad valorem area, the work has become more complicated, not less. The job of the County Assessor has changed enormously in the last fifteen years. That's why our District Meetings, Annual Conference, the training provided by Oklahoma State, Ad Valorem Division, IAAO, and Center for Local Government Technology (CLGT) and Cooperative Extension are so important.

We enjoyed seeing everyone at the district meetings. Have a good month. 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.

Sincerely,

Jeff Spelman, CAE
Director, Ad Valorem Division

P.S. "It's good to call your mother on Mother's Day, but it's even better to call her on an ordinary day." Anwar Caddo, Ad Valorem Philosopher.

P.S. S. Small Reminder on District Meetings

Remember that if you don't attend your District's meeting in May, you may attend another District's meeting. We have four or five notable assessors---Randy Wintz, Leonard Sullivan, Evelyn Bradley and Karen Perkins who attended other district meetings because of scheduling conflicts. Pick the one you want to attend; just don't forget to attend one. It's a required meeting.



June Birthdays

Randy Wintz (Lincoln)	June 4
Donna Giddens (Greer)	June 7
"Pawnee Bill" (Pawnee)	June 8
Sonya Booher (Alfalfa)	June 14
Roger Ballard (Haskell)	June 16
Letitia Stockton (Kiowa)	June 24
Tom Porton (McCurtain)	June 21

Reporter's Notes

Hello Eveyone:

By now everyone should have received at least 1 copy of the Assessor Directory. If you did not attend a district meeting, you may have been missed. I will mail a copy to those who did not receive one at a district meeting. The demand was high and we only had enough for 1 or 2 copies per county. I will be printing a second batch very soon. If you would like an additional copy, you need to send me an email or fax so I can get you on the list.

You might notice that the State Auditor and Inspector's Office was not included in the book. We will have that oversight corrected in the next version. Several corrections have been brought to my attention. Please review your data and let me know if anything needs updating.

The first round of the legislative session has ended and we are waiting on the special session to begin. I would like to thank all the county officers that answered the call when needed. The calls you made to your legislators were heard loud and clear. The legislative committee could not make it without your assistance. Dave Herbert said that the calls you placed made the difference and convinced the Senate not to hear several bills.

Please continue to be ready to respond at a moments notice if you are notified. The special session is approaching fast and promises to be challenging at best. By working together, we can make a difference.

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

P.S. Because this letter is so late, most of you have already filed for office today. All 77 County Assessors must file as well as district 1 and 3 County Commissioners, the County Treasurer, and the District Attorney. Here is hoping you are blessed with no opponent. Always remember, you are the expert in ad valorem in you county.

2006 Legislative Session Update

Dear Assessors,

I want to thank all of you who came to the capital and made phone calls to your legislators during the last week of session. We would not have defeated the oil & gas legislation without your help. I especially want to thank Gail & Wade for being there the last week of session. There were two out of the three of us there every day during that last week and it made the difference.

We still have the special session to deal with. We have a number of budget issues that are critical to county government. The exempt manufacturing and double homestead reimbursement fund much be funded.

It must be funded and delivered to the counties by June 30th for us to be able to use that money in the 2007 budget.

I have spoken with Jeff Spelman and they are trying to have everything prepared to get the money to us once the legislature makes the funds available.

Currently the reimbursement fund looks something like this:

Total exempt manufacturing claims:	\$ 47,000,000.00
Double Homesteads: 2004 & 2005:	<u>10,900,000.00</u>
Total Funds needed:	\$ 57,900,000.00
Current Balance of reimbursement Fund:	\$ 19,000,000.00
Total Funds needed:	\$ 38,900,000.00

There is supposed to be set aside \$ 19,500,000.00 for Education and \$ 18,500,000.00 for Counties. That leaves it short \$ 900,000.00.

We need to continue talking to our legislators about how important this funding is to us. You may want to tell your legislator exactly how much the State owes your county. For instance, the State owes Pittsburg \$ 5,229,128.43 for exempt manufacturing and double homesteads.

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

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.

(an Excel spreadsheet with legislation of interest, is attached with this newsletter)

Sincerely,

Jim Kelley
JIMKELLEY46@YAHOO.COM

IAAO Update

Come join us now! It's an exciting time to be in the Oklahoma Chapter of IAAO! Our club has grown about 20% this year and is continuing to grow. There's plenty of time and room for more members. It is that time of year when our chapter dues are now coming due. The price is \$10 and can be mailed to Gary Snyder. What's keeping you from joining?

Don't forget about the two IAAO courses coming up in June and July. Unit 101, Real Property, will be held June 26-30, and Unit 102, Income, will be held July 17-21. 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

Dear County Assessors and Deputies:

We hope your protests are finished and you're ready for vacation and some summer fun! Here at OSU-CLGT classes are about finished for the year and were both looking forward to the summer and a little time off before getting ready for the OTC Annual School in August.

We are still waiting to see what happens down at the Capitol with the state budget. If the House and Senate ever agree on a budget then we will find out our funding for FY07 and will publish a training schedule soon afterwards. Classes will be held in the OKC- Norman area the first 6 months of the year (July – December) and the Tulsa area in the spring.

We would like to say thanks again for all your support. We feel very privileged to work with such great people.

OSU/CLGT Upcoming Course Schedule

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.

Sincerely,

Doug and Gary