

A Look Ahead...

September 3
Labor Day

September 5 - 7
Intro. to Assessors Office
Unit I • Oklahoma City

September 12 - 14
CODA Fall Conference

September 25 - 28
Real Property
Unit II • Oklahoma City

Oklahoma
ad valorem

Volume X, Issue 8
August 2001

FORUM

Director's Notes...

Educational Conference Success!

The 2001 Educational Conference "Blueprint for Success" is now history. We were all pleased with this year's edition of the Annual Conference. I thought the experience was very worthwhile.

We had excellent attendance, lots of good instructors, hard working students, and some good stories from the bowling tournament.

Once again the secret to success is the partnership spirit of the county assessors and deputies, State Auditor and Inspector (SA&I), Oklahoma State, and the Ad Valorem Division working together.

President Mike Means, J.C. Brooks, Kathi Mask, and Debbie Collins did a great job. Mike's officers have done a great job this year, and we're glad that Mike Means returned from his African trip in time for the conference. I enjoyed hearing about Mike's adventure. Thank you officers. The County Assessors' Association has been great to work with this year.

Another thank-you in is order to Center for Local Government Technology and Cooperative Extension and State Auditor and Inspector for their great "partnership" in putting on the training program. Dr. Mike Hughes, Anne Embree, Doug Warr, Gary Snyder, Dr. Notie Lansford, Steve Singleton, Don Sporleder and Doug Wright did a wonderful job in organizing and teaching classes. Scott Warren, Johnny Caldwell, Carol Bomhoff, and Clark Kelley led another excellent session on the AA software out at OSU/Tulsa.

We had some great comments on our IAAO instructors—Jewette Farley, Gary McCabe, and Steve Sutterfield. They added a great deal to the week.

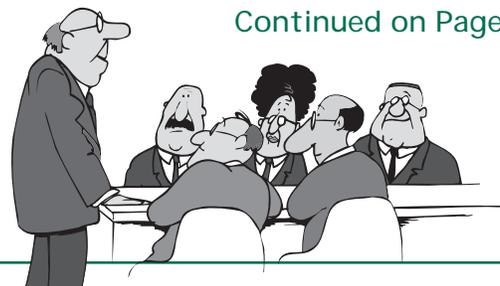
Also we extend thanks to Alan Harding and Tim Wooten for their contributions in providing unique perspectives on centrally valued property. Other out-of-state instructors that provided their invaluable time and assistance include Bill Wadsworth, Jerry Huff, Joe Fleming, Danny Spillman, Marty Albrecht, Dr. Paul Bendt, TerraScan, Inc., Colorado Customware, Inc., and Vince Pulsipher.

Our home grown instructors did a great job too: In addition to the Ad Valorem Division staff members, I want to personally thank Doug Price, James Mallory, Dale Frech, Dr. Mike Sharp, Mary Banken, Mickey Coley, Shelly Rudd, Judith Royster, the Cherokee and Osage Housing Authorities, Charles Ward, Joe Sherman, Vicki McCartney, Sharon Judd, Ron Knox, Greg Hodges, and Jane Salisbury. Special thanks are also in order for Royce Cowley, Lana Swad, and Johnny Brandon of the Oklahoma Tax Commission.

Finally, I want to thank all the county assessors and deputies who worked so hard throughout the week, juggling back-to-school plans, and traveling to Tulsa. We appreciate the effort and I know all of county government does too.

The Ad Valorem Division anticipates a busy fall. We've got several legislative study issues that will kick off in a few months and as always,

Continued on Page 4...



Property Tax News Around the Country

Arkansas: All Mobile and manufactured homes are real property subject to taxation. Previously, only those homes secured to a foundation and those mobile homes wider than 10 feet were considered real property (Act 410, H.B. 1120, Laws 2001).



first year. Furthermore, the costs deducted were speculative because the owner had not begun to remove the contamination (Garvey Elevators, Inc. v. Adams County Board of Equalization, Nebraska Supreme Court, Dkt. No. S-00-226, January 26, 2001).

Nebraska: Costs to clean up soil and groundwater contamination on property owned by a grain storage and merchandising company could not justifiably be reduced dollar-for-dollar to arrive at a negative value because the property had value in use, evidenced by the fact that another company was paying the property owner for the exclusive right to process grain, feed, and other commodities at the owner's facility.



New York: Volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers residing in counties with populations of 133,000-141,000 may be granted a 10 percent property tax exemption for their primary residence by adoption of local law, ordinance, or resolution. Eligible workers are certified members of volunteer fire companies, fire departments, or incorporated ambulance services with at least five years of service.

The parcel was "being put to its highest and best use as of the assessment date and was generating income," according to the court. The owner's appraisal deducted the full environmental remediation costs from the unimpaired value of the parcel, but the appraiser did not explain why all of the cleanup costs should be charged off in the

The exemption may not exceed \$3,000 multiplied by the latest state equalization rate of the assessing unit in which the property is located (S.B. 7623, Laws 2001, effective with respect to taxable status dates after 2001).

Values Up: A Public Service Update

By now all counties have all received their public service values as certified June 18th of this year. As in years past we encourage calls to our office regarding any concerns involving a public service company in your jurisdiction or county. However, to better service these inquiries we will be asking that requests be made in writing and, in turn, they will be responded to in writing from this division.

As opposed to a swing of 1% or 2% per year, the total state assessed value for centrally valued property was markedly up for the year 2001. Some of this was real growth achieved by existing or new public service companies operating in Oklahoma at a level that would compensate and be greater than those public service companies operating inefficiently, or possibly at a loss.

Other growth could be partially attributed to several unanticipated market and economic factors that occurred in 2000 that certain public service companies were unable to respond to. As it is a going concerns responsibility to increase shareowner value, one can anticipate these companies will respond to these factors in calendar year 2001.

With the ruling on Dobson Fiber completed, the Public Service section is now preparing valuations on fiber companies having situs in Oklahoma. It is expected that these values will be ready for the next meeting of the State Board of Equalization.



Don't Do It All Yourself:

The Art of Delegating

One of the best ways to get more time for those top-priority projects is by delegating some of the lower-priority work to someone else. But many people are reluctant or afraid to delegate some of their work. Do any of the following reasons sound familiar to you?

- *"Nobody can do this work as well as I can."*
- *"If I delegate this work, there's no guarantee that it'll get done properly."*
- *"If someone else does this better than I do, I'm in trouble."*
- *"I haven't got time to teach someone else how to do it."*
- *"I want to be seen as a nice person, not a slave driver."*

When we try to help each other out, it's called teamwork. In a well-run organization, everyone works together as a team. Different jobs are performed by different members, and there are various levels of authority and responsibility.

But the team was formed for one purpose: to get the job done successfully and help everybody go home a winner.

Think of yourself as a member of a team and you'll have a lot less trouble with the concept of delegating. Your attitude toward delegation is an important factor in getting the help you need from your team members.

If you delegate only the boring and trivial tasks to others, naturally they'll be resentful. If you toss a pile of papers on somebody's desk and say "I want this done by Monday," that can be grounds for mutiny.

Or how about the boss who gives her assistant a project and then hovers over him, checking up every five minutes to make sure it's being done to her satisfaction? Don't be a boss who assumes an assistant can do an unfamiliar job without any help or direction.

Here are some helpful tips about how to approach the business of delegating:

1. Ask for help, don't demand.

2. Make sure the person has a clear picture of the purpose of any delegated work and knows what kind of results you expect.

3. Take the time to explain specifically what you want, encouraging questions.

4. Give the person all the information and other resources needed to complete the project.

5. Set a deadline that's reasonable and workable for both of you.

6. Be available for questions, and ask for progress reports.

7. Don't assume a person will be able to complete a delegated task without any additional help from you.



Cheryl Clay, Tulsa County Assessor, has retired effective July 31 after serving 22 1/2 years as assessor. She was elected in November of 1978, and took office in January of 1979.

Cheryl is retiring to Turning Point Farms outside Branson, Missouri where she'll be raising custom low fat beef and pork. She's also hoping to spend part of the hot weather at her summer home in Gold River, B.C., Canada.

The Ad Valorem Division extends its best wishes to Cheryl in all of her future endeavors.

Jack Gordon has been appointed as the new Tulsa County Assessor. We look forward to working with Jack.

Summary Ad Valorem Legislation

HB-1169: Task Force On Assessment Practices

- Study assessment practices for locally assessed property
- Report to Governor & Legislature by July, 2002
- 11 members
- 2 from House
- 2 from Senate
- 1 Assessor from county w/ population < 50,000
- 1 Taxpayer from county w/ population < 50,000
- 1 Assessor from county w/ population > 50,000
- 1 Taxpayer from county w/ population > 50,000
- Governor appoints: 1SBOE member, 1CPA, and 1 taxpayer
- OTC provides support. *Effective immediately*

HB-1203: General Revenue & Taxation

(All Sections below Effective July 1, 2001)

Section 17: Buffer Strips

- Value calculation exclusively on income production

Section 18 & 19: Visual Inspection

- Adds personal property as part of V.I. process
- Includes personal property as part of V.I. Costs

Section 20: Public service value certification date

- Certification by SA&I from 3rd Monday in June to July 31

Section 21: Public Service Protest Period

- Changes protest period from 30 days to 20 days
- Value becomes final after 20 days if no protest filed

Section 22: Five Year Exempt Manufacturing

- Employees employed by another entity other than the previously or currently qualifying manufacturer may qualify (Constituent Bill)

HB-1224: School District Maps

- New Section 2815.2
- Assessor shall maintain and use the current S.D. maps furnished by the Dept. of Education
- Effective November 1, 2001

HB-1736: Exemption of Charitable Property

- Adds continuum care facilities
- Owned by Non-Profit 501C-3
- Located in a county w/ population > 500,000
- Retains Rev. Proc. 96-13 language
- Effective November 1, 2000

HJR-1001: Exemption of storm shelters

- Added to property after January 1, 2002
- Underground or safe room
- 100 sq. ft. maximum allowable for exemption
- Exemption terminates upon sale of property
- To Secretary of State for ballot certification

HJR-1025: County Economic Development Fund

- County vote
- Increase in ad valorem tax from 5-year exemptions
- Maximum of 25% of county 10 mill retained
- Available after the 5-year expires
- To Secretary of State for ballot certification

SB-101: Five Year Exempt Manufacturing

- Previously qualified facilities
- \$10M investment in any 5 year period
- Payroll requirements deemed to be met
- Facility shall continue to receive the exemption
- Effective immediately

“Mapping Minute”

Another year, another annual school at Tulsa! I hope that everyone got something out of the mapping track. If you have any ideas or concerns to be addressed for next year, please let me know.

I would like to apologize to the eastern and panhandle counties. When I first wrote to you in the *Ad Valorem Forum*, I intended to visit each county once a year. I have not forgotten you.

With my current schedule, I will be able to visit each county about once every year and a half. I plan to reach the counties I have not yet visited by the end of the year. If you have some pressing need, please do not hesitate to call.

Remember: The secret goal of every abstractor, surveyor, and lawyer is to submit at least one deed that is impossible to map!

there will be considerable debate and research on these topics.

We'll also be working closely with the County Assessors' Association throughout the fall preparing for the Association's Annual Convention and the legislation that will be implemented in 2001.

Thanks to everyone. I appreciate everyone's hard work in studying, concentrating, and preparing to do the job for the taxpaying public in the county assessor's office.

Sincerely,
Jeff Spelman, CAE
Director, Ad Valorem Division