AAP Journal
Assessors' Association of Pennsylvania

AAP
ASSESSORS' ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA

Summer 2016
Issue 3 Volume 13

CCAP COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA
Serving Counties Since 1886
An affiliate of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania

AAP Annual Conference Recap

In May AAP held its 68th Annual Conference at the Hilton Harrisburg with one of our largest attendance numbers in recent years! Over 250 assessors and 12 exhibitors were on hand for the three-day Conference.

Over the course of the Conference, the membership elected a new slate of officers, raised money for chapter education, recognized new CPEs (*see the picture below*), presented several awards and held valuable classes for CPE recertification!



AAP's 2015-16 officers: President Elect Angelia Tennies; Secretary Mark Kellerman; President Melissa Border; Vice President Larry Shubert; Treasurer Deborah Crawford; and, Immediate Past President Charles 'JR' Hardester.

Conference highlights -

♦ The membership elected the 2016-17 officers:
President **Angelia Tennies**
President Elect **Larry Shubert**
Vice President **Deborah Crawford**
Treasurer **Mark Kellerman**
Secretary **Robert Roland**
Immediate Past President **Melissa Border**

♦The **AAP education auction** raised over $2000 that will be returned to the chapters at the end of the year.

AAP Awards - The following members were recognized at the Conference -
— Hanisits/Hettinger Award - **Barbara Walter**, Adams County
— Naessig Awards - **Charles 'JR' Hardester**, Lawrence County
— Chudy Award - **Larry Shubert**, Philadelphia County
— President's Special Appreciation Award - **Danette Hobbs Magee**, Local Government Commission
— AAP Special Award - My Mentor - **Paulette J. Sebring**, Monroe County



Congratulations to AAP's newest CPEs!

AAP Events

Fall 2016 CPE Classes
Ramada Inn, State College

- Introduction - September 19 - 23
- Site/Market - September 26 - 30
- Cost - October 3 - 7
- Income - October 11 - 14

AAP 2016 Fall Conference
November 3 - 4
Nittany Lion Inn, State College

CPE Review Class
CCAP Harrisburg

- November 30 - December 2, 2016

Spring 2017 CPE Classes
CCAP Office, Harrisburg

- Introduction - March 6 - 10
- Site/Market - March 13 - 17
- Cost - March 20 - 24
- Income - March 27 - 31

AAP 2017 Annual Conference
May 3 - 5
Lancaster Marriott

AAP 2017 Fall Conference
November 2 - 3
Eden Resort, Lancaster

What's Inside

President's Message, Legislative Update, latest County Corner, AAP People

AAP OFFICERS

Angelia Tennies, CPE
McKean County
President
(814) 887-3215
astennies@mckeancountypa.org

Larry Shubert, CPE
Philadelphia County
President Elect
(215) 686-7680
larry.shubert@phila.gov

Deborah Crawford, CPE
Tioga County
Vice President
(570) 723-8112
dcrawford@tiogacountypa.us

Mark Kellerman, CPE
Centre County
Treasurer
(814) 355-6721
mjkellerman@centrecountypa.gov

Robert Roland, CPE
Bedford County
Secretary
(814) 623-4842
rroland@bedfordcountypa.org

Melissa Border, CPE
Bedford County
President
(814) 623-4842
mborder@bedfordcountypa.org

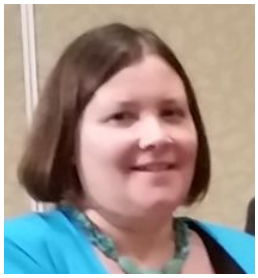
AAP COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Larry Shubert, CPE
Philadelphia County
AAP Journal Editor
(215) 686-7680
larry.shubert@phila.gov

Jonathan Schuck, CPE
Chester County
Government Information Co Chair
(610) 344-6147
jschuck@chesco.org

Mark Kellerman, CPE
Centre County
Government Information Co Chair
(814) 355-6721
mjkellerman@centrecountypa.gov

Steve Howe, CPE
Dauphin County
Education Chair
(717) 780-6121
showe@dauphinc.org



President's Message

First, I would like to say "thank you" to Melissa Border for her outstanding job as our president. Many of you probably do not know that Melissa was instrumental in creating the Tax Claim Committee. The goal of this committee is to offer assistance to the assessment offices and tax claim bureaus. As a new Director of Tax Claims, having this committee and experienced individuals to talk with has been a tremendous help.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to the Conference Planning Committee for their outstanding job in planning such an awesome Conference. The classes and instructors were top notch, as usual.

Wow, what an eye opener it was to discuss our jobs as assessors and the issue of trespassing. Joan, thanks so much for bringing this to the forefront. How many assessors went back to your counties and started working on policies and procedures for your county to adopt? I sure did!

As we move forward, I am sure that there will be many challenging issues ahead of us. Whether, it pertains to Clean and Green, the continuation of the sheds bill or even the most recent controversy with the veterans exemption status. The one thing I know for sure is that the AAP Board and Board of Governors will be engaged on behalf of the assessors throughout the state.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all of our members to become active within your chapters and on the Board of Governors. Because that old saying is true, every person can make a difference.

I hope everyone has a safe and healthy summer and I look forward to seeing you all at the Fall Conference in State College on November 3rd and 4th.

Sincerely,

Angelia S. Tennies, CPE
AAP President



Legislative Update

By Jonathan B. Schuck, Co Chair
Government Information Committee and
Director of Assessment/Tax Claim, Chester County

Greetings fellow assessment professionals throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. By the time you receive this issue of the AAP Journal, it will be well into the summer season. Hope you have already enjoyed some well-deserved vacation time or have plans to enjoy time off before the seasons once again turn. In either case, those who are part of the AAP remain committed to meeting the complex and diverse challenges encountered with a combination of intelligence, applied knowledge and creativity. Keeping abreast of the legislative environment is one means of accomplishing this goal.

With approximately six months remaining in the 2015/2016 Session, more than 4675 bills/resolutions have been introduced, 56 of which pertain to assessment-related matters. The Legislature in Harrisburg remains primarily focused on budgetary matters. Since the prior Update in early March, only four new bills have been introduced, three of which pertain to real property tax reform/repeal. Similar legislation has been introduced in prior Sessions and never made it out of committee. Two bills that have received second consideration since early March are summarized below.

House Bill 147

This constitutional amendment would increase the maximum exclusion amount to 100% of the assessed value of each homestead property within the taxing jurisdiction (first introduced as House Bill 125 during the 2013/2014 Session). Passed 200-0 in the House 2/24/2015 and received second consideration in the Senate Appropriations Committee 6/6/2016.

Senate Bill 1109

This constitutional amendment would extend the veteran's exemption to the unmarried spouse of a service member who is killed or dies from injuries received in active service, provided the surviving spouse and service member owned and resided in the residence prior to the service member being called to active service and provided the State Veteran's Commission determines the unmarried surviving spouse needs the exemption. The bill received second consideration in the Senate Appropriations Committee 6/8/2016.

County Corner Seeking Authors!

Does your county have a "claim to fame", did something historic or unusual take place there or are there little-known facts about your county that we all should know?

We're seeking authors for our County Corner feature in each issue of the *Journal*.

If you're interested in showcasing your county, please contact *AAP Journal* editor, Larry Shubert at *larry.shubert@phila.gov.*

AAP STAFF

Douglas E. Hill
Executive Director
PO Box 60769
Harrisburg, PA 17106-0769
(717) 736-4715
fax (717) 526-1020
dhill@pacounties.org

Terry Cochran
Deputy Director
PO Box 60769
Harrisburg, PA 17106-0769
(717) 736-4734
fax (717) 526-1020
tcochran@pacounties.org

Lori Lawyer
Administrative Assistant
PO Box 60769
Harrisburg, PA 17106-0769
(717) 736-4712
fax (717) 526-1020
llawyer@pacounties.org

The *AAP Journal* is published four times a year.
Deadline for the Fall 2016 issue is September 9, 2016

Article submissions are welcome.
Please send to:
Larry Shubert, CPE
Journal Editor
larry.shubert@phila.gov

Publication Disclaimer
The information provided in this publication is not intended to take the place of professional advice. Readers are encouraged to consult with competent legal, financial, or other appropriate professionals. Statements of facts and opinions expressed in this publication, by authors other than Association staff and officers, are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent an opinion or philosophy of the officers, members and staff of the Assessors' Association of Pennsylvania (AAP). No endorsement of advertised products or services is implied by AAP unless those products or services are expressly endorsed, or are owned or managed by the Association programs, or our affiliates. This publication may not be reproduced, modified, distributed, or displayed in part or in whole, by any means, without advance written permission of AAP. Please direct your requests to Terry Cochran. *Note:* As part of its copyright agreement, the AAP grants the author the right to place the final version of his/her manuscript on the author's home page, subject to AAP's standards, or in a public digital repository, provided there is a link to the AAP website.

AAP People & Chapter News

Allegheny County

The county is in the process of appeals. This year, a total of 9,545 appeals have been filed; 1,034 Commercial and 8,511 Residential. As of June 9, 2016, a total of 4,409 have been heard.

The county is also in the process of hiring a new assessor.

Lastly, the county is proud to be the home of the Pittsburgh Penguins - Stanley Cup Champions. Go Pens!!

Bedford County

Melissa Border, Chief Assessor and AAP Immediate Past President, retired from the county at the end of June. She's excited to be spending more time with her family, especially her grandchildren! She will be missed.

Cambria County:

Amber Bracken and **Christa Buck** received their CPE pins at the AAP Conference held this past May.

Christa Buck became engaged to Mark Kline and is preparing for her wedding.

Crawford County

The Crawford County Commissioners, at the behest of the County Register and Recorder, recently enacted a Uniform Parcel Identifier to go into effect July 1, 2016.

Erie County:

After 38 ½ years, Senior Appraiser **John Innocenzi** is retiring from Erie County. John has served the AAP as a member of its Board of Governors and various AAP committees, as well as a faithful member of the Northwest Chapter. His knowledge and experience will be truly missed in Erie County. We wish John all the best!

Erie County has hired **Sarah Willow** as a Data Collector. Sarah plans on attending the CPE classes in State College in the fall. Welcome Sarah!

The county is going live with IAS World in July and are hoping for a smooth transition from IAS4.



Presentation to Camins' family - Son-in-law Frank Schwartz; Bernie's widow, Judith Camins; Michael Piper, Chief Assessment Officer, Philadelphia County; Granddaughter Danica; and daughter, Jennifer Schwartz.

Franklin County

Welcome to **Ingrid Ashley**, the county's newest assessor!

Philadelphia County

The county's Office of Property Assessment presented a commemorative plaque to the family of our late friend and mentor, **Bernie Camins**. Bernie was well loved throughout the appraisal and assessment community in Pennsylvania. *See picture of presentation above.*

Susquehanna County

Sara Wickizer and her husband welcomed their first child, a healthy baby boy, on May 16th! Congratulations, Sara!

Susquehanna County also has a new CPE - **Patricia Leach!** Congratulations!

North East Chapter

We would like to wish **Brenda Reddy**, Northampton County, a wonderful retirement. She retired on June 3. Happy retirement, Brenda!

South Central Chapter

The South Central Chapter meets quarterly beginning with a business meeting at 9 a.m. with seminars immediately after the meeting and are held at the Adams County Agricultural and Natural Resources Center in Gettysburg. Please contact Barb Walter at (717) 337-9837 for more information. The next meeting is September 9, 2016.

Send Your Chapter & County News!

Don't forget to send your county or chapter news for the next *AAP Journal.* Our next deadline is September 9.

Please send your news to **Terry Cochran** at *tcochran@pacounties.org.*

INFOCON CORPORATION

Celebrating 40 Years 1976 - 2016

172 Gateway Road, P.O. Box 568
Ebensburg, Pennsylvania 15931-0568
Telephone: (814) 472-6066, Fax: (814) 472-5019
E-Mail - infocon@ic-access.com Web Site - www.infoconcorporation.com

Providing County, School and Municipal Governments.....

Consulting	On-Line Computer Services	Document Imaging Services
Tax Printing Service	Mailing Services	Microfilm Services
Tax Claim Services	Forms and Supplies	Digital Scanning Services

County Corner - Sullivan County

Contributed by Kristin Montgomery, CPE, Chief Assessor

Where on Earth is Sullivan County? On a map, draw a line from Williamsport to Wilkes Barre then make a triangle - Sullivan County would be near the top of that triangle. We have only one traffic light in the entire county and a population of 6,428.

When asked where we are from, we refer to ourselves as being from "Sullivan County" rather than being from the town we live in. In my opinion, that's because we only have one school district; it has graduating classes of 40-50 students. Since we are the Sullivan County School District, our entire county is one community. All sporting, scouting, 4-H etc. are grouped as a county.

Although some people think there is nothing to do here, we get many vacationers that come to enjoy nature! Some people go camping, others stay at local inns or state parks and enjoy swimming and boating in the lakes and creeks here. Mountain biking and hiking at some of the famous waterfalls are very popular. Then there are people who visit Sullivan County just for peace and quiet and maybe shopping!

Throughout the summer months you will find carnivals, fairs, festivals and markets. We have the Antiques Market and Arts & Crafts Festival in Eagles Mere, the Dairy Parade in Dushore, an authentic Pow Wow weekend in Forksville, the Ultra Marathon in Forksville and Dushore's Founders Day, which has become famous for its outrageous fun with outhouse races and keg roll competitions, just to mention a few events.

Throughout the Fall you will find the famous Bowhunters Festival; the Tour de Shunk - the most challenging century ride, benefitting cancer research and the big brothers big sisters programs; gorgeous foliage views from the High Knob Overlook and Canyon Vista as well as just a nice country drive; the Flaming Foliage Festival; Fall Festival and Lumberjack Competition both in Forksville; and, Heritage Days in Sonestown.

Winter is beautiful in Sullivan County! Many come to snuggle, in front of a fire inside, while watching the snow outside; to cross country ski, snowmobile or just to enjoy the aesthetics. During the winter, we have the Winterfest at Camp Brule which has ice sculpting, snowmobile racing and a polar bear plunge, among other activities and, if the weather cooperates, Eagles Mere has a toboggan slide going down Lake Avenue at the boat launch, taking you half way across the lake on a toboggan.

Sullivan County has its own museum behind the courthouse in Laporte! Additionally, the county is home to many other museums - The Endless Mountains War museum which displays personal artifacts from five different conflicts spanning 200 years; the Eagles Mere Museum displaying Eagles Mere's historical background, once having five grand hotels; the Eagles Mere Automobile Museum; and, the Eagles Mere Air Museum displaying vintage air and auto travel vessels from the past along with interesting associated historical artifacts. In October the museums participate in the Bi-Planes, Trains and Autos event to close the season.



Our leading solutions **solve the biggest challenges** in increasingly understaffed and underfunded appraisal and tax offices with

mass appraisal services

computer-assisted mass appraisal

and **tax billing and collections**

so assessors like Kevin can spend **less time** juggling tasks

and **more time** juggling cans at the local food bank.

Put our *appraisal & tax* solutions to *work for you.*

tyler technologies



James Allan Ray

Assessor III

Chester County

Years in assessment field: 23.6

Marital Status and family: Married with two grown children and five grandchildren

What irritates me most in the assessment business: Not enough help from municipal clerks in providing permit data

Most people would be surprised to know: I can speak some parts of eight different languages

Biggest challenge as an assessor: Making as few mistakes as possible

First Job: Assistant Front Office Manager, Sheraton Cadillac Hotel, Detroit, MI (1,300 rooms)

If I couldn't be an assessor, I'd be: Selling bourbon and wine

If I won millions in the lottery, I would: Donate to my family, my fraternity, and my friends

Favorite food and drink: Eagle Rare bourbon, (17 year single barrel) and salmon filet

Favorite vacation: Washington State, mountains and rainforests!

Favorite movie: *The Last Detail*

Three people living or dead that I would invite to dinner: Winston Churchill, John F. Kennedy, Martin L. King

The hardest lesson I ever learned as an assessor was the time: I asked a very direct but emotional question

If I could live in the past for one day, I would change... a lot of things about our society.

My best friend: G. Tom Taylor

AAP
ASSESSORS' ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA

MEMBERABILIA

AAP Awards Winners

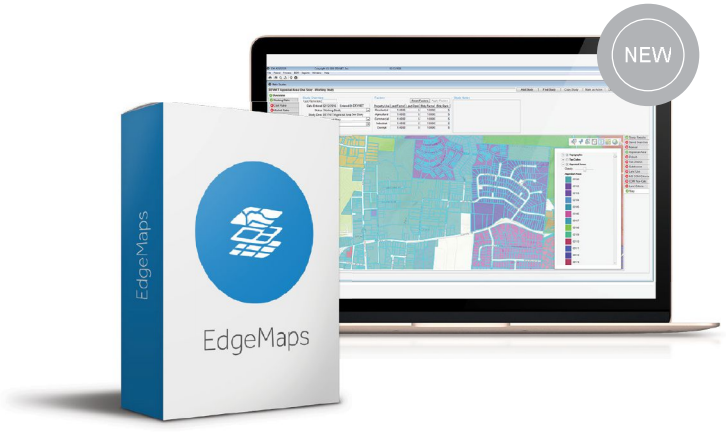
Trailblazer Awards (20 - 29 Years of Service)
Daryl Crum, Adams County
Rebecca Broad, Armstrong County
Melissa Border, Bedford County
Joyce Hillegass, Bedford County
Donna Roof, Bradford County
Scott A. Smith, Lehigh County
Joan Fitting, Montgomery County
Kathleen Hennigan, Montgomery County
Rob Jaffe, Montgomery County
Michael Palermo, Montgomery
Joan Righter Price, Montgomery County
Joe Rutkowski, Montgomery County
William Smyth, Montgomery County
Brian Thomas, Montgomery County
Roseanne Weathers, Montgomery County
James Duncheskie, Synder County2
Karen A. Beardsley, Warren County
Brian Bull, Warren County
Denyel O'Brien, Westmoreland County

Board of Governors' Awards (30 - 39 Years of Service)
Jeff Pesanski, Allegheny County
Tom Slimak, Allegheny County
Cindy Zimecki, Allegheny County
Tina R. Schaeffer, Berks County
Kathe E. Stanislaw, Berks County
Debbie Kolodziej, Bradford County
Bernard Walsh, Bradford County
Tamra Forgan, Cambria County
Randy Waggoner, Perry County

Presidents' Award (40 or More Years of Service)
Lisa J. Hoch, Berks County
Mark Grabfelder, Montgomery County

Congratulations to everyone and thank you for your years of dedicated service to the assessment profession!

These awards were presented at the AAP Annual Conference in May.



EdgeMaps™

EdgeMaps™ provides real-time GIS integration with authoritative CAMA and tax data. Powered by Esri's ArcGIS Platform, easy-to-configure web maps are embedded throughout the Edge™ software suite, offering high-value interactive thematic maps.

DEVNET

info@devnetinc.com | (866) 4-DEVNET | www.devnetinc.com

Government Software Services, Inc.

GSS

Developing Software Solutions For
County Governments Since 1984

- Tax Billing
- CAMA Integration
- Tax Collection
- Tax Administration
- Tax Claim

Customization is our key

Integrating our software with your business needs

info@gss-pa.com
www.gss-pa.com
570-253-6677

PO Box 60769
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17106-0769
(717) 526-1010
fax (717) 526-1020

An affiliate of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania