



2017 Conference Issue

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MAAO's President

Go West, Young Men and Women!

When New York Tribune editor Horace Greeley wrote in July 1865, "Go West, young man and grow up with the country," he was referring to the westward expansion of our nation. I think it's fair to paraphrase Greeley now in 2017, some 242 years later, only now I'm referring to the 77th Annual MAAO conference.

This year, we take a one-year respite from our usual trip 'Downy Ocean' and head west to the mountains of Garrett County. We will converge on scenic Deep Creek Lake June 20-23 for what should be a great conference. Don't forget to reserve your rooms at the Wisp Resort.

A cabin by the lake is a great place to relax after the whirlwind of hosting the NRAAO conference last year. I know our Education Committee has been working diligently to provide you with top-of-the-line seminars and our Social Activities Committee has planned a wonderful dinner party. The Board and I have been hard at work on this year's program. We will have 3 proposed by-laws changes to discuss at the general session.

I need to pause here a moment and take the time to thank the NRAAO planning committee again for all their hard work on a great conference. I hope you enjoyed it. I know I did! I also neglected to thank Chuck Cluster in my last message for affording me the opportunity to impart my wisdom and knowledge at my designation seminars.

That said, you might be wondering why you should come out to the mountains for this year's conference. Horace Greeley set his sights in that direction and we should too. Fellowship, education and change of scenery are three great reasons that come to mind right away.

I urge you to take Mr. Greeley's advice and Go West, Assessors, and Learn with the MAAO!

See ya in the Mountains!
Bryan Levenson, CMPA

From the Director's Office

Greetings from the Director's Office! Spring is in the air (or at least on the calendar) here in Baltimore, and I am sure I'm not the only one dreaming of warmer weather these days. And speaking of warmer weather, I am very much looking forward to meeting with you in June at the MAAO Conference at Deep Creek Lake in beautiful Garrett County. What a great setting for my first MAAO meeting!

As most of you know, I did not come to this job with a background in assessments. While I am well versed in commercial appraisals, having valued and brokered scores of telecommunications infrastructure projects over the years, I am certainly new to the world of residential assessments. I am proud to say that, thanks to the excellent instruction of Dan Puma, I passed the IAAO's Assessor 101 course last fall. I scored just below our new PIO, Corbett Webb – he has been punished for blowing up the curve! – but I gained tremendous insight into the hard work that goes into our assessments. Thanks to Adam Lewis for showing me the ropes on measuring new construction, Bill Baker for his in-depth knowledge of AAVS, and your fearless leader Chuck Cluster for teaching me the finer points of mass appraisals and all that goes in to managing the entire process. I truly and deeply appreciate all that YOU do.

We convey information that impacts homeowners' aspirations across the State, and underpins the basis for one of the largest tax burdens most people bear. Yet, even thru the often contentious appeals process, our assessors score tremendously high marks for customer service. Since January we have received 156 Real Property customer service feedback cards, and **every one of them was positive!** The patience you all show in explaining a complex process to homeowners, the willingness to listen to their arguments and appreciate their concerns, is awe inspiring.

I look forward to continuing to work with all of you in the years to come, to learn from you, and to help provide you with all of the tools necessary to help us achieve new heights.

Cheers!
Michael Higgs, Director (Acting)



Reserve your rooms: (301)387-4000

Booking ID: 1671

From the State Supervisor

This year as normal we sent out close to 750,000 reassessment notices to property owners. This followed a year in which property inspections topped the 300,000 mark. Add to that, by the time this year's conference comes around, you all will have added new construction to the tax rolls, as well as, sent a final notice to more than 25,000 appellants. That's awesome! What do all these numbers mean? Does anyone else keep track of these numbers? Well, I would hope you know staff at Headquarters not only tracks these numbers, but every chance I get to inform the public or our legislators in Annapolis, I'm yelling these numbers as loud as I can. As a matter of fact, every chance we get we are touting the accomplishments of our Department throughout the State to any third party that will listen.

What we also care about is our professional partnership with MAAO. For more than 70 years MAAO has been an educational catalyst to assessors not only in the State of Maryland but also from surrounding jurisdictions. This spring's conference will continue the tradition. As the MAAO board members prepare an informative educational program, hopefully you are planning your trip to Deep Creek Lake to be a part of the experience.

If you attend this year's conference be sure to take full advantage of the Tuesday night class, which in turn, will afford you the opportunity to later take in the beautiful sights of Western Maryland. Such sights include Swallow Falls, Wisp Mountain, Dan's Rock, Casselman River Bridge, and of course, Deep Creek Lake itself. If you need any other ideas of activities or places to visit I'm sure Phil Smith, Supervisor of Garrett County, could be of assistance. We haven't seen the Garrett County office members at MAAO conferences recently but I'm told they will most likely make an appearance this year!

So, as NCIS New Orleans character Dwayne Pride says, "Go – learn things."

See you in June,
Regards,
Chuck Cluster

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M.A.A.O. Treasurer's Report

Total Balance in Accounts	1/1/16	
Total Receipts		
Total Expenses		
Total Balance in Accounts	12/31/16	
Total Balance in Accounts	1/1/2017	
Total Receipts		
Total Expenses		
Total Balance in Accounts		

(Any questions concerning the Treasurer's Report please contact Kim Thomas @ 301-952-2955)





Fantasy Valley Golf Course
296 Marsh Hill Rd
McHenry, MD 21541

M.A.A.O Conference Golf Outing
June 21, 2017
Registration 11:30 am
Tee Time 12:30 pm
Lunch, Prizes and FUN!!!

For Information contact:
Zachary Grisard @ 410-512-4905 or
zachary.grisard@maryland.gov



<http://www.wispresort.com>

There are many activities available in the Deep Creek area. Golf, Scenic Chairlift Rides, Mountain Coaster, Disk Golf, Segway Tours, Mountain Biking, Canopy Tours (zip line), Boating, Hiking, and Rafting are all in close proximity to Wisp Resort.



FUND RAISING RAFFLES



Just a reminder that we are still accepting donations for the raffles. We have had such wonderful donations in the past that we hope to keep this up by encouraging every County Office to participate. Let's see what each office can bring!

Contact Catherine @ Catherine.hovance@maryland.gov

Thank you and see you at the conference!

Proposed Bylaws Changes

ARTICLE II ~ MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 3. Honorary Life Membership: Honorary life membership shall be granted to all members of the Association who have retired from their positions and who, at the time of such retirement, were members in good standing **for a period of fifteen (15) years.** An honorary life member is a non-dues paying and non-voting member.

ARTICLE III ~ OFFICERS

SECTION 2. Terms of Office: At each Annual Meeting of the Association, there shall be nominated and elected for a one (1) year term: President; Vice-President; Secretary and Treasurer. The President and Vice-President may not **succeed themselves in office be elected to successive terms in the same office.**

ARTICLE IV ~ EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 2. Executive Officers: The Executive Board consists of the President, Vice-President Secretary, Treasurer, immediate past President (ex officio) and six (6) regional **members Representatives.** Of the six regional **members Representatives**, two (2) shall be from the Bay Region, (2) from the Central Region, and two (2) from the Western Region. Regions consist of the following:

A. BAY REGION: Anne Arundel, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, St Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester Counties.

B. CENTRAL REGION: Baltimore, Howard and Prince George's Counties Baltimore City and Central Offices.

C. WESTERN REGION: Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Washington and Montgomery Counties.

SECTION 3. Term of Office: At each annual meeting, one **member Representative** from each region shall be nominated and elected to the Executive Board to serve a two (2) year term. **Members Representatives** of the Executive Board may not **succeed themselves in office be elected to successive terms in office.**

ARTICLE VII. NOMINATIONS

SECTION 1. Nominating Committee: The President shall appoint each year, not less than sixty (60) days prior to the annual meeting of the Association, a nominating committee consisting of three (3) regular members, in good standing. The immediate Past President is designated as Chairperson; if unable to serve, the Chairperson shall be appointed by the President. The nominating committee shall select at least one (1) person from the regular membership in good standing as a candidate for each office and one (1) **Executive Board position Representative** in each of the three (3) regions.

Any questions should be directed to: sean.hensley@maryland.gov



Baltimore County

Greetings from Baltimore County,

Anne Groft, Assessor III resigned to stay home with her new baby. Grace Hamilton, C&I Assessor joined us from Anne Arundel County and Talisha Johnson joined us as an Assessor I. Chuck Tillman has been promoted to C&I trainee. Sheqera Simms, Assistant Office Manager joined us from Personal Property.

Kathy Phillips



Cecil County

Cecil County has hired two Office Services Clerks within the past year. Kristine Killen started last June and Cortney Rutecki started in February. Welcome to our team!

Katie Collins was promoted from Office Services Clerk to Assessor I last July, and Jayme Dunn was promoted to Assessor III last September. Congratulations to Katie and Jayme.

Gary Duffy



Charles County

New Employees

We would like to welcome aboard, Debbie Carreira and Clarence Lee as our newest Residential Assessors.

Promotions

Daniele Kennedy was promoted to Residential Assessor III in January

Transfers

We would also like to congratulate Janet Dougherty on her transfer to the Anne Arundel County Assessment Office so she may be closer to home.

----Nicole Ramstedt



Kent County

We welcomed our new assessor Lauren Mench a few months ago. What a great fit Lauren has been for our office. Lauren has already made it through and passed her first IAAO Course. Kent County continues to go strong, and with the help of Lauren, Amy and I can breathe a little easier.

As we look forward to the upcoming 2017 MAAO Conference, I hope to see my fellow assessors there.

Octavia Pauls



Montgomery County

Not much to report here in Montgomery County since the last newsletter. Only 2 comings and goings: We said goodbye to Assessor Kamareena Mbu on January 18th. That very same day we welcomed Jing Lin to the clerical side of the office.

Also, in November, Clerk Elan Hanopole became Assessor 1 Elan Hanopole. Same guy, different job description.

We are all plugging away at appeals and reassessment simultaneously, but the conference in June will be a well-deserved break.

I urge you to "Go West, Assessors and Learn with the MAAO".

Bryan Levenson, CMPA
MAAO President



Somerset County

Somerset County has a lot of happy news to report!!!! 😊

Joanne Croak will have 20 years of service with the State in October of 2017 and she is looking forward to having 5 weeks of vacation.

Watch out world, Betsy McCready is going to be a grandmother!!!! Baby McCready is set to be here in July of 2017. Congratulations!!!!

Guess who's back? Back again. Les is back, tell a friend. After being out, Les is back and ready to go. He is thankful for all the cards, calls and well wishes he received while out.

"Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end." –Semisonic. After 39 plus years serving the great State of Maryland, Jim Ward will be retiring July 1st. He will be greatly missed in Somerset County! Thank you for everything!

Submitted by: Meaghan Beach

77th MAAO Educational Conference

June 20th thru 23rd, 2017

Wisp Resort
296 Marsh Hill Rd
McHenry, MD 21541

Tuesday evening June 20, 2017

5:00 pm – 6:00 pm, **Registration**

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm, **Session A** 3 CEC *

Topic: Is It Real or Personal?

Speaker: **Gary Duffy**

Synopsis: Discussion of whether a parcel is Real or Personal property.

Includes an overview of the Charter Division

Wednesday June 21, 2017

8:00 am – 9:00 am, Registration and Continental Breakfast

9:00 am – 10:00 am, Opening Remarks

10:00 am – 12:00 pm, **Session B General Session** 2 CEC *

Topic: Land Valuation

Speaker: **Leslie Pruitt**

Synopsis: Valuation of water front, water view, and bay front etc. type lots.

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm, Lunch

11:30 until Golf

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm, **Session C General Session** 3 CEC *

Topic: Windmills

Speaker: **Phil Smith**

Synopsis: Wind farms and how they operate.

Thursday, June 22, 2017

8:00 am – 9:00 am, **Registration and Continental Breakfast**

9:00 am – 12:00 pm, **Session D General Session** 3 CEC *

Topic: Special Use Properties

Speaker: **Roy Sleeman**

Synopsis: How to assess special use type properties, ex.: Power plants, Casinos, Sports Stadiums, etc.

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm Lunch

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm, **Session E General Session** 3 CEC *

Topic: Residential Structures, Quality and Condition

Speaker: **Greg Glover**

Synopsis: Identifying architectural elements to determine quality and condition.

6:00 pm – until **Party at Dutch's at Silver Tree, Oakland, MD**

Friday, June 23, 2017

8:00 am – 9:00 am, **Continental Breakfast**

9:00 am – 12:00 pm, **Session F General Session** 3 CEC *

Topic: Subsidized Housing and 2017 Tax Laws

Speaker: **Vince Guida and Jeff Comen**

Synopsis: Understanding the laws and programs for income based housing.

Overview of new tax laws effecting assessments.

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm Lunch

1:00 pm – until, **M.A.A.O Business Meeting**

Treasurer's Report New Business

Committee Reports Installation of Officers

Old Business Final Remarks

***All courses are pending approval from MD Commission of Real Estate Appraisers**

MAAO 2017 Golf Tournament
Wednesday June 21, 2017
Fantasy Valley Golf Course
296 Marsh Hill Rd, McHenry, MD 21541



Name: _____

Foursome: _____ Handicap: _____

_____ Handicap: _____

_____ Handicap: _____

_____ Handicap: _____

COST IS \$75.00 PER PERSON

**Includes your round of golf, cart, food, awards and
Closest to the Pin Competition.**

11:30 AM Registration

12:30 PM Golf Tournament Tee Time with Awards to follow golf

**Format: 4 person scramble. Rules and directions will be furnished at
the conference. Don't forget to list your handicaps.**

Registration will be limited to the first 24 golfers.

**Fax this registration form to: Zachary Grisard (410) 321-4148
or mail with your conference registration.**

Send checks to: Kim Thomas along with the conference registration form.