

THE COUNTY TAX \$TATEMENT



Volume 19, Issue 2—May 2019

President's Message

By Michelle French, Denton County Tax Assessor-Collector



Hello Friends!

I hope you are well and had a wonderful Spring and getting ready to welcome the Summer.

Did you know that today, May 8th, is National "Coconut Cream Pie Day"? Doesn't that sound like something we could all enjoy on a warm sunny day? Speaking of warm sunny days,

we are just a few short weeks away from the Annual TACA Conference to be held in the beautiful City of Galveston.

We are looking forward to meeting with our tax assessor/collectors and deputies in sharing great ideas in how we all run our offices. The educational opportunities will be many and this will be a time for us all to join together as we work to improve our service to our fellow Texans.

We are so excited about the conference and appreciate all those who are working so hard to bring a quality program and educational experience to our counties. Thank you to Jefferson County TAC Allison Getz and Dallas County TAC John Ames for working so hard to make this year's conference successful. Thanks also go out to Amy Lawson and Megan West at Texas Association of Counties and Sarah Lazarowitz at County Progress. They are our conference management and trade show partners. It takes a lot of work and a lot of people to pull it all together. We also want to thank our sponsors and exhibitors. Without their support, we would not be able to have a quality program for you. Thank you to everyone who is, has or will be part of the program!!

We have several new tax assessor/collectors this year. Please be sure to welcome them and help them navigate the conference as we all converge on Galveston. Please travel safe and come prepared to both learn and share.

I would like to thank all of our committee chairs, vice-chairs and members. Our association is stronger because of your involvement. If you would like to be more involved, please join one or more committees. I would like to thank our TACA Board Officers and Directors for their leadership. It takes a group of dedicated professionals to ensure the association runs smoothly.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for allowing me to serve as your President this year. It has been a privilege and an honor to serve this amazing association. I look forward to seeing you in a few weeks. Until then, let's keep riding on those Waves of Progress!

In Service To You,

Michelle French
Denton County Tax Assessor Collector
President, Tax Assessor/Collector's Association of Texas

TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

Waves of Progress

85th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Moody Gardens Hotel, Galveston | June 9-13, 2019

The County Tax \$tatement

The County Tax Statement is the official publication of the Tax Assessor-Collector's Association of Texas and is published four times each year for the benefit of its members and interested contributing parties. The purpose of the organization is to promote professional standards, to unify actions for the benefit of its constituents, to be aware and participate in the legislative process, and to provide a vehicle to educate its members in the proper conduct of the constitutional office of the Assessor-Collector of Taxes.

The 2018/2019 Board of Directors

President

Michelle French, PCC
Denton County

President-Elect

Cathy C Talcott, PCAC
Comal County

Vice-President External

Linda Bridge, PCAC
Bee County

Vice-President Internal

Tammy McRae, PCAC
Montgomery County

Secretary-Treasurer

Randy H Riggs, CPA, PCC
McLennan County

Immediate Past President

Teri Garvey-Hanks, PCC
Anderson County

Directors

Bruce Stidham, PCAC
Grayson County

Larry Gaddes, PCAC
Williamson County

Kevin Kieschnick
Nueces County

Donna Willis
Lynn County

Editor

Billie Page, CTOP
Chair, Public Information Committee
Angelina County

Layout

Teresa McCoy, PCC
Public Information Committee
Hood County

Editing Staff

Public Information Committee



2018/2019 Board: (Left to right) Kevin Kieschnick, Larry Gaddes, Donna Willis, Randy Riggs, Bruce Stidham, Tammy McRae, Linda Bridge, Cathy Talcott, Terry Garvey-Hanks and Michelle French

From the Editor

By Billie Page, Angelina County Tax Assessor-Collector, PCC, CTOP



It's Almost Time for our 85th Annual Tax Assessor-Collectors Association Conference!

In just a few weeks, we will be converging on beautiful Galveston Island for our annual conference. I love our conferences because of the family feeling we bring to our gatherings. I have a good friend who has been to our conference and a few others and she says no other group is as welcoming, caring and friendly as our association. I said yes.

This issue of THE COUNTY TAX STATEMENT is about our upcoming conference. We urge everyone to become involved in our association by signing up for committees, running for a position on our board of directors and asking, "What can I do to contribute?"

This month, Teresa McCoy and I invited everyone to send us news of your county, office, family, anything... that you would like to share. We want everyone to feel a part of our newsletter. Please feel comfortable participating because your input is wanted and appreciated.

Thanks to our many wonderful sponsors, our president Michelle French and our board of directors, our program chairs, Texas Association of Counties, County Progress, our host county Galveston, and everyone who works so hard to make our conferences so great.

Travel safely to Galveston and everywhere you go, be healthy and happy, and never forget God's love for all of us. Always be thankful, for He is good. See you soon.

Billie

Dates to Remember

**85th Annual
Tax Assessor-Collectors
Association Conference
June 9-13, 2019
Moody Gardens Hotel, Spa &
Convention Center—Galveston**

**Father's Day
Sunday, June 16, 2019**

**Independence Day
July 4, 2019**

**37th Annual Election Law Seminar
July 29-31, 2019
Austin**

You Need To Know....

Congratulations to Patsy Schultz and Susie Dreyer on their retirements. Patsy retired as Fort Bend County Tax Assessor-Collector on April 30th after nearly 40 years in the tax office; she served as Tax Assessor-Collector for 15 of those years. Susie retired on Friday, May 3, 2019 after 35 years in the tax office in DeWitt County. We wish both of these ladies well in this new chapter of their lives and appreciate their many years of service.

Congratulations also go out to newly appointed Tax Assessor-Collector's, Carrie Surratt, Lindy Wright, and Ashley Mraz. Carrie is the new Tax Assessor-Collector for Fort Bend County where she has been serving citizens in the tax office for 10 years. Lindy is now the Tax Assessor-Collector in Ector County and had already been serving in the tax office. Ashley is the new Tax Assessor-Collector in DeWitt County. Congratulations ladies and welcome to the T.A.C.A. family as official Tax Assessor-Collectors!

Reminder From Program Committee Chair, Allison Getz - Please remember to bring a door prize for exchange during the conference. Historically, each office brings one, or more, gifts for us to give away throughout the conference. We are looking forward to a fun and informative few days of learning and networking with a bonus of possibly receiving a door prize along the way. Looking forward to seeing everyone in just a few days!



On April 24, 2019, the Texas House and Senate made resolutions and honored Denton County Tax Assessor-Collector and T.A.C.A. President Michelle French. Congratulations Michelle, and thank you for all you do!

Tax Assessor-Collectors Association of Texas

85th Annual Conference

AGENDA

Saturday, June 8

3 – 6 p.m.

Board Meeting

Sunday, June 9

8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Registration Open

9 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

NEW Tax Assessor-Collector Orientation Class

10 – 10:30 a.m.

First-time Conference Attendees: What to Expect!

10 a.m. – noon

Site Committee

11 a.m. – noon

Program Committee

1 – 5 p.m.

Advanced Program – Team Building

1 – 5 p.m.

TACA Store Open

2:30 – 3 p.m.

Still in My First Term...What Questions Do You Have Since Taking Office?

5 – 6 p.m.

Devotional Service

Monday, June 10

7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Registration & TACA Store Open

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

By-Laws Committee

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Security Committee

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Awards Committee

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Election Committee

9 – 10:15 a.m.

Welcome & Greetings – Keynote: Heat and Humanity: Skillful Management of Conflict and Confrontation to Ensure Quality Customer Service

10:15 – 10:30 a.m.

Break

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Anatomy of Fraud – How to Handle it Ethically

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Sponsor Appreciation Luncheon

1 – 3:45 p.m.

Exhibit Hall Open

1 – 2:15 p.m.

Breakout Sessions

Secretary of State Updates

Special Inventory Tax – Funds and Penalties

Human Relations Tips for Retaining Ethical Employees

2:15 – 3 p.m.

Exhibit Hall Break

3:30 – 5 p.m.

Comptroller Update

5:15 – 6 p.m.

Legislative Committee

Free evening

Tuesday, June 11

7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Legislative Committee

7:30 – 8 a.m.

Registration & TACA Store Open

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Technology Committee

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Education Committee

Comptroller Liaison Committee

Continued on Page 6

CONFERENCE AGENDA

(Continued from Page 5)

8 – 8:30 a.m.	Historical Committee
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Exhibit Hall Open
9 – 10:45 a.m.	Texas DMV Update
10:45 – 11 a.m.	Exhibit Hall Break
11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Roundtable: Motor Vehicle – Under 40,000
	Roundtable: Property Tax – 40,000 to 200,000
	Roundtable: Comptroller – 200,000 and up
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.	Memorial Lunch
1:45 – 2:45 p.m.	Roundtable: Property Tax – Under 40,000
	Roundtable: Comptroller – 40,000 to 200,000
	Roundtable: Motor Vehicle – 200,000 and up
2:45 – 3:15 p.m.	Exhibit Hall Break
3:15 – 4:30 p.m.	Roundtable: Comptroller – Under 40,000
	Roundtable: Motor Vehicle – 40,000 to 200,000
	Roundtable: Property Tax – 200,000 and up
4:30 – 5:15 p.m.	DMV Liaison Subcommittee: Steering
5:15 – 6 p.m.	DMV Liaison Committee
8 – 11 p.m.	Bingo!

Wednesday, June 12 ~ Wear Your TACA Shirt Day!

7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Registration Open
7:30 a.m. – noon	TACA Store Open
7:30 – 8:45 a.m.	Past-Presidents' Breakfast
8:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Exhibit Hall Open
9 – 10:45 a.m.	TACA Business Meeting
9 – 10:15 a.m.	DEPUTY SESSION: "Success and Less Stress through Communication Skills"
10:15 – 10:45 a.m.	DEPUTY Exhibit Hall Break
10:45 – 11:15 a.m.	TAC Exhibit Hall Break
10:45 a.m. – noon	DEPUTY SESSION: "Creating Loyal Fan Customers"
11:15 a.m. – noon	TACA Business Meeting (continued)
Noon – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch on your own
1:30 – 2 p.m.	<u>Breakout Sessions (choose one; sessions repeat at 2 p.m.)</u>
	"Texas Friendly" Spoken Here – Hospitality Habits for Great Customer Service
	Health and Wellness within Your Office to Promote Ethical Behavior
	Media Awareness to Support Customer Service
2 – 2:30 p.m.	<u>Breakout Sessions (repeated)</u>
	"Texas Friendly" Spoken Here – Hospitality Habits for Great Customer Service
	Health and Wellness within Your Office to Promote Ethical Behavior
	Media Awareness to Support Customer Service
2:30 – 3 p.m.	Refreshment Break
3 – 3:45 p.m.	<u>Breakout Sessions</u>
	How to Effectively Use Your Association Listserv for Maximum Results in Customer Service to Your Constituents
	Embezzler in the Tax Office: Steals More Than Just Money!
	How to Identify Fraud and Establish an Office Based on Ethics
	Maximizing Postage to Service Your Citizens

Continued on Page 7

CONFERENCE AGENDA

(Continued from Page 6)

3:45 – 4:30 p.m.

Breakout Sessions

Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission

Regulating Title Services to Prevent Fraud and Maintain Great Service

6 p.m.

Offsite Event – Moody Gardens Pyramids and Banquet

6:15 p.m.

TAC Photo – ALL Elected Tax Assessor-Collectors should be in this photo!

6:30 p.m.

Installation of Officers, Presentations & Awards

7 p.m.

Dinner

Thursday, June 13

7:30 – 8:45 a.m.

New Board Meeting & Breakfast

8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Registration Desk Open

9 – 10 a.m.

86th Legislative Update

10 – 10:15 a.m.

Refreshment Break

10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Breakout Sessions

Ethics for County Tax Assessor-Collectors (This is a TACA approved course for certification.)

Customer Service to Build the Public Trust (This is a TACA approved course for certification.)

Truth N Taxation Refresher

12:15 p.m.

Adjourn

THE 86th LEGISLATURE—LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Submitted by: Legislative Committee Members

By the time this article is printed, the dust will probably have settled around the 86th Legislative Session and we will be trying to figure out what happened, if we are not so busy in a special session to consider it. This legislative session has been one of the most intense, with multiple issues being tracked and worked by the legislative committee members. Weekly meetings to review bills and agree on required testimony were interspersed with phone calls, emails and text messages, day, nights and weekends to try and keep up with the fast pace.

The big issues have been of course, school finance reform, property tax reform, and the TxDMV Sunset bill. And those were only three of the issues the legislature considered in the over 4000 (I think) bills filed in the 86th legislative session. Issues like mandatory escrow accounts for property taxes, mandatory multiple payment plans for property taxes, the final destination of the drivers' license process in Texas and the county of issuance for disabled placards are a minor list of the vast number of ideas that have floated around this session.

For those of you who have answered the call to contact your legislators or committee members on specific bills, let us tell you that you have been rock stars. The importance of taking the time to make a call or send an email cannot be overstated. A major difference was made each time. Those contacts help get critical information to legislators who really need to know the impact on their constituents, and sometimes it is the difference between a bill passing or dying.

At the time this is being written, it is the last day that a House Bill can be voted out of a House Committee and move to the Senate for consideration this session. There are still a lot of spinning plates in the air, and any predictions about what the final outcome will be would be foolhardy. We look forward to seeing everyone in June when you should be looking for a final update on the 86th Legislative Session.

JOIN THE FUN AND GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR ASSOCIATION!

Committee membership in the Tax Assessor-Collectors Association of Texas is open to all members, so join as many committees as you like! See committee descriptions below and check the boxes to indicate your choices.

We Welcome You!

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BY-LAWS | <input type="checkbox"/> HONORARY MEMBERSHIP | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC INFORMATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMPTROLLER LIAISON | <input type="checkbox"/> LEGISLATIVE | <input type="checkbox"/> RESOLUTIONS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LIFE MEMBERSHIP | <input type="checkbox"/> SECURITY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ELECTIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> MEMBERSHIP | <input type="checkbox"/> TECHNOLOGY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HISTORICAL | <input type="checkbox"/> PROGRAMS | <input type="checkbox"/> TxDMV LIAISON |

Turn in this form to the Registration Desk or email to Cathy Talcott at talcoc@co.comal.tx.us

Name (Please Print Clearly) _____ Title _____

County _____ Email (Please Print Clearly) _____

Telephone _____

Brief Descriptions of TACA Committees

NOTE: For more detailed descriptions, see the Bylaws at www.tacaofexas.org and click on "Association Form Downloads."

BY-LAWS – Recommends to the Board any changes to the Constitution or the By-Laws, therefore keeping them current.

COMPTROLLER LIAISON – Provides assistance to TACA members regarding issues involving Property Tax and Motor Vehicle Sales Tax divisions of the Comptroller's office.

EDUCATION – Furthers the knowledge of TACA members by establishing criteria and curriculum, and by promoting and offering educational courses for professional designations.

ELECTIONS – Encourages participation in the process of electing officers and directors of TACA by soliciting candidates and facilitating elections.

HISTORICAL – Records the proceedings of all TACA activities to preserve the memories created by the fellowship of attendees.

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP – Recommends and provides a document, plaque, etc., to honor those who have performed notable service to TACA or the office of Tax Assessor-Collector.

LEGISLATIVE – Reviews pending legislation and/or prepares legislation that could benefit members of TACA. Also serves as liaison between Texas Legislature and TACA.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP – Recommends life membership for those past Tax Assessor-Collectors and Sheriffs who have served a minimum of 12 years.

MEMBERSHIP – Contacts, at least once a year, any non-participating or non-member Tax Assessor-Collector of each county to encourage participation. Also provides recognition to those Tax Assessor-Collectors who have served 20 years in the tax office.

PROGRAMS – Works closely with the Board, Education Committee Chair and Education Director for assurance of quality programs for the annual conference. Assists at annual June conference by handing out door prizes to winners and collecting special-event tickets from attendees.

PUBLIC INFORMATION – Publishes newsletter at least quarterly to inform TACA members of activities and changes in laws. Disseminates other information beneficial to the membership.

RESOLUTIONS – Prepares resolutions as necessary to commend those who have shown special friendship and outstanding service to TACA.

SECURITY – Addresses any and all security concerns related to tax office functions, employee safety and welfare. Develops solutions to issues as they arise.

TECHNOLOGY – Addresses any and all concerns related to the technological issues of tax offices, especially regarding the TACA website, and assists in facilitating solutions to the concerns.

TxDMV LIAISON – Provides assistance to TACA members regarding issues involving TxDMV. Notifies members of proposed changes and encourages participation in TxDMV requests.

84th Annual TACA Conference

We wish to thank all of our sponsors:

DIAMOND SPONSORS
McCreary Veselka Bragg & Allen, PC

RT Lawrence Corp
LetterStream, Inc.
SpindleMedia

PLATINUM SPONSORS
Houston-DFW-San Antonio New
Car Dealers Associations
Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP
Texas Association of Counties

GUIDEBOOK MOBILE APP SPONSOR
BIS Consulting

GOLD SPONSORS
Perdue Brandon Fielder Collins & Mott, LLP

CONFERENCE BAG SPONSOR
AIB, Inc.

SILVER SPONSORS
Certified Payments, Inc.
JP Morgan Chase
North Texas Tollway Authority
Tyler Technologies

CONFERENCE LANYARD SPONSOR
Texas Independent Automobile Dealers Association

BRONZE SPONSORS
AAA Texas
Appraisal & Collections Technologies, LLC
Auto Data Direct, Inc.
Bid4Assets, Inc.
CoreLogic
Gov-Pay
LexisNexis Payment Solutions

BINGO GAME NIGHT SPONSOR
Propel Financial Services

TABLE GAME NIGHT SPONSOR
Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP

DANCE ENTERTAINMENT SPONSOR
Certified Payments, Inc.

*Our sincerest thanks to all of these businesses and their representatives.
Without their participation and support, the special events presented at
this conference would not have been possible.
Thank you - thank you - thank you!*