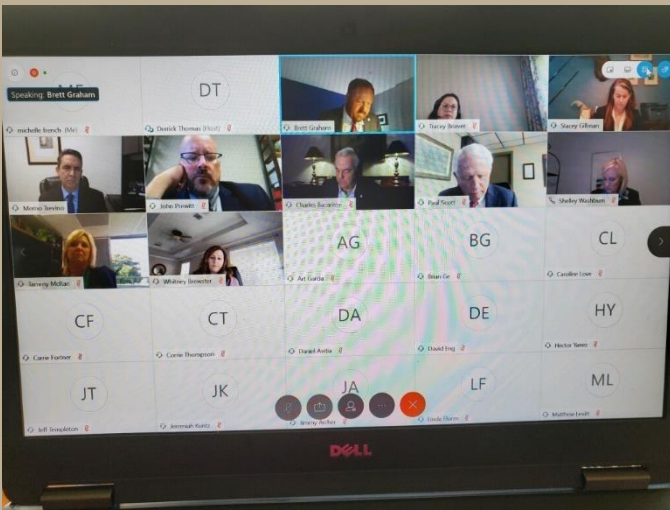


THE COUNTY TAX \$ STATEMENT



Volume 20, Issue 2-October 2020

#BeTheDifference



TACA President Tammy McRae
TxDMV Board Meeting



TACA President Tammy McRae
TACA Board Meeting in August

SPECIAL SECTION:

FEATURING OUR 2020 RETIREES
(PAGES 7-19)

The County Tax Statement

The County Tax Statement is the official publication of the Tax Assessor-Collectors 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 2020/2021 Board of Directors

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Montgomery County

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Bell County

Donna Willis, CTOP
Lynn County

Albert Uresti, CTOP
Bexar County

Dates to Remember

Oct 31	Halloween
Nov 1	All Saints' Day
Nov 3	Election Day
Nov 10-11	V G Young Conference
Nov 11	Veterans Day
Nov 26	Thanksgiving Day
Dec 21	First Day of Winter
Dec 25	Christmas Day



A Letter from Our New President Tammy McRae, PCAC

Montgomery County Tax Assessor-Collector

Hello All & Welcome Fall!

I hope everyone is enjoying the cooler temperatures as summer comes to an end and we slowly fade into fall. I love the beautiful fall colors & everything Pumpkin Spice!

Tax Assessor-Collectors are a resilient group of individuals, which is why we can add another notch to our belts! We survived TNT & the many changes from SB 2! I think many of us felt dazed and confused as we navigated the process, but we have successfully made it to the other side! Good

luck to those that collect, as we get ready to drop those tax statements in the mail.

Best of luck to our fellow Tax Assessor-Collectors who serve as the Voter Registrar or conduct elections! I know this is an important election and will certainly be a busy & hectic time for you.

Your TACA Board met in Belton (Bell County) for the August board meeting. A huge thank you to Director Shay Luedeke & his wife, Laura for hosting a board dinner at their beautiful home. Good food, good times & great fellowship!

Several of our committees have been hard at work. With the legislative session, right around the corner, Ronnie Keister & his legislative committee has already begun working on a platform to present to the board in November.

The TACA website will soon have a new look, as Texas Association of Counties will host our domain. A big shout out to Justin Carothers for taking the lead on this project!

I am excited that the V.G. Young School for Tax Assessor-Collectors will be in-person! The conference will be held in Waco, November 10-12th. Sherry Mueck and the V.G. Young Conference Planning Committee has been busy working to make this a special conference with lots of educational opportunities. Christina McMurray has done an outstanding job of coordinating the awards committee to be able to present the TAC of the Year and DSA at this conference. It will be our first, last & only conference in 2020! It will also be the last time that many of us will be together as we say goodbye to those who have decided not to seek another term.

If you're unable to attend the conference & are in need of CEs, there are a few options still available. TxDMV is conducting virtual Title Fraud Training sessions and the Comptroller will host their annual Property Tax Institute conference virtually.

For those of you who have decided not to seek another term, you will be missed! I wish you all success in your endeavors and retirement. For those of you who are opposed in November, good luck!

Thank you again for the honor of serving as your President! #BeTheDifference

My best to you all,

Tammy
Tammy McRae, PCAC
Montgomery County Tax Assessor-Collector
President- Tax Assessor-Collector's Association of Texas



A Letter From the Editor:
Billie Page, Angelina Co.



Greetings and Hello, Friends.

Happy Fall!

It's Official. It's tax season. Let the fun begin!

Getting ready for tax rate calculations was a little stressful. It seems like the calculation software stayed in "tweaking" mode the whole time. A small change here led to another change there... always a challenge. However, the knowledge, skill and professionalism of our vendors was a blessing.

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered our lives on many different levels. Will we ever get back to "normal"? What is normal now, anyway?

Several of our members are retiring at the end of this year, so there is a special section of this newsletter, starting on page 7, devoted to them.

To all of our peers with opponents in the General Election, best of luck and good wishes for reelection.

Currently, the V G Young Conference in November is still a go, so prayers that we are able to gather in Waco are being said. See more info on page 31.

I wish you all a wonderful fall and holiday season, as this is the last newsletter for 2020. I hope to have one ready to publish in early January, so send me your news!

May God bless and keep you all.

Peace and love,

Billie

2020 Tax Assessor-Collector of the Year Nominees

(In alphabetical order by Region)

Amarillo Region	Honorable Gaye Whitehead, Gray County
Bluebonnet Region	Honorable May Jane Poenitzsch, Colorado County
Coastal Bend Region	Honorable Jeri Cox, Aransas County
Dallas Region	Honorable Kim Sweet, Rockwall County
Fort Worth Region	Honorable Michelle French, Denton County
Houston Region	Honorable Ro'Vin Garrett, Brazoria County
Lubbock Region	Honorable Anna Rodriguez, Crosby County
San Antonio Region	Honorable Loretta Holley, Atascosa County
Waco Region	Honorable Sherry Mueck, Milam County



Jeri Cox



Michelle French



Kim Sweet



Ro'Vin Garrett



Anna Rodriguez

(The nominees above are the only ones to respond to my request of photos. Bp)

Special Section:

2020 Retirees

December 31, 2020 will be a day of mixed emotions. Several of our friends will be retiring as Tax Assessor-Collectors. While we will be sad that they will not be attending our regional and annual meetings any longer, we will be so glad for them for their new chapters in life. We wish them well in their futures and retirement. In alphabetical order by county, following are the 2020 retirees:



Teri Garvey-Hanks, Anderson County

Years of service with Anderson County 1993-2020.

Chief Deputy 1993-2004

Tax Assessor 2004-2020

Served on TACA board. Director 2008-2014

VP External 2015-2016

VP Internal 2016-2017

President 2017-2018

Served on education, legislative, advisory and scholarship committees within TACA organization.

Advice: Always remember that we wouldn't have this job if it wasn't for our customers. Never take anything personal. Always stay open minded and listen to both sides of the story before making a determination. And remember.....ability can take you to the top but it takes character to keep you there.



Jeri Cox, Aransas County

Jeri Cox is COUNTING THE DAYS until New Year's Eve ready to celebrate the end of 2020 and 39 years and 4 months of public service to the citizens of Aransas County! I can still remember August, 1981 when I began this journey, never dreaming I would be the next tax assessor-collector which happened on February 1, 1995. I also remember the first customer who made me cry was a local car dealer who came in all the time. I had to "get over it" and continue providing customer service "with a smile" leaving out the negative words and feelings. There have been many highs and lows through the years, but the most treasured blessing is the many friends I have made throughout the whole state of Texas. My husband will marvel when we travel through counties and I tell him who my friends are that work in the local tax office. Thankfully, my "low" times fade from my memory but the most recent would be trying to navigate the changes brought to us by COVID-19 and Senate Bill 2! My "highs" include the times being active in TACA's Coastal Bend Region and at the state level serving on various committees. My advice to all TACA members is "Be Involved" and you will "#BeTheDifference!" & make friends on your journey.



Gwenda Tschirhart, Bandera County

Well I am retiring as TAC, but staying on to run elections for the tax office. So not sure if this is really retirement, right now I am thinking What have you done crazy girl...

I have been working in the tax office since October 2000, I was appointed to take over as TAC in January 2012 and my last day as TAC will be December 31, 2020. It has been great ride, I have found that while being TAC, some of the best moments have been taking on new challenges, stepping up to the plate to help our citizens out, in November 2017, I agreed to take back duties of VR and Election Official for our county, when the county election board choose to do away with the Election Administrator position. In May of 2020, I have also agreed to start collecting property taxes for Utopia ISD. It has been with great pleasure and pride that I have served the citizens of Bandera. When asked if I would stay on with the county and ran the election department, it seemed like the right thing to do for our county, as the County Judge told me, you know elections and you know how to do them.

Linda Little, Cherokee County



My service for Cherokee County began in 1994 as internal auditor. This position provided a comprehensive and thorough knowledge of the tax office's processes. When the former tax assessor/collector announced her retirement, I decided to run because there were numerous procedures which needed to be updated and streamlined.

The first project was to identify retention requirements for documents on file in the tax office. This project yielded 6,000 pounds of unnecessary paper that qualified for shredding. Scanners were installed which allowed digital storage rather than paper storage.

The next project was to enhance customer service. This included a website for tax payments, keeping the office open during the lunch hour, and implementing a telephone message system.

It has been a gratifying and rewarding twelve-year journey.



Cathy Talcott, Comal County

Comal County Tax Assessor-Collector – Nov. 2008-2020
(Retiring December 31, 2020)

Served on multiple TACA committees and sub-committees
Served on TACA Board of Directors 2012-Present
Received 2013 Texas Association of Counties Best Practices Award

Nominated 2011 and 2014 as TAC of the Year

Served as Regional Coordinator for Bluebonnet Region

Served as TACA President 2019-2020 with the following TACA firsts:
Conducted Board Retreat, Completing 5 Goals
Revised Mission Statement
Legislative Committee began TACA Legislative Awards for Legislative Members
Posted Board Meeting Agendas on Website
Board Meetings Video-Conferenced with Membership Call-In Participation
Established new Education Coordinator Position through VG Young

Cancellation of Annual Conference due to Covid-19, which prompted:
TACA Annual Conference Webinar Classes
TACA Website Vendor Sponsorships
TACA Annual Business Meeting & Elections Postponed to VG Young Conference
in November

My favorite mantras are:

“Put yourself in your customers’ shoes.”

“Don’t just say ‘no’ to a customer (or an employee), but explain *why* you must say no.”

“Rise above by taking the high road!”

Regarding running an office: “There’s gotta be a better way!”





Anna Rodriguez, Crosby County

Anna Rodriguez retire: <Dec 31st, 2020>

Started to work in (Crosby County) Tax Office on June 12th, 1979

Sworn in as Tax Assessor-Collector on August 6th, 1996

My #1 highlight: Serving the people of the county. The one on one with People. Being from a small county, you are stopped at Grocery Store, Ball Games, or even after Church to answer any question they might have.

Advice: Always listen to your heart and you will know when it is time to step down and let someone else take charge. I have made some lifelong friends and I will miss everyone.

Linda Crump, Donley County



LINDA DARLENE CRUMP TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR
DONLEY COUNTY

I STARTED TO WORK FOR WILMA LINDEY ON JULY 09 2007, SHE WAS RETIRING AT THE END OF HER TERM 12-31-2008. I HAVE BEEN THE ELECTED OFFICAL SINCE THEN. OUR COUNTY IS VERY SMALL SO I ONLY HAVE ONE PART-TIME DEPUTY. I HAVE ENJOYED SO MUCH BEING ABLE TO ASSIST MY PEOPLE AS THEY COME IN WITH MOTOR VEHICLE OR VOTER REGISTRATION WORK. I'VE BEEN FORTUNATE I HAVE NEVER HAD ANY ONE RUN AGAINST ME THE THREE TERMS I RAN FOR OFFICE. GAYE WHITEHEAD FROM GRAY COUNTY WAS VERY HELPFUL WHEN I WOULD HAVE QUESTIONS AND SHE MADE ME VERY WELCOM AT ALL EVENTS I ATTENDED. ALL THE T.A.C.' THAT I HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH WERE VERY FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL IN ANY WAY THAT WAS NEEDED. SCOTT PORTER FROM WHEELER COUNTY ALLOWED ME TO RIDE WITH HIM, HIS WIFE, AND DEPUTY TO AUSTIN TO THE FIRST CONFERENCE I ATTENDED. I'M JUST A COUNTY GIRL AND TH BIG CITY WAS AMAZING TO ME. TERESA ALTMAN OF HALL COUNTY HAS BEEN TRAVELING WITH ME TO OTHER SCHOOLS AND CONFERENCES SINCE. WE ENLISTED MY SISTER LUCY TO DO OUR DRIVING AS SHE WAS USED TO THE TRAFFIC. I AM HAPPY TO BE RETIRING SO THAT I CAN SPEND MORE TIME WITH MY FOUR SONS, 13 GRANDKIDS AND 2 GREAT-GRANDS. I AM BLESSED BY MY LO AND SAVIOR SO MUCH AS HE LEADS ME DOWN LIFE'S PATHWAY. I PRAY THAT EACH ONE WILL BE BLESSED BY HIM AS WELL.



Dannette Millican, Houston County

I started in the Houston County tax office in January 1986. I had a bad case of burn-out and left in October 1994. The time I was away gave me time to clear my mind and when I came back in March of 1996, I had a whole new outlook and perspective. I realized in that time that I could not make someone do the right thing if they didn't want to. For example, someone wanting to put farm tags on a truck that I knew they were driving to work. This was before the Ag/Timber card requirements. I adopted the attitude that if they wanted to sign the affidavit, it would be between them and law enforcement if they got stopped. I was given the opportunity by then Tax Collector Joan Lucas to work toward my certification with the intention of running when she retired. I owe a lot to the two tax collectors that I worked for. Odessa Brown who hired me and exhibited a lot of faith in my abilities and then to Joan Lucas for giving me the courage and knowledge to run for tax collector. I ran and took office January 2005. I have thoroughly enjoyed my years serving the public and will miss interacting with my staff, the public and other county officials and employees. However, I look forward to being able to spend more time with my parents, our son and his family and of course, my husband, Robert.



Sadie Piper Spitzer, King County

I have been King County Tax Assessor-Collector for 28 years. It has been a great ride. But it is time for this old mare to be turned out to pasture... lol.

I plan on moving to Abilene, Tx to be near my three awesome Grandchildren: Isaac 1, Luke 11, and Ella 3 .. Oh by the way, my daughter Stacy and son-in-law Jason live there as well.. (you know Grands come first) lol.

Happy Trails My Friends..

Love to all,

Sadie Piper Spitzer
King County Tax Assessor Collector
1993 - 2020



Melissa T. De La Garza, Kleberg County

I was elected Tax Assessor-Collector on January 1, 1997. In September 2, 1986, I began working at the Tax office as a Deputy. I graduated in December 1985 from Texas A&M University-Kingsville with a Bachelor of Business Administration.

I have been an active member of TACA and TAAO for many years. Being part of these Associations has been very rewarding. The most rewarding is the friendships I have made throughout the many years. That cannot ever be taken away. These friendships will be cherished forever.

The highlight of the many years of service in Kleberg County is serving the public with respect, honor and high ethical standards. The journey in the tax office has been very memorable and will never be forgotten. Service with pride will get you through the many years, changes in the laws and the many challenges that come before you every day as a public servant. Always strive to be the best you can be.

I will say that 2020 has been a year like never before, but together we will all get through it.

As I turn a new chapter in my life, I will be spending more time with my husband Pete and my family.

Until we meet again!!



Rena Scherer, Victoria County

I started working in the Victoria County Tax Office in December of 1981 in the property tax department. In 1991, when my predecessor Bessie Lassmann decided not to run for Victoria County Tax Assessor County anymore, she approached me seeing if I would be interested in running for the elected position. I liked what I was doing and put both feet in and ran with it. You know when a position comes available everyone wants the job thinking it is an easy job. So, the first go round, I had two gentlemen from the Appraisal District Office and the City/School Tax Assessor Collector run against me in the primary. We all ran under the same ticket so of course when there are that many people running on the same ticket there would be a run-off. The run-off was myself and the City/School Tax Assessor Collector. If I had received only 475 more votes I would have won without the run-off. Took my first oath January 1st 1993. My first goal after getting elected, I approached the City and two Schools in offering my services and to consolidate to save their entities money. They were happy with the outcome. As I am ending my 7th term (28 years) as Victoria County Tax Assessor Collector and 11 years as deputy clerk (39 years total with the Victoria County), I was blessed to have accomplished many things in the tax office and I had and have still wonderful, professional and efficient employees. I am ready for retirement so I can have only one job instead of two. What I mean by that, my husband (Calvin) and I own a business Scherer Kubota it is a farm equipment implement dealership we have 4 locations one in Victoria, El Campo, Hallettsville and La Grange Texas and I also work there in doing payroll and paying the bills so I usually do this after getting off from tax office and on weekends. I also have two grandchildren who are active in many activities and will enjoy watching them. Calvin and I enjoy camping and traveling. So, farewell to my TACA family; I will definitely miss seeing ya'll at the conferences.

Love my TACA Family,

Rena Scherer

COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE UPDATES

MOTOR VEHICLE TAX PAYMENT EXTENSIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, THE NEW MOTOR VEHICLE TAX GUIDE AND PROOF OF TAX PAID FOR NEW OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES PURCHASED OUT OF STATE

TALIEA POCAIGUE | TEXAS COMPTROLLER OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS | TAX POLICY DIVISION

As we all continue to navigate our way through the uncharted territory of COVID-19, the Comptroller's office remains dedicated to ensuring that each of the county tax assessor-collector (CTAC) offices adjusts to the ever-changing landscape and remains up to date with our agency's activities.

MOTOR VEHICLE TAX PAYMENT EXTENSIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

With the continuing requirement to practice safe social distancing and the Governor waiving certain rules relating to vehicle titling and registration at the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV), the Comptroller's office will continue the extension of the motor vehicle tax payment from the date of the most recent [state disaster declaration](#) from the Governor. Any tax penalty will be automatically waived if the tax payment is received within 60 days of the expiration of the state disaster declaration.

Note: The extension does not apply to seller-financed motor vehicle sales. In these cases, the motor vehicle tax is reported and paid directly to the Comptroller's office instead of a CTAC upon registration.

If you have any questions regarding motor vehicle tax payment extensions, feel free to contact our CTAC Assistance Section at 800-803-2573 or email tax.help@cpa.texas.gov.

THE NEW MOTOR VEHICLE TAX GUIDE

Our agency is currently working hard on an updated Motor Vehicle Tax Guide. We feel this tax guide is more user friendly, with convenient links to relevant tax laws, publications and forms. It will also be made available on our website as webpages instead of a PDF document, for ease of access.

We understand this update is highly anticipated and want to thank each and every one of you for your continued patience as we complete this major project. We anticipate having the tax guide available by 2021.

PROOF OF TAX PAID FOR NEW OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES PURCHASED OUT OF STATE

We have received some questions from CTACs regarding acceptable types of proof of tax paid from a Texas customer for purchases of off-highway vehicles from out-of-state dealers. We want to clear up any confusion that some CTAC staff may have about who is responsible to show proof of tax paid.

The Texas customer, not the out-of-state dealership, is responsible for showing proof of tax paid. For example, if an out-of-state dealer collects Texas sales tax, the Texas customer must provide documentation (e.g., dealer statement or sales invoice) that the tax was collected by the dealer.

Proof that the out-of-state dealer has remitted the sales tax to the Comptroller's office is NOT required. The out-of-state dealer is only able to collect and remit Texas sales tax if they have a Texas sales and use tax permit. When the out-of-state dealer reports the taxes collected to the Comptroller's office on their Texas sales and use tax return, they do not report individual sales transactions. As long as the customer provides documentation that the out-of-state dealer collected Texas sales tax, that documentation is sufficient proof of tax paid.

In cases where an out-of-state dealer does not have a Texas sales and use tax permit, the customer is required to remit Texas use tax directly to the Comptroller's office and provide proof of tax paid (i.e., receipt from our office) to the CTAC.

TxDMV TACA Newsletter Content (Sept-Oct 2020)

COVID-19 Update

All regional service centers are open and serving customers by appointment, while the department continues to prioritize the health and safety of the motoring public by practicing social distancing and performing routine cleaning and disinfecting. The waivers issued by the Office of the Governor for certain registration and titling requirements are still in effect, and the extension for accepting the Law Enforcement Identification Number Inspection (Form VTR-68-A) beyond 30 days from completion also remains in effect. To support the governor's waiver for the time in which to apply for title and the associated delinquent transfer penalty, programming changes were implemented in webDEALER to waive the delinquent transfer penalty for transactions subject to the waiver and previously assessed penalty.

Additionally, programming changes were made in webDEALER to allow a county user to modify the amount collected for the delinquent sales tax penalty for a title application based on guidance from the Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA). To support the waiver for the delinquent transfer penalty, CPA extended the timeframe for when motor vehicle sales tax is due, resulting in the extension of when the associated delinquent sales tax penalty may be assessed.

Updates to County Equipment Guide

The department is working on updates to the County Equipment Guide and is expecting to publish a revised guide in advance of the November workstation request period. There are no major changes anticipated, but there will be some minor updates to pricing and the county workstation refresh schedule, which is expected to kick off in spring 2021. One item of note is that the annual invoicing will be moved from October to late December.

Start considering your workstation needs now in preparation for the upcoming November request period. As a reminder, requests for additional workstations or workstation conversions must be submitted during the open request period, which runs from Nov. 1 to Nov. 30, 2020. This includes additional workstation needs for new office sites and full-service deputy locations. Workstation moves may be done at any time with prior approval from the department.

Statewide webDEALER Adoption

webDEALER is the department's web-based application for processing title applications that is used by motor vehicle dealers and county tax assessor-collectors. Senate Bill 604, enacted by the 86th Legislature, requires all county tax assessor-collector offices to make webDEALER available to any dealer requesting to use the application effective Sept. 1, 2020.

Statewide webDEALER Adoption is the department's project to prepare county tax offices and dealers for this requirement and deploy programming changes to enhance webDEALER. To assist with this effort, the department developed training for initial webDEALER setup, "Getting Started with webDEALER" and in-depth training, "Using webDEALER" for both county tax offices and dealers. The department's 16 Regional Service Center (RSC) managers reached out to each county tax assessor-collector's office that was not utilizing webDEALER and presented these trainings on a more personalized level to assist with questions.

Vehicle Title and Registration (VTR) worked with the Information Technology Services (ITS) Division and the Managed Application Services (MAS) vendor to finalize programming that included enhancement requests and defect fixes. The programming changes were originally scheduled for deployment by Aug. 31, to coincide with the effective date of SB 604; however, to ensure a high-quality product, the release was postponed to continue User Acceptance Testing through September 18.

The release was successfully deployed the weekend of Oct. 2. VTR and ITS finalized webDEALER User Guide Addendums for distribution to county tax assessor-collectors and dealers in advance of the release to ensure users had detailed information regarding the changes. These addendums can be found on the TxDMV website and county tax assessor-collectors should contact their RSC if additional assistance is needed using webDEALER.

The department continues to work on defining business requirements for additional enhancements to webDEALER in preparation for a December release.

Specialty License Plate Guides

We invite you to visit <https://www.txdmv.gov/tax-assessor-collectors> and utilize the following guides to assist customers when ordering specialty license plates. You can find the guides on the webpage under "Manuals & Guides."

- Specialty Plates Disabled Veteran Plate Guide
- Specialty Plates Military Plate Guide
- Specialty Plate Guide

New Specialty Plates

The TxDMV Specialty License Plate partner, My Plates, will release two new plates that the TxDMV Board approved in April and June of this year. The Dallas Cowboys Silver Crossover plate will be available in October, and the Lone Star Carbon Fiber plate will be available in December.

Something a little quirky and different . . .

Several years ago, when Tavie Murphy was our Program Director for our annual conferences, she approached me with a song request, since I had been leading the singing at our conferences. She asked me if I would be willing to “write a TACA song!” So, I wrote a little “ditty,” and we sang it during our opening sessions for several years.

Full disclosure, I cheated and did not write the melody.

And who knows? I just might dredge it up at our VG Young conference as my “REAL swan song”!



TACA Song

(sung to the tune, “My Bonnie Lass”)

We are the Texas Tax Assessor-Collectors

We are among the chosen few!

We are the Texas Tax Assessor-Collectors

We take great pride in serving you – Yes, we do!

We take your money

And we know it’s not funny,

But we do it with great integrity.

YOU CAN TRUST US!

We are the Texas Tax Assessor-Collectors

We take great pride in serving you – Yes, we do!

(lyrics by Cathy C. Talcott, Comal County TAC, 2011)

In Memoriam:

Mary Alice Moseley Biggs

August 23, 1934 ~ August 5, 2020 (age 85)

Obituary

Graveside Services for Mrs. Mary Alice Moseley Biggs, age 85, of Jefferson, TX., will be held at 2:00 P.M. Friday August 14, 2020 at Moseley Cemetery with Rev. John Barfield and Doctor Henry Armington officiating under the direction of Haggard Funeral Home. A, come-and-go, time of Visitation will be held Thursday, August 13 from 3:00 to 6:00 P.M. at the Cpt. Wm. Perry Chapel of Haggard Funeral Home in Jefferson, Texas. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and State guidelines, we want to remind everyone to practice proper safety and social distancing.

On August 5th, Mary Biggs, passed peacefully as she entered the next chapter of her life with those loved ones who passed before her. She was less than a month shy of her 86th birthday.

Born August 23, 1934, in Hughes Springs to Marvin and Bertha Niblett Moseley, she spent most of her life in Smithland. She married her childhood sweetheart, Aubrey Louis Biggs on September 2, 1950. They were blessed with two children, Carla and Marvin.

Mary was placed on this earth to be a caretaker and community leader. She began as a newlywed, taking care of her grandmother and many other family members over the years. Over the years she looked after or brought relatives into her own home to care for them throughout their recovery. She transported many of the family and neighbors to their doctor's appointments or to the hospital. Much of this was done during the time she and Aubrey Louis ran Moseley's Store in Smithland, a third-generation general merchandise store. After her children started school, she went to work at the ASCS (Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service). Upon her father's retirement, she and Aubrey purchased and ran Moseley's Store. During this time, she was instrumental in getting the East Marion County Water Supply and the Smithland Volunteer Fire Department off of the ground. To end her life of community service, she was elected as Marion County Tax Assessor/Collector for which she spent 20 years in office. Over the years, she was on the Board of Directors of the Marion County Chamber of Commerce where she held various offices, including two terms as President.



Rest in peace, Mary.

Rosalinda Adamcik

I just wanted to pass this information along to the association. We had a really nice Bluebonnet Region meeting in LaGrange a year or so ago. Rosalinda and her staff were so excited to show off what LaGrange had to offer. We had a really great time.

Fayette County Mourns the passing of Tax Assessor - Collector, Rosalinda Adamcik. Mrs. Adamcik gave 22 years of faithful service to the citizens of Fayette County. Rosalinda was a wife, a mother, a grandmother, an aunt and to many, a friend. Her presence around the county will be sorely missed. Please join us in offering her family and friends our sympathies.

<https://www.lagrangefunerals.com/obituary/rosalinda-adamcik>

Kathy Foster

Tax Assessor/ Collector Chief Deputy | Bastrop County

211 Jackson St | Bastrop, TX 78602

(512) 332-7258 | kathy.foster@co.bastrop.tx.us | <http://www.co.bastrop.tx.us>



Dallas Regional Meeting

The Dallas Region met on September 18, 2020. Yes, that's right, we met during the pandemic, but we met ***Virtually!*** The Dallas Region is the first TACA region to have a full virtual meeting and it was a huge success with over 50 attendees and 100% participation from our region counties.

The Dallas Region is comprised of Collin, Dallas, Fannin, Grayson, Hunt, Kaufman and Rockwall Counties. Up until this year, the Dallas Region met jointly with the Fort Worth Region and were known as the DFW Region. A few months ago, the Dallas Region Tax Assessors voted unanimously to re-establish the Dallas Region as an independent region once again.

The September 18, 2020 meeting was hosted by Dallas County Tax Assessor/Collector John R. Ames using the Microsoft TEAMS application. The meeting was sponsored by the Linebarger delinquent tax collection law firm who sent "Sweet Treats" to each office on the morning of the meeting. Depending on your location, some counties received Krispy Kreme donuts, some received Nothing Bundt Cakes and the rest received Tiff's Treats cookies. What a generous and thoughtful thing for Linebarger to do. Thank you to Managing Partner Bridget Lopez for the sponsorship and treats enjoyed by all seven counties.

The meeting was broken into two parts, a morning session and afternoon session. During the morning session, Regional Coordinator Kim Sweet, Rockwall TAC, provided an update on TACA activities across the state. Her report included information about the Driver's License study that recently concluded that a new agency should be created for Driver's Licenses and it should NOT be left with DPS or moved to the DMV. Our region concurs with the study's findings. Kim Sweet is also the Dallas Region nominee for Tax Assessor/Collector of the Year! Congratulations Kim and good luck in November.

The other morning sessions included a great discussion title "*Serving Customers.... COVID Style!*" that was led by Dallas County Chief Deputy Peggy McCormick. Peggy presented a fantastic PowerPoint that detailed what each county in our region had done to accommodate for COVID. It was great to see who had adjusted hours, opened and/or closed offices and how they were handling mail, dealers and social distancing public customers. Many TACs shared what they had done and how much they have learned during the COVID Pandemic. At the heart of the discussion was the need to serve our customers and still stay safe!

DMV Dallas Regional Service Center Manager Fetina Green provided an update that included a PowerPoint about the new trailer laws and the processes that both DMV and the county are taking to accomplish getting trailers in Texas titled. She also shared information about the new Communication Disorder flag and how that process works. Finally, she gave us an update on how the RSC's are handling phone communications with counties and serving customers. In the Dallas RSC, they are mainly assisting customers by appointment, but they are accepting walk in customers from 8-10 am and 1-3 pm daily.

The last morning session was "Property Taxes – Compassionate Collections during COVID" that was presented by Linebarger Managing Partner Bridget Lopez and Capital Partner Edward Lopez. Bridget and Edward shared a PowerPoint that provided great data on COVID and how their law firm has leveraged technology to continue collecting delinquent accounts while maintaining their compassion with COVID related issues for homeowners and businesses in Texas. It was great to see them respond to their clients request to provide the delinquent revenue and still assist taxpayers whenever possible.

The region took a one-hour lunch break and we enjoyed our sweet treats from Linebarger. After lunch, Linebarger Attorney Wade Gent did a great job teaching the Ethics for County Tax Assessors course. Wade shared real life scenarios on how ethics play out in our daily lives, but especially for Tax Assessors and our teams that are held to a higher standard by the general public. At the end of the course, all seven TACs in our region discussed how their offices were combating fraud in their offices and making sure that their teams were being ethical and representing our counties with the highest regard. Remember, everyone who holds a TACA certification needs the Ethics course once every 24 months beginning January 1, 2019. You have a few more months to get your course in before the December 31, 2020 deadline.

A Regional meeting during a pandemic? Absolutely! It was Virtual and it was great! This was the first meeting of our newly established region and it was very successful. We look forward to many more Dallas Region meetings with our member counties.

Respectfully Submitted by Dallas County TAC John R. Ames, CTA, PCC



Monica Blackwell Retiring

By Bruce Elfant

Monica Blackwell who is the director of the Motor Vehicle Division for the Travis County Tax Office has decided to re-retire from public service. I say re-retire because when she joined our office in May 2018 Monica had already retired once from the TX Dept. of Motor Vehicles.

Monica joined our team at a time when we critically needed her expertise and leadership. She stabilized our Motor Vehicle division which was reeling from the fallout of a criminal investigation conducted by the State. Processes and accountability have improved to the point where the County Attorney and Auditor's office have expressed great satisfaction for her leadership. Monica, during the most challenging of circumstances, helped set a foundation for success and for that we will always be grateful.

I know everyone joins me in wishing Monica all the best with the next chapter of her life.

TACA Liaison Report

Liaison to: Texas Association of Counties

DATE: August 30, 2020

REPORTS TO: President

TAC Board Member: Randy Riggs

Duties: The Texas Association of Counties board member is appointed by the TACA President and serves a one-year term on the Texas Association of Counties Board of Directors representing the interest of county tax assessor-collectors statewide.

REPORT:

The Texas Association of Counties held a board meeting on August 26, 2020 by WebEx. Reports were given by the President and the Executive Director. Other reports consisted of the Property Redevelopment Project, Audit Committee, Investment Committee and the NACo representatives. Several action items were approved including amendments to the investment policy, TCDRS, the 2019 Audit Report, TAC Record Retention Policy and Personnel Policy. Several departmental reports were also received by the board including General Counsel, Human Resources Services Director, Chief Financial Officer, Finance Services Director, Membership & Strategic Services Director, Health & Benefit Services Director, Risk Management Services Director and Legislative Services Director. Following the board meeting on Wednesday morning, the 2020 Legislative Conference convened virtually. One session related to Senate Bill 2. The session consisted of a conversation about the basics of Senate Bill 2 and how counties are coping with it in the wake of COVID-19. Katy Estrada was the moderator for the panel consisting of Tom Green auditor Nathan Craddock, Ellis County JP Judge Jackie Miller and Schleicher County Treasurer Jennifer Henderson. There was some question regarding a Tax Assessor-Collector not being on the panel. The intent of the session was to discuss the impact on county offices by Senate Bill 2 and not to discuss the specific rate calculations. The conference concluded on Friday, August 28, 2020. The virtual conference had more members register for this format rather than an in-person conference. Over 1,000 participants were registered.

Respectfully Submitted by: Randy Riggs

How Randall County survived the Pandemic Closure

When we first got the unfathomable word that the County may have to close due to the COVID-19 virus followed quickly by the word that our office was going to be considered essential, a myriad of scenarios flooded our minds. How would the public respond? How can we best protect the staff? What's the smallest number of employees that we can use to serve the public? How long would we have to do this? We got busy making the best decisions we could make with the information we had, but as we all know the one thing that has remained the same through this crisis, is that nothing remains the same. The Randall County Tax Office has 24 full time and one part time employee, and we do both Motor Vehicle and Property Taxes. Along with the Tax Assessor-Collector, we have 11 employees in one office and 12 plus one part time employees in our annex location. All county buildings were closed to the public for in-person transactions in mid-March.

We quickly got a game plan together of what services we could provide and how. We would have employees help customers over the phone, we would process work through the mail, we have drop boxes in both locations for customers to use, banks and dealers could either drop work off at the office or mail it in, and since one of our locations had a drive up, we could continue to serve the public through the drive up. We did shorten our office hours by one hour so the employees could have time to balance their drawers and get ready for the next day, and we closed the office for the lunch hour.

We started out thinking that maybe this would only last a couple of weeks, we are glass-half-full kind of people! Most of our managers and a couple employees signed up to work the skeleton crews those first two weeks and we limped our way through. The work load was too great for that small of a crew for both offices, so once we knew this closure would continue for the foreseeable future, we started scheduling employees to help us get through. Half of the employees would work a two week then the other half would work for two weeks. In the end, we were able to even out the amount of time the employees were off and ended up owing very little comp time.

I won't soon forget the challenges that we walked through during this time such as constant phone calls from customers who wouldn't believe that there was a registration grace period given by the governor, continuous lines in the drive-up that wrapped around the building, phone calls from customers asking if they really had to wait in that drive-up line, piles of bank and dealer work with only a couple of employees to work it, phone calls from customers in the drive up line that someone has cut in front of them, customers that refused to drop off a payment in our drop box that is attached to the building, locked and has a sheriff's deputy right next to it because it wasn't safe, and did I mention the phone calls?

We did survive it though, and I feel like we were forever changed by this experience. Compared to the losses in our community, state, nation, and world the trials that we faced are very minuscule in comparison. But, the lessons that we learned during this period are lessons that will remain with us for quite some time.

1. We learned how service oriented our employees really are. They were all willing to step up when called, do whatever work we gave them, and we had no employee complaints at all. We are so grateful for each of them.
2. As management, we were reminded what it was like to work the counter and help customers on a consistent basis. It's so easy to get busy with paperwork, meetings, or

management duties, so it was a great reminder of not only how to do things (like normal motor vehicle and tax transactions), but of what our employees have to face every day.

3. We realized how fortunate we were not only to have jobs, but to work for a county that who truly sought to take care of their employees in unimaginable circumstances.
4. We learned to survive together – no one could have accomplished anything without the person next to them doing their part. We really learned how to help each other. This has forged a unique bond between all of us and definitely showed us that we can overcome great difficulty together.

While we would need a bit longer to want to endure these challenges again, we will in the end be grateful for this unique period in history. And that is the biggest lesson we take away from all of this is gratefulness. Gratefulness for our health and families, gratefulness for the people we work with, and gratefulness for being able to work in a job that allows us to serve our community every day.

Randall County Tax Office

News from Milam County

Hello from Milam County, deep in the Heart of Texas.

Milam County is in the process of acquiring/swapping property so we can consolidate most of the County offices to one location, under the same roof. This new building will have to undergo renovations before we can move. Offices set to move are Milam County Tax Office, County Clerk's Office, County Attorney's Office, Adult Probation, Juvenile Probation, Emergency Management, Auditor, Treasurer, HR, Veteran's Services, County Extension Services/4H and possibly 2 Constables. The Tax Office is tentatively set to move late 2021 or early 2020. In the new location we will be adding 4 extra RTS workstations. All employees are now being crossed trained for taxes and DMV. They have taken the DMV modules needed for RTS. These changes will provide us with the ability to provide faster customer service to the Citizens of Milam County.

I am pleased to announce that my part-time employee, Terryn Adams, has joined the United States Navy. Terryn will report for Basic Training on October 26, 2020. We wish Terryn the best of luck! We ask for your prayers to keep her safe and healthy as she works towards protecting all of us in her endeavor to serve our great Country.

I pray you all have a safe and happy Holiday Season!

Sherry Mueck
Milam County TAC

38th Annual V.G. Young School for County Tax Assessor-Collectors

Greetings everyone!

As of 09-15-2020 the November 20-22, 2020 V G Young Conference is still a go! Due to COVID-19 we will have some restrictions, but nothing we can't handle. As of this post the convention center is limiting the number of registrants for the event to 300, but V.G. Young has a waiting list. We are hoping that we get closer to the event, some of these restrictions will be loosened or maybe even removed...only time will tell. If you haven't registered for the event, please check the Tax Assessor-Collectors Association of Texas website under News and Announcements for the 2020 V G Young School; click on the registration link. There you can be put on a wait list. If you have any questions feel free to email me at sdmueck@milamcounty.net. Also please check your listserv emails for continued updates. I look forward to seeing you all in November. Until then, please be safe.

Sherry Mueck
Milam County TAC

Click this link <https://agrilife.org/vgy2/files/2020/09/TA-C-Draft-Agenda-9.10.pdf> to view the draft agenda for this conference.

PTAAB Report

DATE: August 30, 2020

PTAAB Members: Larry Gaddes and Randy Riggs

Purpose: The purpose of PTAAB is to advise the Comptroller with respect to the Property Tax Assistance Division and may make recommendations regarding improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the property tax system, best practices and complaint resolution procedures.

REPORT:

The Property Tax Administration Advisory Board held a meeting on August 18, 2020 on WebEx. After introductions and minutes approval, the meeting began with reports regarding COVID-19 best practices affecting PTAD, Appraisal Districts, Tax Offices and Tax Consultants. The Comptroller's office then gave updates on the 2020 MAP progress, the Property Value Study and Manuals updates affecting the Agriculture Appraisal Manual, the Timberland Appraisal Manual and the Arbitration Manual. The next meeting has not yet been scheduled.

Respectfully submitted, Randy Riggs

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