

RECORD KEEPING

Record keeping is vital in the Assessor's office. When a change is made to an assessment requiring documentation, a copy is retained in our office for future reference to help determine ownership and valuation. When residents move from another state or even just across the county line they have to assess in Washington County. When this happens, we keep a copy of their most recent registration on the prior year's assessment. Marriage and divorces also influence personal property assessments. Keeping copies of divorce decrees and marriage licenses aid in name changes and proper allocation of personal property.

A large percentage of the records in the Personal Property Department are derived from commercial assessments. Everything received from a business is maintained in a folder for that company. We are required by law to keep records of Commercial Personal Property assessments for five years. With the steady increase of businesses in this area our physical filing space has become limited for these records. In order to increase the efficiency of our filing system, we have begun scanning documents so that they can be easily accessible from our computers. However, we will still keep hard copies of the most recent assessments.

Scanning will save valuable time and space. We are in the process of reviewing our personal property documents that have been already scanned. Our next step will be to scan the files of assessments for establishments that are no longer in business. After that, we will scan the current commercial assessments. We are very excited about this new method of record keeping and will keep you posted on our progress.

BY: MISTI KINNEY

NEW FACE



We would like to introduce to you one of our newest Deputy Assessors in the Real Estate Department, Brian Frazier. Brian is originally from Tulsa, Oklahoma, but for the last five years he has called Fayetteville home. He married his college

sweetheart, Jenny Canterbury in May 2004. He spends most of his spare time with his wife and nine-month old son, Easton. When he is not with his family he enjoys playing baseball in the Northwest Arkansas Men's Baseball League.

Brian started as a temporary employee in July, 2004 and was hired as a full time Deputy Assessor in January, 2005. Brian received a degree from the University of Arkansas in December of 2004, earning a bachelor's degree in Finance with a concentration in Real Estate. His degree along with his customer service skills have been a real asset in our office.

BY: JUSTIN KELLY

FAMILIAR FACE

You have probably met Nannette Bhaumik when you've come in to assess your vehicle. She has been working as a Deputy Assessor for almost 8 years. The majority of that time, she has worked at the Personal Property counter where she has helped customers assess vehicles. She helped train most of the employees in the Personal Property Department. In April, she took on a new challenge and has been working in the real estate department, helping with customers with questions regarding their house and land.



Nannette is a native of Fayetteville. She received her BS degree at Cal-Poly-Pomona in California. She worked for City Services in the suburbs of Los Angeles until she moved back to Fayetteville. Nannette has one child, her pride and joy, 12-year-old Alisha. Much of her spare time is spent taking Alisha to flute lessons and the other activities that Alisha participates in. They are active members of their church and community. When Nannette gets time for herself, you will find her visiting with friends, working in her beautiful home, or watching a good movie.

BY: MARY CHANDLER

"Thanks for all the assistance in putting this newsletter together. Particularly: William Stephenson's editing, Lisa VanVliet's editing assistance, Dan Cypert's photography, and Cindy Jester for the layout."



Washington
County
Assessor's
Office

"Our mission is to serve Washington County taxpayers by fairly assessing property values, maintaining equity, providing information, and assisting our customers in every capacity within the law."

ASSESSMENT NEWS

QUARTERLY EDITION

September 1, 2005



FROM THE ASSESSOR

Lee Ann Kizgar

It has been a very exciting summer. Several of our student employees graduated from college in May. Some are going on to Graduate School this fall, and others continue to work while they search for career opportunities. While I'm sorry to see them leave, I know that they all have great things in their future.

In July, Washington County and the City of Fayetteville were honored to receive a Special Achievement in GIS award from ESRI, the Microsoft of the GIS software world. Over 100,000 entities are eligible to receive these awards, and about 120 are awarded each year. I am very proud to be a part of the team developing our countywide GIS.

There were also a record number of new real estate parcels this year which contributed to the \$700 million of new construction value that was added to the tax rolls. The total value of all property in the county increased almost 10%.

As the summer winds down, I look forward to Saturday afternoon football and all the other great activities available in NW Arkansas.

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

Washington County and the City of Fayetteville were recently honored at the 2005 ESRI User Conference in San Diego, California. The Special Achievement in GIS (SAG) award was given jointly to both governments in recognition of their cooperative efforts to build and maintain a countywide Geographic Information System (GIS).

GIS is a computer-based mapping tool that takes database information about a location, including streets, buildings, water features, and terrain, and turns it into visual layers. The ability to see and analyze geographic features on a map gives users a better understanding of a particular location; enabling planners, analysts, and others to make informed decisions about their communities, the environment, and businesses. This innovative technology brings countless benefits to the world through geography.



Left to right: John Goddard, GIS Coordinator; Scott Caldwell, Database Administrator; both City of Fayetteville. Jack Dangermond, President, ESRI. Lee Ann Kizzar, Assessor; Steven Kizzar, Computer Systems Administrator; both Washington County

Though many people are involved in the maintenance of the GIS on a daily basis, four of the people most involved in coordinating the cooperative effort were on hand to personally receive the award from ESRI Founder and President, Jack Dangermond. (See picture above)

"This award reflects the significant dedication and support these organizations provide to the people who depend on them," says Jack Dangermond, ESRI president. "Each of the winners uses GIS technology to go beyond what is expected into the realm of excellence."

BY: LEE ANN KIZZAR

COURTHOUSE SECURITY

There is one face that everyone sees when entering or leaving the Washington County Courthouse. It's the face of Steven Casamayor, the Washington County Sheriff's Deputy who stands guard at the main entrance. We would like to thank our often overlooked security officers that



help us keep things running smoothly here at the courthouse. In addition to overseeing the courthouse activities, the Deputies also provide helpful information, direct customers to various offices in the courthouse, and provide friendly customer service. Steven,

now only 22, has been employed at the courthouse for seven months, but he has also been active in other law enforcement activities including being a county jailor and being involved with Police Explorers, a youth oriented volunteer-experience program.

BY: LELIA PELAEZ

COLLEGE STUDENTS

For most college students, the prospect of finding a summer job, work over the holidays, or employment while in school can be an agonizing process. Few employers are willing to expend the time and resources training new employees while knowing that these staff members will be leaving after a short time to return to school or will need time off to attend classes. And thus many university students resign themselves to the drudgery of inquiring, "Would you like the combo platter?" for months on end with little hope of gainful employment in sight.

The Washington County Assessor's Office has sought to lift the dim job prospects of a few area students. One-third of our deputy assessors are either currently attending college or are recent graduates in transition from their university study to graduate school and permanent careers. While some student workers are pursuing or have recently attained degrees in areas related to assessment, such as finance or real estate, most come from a wide variety of majors, ranging from

anthropology to education to transportation logistics to pre-med. For some, working at the Assessor's Office simply provides a good place of employment to which they can return every summer or winter break. Others attend local universities and are employed by this office during the school year. Working while attending college can pose significant problems as class times may conflict with work schedules, but the Assessor's Office places a high premium on education and seeks to accommodate the students' needs by offering flexible work hours and giving them time off to attend class through the middle of the workday.



College students: (from left to right) Farris Jackson, Lisa VanVliet, Tali Davis, Nathan Melson

Working in the Assessor's Office provides more than a mere source of income for these student workers. Deputy Assessors gain valuable career skills through the use of assessment and mapping software, particularly the fast-expanding world of Geographic Information System (GIS) technology. Interaction with customers from title/abstract companies and the general public provides a forum for honing customer service and interpersonal relations skills. The assignment of long- and short-term projects furnishes employees with experience in goal setting and time management invaluable in any number of careers. And thankfully for a few students, it keeps them from having to ask, "Do you want fries with that?"

BY: NATHAN MELSON

INTERESTING FACT

Arkansas is the only place in North America where diamonds have been successfully mined. In 1967 it was designated the official state gem.

BY: LISA VANVLIET