



From Chapter President Wade Rainey:



Another tax year has come and gone by. As we take a breather

and look forward to the IAAO Maine Chapter Annual Meeting we can reflect on whether our town, or towns, experienced growth during the year. Things have been pretty stagnant for a few years now, but I think this year showed some encouraging new residential and business construction.

Assessors can get a good feeling about what's happening in the state, we can feel the activity by the number of permits taken out, the number of transfers we process, the number of people coming into our offices or calling us on the phone as they research buying, selling, splitting or developing a property. Pollsters might learn something about economic activity by polling assessors.

It looks like a great line up for this year's annual meeting taking place in just a few weeks. Your executive board strives to bring informative and interesting topics to support the assessing profession.

Heads up for our February (winter) meeting. We'll be going back to the Calumet Club in Augusta. Maple Hill became too expensive. The Calumet Club is easy to get to and serves terrific food. And we're already hard at work creating a program for you.

Here's looking forward to another great year! Thank you all for your support.

Wade Rainey, CMA, is a contract assessor and owner of TA Associates.

All About This Year's Maine Chapter IAAO Annual Meeting

We've got quite a day planned (some of which is a secret that can't be revealed), but here's what we can tell you:

We'll start off with the election of board members. Kyle Avila has been nominated to serve a second term on the board, and Susan Russo has been nominated to serve on the board for her first term. Then we'll hold a business meeting of committee reports from the executive board members. Matt Sturgis will then update us on IAAO news and activities.

Our first guest speaker will be Kerri Kondisko, Director of Marketing for Innovative Building Systems. Innovative Systems owns five modular home manufacturers. They are the parent company of Maine's Keiser Homes, as well as four other modular home manufacturers: Excel Homes in Pennsylvania, Modukraf in Virginia, and All American Homes in Iowa and Indiana. We asked Ms. Kondisko to talk about what goes into today's modular home stock.

It used to be a modular home was little more than a mobile home on frost walls rather than a slab. There were barely better than a mobile home as far as quality went, and this way back when the words mobile home and quality weren't allowed to hang out in the same sentence – no more than 15 years ago. But as mobile homes have improved, modulars have stepped it up even more. Look at the pictures of the five homes on page 3. Can you tell which are modular homes? The answer is on page 6.

There are differences between how an on-site stick built house is constructed and how a modular home is built. Some say, and this includes Kerri Kondisko, that modular homes are built better because they have to be sturdy enough to travel and survive a crane ride. Making them sturdy enough means there are 30% more materi-

als to a modular home than the typical stick built.

Then after a short break Dave Ledew, Mike Rogers and Jeff Kendall will take your questions in a panel discussion we're calling, "Your Property Tax Division." Under Dave's leadership, the Property Tax Division of Maine Revenue Services has been making a determined effort to work with us in a more familial manner.

Dave wants field reps to "own their towns." Meaning the field rep for my town should be the person I call first when I need something from MRS, and he should contact me when MRS needs to relay something to assessors. Dave has given the field reps the necessary latitude to develop knowledge of their assigned municipalities and relationships with us. During registration we'll give you an index card to use to write a question for any or all of the panelists or to make a comment. We'll collect the cards as you leave for the break after Kerri Kondisko's presentation.

Then we're off to a catered lunch. We'll come back to a little fun, door prizes, drawings for admission to the Winter meeting and then (dah tahhhhh) the awarding of the \$500 Michael Austin Scholarship.

After all of this excitement it will be up to Kim Fowler, of the Maine Real Estate Network, to restore order for another timely presentation. Kim will speak to us about stigmatized properties, foreclosures and short sales, and what the overall real estate market looks like today and how distressed properties are affecting it.

Your executive board has worked hard to plan a day of professional education and social networking. We hope you'll take good advantage of it. See you there!

Kerry Leichtman, CMA, is assessor in Rockport. He serves as editor of CMA.

The Michael Austin Scholarship

By Kerry Leichtman, CMA

I'd heard stories about Michael Austin but didn't get to know him until April or May of 2013. Those of you who did know Michael are wondering what I had with my breakfast sandwich this morning, seeing as Michael passed away in 2005. But I got to know him eight years later when this newsletter featured two pages of articles about the Maine Chapter's Michael Austin Scholarship, Michael Austin and his very impressive contributions to our profession.

Michael Austin was a force behind the founding of the Maine Chapter IAAO. Before that he had been president of the IAAO – imagine it, this assessor from way up in the country's northeast was so respected by his peers *internationally* that he was elected to helm the mothership as its president.

As Matt Sturgis wrote in an article from that issue, which is reprinted in this one, "Mike was always striving to improve assessing quality through professional development and education in Maine." Which is exactly what the Maine Chapter is all about. Plain and simple, nothing more nothing less.

The Maine Chapter's goal has not wavered from Mike's original vision of providing interesting and worthwhile educational opportunities. The hope is that we will also have some

fun along the way, which is also in keeping with Michael Austin's way. But to be quite honest about it we've had a bit of trouble awarding the scholarship. Probably due to a combination of factors: people tend to see scholarships as a form of charity they both don't need and would rather leave for someone who does, and we on the board are already pretty busy with our jobs and organizing Chapter meetings to properly market and administer a scholarship program.

So we came up with a much better idea, rather than have you apply for the scholarship we'll just give it to one lucky member at the annual meeting. The goal remains the same: to improve assessing quality through professional development and education. There are, however, four strings attached. You must be a paid-up member of the Maine Chapter IAAO; you must be present to win; the scholarship is only available for courses that Maine Revenue Services blesses with continuing education credits; you have to use the scholarship before October 31, 2015. The \$500 Michael Austin Scholarship can be used for course tuition and associated lodging expenses.

You can pay your dues right up to the drawing, which will be after lunch at the Annual Meeting this November 21st at USM's Wishcamper Center.

By Matt Sturgis, CMA

Many assessors in the State of Maine fondly remember Mike Austin. He embodied the essence of professional assessor qualities. Mike was a patient mentor to many of us in the profession. Always willing to answer questions, Mike was the ultimate professional. His knowledge of the profession, and his ability to communicate that knowledge to others, were truly something to experience. When I began in the field of assessing, gentlemen like Mike Austin, Joe Downey, Gerry Daigle, and others were the Deans of the profession, always willing to teach, explain, and show by example what it meant to be a professional in this business.

Many of us met Mike when we attended our first IAAO meeting, being warmly greeted by Mike as Secretary of the Chapter and Donna Moore Hayes as its Treasurer. A new assessor would walk in, perhaps a little out of his or her comfort zone, and Donna and Mike would welcome the new assessor to the meeting with the warmth of long time friends. Only later would you learn that Mike was a past President of the entire IAAO, helped found the Maine Chapter, and was considered

(continued next page)

among the best assessors in the country.

Mike was always striving to improve assessing quality through professional development and education in Maine. He made a difference, as he still does today through the scholarship named in his honor. Mike may have moved on to his reward for a life well lived, but his legacy and what he stood for is as relevant today as it was when he was here doing the work he was so dedicated to achieving. I am truly grateful for having known Mike, and having had him as a professional influence.

Matt Sturgis, CMA, is assessor in Cape Elizabeth, and Treasurer of the Maine Chapter IAAO.



Matt Sturgis at IAAO in Kansas City, with the custom-made credenza built to honor Mike Austin. The credenza was made of all natural woods from Maine and features an in-laid plaque honoring Mike.

Matt drove the credenza an estimated 1,500 miles to the IAAO's headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri, where it was presented to the organization as a permanent remembrance of Mike's dedication to assessing in Maine and around the world.

Which of these homes are modular and which are stick-built on site?

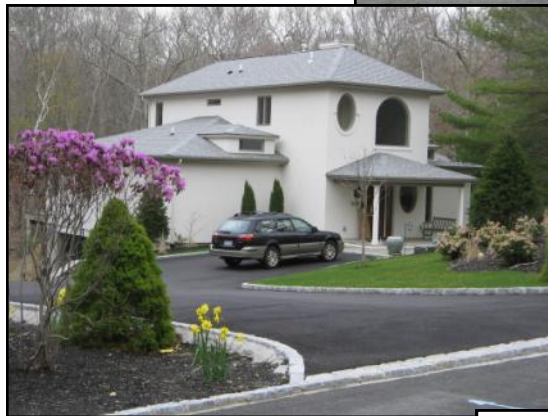
(answer at bottom of page 6)



#1



#2



#3

#4



#5





**STATE OF MAINE CHAPTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF ASSESSING OFFICERS**

**FALL CHAPTER ANNUAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 21, 2014
WISHCAMPER CENTER, 44 BEDFORD STREET
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE, PORTLAND**

Agenda

- 8:30 – 9:00 Registration
- 9:00 – 9:30 Pledge of Allegiance, Introductions, New Officers, Committee Updates
- 9:30 – 10:45 Modular Manufacturing - New Technology
Keiser Homes, Kerri Kondisko, Director of Marketing
- 10:45 – 11:00 Break
- 11:00 – noon Your Property Tax Division – The present, the future and everything in between
David Ledew, Mike Rogers & Jeff Kendall
- Noon – 1:00 LUNCH
- 1:00 – 1:30 Michael Austin Scholarship – This year, we will be awarding a \$500 scholarship
to one lucky winner, but you must be a paid member and be present to win!
- 1:30 – 2:30 A Broker's Point of View – Stigmatized properties, foreclosures, short sales
Kim Fowler, Maine Real Estate Network

Annual IAAO State Chapter Meeting
November 21, 2014

Attendee(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

E-Mail _____ Phone _____

Please remit the bottom portion along with \$30 payable to: State of Maine Chapter of IAAO

And Mail to: Judy Mathiau, Town of Winslow, 114 Benton Avenue, Winslow, Maine 04901

How to find the Wish Camper Center...



The University of Southern Maine Wish Camper Center is located just off I-95 in South Portland. Take exit 6B, Forest Avenue (west); travel on Forest Avenue for 2/10 of a mile and then turn left onto Bedford Street.

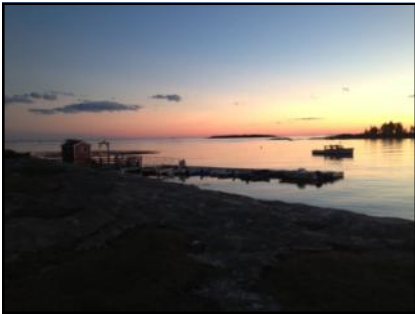
Miscellaneous Assessing News...

The MAAO held its annual Fall Conference at the Sebasco Harbor Resort during the first week of September. They did their usual outstanding job, and with the exception of one overly-robust game of Jenga, the event went off without a hitch.

The highlight of the conference was Assessor of the Year awarded to Dave Sawyer (CMA, Windham). Outstanding!



Assessor of the Year, Dave Sawyer.



Sebasco Harbor at day and dusk.

The Maine Chapter IAAO and MAAO joined forces at this year's MMA convention by collaborating on booth whose purpose was to inform people about assessing and assessors, and to interest people in assessing as a profession. The two organizations also co-sponsored, Using GIS to Update Wetlands Maps, which was taught by Dave Sawyer. GIS is/can be a dry subject, but not when such an able instructor is at the podium. The discussion was lively and information rich.



(L to R) MAAO President Rick Mace (CMA, York), Maine Chapter IAAO directors, Judy Mathiau (CMA, Winslow) and Kyle Avila (CMA, MDI). MAAO Past President Darryl McKinney (CMA, Waldoboro) missed the photo op, but worked the booth too. The gift basket door prize (at left) from Stonewall Kitchen was won by Virginia Lindsey, Finance Director at the Town of Rockport.



Property Tax School, held in Belfast, was exceptional again. Jeff Kendall's been raising the bar and meeting the challenge each year, making this educational experience an event unto itself featuring great course offerings coupled with excellent socializing/networking opportunities.

The Maine Chapter IAAO sponsored a course this year, The Assessors Practice, taught by Judy Mathiau (CMA, Winslow) and Kerry Leichtman, (CMA Rockport), which was very well received.

The lobster bake entertainment was once again provided by Cheap n' Easy, (Dave Sawyer, CMA Windham, and Peter Arne-mann, CMA Standish). Great fun, great tunes!



Cheap n Easy

Answer to Page 1 Question: Which of the houses pictured on page 3 are modular homes? All of them!



**STATE OF MAINE CHAPTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF ASSESSING OFFICERS**

2014-2015 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
(Membership runs November 1st to October 31st)

Please print clearly and complete the following:

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/Town Affiliation: _____ Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ Cell: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Do you hold a certificate for any of the following?

Maine CAT (Certificate No) _____ Maine CMA (Certificate No) _____

Maine Appraiser (Certificate No) _____ Other (Please explain) _____

Please answer the following (optional):

Would you be interested in serving on the executive board or committee? _____

What educational topics would you like offered at a Chapter Meeting? _____

Would you be willing to speak at a future Chapter meeting? _____

Please remit this application and \$30 payable to: State of Maine Chapter of IAAO

And Mail to: Judy Mathiau
Town of Winslow
114 Benton Avenue
Winslow, Maine 04901

*If you have any questions please contact Judy at 207-872-2776 Ext 5205
or log onto <http://www.mechapteriaao.org>*

State of Maine Chapter IAAO Executive Board

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