

July 2019

Judy Mathiau, Editor

Chapter President Judy Mathiau

As I was weeding my garden last weekend, sitting on my little cart and attacking the dirt, past memories came to me about my childhood and growing up on the farm that I now own today with my husband Rick.

Running through the fields, climbing stone walls and skipping stones in our farm pond as a young girl with my red hair tied up in braids. We would chase chickens, feed the cows corn husks and pick fresh cucumbers for sandwiches.



My dad always wore rolled up jean shorts, shit kickers and a hat cocked sideways, barely stopping for a break from the work that needed to be done on the farm. He worked full time at Sears as well, but as soon as he came home and we ate supper, he would be right back at it, hoeing, harvesting, cutting and baling hay.

Mom worked nights as an RN at Togus Hospital and would arrive home in the morning after a long night caring for veterans. And Mom as well, immediately set to work canning or freezing the harvested vegetables. We would snip beans under the apple tree, with tape on our thumb and a paring knife. My little sister loved to fill the jars with

string beans, sneaking a bite now and then.

One hot afternoon, we were once again under an apple tree, but with a wheelbarrow full of fresh picked corn. Sitting in lawn chairs, we husked the corn while mom sliced the corn off the cob into a large pan. The skies began to darken and we noticed these small swirling cloud vapors falling from the clouds and skirting the field. Dad yelled, "...get inside, get inside!" - I ran like the devil was at my heels. I was terrified of thunder

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Maine News

Congrats to **Nick Cloutier**, the new Brunswick Assessor! However, he faces his first challenge as Wal Mart continues to appeal their value, looking for a 41% reduction. The city has hired Stephen Traub, an independent appraiser to appraise the property.

In Fairfield, homeowners are in discontent with an approved **solar array** consisting of 30,600 panels. One homeowner is within 150 feet from the site and plans to appeal the value of their home once this is built.

Travis Roy, assessor of Old Town, has been promoted to Assistant City Manager. He will hire an assistant assessor but still retain the Assessor title as well.

A huge shout out to Maine Assessors Bill Healey of Lewiston and Penny Thompson of Caribou! They were both recently awarded the **RES IAAO Designation**. To qualify, you must have 3 years of appraisal experience, must have taken 6 designated IAAO Courses and a 4 hour RES Master exam.

**2019 Property Tax Insitute
Photo Shoot page 4 and 5**

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Storms!

I remember sitting under the kitchen table holding a rubber boot thinking it would protect me from the lightening. Mom never let me forget it.

We were not rich, but so fortunate to have had the upbringing that we had with hard working but such caring parents. They were strict and expected the best from us.

They taught me to feel good about my achievements and guided me to be independent but thoughtful. I have tried!



My mom Beryl, checking out my gardens a few years ago.

After my dad passed away in 2000, my mom lived on the farm with Rick and I for the past 17 years until she passed away at home last fall. Even at 88, she continued to TRY and guide me in proper gardening and the process of boiling sap.

As I continued to weed and swat deer flies and mosquitoes, I reflected on the old days and my parents' frugality. Nothing went to waste. Back then, we had to do what we did to put food on the table.

Dad saved everything from bread bags to used nails. The bread bags we wore on our feet inside our boots to keep us dry. We do not think about those things as a child. We did

not think about the sacrifices they made for us.

Now at 59 years of age, I still feel compelled to maintain the gardens of vegetables, fruits and flowers and stocking the pantry and freezer with the bounty. My husband asked me why I continue to have gardens, and I said that I enjoy it, even if I do complain now and then.

I do not think twice about making a soup from leftovers, or hanging wet paper towels on the rack to dry and use again. I chuckle now when I think of my mom saving the bread heels to make stuffing, because I do the same.

I have come to realize that my childhood instilled a certain pride in providing and sharing, whether it is food or knowledge or experiences. Life was simple indeed and there was a certain peace at the end of a summer day, listening to the robins and peepers.

So when I am sitting on that cart, shaking dirt balls off the roots of the weeds and look out over the hayfields, I am humbled and comforted in my memories of childhood.

Slow down and reflect, nod your head in understanding and let your face smile. Simple is good.



My dad, Harlan taken in the sugar shack



Have a story you would like to share?? E-mail me at jmathiau@winslow-me.gov

The Lighter Side of an Executive Board Member

Meet Caitlin Thompson

Caitlin grew up on Isleboro, where her mom is now currently a town manager. From being a nanny in Boston to receiving her BA in communications and journalism, Caitlin is now settled in as the assistant assessor for both Rockport and Camden. She is our FINAL victim in

The Lighter Side.

For Fun We Asked:

1. If you could throw a parade at the next MMA Convention, what would it be? Obviously Game of Thrones related.
2. If you wrote a song, what would the title be? I got in bed at 8
3. How do you weigh an elephant without a weight machine? I don't want to hurt myself so I guess I would let it sit on things until we found something it couldn't squish.
4. If you could be a superhero, what power would you possess? Harry Potter - apparitions or very interested in Aquaman - breathing underwater & super strong
5. What did you eat for lunch yesterday? A Chicken Salad wrap!



A True Story

An elderly taxpayer (MRS. SMITH), went to the town office to pay the balance of her property tax. She approached the counter and asked the lady clerk at the counter what she owed.



The clerk was quite new to the position, but was able to look up her account and proceeded to tell Mrs. Smith that her taxes were paid in full.

Mrs. Smith was quite shocked and explained that she had certainly not paid the balance, but the new clerk said that someone indeed had paid the balance.

Mrs. Smith wondered how that could be and asked her who had paid them. The new girl said, "Do you know anyone with the last name BATE, first initial A?"

Anonymous

IAAO NEWS



You can rent bunkbeds in San Francisco for \$1,200 per month. Called a pod, it comes with a flat screen tv and night light.

The IAAO Annual Conference will be held at Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada September 8-11. If you plan to attend, do not forget your passport!

IAAO's Assessment Books are now available at Amazon, including a series of educational books called the *Appendium*.

Property Tax Institute 2019



Quality and Condition are Subjective



Exemption starts with the Assessor



Property Tax Institute 2019



Tax Notice

Notes and News from the Property Tax Division

The Property Tax Division hosted a Certified Maine Assessor exam on Thursday, May 16. Seven candidates sat for the exam and one candidate passed. Congratulations to Cassie Bouton of the Property Tax Division for being the first CMA of 2019! The next exam will be Friday, August 9, in Belfast.

Preparations for the 72nd annual Property Tax School are nearly complete. The Tax School will be held in Belfast during the week of August 5 - 9. If you haven't done so already, register soon here: <https://www.maine.gov/revenue/propertytax/trainingcertification/school.htm#school>.

The Property Tax Division has finalized Bulletin No. 28 - Business Equipment Tax Exemption. This new bulletin replaces the old BETE guidance document and can be found on the Property Tax Division website: <https://www.maine.gov/revenue/forms/property/pubs/bull28.pdf>.

Also posted to the Property Tax Division website is a summary of the tax laws enacted this year. Highlights of the recently completed session include:

The homestead exemption will be increasing next year from \$20,000 to \$25,000 and the municipal reimbursement will increase next year from 62.5% to 70%.

Beginning next year, solar and wind energy equipment, except that of industrial power suppliers, will be exempt from property tax. The law also requires the Property Tax Division to create guidance for valuation of this property by December 1.

The Property Tax Division is already working on changes to forms, instructions, and bulletins to reflect these law changes.

For those assessors looking to take the next step in their professional education, the Property Tax Division is planning for the fall IAAO course in Portland. This year, the division will be hosting Course 300 - Fundamentals of Mass Appraisal during the week of October 7 - 11. Details will be provided as they are locked in.

"People who complain about taxes can be divided into two classes: men and women." — Unknown

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Save the Date!!! The Maine Chapter's annual meeting is scheduled for November 22nd and will again be held at South Portland's USM Campus. We have an amazing day planned!

IN SEARCH OF historical assessing items; photos, stories, memories, videos, news and any publications from the past that we can use in a presentation to be given the day of the meeting. PLEASE reach out to me as soon as possible.

The Maine Chapter's Executive Committee is proposing amendments to the by-laws. These will be voted on by the Maine Chapter Members at the Annual Meeting. You may view the proposed changes on our web site mechapteriaao.org

Another topic of discussion by the Executive Committee will be to promote more chapter member participation on the **standing committees**. More information regarding these committees can be found in the by-laws. If you are interested in serving on any of these committees please get in touch with me at jmathiau@winslow-me.gov

PTI 2019



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