



CMA

Covering Maine Assessing



Late Winter/Early Spring

2023 Issue #1

Joseph St Peter

Meet the Maine Chapter Board

Since the Maine Chapter of the IAAO was established in 1978, Assessors across Maine have volunteered to serve as board members. In 2022, the board saw the retirement of esteemed members Kerry Leichtman, Caitlin Thompson, and Julie Romano Ethridge.

Julie has the rare distinction of being only the *second* chapter secretary, a post she held for an incredible 16 years. Like Tom Brady, her tenure was impossibly long and filled with unmatched excellence. She is our first round pick for the hall of fame! The Board relied on Julie to keep the chapter running like a fine-tuned machine and she never disappointed. Her commitment and chapter memory were a gift that we can never replace. She is already dearly missed. *Please don't go to Tampa Bay Julie, your stats are unlikely to be surpassed!*



Moody's Diner, Waldoboro

Caitlin is a go getter and selflessly pursued all manner of projects that the chapter sent her way.

Continued on page 2



Board members meeting at Moody's Diner. Pictured from left to right: Natalie Andrews, Darryl McKenney, Judy Mathiau, Clinton Swett, Lauren Asselin, Nicholas Cloutier, Amber Poulin, Karen Scammon, Brent Martin, Joseph St Peter

A Word From the President

Maine IAAO Chapter President Karen Scammon

Greetings everyone,

Welcome 2023! So far so good I am happy to report. The new year brings a few new faces to The Maine Chapter Executive Board which we all should be very excited about. The Board's first couple of meetings were full of high energy and fresh new ideas that I find very exciting and surely will benefit our Chapter members. One of them being the new format of the newsletter. After you have read it, feel free to reach out to Joe St Peter, your 2023 newsletter editor, and let him know what you think. This newsletter is for the benefit of you, the readers, so please let him know if you have an idea for the next newsletter.

I have been with the Auburn Assessing Office since 2000 and became a member of the Maine Chapter of the IAAO shortly after I started. Many of you have been members for much longer. We have watched our membership grow and over the years provided quality educational offerings, networking opportunities and the newly created mentorship program (JATA). We have done our best to provide both beginners and seasoned assessors the ability through educational offerings to advance their skills. Assessing is a lifelong learning process and as members of the Maine Chapter of the IAAO we all should be working together to do our best to provide Assessors the tools they need to be the best they can be in this profession. This year one of the goals of the Executive Board is to discover new ways to encourage assessors to attain higher designations and work to provide the classes required for those designations. The classes can be quite expensive so a second goal for 2023 is to find ways to make these classes more affordable. We encourage any Chapter member to contact any member of the Board with ideas they may have to help achieve these goals.

I believe 2023 is going to be a great year in the Assessing world and we as Chapter members can all be a part of it starting with the Winter meeting March 9th in Augusta. I hope to see you all there.

Best, Karen

Assessor Spotlight Bonnie Baker	Advanced Certification State of the Program	Assessor Amusements The latest puzzles
Page 2	Begins on Page 4	Page 8
	A look at the State of Maine, Advanced Assessor Certification. The author's perspective eight years later.	

Bonnie Baker, Chief of Training and Certification MRS



contributed by Andrea Lubejko

Assessor Spotlight: Bonnie Baker

Bonnie Baker is the new Chief of Training and Certification for the Property Tax Division of Maine Revenue Services. She came to MRS as a Property Appraiser last fall before being promoted to Principal Property Appraiser in late December. She has worked in municipal government for more than 14 years, having started as an Assessment Technician for the Town of Embden in October 2008. Bonnie served the Town of Embden in multiple capacities before going to work for the Town of Farmington in 2018. She also served on the Board of Assessors for Skowhegan for 5-1/2 years until she started with the Property Tax Division. She has held her CMA since 2017, and before that was certified as a CAT. Like many assessors, she’s fond of saying that she wasn’t trying to get into assessing and just kind of fell into it, but maybe she’s just indecisive since she also spent 12 years in the Army National Guard and 10 years on the Anson Fire Department.

When she’s not in the office, Bonnie spends her time outdoors, either hiking, snow-shoeing, or cross-country skiing, depending on the season. She is currently section hiking the Appalachian Trail southbound, and while she will tell you she hasn’t made it very far yet, she has hiked sections in Maine, New Hampshire, North Carolina, and Tennessee with her “bonus” daughter when she thru hiked in 2019. She is also one of those twisted people that willingly gets up at 4am to go to the gym. Don’t worry, we don’t understand it either. Bonnie told us that she is looking forward to speaking with all of you and learning from your vast knowledge and experiences. If she sounds a little funny, don’t worry, her accent comes out when she’s mad or tired. She’ll tell you that she talks normal and y’all listen funny, but we aren’t so sure.

Assessor News and Announcements

- **Karen Fortier** recently accepted the position of Deputy Assessor in Old Orchard Beach. She replaces **Bill Didonato** who retired on August 31, 2022. Best wishes to both!
- **John R O’Donnell & Associates, Inc** has a lot going on with upcoming projects. They will be doing revaluations in Action, Hebron, Lebanon, and Mechanic Falls.
- Over in **Winslow**, the Town will be advertising for a **clerical assistant** to the Assessor and Code Officer.
- The Town of Farmington has a brand-new assessor! **Allison Brochu** the former assistant to the Waterville Assessor is on the job. Congratulations Allison!
- The Towns of **Woolwich** and **Canaan** have RFPs out for revaluations.
- **Farmington** also plans to put out an RFP for a “Tax Equalization Project” by the end of February.
- **Lamoine** and **Hampden** are each seeking Tax Assessor Services. **Thomaston** and **Fryeburg** are both looking for a full-time Assessors’ Agent.
- The Cities of Portland and Sanford each have **open Assessor Positions** advertised.
- The **Town of Cape Elizabeth** is seeking applicants for a full-time Secretary position with the Assessing, Code Enforcement, and Planning (ACP) Department.
- The Maine Chapter of the IAAO welcomed **7 new members** in 2022 and 2 so far in 2023. Brooke Cobbett (Saco), Donald Ferrara (Lewiston), Kristin Haase (Rumford), Colleen Halse (Buckfield), Jacky Murphy (Bangor), Katherine Waite (Bangor), Fuyu Xu (Brewer), Cassie Boutin (MRS), and Joseph H Murphy (Murphy Appraisal Services). **The future of assessing looks bright!**



Maine Board continued from page 1

Like a Swiss-army knife she proved to be useful and versatile, qualities that will take her far. She oversaw the newsletter and made sure members were always well informed. She leaves the board to take on even more duties as an assessor in three Maine Communities.

We were sad to see our past president Kerry leave the board in 2022. Hard-working, he too has ladled heaping helpings of responsibility to his plate. Among other commitments, Kerry oversees three mid-coast communities and lends his assessor expertise to the State Board of Property Tax review.

Article continues on page 4



IAAO Update February 2023

The IAAO Board of Directors met January 26-28, 2023 in Tampa Florida. Newly elected Board, and Executive Committee members were sworn in, and welcomed to the Board. The primary focus of the meeting was the **Strategic Plan, Future Assessment 2025**. The Board held breakout sessions to determine what has been accomplished so far, what has changed since the Plan’s inception, what should be re-prioritized, and whether there are adequate funds and resources to do adhere to the Plan.

Future Assessment 2025 is comprised of 4 major Strategic Goals.

Strategic Goal 1 is Professional Development. The primary objectives are *increasing the diversity* of IAAO’s Instructor base to reflect the communities they serve, strengthen IAAO Instructor competencies, implement programs and operations to improve speed to competency for IAAO students, increase access to education regardless of a student’s location, technological, financial, and personal limitations, increase opportunities for individuals to earn designations, provide education and training for learners in the use of assessment technology tools, and continue to update and/or create courseware for IAAO students.

Strategic Goal 2 is Community Engagement. The primary objectives are to establish mechanisms to measure diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility within the IAAO Community, define the structure and function of IAAO Chapters & Affiliates, increase volunteer opportunities at IAAO, increase the number of members who belong to both IAAO and an IAAO Chapter, develop deeper engagement within the IAAO Community, and become the global hub on technology, trends, and resources in mass appraisal.

Strategic Goal 3 is Communications and Advocacy. The primary objectives are to develop communication strategies and value statements that describe the value of IAAO Designations and education for individuals, employers, and communities, develop a communication campaign that advocates the value of a professionally trained and diverse community of mass assessment professionals for target audiences which includes the public, legislators, regulators, media, and industry partners, develop partnerships with leading global and domestic organizations, ensure that all IAAO media and communications content is kept current and up-to-date, ensure that diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives are woven into print and electronic communication vehicle, and to ensure that all critical Intellectual Property is protected and preserved.

Strategic Goal 4 is Business Innovation. The primary objectives are to determine the role of Professional Consulting Services as it relates to the mission and vision of IAAO, focus all IAAO products and services to solve identified and valuable needs of members, customers, partners, and other defined stakeholders, demonstrate IAAO as essential to business partners and other stakeholders in the mass appraisal marketplace, establish a fund dedicated to research and development and new initiatives, and to ensure that IAAO is relied upon by the mass appraisal community as the resource of choice for research and standards in mass appraisal.



Bill Healey is the Chief Assessor for the City of Lewiston. He has served as Assessor for 5 Maine Towns, and has over 25 years’ experience in the assessing profession. Bill has been a member of IAAO for nearly 25 years, and holds the IAAO Residential Evaluation Specialist (RES) Designation. He has served on many IAAO Committees, and has been selected to serve on the Governance Committee in 2023. Bill served on the IAAO Board of Directors from 2020 thru 2022.



Just Ask the Assessor

Dear Assessor,

“What is the eligibility of a taxpayer with a homestead exemption if the tax liens have put this property into foreclosure and the town has done a waiver to foreclosure to not have to take possession of the homestead, yet this person is party-in-possession and is still liable for taxes?”

Karen Fortier, Deputy Assessor Town of Old Orchard Beach

Dear Karen,

Thank you for your question.

For some clarification, if a waiver is recorded, the tax lien remains in place, and hence does not automatically foreclose the property. In order for this waiver to be legal, the waiver of foreclosure needs to be recorded before the right of redemption has expired (36 MRSA §944).

If you believe the waiver has been recorded in accordance with 36 MRSA §944, then the “party-in-possession” is the owner, and would qualify for the Homestead Exemption if they meet the criteria. In order for the taxpayer to qualify for the Homestead Exemption, they must be a permanent resident of Maine, the property must be their permanent residence, they must have owned the property for the twelve months prior to applying and the application must be filed on or before April 1st (36 MRSA §§ 681 - 684). If the taxpayer has met all these requirements, they would qualify for the Homestead Exemption in this example.

Great question and I hope this explanation is helpful.

Respectfully,

Amber Poulin, Tax Assessor for the Town of Stockton Springs



Do you have an assessing question you would like us to consider for the next issue?

E-mail the editor at jstpeter@auburnmaine.gov.

Are you a new CMA seeking a mentor to guide you? **JATA mentors are waiting for your call.**

Check out the updated brochure at www.mechapteriaao.org

Maine Board, Continued from page 2

Kerry espouses the best qualities of an assessor being, intelligent, thoughtful, kind, and the model of reasonableness. Articulate and thorough, Kerry is our favorite litterateur. I have a feeling that we will call upon his sage wisdom when needed. Fortunately, we know where he lives.

In 2023 the Board welcomes new members Amber Poulin and Lauren Asselin. Amber is the Assessor in Stockton Springs; Lauren is the Assessor in Gray. We are renewed by their fresh perspective and we welcome them to the team. Both have impressive backgrounds, and we are excited to share their expertise and enthusiasm with the members.

Barbara Brewer is our newly appointed secretary and already impresses with her skill and work-ethic. Though she has big shoes to fill, she has hit the ground running undaunted by the challenge.

Returning members include directors Brent Martin (Eliot), Joseph St Peter (Auburn), Nicholas Cloutier (Scarborough) and Natalie Andrews (Bethel). Past President Judy Mathiau (Winslow) continues to grace us as a board member. Returning officers include the Treasurer Clint Swett (Cape-Elizabeth), Vice-President Darryl McKenney (Waldoboro), and President Karen Scammon (Auburn).

The stated purpose of the Maine Chapter is to educate the public on the importance of work performed by assessing officers; to improve the standards of present assessment practice by engaging in research and publication of the results of these studies; to elevate the standards of personnel requirements in assessment offices; to establish a clearinghouse to collect and distribute useful information in order to further cooperate with public and private agencies interested in a concerted effort for improving tax administration; to work for justice, equity, and uniformity within the tax structure and the distribution of the same.

There is a lot to unwrap in that mission statement, but for me the fundamental purpose of Maine Chapter Board is to support the assessing community, all of you. We are a board comprised of assessors dedicated to assessors. Our best resources are our members, and we remember our promises to you.

Assessing can be challenging and complex, the Maine Chapter strives to help you unravel your assessing problems with timely and informed guidance. We recognize that each community is unique, therefore every Maine assessor faces different challenges. We honor that diversity and hope our own varied experiences as Board members shine a light that others can follow.

One small way the Board is celebrating variation in 2023 is to hold our regular board meeting in different Maine communities. We have already been to Moody’s Diner in Waldoboro and Big G’s in Winslow. Where will we pop up next? Maybe in your community, stay tuned for the answer.



The Board meeting at “Big G’s” in Winslow. From left: Bill Brunelle, Darryl McKenney, Barbara Brewer, Amber Poulin, Karen Scammon, Judy Mathiau, Nicholas Cloutier, Joseph St Peter

Joseph St Peter

Advanced Maine Assessor Certification—Part I

The first time I ever heard about advanced assessor certification was in 2015 at *Le Club Calumet* in Augusta. Looking back, I realize it was also the first Maine Chapter of the IAAO meeting I had ever attended. At the time, I was a newly hired appraiser and not yet a CMA. I had yet to even sit for my CMA exam Spoiler, when I did, I discovered it was very hard – more on that later.

Leaders from Maine Revenue Service were there to discuss a proposal to create a tiered system of certification to recognize assessors with advanced skill, training, and experience. There were a lot of details to work out, but the basic framework was set. What was proposed then looks a lot like the advanced assessor training and certification program that we have today.

I recall that members in attendance provided a mixed bag of feedback, most seemed to be hopeful and supportive. Others were rightly concerned about the lack of available training and the prohibitive cost. I suspect some quietly doubted it could work or deemed it unnecessary.

So, eight years later where does the program stand? Is the vision realized? Have the hurdles been overcome? I think the answer is a familiar one to assessors: it depends.

According to Peter Lacy at Maine Revenue Services there are 343 active assessors who hold either a CMA or CAT designation. Of those, only 42 assessors hold an advanced certification. This means that 12.24% of certified assessors have enhanced credentials. The breakdown to the right (table 1):

Table 1, Active Maine CMA/CATs		
CMA	294	
CMA-2	16	
CMA-3	11	
CMA-4	15	
CAT	7	
total CMA/CAT	343	

Although 12% advanced CMA designations may seem meager compared to the remaining 88% of CMAs, the trend going forward looks encouraging on a couple fronts. In 2022, 21 new CMAs were added. This is almost double compared to 2021 when only 12 new CMAs were awarded. The same year 10 assessors *upgraded* their certification to advanced. 7 attained CMA-2, 2 CMA-3, and 1 new CMA-4 was awarded. So nearly *one quarter* of the current advanced holders were added just *last* year. Juxtapose that with new assessors added and the outlook for increasing numbers is good.

Time will tell if the number of advanced CMAs will continue to climb or backslide. So, I wondered and asked MRS if we have *lost any* advanced CMAs because they failed to renew year-to-year. To that, Peter Lacy responded, “it’s relatively uncommon for advanced certifications to lapse, unless the individual retires.” That certainly rings true to me, after all the time and effort put into acquiring your advanced CMA, most will be motivated to maintain it.

It occurs to me that the CAT/CMA classifications are the original two-tiered system of “advanced” certification. I was surprised to learn that we still have 7 active CAT designations. The CAT exam is no longer offered, and the State has not certified any new CAT certifications since 2017. The last candidates who sat for the CAT exam were in 2016. This of course means that the CAT designation is being phased out. To me, it also means that the remaining CATs hold a distinguished place in our profession. While an outsider may see CAT as a lesser designation, we know that CATs are experienced assessing professionals with long tenures. Let us celebrate their contributions to the assessing community!

Continues on next page

Advanced Maine Assessor Certification continued from page 4

All these musings about CAT, CMA, and advanced CMAs naturally raise the question, are advanced designations even necessary? Going back to *Le Club Calumet in 2015* what was emphasized then and in days to come is that an *advanced* certification will not be required generally. Anyone who earns their CMA has proven their assessing chops and can be an excellent assessor without advanced certification. This is a proven fact, given the abundance of all the excellent assessors currently practicing. I hold an advanced designation, but I know for certain there are seasoned assessors out there who have forgotten more about assessing than I know. The point is, an advanced designation does not *necessarily* make a better assessor.

Yet it is also true that some of these excellent assessors sought advanced skills in the form of training and experience to help them to solve increasingly complex assessing questions in their towns and cities. Some of them even accumulated enough training and experience to receive IAAO or other designations. Having the ability to competently appraise and defend difficult assessments required no less. So, for all the time and expense to gain specialized competency, why not be recognized? For those who are willing, why not proactively walk the road toward advancement?

Like many of you, I have been asked to cite my qualifications in public. Sometimes by the taxpayer, at public meetings, and especially at appeal hearings (lawyers love asking about your qualifications). I’ve never been one to punctuate letters or numbers by my name, but there is a certain relief that comes from being able to list credentials when someone is trying to impugn your qualifications. One more reason to pursue advanced certification.

The diverse nature of Maine communities means that not all assessors require the same skills or training. Some might need less advanced training owing to a more homogenous property base. However, there are assessors in communities where complex assessing problems necessitate advanced training, such as advanced income analysis, regression studies, and modeling to name a few. To be clear this is not a big city little town divide, some small towns have big appraisal problems. Think of having to find, list, and finally assess billions of dollars' worth of timber harvesting equipment in the unorganized territories. Sounds complex to me. Here again, we should regard those with specialized training, skill and experience to be advanced assessors.

Bulletin 22 clearly states: “A (CMA) certification does not guarantee the holder a position as an assessor. However, municipalities ordinarily consider certification to be part of the qualification when choosing an assessor and certain positions require an individual to hold a CMA certification” (MRS Bull 22 pg 2). My employer, the City of Auburn requires a CMA.

I believed that this requirement to be a CMA was a professional growth opportunity. Back in 2014, I had made what felt like a risky career move having relocated to Auburn from Aroostook County. Prior to my entry into assessing, I was a self-employed fee appraiser. As a independent appraiser, licensure was especially important because without my credentials I had no livelihood. Assignments from my clients meant that I had cash flowing into the business. This meant that I could afford my bills, pay for the many required subscriptions, put fuel in my gas tank, and food on the table. I worked hard to get my license and was invested in keeping it, because there was a clear consequence if I didn’t. Furthermore, additional training and experience allowed me to take on ever more complex assignments and made me more marketable to new clients. I now view CMA certification *and advanced certification* with the same lens. To be honest, it starts with survival. Many, if not most of us accepted assessing jobs on the condition that we either had or could attain our CMA within a certain timeframe. In my case it was one year. Getting my CMA was the first step on the “professional hierarchy of needs”. Advanced certification would come later, along with other professional milestones on the climb up the pyramid. I wonder how long it will be before “advanced” certifications are required for certain Maine assessor positions.

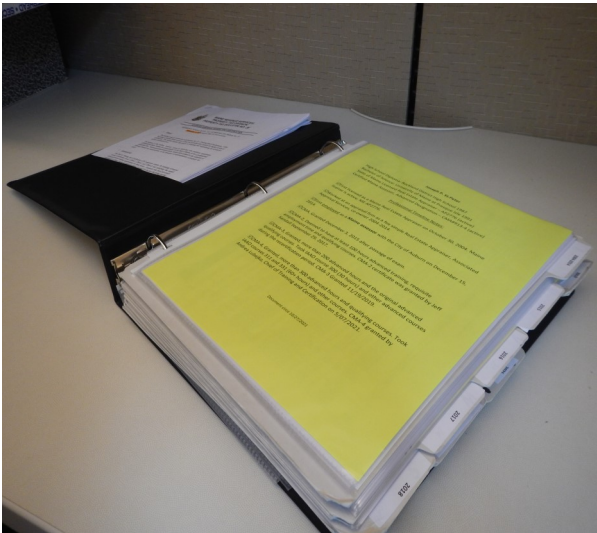
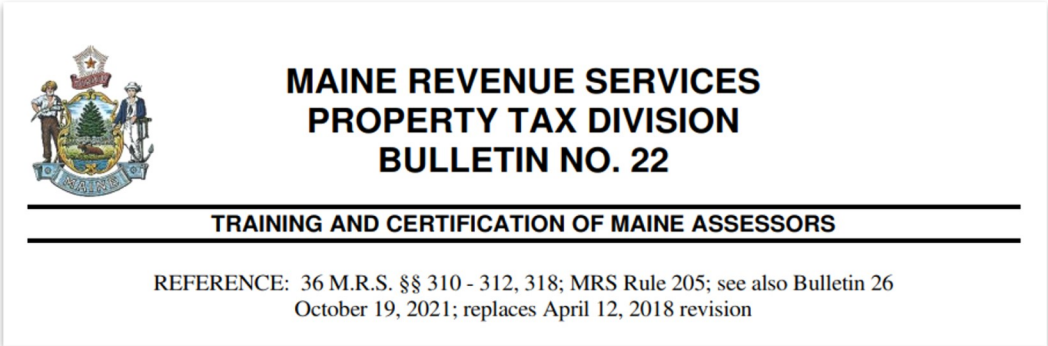
This all leads to the important questions, how does one attain advanced certification? I suspect some assessors do not start down the path because the steps are not clear, or they seem insurmountable. Like all worthy endeavors that are difficult, it is done one step at a time.

Of course, the first step is to become a **Certified Maine Assessor**. I regard CMA as the *first advanced certification*. It is CMA-1 after all and the foundation of all levels to come. The guidelines for CMA attainment are clearly established in MRS Bulletin 22, but until you embark on the effort those are just words on paper. To become a CMA, all you really must do is pass the tests. Easy right? Not exactly.

The reality is that getting your CMA is tough. Even those with a background in assessing or appraisal find it challenging. I mean, what other profession sits for an eight-hour multi-subject test? Trust when I say that the review course is not enough. Before my test I recall then Chief of Training, Jeff Kendall’s words, “This test is a bear!”. Boy was he right and I felt like I had been mauled after taking that first test in 2015 at prop-

erty tax school. The test is grueling, we must know Maine Statute, pivot to math, recall terms, appraisal theory and so much more. After writing for several hours, I needed to do hand stretches to keep from cramping. No one told me I had to hydrate first! To say I was not prepared is an understatement. I passed only 3 of the required 5 tests. Only after some anxiety, cramming and consulting with other assessors did I pass the remaining 2 later that year. My tip for aspiring CMAs is to relax, take it one step at a time, take all the introductory classes available, and find a support system. You might also consider accessing the JATA program to find a mentor who can advise you.

After getting your CMA, **Advanced certification** is next. Like before, you need to approach the effort by taking deliberate, manageable steps. To a point – you can even customize the steps. While there are clear required courses, you can choose them a la carte to suit your needs and interests. Currently MRS recognizes qualifying education that is offered by either the IAAO or the Appraisal Institute (AI). All the requirements for certification are found in MRS bulletins 22 and 26. Table 2 (next page, top) is a breakdown of those requirements condensed for each level of certification.



Keeping good records is imperative. Whether it is an old school scrapbook or digital archive is up to you

Continues on next page

Table 2—CMA and Advanced CMA requirements

	CMA	CMA-2	CMA-3	CMA-4
MRS guidance document	bulletin no. 22	bulletin no. 26	bulletin no. 26	bulletin no. 26
Annual recert hours (total)	16 hrs	21	28	28
Advanced hours required for annual recert	0	5	12	12
Cumulative <u>advanced</u> hours required to attain level (minium)	0	100	200	300
Ethics - MRS approved	every 3 yrs	every 3 yrs	every 3 yrs	every 3 yrs
Application	none, CMA is granted when tests are passed	yes, intial and annual renewal	yes, initial and annual renewal	yes, initial and annual renewal
Years of paid experience in assessing	no requirement	at least 1 year	at least 3 years	at least 5 years
MRS Test	Yes, 5 parts	No	No	No
	Required <u>Advanced</u> Courses for level (must take at least 1):			
IAAO	None	IAAO 101, 102, 112	IAAO 201, 300, 311, 500	IAAO 331, 400, 402, 600, 601
Appraisal Institute	None	AI Basic Principles, AI Basic Practice, Income 1, Income 2		

Note: CAT designations have the same annual recertification requirements as CMA.

If you are interested in advanced certification, I offer this advice:

- 1) **Set your goal** and take it one step at a time. You get to choose your timetable and preferred level of certification. It might take you a year or ten. Proceed at the pace that suits you.
- 2) **Discuss your professional development goals with your employer.** Help them understand the benefits. You are going to need time, money, and support. Not all municipalities will have the resources to help but accept what they can offer – even if it is just their encouragement. On the other hand, they may have more resources to offer than you realize. If you never ask you will never know.
- 3) **Inventory your training and experience;** you should think of both as assets. You could be closer to your goal than you think. Familiarize yourself with bulletin no. 26 and the necessary requirements. You are allowed to “bank” approved training, so if you have already taken an approved course – you do not have to take it again. Before you take or claim any “advanced” course check to make sure it is approved.
- 4) **Develop a support system,** state your goals out loud to others. You will have questions, so talk to other assessors who have done it. Better yet, correspond with the Chief of Training and Certification. Maine Revenue Services and other assessors want you to succeed and will guide you.
- 5) You will have to **keep your training records** over a long period of time, so they need to last. Protect your certificates like they are currency. Be organized and clear. My training record looks a lot like a scrapbook (photo, previous page), yours might be a detailed excel document (or both). Maintain a complete record and back it up when possible. If you attend a training, update your record without delay or risk overlooking your achievement. Ask for certificates or other evidence and keep the originals. Make sure you have backup copies of your training record.
- 6) Look for **scholarships.** The IAAO and the Maine Chapter both offer them as do other organizations. More may be offered in the future. You can find information about our scholarships on our website:
- 7) **Don’t get discouraged,** this is probably going to be a marathon not a sprint. Your other priorities, lack of resources, and life in general may stall your progress at times. Despite any setback, stand resolute and you will get there.

Before you cross the finish, you must step onto the starting line. The ME IAAO Chapter Board has been pondering the reasons why some assessors are reluctant take that crucial first step.

We have heard from some assessors who say that advanced certification is simply not a box they need to check off. Many, who have had long and successful careers fall into this category. Our distinguished past president **Judy Mathiau** puts it like this, “I believe that the CMA designations are important to assessors who want to further their own advancement in their career as an assessor. The CMA Designations provide an educational challenge for many, as well as an opportunity to spice up their resume. For me, as an Assessor closing in on retirement, I do not feel that need to further my education in certain areas let alone, worry about meeting the requirements to maintain that designation on annual basis. Also, this program comes at an expense, and I did not feel justified to spend the town’s money at this point in my career. I do see it as an accomplishment for many assessors, and perhaps if I was younger, I would have pursued it. In my opinion, the program needs to be promoted more and made known to Town Managers. Advanced training to achieve a higher designation needs to be made more available statewide.”

In the end, we are all responsible for our own individual professional development and advancement. Back in 2016 Kerry Leichtman wrote in the chapter newsletter, “Advanced training will enable assessors to concentrate on areas of personal and professional interest. It will not force people into coursework or career advancement they do not aspire to.” To echo this sentiment, we respect the choices of assessors and their ability to customize their career path. Veterans, like Judy, have already proved that they are “advanced” assessors, and we benefit from their examples. Others may elect not to pursue advanced levels of certification because it is simply not required or desired. Whatever the reason, *excellence* in assessing can be achieved at the certification level you deem best.

What about the assessors *who are* interested in advanced certification but have yet to take the leap? Perhaps they have no encouragement. Maybe the cost and time investment are too prohibitive. It could be the lack of *advanced* courses available locally. Others may not fully understand the process. We don’t know the prevailing reasons why, but in order to support your goals, we hope to find out.

article finishes on page 7



2023 WINTER MEETING

Its not too late to sign up for the Winter Meeting! Come for the **company, food, and fresh topics!**
Attendance at this meeting will provide 5.25 credit hours (1.5 advanced) toward CMA recertification.

Follow this link to our website for a registration form:

[Registration-Form-and-Agenda-for-ME-Chapter-IAAO-Winter-Meeting.pdf \(mechapteriaao.org\)](https://mechapteriaao.org/Registration-Form-and-Agenda-for-ME-Chapter-IAAO-Winter-Meeting.pdf)

Remember that paid members get a discount on this and upcoming training.

Members are also eligible for scholarship drawings.

If you are not a member or need to renew, now is a great time to join.

When: Thursday, March 9, 2023

Where: Augusta Civic Center, 76 Community Drive, Augusta, ME

Agenda & Topics

- 8:30-9:00 Registration
- 9:00-9:15 Opening Remarks
- 9:15-10:45 **Section 706-A – the Power and the Glory:** Use of 36 M.R.S. § 706-A by Assessors – Sally Daggett, Esq., Attorney at Jensen Baird
- 10:45-11:15 **MRS Property Tax Division Updates** – Peter Lacy, Director, Property Tax, State of Maine
- 11:15-11:45 **Land Use Penalties** – Nichole Stenberg, Oakland Assessor
- 11:45-12:30 Lunch
- 12:45-1:15 **The state of Maine’s Real Estate Market** – Julie Cromwell, Cromwell Coastal Properties
- 1:15-2:00 **Establishing Fair & Equitable Procedures for Assessing Building Grades** – Nick Desjardins, Biddeford Assessor
- 2:00-3:30 **Qualified Sales Determination** – Joseph St. Peter, Auburn Deputy Assessor

Attendance at this meeting will provide 5.25 credit hours (1.5 advanced) toward CMA recertification.

Advanced Maine Assessor Certification *continued from page 6*

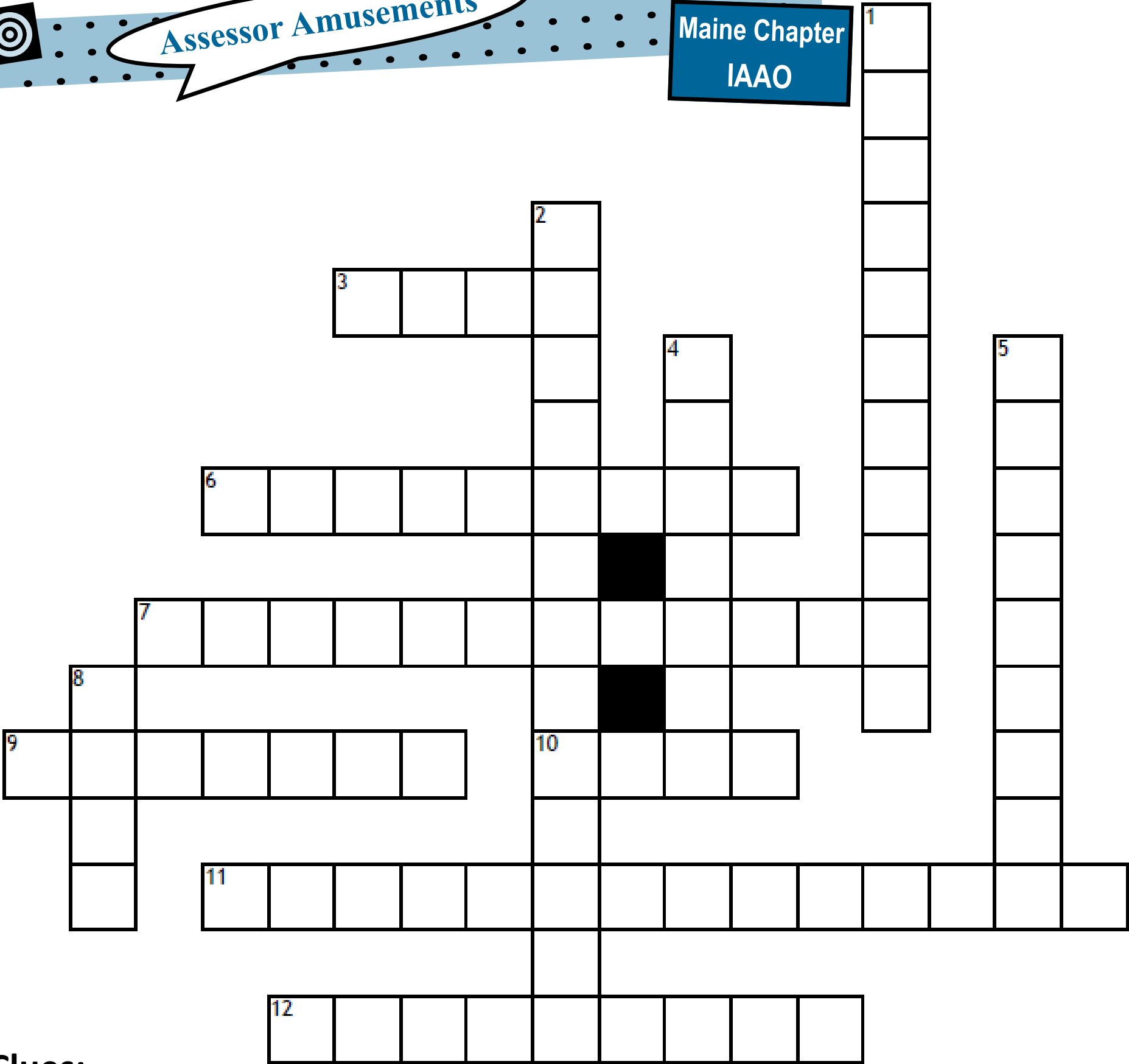
Generally, the Maine Chapter of the IAAO does encourage assessors to seek advanced designations. In part because it aligns with our overall purpose. One of our goal statements is particularly relevant, “to elevate the standards of personnel requirements in assessment offices”. I suspect the chapter members who authored this statement had advanced training for working assessors in mind. How better to achieve this than to pursue advanced training and certification?

Another reason to encourage advanced certification is that new CMAs are the future of Maine assessing. You may have noticed at chapter meetings that many of us are a little gray around the edges. With retirements on the horizon, the younger crowd will need all the advantages they can get sooner than later.

For our part, we are here to help others fulfil their **personal** and **professional goals**. In the coming weeks we plan to unroll strategies to help aspiring assessors advance. To that end, I hope to hear from you. How is your journey going and what are the barriers you have encountered on the road toward advancement? What supports do you require?

In **part 2** of this article, I plan to report your responses and varied experiences. Look for a survey link the coming weeks. Until then, know that the Maine Chapter Board of the IAAO supports your professional goals.

Joseph St Peter is the Deputy Assessor for City of Auburn and Newsletter Editor



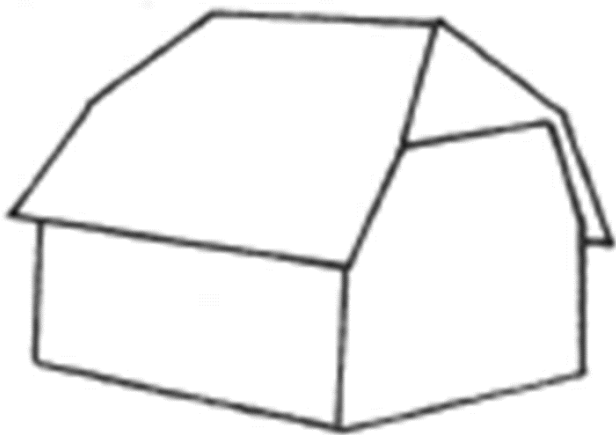
Clues:

Across

- 3. Assessing Software
- 6. ...is interpreted to mean "market value"
- 7. The expectation of benefits in the future
- 9. A New England style of home
- 10. 43,560 square feet
- 11. April 1

12. According to value
Down

- 1. _____ of Variation aka Quality Rating
- 2. USPAP Standard 5
- 4. My next door neighbor
- 5. Grant of tax relief
- 8. Income/Value =



If printing, pages print best on 11 x 17 paper
For answers with compound words do not insert a space,
example: Write Personal Property as PersonalProperty
Answers will be posted to our website and available at the March 9 training



Like this page?

Have a puzzle to suggest?

Let us know

email: jstpeter@auburnmaine.gov

What is it?

What style of roof is depicted in the two images to the right?

- A) Clipped gable
- B) Jerkinhead
- C) A and B
- D) Hip roof

