

CROAA *Advisor*.....

Official quarterly newsletter of the County Revenue Officers Association of Alabama
Fourth Quarter 2008

CROAA 2008-09 Board of Directors

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DARRICK WILLIAMS
Vice President
Jefferson County

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Montgomery County

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District 11 – Montgomery County

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Looking to the Future Means Making Changes

Let me start off by thanking you for electing me as your president for the coming year. It is an honor to be elected president, and I look forward to serving you this year.

I take office at an exciting time in our 10 year history. During the past two years under the leadership of **Kirk Keith**, we saw our membership grow almost 25 percent and the creation of the Outstanding Contribution to CROAA Award and the CROAA brochure.

Thanks, Kirk!

Looking to the future there are many challenges we as an organization will face in the coming months and years, challenges that will push our organization. We will see such issues as Streamlined Sales Tax, the removal of sales tax on unprepared food, the ongoing struggle with business license reform, joint audits, and the continued push to add more items to the sales tax holiday to name a few.

As many of you know, I used to be able to lace up the old skates and fly around the ice chopping player's ankles with my hockey stick. Then, father time caught up with these old bones, and I found a new life in screaming at referees from the bench – otherwise known as coaching. As a coach, I tell my teams that winning teams always rise up against the challenges they face in every game. I say challenges create opportunities, opportunities create success, and success creates accomplishments.

As CROAA moves forward, we have that same opportunity for accomplishments. Streamlined Sales Tax, the removal of sales tax on food, Business License reform, and the sales tax holiday are all big challenges, but each challenge presents us with an opportunity for success, and with it accomplishments. However, for us to continue to achieve the accomplishments we have grown accustomed to, we may need to change the mindset of our organization.

At the ACCA Annual Conference in August, **ACCA Assistant Executive Director Sonny Brasfield** discussed that CROAA needs to in some ways redefine itself. We need to be more visible in what we do. Whether it's speaking with our commissioners, school boards, the news media, or anyone that has a stake in what we do. Sonny also mentioned that we need to say that we are in the business of *revenue enforcement and compliance*, rather than being *tax collectors*.

Since I was elected president, I have been meeting and calling a number of you. I met with **Vice President Darrick Williams** of Jefferson County to discuss a game plan for the coming year. Several weeks ago I met with Sonny and discussed a number of issues concerning CROAA.

It is from these meetings and conversations that a number of great ideas have been hatched. For instance, I have appointed a President's Committee.

"Looking to Future" continued inside...

Membership Has Its Privileges...

As a member of the County Revenue Officers of Alabama, membership has its privileges! And, one of the benefits of membership is this newsletter, which will be published quarterly and jam-packed with information we think will be useful to you. CROAA is a statewide organization of professionals just like you. Through the Association, you will be provided educational opportunities to further your skills as a leader in your profession, all the while making important contacts that can prove most useful in the future.

Not a member of CROAA? If you would like to learn more about CROAA, log on to www.acca-online.org and look for CROAA in the Affiliates section.

Not sure if your membership dues are up-to-date? Please e-mail **Jennifer Datcher** at jdatcher@acca-online.org.

Membership dues are \$10 annually. Make checks payable to County Revenue Officers Association of Alabama and mail with completed form, which can be found online, to:

CROAA
100 N. Jackson Street
Montgomery, Ala. 36104
(334) 263-7594
Fax (334) 263-7678

"Looking to Future" continued from front...

This committee is made up of all the former CROAA presidents as well as Darrick and myself. This committee will look at where CROAA has been, where we are today, and where we would like to be in the future. It will then report back to the board of directors.

Another idea is the creation of a new award – The County Revenue Officer of the Year Award. Should the board of directors approve this award, the awards committee (formerly the honorary membership committee) will begin work on drafting its criteria. This award will be awarded annually to a CROAA member for outstanding accomplishments on and off the job.

I hope to have all of the committees appointed soon and posted to the ACCA Web site as well as e-mailed to the membership.

Looking out a bit further, if you haven't already done so, make your calendars for the upcoming ACCA Legislative Conference. It is to be held Dec. 10-11 at the Renaissance Ross Bridge Resort and Spa. The CROAA breakout session is scheduled for Thursday Dec. 11 from 10:15 a.m. – 12 p.m. For the session we have new **ADOR Commissioner Tim Russell** confirmed to speak, and we are hopeful for one other speaker as well.

(NOTE: There is no charge for simply attending the breakout session.)

I have called a board of directors meeting for Thursday, Dec. 11 at 1:30 p.m., hoping we can maximize our attendance. *NOTE: I will be e-mailing an agenda to the membership soon. If you have a topic you would like discussed please e-mail it to me as soon as possible.*

The one thing that I want to leave everyone with is a challenge. A challenge to take 30-60 minutes a week to work on CROAA-related issues. Whether it is working on your committee assignments, brainstorming with other CROAA members about future educational class offerings, offering to teach an hour section in one of our classes and preparing for such, picking up the phone and simply calling a member to see how things are going in their county. The strength in our organization is in our people. The more people we have actively involved, the stronger we will be as an organization, and the bigger the voice we will have across the state.

Once again, I want to say THANK YOU for electing me as your president, and I look forward to serving you in the coming year.

Kevin Caputo
President, Tuscaloosa County

HAVE YOU MADE YOUR PLANS?

ACCA's Legislative Conference is just around the corner. Have you made your plans to attend? If not, we've included a registration form in this newsletter for your convenience.

The deadline for early registration is **Friday, Nov. 14**, and registration cancellations after Friday, Nov. 28, will not be refunded. Early registration is **\$125** per person before Nov. 14. (Registration after Nov. 14 is **\$150** per person.)

While the deadline to acquire rooms at the Renaissance Ross Bridge Resort has already passed, accommodations have been made at the Hyatt Place Hoover, which is about 10 miles from the host hotel. Rooms are **\$129** and can be reserved by calling (205) 988-8444. The deadline for making hotel reservations at Hyatt Place is **Tuesday, Nov. 18**.

Register for “Legal Considerations of Local Revenue”

Legal Considerations of Local Revenue is Course II of the CROAA Education and Certification Program. This course contains topics such as the Taxpayers’ Bill of Rights, federal and state laws affecting levy and collection of revenues, constitutional issues, the Alabama Legislative Process and legal research principals.



This course is scheduled for **Feb. 11-13, 2009**, at the **Shelby County Community Service Building**. Registration for this class is **\$195 per person**. To register for this class, log on to www.coned.jsu.edu or call (800) 634-7199.

CROAA’s Certification Program consists of three core courses and two electives. Courses are 20 hours in length with information given on the first two days and a test on the third day. Participants must attend the entire course and make a passing grade on the test to satisfy that portion of the certificate program.

ACCA Announces Dates for District Meetings and County Commission Days

With the 2009 Legislative Session just around the corner, the Association staff wants to make sure all ACCA members are prepared for what’s ahead in the coming months.

During the three-week period set aside for **ACCA’s District Meetings**, county officials and employees gather to discuss legislative and other important issues.



Please mark your calendars for the meeting that is most convenient for you. **All meetings will begin at 6 p.m.** A registration form and specific locations will be available soon. All county commissioners, chairpersons, clerk/administrators, engineers, county attorneys, EMA directors, county revenue officers, and 9-1-1 directors should plan to attend the district meetings.

Monday, Jan. 5, 2009Jasper, Ala. (Walker County)

Tuesday, Jan. 6, 2009.....Decatur, Ala. (Morgan County)

Thursday, Jan. 8, 2009.....Gadsden, Ala. (Etowah County)

Monday, Jan. 12, 2009.....Linden, Ala. (Marengo County)

Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2009Clanton, Ala. (Chilton County)

Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2009Clayton, Ala. (Barbour County)

County Commission Days are scheduled during each Legislative Session to give counties the opportunity to come to Montgomery and lobby on Association measures. *This is your county’s opportunity to have a sure presence in Montgomery during the Regular Legislative Session.*

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend your district’s County Commission Day. All participants should convene at the ACCA office for a briefing before visiting the State House.

Tuesday, Feb. 17, at 11 a.m. – District 8: Bullock, Chambers, Clay, Coosa, Lee, Macon, Randolph, Russell and Tallapoosa Counties

Thursday, Feb. 19, at 9 a.m. – Districts 10 and 12: Baldwin, Butler, Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Escambia, Marengo, Mobile, Monroe, Washington and Wilcox Counties

Tuesday, March 24, at 11 a.m. – Districts 7 and 9: Autauga, Calhoun, Cleburne, Elmore, Lowndes, Montgomery, Shelby and Talladega Counties

Tuesday, March 31, at 11 a.m. – District 11: Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston and Pike Counties

April 8 and 9 – County Day at the Legislature at the Alabama Activity Center in Downtown Montgomery

Tuesday, April 21, at 11 a.m. – Districts 2 and 4: Blount, Cullman, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Morgan and St. Clair Counties

Tuesday, May 5, at 11 a.m. – Districts 5 and 6: Bibb, Chilton, Dallas, Greene, Hale, Jefferson, Perry, Pickens, Sumter and Tuscaloosa Counties

Thursday, May 7, at 9 a.m. – Districts 1 and 3: Cherokee, Colbert, DeKalb, Etowah, Fayette, Franklin, Jackson, Lamar, Lauderdale, Marion, Marshall, Walker and Winston Counties

2008 LEGISLATIVE Conference

Dec. 10-11, 2008 • Renaissance Ross Bridge • Hoover, Ala. • REGISTER TODAY!

CROAA BREAKOUT AGENDA

- **Conversation with New Alabama Department of Revenue Director Tim Russell**

Tim Russell, Director, Alabama Department of Revenue

Mike Mason, Deputy Commissioner

Joe Garrett, Tax Policy Administrator

Curtis Stewart, Tax Policy and Research Director

- **Current Legal Issues Facing Tax Collections**

Wade Hope, Attorney, Alabama Department of Revenue

- **President's Report**

Kevin Caputo, President, CROAA

2008 ACCA Legislative Conference Registration Form

County or Company Name: _____

Person Completing Form: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Fax: (____) _____

E-mail Address: _____

ACCA member registration is **\$125** per person **before Nov. 14**. (After Nov. 14, registration is \$150 per person.) *Company registration is \$175 per person.*

\$ _____ Total amount enclosed. **Please do not ask ACCA to bill you.**

List below those you are registering for the conference. Please indicate if each person is a (C) Commissioner, (CA) Clerk/Administrator, (CE) County Engineer, (ACE) Assistant County Engineer, (EIT) Engineer in Training, (AAEM) Emergency Management, (CROAA) County Revenue Officer, (AAND) E-911, (G) Guest or (S) Spouse.

Please note that cancellations will not be refunded after Friday, Nov. 28.

Please return completed form and check payable to ACCA by Nov. 14, 2008, to:

ACCA Legislative Conference • 100 N. Jackson Street • Montgomery, Ala. 36104 • Fax (334) 263-7678