



## The Garden of Eden

By George Donatello, CMS, Principal Consultant, TEAM Consulting

I usually start this column by describing all of the cool places that I have been to in the previous few months talking about the IAAO Mass Appraisal Standard, remote sensing and how the technology is changing our world. Not this time, though. I was in San Diego recently and had a chance to talk with 150 members of San Diego Assessor Ernie Droneburg's office; Chief Deputy Harold Scott; Consultant Sandy Woodhouse; and Derek Millard, President of the Society of Certified Appraisers. That a great meeting but totally different than this article.

I know that you are going to find this hard to believe, but I, George Donatello, own a pair of bib overalls and a straw hat that I routinely wear around the yard as I play (work) on my garden. Last year, we built a 6,000 gallon fish pond and planted hundreds of plants and trees on our quarter-acre lot in Villa Rica, Ga., and working in it has become my obsession. One of my koi (Big Boy) is now over 18" long and is one of the most beautiful fish I have ever seen.

So, you ask, what does all of this have to do with TEAM Consulting and assessment administration? Before I tell you the answer to that question, I want to tell you one more thing about my Farmer George life. Since the flowers and fish pond

were doing so well, I decided to try my hand at vegetables. Doesn't everyone dream of growing their own salad fixings, tomatoes and onions for the 4th of July cookout? I wanted to try out my new-found green thumb on being self-sufficient and saving money at the same time. The only problem is that we live in a golf course community and only have a 10' x 15' spot for a garden. All this meant that my garden had to be very small and extremely efficient. I did a little research and decided on the Square Foot Garden concept (raised four-foot beds divided into one-foot squares, filled with Mel's famous soil developed my Mel Bartholomew).

I purchased the wood, compost and vegetable seed and went for it. My wife, Marilyn, and all of our neighbors and friends were skeptical but gave me the benefit of the doubt. The picture of me standing next to the 10' (now 12') Peaches and Cream corn stalks are a testament to Mel's soil recipe and my gardening efforts! I planted 35 different fruits and vegetables in my 48-square-foot garden, and almost everything is doing well. In the square foot space where the 12' corn is growing, there are three stalks of corn, pole beans (growing up the corn stalks), and asparagus—all do-

ing nicely, thank you.

The moral of my garden story is that I would have never dreamed that I could grow over 30 different plants from seed, produce a tasty crop in 48 square feet and spend only a few dollars. Just as I would have never believed that we would be able to use remote sensing to verify and collect property data characteristics at a fraction of the cost of traditional methods that many "traditional farmers" are still using in their jurisdictions today. They should try the Square Foot Method!

In closing, I will be doing a workshop for IAAO at our annual conference in Kansas City, Mo., on Monday, September 10 about presentation skills: "How the First 7 Seconds Really Matter!" Hope to see you there. ❖



George the Farmer measures his success in the garden.

# TEAM Members at NCRAAO

TEAM members played active roles at the annual North Central Regional Association of Assessing Officers (NCRAAO) conference, which was held June 11–13, in Kansas City, Mo.



Pete Davis

## ■ Presenter Pete Davis

TEAM member Pete Davis presented an excellent seminar: “Practical Application of Ratio Studies & Proposed Changes”:

Ratio studies—not the sexiest topic, but this session will help you better understand some of the basic terms plus a brief discussion of confidence intervals. The students will be provided a demo program (in Visual Basic and distributed on a CD-ROM developed by the presenter) that can read data from an Excel worksheet and calculate the basic IAAO ratio study stats and associated confidence intervals. It also includes outlier trimming routines. Also discussed will be the new PRB statistic that is being proposed to supplement (or replace) the PRD in the IAAO Standard.

Pete brings over 30 years of computer-assisted mass appraisal (CAMA) experience to TEAM Consulting, Inc. He served as systems and standards supervisor for the State of Kansas during its statewide reappraisal, and he now serves as the ratio study and GIS manager for the Kansas Property Valuation Division. Pete has also worked as a chief appraiser and commercial property appraiser for local assessment jurisdictions.

Over the last 12 years he has served on the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO) Technical Standards Committee, Research Committee and Conference Content Committee. He is the recipient of several IAAO awards and serves as state IAAO instructor. Pete has performed equalization program reviews and ratio study evaluations in nine states. He has also developed customized personal computer applications to assist state agencies and local jurisdictions with model calibration and innovative ratio study statistical tools.



Rick Stuart, CAE

## ■ Education Coordinator Rick Stuart, CAE

Rick Stuart, CAE, served as the education coordinator for the conference and was responsible for developing session topics and acquiring the presenters. This is the third time Rick has served in this capacity for NCRAAO and the second year straight.

This year, a new concept was implemented that allowed the vendors to also be presenters but could speak directly about their products.

“Technology is always a major component in any assessment office, and with the continued budget

constraints and reductions, more and more jurisdictions are seeking new technology avenues to perform their required tasks,” said Stuart. “Each year a major portion of the conference is the vendor area that allows the assessors/appraisers to view the most current technology. Each vendor will be given a 45 minute time-slot and the session will be repeated. Each vendor would have to choose what their topic is, and it can include a discussion of cost, etc. I believe the sessions are as much educational as a discussion on, say, depreciation, the comparable sales approach, hotel valuation or any of the other more traditional educational sessions. I see this as a positive for the vendors and the attendees.”

TEAM was a contributing sponsor to the Exhibitors area at the NCRAAO conference.

## ■ TEAM Business Partners

TEAM business partners, The Sidwell Company and Pickett & Company, Inc., were also involved in the NCRAAO conference. Both set up vendor booths and also took advantage of the opportunity to present their company and products to those in attendance.



**Sidwell's presentation:** *What all is under the GIS umbrella?* This session will cover topics relating to deploying GIS via the web, enhancing data for supporting all local government operations. GIS agland assessments, supporting your GIS operations with remote technical support are some examples. The presentation was given by Mel Obbink and Brian Baker. Sidwell can be contacted at <http://www.sidwellco.com/>.



**Pickett & Company's presentation:** *Pickett's Prowess.* “The need for technical appraising/valuation services for Tax Entities has never been greater.

Assessors, County Appraisers, Chief Appraisers, in towns, schools, counties, do not have the full time engineering and appraisal staff, proprietary software, years of expertise, etc. required. Only a company, which specializes across the country, can provide the sources to perform timely, accurate and defensible appraisals in both fee (as in litigation) or in mass appraisal for ad valorem work. Licensed professional engineers and registered professional appraisers, supported by experienced staff, get the work done smoothly, annually, and for a cost that meets the budget requirements.”

Bob Lehn was the presenter. You can find out more about Pickett at <http://www.typpo.com/> ❖

**Need help with your conference?  
Contact Rick Stuart, CAE at [rstuart17@cox.net](mailto:rstuart17@cox.net)**

## Wm. Henry Riley, CAE

### Here's Henry!



Henry Riley, CAE

As the spotlighted TEAM member in this newsletter, I'm to give a brief biography with some little known facts about myself. I have been involved in the assessment profession for more than 40 years. Mass appraisers deal with numbers, especially the relationship of numbers in model specification and model calibration. Here is a question for you: What is the relationship of the numbers 15 and 875? We'll come back to this a little later.

Beginning my career in Maryland as an assessor, I moved through progressively responsible positions to become the assistant director of that statewide agency. Key responsibilities included the implementation of a statewide computer-assisted mass appraisal system and a force in the statewide GIS development.

Later, in the District of Columbia, my responsibilities included assessment administration, land records management and tax billing. While there, a new CAMA system, GIS, Land Records Management and Tax Billing Systems were implemented. Finally, as independent consultant with TEAM Consulting, Inc. my work has consisted of revaluation projects, subject matter expert, expert witness, assessment performance audits and assessment procedures development for local governments.

My academic work includes a DPA, an MBA, and a BA in Economics. I have published various articles and made presentations on appraisal, assessment administration, and appraisal standards. As a member of the International Association of Assessing Officers, I have served on various committees, hold the CAE professional designation, and am a senior national instructor. As a State Certified General Appraiser in Maryland, I am also an AQB Certified USPAP Instructor and have served on the Appraisal Standards Board of the Appraisal Foundation.

At the beginning, I asked what is the relationship between the numbers 15 and 875. That relationship is father and son. My father was in the assessment profession, a member of IAAO, and was awarded the CAE designation and, the best we can tell, he was around #15, in September 1954—the second year of that designation. My CAE is # 875. Other little known facts are that I served as an Army infantry officer, served as a board member and officer of my golf club, was a member of my local Kiwanis Club, and serve as a board member of a small community bank. ❖ See "Henry the Author" below.

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### Henry the Author

An article coauthored by Henry and Ken Joyner, RES (University of North Carolina) was published in the April 2012 issue of IAAO's *Fair & Equitable* magazine. The article, "Following the Trail: A Guide to USPAP for Assessors," focuses on the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice ((USPAP) and ad valorem appraisal practice. Its aim is to promote understanding of USPAP and

its application by assessors.

The article emphasizes USPAP compliance in appraisal development and reporting in ad valorem appraisals, discusses Advisory Opinion 32–Ad Valorem Property Tax Appraisal and Mass Appraisal Assignments, and reviews key points of the IAAO Revaluation Template. A sidebar article by the authors, "How USPAP Got Its Start," describes the

*Henry the Author, continued*

history of IAAO, USPAP, and The Appraisal Foundation and summarizes the structure of USPAP.

Often an assessor's work is misunderstood by the public, appraisers, and users of appraisal services. While assessors use the recognized methods and techniques of both single-property appraisal and mass appraisal, the uniqueness and timing of the assessor's work can cause misunderstanding of how USPAP applies to ad valorem practice.

Similarly, assessors who are not thoroughly familiar with USPAP may have difficulty relating USPAP to their work—some describing it as "putting a square peg in a round hole." However, others recognize USPAP as an important set of ethical and minimum performance obligations for all appraisers, including assessors. The authors believe that some of the difference of opinion is caused by a lack of understanding of the assessor's work when compared to the appraisal standards.

The article provides a detailed overview of the requirements of USPAP and summarizes the key points of the IAAO revaluation template. It provides a ready reference to key points to USPAP and the IAAO Template.

The article also focuses on the key principle that in developing and reporting of an appraisal, the appraisal should be "meaningful and not misleading."

Both "Following the Trail" and "How USPAP Got Its Start" promote a better understanding of ad valorem appraisal and the uniform appraisal standards that apply to all appraisal disciplines. IAAO Members can view the articles online at [www.IAAO.org/fairandequitable/April2012](http://www.IAAO.org/fairandequitable/April2012). Members will also find a downloadable PDF version of the 2012-2013 Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice at the website. ❖

# Lee County, Ill., Launches Portico® GIS Website

Lee County, located in north-central Illinois, recently launched a GIS website that features Sidwell's latest version (2.1) Portico® technology to bring local government GIS to the Internet.

The Sidwell Company and Lee County first worked together in 1979, when Sidwell was selected to provide an aerial-based, countywide cadastral mapping system. Since then, Sidwell has been the county's partner in providing GIS-based solutions to meet the evolving needs of successful government.

The Lee County Portico® website has three distinct map layers for aerial photography, parcels, and soils. It also includes customized reports where robust appraisal data for a selected property is captured on a letter-sized PDF to save or print. Users can also view sketches and photos for selected properties that come from the county's appraisal database.

"I have come to expect a high level of service and professionalism from Sidwell, and you have

exceeded my expectations with the Portico website! It is exactly what we envisioned – user-friendly, straightforward, with intuitive toolbars and "spot-on" help tips, all customized to meet the needs of Lee County. Staff members, the public and real estate professionals alike will navigate the site with ease. Thank you to the entire Sidwell Team all your efforts—and for giving us a website we can be proud of!" —Wendy Ryerson, Lee County, Ill., CCAO

With the Portico® website, Lee County residents are introduced to several new functions, including:

- **Advanced Search.** Users of the Lee County website can search for parcels, building multiple search strings against the county's mass appraisal data. For example, users can perform complex queries to find all comparable parcels with structures between 1,000 and 1,200 square feet and whose most recent sale price was less than \$250,000. According to Chad Bergeson, director of Solu-

tions and Support, "The addition of advanced search and reporting functionality to Portico is a welcome innovation that provides a much more robust solution for querying and reporting parcel information in the same easy to use way our clients have come to expect from Portico."

- **XY Locate.** Users can enter XY coordinates (lat/long, State Plane, or UTM) and locate the exact coordinate on the map. Conversely, the user can also click a point on the map and view the coordinates for the location.
- **Bookmarks.** Spatial bookmarks can be saved and recalled by users to return to saved locations. The bookmark will stay on the workstation until the user's Internet cache is cleared.
- **Legend.** Users can view a dynamic legend that reflects map features visible according to scale.

To visit the Lee County website, go to <http://www.leecountyil.com/> ❖

## KANSAS

### TEAM at the Kansas Appraiser's Conference

By Rick Stuart, CAE

TEAM participated in this year's Kansas County Appraiser's Conference, held June 17–20 in Manhattan, Kan. TEAM was a sponsor for the bowling tournament that was held on Sunday night, and assisted with both the golf tournament and the hospitality room. But the key contributor to the conference was TEAM's Pete Davis. Pete's presentation on the Land Based Classification Standards (LBCS) covered the history and various coding issues.

The LBCS provides comprehensive guidance in the classification of land using five parcel dimensions

that are important to mass appraisers and assessors: site development, ownership rights, structure types, activity character and economic function. This standard was developed over a period of 40 years by the American Planning Association. IAAO replaced its Standard on Property Use Codes (1980) in 2000 with this new standard.

Kansas was the first state in the nation to adopt the standard on a county-by-county basis as each jurisdiction migrated to a new CAMA system over the last five years. ❖

### Meet Our TEAM

Learn more about our highly qualified consultants on our website: <http://www.teamconsulting.cc/teamconsultants.html>.

- Brent Bailey, ASA
- Kishin Bharwani
- Fred Chmura, AAS
- Ed Crapo, CFA, ASA, AAS
- Keith Cunningham, PhD
- Pete Davis
- George Donatello, CMS
- Lynn Gering
- Marion Johnson, CAE
- Dan Muthard
- Richard Norejko, CMS
- Henry Riley, CAE
- Pam Ringer
- Ron Schultz, CFA
- Rick Stuart, CAE
- Ken Voss, MAI, SRA, CAE

# TEAM Consulting Contracts

By Rick Stuart, CAE

TEAM has signed several contracts in the last few months, some of which have been completed.

## Scottsbluff County, Nebraska

A contract was signed that provided for onsite review and analysis of the following topics:

### Residential:

- Quality, condition and effective age ratings and determinations
- Manufactured home valuation
- Development of depreciation tables
- Out-building economic life assignments and depreciation
- Valuation of metal buildings used as dwellings
- Neighborhood delineation and land valuation

### Commercial:

- Neighborhood delineation and land valuation
- Quality, condition and effective age ratings and determinations
- Development of depreciation tables
- Development and mailing of income and expense questionnaires
- Development of EXCEL or some template for storing and analyzing questionnaires
- Mailing of questionnaires to lenders
- Consideration of purchasing outside data, especially for cap rates

The county has signed a contract for TEAM to provide additional services in 2013. TEAM was represented by Rick Stuart, CAE.

## Lyon County, Kansas

TEAM conducted a Review and Analysis of the Commercial Valuation Process for the Lyon County Appraiser's Office. The review included the following:

- Review of neighborhood boundaries
- A field review of a fairly large sample of property data
- Review of all sales and how they are used & maintained
- Review of land values
- Review of collection, storage and model building processes for the income approach application
- Provide a plan on how the County should proceed in order to have sound processes in place for the valuation of commercial property

Lyon County signed an additional contract to provide for all commercial phases of valuation except for the re-data collection and valuation. Those phases included:

- Create a new organizational chart
- Review of land and possible land sales
- Neighborhood delineation & profile development
- Remove land influences determine any appropriate land influences
- Land valuation, data entry and write-up
- Redesign income & expense letters and questionnaires
- Analysis of new construction, data entry and write-up
- Developing percent good tables, data entry and write-up

- Analysis for economic condition adjustments
- Income & expense models

Marion Johnson, CAE, and Rick Stuart, CAE, are the TEAM members assigned to both of these projects.

## Comanche County, Kansas

Comanche County has signed a contract with TEAM for technical assistance for the valuation year of 2013. Phases included in this contract are:

- Residential Cost Index Study
- Commercial Cost Index Study
- Residential Depreciation Study
- Commercial Depreciation Study
- Neighborhood Analysis and Review
- Land Value Model Recalibration
- Quality Control
- Residential Market Model Building
- Commercial/Industrial/ Apartment Income Approach Analysis
- Review of rural residential for quality and condition
- Training on residential and commercial modeling
- House style review and analysis

Marion Johnson, CAE, and Rick Stuart, CAE, are the TEAM members assigned to both of these projects. Let TEAM help you with your many projects. ❖



A complete list of our areas of expertise can be found at:  
<http://www.teamconsulting.cc/>

# TEAM's AAS Case Study Review

## **Congratulations to new designees**

**Phillip Raskosky, II, AAS**, a valuation specialist in the Marion County Assessor's Office in Indianapolis, Ind., and to **Abby Arnold, AAS**, who serves as chief of staff for the Lucas County Auditor's Office in Toledo, Ohio.

These new designees represent the 19th and 20th successful AAS candidates that have used the TEAM AAS Case Study Review.

The workshop provides a review of materials and an understanding of the composition of a case study to help prepare for the AAS Case Study Exam. It emphasizes the most prevalent items to study for, although it cannot be all-inclusive of what may actually be on the exam. Topics discussed are: USPAP, rates and levies,

I had received many inquiries from AAS candidates asking if I had any material that could help them in their pursuit of an AAS. Until this course was available my answer was always no. Now I can definitively tell them that there is a great course available to assist them. I plan to regularly offer this course and would recommend the same to other states or chapters with serious AAS candidates.  
—Ken Joyner, RES, AAS

I successfully completed the AAS Case Study Exam this year after completing the Team Consulting LLC review course. I found the review course to be extremely valuable. The possible subject matter for the AAS exam is so broad that it was difficult to focus my preparation. The review course helped me to determine the areas where I needed to concentrate as well as giving me a great refresher course. The interaction with other candidates during and after the course was also very valuable to my success. I highly recommend that anyone who is planning to take the Case Study Exam, take the Case Study Review course first.  
—J Brent Weisner, AAS

effective tax rates, economic principles, property definitions, ownerships and rights, three approaches

to value, attributes in an effective tax system, role of the assessor, ratio studies, and tax policy. Included are multiple problems associated with the assessment and valuation processes, and the workshop concludes with a four-hour case study exam followed by a review of the answers.

***This is not an IAAO workshop but one developed by TEAM Consulting, LLC.*** It has become a very popular item for those seeking their AAS designation. To set-up the workshop, contact Rick Stuart at [rstuart17@cox.net](mailto:rstuart17@cox.net) or by calling 785.259.1379 or you can use a local instructor to present the workshop.

You can also order the complete workshop as a self-study guide by going to: [http://www.teamconsulting.cc/images/AAS\\_Order\\_Form\\_2010.pdf](http://www.teamconsulting.cc/images/AAS_Order_Form_2010.pdf) ♦

## TEAM Class Offerings

Several classes using TEAM workshop materials are on tap for 2012. Those open to enrollment (at this writing) appear below with the contact info.

Aug. 28 – 30	Manhattan, KS Cindy Brenner, <a href="mailto:kcaa@sbcglobal.net">kcaa@sbcglobal.net</a>
Classes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Valuation of Self Storage Properties</li><li>• Valuation of Low End &amp; Difficult Residential Properties</li><li>• Preparation &amp; Presenting a Valuation Appeal</li></ul>
Sept. 24 – 26	Peoria, IL Erica Larkin, <a href="mailto:planner@ipaionline.com">planner@ipaionline.com</a>
Classes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Valuation of Green Buildings</li><li>• Valuation of Low End &amp; Difficult Residential Properties</li><li>• Valuation of Lodging Properties</li></ul>
Nov. 19 – 20	Washington, IA Sheila McAllister <a href="mailto:smcallister@henrycountyiowa.us">smcallister@henrycountyiowa.us</a>
Classes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Valuation of Self Storage Properties</li><li>• Valuation of Low End &amp; Difficult Residential Properties</li></ul>

See all of the TEAM workshops at <http://www.teamconsulting.cc/workshops/workshopoverview.html>. Not finding what you want? Contact Rick Stuart, CAE, about developing a workshop to meet your needs. [rstuart17@cox.net](mailto:rstuart17@cox.net)



**IAAO 78th Annual  
International  
Conference on  
Assessment  
Administration**

**September 9–12, 2012  
Kansas City, Mo.**

<http://www.iaao.org/>



## What is TEAM Consulting All About?

**TEAM Consulting** is a network of experienced “problem solvers” who can offer cost-effective and practical solutions to both large and small assessment jurisdictions. The core of **TEAM Consulting** is our vision, mission and values. These items are the key elements that guide **TEAM** in creating innovative solutions and partnerships that have the potential to change assessment administration and property valuation today and in the future.

### **Our Vision**

TEAM's vision is two-fold. First, our vision for the future of assessment administration and property valuation is to help build systems that are technologically efficient, cost-effective and valuable to the publics who depend on them for information. Secondly, our vision for **TEAM** is to become a recognized leader who can make a difference in assessment administration and property valuation by creating a link to all parties involved in this process. Third, **TEAM** is a strong advocate of education and will create or assist in the creation of specialty designed educational workshops and courses.

### **Our Mission**

“To enable the emergence of a new technology and innovative concepts and ideas to improve the performance of assessment administration and property valuation processes for the benefit of our customers and taxpayers who we all work for.”

### **Our Values**

TEAM's values are central to who we are as individuals and as a team. Following are our primary values:

**Respect** – appreciating and valuing diverse perspectives; building relationships based on trust; and relating to others as individuals, without regard to role, authority, skill, experience or compensation.

**Creativity** – comes from thinking progressively and being open to the new concepts and ideas that have the potential to work better in the future and bring us closer to our mission.

**Performance** – takes many forms, but at its essence, this value reflects our desire for achievement, quality, professionalism and success.

**Growth** – comes out of education, learning from the examples of others and reflecting on our experiences in order to gain insights into how we can improve.

**Purpose** – knowing why we are doing something, which results in being more effective in our work. When we have purpose for our individual efforts that connects to the purpose of our group and corporate efforts, we have consistency of purpose as an organization.

**Service** – focusing on others rather than purely on us. Service drives our mission to create something that is of value to others.

**Ethics** – we subscribe to a code of ethics and the highest standards of our profession.

**Check us out at [www.teamconsulting.cc](http://www.teamconsulting.cc)**