

# The Collector Treasurer

A publication of the Massachusetts Collectors and Treasurers Association

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No.2 &3

## **MCTA's Annual Fall Conference will be in Holyoke October 21**

The Log Cabin will again be the site for this year's Fall Conference. Do come and enjoy this beautiful facility and the spectacular view of Mt. Tom and across the valley. The fall foliage should be a delightful site.

We are pleased to have one of our Associate Members from the western part of the state participate in sponsoring an event for the Fall Conference. The Bank of Western Massachusetts has generously offered to sponsor the Continental Breakfast. The Association appreciates their partnership and contribution to our Fall Conference.

The meeting will start with a Joint Session presentation from Assistant Attorney General Scott Schafer, Chief of the Consumer Protection Division, who will address our members on Security Breaches. Following an intermission, Assistant Attorney General Peter Leight, will address our members on Municipal Investments and the False Claims Act.

This will be followed by Attorney Shawn Williams from the Division of Public Records Division of the Secretary of State's Office, who will address our members concerning issues of public records.

## **Holiday Meeting set for College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, December 9**

The Hogan Center at Holy Cross College will again be the site of MCTA's Holiday Meeting for December 9. Set the date aside on your calendar for a day of educational presentations, discussion and socializing.

The Education Committee is developing a program, which will feature speakers and topics centering around Local Aid and State Revenues

## **MCTA Staff School**

**Annual Staff School** was held at the Littleton Municipal Office Building on September 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. The September 9<sup>th</sup> classes attended by over 50 staff members offered the Basics to Collectors & Treasurers staff, while the September 23<sup>rd</sup> Session, which was attended by 75 staff members offered Advanced classes. MCTA would like to acknowledge and thank all the Faculty members who gave their time, knowledge and experience in making the Staff School a very successful educational event. MCTA would also like to thank SoftRight for their contribution to the Continental Breakfast, as well as Steve Venuti, Treasurer of the Town of Littleton.

## **Newly Certified Treasurers**

**Jacqueline Boudreau**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Norton, **Floyd Carman**, Treasurer, Town of Belmont, **Anne Cervantes**, Treasurer, Town of Ashburnham, **Tammy Collers**, Treasurer, Town of Templeton, **Jacqueline Cuomo**, Treasurer, Town of Georgetown, **Patrick McIntyre**, Treasurer, Town of Clinton, **Melanie Phillips**, Treasurer, Town of Medway, **Nancy Ward**, Treasurer, Bourne Water District, **Karen Williams**, Treasurer, Town of Stockbridge.

## **Newly Certified Collectors**

**Virginia Boutchie**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Essex, **Mary Beth Carter**, Collector, Town of Whitman, **John Clark**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Billerica, **Brian Conway**, Collector, Town of Natick, **Cheri Cox**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Northborough, **Deborah Fox**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Grafton, **Michelle Hill**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Southwick, **Denise Marlborough**, Collector, Town of Millbury, **Kathleen O'Malley**, Collector, Town of Clinton, **Lisa Sinkus**, Collector, Town of Foxborough, **Barbara Walls**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Hopedale.

## **Dues, Dues, and Dues**

Second notices will be mailed in early October. Please check to see if your Fiscal Year 2010 dues have been paid. We appreciate your membership.

## The President's Page

By

Susan Kelley

From the President:

It was great to see so many people at Annual School! I hope you feel it was a success – considering budget cuts and reduction in staff I was extremely pleased that so many were able to attend! I hope that each one of you came away with learning something valuable and helpful to your position. Sometimes our understanding of knowledge comes from the most unexpected places. I was having a conversation in the coffee line when someone shared something they had just heard in their class that I didn't know! It seems we can never stop learning! I am also so appreciative of the enthusiasm that our new treasurer's and collector's bring to the organization. It warmed my heart to see and know how many of you truly care about the MCTA and its success. We ultimately are all working towards the same goal of doing our best. You should all be proud of yourselves in your participation in continuing your education in a

### Association Calendar 2009 - 2010

Oct. 21, 2009	Fall Conference The Log Cabin Holyoke
Dec. 9, 2009	Holiday Meeting The Hogan Center Holy Cross College Worcester
Feb. xx, 2010	Winter Meeting TBA
April xx, 2010	Spring Meeting TBA
May xx, 2010	New Collector and Treasurer Day
June 13 to 16, '10	61st Annual Cape Conference
Aug 17 to 20, '10	40 <sup>th</sup> Annual School U Mass Amherst
Sept. 9 & 23, '10	Annual Staff School Littleton Municipal Office Building

professional atmosphere. Many of you who are certified become teachers or presenters and you give of your time unselfishly. This is truly a credit to your character and one that I want to acknowledge and say "Thank you". I also want to personally thank the education committee, Gene Spickler, our first vice president, and Mike Hanlon, our executive director for all of their help in pulling off our 39<sup>th</sup> annual school. Last but not least a great big "Thank you" to Diane O'Donnell, our secretary. She does so much behind the scenes preparation; it makes your head swim! It's a thankless job but trust that we all appreciate you!

Right around the corner is our Staff School scheduled for September 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Littleton Town Administration building in Littleton, MA. Please take this opportunity to send your staff to this learning opportunity to guide them in understanding their roles better and ultimately helping your office run more efficiently.

Many of you commented on trying to use the Website to its fullest potential. At our annual meeting in June we created a new committee to help keep our website updated and fresh! It has a catchy title – the Website Committee! Ha Ha! I am looking for someone certified to volunteer to be on this committee. If you are good with computers and website postings – we need you! Please contact me directly or by email if you are interested or would like more information on this vital new piece of our organization.

*Sue*

### Newly Certified Assistant Treasurers

**Sharon Lowder**, Assistant Treasurer, Town of Holden, **Deborah Morse**, Assistant Treasurer, Town of Sturbridge.

### Newly Certified Assistant Collectors

**Elizabeth Driscoll**, Assistant T/C, Town of Hanover, **Amanda Monahan**, Assistant Collector, Town of Chatham, **Janice Polin**, Assistant Collector, Town of Westwood

## Comings - - - - -

## And Goings - - - - -

(This feature in *The Collector-Treasurer* is intended to help our members keep abreast of changes taking place within our professional community. With your help in sending us late-breaking changes by fax or e-mail, we will be able to keep current on the whereabouts of our members and friends. Please tell us of changes you have not yet seen in print)

Comings & Goings  
(for the Autumn 2009 newsletter)

**Kimberly Yargeau** is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Northbridge, replacing Laura Woeller.

**Angelina Epiceno** is the new Treasurer of the Mohawk Trail Regional School District, replacing Sheila Sprague.

**Beth Hull** is the new Treasurer in the Town of Alfred, replacing Jennie Van Deusen.

**Dr. Josephine Testaverde** is the new Treasurer of the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School District, replacing Charles LaBella.

**Richard Scortino** is the new Treasurer in the Town of Wilbraham, replacing Donna Easton-Vicalvi.

**Deborah Fox** is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Grafton, replacing Karen Gauthier.

**Christa J. Marsh** is the new Treasurer in the Town of Clarksburg, replacing Marie Allard.

Alyce D. Johns is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Boylston, replacing F. Ellen McKay, who retired.

### *The Collector-Treasurer*

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President	Susan Kelley
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Pres	Gene Spickler
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres	Victor Garofalo
Treasurer	Paul Keating, Jr.
Secretary	Pat Mielke
Exec Director	Mike Hanlon
Editor	Mike Hanlon
Assoc. Editor	Diane O'Donnell
Tel. (978) 952-6644	Fax. (978) 952- 6655
E-Mail	<a href="mailto:Masscta@aol.com">Masscta@aol.com</a>

## **Education Committee Report**

*By First V-P Gene Spickler*

With UMASS School behind us, the Education Committee has been working hard on getting your fall conference at The Log Cabin in Holyoke finalized! We will have representatives from the Attorney General's Office and the Secretary of State's Office addressing our members on Security Breaches, Investments and Public Records. We had another successful year of Staff school with a large attendance for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year track. Thanks to all of our colleagues who volunteered to teach, and to our generous associate members for their sponsorships.

The Education Committee is turning its' attention to the Holiday Meeting at Holy Cross on December 9, and future conferences!

We are also looking for some new Education Committee members. You must be certified. If you are interested please contact Mike Hanlon, our Executive Director, or give me a call to chat about it! It's very rewarding! I would like to acknowledge Dot Jenkins, Collector of Monson, Barbara Barry, C/T of Sturbridge and Lane Kelly, C/T of Greenfield for serving on the Education Committee. Their terms have expired but they have been a tremendous asset to the committee, you will be missed.

***Gene***

## **News From Beacon Hill**

By MCTA's Registered Agent, Steve Roche  
MCTA LOBBYIST REPORT – FALL 2008

### ***SENATOR TED KENNEDY & THE UPCOMING SPECIAL ELECTION***

Beacon Hill came to a screeching halt during the last week of August as the state mourned the passing of Senator Kennedy. I was influenced heavily as a child by the Kennedys, growing up in a typical Irish, blue collar Catholic family. One of my more exciting adventures as a young man occurred in 1980 when I traveled to several states on behalf of Ted Kennedy's run for President; I even managed to get my Mom elected as a Kennedy Delegate from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District in New Jersey. It was a lot of work, but well worth the effort.

It will be an interesting race as candidates begin to line up for the Special Election for Kennedy's seat.

My focus the past few weeks has been to secure state reimbursement of the municipal costs of the Special Election. As you may know by now, we won! I worked with other groups, including the Mass. Town Clerks and the MMA, to ensure that municipalities were not saddled with these costs.

Cities and towns are entitled to at least \$7.2 million as a "local mandate" and these costs must be reimbursed, according to a letter issued by State Auditor Joe DeNucci.

When I raised the funding issue with several state legislators before the Auditor's letter was sent, they said the state didn't have money to cover the local costs of the Special Election. I responded that cities and towns

didn't have money in their budget either. I stated that we weren't requesting money – rather, I reminded them that Prop 2 1/2 requires reimbursement of these costs.

The next step is for the State Secretary and the clerks to work together on a cost analysis. Then, we must wait for the Governor and General Court to appropriate the money.

I have a feeling that I'm going to have to stay on top of this situation until we see an actual line item in a supplemental budget to reimburse cities and towns.

### ***STATE PENSION STUDY COMMISSION ISSUES FINAL REPORT***

The commission studying the state's pension system submitted its report on September 1<sup>st</sup>. The final report, submitted to the General Court, indicates the commission's proposals are intended only to apply to new hires, not current employees.

A total of 31 policy change recommendations were sent to the Legislature. A cost estimate is expected by the end of September. Suggested changes include:

- Increasing the period for averaging earnings for benefits from three to five years.
- Prorating benefits depending on the number of years a retiree spends in a particular pension group category.
- Capping the amount of public employees' earnings that can be used to calculate their pensions. The limit would be equal to 75 percent of the federal \$245,000 limit and would be indexed to

inflation. "High-wage employees would not make contributions on amounts above the cap," according to the report.- Introducing an "anti-spiking" rule that limits an annual increase in "pensionable" earnings to 7 percent plus inflation of the average earnings over the previous two years.

- Permitting public employees to choose a lower pension payout in exchange for a more generous cost-of-living adjustment.

- Clarifying language in the law "so that employees do not lose pension for minor misdemeanors, but primarily for pension convictions related to one's employment."

- Allowing boards to recoup pensions from retirees convicted of a crime retroactive to the date of retirement. "Currently, pensions can be recouped retroactive only to the date of conviction. This change would prevent employees from retiring to receive benefits in advance of a criminal proceeding.

- Requiring Supreme Judicial Court justices, currently exempt from making contributions, to pay into the retirement system. "This exception is hard to justify in a contributory retirement system," according to the report.

## *2010 BALLOT QUESTIONS*

The Attorney General has certified a total of 25 petitions covering 12 topics. The petitions likely to draw the most public attention – and campaign spending - are questions to:

- eliminate tolls in Massachusetts
- repeal the sales tax on alcohol

- slash the 6.25% sales tax to 3%

Obviously, the tax questions are a great concern to cities and towns given likely Local Aid cuts if they were approved by the voters next year.

## *MORE CUTS IN FY2010?*

State revenues are not living up to expectations. While there was an overall increase in August revenues, we assume most of that increase is the result of the sales tax and other tax increases that took effect on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

This, in turn, has led to speculation on Beacon Hill that another Local Aid cut is on the way by October.

*Steve*

## **Legislative Committee Report**

By *Second V-P Victor Garofalo*  
Legislative Committee Report

The Legislative Committee has some openings; if any certified Treasurers or Collectors are interested in volunteering for the Legislative Committee and contribute their ideas and efforts to help pass legislation please email [masscta@aol.com](mailto:masscta@aol.com).

Below are the list of the bills we are following and working on, and their status.

**Senate Bill #1582 Uncashed Checks** –  
Lead Sponsor: Sen. Stephen Brewer –  
Other Sponsors: Rep. Cory Atkins, Rep. Vinny deMacedo, Rep. Todd Smola, Rep. George Peterson, Sen. Richard Moore, Sen. Bruce Tarr. This bill has been referred to the Joint Committee on Judiciary and has been filed in Senate.

### **Senate Bill # 761-Trust Funds Investments** –

Lead Sponsor: Sen. Stephen Brewer –  
Other Sponsors: Rep. Vinny deMacedo, Sen. Bruce Tarr, Rep. George Peterson. This bill has been referred to the Joint Committee on Municipalities and

Regional Government. A hearing was held on April 7, 2009.

### **House Bill # 1050- Safety of Public Deposits** –

Lead Sponsor: Rep. Thomas Stanley –  
Other Sponsors: Rep. Cory Atkins, Rep. Vinny deMacedo, Rep. Colleen Garry, Rep. John Fernandes, Rep. George Peterson, Sen. Bruce Tarr. This bill has been referred to the Joint Committee on Financial Services. The Senate concurred in committee referral.

### **Senate Bill # 791-Municipal Borrowing** –

Lead Sponsor: Sen. James Timilty –  
Other Sponsors: Rep. Vinny deMacedo, Rep. James Cantwell, Rep. Colleen Garry, Sen. Richard Moore, Rep. John Fernandes, Rep. George Peterson, Sen. Bruce Tarr. The bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Ethics and Rules. A hearing was held on 8/11/09 and 9/3/09 Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Govt. reported bill out favorably to Senate Committee on Ethics and Rules.

### **Senate Bill # 1355- Personal Property Taxes** –

Lead Sponsor: Sen. James Timilty –  
Other Sponsors: Rep. Cory Atkins, Rep. Vinny deMacedo, Rep. George Peterson. This bill has been referred to Joint Committee on Revenue. The House concurred in committee referral.

### **Senate Bill # 1102-Residency Bill** –

Lead Sponsor: Sen. Michael Knapik –  
Other Sponsors: Sen. Scott Brown, Rep. Vinny deMacedo, Rep. Brad Jones, Rep. George Peterson. This bill has been referred to Joint Committee on Public Service. A hearing was held on May 11, 2009.

### **Municipal Relief II – no bill number yet.**

The Special Commission on Municipal Relief. This bill is currently in Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government. Hearings took place from May – June 2009.

I want to thank all the committee members for all their support and help. I also want to thank those that support our efforts in contacting their legislators for support of our proposals.

*Victor*