

The Collector Treasurer

A publication of the Massachusetts Collectors and Treasurers Association

Volume 20

Summer 2007

No. 1

MCTA's 37th Annual School to be at U Mass, Amherst, August 14-17

School Registration information and Forms were mailed with President McKay's letter of invitation the last week of June. If you did not receive your mailing, or if you just can't find it, go to the MCTA web site at www.MassCTA.com and download the Annual School information.

You can fax your registration to the school or just show up and take the forms with you. But, please **do not send your Annual School Registrations to the MCTA Office.**

Even if you miss the July 31 deadline and have to add the \$35 late charge, MCTA's Annual School is still a bargain in terms of the educational and professional benefits you will receive. Do not miss this year's Annual School.

Remember, Assistant Collectors and Assistant Treasurers may now sit for the examination and become Certified. A great many assistants have been taking courses for years, but have not been allowed to sit for the Certification Exam. With the new rules for eligibility, 20 Assistant Collectors and 16 Assistant Treasurers have become Certified.

A previously approved PACT application is required to attend the Thursday review classes and to sit for the Friday Examinations

If knowledge is power, take this opportunity to become more powerful. Come learn with us at the Annual School, August 14 - 17.

Michael J. Hanlon Named Next MCTA Executive Director

The Executive Board of MCTA has appointed Michael J. Hanlon to the position of Executive Director of the Association effective as of August 1, 2007.

Mike knows the Association and many MCTA members from his previous service with the State Treasurer's Office, Middlesex County and the City of Boston

Read details of the transition in Nancy Holt's column on page 2.

HIRD Forms Available From Commonwealth Site

HIRD (Employee Health Insurance Responsibility Disclosure) Forms that must be filed by November 15, 2007 by employers – including municipal employers – of more than 11 FTEs can be downloaded from the web site of the Commonwealth Connector at www.mahealthconnector.org. At their homepage, click on the green block for "Employers"

You can also download an "Employer Handbook" from this site, and you will see that the process for filing your Section 125 plan documents is still under development, so hold on to your documents until further notice

58th Annual June Sea Crest Conference Was A Big Success

Seventy Nine Certified Members Earned Credit For Re-Certification

This was the second year of a program change that now awards re-certification credit for attendance at Sea Crest. The requirement continues to be attendance at Course #201 (Review of New Legislation with Atty. Gary Blau of MA DOR) and five hours of additional approved classes, the same as re-certification at Amherst.

When the Education Committee and the Executive Board approved the new re-certification rules, no one knew how our members would respond. But the decision to develop this alternative was made to encourage more Certified members to send their Assistants to Amherst for Annual School and the potential to become a Certified Assistant. This year's participation was nearly twice that of last year.

We also enjoyed a variety of speakers and social events, thanks to the generous support of several associate members and other sponsors. And our exhibit floor was sold out, with 50 vendors present.

Next year's location and dates have been set: the **Sea Crest** on Old Silver Beach in North Falmouth, Sunday, **June 8** to Wednesday **June 11, 2008.**

So mark the dates in your calendar now, for the **59th** Annual MCTA Conference on Local Taxation and Finance.

The President's Page

By

Nancy Holt

From the President:

As many of you already know, this year is one of transition. With the approaching retirement of our Executive Director, Nils Nordberg, your officers and executive board have been seeking candidates for the upcoming vacancy. Efforts toward this end have been going on for almost six months with the sub committee on Staffing and Compensation turning over their recommendations to the search committee who in turn recommended finalists in June.

I am pleased to inform you that all the hard work has been worth it and we have a new Executive Director who will start in August. Michael J. Hanlon, Jr. has had a long and successful career in public service having worked in the State Treasurer's Office under Treasurers Cahill and O'Brien. Michael also worked for the Middlesex Regional Retirement System, the Middlesex →

County Treasurer's Office, and the City of Boston. He has impressed us with his grasp of our Association's mission and goals and his willingness to help us meet them. He will be working with Nils through the month of August as a transition period, so we will be doubly blessed at Annual School.

At this time, I would be remiss if I did not recognize Nils for all of his hard work and dedication over the last nine years. He has committed his knowledge of the inner workings of the legislature to help us attain some of our legislative goals. He has used his event planning skills to negotiate the best deals for our conferences and engage presenters for our events. He has met the many requests from the varying committees and boards within our Association and followed through with planning and implementation. I want to extend my thanks to him on behalf of the Association and wish him and his wife Linda the best of luck and health in their 'retirement'.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication from our outgoing Secretary, Marcia Cole of Halifax, for her years of dedication and service on the Executive Board of the Association. Also a special thanks to Mary Roy of Haverhill for her service on the Executive Board.

Summer has officially arrived, so Annual School must be fast approaching. The Education Committee has worked very diligently over the last year to meet the ever changing needs of our members and that is reflected in the updated curriculum for August 14-17th. The Legislative Committee has also not taken a summer holiday and has been turning their attention to bills that we did not sponsor but that could negatively impact our day-to-day operations. Please heed the e-mail requests for support by making phone calls or writing letters to your representatives and senators. If they do not hear from us, they will assume some of these proposals are fine, when they are far from it.

I would like to take an opportunity to remind all of our members about the benefits of membership. No, it is

not a copy of the latest PBS documentary with your \$50 pledge. It is access to several hundred of your colleagues who deal with similar issues that you face every day. Your attendance at educational meetings provides an opportunity for you to learn and also, in many cases such as panel discussions and open forums, for you to share your existing knowledge with others. It also enables you to network and to build contacts with others whom you can then consult with when issues arise in your office. Much like a fitness club membership, it is most useful when the member is an active participant.

I look forward to seeing you all at Annual School. If the June conference was any indicator, it should be an extremely well attended school this year.

Nancy

The Collector-Treasurer

Published quarterly by the Massachusetts Collectors and Treasurers Association, 510 King Street, Littleton, Massachusetts 01460

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Association Calendar- 2007-8

Aug 14-17, '07	37 th Annual School University of Mass. Amherst
Sep 11 & 26, 07	Annual Staff School Municipal Office Bldg Littleton
Oct. 24, 2007	Fall Conference The Log Cabin Holyoke
Dec 12, 2007	Holiday Meeting Holy Cross College Worcester
Feb XX, 2008	Winter Meeting Location TBD
April XX, 2008	Annual Meeting Location TBD
May 14, 2008	New Coll/Treas Day Forbes Municipal Bld Westborough
May 31, 2008	PACT Form Deadline
Jun 8-11 '08	59 th Annual Cape Cod Conference Sea Crest Hotel North Falmouth

"Did you know that..."

...as of December 5, 2006, MGL Ch. 44B, Sec. 5(b)(2) was amended to allow use of CPA funds to acquire Affordable Housing Units? (See Ch.289, Acts of 2006)

...as of February 7, 2007, Treasurers can extend their tax title payment plans out to two (2) years beyond the 6 month statutory period in MGL Ch. 60, Sec. 65 and that the 25% minimum partial payment has been eliminated? (See Ch.354, Acts of 2006)

(Did you know that...? is a new feature in *The Collector-Treasurer*, contributed by 2nd VP and Legislative Chair Paul Nowicki, intended to help our members keep abreast of changes in law. Please tell us of changes you think other members may not be aware of.)

Education Committee Report

By First V-P Joanne Savignac

So, you thought summer had just begun? Think again! The 37th annual school at UMass, Amherst (August 14-17) is right around the corner. I think you'll be pleased with the courses offered this year, and the many returning presenters. Try to attend at least one day, and consider sending your assistant(s). Your Education Committee has increased the number of required courses and added new courses to the certified track. If you can't find anything to boost your knowledge or pique your interest, well, it's your own fault. The Education Committee works with your ideas and suggestions, so share with us your thoughts on topics (good and bad).

The same applies to the annual Staff School in September. Send your staff, get their input, and return the surveys. Programs are only as good as the subject matter and presentation, so give us your feedback on programs as they happen and send us your suggestions for subjects and speakers.

We are always looking for sites for meetings. If you would like to make a contribution to the Association without too much "heavy lifting", please consider offering your municipal site (town hall, senior center, school annex, etc.). The MCTA provides the speakers and the food; you provide the space and set-up. How about hosting a program during the year – a legislative local briefing session or new Collector/Treasurer day?

Looking ahead in the calendar year, there's the annual fall conference on October 24 at the Log Cabin in Holyoke. This is a beautiful location with great food and service. What could make it better? Your ideas for topics and speakers could make the day a complete winner.

On December 12 we will be at the Hogan Center, Holy Cross College in Worcester, for the annual holiday gathering. It's not too early for the committee to start planning to secure programs for both of these events.

I look forward to the upcoming year as Chairman of the MCTA Education Committee, a dynamic and hard-working committee that influences the success or failure of Association programs.

Have a great July. See you in August at UMass!

Joanne

School Course Records Available on the Internet

Here's how dues-paid members, with their current email address listed in the MCTA database, can get a login name and a password:

Go to www.MassCTA.com and click on "Course Information" at the top of the home page, and then click on "get your login information".

Enter your email address in the box, and then click "Submit".

If the email address you entered is found in the MCTA database, a username and password will be emailed to you.

If the email address is not found in the database, you will get a page saying that the email address wasn't found and giving you the opportunity to try again.

Here's how members can access their course information:

Go to www.MassCTA.com and click on the "Course Information" link on top of the page.

Enter your username and password, then click "List Courses".

If the username and password combination are not found, the user will get a page saying that the information was not found in the database, with a link to try again and the email login form.

If the username and password are correct, the user will get a page listing his or her courses by descending year. If the member has no courses listed in the database, "No courses were found." will appear.

To sort the courses by course number instead of by year taken, click on "Sort by Course Number".

Here's how members can change their username and/or password to something that's easier to remember.

Go to www.MassCTA.com and click on the "Course Information" link on top of the page.

Enter your username and password, and click "Change Username/Password".

If the username and password you enter is not found, the user will get a page saying that it was not found in the database, with a link to try again and the email login form.

If the username and password are correct, the member will see the "new username/password" form.

Enter your desired username and/or password in the appropriate boxes and click "Submit".

A confirmation page will appear, with the email login information form.

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)

Michael Conrad is the new Treasurer/Collector in the City of Worcester, replacing Thomas Zidelis.

Diana H. Asanza is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of North Attleborough, replacing William Moffitt.

Kristen J. Noel is the new Collector in the Town of Hardwick, replacing Lillian Holden.

Cindy Penniman is the new Treasurer of the Gill-Montague Regional School District, replacing Laura Willis.

Bonnie Roberge is the new Collector in the Town of Williamsburg, replacing Teresa Barstow.

John K. Franey is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Carver, replacing Stephen Romano.

Shirley Deane is the new Collector in the Town of Erving, replacing Judith Collins.

Jeff Cannon is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Millis, replacing Joanne Russe.

R. Renee Fernandes-Abbott is the new Treasurer/Collector in the City of New Bedford, replacing Daniel Patten.

Daniel Patten is the new Treasurer in the City of Fall River, replacing Christine Tague.

Ann Vandal is the new Treasurer in the Town of Dracut, replacing James R. Doukaszewicz.

Karen Fink is the new Treasurer in the Town of Otis, replacing Rhonda Winters.

Brian Doheny is the new Treasurer/Collector in the City of Fitchburg, replacing Charlotte Noponen.

Deborah Fox is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Maynard, replacing Clarida Cote.

Peter Mahieu is the new Treasurer in the Town of Williamsburg, replacing Karen Karowski.

Todd K. Hassett is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Sharon, replacing Robert J. Uyttebroek.

June A. Biggs is the new Collector in the Town of West Stockbridge, replacing Eunice Panzeri.

Legislative Committee Report

By *Second V-P Paul Nowicki*

First of all I want to thank the MCTA membership for having the confidence in electing me as your 2nd Vice President, and through osmosis (noun - the gradual, often unconscious, absorption of knowledge or ideas through continual exposure rather than deliberate learning), as your chairman of the Legislative Committee.

The Legislative Committee has openings for at least three (3) new members, two to replace the voids left by newly elected Executive Board members, Ellen Guerin, Treasurer-Collector in Boxford, to fill her unexpired term until December 2007, and M. Ronald Mendes Treasurer-Collector in Wilmington, to fill his unexpired term until December 2008, and to replace Frank Geishecker, Treasurer in Dedham, whose term will expire on December 31, 2007.

Any Certified incumbent Full, Unlimited member may serve as a voting member of this dynamic team! Don't be shy, I'm sure there are quite a few members who qualify who would like to change the doldrums of their regular daily job to take on a new challenge. "The Legislative Committee shall concern itself with all matters of legislative interest to the Association and its members. It shall keep informed of all proposed laws relating to management of public funds and other matters of concern to the Association and its members". Please read the Article VIII of the MCTA By-Laws for further information.

Legislative committee meetings can take place anywhere in the state, so I would suggest the meetings take place at least once in each member's home town. I plan to hold meetings at least quarterly.

In order to get a jump start on new or improved proposals, I am requesting any **new legislative proposals** that any members would like to present to the Committee be forwarded to myself at pnowicki@townofware.com or to the MCTA Executive Director at masscta@aol.com.

I look forward to working together with all MCTA members in the upcoming fiscal year.

Paul

News From Beacon Hill

By MCTA's Registered Agent, **Steve Roche**

As I write this report, we are anxiously awaiting the Governor's approval of **Senate 1691**, legislation filed by Senator Ed Augustus of Worcester to modify the real estate tax bill delinquency notice provisions established by the Municipal Relief Act of 2003. The bill was sent to the Governor on July 19th. We have been working closely with Senator Augustus and the House Revenue Chairman, Representative John Binienda, to pass his bill since it seems very unlikely that we will be able to secure an outright repeal as proposed in our bill, **House 3073**, or achieve another postponement of the 7/1/2007 effective date.

Senate 1691 would exempt communities that have multiple billing and collecting authorities from the requirement that a tax bill include notice of all prior delinquencies that potentially represent a lien against the property. As you know, many communities are unable to comply with these requirements; the reasons range from the cost of procuring software that includes this function to distinct methods of tracking obligations in different departments in city or town hall.

The MCTA has sent a letter to the Governor urging his approval of the bill and requesting that he attach an "Emergency Letter" to the bill upon his approval, making the provisions of Senate 1691 effective immediately.

In other State House news, the General Court recently approved two of Governor Patrick's municipal relief initiatives:

H.4110 would allow communities to join the state's Group Insurance Commission for health care for their employees. The House estimated that cities and towns could save a total of between \$120 million and \$180 million annually by adopting the change.

H.4125 would require local retirement systems that are "underperforming" to turn over their investments to the PRIM Board for management.

House 4110 and House 4125 were both sent to the Governor on July 19th. It is assumed that he will approve both.

Still up in the air are the Administration's other proposals in **House 3749** - the Municipal Partnership Act - to:

- allow local meals and hotel taxes as a local option

- eliminate utility corporation loopholes for telecommunications companies
- permit invitations for bids to be posted online
- provide more flexibility for municipal borrowing

The Governor followed through on his proposal to create a Director of Municipal Affairs position in his Administration when he appointed former Taunton Mayor Bob Nunes to interface with local officials. As many of you know, Deputy Commissioner Nunes joined us for a brief bit at the Sea Crest Conference and will join us at Annual School as the instructor for the "Science of Politics" class.

I have known Bob for many years, since our days working together in the State Secretary's Office back in the 1980s. I look forward to working with him in his new role and appreciate his interest in the MCTA's issues.

In closing, since this is the last time that Nils Nordberg has to nag me for my newsletter report, I want to state again what a great job he has done for the MCTA. It has been very helpful for me to have a former state legislator and state official to confer with on legislative matters. Thanks, Nils, and enjoy the next phase of your life with your family.

I want to add that I look forward to working with Mike Hanlon, the incoming Executive Director, as I know him from his work in the State Treasurer's office.

Enjoy your summer, folks, I'll see you at the Annual School at UMass.

NOTE: The text for the above-referenced bills and budgets can be found from the MCTA web site www.MassCTA.com by clicking on "Links" and then on "Legislation".

Steve

Last Call For Suggestions For New Legislation For 2008 MCTA Support

At the General Assembly on opening day of Annual School, Tuesday, August 14, members will have an opportunity to consider new proposals for legislation to be supported by the Association this coming Legislative year.

If you have any suggestions for new proposals, please send them to Nils at the MCTA office at MassCTA@aol.com or Legislative Committee Chair Paul Nowicki at pnowicki@townofware.com