



# APPRAISING THE PLAINS

of Kansas



A Publication of the Kansas County Appraisers Association

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**Mob Bust.** Even though some of the members of the notorious Appraisal Mob were incognito, they were captured while scouting out the Tyler Gang at The Mob Museum in Las Vegas. *Back row (l-r):* Rob and Barb Esfeld, RMA, Barton County; Connie Lawrence, RMA, Coffey County; and Cindy Magill, RMA, Sumner County. *Front row:* Lisa Ree, RMA, Ellis County; and Lori Reedy, AAS, RMA, Cowley County. Find more highlights from the IAAO conference on pages 6–7.

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## Kenton's Korner

Kenton Lyon, RMA  
Russell & Osborne County Appraiser  
2017 KCAA President

*Where am I, how did I get here, and where am I going?*

That's a question I've asked myself a lot recently. Re-inspection in the land of OZ was and continues to be problematic, in large part due to my unfamiliarity with Osborne County. But that difficulty is compounded by the road signs as pictured. Where we are, especially as it relates to where we are going, is essential information.

The majority of us came into this profession through differing circumstances. Yet those circumstances yielded the same outcome. We're employed as mass appraisers. Those circumstances didn't just "happen." Others believed in us, helped us, even as we helped ourselves. While that is true, it's also true that, consciously or not, we threw up roadblocks, got confused, and got disoriented on our career journey. Ultimately we survived, and now here we are hard at work in our offices. We may not know much, but we do at last know where we are.

David Harper did a nice job at Conference looking back at our history. KCAA is uniquely positioned to help others navigate their own path leading to our office. Barb Konrade will be taking over as your KCAA President and is working with PVD to help devise support and mentoring for our replacements.

So, where are we going? As we begin yet another round of substantial compliance, I believe that much of our methodology is based on a world that existed 25 or 30 years ago.

For example, Kansas had no ethanol plants or wind farms at reappraisal. There are today no guides for assisting in the valuation of those properties. No accredited coursework exists that addresses the valuation of these prop-



**Our road signs will be hard to read. We may not know where exactly we are regarding a particular issue. That is where this organization excels relative to our peer associations.**

erties. We're pretty much on our own. And we don't even know for sure what is taxable, when it is taxable or if and when it is exempt.

We do get annual guides for personal property, oil and gas, and we purchase guides for valuing boats, trucks and other vehicles. The grain elevator guide is in its 3rd or 4th iteration complete with a worksheet that must be completed to arrive at a gross value entry. I'm sorry, but there has to be a better way. No single type of

property has had so much time, money, and energy expended on it. Yet we fall short on accurately listing and valuing grain elevators. Orion has the potential, and should be superior to gross value entry. Our subsidized housing guide is the original, from back when Section 8 ruled the day.

Many different types of programs continue to evolve with varying types of property qualifying, and we've got a single tool in our box. The same could be said for feedlots.

Thirty years ago, counter checks were on the counter in nearly every grocery store and in the Treasurer's Office. Banks employed lots of people doing various jobs. We were taught that if we thought it was an "average" bank it ought to be "good." It was impossible to get enough value on banks.

Today those banks are shells of what they once were. Obtaining cash money in one of my county seats means going down to the local convenience store. There isn't an ATM located in any bank in the county. Lending decisions are no longer made at home; rates, terms and conditions are all determined by a handful of regional lenders. But we must gather cap rate data locally from folks who've done nothing but "package" commercial loans for the regional lenders for years. They don't know the terms, conditions, and loan rates until they are provided by the regional bank for the specific project, to the specified borrower.

Finally, there is land valuation. "Beneath it all lays the land," therefore it must be valued accurately. For most of us, though, a \$500 vacant lot 25 years ago is in all likelihood a \$500 lot today. Sometimes there are sales; usually there are none. But we will once again drag out the templates, attempt sophisticated statistical analysis, and justify our land values based on 1 part land to 50 parts improvement value.

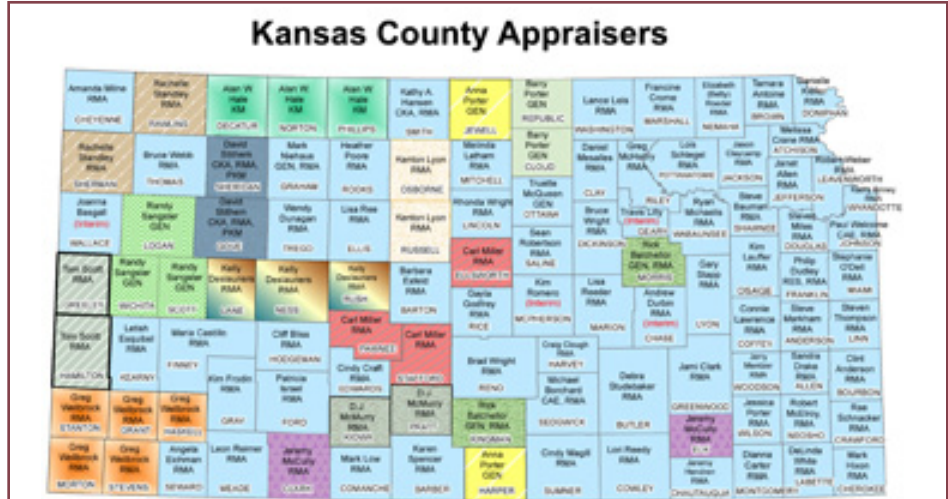
Declining populations have led to declining demand for vacant lots in almost direct proportion to whatever market increases might otherwise ex-

**continued on next page**

ist. K-State Ag Statistics generates our use valuation for over 65 million acres of farmland in this state. They also publish median ag market values for dryland, grass, and irrigated land by county. Their data comes directly from PVD, who gets it from us. One would hope that those numbers are good, and ought to be used for our Ag Market values. That math has been done.

The solutions to these issues and more lie with us. As we journey into 2018, the only certainty is change. New laws will be written by the Legislature, PVD will clarify those statutes with memos and directives, BOTA will interpret those statutes, and we will be expected to understand and implement it all. Our road signs will be hard to read. We may not know where exactly we are regarding a particular issue. That is where this organization excels relative to our peer associations.

We were all designed to do more, to think creatively, and to act on a larger stage than we may choose to believe. Doing more, doing it better, thinking and acting outside of the box is easier when we work together. If you've not gotten involved in the Association, please let someone know, either in your regional association or the chair of one of our committees. When you're asked to participate, it's because your particular skill set is needed. We survive because, borne of necessity, we find the solutions, we support one another, and we continue to advocate for better ways of doing our work. Our structure works well because it truly is driven from the bottom up. You are the lowest common denominator within KCAA, and therein our strength and our future.



## County Appraiser Changes & Interims

Information was provided by David Harper, former PVD Director.

### Appraisers with new counties or newly appointed appraisers:

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Tami Antione, RMA:      | Brown County                                  |
| Daniel Mesalles:        | Clay County                                   |
| Lori Reedy, RMA:        | Cowley County                                 |
| Anna Porter:            | Harper County and also retained Jewell County |
| Lisa Reeder, RMA:       | Marion County                                 |
| Raelane Schnacker, RMA: | Crawford County, Acting PVD staff appointment |
| Rachelle Stanley:       | Rawlins County & Sherman County               |
| Wendy Dunagan:          | Trego County                                  |
| Francine Crome:         | Marshall County                               |

### Interim Appointments

Interim appointments are for a period not to exceed six months.

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Andrew Durbin:     | Chase County      |
| Travis Lilly:      | Geary County      |
| Kim Romero:        | McPherson County  |
| Susan Thompson:    | Montgomery County |
| Joanna Basqall:    | Wallace County    |
| Beverly Finlayson: | Washington County |



Submitted by Lisa Ree, RMA, Ellis County

The following showed up on a Google county appraiser search. The article is from the Parson's Sun.

### Sept. 15, 1987

Field data collectors for the reappraisal of Labette County property were scheduled to begin work in Parsons in late September. Data was being collected in Erie, and collectors were scheduled to travel to Chanute before entering Labette County, where work would probably begin in Parsons, Labette County Appraiser Don Harris said. The reappraisal process was mandated by the Kansas Legislature and had to be completed by Jan. 1, 1989. About 16,000 pieces of property in Labette County and 12,500 in Neosho County were to be appraised.



## Brenner Appointed to Advisory Committee

By Lisa Ree, RMA,  
Ellis County

KCAA's Executive Secretary Cindy Brenner was recently appointed by Governor Brownback to the Kansas Advisory Committee for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The committee will provide advice and counsel to the secretary and staff of Department for Children and Families (DCF) regarding issues of Kansans who are blind or visually impaired. Topics include matters affecting policies, programs, priorities as well as a long-term, strategic direction for the state's services.

"I hope I can help others like [my daughter] Molly," Cindy said. Congratulations, Cindy!



## Big Box Like I Have Not Seen...

By Rick Stuart, CAE, CDEI

Thank you, Stephen Hacken, assessor for Winona County, Minn. I was not aware that the Big Box Dark Store Theory was a result of assessor conspiracies until he sent me the article from Bloomberg BNA, "The Dark Store Theory and Other Lies the Government Told." It discusses "the dark stores theory and why using vacant stores in property valuation is an acceptable appraisal practice." I think it will make your heart pump a little faster. Read the article at <https://www.bna.com/dark-store-theory-n73014462929/>.

## A Bit of Kansas Appraiser History: 1942

Submitted by Barry Porter, Republic County

We found this while cleaning out the office. I thought it might be of interest to the county appraiser's office. It is a document to county assessors from the State Commission of Revenue and Taxation during the time of WWII, titled "Suggestions to County Assessors Relative to Assessment of Property 1942." The cover page from the 18-page document is shown below. You can see the entire document on the KCAA website: <http://www.kscaa.net/kcaa/WW2Assessors.pdf>

To the County Assessors:

The local assessor is the most important official in the administration and application of the ad valorem tax and his functions or duties exceed in importance those of any other official, or group of officials. This is true because the work of the assessor is primary and the work of others is either doing that which the assessor has failed to do or perfecting that which he has initiated. If equality is not obtained among the taxpayers in the assessment of property in the first instance by the deputy assessors, it will thereafter be impossible to more than approximate equality as Boards of Equalization have only a brief time within which to perform their work.

This year, in order to finance our war efforts in the present National emergency, all taxpayers will be called upon to pay additional Federal taxes. Because of this increased tax burden and the unsettled conditions that accompany this emergency, you are faced with a serious responsibility. You must make every effort to get all taxable property on the tax rolls to bear its full share of the tax burden. Likewise, it is your duty to see that no class of property bears more than its full share of the tax burden.

This being the year in which real estate is assessed, you have an added responsibility. This task is all the more important because the values fixed by you, with few exceptions, will remain the same for four years. Arriving at the proper valuation will be difficult in many cases because of the changed business conditions resulting from the present National emergency. The location of defense industries will create in many localities of our State problems in arriving at the value of property also, in determining the exempt status of both real and personal property. However, if you will review the various Kansas statutes relating to assessments, the correction of irregularities and equalization and apply your best judgment, you should have little trouble in arriving at a proper decision.

You are assured the fullest cooperation on the part of the State Commission of Revenue and Taxation in the solution of any serious problems confronting you.



"Arriving at the proper valuation will be difficult in many cases because of the changed business conditions resulting from the present National emergency."



Don't miss the 42nd Annual KAC Conference & Exhibition, November 14–16 at the Sheraton Overland Park. Find details and registration at <http://www.kansascounties.org>

KCAA will meet Thursday morning, November 16. Here is our agenda:

8:00 – 8:30 a.m.

**KCAA Business Meeting**

- Financial Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Audit Report
- Legislative Report
- Installation of Officers
- 2017 Budget
- 2017 Committee Appointments

8:30 - 9:30 a.m. **PVD**

9:30 - 9:45 a.m. **Break**

9:45 - 11:00 a.m. **PVD**

11:00 – 12:00 p.m.

**Committee Meetings & Executive Board Meeting**

**IAAO Candidates**

Below are the candidates seeking a position on the IAAO Executive Board. The election is in November.

**President-Elect**

Tim Boncoskey, Arizona

**Vice President**

John C. Isbell, AAS, Tennessee  
 Anthony "Sackey" Kweku, New York  
 Amy Rasmussen, RES, AAS, Iowa

**Region 1 Board**

Jeffrey T. Holsapple, CAE, RES, Kan.  
 Scott K. Teruya, AAS, Hawaii

**Region 2 Board**

Rebecca L. Malmquist, CAE, Minn.  
 Donna VanderVries, CAE, AAS, Mich.

**Region 3 Board**

David B. Baker, PPS, North Carolina  
 Bryan Kinsey, AAS, Tennessee



**IAAO Member News**

Thanks for your support of the IAAO!

**New member(s):** Michelle Adkins, Anna Burson, Nancy Delgado-Hernandez and Grant Schmidt, of Sedgwick Co.; Shana Casner, Michelle Clark, RMA, Stephen Conner, Anthony Fandel, Eric Serrano, Cody Sosna, Vincent Tobin, Mary Carter and Michelle Sipes, of Johnson Co.; Alicia Baumfalk, Rawlins Co.; and Cara Mays, Coffey Co.

**5 years:** DeLinda White, RMA, Labette Co.; and Jack Manion, RES, AAS, RMA, Sedgwick Co.

**10 years:** Shelly Borland, Douglas Co.

**15 years:** Katherine Briney-Wagner, RMA, Wyandotte Co.; Glenda Mills, RMA, Harvey Co.; and Carol Neihardt, Tyler Technologies (Eudora).

**20 years:** Karen Spencer, RMA, Barber Co.; and Jamie Clark, RMA, Greenwood Co.

**25-years:** Terry Ballard, Rawlins & Sherman Cos.; and James Shontz, PVD.

**35 years:** Marion Johnson, CAE, TEAM Consulting.

**50 years:** Robert Taggart, MAI, CAE, Taggart & Associates (Topeka).



**KCAA Education Calendar**

Wrap up 2017 with another KCAA appraiser ed class! On December 4–8, KCAA offers **IAAO 311, Residential Modeling** in Wichita. For more information or to register, go to the KCAA website <http://www.kscAA.net/education/education-information/>.

**Honoring the Past ... Educating the Future**

**Historic Sites of Waterville**

Waterville, in Marshall County, was founded in 1867 as the western end of the Atchison & Pike's Peak Railroad. Cowboys on the Chisholm Trail drove cattle to the railroad terminus. Though it began as a rough cow town, Waterville is known today for its many Victorian homes and its community support for performances in the Opera House, restoration of the Weaver Hotel, and preservation of the Central Branch railroad track. Learn more about this charming community at <http://bit.ly/2hoe9rh>



Weaver Hotel (1905) National Register of Historic Places. Restored and re-opened as a hotel and tourism center, with meeting rooms and a gift shop, Fancy T's & More.

.....  
*This series presents items of interest in Kansas counties such as landmarks, structures, events, architecture, etc.—but only with your help! Every county has something of interest. Look around and send the info and photos to Rick Stuart at [rstuart17@cox.net](mailto:rstuart17@cox.net).*

**There's Still Time to Register!**

**The KS Orion Users Conference**

**October 26-27, 2017 | Wichita**

Don't miss this 2-day conference designed specifically for Kansas Orion users. Find the program agenda and registration info at <http://www.kscAA.net/conferences/>



Good attendance at IAAO's management and personal development session on women in leadership roles

### IAAO Conference

## Ladies Who Lead in the Assessment Industry

By Barbara Esfeld, RMA, Barton County

While attending the 2017 IAAO Conference in Las Vegas, I had the opportunity to attend several sessions. One of the sessions was a panel discussion given by several empowering women. This panel consisted of incoming IAAO President Dorothy Jacks, AAS, from Florida; Rebecca Malmquist, CAE, SAMA, from Minneapolis; Carol Kuehn, IAAO past president from Wisconsin; Amy Vermillion from Iowa; and Amy Rasmussen, RES, AAS, ICAA, from Iowa.

This session was particularly interesting to me as changes in our industry are rapidly taking place as the U40's, a term I learned in Vegas for people who are under 40 (*not me*), are or will soon be leading the assessment world.

### Effective Leadership

■ Effective leaders like to keep in mind the quote: by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry: "A goal without a plan is just a wish."

■ As ladies who lead, we should all seek to obtain strong, independent mentors that we can go to for wise advice. Looking back some 20-plus years ago, some of my mentors were Carol Neihardt, who calmed me down by telling me we were not performing brain surgery; and Mark Neihaus, who was so composed and always willing to

help. I realize I had many mentors, both male and female, that helped along the way.

■ Effective leaders are very engaging and know how to lead people where you want them to go. Role models are very important. Surround yourself with people who lift you up.

■ Effective leaders realize school is never out. On occasion we find we all must attend the Hokey Pokey Clinic and turn ourselves around. Remember to ask questions and reach outside of your own office for help as needed.

■ Some women tend to be shy. It is important to be somewhat thick-skinned and seize an opportunity when one arises.

■ A strength that women do have is the ability to think long term. At times it is helpful to know what the answer should be and work backwards.

■ To bring things to a close: one of the most important things you can do is network outside of your office by becoming involved in your community. It is helpful to belong to service clubs, such as Kiwanis, Rotary, and Optimist etc., or donate your time to make a difference. Giving to others is something you will not regret.



### IAAO Conference

## Customer Service—Santa Fe Style

Lisa Ree, RMA, Ellis County

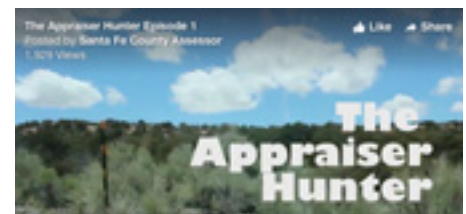
At the 2016 IAAO Conference, the Santa Fe County Assessor's Office was awarded the Public Information Program Award. After attending their 2017 Conference session titled "The Importance of Customer Service and Information Technology," it was obvious why they received the recognition.

When the current assessor, Gus Martinez, took office in 2015, the office was known as being confrontational and having poor office morale. His main priority quickly became customer service. Using the idea that the employees are also customers, they promoted customer service through staff accountability. Giving employees a sense of responsibility and pride and ownership helped change the internal attitude and build relationships within their county.

Customers are given the opportunity to rate staff using the online tool Survey Monkey. Sample questions include: Did the staff smile? Did they greet you? Were they knowledgeable?

Outreach meetings are held throughout the county with the purpose of informing the public of the county

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Check out Santa Fe County assessor's office video, "The Appraiser Hunter" at

[https://www.santafecountynm.gov/assessor/informational\\_videos](https://www.santafecountynm.gov/assessor/informational_videos)

## Customer Service, continued

assessor's roles and responsibilities. Assistance is offered at these meeting regarding the valuation protest process and the benefits and exemptions the taxpayer may qualify for. Traditional means of communication, such as newspaper and radio ads, are also utilized to explain these as well as the notice of value. The air waves are also used for live broadcasts.

Their website includes a parcel search, protest filing, business personal property filing, tax estimator, and live chat. Their goal is to make life easier for the public using both traditional means and technology.

Their online Live Chat has been positively received. With this option, staff can give the public instant feedback and guidance; send attachments, links, pdf files, and videos. It not only gives good customer service but keeps employees engaged and knowledgeable.

Implementing changes such as these and more has not only improved the public's perception of the assessor's office but has increased staff morale, trust, and productivity.

Check out their website at: <https://www.santafecountynm.gov/assessor>. Be sure to check out their informational videos, especially the "Appraiser Hunter" video. You'll be inspired.

### IAAO Conference

## The Big Stage

By Rick Stuart, CAE, CDEI, TEAM Consulting

I remember the experience and tell new designees you always want to walk across the stage at the Annual IAAO Conference and receive your professional designation in front of your friends and peers. It is the highlight of becoming designated.

It was great at the conference to see two of ours cross the stage. Although we have previously recognized them in the newsletter, it is worth saying congratulations again to Melanie Berry, RES, and Ryan Janzen, CAE.



### IAAO Conference

## Managing Change

By Lisa Ree, RMA, Ellis County

We've all endured, encouraged, exercised change, particularly if you survived the Orion conversion era. We all know that time waits for no one, that time brings change, and that change is constant. Who would agree that change is easy to process as long as it is required of someone else? A session at the IAAO conference dealt with managing change for you, your employees and your organization.

The speaker used a personal illustration of how change occurs. Growing up, he would often frequent his great-grandmother or grandmother's homes for his favorite breakfast, which included biscuits. His great-grandmother would make biscuits from scratch. She purchased flour in bulk, never measured her ingredients, molded the biscuits by hand and baked them in a square cast-iron skillet. She also made home-made simple syrup to compliment the biscuits.

If he had breakfast at his grandmother's, she would also make biscuits for him but took a few shortcuts. She used self-rising flour, shaped them with a biscuit cutter, and baked them in a round cast-iron skillet. She provided store-bought corn syrup.

His mother was a single, working mom, so she would provide him with frozen biscuits and Aunt Jemima syrup. He had to cook them himself and was told not to burn down the house. As his older brothers became more responsible for him, he was given canister-style biscuits to bake. He was fine with the change to his favorite breakfast, as long as it included biscuits.

Now, fast-forward to married life.

The first breakfast his wife prepared for him involved a single-serving container of cereal and her saying that he will find a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow before she would make him biscuits. His point was that the changes he experienced in his family demonstrate that change happens to all of us in many ways.

The three ways discussed to approach change reminded me when Orion was first introduced to the counties:

1. Through power. There were counties that jumped on the band wagon immediately and became beta counties. There were others that had no desire to switch to Orion and wanted to be one of the last to convert. But we all knew it was inevitable that we would be required to retire the old Legacy system and embrace Orion.

2. Through reason. Thanks to PVD and the beta counties, major issues and concerns were noted and resolved. It took a team of state, county and Tyler staff to "reason" through the issues to solve them.

3. Through knowledge/education. The switch to the new CAMA system was made smoother because of the education received, beginning with an Intro to Orion course. Knowledge derived from fellow county appraisers and staff helped ease the transition.

Does anybody really like to change their ways just because they are told they have to? Using reason to work through issues and solutions, involving and motivating others in a solution, and providing performance feedback can ease the process.

## PVD's Harper New Director of Vehicles



PVD Director  
David Harper,  
AAS, RMA

In August, Revenue Secretary Sam Williams announced David Harper will replace Director of Vehicles Lisa Kaspar after she retires in September.

Director Harper currently serves as Director of Property Valuation in the Department of Revenue, and will retain that job in addition to his new role as Director of Vehicles. He will take over as director of vehicles on September 9.

Combining leadership roles will promote cross-team collaboration and reduce duplication of efforts, Secretary Williams said.

"We are reforming this agency to make it more accessible to Kansans and encourage efficiency in all areas," Secretary Williams said. "I'm deeply thankful for the terrific job that Lisa has done to grow customer satisfaction within the Division of Vehicles

and I know David is going to continue building on that with the broad range of management skills he brings to our agency."

Before coming to the Department in 2007, Harper worked for 25 years in the appraisal and property tax administration field. He has a proven track record with strategic planning that helps ensure both Kansas law and department policy are followed. He also has a long history of developing positive working relationships with staff, taxpayers, stakeholders, and government officials.

"Anyone who is familiar with the Division of Vehicles knows that Lisa has made incredible improvements in communication and customer service," Director Harper said. "I look forward to continuing that effort to make our services accessible and user-friendly."

Director Kaspar has served as Director of Vehicles for four years, culminating a 35 year career at the department which spanned multiple roles and leadership positions. She's known

across the state as a leader whose style is friendly and cooperative. When she took over the Division of Vehicles, she implemented twice yearly stakeholder meetings that brought together industry officials that have ties with the division in any way, such as law enforcement, transportation leaders, organ donation representatives, and the banking industry, among many others. The meetings facilitated communication into and out of the Division of Vehicles, making a significant impact on the processes of the division and collaboration with partners

"One of the parts of my work at Revenue that I'm most proud of is the way we made dramatic improvements to customer service and the rate at which we answer phone calls," Director Kaspar said. "We reorganized, and implemented teamwork with an emphasis on consistency and it's made a big difference in our service to Kansans." Director Harper plans to continue the bi-annual stakeholder meetings.



## Land Fees Going Up for Cabin Owners at Reservoirs

By Mary Clarkin. Posted July 13, 2017 at 6:20 PM. Reprinted with Permission from Hutchinson News. Submitted by Lisa Ree, RMA, Ellis County

Former state Sen. Ralph Ostmeier, R-Grinnell, says he shouldn't have walked out of a June 16 forum in Hays about higher land charges planned for cabin owners at Cedar Bluff Reservoir. But he was exasperated.

"This is like socialism," he said in a phone interview Thursday. He's a Cedar Bluff cabin owner who can expect the annual charge on the government land on which his cabin stands to be roughly 700 percent or more higher within five years.

"We get no services from them," Ostmeier said of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The water level in Cedar Bluff—a federal reservoir in a state-managed park—is unstable, he said. Ostmeier's preference would be to personally own the land.

However, that would require an act of Congress, and he's not anticipating any immediate legislation.

**New Lease.** At the end of May, the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism's master lease agreement with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation expired after 25 years. A new 25-year lease was signed. The expiration of the lease agreement triggered a fresh look at permit fees charged to cabin owners at the three Bureau of Reclamation reservoirs with private dwellings.

Annual permit fees have been about \$274 a year for a cabin lot at Cedar Bluff in Trego County, Webster in Rooks County, and Lovewell in Jewell County. Cabin owners pay property taxes on the structures, but there are no

property taxes on the land, according to the appraiser's office in Trego County.

New rates were not written into the new agreement, but the agreement expects Wildlife, Parks and Tourism to collect permit fees from owners of private cabins or mobile homes that reflect fair market value.

In early 2017, a California-based review appraiser with the U.S. Department of Interior performed a market rent analysis to update the fees assessed at Cedar Bluff, Webster and Lovewell. "We attempted to find an appraiser in state to do that," said Steve Adams, the Topeka-based chief of planning for Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. They either could not find one interested or one willing to do it at a reasonable price, he said.



## Land Fees, continued

The appraiser collected online data and also made calls for information on the city lakes at Anthony and Eureka, and on Marion County Lake. The study identified certain lots at the three state parks—Cedar Bluff, Webster and Lovewell—that were typical lots.

In the appraiser's opinion, the annual market rent for a typical Cedar Bluff South Shore cabin lot, based on a January 2017 valuation, should be \$2,200; for a typical North Shore cabin lot, \$2,450; and for a South Shore club lot, \$2,500. At Webster, in his opinion, the annual market rent for a typical cabin lot should be \$2,200 and for a club lot, \$2,500. At Lovewell, he suggested \$1,250 for the typical mobile home space; \$2,500 for a typical cabin lot; and \$2,900 for a typical club lot.

"They're going to be putting cabins up for sale," Ostmeier predicted.

**Phased-in.** No new fees have been adopted yet for the 104 lots at Cedar Bluff, eight lots at Webster and 62 cabin lots plus 55 mobile home sites at Lovewell. Informational forums were conducted at or near each of the three state parks in June. A proposed regulation to establish fee ranges will come before the Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission three times before there is a vote to adopt.

It was discussed at a prior commission meeting, and it is on the agenda for the commission's 1 p.m. Aug. 10 meeting at Cheney State Park. It also will appear on the agenda for the commission's 1 p.m. Oct. 19 meeting at the Bryce Conference Center in Scott City. Adams said the plan is to phase-in higher rates.

The first year, he said, the charge would be 20 percent of the new rate, the following year, 40 percent, then 60 percent, 80 percent and finally 100 percent. To keep rates up-to-date, they would be adjusted to the Consumer Price Index every five years. "We do understand there is a significant increase," Adams said. "We very intentionally wanted to phase it in," he said. The revenue from the lots will stay with those state parks, he said.

## Robertson Prepares for 29th Consecutive Kansas Amateur

By Larry Moritz, Salina Journal, July 12, 2017. Reprinted with permission

Submitted by Lisa Ree, RMA, Ellis County



Sean Robertson  
Saline County  
Appraiser

For his entire adult life, 45-year old Sean Robertson has reserved the third week of July for golf, often with no guarantee that there will be a place for him to play. Robertson will compete in the 107th Kansas Amateur next week at Kansas City Country Club, marking the 29th consecutive year he has participated in the state's top individual golf tournament.

The streak is impressive not only for its length, but the fact that in 22 of the 29 years, Robertson has had to first make the cut in a one-day, 18-hole qualifying tournament in order to earn a spot in the Amateur.

This year he earned a rare exemption—his third in 29 years—for winning the masters division of the High Plains Amateur. There were another four years when the tournament was held at two sites and no qualifying was required.

Robertson, the Saline County appraiser, has also had remarkable success at the local level. When he won the Saline County Four Ball last month with partner Patrick Newell, it was his 25th overall county title since 1991.

Robertson took some time this week to talk about his Amateur streak, his success in county tournaments and what he looks forward to as he approaches senior status in the golf world.

**Would you share a little of your**

**background in the sport? How did you get your start in golf?**

Growing up I was more of a baseball player than anything. My grandfather was a very good senior player in the state and was a member of Prairie Dunes, so Prairie Dunes was the first golf course I ever played.

The next golf course I played was Salina Municipal and it seemed really, really easy compared to what I played before. It was amazing to me that there was a golf course where you really couldn't lose golf balls.

I played a few summer tournaments starting when I was 13, but once I got into high school I actually played tennis my freshman year and was (Salina) South's No. 2 singles player. At the time I was really small, short and skinny. I was 5-2 and 95 pounds as a freshman and just got killed in most matches I played.

I still remember opening the newspaper that year and the 5A regional golf tournament was at the Muni. I saw what scores it took to get to state and I thought I could do that right now. That was the end of my tennis career.

**So you went from playing tennis as a high school freshman to earning an NCAA Division I golf scholarship three years later?**

My senior year was a very good year. I won the I-70 League meet, finished second in regional and second at state. At that time I planned to play golf at Butler County but Dick Renfro made a phone call to the golf coach at K-State and said if he had a spot, he should check out this kid from Salina. I changed my mind in July about going to Butler County and went to K-State instead. One of the things I'm most proud of in my time golfing is in 1993 we were the first K-State team to ever make the NCAA Tournament. And we

continued on next page

**Robertson, continued**

did it with all five players being from Kansas.

**You won your first County tournament in 1991 while still in college and last month won your 25th title. When you think of your success at the local level, how to do you put that into perspective?**

When I was playing in college and playing Saline County tournaments in the summer, those county tournaments seemed more like practice to get ready for the college season. The wins came easier but I'm sure it had to do with being able to take the time to practice and play.

At the time it seemed like winning a county tournament was expected. I probably didn't appreciate it at the time. Now, looking back and as the wins get fewer and farther between in time, those mean a lot more to me now.

**Are there any of those county titles that you are particularly proud of?**

The Medal tournaments probably mean more. Number one, they are individual tournaments and you can't rely on anything from a partner. Then they all take place on each of the three courses and that requires something different from your golf game each day.

It is extremely difficult to play well for three consecutive days on three different types of golf courses.

**For the last several years your streak of consecutive Amateur appearances has been included as a tournament record on the KGA's website. What does that streak, which reaches 29 years next week, mean to you?**

It's amazing to me that most of the people I play with in the Amateur recently were not born when I played in my first. I believe the two guys I'm paired with next week, one is 18 and the other is 22.

It just means to me that I have seen every good player in the state for over a quarter century and played with most of them. And I have played the Amateur at every big name Kansas course there is.

I hope it doesn't end. I know that the

field in general keeps getting younger and it gets more difficult to qualify every year. But if the streak does end, I have no doubt that I will try again the year after that.

**Were there times when life potentially got in the way and you thought about sitting about a year?**

I took a job with the county and started June 1 of 2002. I talked with the HR director and said that even if I had to take unpaid leave, I had to be off the third week of July and I did take a week of unpaid leave that year. I just know that I need to save up some vacation time for the third week of July every year.

There have been a couple of times where it has crossed my mind not to play. The most recent example was when the tournament was at Hallbrook in 2011. I had played that course before and did not like it all.

I really considered not playing, but in the end I did decide to play. I qualified for it and then played as well there in the two rounds of stroke play than I did at any other tournament.

**What are the biggest differences in your game now and when you were coming out of college back in 1994?**

Coming out of college I was always a very good chipper and putter. Now I have moments where I am still good at my short game, but there are moments where I am really bad. I think that has to do with the time spent practicing or the lack of time practicing as you get a little older.

Over a number of years and decades there starts to be this mental scar tissue that builds up from bad shots you've hit in the past. It's human nature that the bad shots are remembered more than the good ones.

Another difference, not only in my game but the game of golf in general, is that I hit the ball longer now than I ever have in my entire life. But the gap between my length and the length of the longest players is getting wider and wider.

**What does the future look like for you?**

My goal in the next few years is to

**Sean Robertson**

**Position:** Saline County appraiser

**Age:** 45

**Education:** Salina South, Kansas State University graduate.

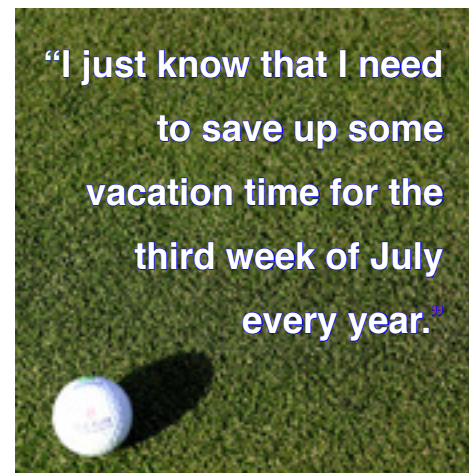
**Career highlights:** 29 consecutive Kansas Amateur appearances; 25 Saline County golf titles, including seven County Medal championships, six in County Four Ball and six in County Match Play; eight times named County Golfer of the Year; four-time champion in the KGA High Plains Amateur, masters division.

play more golf. I'll be 46 next month and I'm actually looking forward to turning 50 and being able to play in as many senior state tournaments as I possibly can.

Look at (Salinan) Greg Goode. He is probably the best senior player in the state right now. I plan to spend a little more time practicing over the next couple of years in order to be one of the better senior players when I do turn 50.

**Do you have a trophy case at home or where do you store all those awards?**

I do have a trophy case where I display the more important ones. Rightly or wrongly, I have two totes in the basement where I keep some of the less important ones.





■ *www.builderonline.com*, June 29, 2017. "The U.S. median home price was \$253,000 in the second quarter of 2017, the least affordable level since third quarter 2008, a nearly nine-year low in affordability, according to ATTOM Data Solutions. The national home affordability index was 100 in the second quarter of 2017 and meaning the share of average wages needed to buy a median-priced home nationwide was on par with its historic average. The index was at 86 in 2008." <http://bit.ly/2sZm2sv>

■ Kaja Whitehouse, *www.nypost.com*, June 29, 2017. Submitted by Brad Eldridge, MAI. "The federal government won a valuable prize in the war on terror Thursday — full ownership of one of Manhattan's hottest properties: 650 Fifth Ave., where Nike just signed a 15-year lease worth an estimated \$700 million. The 36-story tower, worth an estimated \$800 million, was awarded to the government after a Manhattan federal jury found that it was actually controlled by Iran in violation of US sanctions." <http://nyp.st/2s6Xtaj>

■ *www.builderonline.com*, July 5, 2017. **Editor's Note:** The video on the website listed below is pretty cool. "In 2014, German engineer-

ing conglomerate ThyssenKrupp unveiled its concept for a cable-free, multi-directional elevator. Over the past few years the company has been constructing a 246-m (807-ft) high test tower and refining the technology that would allow multiple cars to move vertically and horizontally in a single shaft using a magnet-based drive system, and it's finally worked." <http://bit.ly/2tKGBu1>

■ Cathie Ericson, *www.realtor.com*, July 6, 2017. **Editor's Note:** Interesting article titled "9 things buyers regret overlooking in a home: Will you miss them too?"

<http://bit.ly/2tPOpu7>

■ John Egan, *www.nreionline.com*, June 20, 2017. "Does the growing legalization of recreational and medical marijuana represent a pot of gold for industrial real estate? It could, experts say, but only if investors quickly and carefully pounce on opportunities." **Editor's Note:** Never in most of our wildest dream would we have thought this would be part of a supply and demand discussion. This is an interesting article. <http://bit.ly/2v38VFE>

■ Kenneth Harney, *Miami Herald*, July 20, 2017. "A federal district court has levied nearly \$11 million in fines and damages against Quicken Loans for home owners who the court said were victims of an alleged appraisal tampering scheme by the company during the housing boom and bust years in West Virginia, reports."

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■ Jenny Xie, *www.curbed.com*, June 29, 2017. "Three years in the making, the Austrian Company Ecolit house is a modular, flat-packed design built from thermal-insulated panels and eco-friendly materials. The exterior looks something like a small, modern barn with a gabled roof, slanted side walls, covered deck, and solar roof system that the company claims can generate both electricity and hot water. Renderings for the interior show an open-plan living and dining area, with a bedroom on the ground level and another in the mezzanine." <http://bit.ly/2urqf71>



*Rick Stuart, CAE, is a senior consultant with TEAM Consulting LLC and lives in Topeka, Kan. Email: [rstuart17@cox.net](mailto:rstuart17@cox.net).*

**REAL ESTATE NOTES, continued**  
<http://bit.ly/2uFYMRC>

■ *Forbes*, July 20, 2017. "Foreign investment in U.S. residential real estate has reached a new high in the twelve-month period between April 2016 and March 2017. Foreign buyers and recent immigrants purchased \$153 billion in residential property over this span, a 49% increase over 2016's annual sales volume (\$102.6 billion) and a new survey high over 2015's \$103.9 billion." <http://bit.ly/2uGqE7U>

■ Ryan Dezember and Laura Kusisto, *www.wsj.com*, July 22, 2017. "Four big companies have bought nearly 700 single-family homes in Spring Hill, Tenn. A new breed of homeowners has arrived in this middle-class suburb of Nashville and in many other communities around the country: big investment firms in the business of offering single-family homes for rent. Their appearance has shaken up sales and rental markets and, in some neighborhoods, sparked rent increases." <http://on.wsj.com/2vli31W>

■ *www.gobankingrates.com*, July 24, 2017. "GoBankingRates is out with a study, and a calculator, that will tell folks who live in various places whether it's better to rent than own. To find out where it makes more sense to rent or buy a home, GOBankingRates once again surveyed the cost of renting versus owning a home in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Since conducting a similar survey in 2016, we found that the number of places where it's more expensive to own than rent has increased from nine to 11 — this includes a few states where the price difference is minimal." <http://bit.ly/2uVeulZ>

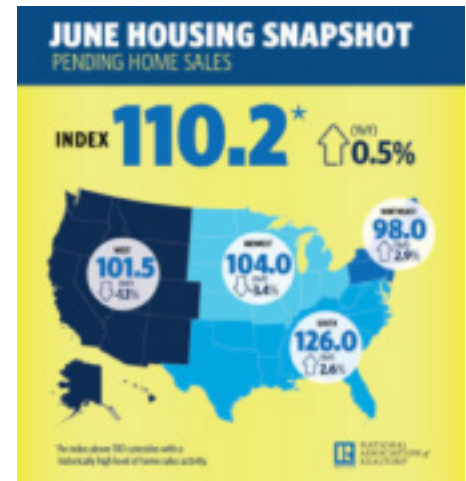
■ Benjamin Parkin & David

George-Cosh, *www.wsj.com*, July 23, 2017. "Wildfires in Canada are pushing up the price of lumber, threatening the supply to U.S. home builders. Lumber futures have soared in July as blazes spread across the province of British Columbia, leaving many U.S. wholesalers short-handed. Lumber dealers ran down their inventories this year as a trade spat between the administration of President Donald Trump and Canadian officials sparked wild price swings. Then Canada's wildfires, a threat every summer, turned out to be the hardest on the lumber industry in more than a decade.

Now home builders in the U.S., which gets around a third of its lumber from Canada, fear prices might climb even higher as wholesalers try to restock amid the price surge. British Columbia produces nearly half of all Canadian lumber, according to Statistics Canada." <http://on.wsj.com/2tq3csi>

■ Laura Kusisto & Sarah Chaney, *www.wsj.com*, July 26, 2017. "Two top demographic groups, baby boomers and millennials, are driving a recent home-improvement craze. Americans are expected to pour a record \$316 million into home remodeling this year, up from \$296 million a year earlier." <http://on.wsj.com/2v2TzV3>

■ David Enrich, *The Wall Street Journal*, July 27, 2017. **Editor's Note:** For those of you that deal with cap rates, this will change what most banks use for calculating loan rates and adjustable rate mortgages. Libor—the London interbank offered rate—was created in 1986 to help banks set interest rates on big corporate loans. Thirty-one years later, a top U.K. banking regulator said the benchmark would be phased out over the next five years.



■ National Association of Realtors, July 31, 2017, *www.builderonline.com*. "Pending home sales reversed a three-month slide in June, rising 1.5% to a Pending Home Sales Index of 110.2, the National Association of Realtors reported Monday. The West, South and Northeast posted gains; the Midwest was the sole region with a decline." <http://bit.ly/2udBs9V>

■ *www.builderonline.com*, Aug. 1, 2017. "Home prices were up strongly in June both year over year and month over month, with gains of 6.7% and 1.1% respectively, according to the CoreLogic Home Price Index, released Tuesday." <http://bit.ly/2uhXDfb>

■ Prashant Gopal, *www.nreionline.com*, Aug. 8, 2017. **Editor's Note:** This is an interesting article. "People 55 and older own 53 percent of U.S. owner-occupied houses, the biggest share since the government started collecting data in 1900, according to real estate website Trulia. That's up from 43 percent a decade ago. Those ages 18 to 34 possess just 11 percent. When they were that age, baby boomers had homes at almost twice that level." And apparently they are not moving. <http://bit.ly/2vk1cDu>

■ *www.cnn.com*, Aug. 8, 2017.

**Editor's Note:** You might only see this once in a lifetime. "These days, the price of a San Francisco home can easily top a million dollars. But one savvy investor has bought up a whole street in the city's most exclusive neighborhood for a mere \$90,000.

Trouble is, some of the extremely wealthy residents of Presidio Terrace were not aware their street was up for sale and are not pleased it has been sold." <http://cnb.cx/2vGSjGO>

■ Mike Sorohan, *www.mba.org*, Aug. 1, 2017. "The market shift toward more purchase mortgages, coupled with rising rates and tight inventory, is generating the consistent upward trend in defect risk, said First American Financial Corp., Santa Ana, Calif. The company's monthly Loan Application Defect Index said frequency of defects, fraudulence and misrepresentation in the information submitted in mortgage loan applications increased 1.2 percent in June from May. From a year ago, the Defect Index increased by 16.7 percent but is down by nearly 18 percent from its high point of risk in October 2013." <http://bit.ly/2wvoDtR>

■ Roger Yu and Paul Davidson, *www.usatoday*, Aug. 11, 2017. "The number of residential houses available to buy is at a 20-year low as the appeal of McMansions wanes and Baby Boomers grow increasingly reluctant to trade up or down from their current homes, according to a survey by Realtor.com." <https://usat.ly/2fvb3CE>

■ Smith Travel Research, *www.htrends.com*, Aug. 15, 2017. The U.S. reported 188,734 rooms in 1,436 hotel projects in construction in July 2017, according to STR's pipeline report for the month. The number of rooms is a 10.2% year-over-year

increase compared to July 2016." <http://bit.ly/2v14EI3>

■ Samantha Smart, *www.forbes.com*, Aug. 15, 2017. "In a recent survey from ValueInsured, 58% of the 1,079 adults surveyed agreed that there will be a "housing bubble and price correction" in the next two years. Forbes' Samantha Sharff reports that a price correction does not have to mean that there is a bubble. Sharff explains that the last up-cycle ran for 17 years before the crash in 2006, and this number could well be the new normal for up-cycles. She goes on to explain how today's market differs from that of the previous decade." <http://bit.ly/2w0NAA2>

■ Laura Kusisto, *The Wall Street Journal*, Aug. 26, 2017. "Sales of previously owned homes fell in July to their weakest level of the year as a shortage of houses for sale weighed on the market."

■ *The Casper Star Tribune*, Aug. 27, 2017. "The benchmark 30-year mortgage rate is at new low for the year, touching its lowest level since last November. Mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday the rate on 30-year, fixed-rate mortgages fell to 3.86 percent from 3.9 percent last week."

■ *www.builderonline.com*, Aug. 29, 2017. "The S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller U.S. National Home Price NSA Index, covering all nine U.S. census divisions, reported a 5.8% annual gain in June, up from 5.7% the previous month, S&P/Dow Jones reported Tuesday. The index at the end of June stood at 192.60, 4.3% ahead of the 2006 pre-crash peak and 43.7% above the post-crash trough in 2012." <http://bit.ly/2wPU5GA>

■ *www.builderonline.com*, Aug.

29, 2017. "In the second quarter of 2017, the delinquency rate for mortgage loans on one-to-four unit properties fell to a seasonally-adjusted rate of 4.24% on all loans outstanding, according to the Mortgage Bankers' Association's National Delinquency Survey. This rate is down 47 basis points from the past quarter, and 42 basis points from one year ago." <http://bit.ly/2wGuz6o>

■ Christina Rexrode, *www.wsj.com*, Aug. 27, 2017. "Rising home prices are getting borrowers comfortable again with the idea of tapping their homes for cash. Home-equity lines of credit and cash-out mortgage refinances, two products that let consumers spend the windfall of home ownership, are back in vogue with consumers. That reflects growing confidence and is a potential benefit to the U.S. economy as homeowners have more money to spend." <http://on.wsj.com/2wJyFtn>

■ Kenneth Harney, *www.chicagotribune.com*, Aug. 29, 2017. "Would you welcome the option to buy a house but not have to pay hundreds of dollars for an appraisal? If an appraisal-free home purchase sounds intriguing, you might be interested in groundbreaking new policy changes by the two largest sources of home financing — Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Both government-chartered companies now are willing to waive their decades-old appraisal mandates for certain home purchases, provided their automated valuation models — loaded with previous appraisal and current market data — flash a green light."

**Editor's Note:** You should read this article. <http://trib.in/2vPQS9T>

■ *www.htrends.com*, Sept., 13

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**REAL ESTATE NOTES, continued**

2017. "In the Construction stage, the U.S. reported 192,132 rooms in 1,463 projects and based on the number of rooms, that is a 12.9% increase in year-over-year comparisons." <http://bit.ly/2y3524m>

■ Yvonne Morris McCallum, [www.wsj.com](http://www.wsj.com), Sept. 12, 2017. This article discusses the added tax on properties owned by anyone not Canadian. **Editor's Note:** I was not aware that the extra tax applied to previously purchased properties also. <http://on.wsj.com/2jw3LAa>

■ Patrick Kirk, [www.nreionlin.com](http://www.nreionlin.com), Sept. 19, 2017. "Rebuilding after both Harvey and Irma will likely cause building costs to skyrocket nationwide due to increased demand for building materials and skilled labor, says Doug Wilson, chairman and CEO of San Diego-based Douglas Wilson Co., a commercial real estate development

and advisory firm that operates a problem resolution and fiduciary services division. Hurricane-affected areas are considered a priority by both the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and labor unions, so skilled workers from around the country are likely to end up working in Texas and Florida, which will increase labor shortages elsewhere, he notes." <http://bit.ly/2fj1Ptv>

■ Laura Kusisto and Josh Mitchell, [www.wsj.com](http://www.wsj.com), Sept. 20, 2017. "Sales of previously owned homes fell in August to the lowest level in a year, reflecting a shortage of properties on the market and a sharp drop in Houston home purchases because of Hurricane Harvey. Existing-home sales declined 1.7% from a month earlier to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.35 million, the National Association of Realtors said Wednesday. That marked the third straight monthly drop, with contin-

ued declines expected in the coming months. Sales rose just 0.2% over the 12 months ending in August." <http://on.wsj.com/2flrkud>

■ Jan Swanson, [www.mortgage-newsdaily.com](http://www.mortgage-newsdaily.com), Sept. 9, 2017. The new product, branded as the Enhanced Relief Refinance Mortgage, will provide refinance opportunities to borrowers with existing Freddie Mac mortgages but who cannot utilize the Freddie Mac "no cash-out" refinance because the LTV of the new loan would exceed that program's maximum limit. There is no maximum LTV for a fixed rate Enhanced Relief Mortgage but there is a maximum LTV of 105 percent (emphasis added) for an adjustable rate (ARM) version. Refinancing into an ARM will only be allowed if the existing mortgage is also an ARM. **Editor's Note:** Just about monthly I continue to have flashbacks to the pre-residential crash. <http://bit.ly/2wBsKbG>

## Western Kansas Farmstead

Submitted by Kenton Lyon, RMA, Russell County



Here is a typical Western Kansas farmstead located along I-70. Entry to the farmstead is the narrow tunnel underneath the Interstate. Yes, the farmstead is occupied. No, the images have not been Photoshopped or altered.

The property owners continue to farm the property and to utilize the buildings. They are resourceful and have had to modify their farming practices as a result of the limited access. They usually get new tractors and equipment from Sears—as in yard-sized equipment. Their wheat truck is an old Chevy Model S-10 pickup with sideboards. And the cow herd here is most definitely not longhorns.

Water stands underneath the highway most of the time, so the frogs are happy until it freezes in the winter. During that time, nobody is happy dealing with the ice and the narrow passageway.



Entry to the farmstead is the narrow tunnel underneath the Interstate.

