

# VALA NEWSLETTER

## *PRESIDENT'S REPORT*

Thank you for your support for my second year as your President. The past year was a very busy one for VALA in meeting our goals. The 2010-2011 year will be even busier for our organization with a new legislative session, new leaders, and agendas but many old issues reappearing. We are fortunate to have two very experienced members making up the Legislative Committee – Tom Vickery and Randy Viens.

I have set five high priority goals for VALA for the fiscal year:

- **Website enhancement** – The Board of Directors supported a \$1,500.00 expense budget to update and enhance the site to make it our main communication tool. VALA's Web Coordinator Penny Allyn and Consultant Chuck Burt have already begun the research to complete this goal. It will be an exciting new user-friendly site.
- **Financial Restructure – Finance Committee** – This new approved committee will be responsible to review our dues structure and financial reporting. They will recommend changes that will broaden the membership bases while providing adequate financial support. These changes will keep VALA a highly recognized and effective organization to meet our mission statement. I will be providing the committee an outline of suggested financial areas to be re-examined.
- **Lister Certification** – The work on a Vermont Lister Certification Program has been a work in progress for more than two years. It is time to make it a reality. I will keep this goal above the radar in 2010-2011 with the Certification Committee.
- **CAMA Changes & Enhancements** – I will be working with Chris Miele to ensure that software improvements on the CAMA punch list are implemented this year. Chris's programmer is already working on the first seven items.
- **Education** – We understand that PVR, by statute, is required to provide education classes. It is important that VALA is also recognized as a resource for Lister continuing education. I will be working with the Education Committee to sponsor selected education classes for VALA members and non-members.

The work that was completed last year, and the goals set for 2010-2011, will provide positive momentum for whomever the membership chooses to be the VALA President for 2011-2012.

*John Fike*  
*VALA President*



## VALA OFFICERS

### 2010-2011

*President - John Fike*  
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*Secretary - Carol Hammond*  
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*Treasurer - Louise Ferris-Burt*  
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*Suggestion for the Newsletter: We have received a request to post a listing of all the State's Representatives in our Newsletter. Due to the large number of Representatives we are looking at posting these names at a future date on our VALA Website.*

*NEWSLETTER  
EDITOR/COORDINATOR  
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SUGGESTIONS OR COMMENTS TO:  
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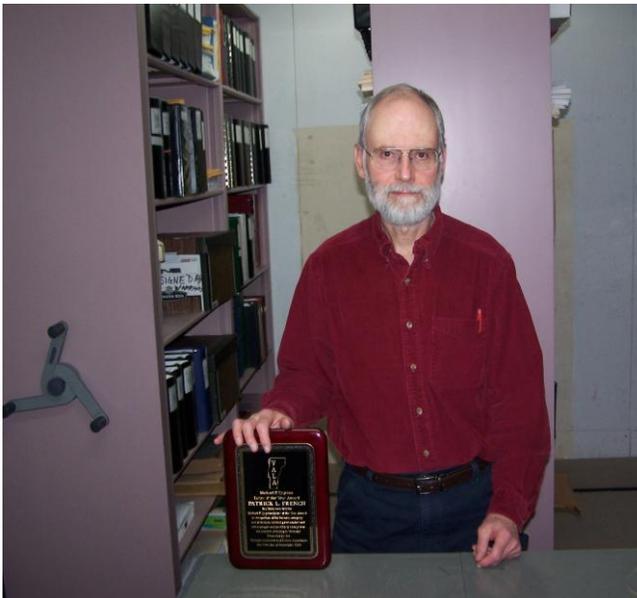
# MICHAEL P. CYPRIAN AWARD

VALA established the Michael P. Cyprian, Lister of the Year Award in 1991 to honor Listers and Assessors who demonstrate fairness to all, dedication, helpfulness, worked to improve the listing process and pursued better education for the assessment community.

The award is named for Michael P. Cyprian who was the 'Ultimate Lister'. He was active in his town volunteering his expertise on many committees. He was well trained as a Lister and chose to become a professional appraiser. His integrity, unquestioned fairness, ability to communicate with the townspeople, sense of humor, and high level of professionalism marked Michael's eleven years as a Lister. He was an active VALA member and offered much Lister training.

This year's nominee began his assessing work by being elected to fill the unexpired term of Harry Cooley. He was re-elected as a Lister from 1983-1986. He was elected as a Selectman from 1986-1992 and again from 1994-1996. He was contracted as an Assessor from 1986-1997 to assist the town Listers. From 1998 to the present he was hired as the Assessor for the Town of Randolph. He has been involved in three town-wide reappraisals, with the last occurring in 2006. His knowledge about current use, education taxes, veteran's exemptions, town voted exemptions, and issues pertinent to assessing properties is invaluable. He has been involved in local government and has served on many local committees such as the Randolph Area Community Development Corporation.

This individual is an active member of VALA, currently serving as Vice President.



## PAT FRENCH

VICE PRESIDENT VALA

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE TO  
ANNOUNCE THAT PAT FRENCH HAS  
BEEN AWARDED THE MICHAEL P.  
CYPRIAN AWARD FOR LISTER OF  
THE YEAR 2010!

*Quote for the Day: If there is no  
struggle, there is no progress.  
Frederick Douglass*

## REMINDER!!!!

Remember to do your backups and keep checking and updating your NEMRC AND MSOL programs every time you are in the office. We can't stress enough how important it is that you have the most current versions of the software.



**SIGN UP TODAY TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE**

**NEMRC EMAIL LIST SERVE**

➤ **BENEFITS INCLUDE EMAIL NOTICES OF UPCOMING WEBINARS.**

➤ **YOU CAN REGISTER FOR WEBINARS AT [www.nemrc.com](http://www.nemrc.com)**



## UPCOMING WEBINARS!!!

🍁 Keep in mind that the Annual Grand List Seminars will be held in March 2011.

🍁 Check our Webinar for upcoming various CAMA Webinars.

## January Directors Meeting

### *Question of the Month*

*How do Listers appraise solar installations & off the grid properties? We are looking forward to a good discussion of this question at our January Board Meeting.*

### Education Committee Update from John Vickery

I have recently found a great website that contains all the MLS listings in VT, NH & MA, plus all the sold properties. Assessors should find this website useful for reviews of which properties have been exposed to the market. Plus each property has detailed property information. It is the official website of the Northern New England MLS. [www.nneren.com](http://www.nneren.com)



## NEMRC/CAMA PUNCH LIST UPDATE

**THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF HIGH PRIORITY ITEMS THAT NEMRC/CAMA IS PRESENTLY WORKING TO IMPROVE:**

- ♣ ***Identity inactive parcels in CAMA.***
- ♣ ***Adding a base date feature to the program that provides a specific date for the calculation for effective age to use.***
- ♣ ***Ability to use a range, individual or all parcel audit trail.***
- ♣ ***Hard code program to always open the data base linked to the appropriate corresponding NEMRC entity.***
- ♣ ***Add Span numbers to CAMA.***
- ♣ ***Create commercial cost sheets to have the same format at the top of the page as the residential cost sheets.***
- ♣ ***Provide sales info on the cost sheet.***

## PVR CORNER

You would think with the holiday season rapidly approaching, people like Mark Paulsen and Michele Wilson at PVR would have visions of sugar plums or perhaps roast turkey dancing in their heads. Unfortunately they are under considerable pressure to complete the annual equalization study and finish development and training for our new on-line property transfer tax system. Given their heavy work, I was designated to write something for this month's VALA Newsletter. In thinking about what to write about, decided to talk about recent staff transitions in the Division. There are three notable transitions you should be aware of – in no particular order they are...

**Dave Tanner**, who technically isn't a member of PVR but of the Dept IT Helpdesk group, will become a part of the State's Dept of Innovation and Information (this is a fancy name for the State Information Technology Group). Dave has acted as our CAMA support and education person for the last year and in this role many of you who use the CAMA 2000 software have had an opportunity to meet Dave. For what I hope is a transition period of a half a year or more, Dave will continue to assist the CAMA 2000 users with their software and education. Unfortunately, just when Dave was feeling comfortable with the software and the job, we will eventually lose his services.

Many of you already know that PVR, after a longgg search, hired a new person to head up our Current Use Unit. **Elizabeth Hunt** comes to us from the Agency of Natural Resources where she has garnered considerable experience in the realm of management and information systems over the years. (Continued next page)



Do you know the difference between education and experience? Education is when you read the fine print; experience is what you get when you don't.

**Pete Seeger**

(Continued from previous page)

Though not a current use expert when she arrived, she is quickly making herself into one as she is proving to be the quick study we were hoping for. As a matter of fact, she has already been cooking up new, and I think, good ideas for future changes to the program.

Finally, in January 2011, **Bill Smith** will be retiring from State service. While technically not a part of PVR, Bill's work as a statistician has been invaluable to the Division. In large part it was Bill who did the technical work introducing a long list of statistical measures that have brought the equalization study methodology up to national standards for ratio studies. Bill also was essential in the development of our ANR land valuation system and any number of other large and small improvements to our programs. While he didn't spend a lot of time in the field, Bill was involved in a number of collaborative events involving VALA members and he taught several classes on the use of math and statistics in property appraisal. Bill has always been in pursuit of an agenda of "continuous improvement" for PVR and his knowledge and boundless enthusiasm will be greatly missed.

*Bill Johnson, PVR Director*