



President's Message



We are going right from March Madness to April Crazyiness. The good news and bad news is that April 15 is right around the corner. Somehow it all gets done. That is what I keep telling myself anyway. Good luck to everyone heading into the home stretch.

I want to thank Bill Ross, EA, for all his work as editor of the BriefCase. As Bill migrates to warmer and drier climates, Shanti Patel, EA, will be interim editor of the Brief-Case for the rest of this year. And, Carol Kehoe, continues to be the glue that keeps the BriefCase on schedule and available to our members. Good luck to you, Bill. And, thank you Shanti and Carol.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, June 12 to attend our MaSEA annual conference at the Resort and Conference Center in Hyannis. The member early bird discount price of \$220 ends April 19. So, sign up now. The registration fee includes 8 CPE credits taught by nationally recognized speaker, Beanna Whitlock, EA, CSA. The fee also includes breakfast, lunch, and a banquet dinner. Our MaSEA annual meeting will be held over lunchtime and our installation of officers will be after dinner. Make a weekend of it and enjoy Cape Cod before the summer crowds totally take over Hyannis. Go to our website for more details, www.mseonline.org.

The Warren Group (TWG) is working with our MaSEA task force on a member survey that you will soon see in your email. It is an online survey that should not take more than 5 minutes to fill out. I ask for your support in participating in this survey. I know it is a busy time for all of us, but your input is needed. The survey results will help us get a better understanding of all our members and what we can do to improve our society. So, before you tackle that next K-1, take a few minutes to have your voice heard. Thank you!

I look forward to celebrating the end of tax season at our April 22nd monthly meeting. See you there.

Terry Durkin, EA, MBA, MaSEA President

Welcome New Members

Please welcome the following new members. We hope to see them at an upcoming meeting.

Steven DeWitt from W. Hyannisport, Dorothy Dimo from Warren, Joseph Cipolla from Hanson, Barbara Rybicka-Buikewicz from North Easton, Kelley Murphy from Marshfield, and Yee Man-Kin from Quincy, Satchi Karikal from Framingham.

Submitted by: Alice McElhenny, EA, Membership Chair

Please patronize our advertisers. In this issue: CFS Tax Software, Discount Tax Forms, Small Business Accounting Services and Tax Research Services. Be sure to mention you saw them in MaSEA's Briefcase. For information or to place an ad, contact Leon Rudman, EA.

Inside this issue:

Minutes of the February Board Meeting	2
IRS Regulations for Unenrolled Preparers	4
March Meeting Notes	6
Coming Events & BOD	7
NAEA Important Dates	8
IRS Sending Letters to Insure Accuracy	8
NAEA Tax Research Service Offered	8
Insurance Advice for Flood Victims	9
IRS Grant of Relief for NE States	9
MA DOR Important Phone Numbers	10
Scholarship Application	11
DOR Business Amnesty Program	12
Meet The Board	12



TAX SOFTWARE INC.

TAX SOFTWARE FOR THE TAX PROFESSIONAL

Have you heard of CFS Tax Software?



We are an established software company, serving tax professionals for over 15 years with over 30,000 active users.

Our most popular product, TaxTools, is the most widely used program of its kind.

We provide free technical support and a 30-day money-back guarantee.

We offer a 20% discount to first-time users (promo code: MaSEA)

Find out how CFS Tax Software, Inc. can help you save time and money this tax season!

Visit www.taxtools.com to find out more or Call 1-800-343-1157

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2010 3:45PM TO 5:15PM

Board Members:

Present: Sarkis A. Babikian, Kay Cassidy, Theresa Durkin, Randy F. Hull, Jr., Stephen B.Jordan, Eunice A. Malkasian, Joyce Mohr, Alice M. McElhinney and Shantilal T. Patel.

Absent: Janet Foote, Ralph Macdonald

Guest(s): Fred Brewitt, Sarah Cunningham of TWG, Nancy Goedecke, Leon Rudman, Vincent Valvo of TWG.

Quorum present? Yes

Proceedings:

_ Meeting called to order on Thursday, February 18, 2010 at 3:45 pm by President and Chair, Terry Durkin. Durkin noted fellow EA Linda O'Leary fell and broke her shoulder and wished her a speedy recovery. Durkin stated there will be no MaSEA Board meeting held in March. Durkin reminded board members the MaSEA 2010-2011 Budget will be reviewed and submitted for approval at the board's May 2010 meeting.

Durkin requested Committee chairs have their Budget input ready by May 01st, 2010 so the Budget Committee composed of Durkin, Malkasian and Patel have time for review.

_ January 21, 2010 meeting minutes were reviewed. No further corrections noted,

approved as distributed by President and Chair Durkin.

_ Treasurer's Report provided by Treasurer Janet Foote (in absentia):

Foote reported the Financial Statements for the seven-month fiscal period ending January 31, 2010. Overall, Foote noted, the Society's Fiscal YTD total gross income was \$64,102, a unfavorable variance to budget of \$(3,358) or 95.02% of budget and an unfavorable variance to the preceding year of \$(5,334) or (7.68)%. Foote noted the Society's Fiscal YTD net income/(loss) was \$2,075. This represented a unfavorable variance to budget of \$(6,510) or 24.17% of budget and an unfavorable variance to the preceding year of \$(11,085) or (84.23)%. Foote reported that the Society's cash and cash equivalents balance as of January 31,

2010 is \$27,266. This is down from the preceding year by 21.1%, or \$7,292. Foote introduced a written report addressing the January 2010 YTD financials to be included in the minutes as follows:

Treasurer Report for the month ending January 31, 2010 To be recorded in February 18, 2010 board minutes with the board's approval. Miscellaneous Expense under Administrative costs reflects an income of \$164.45. This means that we collected more

(Continued from page 2)

balanced program. This does not take into account postage and printing.

By Janet Foote, EA

MOTION by Mohr to accept January 2010 fiscal YTD Financial statements,

Seconded by Patel; accepted.

_ June Convention Update provided by Shantilal Patel:

Patel stated approximately 1,200 mailers have gone out announcing the MaSEA June Convention. Four hundred went to MaSEA members, 600 went to non-members and the

balance to 1040 Update and SEE Course attendees. Attendees may register via PayPal on the Society's website and Patel will send an "e-mail blast" reminder announcement in March.

_ Bentley University Program Report provided by Joyce Mohr:

Mohr recently met with Jack Lynch of Bentley and explained potential MaSEA training and orientation for LITC tax representation in partnership with Bentley. Mohr expressed insightful ideas about integrating MaSEA's contact info and website info into Bentley's marketing materials for LITC. Mohr stated Bentley seemed very eager to be working with MaSEA on representation and collection issues for low income taxpayers. Mohr will

announce details regarding the May LITC orientation at Bentley for interested MaSEA members when time permits.

_ Old Business

o Babikian stated the Society received a free Tax Book valued at \$60, proceeds of which went to the MaSEA Scholarship fund.

_ New Business

o Patel graciously volunteered to serve as interim Editor for The BriefCase until such time as a permanent one can be found.

o Vincent Valvo, Group Publisher and Sarah Cunningham, Events Manager of The Warren Group (TWG) greeted board members with a discussion of TWG's goals, commitments and deadlines to be achieved for MaSEA under the existing agreement recently put in place by the special task force evaluating TWG. Valvo stated his underlying theme for MaSEA should be one of "We are Small Business--We Represent Small Business!"

There being no further business, the Thursday, February 18, 2010 Directors' meeting was officially adjourned by Terry Durkin, President, at 5:15pm.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary,
Stephen B. Jordan



Preprinted checks and supplies at 30-60% off for all MASEA members!

In addition to our tax products, we offer payroll supplies at great savings. We print our checks in 24 hours standard and logos are always free. Use the code **MASEA** and receive **free shipping** on your entire order!

**Offer Ends June 1st*

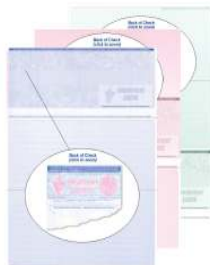


Preprinted Checks Compatible With All Major Software Brands!

Including:

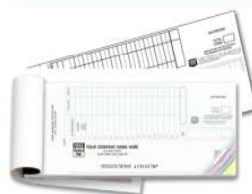


and more!



250 qty. - \$63.75
500 qty. - \$79.90
1000 qty. - \$101.15

Deposit Tickets



Starting at \$80.50

Check Envelopes



Starting at \$63.25

MICR Toner



Starting at \$66.50

Endorsement Stamps

Starting at \$29.84



Shop now at

www.DiscountTaxForms.com

Questions? Call us Toll Free 877.824.2458

E-mail : service@discounttaxforms.com

Recommended by
Accountant's
Source



IRS PLAN TO REGULATE UNENROLLED PREPARERS

From The National Society of Tax Professionals

When will the new rules for registration of tax return preparers take effect?

The proposed rules will not be in effect for this filing season, 2010. The IRS intends to have all covered preparers registered by the 2011 filing season. We anticipate that the registration process will begin in early Fall 2010. You can continue to prepare returns this season without the new registration.

Do I have to register for a new Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN) now or can I use my existing number?

Use your existing number for now. The IRS intends to develop an online registration system for paid return preparers who do not currently have one as part of the online registration process. The IRS also intends for the registration process to apply to those paid preparers who already have a PTIN. These individuals will be reissued their current PTIN when they register under the new system, which will not take effect until the 2011 filing season.

How will the IRS implement its proposal?

The IRS intends to issue new regulations this year to carry out its preparer regulation plan. We expect the regulations to be issued within the next six months. We will notify you promptly of any new developments.

Will all preparers be subject to the new rules?

Unenrolled Preparer All paid tax return preparers will have to be registered with the IRS and obtain a PTIN. All paid tax return preparers except attorneys, certified public accountants (CPAs) and enrolled agents who are active and in good standing with their respective licensing agencies, will be subject to the new testing requirements.

Only preparers who are required to sign tax returns will be subject to the new rules. Nonsigning preparers will not be covered. Thus, within a large tax preparation firm, it is possible that preparers who meet with taxpayers and prepare their returns will not have to register and take competency exams if someone else in the firm who is a registered preparer signs the returns. Finally, volunteer and uncompensated preparers would be exempt from the registration and testing requirements.

I have been preparing tax returns for many years. Will I be "grandfathered in" and be exempt from the testing requirements?

No. It does not matter how long you have been preparing tax returns. All unenrolled paid preparers who sign returns will be required to register and take one of the two competency tests described in Number 6 below. However, as an existing preparer, you will have three years to pass the required examinations once the testing procedures are in place.

What type of exam will be required?

At first, the IRS intends to develop two competency exams to test a preparer's ability to accurately prepare returns. At first,

existing preparers must pass one of the two exams. One exam will cover wage income and nonbusiness income reported on individual returns in the Form 1040 series. The other exam will cover wage income and small business income reported on individual returns in the Form 1040 series. The forms covered by these exams are listed in Appendix I to the IRS's Tax Return Preparer Review posted on the Member's Only section of the NSTP website.

Will I have to take a test on business tax returns if I do not prepare them in my practice?

The IRS has given us some indication that preparers will be able to take only the exams for preparing individual returns if they do not regularly prepare business returns in their practice. We expect that the IRS regulations will address this issue in more detail.

Can I prepare business tax returns without taking an exam?

After the initial implementation phase is complete, the IRS plans to offer a third examination to cover business tax issues and business entity forms. Until more detailed rules are released, we believe you will be able to prepare business tax returns until the third examination is developed and put into place.

What about forms 940 and 941 payroll returns? Will I have to take a test to prepare these forms for my clients?

The IRS has not included these forms in its list of items that will be covered in the first two competency examinations. You should be able to continue preparing these returns unless and until the IRS indicates that it will implement any requirements for payroll preparations.

When will I have to take the competency examinations?

The examination requirements will be phased in over three-years. Existing preparers will have three years to pass the required examinations.

If I do not pass the examination, can I take it again?

Tax preparers can take the exam multiple times until they pass. You will be charged an administration fee each time you take the test.

What about just entering the tax preparation business? Will new preparers be required to pass an exam before they can prepare any returns?

The IRS's fact sheet indicates that once testing is available, the IRS plans to require unregistered individuals who want to become preparers to pass the competency test prior to registration and issuance of a PTIN.

I am an enrolled actuary/enrolled retirement plan agent. Will I have to register and pass the competency examinations?

The IRS recommends that enrolled actuaries and enrolled retirement plan agents be required to pass one of the IRS competency tests if they intend to prepare Form 1040 series returns.

I am an enrolled actuary/enrolled retirement plan agent. Will I have to register and pass the competency examinations?

The IRS recommends that enrolled actuaries and enrolled retirement plan agents be required to pass one of the IRS competency tests if they intend to prepare Form 1040 series returns.

Continued from page 4

My state already requires registration and testing of tax preparers. Will I have to register with the IRS and take the federal tests too?

Yes. The IRS will require all persons preparing federal tax returns for a fee to register and comply with the new rules whether or not they are already licensed in tax return preparation by their state. However, licensed attorneys, CPA's, and Enrolled Agents will not have to comply with the new federal rules.

How much will it cost to become a registered preparer?

The IRS will charge a user fee to register as a return preparer. The IRS has stated that the fee will not be too burdensome. One IRS official has commented that the fee could be in the \$40-\$100 range. You also will have testing fees and the expense of continuing education courses, so it will become more costly to be employed in the tax return preparation business.

If I register with the IRS, will I be subject to a background check or an audit of my own personal or business return

All signing paid tax return preparers will be subject to a "suitability check" which may include a criminal background check and a Unenrolled Preparer IRS Regulation FAQ's limited compliance check. The compliance check will require verification of personal and business tax compliance every three years. During the initial three- year implementation period, the IRS plans to conduct the tax compliance checks after registration and prior to the required renewal date. After the three-year phase-in period, the IRS intends to require tax compliance as a condition of registration and PTIN issuance.

The compliance check will be a "limited tax compliance check", according to the IRS, to determine whether you have filed federal personal, employment and business tax returns and that the tax due on those returns has been paid.

How long will my registration be effective? Will I have to renew my registration?

Tax preparers will be required to reregister every three years and pay a fee. They also will be required to take continuing education courses each year to maintain their registration.

I am an enrolled actuary/enrolled retirement plan agent. Will I have to register and pass the competency examinations?

The IRS recommends that enrolled actuaries and enrolled retirement plan agents be required to pass one of the IRS competency

tests if they intend to prepare Form 1040 series returns.

Who will give the test?

The IRS will contract with a private company to administer the competency exams. The IRS intends to exercise detailed oversight of the choice of questions and materials presented on the competency exams.

What are the continuing education requirements?

Registered preparers who are not attorneys, CPAs, or Enrolled Agents will be required to take 15 hours of continuing education

classes per year. The 15 hours must include three hours of federal tax law updates, two hours of ethics, and 10 hours of other federal tax law topics. NSTP's courses are approved by the IRS, and NSTP will be developing additional courses to cover the content of the new competency examination.

How will the IRS enforce the new rules?

Tax preparers will be subject to disciplinary actions under Circular 230, the rules of practice and standards of conduct currently required for attorneys, CPAs, and Enrolled Agents admitted to practice before the IRS. Tax preparers who fail to comply with the new requirements or who engage in unethical or unprofessional conduct will be subject to the Circular 230 disciplinary actions, including suspension from return preparation.

Some Taxing Humor:

Income Tax Filing Strategy

To: Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury Washington, DC 20001

Enclosed is my 2009 Form 1040, together with payment. Please take note of the attached article from USA Today archives. In the article, you will note that the Pentagon paid \$171.50 each for hammers and NASA paid \$600.00 each for toilet seats.

Please find enclosed in this package four toilet seats (value \$2,400.00) and six hammers (value \$1,029.00). This is in payment for my total tax due of \$3,429.00.

Out of a sense of patriotic duty, and to assist in the political purification of our government, I am also enclosing a 1.5 inch Phillips head screw, for which HUD duly recorded and approved a purchase value of \$22.00, as my contribution to fulfill the Presidential Election Fund option on Form 1040.

It has been a pleasure to pay my taxes this year, and I look forward to paying them again next year in accordance with officially established government values.

Sincerely,

Another satisfied taxpayer





Photo by: Bill Ross, EA

Lorry Sorgman, EA, MST, USTCP and Nancy Goedecke, EA presented the Annual Share Shop at the March meeting in Newton, where members can discuss tax problems and share amusing stories they have encountered during the season. Always a popular topic, this year did not disappoint. It was hard not to get something useful out of this free exchange of problems.

"TAXATION WITH REPRESENTATION"

BACK TAX CONSULTING

We specialize in helping people resolve their tax troubles with the IRS

Lorry Sorgman, EA, MST, USTCP

Ms. Sorgman, president of **Small Business Accounting Services**, is an Enrolled Agent, holds a Masters in Taxation from Suffolk University and is admitted to practice before the U.S. Tax Court.

Small Business Accounting Services



617-467-3182

www.backtax.info

1340 Centre St., Suite 201, Newton Center



We Answer Tax Questions!

*With over 18 years of assisting the tax practitioner - you will find **TRS** to be a **reliable and quick resource for your tax answers!***

Tax Professionals can try our service for **FREE**

Tax Answers... for the Tax Professional!!

No charge for your first call!



CALL 1-800-333-TAXX (8299)

- Informed tax opinions
- Reliable tax research.
- No annual fee.
- No charge for research time.
- Per minute/Phone time only.



Drop us an E-Mail or Visit our website - for more information.

**E-Mail: info@taxresearchonline.com
Web: www.taxresearchonline.com**

MaSEA Meeting Schedule, 2009/2010

APRIL 22, 2010

TOPIC: 1031 EXCHANGES
SPEAKER: MARK COUTURE

MAY 20, 2010

TOPIC: EHICS
SPEAKER: CAROL THOMPSON

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW MEETING LOCATION:

BOSTON MARRIOTT NEWTON, 2345 COMMONWEALTH AVE.,
NEWTON, MA.

JUNCTION OF MASS PIKE, ROUTE 128 & ROUTE 30

Regular Monthly Meeting Price: Members, Spouse, Guest & Member Teleconference Fee: \$55 (\$50 if registered by the Monday before the meeting). Non-Member Fee \$60 (\$55 if registered by the Monday before the meeting) To Register, call 800-342-0031, Fax 978-535-1954, email: MSEAOFFICE@aol.com, Register on Line at <http://www.maseaonline.org>. Pay by Credit or Debit on line only using Paypal. Teleconferencers must pay prior to meeting and supply phone-in number & email address.

3:30 Board Meeting; 5:00 Attitude Adjustment Hour; 5:45 New Member Welcome and Tax Corner; 6:00 Dinner, 7-9:00 CPE Program

Ask about paying by Credit Card 

Massachusetts Society of Enrolled Agents 2010 Meeting, Elections & Annual Conference

Friday Night 7:00 pm Dinner with your colleagues (optional)
Saturday 7:00 am Check-in and breakfast
8:00 am Reasonable Compensation
10:00 am Payroll Tax Audits
12-1:30 pm Lunch and Annual Meeting
1:30 pm The Ugly 1040
3:30 pm How to Assist Our Aging Clients
5:30 pm Cocktails
6:00 pm Banquet Dinner
7:00 pm CPE: Let's Die and See What Happens: Executor/Executrix
8:00 pm Installation of Officers
9-11:00 pm Dancing to the music of the Anytime Band
LOCATION: Resort and Conference Center at Hyannis 35 Scudder Avenue (West End Circle), Hyannis, MA 02601
FEATURED SPEAKER: Beanna J. Whitlock, EA, CSA
Earn 8 CPE Credits
Member \$250 *Early discount by April 19th \$220*
Non Member \$275 *Early discount by April 19th \$250*
Guest and non-conferee – Saturday banquet dinner & entertainment \$50
Guest – Breakfast \$15 Optional Friday dinner at Brazilian Grill (per person) \$33 Member Annual Meeting only no charge
Lunch for non-conferees and guests \$23

MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY OF ENROLLED AGENTS OFFICERS & DIRECTORS, 2009/2010

PRESIDENT: Terry Durkin, EA
1ST VP: Eunice A. Malkasian, EA
2ND VP: Shantilal T. Patel, EA
TREASURER: Janet L. Foote, EA
SECRETARY: Stephen B. Jordan, EA
IMMEDIATE PP: Randy F. Hull, EA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:
Joyce Ann Mohr, EA
Sarkis A. Babikian, EA
Ralph Macdonald, EA
Kay L. Cassidy, EA
Alice McElhinney, EA

The *Briefcase* is published by the Massachusetts Society of Enrolled Agents, P.O. Box 2263, Peabody, MA 01960-7263 for the benefit of MaSEA members and affiliates. This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is distributed with the understanding that neither the publisher nor author is engaged in rendering specific legal, tax or accounting advice or other professional services. If specific advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought.

MaSEA, P.O. Box 2263, Peabody, MA 01960-7263

Email: MSEAOFFICE@AOL.COM

Telephone: 800-342-0031 Fax: 978-535-1954

Internet: <http://www.maseaonline.org>

SAVE THE DATE!

Join us at NAEA's 2010 National Conference, August 8-10, 2010 at the Mandalay Bay Hotel and

Casino in Las Vegas, NV. This unparalleled event will include:

- The prestigious National Tax Practice Institute (NTPI®)
- A Graduate Track in Representation
- Tax Prep Issues Workshops
- Tax Practice Management Workshops
- An In-person SEE Review

NAEA's 38th Annual Meeting and Board of Directors Meeting will be held August 11, 2010.

For more information, visit www.naea.org

Tax Filing Season 2010: Efforts Increase to Ensure Accurate Return Preparation

FS-2010-2, January 2010

During the 2010 tax filing season, the Internal Revenue Service will step up its efforts to ensure paid tax return preparers are assisting clients appropriately.

Starting this week, the tax agency is sending out more than 10,000 letters to tax return preparers to remind them of their obligation to prepare accurate tax returns on behalf of their clients. These letters will inform tax preparers about the kinds of common errors the tax agency is seeing on returns.

This tax return preparer initiative coincides with the announcement by Commissioner Doug Shulman of the results of the Return Preparer Review. The effort is part of an overall effort to increase oversight of return preparers, a key part of the tax administration process.

Letters

The IRS is sending letters to paid preparers nationwide. These preparers are among those with large volumes of specific tax returns where the IRS typically sees frequent errors. Specifically, the letters will encourage return preparers to:

Review pertinent books and records of Schedule C filers.

Determine the correct itemized deductions of Schedule A filers.

Make sure those who claim dependents and the EITC are entitled to do so.

Ask first-time homebuyers the right questions to make sure they qualify for the First Time Homebuyer Credit.

The letters will also remind tax return preparers of the consequences of filing incorrect returns. This includes monetary penalties, suspension or expulsion from participation in IRS e-file, civil injunctions barring the return preparer from preparing tax returns and referral for criminal investigation.

Visits

This filing season, IRS representatives will visit thousands of tax return preparers who received these letters to discuss many of the issues described. This is part of a broader effort by the IRS to step up its efforts to ensure paid tax return preparers are assisting taxpayers appropriately. Separately, the IRS will be conducting other compliance and education visits with return preparers on a variety of issues.

In addition, the IRS will more widely use investigative tools during this filing season aimed at determining tax return preparer non-compliance. One of those tools will include visits to return preparers by IRS agents posing as a taxpayer.

During this effort, the IRS will continue to work closely with the Department of Justice to pursue civil or criminal action as appropriate. Every year, hundreds of criminal investigations are initiated against problem return preparers. In 2009, 124 were sentenced, with the average incarceration rate running 18 months.

NAEA's Tax Research Service

Related Links

[Tax Research Service Presentation](#)

As an enrolled agent, you've proven your tax expertise. Even with your experience and knowledge, there are times when you want to verify your memory, read the regulation, or just double check your answer. It's part of providing the best service possible for your clients. You may also run into a unique tax situation from time to time that requires extensive investigation.

The National Association of Enrolled Agents offers a tax research service. Convenient and easy to use, this service will answer your questions and offer written tax guidance in conversational language that you could share directly with your clients. Whether you just need to check a simple fact you have a complex tax situation, you can trust the research provided by NAEA's tax research service.

NAEA members and registered users receive the lowest possible cost for this service, but only when you access the Tax Research Service through NAEA.

[Click here to connect to the Tax Research Service](#)

How it Works

There are two parts to this robust service:

NAEA members can search the tax knowledge database by clicking on "Find Tax Answers" which allows users to search by key word or by topic. The tax knowledge database contains over 3000 articles, compiled from frequently asked questions by other tax professionals.

NAEA members can choose to "Ask a Tax Expert" to receive personalized case research. This service allows you to provide any necessary documentation through fax or upload, and our tax research experts do the work for you. Two levels of service are available (standard or extensive) based on the complexity of the tax situation.

The [Tax Research Service Presentation](#) is a full how-to guide to accessing and using the Tax Research Service. Print it out or

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

review it online. There's also a full "Help" document available to you and you may submit a "Support" email request once you've logged into the service.

Pricing for NAEA's Tax Research Service

NAEA members receive the best rates for this service. Not a member? Maybe it's time you joined. Check out our membership benefits and [sign up as a member or associate now](#).

Tax Knowledge Base

NAEA members and associates: complimentary, unlimited access

Non-members: \$100 yearly subscription

"Ask a Tax Expert"

NAEA members and associates

Standard: \$35 per question

Extensive: \$75 per hour (you will receive an estimate to approve before research begins)

Non-members

Standard: \$50 per question with Tax Knowledge Base subscription; \$100 per question otherwise

Extensive: \$100 per hour with Tax Knowledge Base subscription; \$150 per hour otherwise (you will receive an estimate to approve before research begins)

For the "Ask a Tax Expert" service, your credit card will not be charged until an answer is delivered to you. If your tax situation requires additional research, you will be notified and given the cost for that specific question. You must approve the additional charge before work begins.

NAEA's Tax Research Service is powered by The Tax Institute. Questions about membership or this service may be directed to membership@naea.org or 202-822-6232.

Insurance Advice for Flood Victims

Submitted by Thomas G Feenan EA, CPCU, RFC, ATA

Unless the damage is very minor, the customer should file a claim with their insurance company for two reasons: They may have coverage once the company investigates the cause of loss. If they have no coverage with the insurance company or NFIP, a letter of denial will be required if they are seeking FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) assistance. FEMA information can be accessed at www.fema.gov, or (800) 621-3362 to apply for assistance.

Mitigation of further damage:

- o Calling an emergency services company, such as Master-Clean Restoration Service, Inc (877-234-2847) or SERVPRO®
- o If the customer can handle some of the work themselves, here are just a few useful tips:

- § Move valuables to a dry side or dry elevation

- § Extract all the water by any means – mopping, sump pump, portable sump pump, wet vacuum, or wet shop vacuum

- § Pump the water far from the foundation with a long hose.

- § Remove all saturated and damaged personal property (you need to preserve or photograph if insurance is available, or to record for tax purposes)

- § Pull up carpeting/rugs for cleaning or removal.

- § Remove and dispose of wet carpet padding. (Padding acts like a sponge and does not respond well to cleaning efforts).

- § Use fan to move air out and away from the basement – open windows after the rain stops

- § Turn on air conditioning, if available, to remove moisture from air.

- § Turn on a dehumidifier, if available, to remove moisture from air and to encourage further dry down.

- § When cleaning up afterwards, use rubber gloves and mild bleach solution to kill germs and reduce the instance of mildew and mold growth.

The IRS offers Grant of Relief for Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and West Virginia

The IRS has announced that victims of the recent severe storms and flooding in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, West Virginia, have more time to make tax payments and file returns. The State of Connecticut has extended deadlines for business taxpayers.

Under section 7508A, the IRS gives affected taxpayers until May 11, 2010, to file most tax returns (including individual, corporate, and estate and trust income tax returns; partnership returns, S corporation returns, and trust returns; estate, gift, and generation-skipping transfer tax returns; and employment and certain excise tax returns), or to make tax payments, including estimated tax payments, that have either an original or extended due date occurring on or after March 12, 2010, and on or before May 11, 2010.

As a result, the IRS is postponing until May 11 certain deadlines for taxpayers who reside or have a business in the disaster area. This includes the April 15 deadline for filing 2009 individual income tax returns, making income tax payments and making 2009 contributions to an individual retirement account (IRA).

In addition, the IRS will waive the failure to deposit penalties for employment and excise deposits due on or after March 12 and on or before March 29, as long as the deposits were made by March 29.

If an affected taxpayer receives a penalty notice from the IRS, the taxpayer should call the telephone number on the notice to have the IRS abate any interest and any late filing or late payment penalties that would otherwise apply. Penalties or interest will be abated

(Continued on page 10)

only for taxpayers who have an original or extended filing, payment or deposit due date, including an extended filing or payment due date, that falls within the Postponement Period.

IRS computer systems automatically identify taxpayers located in the covered disaster area and apply automatic filing and payment relief. Affected taxpayers who reside or have a business located outside the covered disaster area must call the IRS disaster hotline at 1-866-562-5227 to request tax relief.

Go to <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=108362,00.html> for additional Grant of Relief information for each of the above mentioned states. State specific information follows.

Massachusetts

Massachusetts Severe Storm and Flooding Victims Have Until May 11 to File Their Tax Returns

The President has declared Bristol, Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk and Worcester counties federal disaster areas qualifying for individual assistance.

Go to <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=220830,00.html> for additional details regarding Covered Disaster Areas, Affected Taxpayers, Grant Relief, Casualty Losses, and Other Relief.

Rhode Island

Rhode Island Severe Storm and Flooding Victims Have Until May 11 to File Their Tax Returns

The President has declared Kent, Newport, Providence and Washington counties federal disaster areas qualifying for individual assistance.

Go to <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=220829,00.html> for additional details regarding Covered Disaster Areas, Affected Taxpayers, Grant Relief, Casualty Losses, and Other Relief.

West Virginia

West Virginia Severe Storm and Flooding Victims Have Until May 11 to File Their Tax Returns

Victims of severe storms, flooding, mudslides and landslides beginning March 12 in may qualify for tax relief from the Internal Revenue Service.

The President has declared Fayette, Greenbrier, Kanawha, Mercer and Raleigh counties federal disaster areas qualifying for individual assistance.

Go to <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=220828,00.html> for additional details regarding Covered Disaster Areas, Affected Taxpayers, Grant Relief, Casualty Losses, and Other Relief.

The State of Connecticut has extended deadlines for business taxpayers:

Extended Filing Instructions for Those Affected by Recent Storms in Connecticut

Business taxpayers affected by the recent New England storms and flooding will be allowed additional time to file and pay business taxes that were originally due between March 29 and

April 1. Those taxpayers will be granted an extension until April 9, 2010.

If you file your business tax return electronically using the department's Taxpayer Service Center (TSC):

Complete and submit the electronic return on or before April 9, 2010;

If there is tax due, the TSC will automatically calculate late filing penalty and late filing interest;

Pay the total tax amount by April 9, 2010, but disregard the penalty and interest.

If you later receive a bill because your return was not filed by the original due date, please follow these instructions:

Do not separate the bill voucher from the notice;

Write "New England Flooding" in large print across the top of the billing notice;

Enclose the entire notice in the return envelope.

If you file a paper return:

Write "New England Flooding" in large print across the top of the Return;

If tax is due, enclose a check for the full amount of the tax (do not include late filing penalty or late filing interest).

Mail the return. NOTE: The envelope must show a U.S. Postal Service cancellation mark dated on or before April 9, 2010.

Visit the CT DOR website for additional details: <http://www.ct.gov/drs/cwp/view.asp?Q=458234&A=3897>

MA DOR IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Office of the Taxpayer Advocate 617-626-2201

Problem Resolution Office..... 617-626-3833

Publishing & Media Services Office..... 617-626-2805

Taxpayer Service Division Certificate Unit 617-887-6550

Collections Bureau 617-887-6400

Customer Service Bureau 617-887-MDOR (6367)

Toll-free in Massachusetts 800-392-6089

DOR's customer service call center hours for tax help are 10 am - 1 pm and 1:30 pm - 4 pm, Monday through Friday.

District Office Counter Locations:

- [19 Staniford Street, Boston, MA 02114](#)
- [218 South Main Street, Fall River, MA 02721](#)
- [60 Perseverance Way, Hyannis MA 02601](#)
- [333 East Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201](#)
- [436 Dwight Street, Springfield, MA 01103](#)
- [67 Millbrook Street, Worcester, MA 01606](#)

To report allegations of suspected misconduct or impropriety involving Department of Revenue employees, please call the Inspection Services Division's Integrity Hot Line at 800-568-0085 or write to PO Box 9567, Boston, MA 02114.

MaSEA Scholarship Application

P.O. Box 2263, Peabody, MA 01960-7263

Please indicate with a checkmark which scholarship you are applying for:

NTPI NTPI GRAD Taste of NTPI NCPE

Criteria

1. The Candidate must be an Enrolled Agent
2. The Candidate must be a member in good standing with NAEA and MaSEA
3. Applications must be postmarked by April 30, 2010
4. Scholarship will be paid directly to the recipient upon verification of registration.
5. Send application to the following address:

Attention: Maria Lucas, EA
 Scholarship Committee Chair
 MaSEA
 P.O. Box 2263
 Peabody, MA 01960

NAME: (please print) _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ email: _____@_____

Below write a brief essay explaining why this scholarship would assist you professionally and educationally.

Business Taxpayer Tax Amnesty Program from MA DOR

Certain business taxpayers may be able to take advantage of a special two-month Tax Amnesty Program recently authorized by the Massachusetts Legislature. Only taxpayers who receive a Tax Amnesty Notice from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) will be eligible for the amnesty program, which will be available for certain existing business tax liabilities for tax years ending on or before December 31, 2009.

General Information

The amnesty program will run from April 1, 2010 to June 1, 2010 but to businesses that have already paid all tax and interest amounts due and only owe penalties, those that have signed settlement agreements with the Commissioner or were determined to have been the subject of tax-related criminal investigations or prosecutions prior to the start of the amnesty.

What is Amnesty?

Section 43 of Chapter 166 of the Acts of 2009 provides for the Commissioner of Revenue to establish a two-month Amnesty Program. Taxpayers with certain outstanding tax liabilities will be allowed to pay the tax and interest portion of their debt and the Commonwealth will waive the penalty portion.

All non-corporate business tax types will be eligible for this limited amnesty program.

This amnesty program is for outstanding liabilities for taxable periods ending on or before December 31, 2009 only.

When does Amnesty begin?

The Amnesty program begins on April 1, 2010 and will run through June 1, 2010.

MEET THE BOARD.....BY RANDY HULL, JR., EA

Shanti Patel EA
Second Vice President
MaSEA

What was Year Make & Model of First Auto? 1977 Toyota Camry Bought for \$ 200 because nothing in life is Free!

Favotite Sports team? Boston Celtics

Name of Last Book read? "Master Tax Guide 2009" author you Local Congressman

Favorite Vacation place that i have been to more than once? Disney Land in Florida

Favorite Vacation place. India

Favorite Movie of all time? "One Who Flew Over the CooCoo Nest"

Most recent live entertainment? Celtics game at the TD BankNorth Garden

Breed Color name of favorite pet? -----None and I don't want to Adopt!

Activity which I do today. Walking

Favorite Sports Arena that I visited? Fenway Park

Sports or Activity which I have done in the past? When a youngster played Cricket!

How will I know if I am eligible?

The Department of Revenue will issue eligible taxpayers a Tax Amnesty Notice, which must be paid by June 1, 2010;

only the periods listed on this notice are eligible for amnesty. If the tax and interest due are paid in full for any period shown on the Amnesty Notice, the Commonwealth will waive the unpaid penalties on that period, along with any interest associated with such penalties.

How do I pay?

There are four convenient ways for you to pay your amnesty balance due.

1. : A convenient way to pay is online through DOR's [WebFile for Business](#). This application will allow you to make electronic payments directly from a checking or savings account and provides additional services and features for managing your tax account with DOR. Login, and follow the instructions below:

- "Make a Payment"
- "Pay a Specific Bill"
- "Make Payments for Returns, Bills, & Notices";
- "Pay a Tax Bill"

When making your online payment you must enter the listed on the right hand corner of your amnesty notice.

Bill Number

3. Pay by credit card: This option will allow you to pay your amnesty balance due using a third party credit card vendor. The vendor has been approved by the Commonwealth for this purpose and a convenience fee will apply. Click the link above to pay by credit card. (This option will be available April 1, 2010.)

4. Pay by check: For this option you complete and attach the coupon provided on your Tax Amnesty Notice and your payment must be postmarked by June 1, 2010.

