

THE WORD OF THE YEAR IS...

I was driving home from work the other night, radio on in the background, when my "trivia radar" picked up a tidbit of information that I thought is worth sharing. According to Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, the most looked up word for 2005 was "Integrity."

As a collective profession, in recent years, we have been getting a healthy dose of attention when it comes to this issue. We have always been under the microscope; it's just that lately a higher magnification is being used. The overwhelming, vast majority of our membership continues to conduct themselves in a manner befitting the profession and the public trust. Unfortunately, like any other profession, we are a cross-representation of society as a whole, and, as such, a few bad apples get thrown in with the bunch; they have been, and will be, dealt with appropriately.

In the coming months, we will come under yet another round close examination by the state legislature. Some proposals have already been "floated" in the media. Most proposals I've heard of so far would impact, once again, the law abiding Assessor.

I can hardly imagine that any person, Assessor or not, willing to break any existing law, is going to be overly concerned about breaking a new one. What some in the legislature might be missing is one simple fact – the existing laws have proven they work. Thus, the answer may not necessarily rest in the passage of new laws as much as increasing the penalty for breaking the existing ones.

Legislative Action Day is coming on January 24th. This is an opportunity that should not be passed by or taken lightly – it is an opportunity to educate our legislators of what the needs of our profession and our taxpayers are. If you can't make it to Albany on the 24th, make an appointment with your local representatives and meet with them in their district office, or better yet, invite them to your next county association meeting. Use our Legislative Agenda as a foundation for opening the lines of communications with our representatives at all levels of government.

There is an old adage, "There is strength in numbers." Show your numbers on January 24th in Albany!