

One in a *Ver*Million

Meet Gene Lunn

By David Lias
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Gene Lunn was appointed Clay County's director of equalization and assessor on Dec. 1, 2010, and admits the past year has been a busy one for his office.

"In the last year, we had a little over 400 real estate transactions in the county," he said. "We adjust property on a mass basis depending on what the market is doing. And when we do a mass adjustment, what we do is adjust the value of similar types of properties. As you do the work, you zero everything down to the type and age of the property."

Gene got the chance to "get his feet wet" his current role at the Clay County Courthouse by working for 90 days with past Director of Equalization Leonard Rasmussen for 90 days before he retired late last year.

"That was a great experience," Gene said. "When I worked in banking, I dealt with real

estate lending for nearly 30 years, and that has helped me tremendously."

He also has undergone "formal" training that all directors of equalization must undergo to keep on top of the ever-changing rules and regulations involving zoning and real estate appraisal.

"I completed the schooling requirements, and have been certified by the state Department of Revenue," Gene said. "I am enjoying this job tremendously."

"There are approximately 9,000 parcels of property in Clay County, and our goal is to look at one of those properties once every five years."

He has lived in Vermillion since August 1986, and has worked as a banker, and served as director of the Dakota Hospital Foundation before beginning his current role.

"This office is charged with the responsibility of determining the value of real estate in the county," Gene said. "There are approximately 9,000 parcels of property in Clay County, and our goal is to look at one of those properties once every five years."

Some of those properties haven't changed from year to



GENE LUNN

year. But when change occurs, that also prompts a review by Gene and his staff.

"If a building permit is issued for new construction or remodeling, we also look at that, to evaluate it to determine how the changes have affected the value of the property," he said.

Gene admits that sometimes people confuse the scope of his office to the point of believing he actually

determines the amount of property taxes that each owner of real estate in the county pays.

The main goal of his office is to assess county properties' values. That assessed valuation figure is used by local governments, including the city, county and school district, to determine how much property tax must be levied to derive the needed revenue for their budgets.

Any citizen who has questions about the value of his or her property is

welcome to call Gene or visit his office in the basement of county courthouse.

"The information we have down here, except for certain types of

personal information that must remain confidential, is public information," he said. "People can stop in or give a call if they have any questions or concerns."

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