

# VANGUARD APPRAISALS, INC.

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Excellence achieved through people, products, and service.™

Spring 2005



## Special points of interest:

- Have you scheduled your Cama-X conversion?
- 2005 Annual User Group plans underway
- The BEST facility available for Cama-X training
- More website options available

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## News

**For friends of  
Vanguard**

## Cama-X Conversions

By: Kara Leyse

Are you scheduled to be updated to the latest version of CAMAvision, CAMA-X?

At this time we have converted over a dozen clients, and the calendar is filling up fast. How do you get your name on the calendar? Simply send an email to [brad@camavision.com](mailto:brad@camavision.com). The schedule is full until October 2005. If you have preferred dates, or dates you know will not

work, let Brad know and he will try to accommodate your office.

Please keep in mind that you must have Version 8 installed on your system before we can update you to CAMA-X. About two months prior we will contact you to make sure the tentatively scheduled dates will still work. We will also have you download and run a *new* Upgrade Advisor program on all equipment that will have CAMA-X installed on it.

You will need to be on Version 8 to run the *new* Upgrade Advisor. Two to three weeks prior to your scheduled dates, we will be in touch regarding the preparation for the conversion.

If you have questions regarding the scheduling of your conversion to CAMA-X please call Jenny or me at the Cedar Rapids office at 319-365-8625.

## CAMAVision 10, the First 60 Days

By: Nick Klein

Originally I was thinking of using this space to describe a cool way to link some of the Internet street maps into CAMA-X. But that'll have to wait at least until the next newsletter. Hard to believe, but CAMAVision 10 (a.k.a, CAMA-X) has only been in the hands of some clients for barely 60 days. We are rolling it out as quickly as we can, and the conversion calendar is booked solid though the rest of the year.

In these first 60 days we have gotten reports of some items we did not anticipate, but we have been

addressing them as quickly as we can. The big initial push is over, but we are continually working on small updates and already planning enhancements. This is no small task considering the main CAMAVision program contains over 450,000 lines of code and comprises over 90 separate programs. What more could the program possibly do?

Well, recently Andy has been working on Microsoft® SQL Server compatibility items; Chris has been working on the web sites and GIS-Web,

and Tara has been readying the Archive Module for CAMA-X. One area we are very excited about is future mapping connectivity between Sidwell Corp. and ProMap products. Some of you may have seen a glimpse of this with Sidwell's ParcelBuilder™ product. We hope to show more of these items at this fall's conferences.

So by the August User Group Meeting I'm thinking there will be "first 100 days" status report – and a discussion on linking Internet maps into CAMA-X.

# 2005 VCS User Group Meetings

By: Brad Miller

With the announcement of the release of CAMA-X, last year's User Group meetings were the largest ever in Vanguard's history. The 3 user group meetings Iowa/Illinois, Minnesota/North Dakota and Missouri had well over 300 total combined attendees. The new more exciting format proved to be a great success, exciting both new and existing users.

Last year's meetings were centered on informing every one of the latest and greatest enhancements to CAMAvision. By the 2005 VCS User Group Meetings, over 70 jurisdictions will be upgraded to the latest version and over 100 should be completed by years end.

Therefore, this year the plan is to provide more in-depth training, covering as many topics as we can in 2 days. Topics included are: data entry, sales ratio, VCS transfers to and from, basic and advanced queries, Comparable Search, Remote Edit, Personal Property for Missouri users, and much more.

The bar for excellence has been set high for the upcoming 2005 VCS User Group meetings. Planning started last January and we think this years meeting will top last years. Again, three user meetings are planned (Iowa/Illinois, Minnesota/North Dakota, and Missouri) and per user request they

are at the same locations as last year.

Registrations may be made on-line at [www.camavision.com](http://www.camavision.com) Upcoming Events or by calling Teresa at (319)-286-6451.

**Dave and Dodie Have Moved into Their New Home**  
**Dave Siefkas and Dodie**  
**7084 E 2nd Avenue**  
**Denver, CO 80220**

## Email Mistakes—A Little Humor

It's wise to remember how easily email -- this wonderful technology -- can be misused, sometimes unintentionally, with serious consequences.

Consider the case of the Illinois man who left the snow-filled streets of Chicago for a vacation in Florida. His wife was on a business trip and was planning to meet him there the next day. When he reached his hotel, he decided to send his wife a quick email.

Unfortunately, when typing her address, he missed one letter, and his note was directed instead to an elderly preacher's wife whose husband had passed away only the day before. When the grieving widow checked her email, she took one look at the monitor, let out a piercing scream, and fell to the floor in a dead faint.

At the sound, her family rushed into the room and saw this note on the screen:

**Be watching for our 2005 Sales Event**

"Dearest Wife, Just got checked in. Everything prepared for your arrival tomorrow. P.S. Sure is hot down here."



## Conference Winner

Bonnie Gavin from the City of Peoria Township, Illinois, was the winner of the Vanguard Appraisals, Inc. door prize which was drawn from over 900 postcards sent to Illinois Assessors and Township Assessors. The drawing was held on Tuesday, March 15, 2005, at the Certified Illinois Assessing Officers luncheon, held at March Workshops in Springfield, Illinois.

Thanks to all those who took the time to stop by our booth!

# Vanguard Training Facility Available for Cama-X Training

With Cama-X conversions in full stream we would like to remind everyone of the availability of the training facility in our Cedar Rapids, Iowa, office.

Our training facility is a wonderful option for training your entire staff in a comfortable interruption-free setting. Hands on training with no interruptions is the most effective method of training.

YOUR jurisdiction data may be loaded onto our training facility server so we may train with your data. Having your data allows your office staff the familiarity of 'their' parcels.

Utilizing the training facility also reduces training costs. Your cost would only include the time of the actual training by our Vanguard staff and not all the drive time that must be charged otherwise. This could be a tremendous cost savings.

A tour of the Vanguard Appraisals, Inc. home office is a bonus.

For any questions regarding the availability of the Vanguard Training Facility please contact Kara or Teresa at the Cedar Rapids office, 319-365-8625.

Book your dates NOW!!!

"The hands on training we received at the Vanguard office in Cedar Rapids was excellent. Scott did a great job on the presentation and made learning fun. The day just flew by and yet we all walked away with a good understanding of pricing commercial and industrial properties. Bringing most of my staff for a day of training was not only a chance for educational improvement but also a day where we were able to refuel, refresh and bond together out of the office. It was great to have a tour of the Vanguard offices and to see where everyone works. I would recommend to anyone using the hands on training at the Vanguard office."

Margaret Hutchinson  
Poweshiek County Assessor

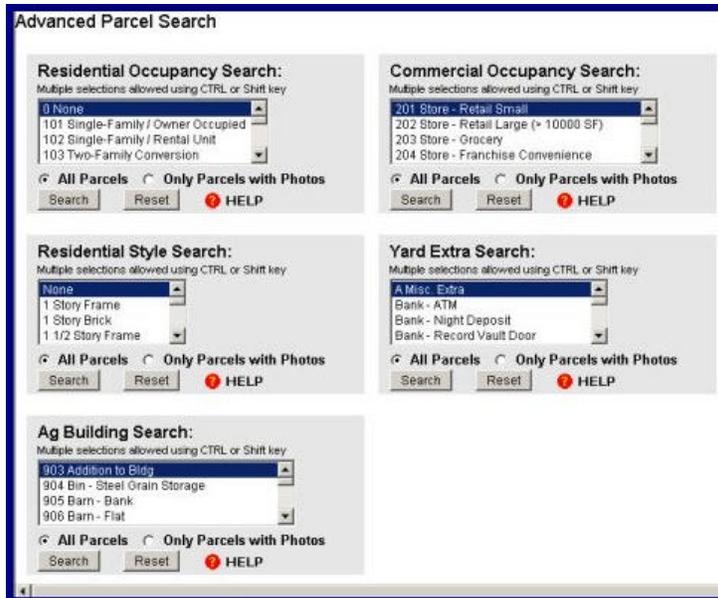
# Advanced Parcel Search Options Available Soon

By: Terri Scheuermann

Vanguard assessor websites will again have more search options available soon.

We are continually upgrading the assessor websites to allow for more functionality and flexibility for the many types of website users. The more searchable options available the less phone calls you receive in the office. What good is a website if you are still taking phone calls regarding parcel data that should be available online?

You will soon have the availability of an "Advanced Parcel Search" option. This search will allow for a parcel search by: Residential Occupancy, Commercial Occupancy, Residential Style, Yard Extra type or Ag Building style. This search allows for an insurance agent to



find all parcels that have a swimming pool or allows for a search of all apartment buildings. How much easier could that be?

Also recently available on the Vanguard website is the "Tax Estimator". This option allows the user to "estimate" the taxes on a

parcel. The user chooses the exemptions available to them and then the "estimated taxes" based on the current years' rollback and tax levies will be displayed. We have heard some great feedback on this new feature.

The "Important News" section on the homepage is maintained by the assessor's office. This allows for adding news pertinent to their office.

Also the customized value heading is a GREAT option. Instead of the value displayed as "Current Value" you may specifically display it as "Current Value as of January 1, 2005—Taxes Payable September 2006 and March 2007". No more public confusion as to what the heck is Current Value.

Note: Watch the mail for your opportunity to get a Vanguard website at a discounted rate.

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We're on the web...  
[www.camavision.com](http://www.camavision.com)

*Since 1968, Vanguard Appraisals has been at the forefront of the mass appraisal industry. Our trained staff includes specialists in field data collection, appraisal review, pricing, mass appraisal project management, court preparation and testimony, data entry, software engineering, technical support and training.*

*Our flagship [CAMAvision](#) product has been developed specifically to operate in the assessor's environment.*

*Vanguard is a full service company. We provide a wide range of appraisal products and services for assessors, we also see all the projects through completion. Customer satisfaction is our main goal.*



## New Employee Profile

Vanguard Appraisals welcomes Patrick Sullivan to their team of Software Developers. He has worked in the field of software development professionally for 9 years, mainly developing software for insurance companies. Patrick not only has good programming and computer skills, he also likes to teach them at the local college here in Cedar Rapids.

Patrick is married with one child, a daughter, who occupies 100% of his free time. He used to enjoy chess, hiking, traveling, and the symphony. Tied to his daughter is an avid interest in photography, leading to more than one person claiming that she "must be the most-photographed baby in the world!".

## Upcoming Events

### North Central Association of Assessing Officers

June 6 - 9, 2005  
Moline, Illinois

### Iowa Certified Assessors

July 13 - 16, 2005  
Dubuque, Iowa

### North Dakota Association of Assessing Officers

August 7 - 10, 2005  
Bismarck, North Dakota

### Missouri User Group Meeting

August 23 - 24, 2005  
Holiday Inn Select  
Columbia, Missouri

### Iowa/Illinois User Group Meeting

August 31st - September 1, 2005  
Cedar Rapids Marriott  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

### Minnesota/North Dakota User Group Meeting

September 14 - 15, 2005  
Holiday Inn  
St. Cloud, Minnesota