

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
President's Message | John Kistler | February 2014

"I do not believe in a fate that will fall on us no matter what we do. I do believe in a fate that will fall on us if we do nothing." Ronald Reagan, January, 1981

As my friends and clients began to find out that I was the new President of The Taxpayers' Association of Indian River County, one question was asked of me more than any other - Why do you want to do this John, aren't you busy enough already?

After being involved in this organization for several years and Vice-President last year, the answer came easy to me – because it is a cause I believe in. The Taxpayers' Association, much like our County, has a long, proud history. For over 56 years it has been looking out for the residents here by providing them with in depth research and information regarding local government that they would find difficult to obtain elsewhere. Our monthly luncheons regularly include the heads of various governmental departments who share with us the important matters of the day. They then answer questions directly from our members and guests, allowing for the type of one on one interaction that is so important if one wants to stay engaged and active in the political process. Since we are a non-partisan organization, we can invite all the candidates to our political forums. I was particularly proud of the fact that last year ours was the only group who had all the candidates for both the Vero Beach and Sebastian City Council races in attendance at those forums. All of these things help our membership stay better informed and educated. This inherently leads to more member activism which I strongly feel is vitally needed now more than ever. Especially at the local, grass roots level, where it is much easier for one person to still make a difference.

The mission statement of The Taxpayers' Association focuses on limited government and the efficient delivery of essential government services as a means of reducing the tax burden of all citizens. These are values that I have long believed in. Every day I work with small business owners who have become more and more frustrated by the many governmental bureaucracies they must deal with simply to keep their doors open. Entrepreneurship and the ability to improve one's economic standing in life through a honest and hard day's work are principles on which this great country was founded. By working to limit the size and scope of government at the local level, I feel those principles can still be secured. The efficient working of government is something The Taxpayers' Association can continue to help foster in our county. Whether it be by attending government meetings on our citizen's behalf or serving as a public voice in local media for both our members and our residents, I believe we can make a difference.

Importantly, as a native of Vero Beach, and a lifelong resident of Indian River County, I am keenly aware of the many wonderful qualities that both draw people to our community, as well as keep them here. My father sold real estate here for many years and always shared with me how proud he was to be able to help someone put down roots in the town that he found so charming. I fully realize we must always remember what makes this such a special place to live. The quality of life that many find so appealing here must be maintained. However, I also want to ensure that future generations will also be able to enjoy that same quality of life. By keeping our fiscal house in order at the local government level we can continue to have a community that is not only a joy to live in, but also a place where economic opportunity abounds and accomplishments are rewarded.

I look forward to an exciting year ahead for all of us and sincerely hope that you will join me and our board as we continue to share our mission.

Thank You,

John Kistler