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Waiting for the corks to pop

editorial

The champagne is on ice." That's the sentiment Maryanne Ingemanson left as she grabbed her clutch, adjusted her cream suit jacket and left the Bonanza building on Friday afternoon after a 120-minute interview session.

She was headed to her granddaughter's graduation in Reno that evening.

"I still do have a life you know," Ingemanson smiled. "And that includes grandmotherly duties."

Of course, if you work for the county assessor's office, the image of Ingemanson, the grandmother, is hardly what comes to mind.

"Ha, I don't know what to say about her that won't get me into trouble," assessor Bob McGowan told the Bonanza during a January interview. "How about persistent. Actually, is there a word for 'a-lot-more-than persistent'."

Indeed, Ingemanson has won plaudits from friends and foes alike. Her four-years in leading the battle to win back property taxes for some 8,700 Incline Village/Crystal Bay landowners will come to an abrupt, and if the tax revolters are to be believed, victorious end Thursday when the state supreme court will begin deliberation to uphold judge William Maddox's January decision that the state board of equalization did not equalize property taxes in the area, and that the county assessor was not using approved rules for assessment.

If the decision comes down on the side of the tax revolters, the 8,700 landowners could be getting a cumulative rebate of some \$30 million, revolters maintain.

The revolters have made national news, and may spark similar reform/protest groups in other states.

While Ingemanson, as the group's figurehead and most ardent worker, does deserve much of the credit, she defers all she can to the community that surrounded her.

From the original 14 tax revolters ("all with unique talents") seeing the process through year after year, tax bill after tax bill, to the 2,600 Incline property owners who signed a petition to take to the state department of taxation (and the men, Ted Harris, Les Barta and Chuck Otto, who collected those signatures, to the thousands of dollars in donations from local property owners to foot the \$25,000 per month legal bills - Incline's revolters are, in the words of Ingemanson, "the strongest group I've ever been affiliated with. And we won't go away."

We laud their efforts and hope that after the supreme court decision, these dedicated tax revolters can go back to simply being fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers, after - that is - they hear the corks pop.

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