

# IASCOE

The Iowa Association Of FSA County Office Employees

October 2012



# 2012/2013 IASCOE OFFICERS

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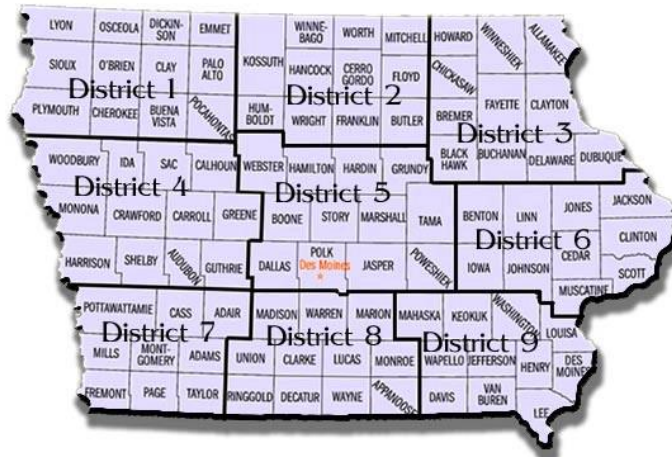
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6	Joni Birkhofer	Muscatine
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2012 IASCOE Directors

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2012 Awards & Scholarship Committee



2012 Publicity Committee



2012 Membership Committee



2012 Legislative and Benefits Committee

## PAST IASCOE PRESIDENTS

1959-61 Kenneth Hatcher  
1961-62 Raymond D Vanderhorst  
1962-63 Luther Stock  
1963-64 William H Holiday  
1964-65 Charles Bacon  
1965-66 Gaylor A Thayer  
1966-67 V. Deane Thornton  
1967-68 Marguerite Liddle  
1969-70 Warner C Walrath  
1970-71 Janet Hemm  
1971-72 Carl Lantz  
1972-74 James A Riekens  
1974-76 Cecil F Zollars  
1977-79 Garnita Ewart  
1979-80 John Ace Parker/Gary Brewer  
1980-82 Gary Brewer 1982-84 Larry Niles

1984-86 Joe McLaughlin  
1986-87 Pat Drew / Ronald Parker  
1987-88 Mike Houston  
1988-90 Ronald Reuvers  
1990-92 Steve Abbas  
1992-94 Kevin Fitzpatrick  
1994-95 Jerry Frank  
1995-97 Kevin McClure  
1997-99 Jolene Fechter  
1999-01 Trice Smith  
2001-03 John Landgraf  
2003-05 Tom Lane/Alan Donaldson/  
John Landgraf  
2005-07 Dee Lehn  
2007-09 Steve Kennedy  
2009-11 Cindy Mensen

## A Message from our State Executive Director



At the beginning of spring, I had a rather uneasy feeling about the weather. I had not heard any private forecasters/weather historians predict a drought in the Midwest. We had areas of concern in Iowa where wells were very low and streams were running well below normal, but it was appearing that spring rains were fixing those situations. Now at the end of summer, we have been through one of those droughts we will long remember but wish we could forget, and it is not over yet.

To be honest, our producers did not need this weather any more than we needed the increased workload it causes. We have our normal workload compounded with the preparation for MIDAS (business file, etc.) and a natural disaster, which is when our producers need us. All of this with 10% fewer staff.

I know not everyone likes the idea of MIDAS and the time it will take for training, but one thing I do like is that it will allow county office staff face-to-face training with breaks where they can reconnect with their colleagues. Several states have completely discontinued all face-to-face meetings and even most of the national SED meetings have been discontinued. We have not done this in Iowa because I believe there is value in getting together. I am painfully aware of our budget situation but the opportunity to reconnect as an FSA community and family simply cannot have a price put on it.

My hope is that as we start to look to both fiscal and calendar year 2013, that we will not have all of the extras of IT systems and weather to add to our workload.

John Whitaker, SED



## 2012-2013 IASCOE President



Hello All,

I just want everyone to know that Iowa was well represented at the 2012 NASCOE Convention in Boise, Idaho. We met up with a number of old friends and made new acquaintances with others that have the same ideas about what is good for the members of NASCOE. I would recommend that any person attend the convention that can because it is interesting to see how everything works.

At the NASCOE Convention we met with a number of the leaders of FSA and had some very frank discussions about what the future of FSA should be. We all know that we need to be patient about what our future will hold because our future is held in the way that the new Farm Bill is written. One of the biggest things that I can tell you is to stay in touch with your Congressman & Senators so they know how you feel about your job and the future of FSA. I was pleased to find out that Iowa has the biggest number of employees that are signed up for CapWiz.....And yet less than half of those individuals signed up actually send the letter when an alert is released. I don't know about you, but I like my job and if five minutes out of my day could help preserve that job I would do it. Five minutes is all it takes to send the letter that is written for you. There is absolutely no reason that a person can't take five minutes to save or make your job better. There is only one thing to remember and that is that you cannot send the letters from a government computer. Please get active and sign up for CapWiz if you are not already signed up and please send the letters when the alerts come out.

Please watch for future information about the 2013 IASCOE Convention. The 2013 Convention will be held the first weekend in April. There is a change in location for next year's convention. We are moving to the Ramada Tropics Resort & Conference Center in Des Moines. The Ramada is just down the road from Merle Hay Plaza. One of the things that drew me to this place is that with each and every room you get four passes to the water park that is under the same roof. I know that we have a number of younger employees that have some children and they could take advantage of this. One of the things that I believe is nice with this is that the Hotel has offered us the option to also stay for an extra night and take full advantage of the water park. One of the best things is that we got the rooms at the rate of \$75 plus tax. I believe this is a great way to take advantage of being able to come to the IASCOE Convention and making a family weekend of it.

I just want to say goodbye to some of our family that we have lost to retirement over the past year. Some didn't retire either, they just saw a little more light at the end of a different tunnel and decided to take a different path. To all of those people I wish the best and please don't be strangers. I also know that there are some that will be leaving us by the end of the year and it was great to have you with us and please know you will be missed.

Last but definitely not least, if anyone has any questions please feel free to contact me. I am here for you. As IASCOE's President it has been a very interesting time. I have been honored to represent you when talking with anyone about our future. I try to look at every situation as being important and I am not afraid to ask some of the tough questions. I have learned that is you don't ask, you don't get an answer. Sometimes that answer may not be what you wanted to hear but it may open a door to another question or an idea that works for everyone. Keep the questions coming.

I hope to see you at the 2013 IASCOE Convention where we can discuss what is happening with our agency.

Jeff Davis, IASCOE President



## 2012-2013 IASCOE Vice-President



Well, summer has gone by fast (as it usually does) and we are now moving toward harvest. The summer has been a difficult one for many with the past several months of drought- the fruits of our labor are only a small result of our efforts, the rest remains with a higher power.

This past month I had the distinctive honor of representing Iowa at the National Convention in Boise, Idaho as your Vice –President. Jeff Davis, Judy Dameron, Dee Lehn, Tammy Eibey, Joni Birkhofer and retiree Deb Krusemark also represented Iowa. We can be proud that we have IASCOE members serving at the Midwest Area Level (Dee Lehn) and the National Level (Tammy Eibey). The convention was held from August 9 – 11<sup>th</sup>, with meetings all day Thursday and Friday, then Saturday until noon.

One “hot topic” of course is the Farm Bill. This is a “moving target” as Bob Redding (our legislative consultant) calls the Farm Bill and what we know today, may be much different the next week. This fact makes it very important that we stay informed and ready to respond to Farm Bill legislation, be it through Cap Wiz and/or personally contacting your legislators. The trend on this Farm Bill is towards the Crop Insurance focus (market/revenue based commodity program). Bob Redding feels that our best bet of getting a Farm Bill timely is if we get an omnibus or minibus during the Lame-Duck session since the current Congress is more Ag-friendly. Our priorities at this time are:

- Crop Insurance Initiative (Informa report), remember that this analysis was suggested by the House Ag Committee chair
- Conservation Administration
- Office Closures: The 2 and 20 rules expires 9/30/2012 and it’s not necessarily favorable with Congress to change this rule
- Leasing: We need to get leasing authority back to the COC
- CO/GS Supervision

Other items of interest include:

- Grievance Procedures - Thoughts are needed in regards to this, the biggest complaint is that the final decisions are many times made by the SED/STO which could be intimidating
- NASCOE PT Opportunity Team – explored revisions to the COT Program, a Hybrid PT position, utilizing an Alternate Duty Station and KPT Position enhancements (Trainer/Mentor Position).
- Hiring Process Task Force – It was desired that we move to a system more like GS (the KSA’s would be gone, Vet’s preference etc). NASCOE was concerned that Vet’s preference could eliminate some good candidates. At this time the move was reversed and hiring authority remains with the COC/CED.

Gov-Delivery changes the way that FSA communicates with the public. It’s all about money and savings. It takes only \$100,000 per year to host Gov-Delivery vs. \$2.5-3 million dollars for a newsletter. According to the administrator (Juan Garcia) we are adding about 1000 e-mail addresses a day towards this communication tool. Mr. Garcia said that 90% of the subscribers to Gov-Delivery are actually participants.

A 15 year contract has been signed with Lexmark who will be providing the machines and maintenance on new copiers. It was noted that other companies using Lexmark have a 95% retention rate with the company.

MIDAS (Modernization of Innovated Agriculture Systems) was a topic of much discussion. MIDAS will ultimately be a one system interphase that will go from policy to payment. A pilot will be out in December, but those pilot states will be close to DC to avoid excess travel. Acreage reporting, farm records, common processes and supporting master data will go live in January 2013. MAL, SCIMS will be out in April 2013. Both systems will have to be operational for a period of time; we can’t just shut one system off and start the other. The training process will involve 68 super users who will train the State Trainers. Those State Trainers will then go out to the county office employees for training. This project will certainly have “growing pains” and we are all familiar with them. The ultimate goal is to improve our method of business and improve our service to our customers.

These items are just a few of the things discussed at the National Convention. I encourage each of you to go to the NASCOE web-site so you can read the minutes from each committee that met in Boise. It was truly a great experience and it is always good to be able to bring information home to Iowa. We have a lot of changes looming ahead and we need to be vigilant on our own behalf. Remember to utilize Cap Wiz, the PAC and meeting with your legislators when they are visiting your communities.

Have a safe fall  
Cindy Pistek – Vice President

## 2012-2013 IASCOE Secretary



Back to Normal?

As I was preparing to write an article for this quarter's newsletter, I was asking my co-workers for some inspiration. One suggestion was to write about; now that the kids are back in school, summer vacations are over, fall is setting in, how things are getting back to 'normal'. NORMAL – really, what is normal? According to [www.meriam-webster.com](http://www.meriam-webster.com) normal is *conforming to a type, standard, or regular pattern*.

Normal at the Comer house is constant chaos. We have recently 'completed' a 2 year re-model on a house just down the road from where we were living. So back in February we made the move, all 500 feet, to our "new" house. At the time our kids were six and three, the oldest is in college. The six year old was very excited to move into his new John Deere green room with more than enough room to drag out all of his farm toys and set up shop to be ready to plant in the spring. The three year old was very excited to move into her Bubble Gum pink room, complete with a new big girl bed, and also enough room to have all of her dolls lined up. Mom and dad were just ready to move and have more space to live and try and get our lives back to normal. Did I mention this re-model took two years? I had big plans – new house, new rules. No more toys in the living room, no more toys in the kitchen, no more staying up late, no more meals after 8:00pm. We were going to live like 'normal' families. That lasted about 3 days. We did eat before 8:00 – only because I couldn't find most of my kitchen stuff and when you live 15 miles from anywhere, your take out is cold by 8:00 – so you eat at 6 while it's hot. Between chores, calving, planting, and running kids. (And why a 6 year old needs 15 t-ball games in 6 weeks I have yet to figure out.) I kind of forgot about the new rules I had so meticulously set. I had managed to clean all the rooms at some point and time just not the whole house at once and stay ahead of the laundry. As far as hanging stuff on the walls, curtains, eating before 8:00, stricter bed times; I was failing miserably in my attempt at normalcy.

My son turned seven in August. I invited the family for a birthday party in our new home. Here was my shot at getting our house normal before everyone arrived. I spent 8 hours (the day of the party) cleaning and re-arranging 6 months worth of living so the rest of my family didn't know I wasn't normal. My husband and step son spent the day cleaning up the outside and I even put the two little ones to work sweeping the patio, wiping down the outside tables and chairs, and cleaning out the coolers. That took an entire bottle of dish soap and two rolls of paper towels but I didn't care, it was two hours of no one in the house but me. The house was clean, dinner was ready by 6:30 and everyone was given fair warning – open any closet door and I send you home!!!! The party was good, the food was great (smoked ribs, thank you hubby), and lots of compliments on our house. The next day we were exhausted, and as I looked around you couldn't even tell I had cleaned. And it was back to chores, hungry kids, and laundry. Yep, we were back to normal at the Comer house.

That is a long, drawn out story but here is my point. When we think about normal and how it fits in our lives, do we really know what normal is? At FSA things seem to be far from normal right now. There is an enormous amount of experience retiring daily, new program guidelines, new co-workers, a new farm bill, and a new software program in the works to replace the one we have had for years. But one thing stands true, FSA is here to serve the Agriculture community, and that; we do well. So during this time of change, some of us might be struggling with 'getting back to normal'. Normal might mean, accepting change. As long as we can continue to accept the changes that are constant (*regular pattern*) we will continue to serve the Agriculture community and things will be 'back to normal' before you know it. As the temperatures begin to cool off, colors begin to change, fall sports begin to start up, combines begin to roll, take a deep breath, focus on what makes you happy, *normal* will fall into to place. Here's to a safe and happy fall, get out and enjoy it, you've earned it!

Jennifer



Everywhere you go people mix up Idaho (potatos) and Iowa (corn). Even our NASCOE president, John Lohr, had a little trouble mixing up the state names (it is rather easy to do). Well, being the ingenious FSA employees that we are, Idaho and Iowa joined forces and became IDAWA!!! Just to make it official, we had our own "state photo" with its citizens happy to pose for ther camera.

## Update of Benefits from the National Convention

Submitted by Dee Ann Lehn, MWA Benefits Chairperson

The Benefits Committee met on August 9 and August 10, 2012. Chairperson, Phillip Morton led the discussions during both sessions.

Shelly Odenkirk, NASCOE Treasurer, met with the committee to discuss the possibility of started a leave bank for FSA employees. The idea is that employees would contribute annual leave to the bank to become a member of the bank and therefore, would be eligible to draw leave from the bank if needed in the future. Leave could be donated to the bank at any time. A leave bank board would be formed to oversee the process and act as a reviewing authority when requests are made for leave withdrawals. A proposal has been submitted to the FSA Administration and we are waiting for a reply.

Sam's Club discount will be renewed again in December. The discount is now good for a full year instead of having to renew the discount every 6 months. Discounts for Costco are not in the current plans as Costco requires a guarantee for a specific number of memberships before offering a discount.

J M marketing representative also spoke to the committee, reviewing current products available to members and NAFEC members. The company has compiled an informational packet for COC members which should be presented to all COC members. J M financial managers have completed over 600 Federal Benefits Analysis for members. This is a free service offered to members.

There are still member s who have not completed the Beneficiary Designation form for the free \$1000 NASCOE Group Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance. J M representatives discussed their Long Term Care plan available to members and presented a comparison of FEGLI Life Insurance to other life insurance options.

J M Marketing will be offering a Legal Shield program to members. This product should be available in the near future. This program offers inexpensive legal advice on numerous issues such as will preparation, document review, assistance with traffic tickets, etc. The fee is \$15.95 for just the Legal Shield service, \$25.90 for Legal Shield service and Identity Theft protection.

J M is also working on a critical illness lump sum plan. With this plan, a member would choose the dollar amount of coverage upfront and premiums would be based on the amount. There is a wellness benefit with this plan which pays the member \$100.00 for preventative screenings such as mammograms whether or not the member has any out-of-pocket expense for the screening.



On Thursday at the NASCOE Convention in Boise we had a Q&A Session with Juan Garcia (FSA Administrator), John Berge (Acting DAFO), Bruce Ward (Chief Financial Officer and Director Office of Budget and Finance), Taylor Chasteen (MIDAS Program Executive) and Brent Orr (DCP Program Manager) on the panel. Attendees were allowed to come forward and direct a question to the panel members, following is a general summary of those questions asked.

Q: In the Budget Process-Staff Reductions, office closures are potentially possible. Is VERA/VSIP on the table to help that?

A: We hope to be able to maintain current staff through 2013. That was the result of current retirements etc.

Q: Right now \$50-\$60 million dollars could be saved by closing or consolidating STO's. Is that something that could be considered?

A: Secretary of Agriculture would look at that, not FSA (Juan Garcia)

Q: Pillar III on the plans for the future noted Service Center Reorganization on the chart shown to us yesterday. What does that mean?

A: That does not refer to county office structures. It is looking at where are places that services could be combined-HR etc.

Q: If, for example, the copier doesn't work in FSA you go over to the other agency and use theirs. In the same building we have two very expensive copiers that seems wasteful to the County Office employees. We could buy a lot of paper with less copier costs.

A: The county office employees have sensible solutions to share. These need to be addressed at the upper level, at the county level you need to continue sharing your ideas

Q: SCIMS, will the COC election info be integrated into MIDAS?

A: If it is required by the business, it will go to be evaluated in regards to adding to MIDAS. No other agency uses the information for election. It is not part of the current roll-out of MIDAS.

Q: NRCS, FSA- we are both USDA. Why can't all agencies have access to the NRCS vehicles?

A: The lack of continuity between states in regards to usage is problematic. We need to do a better job of solving these things. We need to work toward commonality.

Q: Congress passes programs can we get funding to administer them?

A: The current house bill has some funding, but FSA can't use program dollars to administer the programs. We are working on other ways we could use program dollars.

Q: WebTA – when will we be able to accurately report for the work done in the office location where the work is done? Individuals who travel to work in another county office, their home county gets the workload credit-not where the work is done.

A: WDC will do more study on that, some budget issues are a problem. They will work on software to correct that.

Q: Office closure: will you be a stronger advocate for FSA than NRCS is an advocate for a program?

A: We anticipate piloting a program to put acre reporting to FSA. Hopefully, producers will see the need to go to FSA for reporting.

Q: Leasing Authority: Congressmen have said that FSA needs to ask for ability to do leasing authority at county level, has that been asked for?



A: If we have an individual problem with a county office we will deal with that #1. Second priority going to deal with discussion to change policy;

Q: PT's specializing in certain areas; can some of the duties of DC be done remotely to save costs?

A: This is a possibility; the Secretary is interested and can work with DAFO on this issue.

Q: Workload: Each state has their own way of staffing determinations. Can we get continuity?

A: ARS is our source and we are working toward a point of utilizing data and improvement of data. This year starts the process of unit administration.

Q: When will we have ALL states right-sized? Some states held back on ceiling reductions while others completed the reductions to ceiling early on.

A: Those who held back, now have to go forward with reductions to ceiling. We always need to look at logistics; for example budget and enough people to do the job.

Q: Many employees are at the top of their pay scale and have highly technical jobs that would warrant pay increases.

A: We can take a look and try to mirror the technical factors on the GS side.

Q: When will we get the COLA back?

A: Federal \$\$ are rarer, potentially \$148 million less in 2013.

The questions asked were good ones and the answers were appreciated. The one and a half hour session was intense and as you can imagine could have gone on much longer. It is difficult to answer on the spot as this type of Q & A requires, but the efforts of the panel were appreciated.

Submitted by Cindy Pistek – Vice President



This year David Stromer, from Hancock County, was the National Publicity Contest winner for his humorous story "Wedding: A Father's Point of View". Congratulations David!



## IASCOE Membership

Fall time brings the change of the season, many different colored leaves, change in temperature, and harvest!

IASCOE Membership also brings changes, possibilities of new benefits, changes in existing benefits, and security!

We should be proud of our membership numbers and with the members we have had over the years we have maintained and acquired so many of our benefits that make our jobs more valuable to us than most other jobs. However, although we have strong numbers here in Iowa, we should always continue to encourage those that have not yet joined to consider joining. Just think of what we could accomplish if we reached 100% membership here in Iowa alone.

It is no secret to me that those reading the IASCOE Newsletter are more than likely already members and that those who are not members more than likely aren't reading the IASCOE newsletter. Thus is our dilemma, how do we get everyone to join and read the IASCOE Newsletter. Well, it's like this, we spread the word of how important it is that everyone be a member of IASCOE and that NOW, more than ever, is the time to be an IASCOE member. There are a great many benefits beyond COLA's that members of IASCOE have, please check them out at [www.NASCOE.org](http://www.NASCOE.org) under benefits. Just a single benefit can help to partially, if not completely, cover your IASCOE premium for the year. With the drastic budget cuts we have already faced and more than likely more to come, we need to increase our membership numbers to the maximum to continue to have adequate representation to address our desire to keep and increase our benefits package.

Falling leaves and temperatures bring in the next season of the calendar year, along with this starts our new year with FSA. With the Farm Bill still pending we can only guess as to what is to come, however what we do know is that FSA has a purpose and commitment to our farming community, and our programs are paramount to those who feed our country. Although prices may be high right now, we have also suffered a record setting drought period this year, and the Farm Bill more than assuredly will include a disaster program of some fashion and other programs as yet to be determined.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every IASCOE member for their commitment to their jobs in administering vital farm programs and for helping to secure the benefits we currently have and those to come in the future!

Karen LaCour  
IASCOE Membership Chair



# Boise, Olympic Style

Submitted by Judy Dameron & Dee Ann Lehn

It was Saturday, August 11, 2012 and as we gazed over Boise from the window in our room on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor of The Grove Hotel, we could see the “Smurf Turf” Boise State Broncos stadium in the distance, but another scene was filling the street below. At first, we spotted a few bicycles passing by but then the parade of cyclists continued to come and spanned several blocks. The parade of cyclists is led by Kristin Armstrong, a professional road bicycle racer and Olympic gold medalist, who had just recently returned from the London games. This is the second gold medal she has brought home as she won another one at the 2008 games in Beijing.

Boise was hosting a Welcome Home Celebration for Kristin who was also celebrating her 39<sup>th</sup> birthday that Saturday in August. The “victory ride” began at the Boise Depot downtown and ended at Capitol Park. Capitol Park was within walking distance, so Cindy Pistek, Joni Birkhofer and the two of us embarked on a journey to get a closer glimpse of this Olympian. The park was filled with people of all ages cheering as Kristin spoke. Since it was her birthday, birthday cake was served to anyone who wanted to treat their “sweet tooth” as a band played in the background. Kristin also accommodated the crowd by staying around to sign autographs.

Armstrong grew up as an army brat that lived in Tennessee, California, North Carolina and Japan before enrolling in the University of Idaho in 1995. She currently resides in Boise with her husband, Joe and their 2 year old son, Lucas.





# Tammy's moving Onward and Upward!

Submitted by Dee Ann Lehn, Judy Dameron and Joni Birkhofer

FSA and IASCOE are losing one of their own. Tammy Eibey is moving on to another position outside our agency, a bank in her hometown of Manchester. Our loss will most certainly be their gain!

Tammy has served as a IASCOE director for many years and also as the Iowa Publicity chairperson during which time she pushed all of us to give just a bit more of ourselves by submitting articles to the IASCOE newsletter and inspiring us to become more involved with the organization. More recently, Tammy held the position of NASCOE Publicity Chairperson and served on the NASCOE executive board as well as serving as the national CAPWIZ Coordinator.

She spent countless hours working at national conventions and legislative conferences. Many times burning the midnight oil to make sure events came off flawlessly! If you took a look around at one of our yearly state conventions—more times than not you would spot Tammy among the members, bustling around tending to business and doing her part to make the state conventions a success!

She has been a dedicated FSA employee for 26 years. Tammy began her career as a County Office PT, later became a FLO and finally holding a FLM position. Yet, even with all her accomplishments as a FSA employee and NASCOE member, her greatest attribute is that she is a true and loyal friend and as a result, she has gained many friends throughout the nation. She is one of those people who will stand beside her friends through thick and thin overlooking their faults because she can see the goodness in her friends despite their imperfections.

We wish all the best to Tammy in her new adventure. Good Luck Tammy and Best Wishes-You will be missed but hey, we know where to find you!





## Just Put On a Happy Face!

By Judy Dameron

It was a dark and stormy night. The lightening flashed as the thunder grew closer and louder.....Naw, it was actually a typical hot summer day back in August of 2010 and I was weaving my way through the throngs of people at the Iowa State Fair. The air was heavy with humidity and I knew I needed to find relief from the heat that was draining all the energy from my body, if I was going to be able to make it through the day. I sought sanctuary in the Varied Industries building and though the building did provide much needed cooler temperatures, I still yearned for more. Then, I spotted him across the room, hanging out at one of the display booths. I knew immediately he was the answer to all my prayers. He was so cool and so happy, despite the blistering conditions and I knew I must have him.

I strolled over to the booth trying to control my desire to break out in a full run. At last, I reached my destination and I reached out my hand and wrapped my fingers around his wooden handle—it was pure ecstasy as I realized the Smiley Face fan was truly mine, all mine-HA HA HA HA (crazed laughter)!

I took Smiley everywhere with me that day. He was by my side as I ate corndogs and funnel cakes. He waited patiently as I slurped down lemonade after lemonade. He waved continuously at the passing crowds cooling my face as he did so and the faces in the crowds looked back at me with envy because I had something they all wanted.

That evening, the two of us went to the Sugarland concert. Smiley and I swayed to the beat of the music and he seemed to actually enjoy it when I sang along with the band—at least his smile never left his face—not even when I sang so off tune others were trying to move away from me. I knew then, I wanted to have Smiley with me always.

Since the fateful day, we have been inseparable. Smiley is my constant travelling companion and oh the adventures we have. Why, just this summer, he flew (for the first time) with me to the National Convention in Boise. Once again Smiley came to my aid when the air conditioning gave out on the bus that transported us to the scenic train ride through mountains in Idaho. He thoroughly enjoyed that train ride and he had an opportunity to get to know some of my good friends while riding the rails.

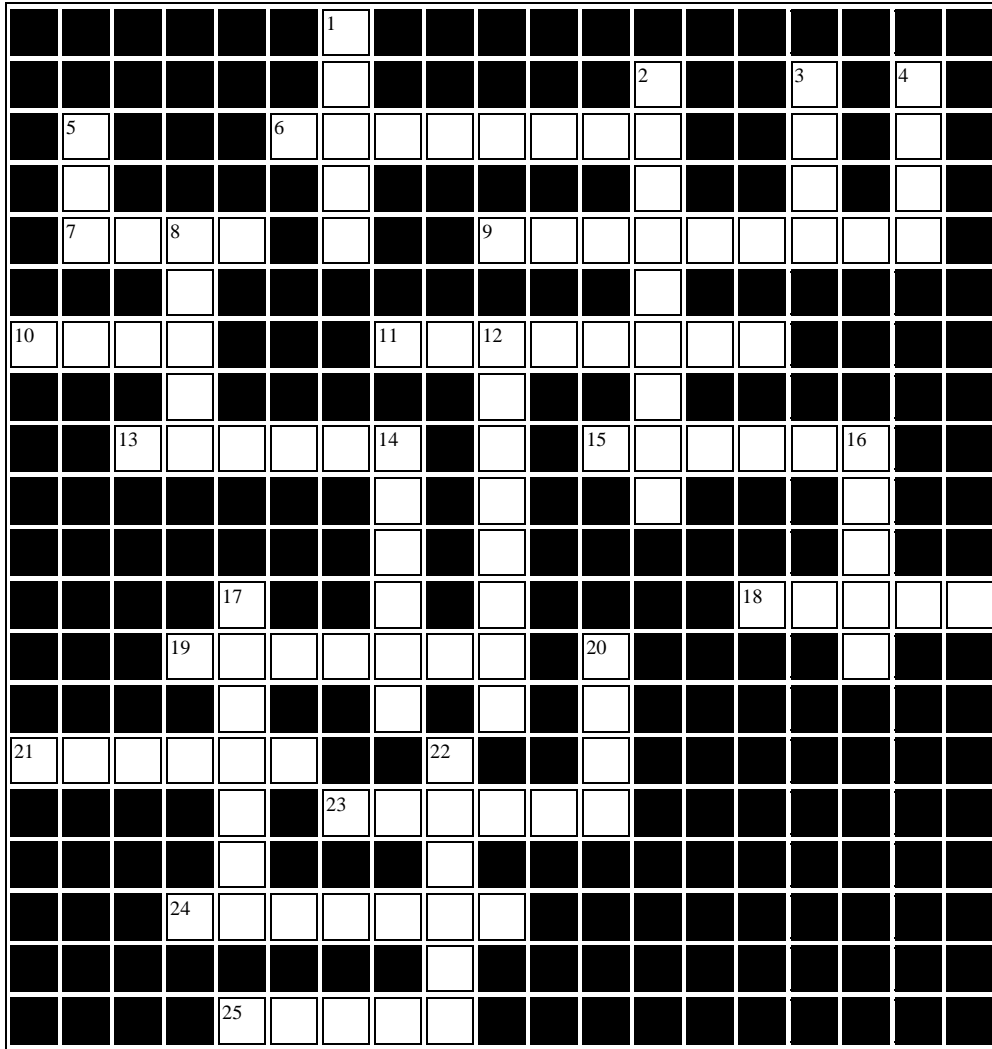
After attending meetings during the days and enjoying the entertainment during the evenings, Smiley would retreat back to the room and relax. And the lucky dog, he was sharing the room with 3 women! Yet, Smiley always remained the gentleman.

It would seem Smiley has been bitten by that old travel bug and can't wait to get on the road again. He keeps his eyes wide open looking for any travel opportunity whether near or far. Who knows where he will show up next!



## Can you Name the County?

Guess the county name using the clues provided.



### Across

### Down

- 6. A brand of automobile
- 7. A kind of pottery
- 9. Not a brown eagle, but a... (2 Words)
- 10. If you "domesticata an animal, you-do-ah-this-ah"
- 11. A sheriff
- 13. What you are if you aren't wrong
- 15. A Texas TV show of the 1980's
- 18. Something of great value
- 19. A movie played around Christmas, "A Christmas..."
- 21. Not the maid, but the...
- 23. What taffy does when it cools
- 24. The best dictionary, at one time
- 25. Part of a book

- 1. Textile manufacturing place
- 2. What the rooster didn't see...
- 3. Is it a state or a county?
- 4. To jab
- 5. A grocery bag
- 8. What you accept, if you're not chicken
- 12. Circle of a precious metal
- 14. A person who sews suits
- 16. A bedtime ritual for children
- 17. Answer the question, "Has Fay Eaten?"
- 20. A large cat
- 22. The favorite color of the Irish

