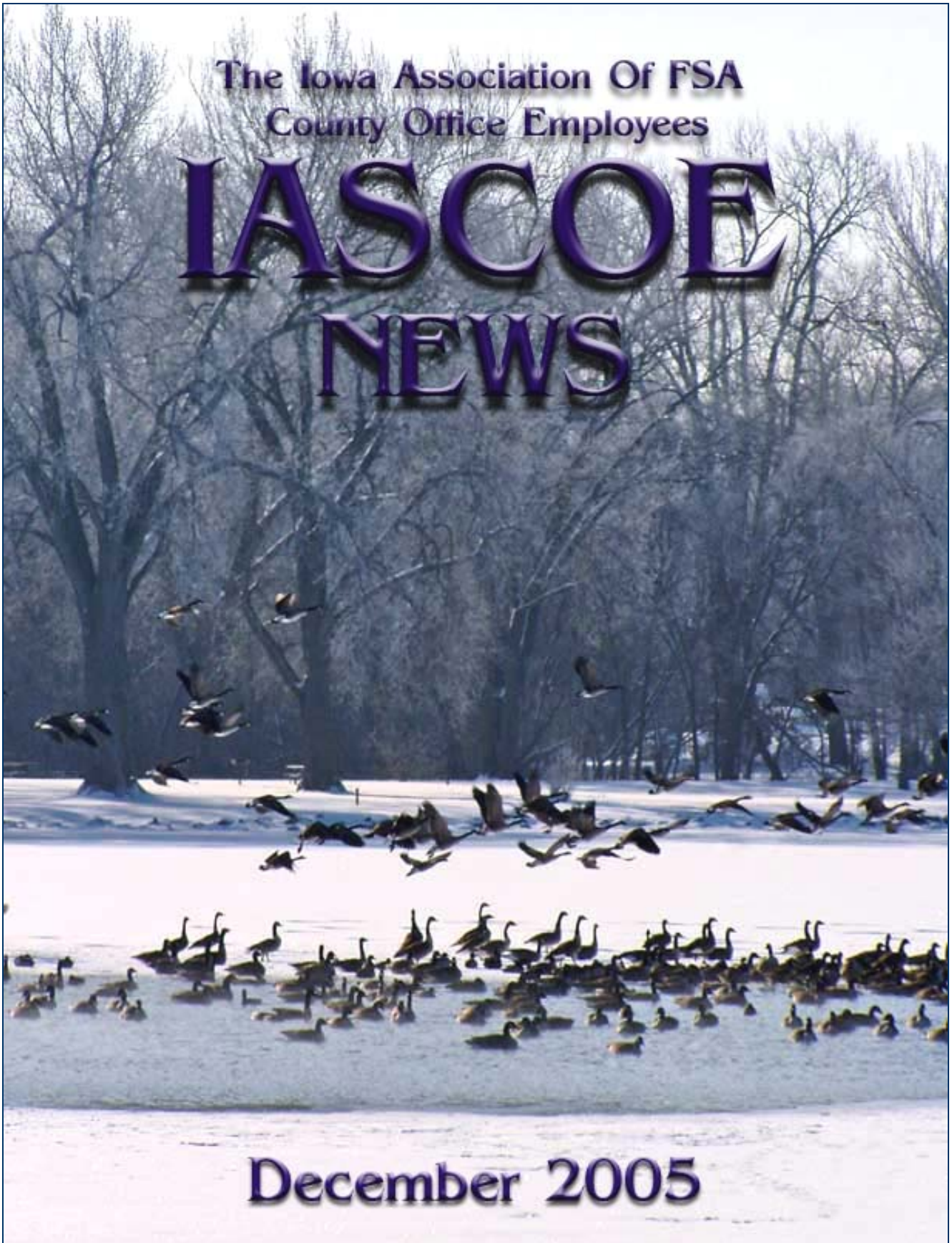


The Iowa Association Of FSA
County Office Employees

IASCOE NEWS



December 2005

December 2005 IASCOE Newsletter

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FROM THE DESK OF DERRYL MCLAREN, SED

The Christmas Season is upon us, and that signals the end to another year. Before we bid farewell to 2005, however, we should pause to count our blessings. We have much to be thankful for.

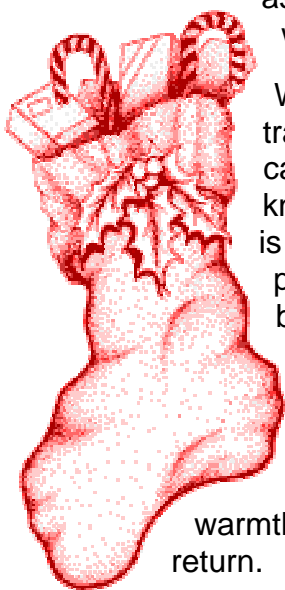
For most Iowans, 2005 was another bountiful harvest. Bin-busting crops translate into mountains of workload for us, but that's okay. My dad always said that you won't go broke with a bumper crop, so I guess we are all safe as 2005 comes to a close. Be thankful for our close affiliation with the livelihood of our producers.



Our farm loan portfolio is sound in Iowa, as farm loan repayments are being received in our offices in a timely manner. In fact, 2005 witnessed the reversal of declining loan volumes for farm loans. Demand for our services should continue, as energy prices and dry soil conditions cast a shadow for next year. Once again, we are reminded that as long as there is risk in agriculture, producers and lenders, alike, will need our Agency as a source of credit.

Yes, I need to acknowledge that the road followed in 2005 had a few chuckholes in it. Budget, buy-outs and office consolidations come to mind. Upon closer inspection, however, even these had a silver lining. Our staffing is right-sized, our offices are open, and we are gainfully employed. These events focused attention on the excellent job performance of our Agency and employees. Politicians and the general public have a renewed appreciation for the Farm Service Agency as we approach the next Farm Bill. For that, we can be thankful.

I am certainly pleased with the progress we made in 2005. You all demonstrated great patience in forging ahead with GIS and Web-based technology. You dealt with a few ill-fated attempts to modernize, but they were all made in earnest. For as good as we are today, we must be ready to deliver the new Farm Bill, as well.



We have a new Administrator, Teresa Lasseter, to lead us in the transition from 2005 to 2006, and for that I am thankful. Teresa came up through the ranks of the Farm Service Agency, and she knows the challenges we face on a daily basis. Our performance is judged by how well we deliver the current program, not how we perform tomorrow. I am comfortable with Teresa facing the budget challenge of accommodating both today and tomorrow.

The Holiday Season is such a personal time of the year. It holds both a time for reflection and a time for tomorrow's promise. Smile, share a laugh, and celebrate your good fortune with family and friends. The Office, filled with the warmth of your colleagues and producers, will greet you upon your return.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Derryl McLaren".

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Dee-liberations

By Dee Ann Lehn
IASCOE President / CED Keokuk County

The Holiday Season is upon us and a new year is just around the corner. For the longest time, 2006 was just a distant date but now it's only a few weeks away. As one year ends and another is about to dawn, many of us take time to reflect on the months that have past.

I can't say 2005 will go down in my book as one of the better years in my personal history. I've seen both my Dad and my father-in-law battling different kinds of cancer and my family has been focused overseas on Iraq as my brother has been stationed there as a member of the Iowa National Guard 224th Engineering Battalion. Yet, we have all made it through and are a stronger and closer family as a result.



On the work front, we all know the anxiety "FSA Tomorrow" has caused throughout the agency. Although the initial plan has not been implemented, changes are still bound to come. Hopefully, we have learned that in order for FSA to be a successful and vital part of USDA, we must work together at all levels of FSA to development a reasonable and workable plan to shape the future of our agency.

As president, I've faced several ups and downs during 2005 and sometimes wondered what on earth I had gone and done by accepting this position. Yet, I have a wonderful group of directors and employees working with me and together, I would like to think we made a difference. I have had the opportunity to travel to Washington DC to meet with our Senators and Representatives. I've been to the Mid-West Rally in Nebraska, the National Convention in South Dakota and recently traveled to Ohio for their state convention. (All of these opportunities for an Iowa farm gal who used to think going to Des Moines was a vacation!)

I have met so many people from so many parts of the country and developed new friendships and I have also developed a great respect for the Officers of NASCOE. These folks are so dedicated and work so hard for our association; I cannot begin to express my appreciation for all they do.



Please take some time this holiday season to reflect on the past year and count the many blessings that sometimes tend to get lost in all the hub-bub of the every day trials of our lives.

Wishing you all Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Dee



*The cover photo was taken at Blackhawk Lake, Lake View Iowa
by Brian Beach - IASCOE Webmaster & PT Sac County*

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Thank You, IASCOE Members

By Steve Kennedy
IASCOE Vice-President / CED Jasper County

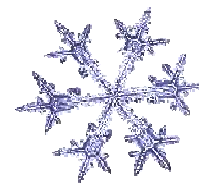


In the June edition of IASCOE News, I wrote about a thing called “FSA Tomorrow”. Even if you had heard the term, no one knew for sure what it meant. Then by mid-September we all knew what “FSA Tomorrow” meant and IT WASN'T GOOD. The plan to close 25% of the FSA offices was to put it mildly; ill conceived. But then what would you expect from a plan that was completely formulated in Washington, DC? There was virtually no input from the people who were affected by the proposed plan such as producers, rural business owners, commodity groups, or FSA employees.



I am convinced that if “FSA Tomorrow” had gone forward, it would have proved to be a colossal failure. It would have resulted in many hardships and ultimately poorer service to our producers. The point we must understand, though, is **just because a plan is clearly flawed, it does not mean it won't become reality.** When IASCOE President, Dee Lehn, and myself sat down with SED, Derryl McLaren, to review the “FSA Tomorrow” plan, there was no doubt of the gravity of the situation.

So why was “FSA Tomorrow” halted (at least temporarily). Once again, I believe a big THANK-YOU goes to IASCOE / NASCOE and its members. I know many of you wrote letters, contacted congressional representatives / aids, talked to individuals and groups of influence in your rural areas. And that is what I truly love about this organization. Each day I am more and more amazed at the care and concern of IASCOE / NASCOE members. You are willing to be involved for the benefit of not only yourselves, but also your fellow employees and the producers you serve. As a member you have a voice, and your voice has been heard.



I wish all of you a wonderful holiday season, and Merry Christmas!!!

Steve Kennedy



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Final Membership Report - December 2005

By Daniel Wells - State Membership Chairperson

The numbers are finally in!!! The 2005 IASCOE Membership drive turned out to be another success. Our IASCOE membership is up this year to 87.5%. Thanks to all of you and the hard work of your membership committee. Our continued goal is to have as many members as possible in Iowa. Hopefully each of the upcoming years we will see a continued growth in our membership.

For those of you who have recently retired, we would like to suggest that you become an associate member of IASCOE. Many of you have been receiving benefits through IASCOE and to continue those benefits, you should consider becoming an associate member. We currently have 39 active associate members.

Each year your IASCOE directors draw five (5) members for the "Early Bird" special. Each IASCOE member whose dues are received before June 15th is eligible for a refund of \$50. This year the following IASCOE members were drawn:

Loretta McClain - Osceola County
Ruth Engelmann - Humboldt County
Barbara Onnen – Shelby County
Barbara Louw – Scott County
Kathy Moorman - Wayne County

Congratulations to the winners!!! Remember next year to get your dues in early to be eligible. You have to play to win!!!

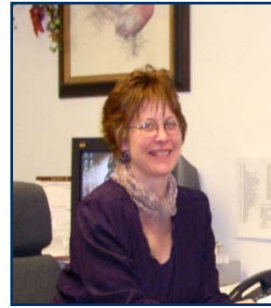
Thanks to those who choose to be members of IASCOE, we are able to receive and maintain benefits that do not come automatically like many people think. All the benefits we receive as County Office employees are a direct result from the efforts of NASCOE/IASCOE. It is very important for us to maintain a strong membership to achieve the goals we have set for ourselves. As you are all aware, NASCOE continues to work to ensure the fair treatment of all our employees and to provide a work environment beneficial for all. This process would be virtually impossible without a strong membership and your continued support.



Christmas gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness.
To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service.
To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect."
~ Oren Arnold

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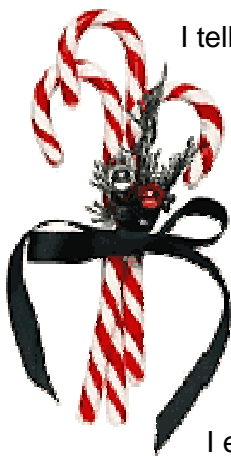
Report From Tammy Eibey
IASCOE Director, Publicity Chairperson
MWA Legislative Committee
FLO, Delaware County, Iowa



Hello Iowa FSA Employees and Friends

As I sat down to write this we have just gotten through Thanksgiving and now everyone will set their sites on the Christmas Holiday Season. I am grateful this year for my family and friends. My mother in law has successfully completed treatments for breast cancer and my sister in law has finished her treatments for ovarian cancer and has now entered into a year long clinical trial for a new drug. She will be one of 1500 women nationwide participating. She will not grow hair back during this trail period and has purchased a few different wigs. She is always in high spirits and the last time we visited, she had my 10 year old cut out several shapes of eyebrows from felt so she could tape them on depending on her mood. It was a good chuckle. But it also was a reminder that even with a heavy load you need a good support system and a few good laughs along the way.

My children are growing and not depending on Mom as much. My oldest is a sophomore at Iowa State. He is a member of the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity and has been participating in campus organizations and committees and growing as a young man. He did call to ask if I would cry if he didn't live at home next summer since he was accepting a job that would have him live in Eldora, Iowa. I told him yes, I would cry but was proud of him. My next son Keith is a senior at West Delaware. He was on the football team that met Harlan in the 3A finals. Even though they didn't win, we left with a good feeling. This season had its ups and downs but the experience for the young men involved with the program was with out question a learning experience. Our head coach not only teaches them about football but about the importance of family and qualities of being a good man. My son actually let me hug him in front of his teammates after the game. So see, he sometimes needs his Mom. Now he is nursing his injured knees and having us speak with the recruiters for the Marines and Army Rangers. So now on to other worries with him. Audrey is a freshman and involved with sports as well. She is wearing makeup and boys are a hot topic...YIKES! My baby Allison is just turning 10 so I am still ok with her. But she too is in sports and twirls baton and seems to think she needs a MSN account...I don't think so....



I tell you about these things just to let you know that nothing stays the way we would really want them too. We get set in our ways and sometimes too rigid to see the good side of things. Change can be good sometimes and speaking up when it isn't can also be good and revitalizing to a soul. As a member of IASCOE/NASCOE, I have recently seen the efforts of many employees to get a plan to basically decimate FSA stopped. Though some may feel that this was only for a stop gap measure, it was the way NASCOE felt it needed to be handled at the time and was in the best interest of all employees in all parts of the country. You will see in the newsletter, articles from Bonnie Heinzman, NASCOE Vice President and Brent Orr, NASCOE SEA Alternate Exec and Legislative Member that NASCOE and its mission is important to many people across the NATION.

I encourage every one to be a member and those that are already, to encourage someone who may not be a member to join. There are many aspects that go on behind the scenes not only on the National Level but in our Area and our State level that many have no understanding. Do you realize that the National Legislative chair is Trice Smith from Benton County, Iowa. What a plus that is for Iowa and our members. I am glad to have been able to participate at the National level at several Legislative Conferences and National Conventions.

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Most recently I have been serving not only as an IASCOE director and the Iowa Publicity Chair but am a member of the National Legislative Committee representing the Midwest Area. I was asked to serve by our MWA Executive Mark Van Hoose, past National Legislative Chairman. This has allowed me to make friendships with other employees from across the nation and even with some of the staffers in our Representatives offices. Good people with good intentions. NASCOE is trying to keep all employees better informed and hope you feel that you have been.

If you should have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me. Also, all employees are encouraged to visit the NASCOE website at www.nascoe.org and the Iowa site of www.iascoe.org and review items. There are forms available to submit negotiation items. This site is updated regularly and contains important information and links for all. The NASCOE Officers and Area Execs will be meeting In Washington DC the week of December 12 and part of that meeting is to meet with FSA administration and officials. I wish them luck and hope they have safe travels to and from the meetings. As we enter another year, we as FSA employees and IASCOE/NASCOE members need to be supportive of our National Officers , Area Executives and National Committee Chairs as they and we all face the challenges that we know will lay ahead of us. We will now promote FSA to its fullest and head into the Farm Bill talks with more negotiating power than what we might have seen in the past. Let's also hope our new FSA Administrator Teresa C. Lasseter and our new Deputy Administrator for Field Operations, Steven Connelly welcome the opinions and abilities of our field offices and employees.

In closing I would also encourage everyone to sign up for CAP WIZ. Iowa has 216 members participating but that is only about 33 percent of all members!

I wish everyone a safe and happy Holiday Season!

Tammy Eibey

Here are some of the current Legislative items that NASCOE has been keeping an eye on:

Key Bills in Congress		
Bill Name	Number of Cosponsors	Position
S. 619 - 'A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.'	24 (5 R, 19 D)	We SUPPORT this legislation
S. CON. RES. 8 - 'A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that there should continue to be parity between the adjustments in the pay of members of the uniformed services and the adjustments in the pay of civilian employees of the United States.'	21 (4 R, 17 D)	-
H.R. 3974 - 'A bill to prohibit the closure or relocation of county or local Farm Service Agency offices pending the completion of the next omnibus agriculture law.'	26 (6 R, 1 I, 19 D)	-
H.R. 3974 - 'A bill to prohibit the closure or relocation of county or local Farm Service Agency offices pending the completion of the next omnibus agriculture law.'	26 (6 R, 1 I, 19 D)	We SUPPORT this legislation
H.R. 2209 - HR 2209, a bill to support adequate staffing of FSA CO employees.	32 (13 R, 19 D)	We SUPPORT this legislation
H.R. 994 - 'To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow Federal civilian and military retirees to pay health insurance premiums on a pretax basis and to allow a deduction for TRICARE supplemental premiums.'	289 (127 R, 1 I, 161 D)	We SUPPORT this legislation
H.R. 633 - 'To amend title 5, United States Code, to increase the level of Government contributions under the Federal employees health benefits program.'	60 (3 R, 57 D)	We SUPPORT this legislation
H.R. 147 - 'To amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.'	301 (116 R, 1 I, 184 D)	We SUPPORT this legislation

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IASCOE SICK LEAVE AWARDS

Sick Leave Awards are given to permanent employees who are IASCOE/NASCOE members and have accumulated sick leave of 1000, 1500, 2000, and 2500 hours.

The national level recognizes 3000 accumulated hours. Send the names of people with accumulated sick leave hours as of December 31, 2005 to

Connie Safley,
1252 230th Street
Linden, Iowa 50146

Thank you, if you have any questions let me know.

Connie Safley - Dallas Co FSA Office

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS

It is time again to start thinking about recognizing someone that has made an outstanding contribution in areas of: NASCOE; FSA – Agriculture; or Community Service. This program encourages recognition of NASCOE members who make outstanding contributions in one of the three areas. Any member of the Association may make a nomination. Only members of the association who are in good standing, who are serving under a permanent appointment, or who have voluntarily retired during the current year are eligible to receive these awards. Nominations need to be mailed NO LATER than FEBRUARY 1st, 2006.

INFORMATION FOR EACH CATEGORY

SERVICE TO NASCOE: Years of NASCOE membership; committee activity; offices held; contributions to the organization; FSA background and any other pertinent information can also be included.

SERVICE TO FSA-AGRICULTURE: How long has nominee worked for FSA? What program or special project have they worked with? Size of county and number of farmers served? Any outstanding contribution to FSA and /or Agriculture? Has nominee received any special awards or promotions? NASCOE background and any other pertinent information can also be included.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: What organization(s) has nominee worked with? Do they hold an office or any special committee assignment? Their church affiliation, family status, children, etc. What has nominee done to improve the community he/she lives in? Any special recognition received? FSA and NASCOE background and any other pertinent information can also be included.

LENGTH OF NOMINATION

A nomination should be brief, factual, and specific! It cannot exceed two (2) double-spaced typewritten 8 1/2" X 11" pages, plus the cover sheet. The pages must not be reduced by photocopier or other means to enable more print on the two pages. No attachments, and conclusions not backed by facts should be avoided. Specific examples and details should be given to support the nomination.

SUBMITTING NOMINATION

Mail the original and five (5) copies of the nomination to Attention – Connie Safley, Dallas County FSA, P.O. Box 70, Adel, Iowa 50003 before February 1st, 2006. If you need a cover sheet or more information contact Connie Safley at 515-993-4205 or you can go to NASCOE website (www.nascoe.org).

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2006 IASCOE SCHOLARSHIPS

All applications may be found at the NASCOE website, www.nascoe.org In order to print the application, access the web-site and look for the scholarship button on the left side and click. On the next page, click on “scholarship application”. This is now a fillable form and you may complete the application by typing in the information. Once you have completed all pages (5) of the application, print the document and sign as required. Be sure to print the scholarship application checklist in order to assure that you have all supporting documents included when you mail the application to me.

The IASCOE scholarship application **MUST** be returned to Cindy Pistek, 2145 Maple Ave, Britt, IA 50423 by **January 31, 2006**.

Eligibility:

1. Applicant must be an IASCOE/NASCOE member, member’s spouse, or member’s legal dependent. The member must be a county FSA employee who has their dues paid and membership current for the past 5 consecutive years or since becoming a permanent FSA employee, whichever is less
2. Applicant must be either a high school senior or graduate with a minimum of a “C” average in both the junior and senior year **or** may be a full-time (minimum of 12 credit hours) college student with a minimum of a “C” average up to the Bachelor Degree level.

Instructions:

1. Complete this **application** if you meet the criteria above. Your state scholarship chairperson (Cindy Pistek) must receive it no later than **January 31, 2006**.
2. Include an **official transcript** of your high school grades and a **letter of recommendation**. If you are a college student, include an official (copy) transcript of your grades. College students must also include a high school transcript if they wish to have them considered for rating.
3. All grade point averages must be on a scale using the 4.0 system. Letter or numerical grades need to be converted by your counselor.
4. Area winners will be asked to submit a recent color photograph.
5. Please type or print legibly in ink.
6. Keep a copy of this application for your records.

Please make sure that all of the following are attached or enclosed, as required, with our application. Failure on your part to provide the required information may result in your application not being considered. Copies of transcripts are acceptable.

Completed Application	_____
High School Transcript	_____
And/or College Transcript	_____
All required signatures	_____
Letter of recommendation	_____

NOTE: DO NOT RETURN THIS SHEET WITH YOUR APPLICATION!!

This is a great opportunity—two chances for scholarship with one application. Every complete application will be forwarded to the Midwest Area NASCOE Scholarship. If you have any questions please contact me at lpistek@fbx.com, 641.923.3666 (day-time), or 641.843.4573. (nights and weekends).

Cindy Pistek
Iowa Scholarship Chairperson

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What Is On The Horizon For NASCOE?

Bonnie Heinzman, NASCOE Vice-President
Program Technician, Wheeling West Virginia



FY06 - near future... FSA Tomorrow has only been set aside and we will face a similar plan in the future, Budget is a problem and management will be faced with making hard choices to live within the budget, as I write this we do not have 2006 staff ceilings but staff ceilings will be based on how much money is available in the budget. As seems to be the norm the past few years, FSA Employees and NASCOE will have a "hard row to hoe" to get through FY06. There have been some changes in our FSA Management, which will undoubtedly bring changes for us as FSA employees and NASCOE members. Teresa Lasseter is our new Administrator. Ms. Lasseter's profile shows that she has been an employee of FSA for many years and has held many positions within FSA - county office, state office, and in WDC. Dan and I have both visited with Ms. Lasseter and look forward to working with her. Steve Connelly has been appointed as the new DAFO replacing Doug Frago. Mr. Connelly has served as SED of Maryland and more recently as Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs. Many of you who attended the NASCOE convention in Rapid City may have visited with him there. Although we will miss Doug we wish him well in his retirement and hope he will visit with us when he has an opportunity. Again, Dan and I have both also visited with Steve and we are looking forward to working with him. There may be other changes in management that we are not aware of at this time. As far as we know John Chott and Linda Treese will remain in their current positions as Assistants to DAFO and will be very helpful to Mr. Connelly as the new DAFO. I know that we will continue to have a great working relationship with the folks in the DAFO shop.

FY07 and beyond... Legislation has been introduced to extend the 2002 Farm Bill through 2008 and if passed will delay the next Farm Bill by one year. However, NASCOE leadership must be forward thinking. For at least 3 years NASCOE leadership and Legislative Team have been discussing strategy, formulating plans, and taking the first initial steps of NASCOE's course of action for the 2007 Farm Bill. On this subject, I hope that each of you either attended the Farm Bill Forum in your area or responded via the internet with your comments on the next Farm Bill. As I write this it isn't too late to submit comments if you wish to do so. Examples of write-in comments are available to get you started, and can be obtained from Trice Smith or me. One of the most important questions I think NASCOE leadership can ask of membership is their thoughts/wishes for their future with FSA and NASCOE and what can we do to get there. So, "What are your thoughts - what do you want for your future with FSA and NASCOE, and what are your thoughts on what we should do to get there?" Comments can be sent to me at bheinzman@charter.net

Continued...

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Holidays – The holiday season is upon us. It is time for us to give thanks for the freedoms we enjoy as Americans and also time to take stock and give thanks for our friends, family and other blessings. The Holiday Season tends to bring out the good in most of us. Unfortunately, it can also bring out the bad in some situations. Sometimes the added stress of scheduling annual leave, purchasing gifts, cooking, wrapping, paying the bills, etc. can elevate a situation to where folks need some help dealing with it. We have a couple of places where folks can obtain help, guidance, or insight into handling workplace situations that may be troubling. The USDA Employee Assistance Program at 888-290-4327 is one. Another is a Workplace Violence Counselor at 202-418-8963. I hope none of us will need to use either of these services this Holiday Season, but if needed please remember they are available.

New Job Performance Evaluations Training – I am embarrassed to admit that I could not sit through the teleconference training on the new Performance Evaluation System. I have received several comments on the training format, content, handling of questions that were posed by the participants, and other aspects of the training. If you sat through it and have questions that were not answered, would like to comment on the format of the training, or would like to comment on the actual Performance Evaluation System; we want to hear from you. Comments should be sent to your Area Exec Mark VanHoose.

Negotiations – It's that time! Time to submit Negotiation Items for 2006. The deadline is December 15th. The form is available on-line at www.nascoe.org under the Negotiations page, or can be obtained from your Area Exec Mark VanHoose or Area Negotiation Consultant Betsy Mace. It is important that each of you submit issues that affect your daily working life that you believe can be improved. Daily issues sometimes seem like minor issues compared to things such as budget and staffing, but the minor issues are important to consider also. Again, we want to hear from you.

Suspensions, Dismissals, OTI's, Reprimands, Etc. – Most everyone is aware that the procedures for Adverse Actions have changed. The changes were effective August 1, 2005. Unfortunately, updated versions of Handbook 22-PM reflecting these changes have not been received in our FSA field offices. This can leave our membership in a bit of a dilemma. If you have a reason to question what your rights might be you may not want to contact your STO for guidance/information. If you find yourself in this situation and you believe NASCOE can assist you, please contact your State President to request NASCOE's assistance. The process for requesting assistance can be read at www.nascoe.org under the Vice President's page.

Christmas - While we are enjoying our holidays with family and friends let's all remember to say a prayer for our military who are busy defending our way of life and can't enjoy the holidays with family. Please accept my sincere thanks to each of you for your support of NASCOE, and my wish for a wonderful, healthy, happy holiday season for each of you.

Bonnie Heinzman
NASCOE Vice President



Visit our website at www.iascoe.org

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NASCOE LEGISLATIVE NEWS - NOVEMBER 2005

Respectfully submitted by Trice Smith
NASCOE Legislative Co-Chair & Chief PT, Benton County FSA

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE INFORMATION

The contract with the hotel for a full 2006 Legislative Conference has now been finalized.

The conference particulars are as follows:

Hotel: Washington Plaza
10 Thomas Circle, NW
Massachusetts Ave
Washington, DC

Dates: Monday February 27 - Thursday March 2.

Participants Arrival: Monday February 27

Participants Departure: Thursday March 2

Participants in the conference will make plans to arrive on Monday with training and speakers on Tuesday, visit congressional offices on Wednesday/Thursday and return home on Thursday. It seems to be a very busy week in D.C. as rooms were difficult to obtain. As soon as we receive the group number for making reservations the Area Legislative Chairs will be getting that and other items out to the states. We are encouraging the states to bring a producer from their state to be a participant in the conference and a coalition partner in the visits on the hill. This will be done at the states expense so make plans now.

LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION TRIP

Brent Orr has graciously volunteered to plan and host our first Legislative Congressional Staff education trip. This recommendation was made at the national convention and money had been previously been set aside for this trip. Brent has planned a Duck Hunt and Trap Shoot for the 8-10 staffers, along with producers from his state. Robert Redding and Brent are working together to decide who will attend this event. The education trip will also include a visit to a couple of county offices within the area. NASCOE feels that this meeting will prove very positive for our organization. With the new farm bill on the horizon we need to "branch out" into other avenues of communication.

BUDGET

The FY 2006 Conference Report was approved on October 28, 2005 and signed by the President on November 10th. Salary and Expense dollars ended up somewhere in between the House and the Senates requests and is \$30M over the 2005 level but still is significantly below what we need. This is a short recap on the funding for S&E's:

Presidents Request - \$1,365.1 M

Conference Actions- \$1,339.7 M

(\$25.4)

Add in the 3% COLA (\$ 7.1)

2% Rescission makes it a total of (\$27.7) shortfall for S&E's for 2006.

The total shortfall for FSA is somewhere around \$70M.

This of course will have a definite impact on the operation of the county office.

Continued...

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STAFFING

FSA Tomorrow is not really a dead issue, it has just been rerouted to a different approach. The producers and community stakeholders will now have the chance to come forward at a public forum or meeting and make their case for keeping an office open or maybe to even be in approval of closing the county office. This is what NASCOE wanted. We wanted stakeholders at the table with fair and justifiable reasons to close a county office. There have been no promises or commitments that monetary savings from consolidations of county offices would be retained in the state or applied to staffing. Therefore the closures may not have helped us with the current staffing situation. Savings from the FSA Tomorrow plan would not be seen until FY 2007. The Department is telling NASCOE that FSA Tomorrow would have cost FSA \$6M in the first year and then any savings would begin to show in 2007. The withdrawal of FSA Tomorrow by the department will not be responsible for the word RIF because by all accounts, it looks as if there were already plans in place for staff reductions in our future. The Department officials made continually stated as "unclear" how many jobs would be eliminated by FSA Tomorrow. Once offices were consolidated could we believe that the agency would allow us to keep 2 clerks for every program? Not when they thought that IT efficiencies for our program operations were in place!

Until DAFO is provided the final FY 2006 staffing ceilings we are operating under the ceilings that were provided by DAFO in September. Dan has been promised by DAFO that he will get the numbers as soon as they do. Until then we do not know what we are up against. The latest numbers on the buyouts show 291 taken for CO and 63 for GS. This falls about 41 short of what the agency wanted. Could there be a possible 2nd buyout? Another buyout would further compromise the county office by dealing with less staff and excess workload. NASCOE is developing an open door policy with the new administrator and will continue to make her aware of the possibilities that FSA has as a county-based operation.

PROGRAM CUTS For The THE RECONCILIATION ACT .

Following are the cuts proposed in the House and Senate. They will now go to conference committee for agreement. Probably will not be completed until December.

House Side Reduction

Reduces direct payments by 1% for each fiscal year 2006-2009

Reduces the direct peanut payments by 1% for FYs 2006-2009

Reduces the Direct Advance payment amounts for FY 2006-2007 from 50% to 40%

Repeals the Step 2 program for upland cotton

Reduces Watershed programs by 15M and rescinds the funds that were previously made available and not used.

Limits funds for CSP for 2006-2010 to \$2.2B and Increases funding for CSP to \$5.7 for fiscal years 2006-2015.

Senate Side Reduction

The Senate reconciliation package was passed about 2 Weeks ago including several cuts to Agriculture.

Proposed 2.5 % reduction in farm program payments

Advance Payment reduction amounts from 50% to 40% for 2006 and reduced to 29% for 2007-2011 crop years.

Cap on CSP to \$1.954 B for years 2006-2010

A forfeiture penalty on non-recourse sugar loans

Extension of the MILC program

House Ag Democrats Introduce Farm Bill Extension

Collin Peterson (Minnesota) and Jim Costa (California) have entered legislation (HR4332) to extend the 2002 Farm Bill thru fiscal or calendar year 2008 depending on the completion of the Doha Round talks. This bill currently has 16 supporters.

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and with time left on the clock in the first quarter, the score is

What does that remind you of? I wasn't exactly sure which direction this should take but as I sit down to the computer I realize just what NASCOE has done over the past few weeks from a legislative perspective.



We are growing towards the end of the college football season. When you hear those remarks during a football game you know the game has just begun and that there is a lot of "game" left. The above analogy holds true to what task NASCOE and its members are undertaking.

FSA Tomorrow, a plan developed by the department to decrease the size of the FSA team and improve customer service, was basically put on hold by congress. Some prefer to call it dead but I have heard "dead" before and "things" have a way of being resurrected and we sure aren't talking about the Gospels. One thing I hope you realize is that your legislative team was a reason that FSA Tomorrow is no more. It's why you pay your dues. Your leadership took the bull by the horns, met with congress, made plenty of phone calls, used Cap Wiz and let congress know what the consensus was back home. Do you ever recall an issue dealing with FSA receiving so much publicity where the publicity had a positive slant back on the county office?

And guess what? We have a new administrator. I feel quite positively about her and look forward to great working relationship with NASCOE. I look forward to the time when the department and NASCOE can work together to create an awesome working environment with no staffing worries and providing the best possible service to the farmers of America.

I have a friend that I visit with from time to time who tends to show me the forest that is hidden by the trees. What we talked about on this trip was the direction we saw this agency headed and how we are going to get there. I think every employee and farmer realizes that modernization of agriculture programs must happen to create a more efficient working machine. Creating this machine is where we are right now. We all know that once computers are introduced into the working environment, it SHOULD improve performance and decrease personnel needs. That's not happening right now. I think it will happen, but that's a lot further down the road.

I hope what the department will see is that we can not get from point A (having very little information stored on the web and very limited computer access) to point B (having every thing 100% on the web) will take more than one or two fiscal years. There is no way to reduce staffing, take time to develop an automated environment, and maintain customer service. Toss in a new farm bill, a few disaster programs, and another Katrina and the machine may throw a rod.

Where do we go from here? I think that is YOUR choice. NASCOE leadership is having planning sessions and meetings coming up. Voice your opinion. Let them know what you are thinking and what direction you think our organization should go. A good friend of mine from Tennessee said something I will never forget about NASCOE. "We must do what we need to make sure the members are served." Here's your chance.

We are approaching the beginning of the second quarter. Will this "game" ever be over? Probably not, but NASCOE will NEVER quit trying to do the best for its members. We've scored a success and I hope that will motivate each and every one of you to become involved in your state and national organization.

Let's keep moving those chains and score a touchdown!!!!

Brent Orr
CED, George/Jackson County Mississippi
NASCOE SEA Alternate Exec and NASCOE Legislative Committee

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MARK VANHOOSE
 MW AREA EXECUTIVE
 &
JON WILLIAMS
 ALT. AREA EXECUTIVE



COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

AREA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEPERSON	Mark VanHoose, OH
ALT. AREA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEPERSON	Jon Williams, WI
AWARDS	Rosie Kahl, IA
BENEFITS	Kay Lumsden, MI
EMBLEMS	Mindy Trogdon, IL
LEGISLATIVE	Tammy Eibey, IA
MEMBERSHIP	Will Herr, IN
NEGOTIATIONS	Betsy Mace, IL
PUBLICITY	Barb Stoll, OH
PROGRAMS	Jake Bourget, WI
SCHOLARSHIP	Tom Oasen, WI
WEBMASTER	[vacant]



I once bought my kids a set of batteries for Christmas with a note on it saying, toys not included.

-- *[Bernard Manning](#)*



News From Your MWA Executive!

I want to thank the Iowa association for this opportunity to share some information from the area level and I wish all of you the best during the holiday season. With so many work pressures it is difficult to take some time off but I hope you make sure to spend time with family this Christmas season.

NASCOE goes to Washington! Your officers and execs will be going to Washington to meet with FSA leadership December 13th and 14th. I especially look forward to meeting with our new Administrator and hearing her vision for our future. We will also meet with staffers in Farm Programs, Information Technology, Human Resources, Budget, Management, Conservation and our new Deputy Administrator for Field Operations Steve Connelly. I have lots of questions about office closure plans and nuts and bolts issues like needing the GIS mess on more than one computer! Hopefully management will have some answers. We will also follow up on promises made last year that we have not seen progress on concerning negotiation items. I will report to you after returning home.

Membership has its privileges! Congratulations to Iowa for being one of two states in the Midwest Area with an increased membership percentage over last year! Your percentage last year was an excellent 86 percent and you increased a whole percentage point to 87 percent. That isn't easy to do in this time of uncertainty and I commend your dedication to NASCOE. Indiana was the other state with an increase in membership. Overall, nationally we are at 79 percent but that is partially due to some states not getting dues in timely. Last years final membership percentage was 83. A high membership percentage sends the message to management that county office employees have confidence in their organization to represent their interests and I appreciate your State's leadership in this area. Last year the Midwest Area had a total membership of 84 percent and this was just behind the Southeast Area's percentage of 86. I am hopeful we can be the number one area this year in membership percentage and I appreciate the work of our Area Membership Chair Will Herr for his efforts.

Capwizing for our future. Many of you are familiar with our electronic messaging system to send our message to Congress. Capwiz can provide you with the message and the correct Congress contacts to send the message on NASCOE issues. With 7500 potential members to enroll, we currently have 2895 registered nationally to receive Capwiz legislative alerts. And guess who leads the pack for Capwiz registration in the Midwest Area? Iowa, of course, with 216 registered! The Midwest Area has a total of 865 registered, which is an impressive 30 percent of the national figure. I commend your state for being one of the first to have a Capwiz Coordinator and your registration numbers reflect your commitment to this effort. I want to encourage you to continue your efforts to get every Iowa member enrolled and also look to area agriculture leaders to participate. As the 2007 budget and Farm Bill process begins in the spring of 2006 it will be very important to have as many Capwiz enrollees as we can to spread our message.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve,
Mark VanHoose, MWA Executive

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Biographical Sketch



Teresa C. Lasseter
Administrator, Farm Service Agency

Teresa Lasseter is the administrator of USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). As administrator, Lasseter is responsible for overseeing the administration of farm commodity and conservation programs, farm loan programs, and certain disaster and federal crop insurance programs. Lasseter also serves as the executive vice president of the Commodity Credit Corporation, a wholly-owned government corporation with a \$30 billion line of credit with the United States Department of Treasury.



Lasseter joined FSA in 1977. As a chief program assistant she rose through the ranks and held several key positions. Her years of experience in farm programs earned her the position of state executive director (SED) for the state of Georgia. Lasseter served as SED for a little over a year before she was commendably named Associate Administrator for Programs in Washington, D.C. From 2003 to 2004, Lasseter was responsible for supervising and administering farm commodity programs, farm loans, conservation programs, and disaster assistance.

Before assuming her current position, Lasseter was involved in Lasseter Tractor Company and the development of commercial property in Moultrie, GA. Lasseter was appointed to the Georgia Ports Authority Board by the governor of Georgia and also served on the South Georgia Businesses for Economic Development board. Lasseter, a native of Tifton, Georgia, also served six years as the Executive Director of Georgia Agrirama Development Authority.

Throughout her career, Lasseter has received recognition and numerous awards for her exemplary work. In 1991, she received the Unsung Hero Award for exemplifying the spirit of public service. An honor graduate from the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Lasseter holds a degree in Business Administration.

Lasseter has two children. She and her husband, Willard, live in Arlington, Virginia.

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A week after taking office as FSA's new administrator, Teresa Lasseter sat down to discuss her long history with FSA, her goals and her vision for the agency. During the 5-minute interview, the veteran of agriculture talks about the various positions she has held in FSA at the grassroots level and how that experience will help her make decisions in Washington, D.C. Lasseter also talks about the important role technology will continue to play as the agency serves America's producers.

The interview was conducted by Paul McKellips of FSA's Office of External Affairs.

Click the link below to listen

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/absoluteig/gallery.asp?action=viewimage&categoryid=&text=&imageid=525&box=&shownew=on>



CAPWIZ

Thanks to all of you--Iowa can brag about being the **TOP STATE** in CAPWIZ participants!

For those who have not yet signed up—it's not too late to be part of this group! Be proactive -find out what is going on with your job and USDA/FSA through the NASCOE leadership. An extra benefit = you can also sign up to receive notices about upcoming Congressional votes as well as how your representatives voted on recent bills.

To sign-up for the CAPWIZ information --

Go to: www.iascoe.org

Then click on NASCOE link at bottom of home page (www.nascoe.org)

*At NASCOE web-site, click on **CAPWIZ Registration***

Or follow these easy steps to get signed up for CAPWIZ Action Alerts:

1. Go home and get on your own computer
2. Access website: www.capwiz.com/nascoe
3. Click on Action e-list (toward the bottom of the page)
4. Load in your name, your **home** email address, etc
5. Hit the "Submit" button

NOTE: your government email address will not update to CAPWIZ and cannot be used for this process.

Submitted By Cindy Mensen
IASCOE Director - CED Clayton County



FSA APPOINTS CONNELLY DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR FIELD OPERATIONS



WASHINGTON, Nov. 18, 2005 – Teresa C. Lasseter, Administrator of USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), today announced the appointment of Steven A. Connelly as Deputy Administrator for Field Operations effective on December 6, 2005.

“Steve has been an asset to FSA through both field experience and more recently, as assistant deputy administrator for farm programs,” said Lasseter. “This promotion is well-deserved and will help the agency maintain effective leadership in field operations.”

The deputy administrator for field operations is responsible for developing and implementing personnel policies and operating guidelines for state and field FSA employees.

Connelly has served as assistant deputy administrator for farm programs since June 2004. Prior to that appointment he was state executive director for FSA in Maryland, beginning in December 2001. From 1995 to 2001, Connelly was Executive Director for the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation. For eight years, Connelly served as the director of intergovernmental relations and special assistant to the Maryland secretary of agriculture.

Connelly's farming experience came from a family-owned, 300-cow Maryland dairy operation, where duties included feeding, breeding, milking and health care. He also produced forage feed for the family livestock. While attending the University of Maryland, Connelly worked at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center caring for swine involved in nutritional studies. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Maryland in agricultural and resources economics. Connelly currently resides in Rising Sun, Md., with his family.

Connelly replaces Douglas Frago, a long-time FSA employee, California farmer and former director with the United States Peace Corps. Frago is retiring.



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“Toto, We’re Not in Kansas Anymore” ***(or ‘Dee Does DC’)***

By Dee Ann Lehn - IASCOE President & CED Keokuk County



Ever get that “we’re not in Kansas anymore” feeling? You know the one, the feeling that you have just stepped into a totally different world. Oh, there are a few faces that you recognize but everyone seems to have emerged from their usual persona to play a whole new role. I think that would pretty much sum up the time I spent in Washington DC with a group of NASCOE members whose mission was to meet with our Senators and Representatives to discuss “FSA Tomorrow”.

The flight to DC on Tuesday went smoothly enough—nothing at all like Dorothy’s flight to OZ. There were loyal NASCOE members waiting for me at the Reagan National Airport who made sure I safely started my journey to the Double Tree Hotel in Crystal City (not to be mistaken for Emerald City).

Upon settling into my room, I was greeted by Cindy Hall of Nebraska who turned out to be rather like Glenda, the good witch of the North taking me to the nearest Mall, then instructing me in Metro etiquette, giving me a quick run down of where everything was in the city and even lead me through the USDA building –a bit scary to be sure, but not as spooky as the haunted forest and I didn’t see any flying monkeys.

Wednesday, we all were off to meet with our assigned Senators and Representatives. Somehow, I ended up paired up with Mark VanHoose, our Mid West Executive from Ohio. I really had only talked to the man for a few brief moments at the National Convention and then again for a few minutes on Tuesday evening to plan our course of action. I immediately sensed he was of a different political persuasion but then I thought: “Hey, he’s from Ohio—how bad could he be?” He turned out to not only show great courage by dragging me around all morning but also proved he actually had a brain by keeping me out of trouble and enough heart to take it all in stride.

We met up with Trice Smith and Tammy Eibey in the afternoon to continue our trip from one building to another to another and yet another. I don’t know how well Dorothy’s feet faired in those ruby slippers while traveling the yellow brick road but my boots were killing my feet by the end of the day—I don’t think a could have walk up one more step, marble or not.

Thursday morning Trice, Tammy and I finished our rounds and headed for the airport. Again, the flight back to reality was somewhat uneventful and those hours in the air gave us time to reflect on the past few days. Oh, those few days were fast and furious and exhausting and wonderful but you know what.....

There’s still no place like home!



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IACS NEWS!



The Iowa Association of Credit Specialists (IACS) is an organization of dedicated Farm Service Agency (FSA) employees who have loan approval authority. The Iowa chapter is a member of the National Association of Credit Specialists (NACS), and has an affiliation with the Federal Managers association (FMA). The organization was founded on the premise that the employees working with the programs could offer ideas to eliminate or reduce barriers in the delivery of programs. Employees can make resolutions (detailed written suggestions of both the problem and a proposed solution) to IACS and NACS when someone sees a better and more efficient method to conduct the specific activity. This resolution process is the heart and soul of NACS.

The organization has established six committees to assist in offering suggestions in these areas. Individual members are encouraged to offer resolutions that are reviewed by the appropriate committee. The committee then recommends the passage or rejection of the resolution and eventually it is voted on by the entire membership and if passed, is presented to the appropriate agency officials. The committees are:

- Information Technology
- Farm Loan Programs
- Farm Programs
- Membership
- Management/Personnel
- Legislative Issues

The objective of NACS is to make FSA a more efficient and better place to work. NACS works closely with our agency officials to keep informed on issues that affect the management and delivery of FSA programs to our farm and ranch customers. There are many challenges ahead for FSA. We all need to work together as employees and managers to achieve our goals, perform our best, and accomplish the agency's mission, as we deliver our programs to the producers of this great nation!

IACS Officers for this year are:

- David Hoaglund – President
- Steve Showalter – Vice President
- John Vote – Secretary
- Rhonda Triggs – Treasurer.

David Hoaglund
IACS President



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IASE NEWS

Iowa Association of Support Employees

IASE Officers for 2005-2006:

President - Sandralee Scott
Vice President - Judy Rains
Secretary - Barbara Reed
Treasurer - Sharon Moroney

Committees:

Bylaws - Marla Crawford
Resource - Ruth Buenting
Ways & Means - Diane Reis
& Dixie Schuster
Personnel - Pam Spear
Nominating - Judy Rains
Automation -
Farm Loan/Program -
Historian -

If anyone is interested in serving on a committee please contact me.
I know we all have a lot to do but work is so much lighter when others help out.

MEMBERSHIP

SAVE YOURSELF \$5.00 & JOIN WITH A FRIEND.

We still have an incentive if two new or renewal members join together the cost is \$40.00 each.

Make check payable to "Iowa Association of Support Employees" and send to
Farm Service Agency
Attn: Sharon Moroney
507 – 17th Street SE
Independence, IA 50644-9874

IASE SPOTLIGHT MEMBERS

My name is Pam Spear and I have worked for FmHA/FSA for 24 years this November....Or has it been 200 years....Twenty some years ago Judy Rains and Sandralee Scott asked if I would consider being a Zone Rep for our Association of PT's.....They told me I wouldn't have to do much?!? Since that time I have held every office in our IASE Association, served on our NASE Personnel Committee as the chairperson, and am here to tell you that I received more than I ever gave. I made some very dear friends, I did some traveling for our association, and I worked with people who really cared about what we were doing in the county offices.

Pam Spear - Personnel Committee

The first meeting I attended was when I realized how much of a voice we have. I had joined IASE several years earlier. My supervisor offered to take me to the meeting so I went on my day off.

I felt very welcomed and got to share the problems and concerns relating to our offices.

The resolutions are what got me hooked. They can make a difference. Everyone, including you can make resolutions to change forms and after it gets reviewed and further approved at the National meeting, the resolution gets forwarded to whichever area that it relates. At these meetings we get to meet people from Washington D.C. and have even toured the Finance Office in St. Louis during a NASE meeting.

Marla Crawford – Past President

Continued....

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IASE Spotlight Members

Happy Autumn from Maquoketa! Once again we find ourselves in the winds of change!! It's certainly good that things never stay the same—we'd be bored to death, right? The good news is that we will all have a job (according to the last information I read)! Many of us have previously been in a situation that caused us to have to drive a distance to keep our jobs. In fact, we're getting pretty darn good at adjusting and we can do it again, mostly because most of us have too many years invested here to do otherwise. So, hang on to your hats, folks! We'll land on our feet again! Hope to see you all at the Zone B meeting and at the IASE Annual meeting! Let's stick together and help each other through this!

Judy Rains – Vice President

I joined the Association back in 1984 shortly after I began employment with the Agency. The main reason I joined was because the other clerk (remember when that was our title) was a strong member and encouraged me to join. I have attended most of the annual meetings and have learned something at each one. We have been joined by various state office personnel for lunch and for updates at these meetings. It is rewarding to have some time with them on a small group level. I have served as secretary and treasurer. Another advantage of belonging the Association is that it is a chance to meet employees from all over the state and even the nation. Our Association has been a part of improving communication, implementing changes for our day to day tasks and making our Agency a better place to work.

Sharon Moroney – Treasurer

November 15th - D-Day!!!!

Do you all remember what was to happen this day? According to my calculations, this was the day that our SED had to have his plan to Washington DC as to what office would be moved, consolidated, closed. . .

What offices would be moved? What ones would be consolidated? What employees would go where? What office would our producers select? What CED's would be out of work?

With all of the workload in the county office these days it is hard to imagine that this was a reality a month ago. The outcry from the producers helped us feel appreciated--but left them feeling unappreciated in that they could be moved anywhere. Never once did we hear a comment at the counter that was in agreement with the plan for office closures.

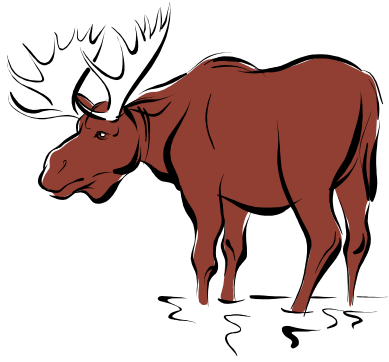
I would like to thank our IASCOE reps for keeping us informed. I hope that each employee takes a few minutes to think about how we would have gotten our information if not through them. We would have had hundreds of employees trying to get the inside scoop. Fall is the busiest time of the year for Iowa FSA offices and the FSA Tomorrow dark cloud was always hanging over us. IASCOE reps helped us separate fact from fiction.

Once again, belonging to IASCOE has helped us by being our information source. The organization has always been our voice to the outside. We can talk to our representatives and give them our concerns. They will take them to the "front". Please know that they have not slowed on their work on this project, changes will come and they will make sure that our interests are known. They will listen and relay our thoughts and concerns.

THANKS FOR A JOB WELL DONE!!!

Connie Straw
CED, Howard County FSA

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It's All About You!



Mark your calendar for the
2006 IASCOE Convention in Johnston, Iowa.

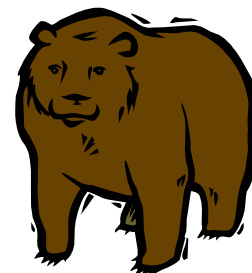
The Convention dates are March 31 and April 1 2006.

Be prepared to take a walk on the wild side. The 2006 convention will be held at the Stoney Creek Inn where you can experience the great outdoors...indoors! You'll feel like you've stepped into the comfort of a warm cozy cabin only you don't have to do the cooking or make the bed!



Friday afternoon will include committee meetings and a general session followed by the hospitality room, some very special entertainment and a dance. A general assembly will be held Saturday featuring several guest speakers including a financial advisor who specializes in financial strategies designed for federal employees. More details will be provided as plans develop.

Please watch for the 2006 Convention Registration Form
Coming soon!!!!



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The Elms Resort & Spa



The Elms Resort & Spa

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR FUN and RELAXATION

The Midwest/Northwest Rally will be held May 5th and 6th 2006

*The Elms Resort and Spa
401 Regent Street
Excelsior Springs, MO 64024
1-800-843-3567*

Room rates are \$87.00 + tax.

To look at this hotel go to www.elmsresort.com

Missouri is planning a great weekend including:

Friday: possible tours include a Harley Davidson Plant, the Jesse James Farm and Watkins Mills Park. Evening activities include a social function with a DJ.

Saturday: Area meetings with presentations from National NASCOE Officers and FSA Management. Evening activities include a banquet and more tunes!

Sunday: Hit the road for home

If you have any questions please contact
Mary C Davis at www.mary.davis@mo.usda.gov

Contribute To The Next IASCOE Newsletter

If you have any information, stories, photos, or jokes that you would like to include in the next IASCOE Newsletter, send them to Tammy Eibey at tammy.eibey@ia.usda.gov.

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"CLEVELAND KICKS IN 2006"

**COME JOIN US FOR THE
NATIONAL NASCOE
CONVENTION**

**AND SEE FOR YOURSELF!
AUGUST 9-12, 2006**

**YOU WILL HAVE THE TIME OF
YOUR LIFE. A GREAT PLACE TO
BRING THE ENTIRE FAMILY!**

**CLEVELAND, OHIO HAS SOMETHING
FOR EVERYONE!**

Museums of Art, Science, and Natural History
 All Major League Sports
 Best Shopping in the World
 The Avenue at Tower City
 Metroparks and a Rainforest
 Cleveland Orchestra at Severance Hall
 Goodtime III Lake Erie Dinner Cruises
 The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
 Geauga Lake - Food, Rides & Fun
 Warehouse Entertainment District
 Cleveland Botanical Garden
 Playhouse Square
 Edgewater State Park Fishing
 North Coast Harbor

Enjoy the comfort and convenience of the Renaissance Hotel in the Heart of Downtown Cleveland, Ohio. Within walking distance of most attractions! Make your reservations today.
Phone: (216) 696-5600



Join us for the Annual NASCOE Golf outing at the beautiful Stonewater Creek 18-hole course on August 9, 2006.

A partial listing of daily tours and events scheduled to date include:

- The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
- The Canton Pro Football Hall of Fame
- A fun-filled day at Geauga Lake
- A dinner and dancing cruise on the Goodtime III
- For the junior rockers and the young at heart, how about a visit to the Great Lakes Health and Science Center or a scavenger hunt in the North Coast Harbor near the Wm. Mather Steamship!
- A must see is a visit to Cleveland's famous Rainforest located at the Cleveland Zoo
- Like Candy? Join the tour to Harry London's in nearby Hartsville
- Nightly entertainment, bands, DJ's and friends - much more to be announced!

Most events within walking distance of the hotel.

**OASCOE invites everyone
to join us for
"CLEVELAND KICKS IN 2006"**



The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Museum from Aerosmith to Zappa, all of the icons of Rock are represented here. The museum houses the single largest collection of rare and priceless Rock and Roll memorabilia in the world. Learn about the history of Rock and Roll and all of the inducted Rock and Roll legends.



Gauga Lake offers more rides, slides, shows and attractions than any other theme park on the planet! Experience 10 roller coasters if you dare and then cool off on the water slides. A great way to spend the day!



Playhouse Square is the Nation's second largest performing arts center with more than 10,300 seats. It hosts Broadway plays, the Ohio Ballet Company, the Cleveland Opera, and the Great Lakes Theatre Festival in addition to hundreds of concerts annually.

THE FUN NEVER STOPS IN CLEVELAND

If you're looking for nightlife, the National Warehouse Historic District is a popular, upscale entertainment destination. The area features trendy restaurants and nighttime hot spots complete with live jazz and blues music. You will also find coffee shops, unique boutiques and art galleries.



The West Side Market, established in 1912.

Colorful indoor/outdoor bazaar, offers ethnic delights and specialty goods from over 200 booths.



2006 NASCOE National Convention
Saturday Night Entertainment
THE DANGER BROTHERS
Outrageous Fun... Don't Miss It!



Enjoy a romantic evening on Cleveland's Goodtime III. Spend a wonderful evening cruising on beautiful Lake Erie. Enjoy dinner and dancing under the stars. A great way to spend one of your nights in Cleveland!



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JUST A FEW OF THE SPECIAL EVENTS
TAKING PLACE IN CLEVELAND AUG 9-12

BIG RED BARN EXHIBIT

Cleveland's Children's Museum

PHOTO SAFARI

Cleveland's Metropark Zoo

THE 2006 NATIONAL CONVENTION OF
STATE AND COUNTY OFFICE EMPLOYEES.



While you're in Cleveland, visit the state of the art Jacobs Field, home to the Cleveland Indians.



Just a short drive to Canton and you can visit football fans' heaven! The Pro Football Hall of Fame.



Voivovich Park just north of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame at sunset offers a panoramic view of Lake Erie and the breathtaking skyline of Cleveland, Ohio.

CLEVELAND IS AT THE HEART
OF IT ALL IN OHIO

It's location gives you unlimited access to everything from art, science, sports, the best shopping in the world, nonstop entertainment, and much more. Come join us and see if you don't agree that...

"CLEVELAND KICKS IN 2006"



Meet Twyla Brede District 5 Alternate PT Director

Hi, My name is Twyla Brede and I am serving as an alternate director for district 5. I am the admin/automation PT for Dallas County in Adel, Iowa. I live right in Adel about ½ mile from the county office with my husband Del and two daughters Kristi, 14 and Kassidy, 10.

When I was growing up on a farm in Guthrie County, I could have cared less about agriculture. My dad and brothers tried really hard to get me to do “my share” of the chores but I always had something at school to do or just spending time with my friends. I wish now I would have paid more attention to what was going on “back on the farm”, it might have been helpful in my job today.

I’m still very active in the community with many activities through Grace Lutheran Church, girl scouts, craft shows and all the running with the girls and their activities. I did manage to take some time out this summer to focus on my health. In July I had gastric bypass surgery. To date I’ve lost 115 pounds and very thankful I had the choice to have it done. With the support from co-workers, family, friends and my faith, I made the very difficult decision to go ahead with it. I still have a long road ahead, realizing it’s something I will deal with for the rest of my life. Support is one of the key ingredients to a successful result so if anyone who has had this surgery or is thinking about it, I would be more than glad to talk with you. The more support you can have the more peace of mind you can have just like IASCOE gives us support in our jobs. Without it a lot of the benefits and programs we take for granted today would be lost.

Thanks again to my co-workers and friends for all their gifts and support and to IASCOE for making my life better.

Twyla



CLAY COUNTY EMPLOYEES HONORED

The Clay County FSA office employees, CED and County Committee honored two of their employees this fall for their years of service to the farmers in Clay County. Nelda Wolthuis and Kathy Geisinger have been employed by FSA for 25 and 20 years respectively. Pictured below are Nelda and Kathy being congratulated by County Committee Chairperson, Donald Nielsen. Thank you both for all of your hard work and dedication.



Nelda Wolthuis with Donald Nielsen



Kathy Geisinger with Donald Nielsen

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60 Years of Service Honored in Kossuth County!



Twenty years of service awards were recently given to three Kossuth County FSA Employees, Cindy Gaedke, Shelly Kohlhaas, and Robin Rode.

They started in the fall of 1985 and each was assigned different jobs. Robin's first duties included typing new loan documents and lien waivers. She remembers sitting in the County Committee room along with Cindy, Charlotte Frideres, and Jack Brandt, CED. After the busy loan season, she helped with Feed Grain Signup, mailing checks, and address changes. Those changes were made on the

Addressograph Machine that smashed fingers! She was single but married the following year and they are celebrating their 19th wedding anniversary this Thanksgiving.

Shelly remembers working with Farm Stored Settlements, which were stacked on a chair which surpassed the desktop. She was married with 3 children at the time she started with ASCS. She has added 2 more and the youngest is now a freshman, the only one left in high school.

Cindy was hired for a 6 week term to load the farm and producer data into the new computer system. She was married with an 11 month old baby. Her youngest now is a sophomore, with the older two girls in college.

No one remembers the weather that fall nor do they remember the price of corn and beans. They just remember coming into an office that was very busy and needed help in catching up! Sounds familiar, huh?

When they began, they estimated there was a total of 11 employees and only one remains working today from that original batch.

Congratulations Cindy, Shelly and Robin; thank you for 60 years of service.



Unisex Sweatshirts Sku #:3019

For those dress-down cold days of winter, wear this sweatshirt with jeans. It is an 8 oz. 50/50 crew with Pill-Free fabric, scoop neck, rib collar, cuffs and bottom, cover stitched collar, armholes and bottom. Embroidered with the USDA-FSA design.

Annual Sweatshirt Sale!

Price: ~~\$49.00~~

Sale Price: \$15.20 each

Visit the online store at www.thenascoestore.com/

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Farewell & Congratulations To Elaine Gordon

In April of 1978, Elaine Gordon joined the ranks of ASCS in Union County. Over the years, she has enjoyed the challenges of nearly every program area and after 28 years of too much fun, is planning to retire at the end of the year.

Elaine says she will have no problem keeping busy. She and husband, Ron, own/operate 1900 acres in Union County and own 600 acres in Adams County which will keep her on the go.



Elaine says she is looking forward to spending more time with her two granddaughters and traveling more. In fact, a cruise is one of the first items on the agenda for this busy lady. Elaine is an avid quilter who has shared her talent with many family members and friends and is a very active member of her church and community

Elaine will be greatly missed by many, many co-workers and producers, but we all wish her the best in this next chapter of her life!

Submitted By Rhonda Cooper - CED Union County



Wisconsin Whispers for Iowa-December 2005

As I tried to come up with some fantastic, interesting topic for you to read, I had this serious whirlpool effect take place in my head with thoughts and emotions spinning around but nothing coming to surface. Ok, so what do I talk about? FSA Tomorrow? I think everyone has heard enough talk about it and felt the roller-coaster effect it has on the emotional system. Do I have a job or not? Will I have to drive farther to work? How could I find a comparable job? Yikes!

So, instead, I tried to empty my mind (ok, I know that anyone reading this that knows me will ask, she has to TRY and empty her mind?), but I did manage to set aside thoughts of family, etc. And I listened to our priest this morning (yes, I paid attention for a change). He discussed the following words: Faith, Hope, and Charity. Well, it was one of the “slap you up-side the head” moments for me. I think you know what that means, when all of a sudden things become very clear for a change. So I started thinking about the words.

Faith. Don't worry; I'm not going to talk about that one here. People tend to get images of churches and preaching when you mention that word. I firmly believe that faith is a very private and personal matter. Everyone has their own type of faith and we will leave it at that.

Charity. Americans are traditionally the most charitable people in the world and at this time of year, remember that charity also is sharing a smile or lending a helping hand. So enough on that subject.

Hope. This is a big word in any language. I'm not talking about the kind of hope like: I hope the Steelers win (this is a dangerous statement in Packer country!). I mean the kind of hope that a mother has when sending her son to Iraq. Or the kind of hope a father has when sending his daughter to college for the first time. Or maybe the kind of hope all NASCOE folks have when FSA Tomorrow rumors loom ominously over all of us.

Hope. It is that unexplainable feeling you have that things will be fine when the odds say otherwise. Hope. We all have it, some to a lesser degree, but nonetheless, we all have some. Hope. It is a gift we can share with others. Hope. Sometimes it's the only thing you can hold on to. Hope. Never let it go.

Here's how Hope can be shared: there was a rumor in a city that a bank was going under and many people were very worried about their money and were planning on taking it all out. By the next morning, people were lined up waiting for the bank to open so they could withdraw their savings. A pastor of the local church also waited in line, but he was there to make a regular deposit. Others in line wondered at why he would do such a thing, but when the doors opened, the pastor walked ahead of the line and loudly stated he was making a deposit. The other people stood there watching and when he was finished, they all walked out with him, without taking their money. The pastor's simple act provided the others with HOPE and they didn't act hastily.

So this holiday season, don't lose HOPE and be willing to share it. Also, remember that TIME is the most precious gift you can give to others, and guess what? It doesn't cost a thing! But the rewards are priceless.

Being the “military mom”, I want to remind everyone to keep our military in your prayers. My twin sons will both be in Iraq this Christmas, so you can be sure my first hope is that they will be safe. Please be sure to utilize the website:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/usda_militaryfamilies/. I started this site to give others hope, support, and useful information with the many links available there. Use it and share it.

Happy Holidays to all the NASCOE family

Deb Esselman

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The 2005 FSA Gary Brewer Memorial Golf Tournament was held in La Porte City, Iowa on August 11th, 2005. Hosts were Mike Craft, District Director of District 5, Craig Olthoff, District Director of District 4 Jim Thompson, District Director from District 2, Bob Wegand, CED from Grundy County and Larry Behnke, CED from Bremer County.



Winners of the tournament were members of the LEAN GREENE TEAM

pictured left to right
Jeff Davis(Plymouth County CED), Kevin Fitzpatrick(Greene County CED), Debi Ostrander(PT Greene County), Lee Ann Davis(FLM Boone County) Connie Carstens, Dick Carstens(TF Greene County).

Winners were awarded individual prizes of their choice from the prize table. Many others also received door prizes as well. The entire group enjoyed a fantastic lunch organized by LeAnn Craft....Thank you!

The 2006 hosts will be Brad Murray and the STO golfers. They have graciously volunteered to find a location near Altoona, Iowa.

Pictures of the other teams....



Those participating but not photographed included the STO Linda and Bob Saylor, Tammy Zanoni, Deb Krusemark, Dennis Judkins, Chris Barton, Paula Volesky, Patti and Brad Murray.



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A Southern Tale

By Brent Orr, SE Area Alternate Executive Committeeperson

I have to admit, if you hear someone from the south say, "Let me tell you a tale" generally you get exactly that, A TALE. Story telling in the south is only exceeded by our ability to be loud and boisterous.

This story I'm going to tell you is not one of those times. Many of you know the recent "Wind and Rain" storm we went through down here. A little storm called Katrina. Recently, my Sunday school class visited the town of Waveland to cook lunch for the folks that work for the city. I call it a city very loosely. Virtually every building in that town is either destroyed or had major damage. Pictures do not do it justice but I will insert a few to tell the story.



This picture was taken on I-10. This picture was taken just after the storm had passed. Exit 16 is about three miles east of the exit for Waveland. Waveland was considered ground zero.

The reason we came to Waveland was because we had personal information about the city. My preacher is the former football coach at a Catholic school just outside of Waveland. The mayor of Waveland is one of his former

football players. Although not doing much, we were able to provide a lunch meal to the city employees of Waveland. They are all living in RVs in a state park on the east side of Waveland.

The mayor tells the story of the day of the storm. He was thankful that the storm came during the day. If it had been at night, there would have been many more casualties because people would have not been able to swim. The mayor spent the time of the storm in a waste treatment facility with two floors and an elevator. The last two ladies to evacuate to the second floor wound up being trapped in the elevator because the electricity went off as they were moving from the 1st to the 2nd floor. The mayor said he could hear their screams. They were forced to cut a whole in 4 inch thick concrete to get into the elevator shaft as the water was rising. This is indeed a miracle. The mayor had just had knee replacement surgery a week before the storm.

Here is the before and after picture of one of the residents of Waveland



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A street in Waveland



The bridge that connected Bay St Louis to Pass Christian



Before and after pictures of the Treasure Bay Casino



Not even the railroad tracks were spared



The US Post Office in Waveland



What a blessing it was to feed these people. After looking at what we did afterwards, it is just a drop in the bucket as to what these families have ahead of them. They had the best attitude and were extremely gracious.



"Maybe Christmas," he thought, "doesn't come from a store."

"Maybe Christmas... perhaps... means a little bit more."

Dr. Seuss From 'How The Grinch Stole Christmas'

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Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)

The mission of the CFC is to support and to promote philanthropy through a voluntary program that is employee-focused, cost-efficient and effective in providing all Federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all.

What is the CFC?

The CFC is the only authorized solicitation of employees in the Federal workplace on behalf of charitable organizations. It continues to be the largest and most successful workplace fundraising model in the world. With a tradition of commitment to the community through the selfless efforts of Federal employees, the CFC has its roots in the many charitable campaigns of the early 1960's. Seeing a need to bring the diversity of fundraising efforts under one umbrella, the CFC was created – one campaign, once a year. In 2004, Federal employees around the world raised more than \$256 million for charitable causes.

Structure of the CFC

The CFC is made up of local campaigns that raise funds in Federal workplaces across the country and around the world. Local charities that serve the local area or adjacent counties apply directly to a Local Federal Coordinating Committee (LFCC) – which serves as a “Board of Directors” of the local CFC. The LFCC is composed of Federal employees and representatives of labor unions with Federal employees as members. Decisions regarding the inclusion of charities in the local campaigns are made by the LFCC. LFCCs are also responsible for the oversight of the local CFC in conformance with the CFC regulations and policies promulgated by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). All organizations participating in the campaigns must meet strict public accountability criteria set forth in OPM regulations.

Every year, the LFCC selects one of the voluntary organizations involved in the local CFC to serve as the Principal Combined Fund Organization (PCFO), whose job it is to manage the campaign and serve as fiscal agent. OPM sets strict requirements for this role. Annual audits are required of the PCFO by an independent CPA.

OPM is responsible for regulating the CFC, providing guidance and oversight nationwide, and also has the authority to conduct compliance audits on any CFC local campaign fiscal records.

Visit the CFC Homepage

For information about the CFC, including details on the public accountability standards for participating charities, visit the CFC Home Page at

www.opm.gov/cfc.

ATTORNEY'S ADVICE-----NO CHARGE

1. The next time you order checks have only your initials (instead of first name) and last name put on them. If someone takes your checkbook, they will not know if you sign your checks with just your initials or your first name, but your bank will know how you sign your checks.
2. Do not sign the back of your credit cards. Instead, put "PHOTO ID REQUIRED."
3. When you are writing checks to pay on your credit card accounts, DO NOT put the complete account number on the "For" line. Instead, just put the last four numbers. The credit card company knows the rest of the number, and anyone who might be handling your check as it passes through all the check-processing channels will not have access to it.
4. Put your work phone # on your checks instead of your home phone. If you have a PO Box, use that instead of your home address. If you do not have a PO Box, use your work address. Never have your SS# printed on your checks, (DUH!). You can add it if it is necessary. However, if you have it printed, anyone can get it.
5. Place the contents of your wallet on a photocopy machine. Do both sides of each license, credit card, etc. You will know what you had in your wallet and all of the account numbers and phone numbers to call and cancel. Keep the photocopy in a safe place. Also carry a photocopy of your passport when traveling either here or abroad. We have all heard horror stories about fraud that is committed on us in stealing a name, address, Social Security number, and credit cards.
6. When you check out of a hotel that uses cards for keys (and they all seem to do that now), do not turn the "keys" in. Take them with you and destroy them. Those little cards have on them all of the information you gave the hotel, including address and credit card numbers and expiration dates. Someone with a card reader, or employee of the hotel, can access all that information with no problem whatsoever.

Unfortunately, as an attorney, I have first hand knowledge because my wallet was stolen last month. Within a week, the thief(s) ordered an expensive monthly cell phone package, applied for a VISA credit card, had a credit line approved to buy a Gateway computer and received a PIN number from DMV to change my driving record information online. Here is some critical information to limit the damage in case this happens to you or someone you know:

1. We have been told we should cancel our credit cards immediately. The key is having the toll free numbers and your card numbers handy so you know whom to call. Keep those where you can find them.
2. File a police report immediately in the jurisdiction where your credit cards, etc., were stolen. This proves to credit providers you were diligent, and this is a first step toward an investigation (if there ever is one). However, here is what is perhaps most important of all (I never even thought to do this.)
3. Call the three national credit-reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Security number. I had never heard of doing that until advised by a bank that called to tell me an application for credit was made over the Internet in my name. The alert means any company that checks your credit knows your information was stolen, and they have to contact you by phone to authorize new credit. By the time I was advised to do this, almost two weeks after the theft, all the damage had been done. There are records of all the credit checks initiated by the thieves' purchases, none of which I knew about before placing the alert. Since then, no additional damage has been done, and the thieves threw my wallet away this weekend (someone turned it in). It seems to have stopped them dead in their tracks.

Now, here are the numbers you always need to contact about your wallet and contents being stolen:

- 1.) Equifax: 1-800-525-6285
- 2.) Experian (formerly TRW): 1-888-397-3742
- 3.) Trans Union: 1-800-680-7289
- 4.) Social Security Administration (fraud line): 1-800-269-0271

We pass along jokes on the Internet, we pass along just about everything. Nevertheless, if you are willing to pass this information along, it could really help someone about who you care.

Submitted by Dee Lehn
IASCOE President - CED Keokuk County FSA

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

WOW - I can't believe the holiday season is upon us. I think it comes faster every year.

We have had a wonderful fall. The farmers think it is one of the best harvests they can remember, in regards to weather as well as bushels.

I'm sure this is a busy time for everyone at work as well as home. We finished our new maps and mailed them out by September 30th. We are now in the process of making field boundary corrections, typing new CRP contracts, taking grain loans, LDP's and starting to sign producers up for 2006 DCP. I use to think we would get caught up some day, but in my 23 years that hasn't happened. There always seem to be a new challenge just around the corner.

I want to wish you a very Happy Holiday Season and may the love of Christmas warm your heart and stay with you throughout the New Year. May we never forget the true reason we celebrate this season and realize what matters the most in our lives.

Merry Christmas To All

Sue Beemer
IASCOE Secretary/Treasurer – PT Taylor County



I have been making this EASY dip ever since I tasted it this fall.

Warm Cheesy Bacon Dip

- 1 cup Mayo
- 1 8 oz pkg cream cheese
- 1 2 cup pkg shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 3 oz pkg Real bacon bits or pieces



Mix together thoroughly, put in a 9 X 9 greased baking pan (or a pie pan)
Bake for 20 minutes @ 350 degrees or until it gets bubbly.

Serve with crackers, chips, and or veggies. Whoa!! It's the best

You could add olives for more flavor and color, also.

You can use fat-free cheeses and mayo and sour cream, and really be a hero.

I have done it that way, too, and it is still great.

Now I'm hungry!! Try it, you'll like it.

Judy Voss - PT Woodbury County

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HOLIDAY RECIPES

All recipes were submitted by Sharon Lovstad in Kossuth County



Fudge

Into a large bowl, put 2 or 3 German Sweet Chocolate bars broken into small pieces. Add the following:

- 2 - 12 oz pkgs chocolate chips
- 1 pint jar marshmallow creme
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 1 cup chopped nuts
- sprinkle 2 Tsp vinegar and set aside for 1 hour

In a large kettle mix

- 4 1/2 cups sugar
- 1 large can evaporated milk
- 1 Tsp butter



Bring to a rolling boil for 5 minutes.

Pour chocolate over mixture and stir until melted. Pour in jellyroll pan until set. Cut into 1" squares

This recipe is very good and never gets hard or sugary.

Sugar Cookies

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 c. powdered sugar | 1 tsp. vanilla |
| 1 c. White sugar | 1/2 tsp. cream of tartar |
| 2 sticks oleo | 1/2 tsp. soda |
| 2 eggs | 4 cups plus 4 TSP Flour |
| 1 c. corn oil | |

Mix in order given. Chill 1 hour. Form into balls, roll in white sugar and flatten with a glass. Bake at 350 for 8 to 10 min. Note - You can frost or decorate if you desire.

Easy Raspberry Dessert

- 1 box Betty Crocker white angel food cake mix.
- 1 1/4 cups cold water
- 1 box (8 serving size) sugar free raspberry jello
- 2 cups boiling water
- 2 boxes (10 oz) frozen sweetened raspberries thawed
- 3 containers (6 oz) Yoplait Original 99% fat free red raspberry yogurt

Heat oven to 350. In extra large glass or metal bowl, beat cake mix and cold water. Pour into ungreased tube pan. Bake 37-47 min. or until top is dark golden brown and cracks feel very dry and not sticky.

Cool cake upside down (in pan) on narrow necked glass bottle or heatproof surface 1 hour or until completely cooled. Loosen edges with flat knife or metal spatula to remove from pan. Tear cake into 3/4 inches pieces.

Place gelatin in large bowl. Pour boiling water over gelatin, Stir until dissolved. Gently stir raspberries into gelatin. Refrigerate gelatin mixture about 15 minutes or until thickened but not set.

Layer half of each of cake pieces, gelatin mixture and yogurt in 3-qt glass bowl, repeat. Garnish with reserved raspberries. Refrigerate at least 2 hour until firm. Cover and refrigerate any remaining dessert.

Lisa Forburger – PT Kossuth County FSA

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HOLIDAY RECIPES

Submitted by Linda Saylor - State Office Executive Secretary

Eggnog Ice Cream

4 C. milk	10 T. brandy
8 eggs, beaten	2 T. vanilla extract
2 1/4 C. sugar	3/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
1/2 tsp. salt	1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
4 C. whipping cream	

Warm milk; add eggs, sugar and salt. Cook, stirring constantly, until temperature reaches 155°F or until mixture coats the back of a spoon. Do not overcook. Remove from heat and add cream. Stir occasionally while mixture cools.

In separate bowl combine brandy, vanilla extract, nutmeg and cinnamon. Beat flavorings into cooled custard mixture. Freeze in ice cream freezer. Pack to let ice cream set up. Makes 1 gallon.

Holiday Crescent Cookies

1/2 lb. butter (2 sticks)	2 tsp. vanilla
2 c. flour	1 tbsp. water
2 c. chopped pecans	1/2 tsp. salt
5 tbsp. sugar	

Cream butter and sugar; add vanilla and water. Sift flour and salt, stir into mixture. Add pecans and mix well. Shape into size of walnut and shape into crescent. Bake slowly at 325 degrees about 20 minutes. While warm, roll into powdered sugar.

Holiday Fudge

1 cup sugar	2 cups powdered sugar
1/2 cup butter	1 tsp vanilla
1/2 cup heavy cream	1/2 cup red candied cherries, chopped
1/8 tsp salt	1/2 cup green candied cherries, chopped

Spray an 8x8" baking dish with cooking spray. In a large saucepan, bring the sugar, butter, cream and salt to a boil over medium heat, stirring frequently. Let boil for 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and slowly add the powdered sugar and vanilla, stirring until smooth and well combined. Stir in the cherries until evenly distributed. Spoon into baking dish and chill for 1 hour or until firm. Cut into squares. Store in an airtight container.



One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess created in the living room on Christmas day. Don't clean it up too quickly."

~ Andy Rooney - Humorist

THE PERILS OF POLLY P.T.

PART SIXTEEN

Written By Roseanne Woerner, COT Wapello County
Created by Dee Lehn, CED Keokuk County
& Roseanne Woerner, COT Wapello County

Visit our website at
www.iascoe.org for the
entire story of
"The Perils of Polly PT"

I want every single person in my new office to like me. Which is why I still use my company manners when I talk to people. I don't curse. I don't gossip. Plus, I go out of my way to be kind and polite to all of my co-workers. The problem is, I'm a big baby and a natural born whiner. So, if I deprive myself of the opportunity to expel whatever nit picking and nagging thoughts I might have on a regular basis, those thoughts will fester up inside of me and explode in a dynamic projectile that is akin to a rocket launch at NASA.

It's Monday morning and I have lots to say. I have issues. I decide to call Stevie Corona so that I can vent.

"How are you getting along Polly?" Stevie asks.

"Okay," I tell him. "I like the staff. I like the producers. It's fine I guess, except..."

"Except what?"

"I'm freeeeezing!" As I draw out my words, I rattle my teeth, just in case he doesn't get the point that I'm really cold.

He laughs, which I pretty well expected because Stevie has a tendency to laugh at everything I say.

"It's the middle of summer," he says.

"So."

"So, it's been ninety degree weather for weeks."

"So."

"So how could you be freezing in ninety degree weather?"

"First off," I tell him. "You have to remember that I'm farther north now."

"Okay, so how hot is it up there today?" he asks.

"Outside, the temperature is eighty-six degrees."

"And you're cold."

"Yes," I say.

"That's impossible," he tells me.

"No sir and I'll tell you why. It's about fifty degrees inside on purpose and it's that cold everywhere I go."

"You're exaggerating," he says.

"Only because I want you to feel my pain."

"I felt your pain for years Polly," he says. "It's someone else's turn. So, why don't you nicely ask your new boss if he would please turn up the thermostat?"

"He won't do it. He likes it this cold. Everyone here does."

"Why do you say that?"

"Because they have this little joke that they say when I mention that I'm going outside to warm up."

"Which is?"

"In northern Iowa, when it's twenty below, they put on a coat."

"That's the joke?" he asks.

"No," I tell him. This is the joke. When it's thirty below, they zip the coat up."

THE (Brrrrr) End



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