

December 2009 IASCOE Newsletter



**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW
YEAR TO EVERYONE FROM THE IASCOE
DIRECTORS!**



2009/2010 IASCOE OFFICERS

President
Cindy Mensen
 CED Clayton County



Office 563 245-1713
cindy.mensen@ia.usda.gov

Vice-President
Jeff Davis
 CED Plymouth County



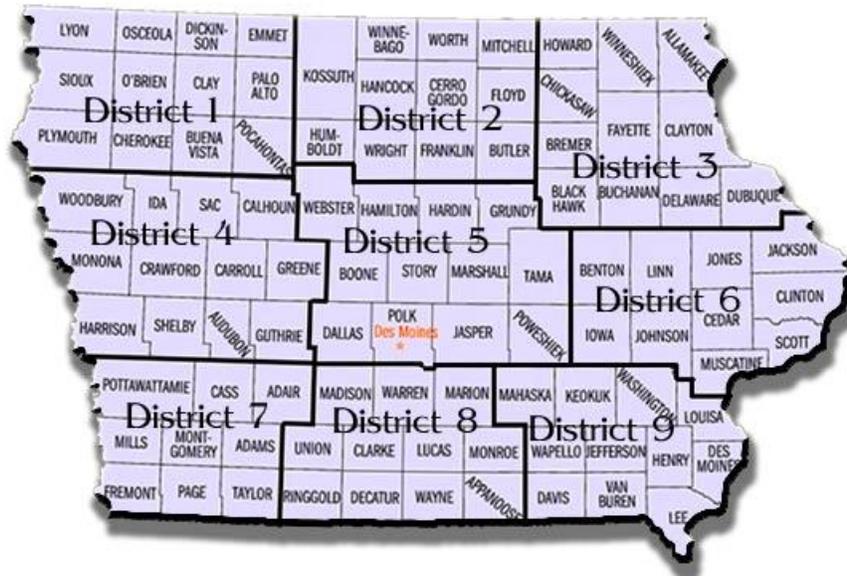
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Secretary/Treasurer
Sue Beemer
 PT Taylor County



Office 712 523-2118
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IASCOE DISTRICTS



2009/2010 IASCOE DIRECTORS

<u>District</u>	<u>P.T. Director</u>	<u>C.E.D. Director</u>
1	Glenda VonArb - Sioux Alt - Nancy Heideman - Clay	Jeff Davis - Plymouth Alt - Larry Lago - Dickinson
2	Cindy Pistek - Hancock Alt - Jeanine Diekhuis - Hancock	Tammy Pruin - Wright Alt - Dave Stromer - Kossuth
3	Tammy Eibey - Delaware Alt - Karen McNeil - Winneshiek	Cindy Mensen - Clayton Alt - Kevin Keegan - Buchanan
4	Mary Lageschulte - Ida Alt - Amy Carlson-Hammen - Calhoun	John Landgraf - Sac Alt - Kevin Fitzpatrick - Greene
5	Chris Grieder - Polk Alt - Teresa Heck - Polk	Steve Kennedy - Jasper Alt - <i>Vacant</i>
6	Jessica Yuska - Scott Alt - Joni Birkhofer - Muscatine	Devalyn Wilson - Cedar Alt - Randy Madsen - Muscatine/Scott
7	Sue Beemer - Taylor Alt - Judy Lundgren - Page	Chris Irvin - Page Alt - Warren Schuler - Montgomery
8	Patsy Bence - Madison Alt - Connie Bence - Madison	Kelly Cain - Madison Alt - Joyce Frost - Wayne
9	Judy Dameron - Louisa Alt - Dawn Stewart - Henry	Dee Ann Lehn - Keokuk Alt - John Bartenhagen - Louisa

2009/2010 IASCOE COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Legislative

Co-Chairs

Dee Lehn
CED Keokuk County
Office 641 622-2800
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Tammy Eibey
FLPO Delaware County
Office 563 927-4250
tammy.eibey@ia.usda.gov

Membership

Co-Chairs

Glenda VonArb
PT Sioux County
Office 712 737-4801
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Mary Lageschulte
PT Ida County
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Benefits

Kelly Cain - CED Madison County
Office 515 462-4884
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Awards

Devalyn Wilson - CED Cedar County
Office 563 886-6061
devalyn.wilson@ia.usda.gov

Programs

Jessica Yuska - PT Scott County
Office 563 391-3335
jessica.yuska@ia.usda.gov

Publicity

Cindy Pistek - PT Hancock County
Office 641 923-3666
cindy.pistek@ia.usda.gov

Scholarship

Tammy Pruin - CED Wright County
Office 515 532-2849
tammy.pruin@ia.usda.gov

Emblems

Chris Grieder - PT Polk County
Office 515 964-4295
chris.grieder@ia.usda.gov

2009/2010 IASCOE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

District 1

Benefits/Legislative: Steve Waller, Clay
Awards/Scholarship: Larry Lago - Dickinson
Publicity: Nancy Heideman - Clay
Membership: Mark VonArb - Cherokee

District 2

Benefits/Legislative: David Stromer - Kossuth
Awards/Scholarship: Jeanine Diekhuis -
Hancock
Publicity: Lisa Forburger - Kossuth
Membership: Janine Schwarck - Mitchell

District 3

Benefits/Legislative: Karen McNeil -
Winneshiek
Awards/Scholarship: Connie Straw -
Chickasaw
Publicity: Rose Woerner - Black Hawk
Membership: Sheri Rodman - Clayton

District 4

Benefits/Legislative: Pat Warmbier - Harrison
Awards/Scholarship: Denise Dugan -
Woodbury
Publicity: Heather Muenchrath - Shelby
Membership: Cathleen "Skip" Borst - Carroll

District 5

Bene./Legislative: Teresa Simonton -
Poweshiek
Awards/Scholarship: Twyla Brede - Dallas
Publicity: Kitty Benda - Marshall
Membership: Rodney Biensen - Story

District 6

Bene./Legis.: Joni Birkhofer - Muscatine
Awards/Scholarship: Angie Reynolds -
Muscatine
Publicity: Betty Williams - Muscatine
Membership: Renee Schultz - Cedar

District 7

Benefits/Legislative: Chris Irvin - Page
Awards/Scholarship: Phyllis Reineke - Taylor
Publicity: Carole Dawson - Taylor
Membership: Dan Wells - Adair

District 8

Benefits/Legislative: Kelly Cain - Madison
Awards/Scholarship: Dave Wynn - Monroe
Publicity: Rhonda Cooper - Union
Membership: Marla Morlan - Monroe

District 9

Benefits/Legislative: John Bartenhagen -
Louisa
Awards/Scholarship: Carol Long - Mahaska
Publicity: Anna Hornbaker - Van Buren
Membership: Cynde Briggs - Mahaska

Other Roles

CAPWIZ Co-ordinator

Tammy Eibey - FLPO Delaware County
Office 563 927-4250
tammy.eibey@ia.usda.gov

IASCOE Web Manager

Brian Beach - PT Sac County
Office 712-662-7159
brian.beach@ia.usda.gov

Convention Registration

Judy Dameron - PT Louisa County
Office 319 523-6381
judy.dameron@ia.usda.gov

PAST IASCOE PRESIDENTS

1959-61 Kenneth Hatcher	1984-86 Joe McLaughlin
1961-62 Raymond D Vanderhorst	1986-87 Pat Drew / Ronald Parker
1962-63 Luther Stock	1987-88 Mike Houston
1963-64 William H Holiday	1988-90 Ronald Reuvers
1964-65 Charles Bacon	1990-92 Steve Abbas
1965-66 Gaylor A Thayer	1992-94 Kevin Fitzpatrick
1966-67 V. Deane Thornton	1994-95 Jerry Frank
1967-68 Marguerite Liddle	1995-97 Kevin McClure
1969-70 Warner C Walrath	1997-99 Jolene Fechter
1970-71 Janet Hemm	1999-01 Trice Smith
1971-72 Carl Lantz	2001-03 John Landgraf
1972-74 James A Riekens	2003-05 Tom Lane/Alan Donaldson /John Landgraf
1974-76 Cecil F Zollars	2005-07 Dee Lehn
1977-79 Garnita Ewart	2007-09 Steve Kennedy
1979-80 John Ace Parker/Gary Brewer	2009-11 Cindy Mensen
1980-82 Gary Brewer	
1982-84 Larry Niles	

BLAST FROM THE PAST in 1985!!! Submitted by John Landgraf

Check out the photo below.... Can you name who's in the photo? The answers are somewhere in the newsletter, have fun!



Note: If anyone has any "old" photos they would like to share, please send them to Cindy Pistek. Just be sure to include the name; that is half of the fun!!

Who is this IASCOE Director?



FROM THE DESK OF JOHN WHITAKER, SED

It is hard to believe that fall is almost over already! I always enjoy the fall season but seem to dread the coming of winter more every year. It does seem this year that due to the late harvest, we really haven't had fall yet but the first couple of weeks of November and the dry weather we had then made a big difference.

At the State Office, October was completely overshadowed by the new payment system, as I am sure that the County Offices were even more hectic. Our County Offices have always prided themselves in having our producers (our customers) paid accurately and timely. The new system did get the payments made accurately and timely to 80 to 90 percent which we appreciate but our standard is higher and we will do better! I am confident in discussing the payment system with Karis Gutter our Deputy Administrator for DAFO and Jonathan Coppess our Administrator that they will not settle for less than total accuracy and timeliness from the new web based system in the future.

One thing I should mention to all of you is that both Jonathan and Karis have committed to me they will visit our State and spend some time visiting County Offices. I don't mention this so that everyone will have their desks clean (they will see mine first) but to let all of you know that they are committed to supporting our Agency to the fullest.

My thanks to Tammy Zanoni for getting our new SharePoint up and running. I believe that this will become a very effective one step for our County Offices to find information. Our Iowa Intranet Web-Site which was put together and maintained by Karen Rawson has been a great tool and will continue to be. SharePoint will be a step further into the electronic age. As I do more and more on the computer myself, I find some things which save me time and some that I will still do the old fashioned way. In the future, I will try to do a better job of updating my blog.

USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan visited Iowa on October 20th. The Deputy Secretary's original plans called for her to be here for two days and spend the second day visiting offices but as often happens, plans had to change. One issue Deputy Secretary Merrigan mentioned is that Chairman Peterson plans to begin hearings on the 2012 farm bill as soon as next summer. My first thought was "give us a chance to get all of the 2008 programs implemented." Our SURE program is an example. This program will take some time to fully implement.

I should mention the changes which are occurring at the State Office. Bruce Cordes retired as Public Affairs/Program Coordinator on October 30th. I want to personally thank Bruce for his many years of service to USDA. Without Bruce here, I spend less time talking about fishing and I miss that.

The biggest change for me is Linda Saylor's retirement on November 20th. I give Linda a high amount of credit for helping me get started in this job, she looks out for me. In the future, someone new will be at the desk outside my office and I look forward to working with someone new, but I will miss Linda. Linda, thank you for your service you provided to USDA and especially from the four SED's.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John R. Whitaker". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

A President's Perspective

Thanks to all of you who completed your membership renewal timely. Your participation makes a strong group of Iowa FSA employees! For those few who have not joined yet, please consider adding your support. You are also reaping the benefits that your IASCOE/NASCOE team has worked so hard to make available for all employees of FSA. For example, I am sure you will read elsewhere in this newsletter about the great accomplishment recently announced that will allow the sick leave you have accumulated to become a benefit to your retirement!

Recently a letter was mailed to all FSA county offices in Iowa regarding our corporate life. Fifty years ago this association was founded and our jobs and benefits are much greater because of that foresight. Let us continue to build a foundation for our future and carry on our mission to support a sustainable agriculture life for our farming communities!

I invite you to plan to attend the 2010 IASCOE Annual Convention that will be held:

* Friday March 26 and Saturday March 27, 2010

* West Des Moines Marriott, just off Interstate 80 on the west end of Des Moines (Jordan Creek exit)

It is a great time to connect with fellow FSA employees, meet out-of-state guests and find out more about IASCOE and NASCOE. We will send out more information on the convention agenda in the future.

Be proud of your director representatives as they are striving to keep you informed. Let them know your home email address and you will be one of the first to find out the most recent information. Another way to stay informed is via the internet. Check out www.iascoe.org for Iowa's webpage and then remember to go to www.nascoe.org to read the latest editions of NASCOE NOW.

If you have concerns that you believe IASCOE or NASCOE should know, please send me an email (mensenc@iowatelecom.net) or give me a call (home 563-927-5455). Jon Williams, our Midwest Area Executive, is always asking me if Iowa has any issues he needs to forward to the national officers.

My favorite season is here and finally November is bringing the weather I enjoy and the clothes I like to wear: Black & Gold Iowa sweatshirts! Go Hawkeyes ☺

Have an enjoyable fall and be thankful for all we have received,

Cindy T. Mensen



Get Involved or at least VOTE

Every two years each member has the chance to vote. They have a chance to vote on who they would like to have representing them on the Board of Directors for IASCOE. Each District has two representatives, one is a PT and the other is a CED that is a member of IASCOE/NASCOE in good standing and is employed in an office in the district.

Any CED or PT can nominate themselves or other to be put on the ballot to be the District Representative for your district. There are two positions that are voted for by each district for the PT Director and CED Director. One position is for the actual Director that will represent the district on the board and the other is as an alternate director in case the director can not make a meeting or fulfill the term as director.

Being a director does take a little time but can be a very rewarding position. You get in on some of the inside thoughts of how things work on the ground floor. If you get the honor of serving in the position as a director, you will quickly learn that the wheels of progress can sometimes move very slowly. It takes time for things to get implemented because you need to remember this organization represents people from all over the United States. You can also be surprised at how fast things might move if the right topic is in the right hands at the right time.

Being a District Representative on the IASCOE/NASCOE board is a lesson in working for the betterment of all of the people. There are a lot of people that put in an immense amount of time. The NASCOE board of directors is a great group of people that have a passion for our organization.

Remember what IASCOE/NASCOE is here for. It is not the rules and regulations of the programs that we implement. Directors work for the majority of the members on benefits for all of the employees of FSA. In 1959, when the organization was formed the benefits of working for the agency were much less inviting as they are today. It is hard to believe where we might be if there was no NASCOE formed 50 years ago.

In closing I would just like to say “get involved”. Don’t rely on someone else to get the job done. Don’t expect every topic to be a priority to every person. You can make a difference and the best way to do that is to serve. If you don’t feel that you can serve as a District Representative at least, make sure you “VOTE”, because each and every member has the right to vote and should do so.

If you have any questions that I can help with I would like to invite you to give me a call and I will do what I can. As the Vice President of IASCOE I am here to serve to the best of my ability and I hope to be able to do so at least a few years in the future. See you at the IASCOE convention in March.

Jeff Davis, IASCOE Vice-President

MIDWEST AREA EXECUTIVE REPORT

November 2009

70 degrees in November, I think that means the average temperature for November has probably been higher than the average temperature for September! I know the farmers in my area have welcomed the nice weather with open arms and have been going strong in the fields.

This fall has been very active and I anticipate that it will continue to be busy for all of us with delayed harvest of corn and soybeans, DCP sign up, and the signup for 2008 SURE.

The NASCOE Execs and Officers are preparing for their fall meeting with management the week of November 16th. The purpose of the meeting is to follow up on Negotiation Session items that action was to be taken on after the spring session, to get answers to unanswered questions from the National Convention, and to address new issues with the FSA Management.

Some of the biggest issues that will be discussed with management are the problems with the new payment process, NRRS, the implementation of the Activity Reporting System (ARS), training, and the status of PT reclassification. Needless to say there are a lot of things to discuss during our short time in Washington. I do however look forward to the opportunity this meeting provides us to meet with FSA Management.

Back in August most of our department heads had just been appointed and had very little knowledge of FSA and what it does let alone who NASCOE was. After a busy three months, we hope the FSA administration has gotten on its feet. I was impressed with the message from the Administrator earlier addressing some of the biggest issues that have impacted the way we do our jobs. This shows me that management will be willing to listen and be open to suggestions to ways that will allow us to do our jobs better and more efficiently.

I would encourage all members to make suggestions through the NASCOE programs committee and negotiation process to all us to meet those challenges we run into every day. Submission forms for both the Program Committee and Negotiation Items can be found on the new NASCOE Website.

I also want to encourage everyone to watch the legislation that is being debated by congress. NASCOE has sent out an alert through Cap Wiz explaining our position on health care and that any changes protect our existing health program benefits.

The Administrator addressed the challenges that all of USDA will be facing because the tight budgets and the pressures they are facing to work within the budget they have been provided. We all are aware that it costs more to operate today than it did a year ago. NASCOE will be vigilant in its effort to work with management in addressing how this will impact County Office staffing, benefits, and service to our customers.

Quotes from Larry the Cable Guy

99 % of lawyers give the rest a bad name!

When everything is coming your way, you're in the wrong lane!

I hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable harvest and holiday season.



Jon Williams
MWA Executive

Awards

A few minutes time, a minimal amount of effort and *VOILA*...you have a perfect opportunity to spotlight that special person! The IASCOE/NASCOE awards program is all about recognizing each other and celebrating the efforts and accomplishments of our NASCOE members.

Distinguished Service Award

Nominations for a Distinguished Service Award can be submitted in three different categories. If you are aware of a co-worker or peer, who goes above and beyond in one of the below-mentioned areas, please take time and recognize those individuals by nominating them for an award. Nominations must be submitted to Devalyn Wilson by February 1, 2010.

The categories are:

- Service to NASCOE
- Service to FSA-Agriculture
- Community Service

Sick Leave Awards

Sick Leave Awards are presented to NASCOE members that have accumulated sick leave of 1,000, 1,500, 2,000, and 2,500 hours, during our state convention. With the help of Admin PT's, CED, and employee's, we should be able to recognize everyone who is eligible for this award. NASCOE members that have accumulated 3,000 hours of sick leave are recognized at the National Level.

Extra Mile Award

This award recognizes NASCOE members or children of NASCOE members who have 'gone the extra mile' for their community, their church, their school, or their state, or national association.

Our Iowa NASCOE members are very deserving of these awards. I would like to challenge each district to submit at least one award in each Distinguished Service Award category. All details of each award are explained in the award handbook which is available on the NASCOE web page at <http://nascoe.org/Awards.aspx>. The NASCOE website has fillable nomination forms that will walk you right through the process! Previous winners are also shown with their write-up's. This should help spark the process!

Please send all nominations by February 1, 2010 to:

Devalyn Wilson
122 W 6th Street
Tipton, IA 52772

Office Phone: 563.886.6061 – ext 106
Office Fax: 563.886.2254

IASCOE December 2009

Missouri-A Meeting with Meaning

Submitted By Dee Ann Lehn

I recently had the opportunity to represent Iowa at the Missouri State Convention on September 17 and 18, 2009. The convention was held in historic Hannibal, home to Tom Sawyer, Becky Thatcher and of course, Huckleberry Finn. This year, Missouri tried something just a little different. Instead of having a week-end meeting, the convention was scheduled for Thursday and Friday with hope more members would be able to attend as free week-ends seem far and few between in today's world. When I walked into the meeting that Thursday afternoon, I estimated at least 75 people were seated throughout the room listening to the panel of State Office specialists. Missouri's new SED, Eddie J. Hamill, was present throughout the whole convention. He seemed very in touch with the employees and the employees were quite at ease with him. I wonder if Mr. Hamill's previous position as a CED was the reason he seemed to relate so easily to the members.



State office personnel were very involved with the convention throughout the 2 days offering not only their knowledge of FSA programs and procedure but also hosting the picnic BBQ which was held in a small park lying on the bank of the mighty Mississippi River on Thursday evening.



Before departing for the picnic, Sheltered Reality put on a rousing performance through their special type of music. The group choreographed drumming is invigorating entertainment which inspires both the performers and the audience. This nonprofit group was starting in the 1996 and its roots are actually in Iowa. It is a youth-oriented project which using music and education to motivate people to make positive changes in both themselves and to the world we all live in. Sheltered Reality teaches personal empowerment and character building through the music and stories of hardship and triumph. This message is what makes their music—Music with Meaning!

Kathy Post, MASCOE President, is a member of the group and has been performing with SR for several months. Some of us out-of-stators were invited to be guest drummers including myself, Charlene Neukomm, John Williams and Tony Augustine. It was truly a unique experience and a heck of a lot of fun to boot!



Friday's agenda included Sergeant Kory Craig with a narcotics presentation featuring meth—a very eye-opening presentation indeed. Other speakers included Jon Williams, MWA exec; Teresa Mace, J & M Marketing and Eddie J. Hamill, SED.

The convention was the perfect mix of informative presentation and entertainment. I commend Kathy and her fellow Missouri members for hosting a wonderful convention.



New NASCOE Group Dental Plan

Submitted by Kelly Cain, State Benefits Chairperson

and Dee Ann Lehn, MWA Benefits Chairperson

J. M. Marketing has secured a new dental plan for NASCOE members. Enrollment is so simple and can be accomplished on line at www.nascoebenefits.com or by paper enrollment. Forms can be printed from that same website.

This year, members have the opportunity to enroll with no waiting periods for covered services. Most plans require a 12 month waiting period for certain services. The new plan allows you to use a dentist of your choice. However, if you select a network dentist, services are discounted from 20% to 30%.

The dental plan is through First Continental Life and covers 100% of preventive services as well as 80% of basic services and 50% of several types of major procedures. The plan includes coverage of 50% of orthodontic expenses up to \$1500.00 to age 19. The calendar year deductible is \$50.00 per person or \$150 maximum per family.

For further information, please log on to www.nascoebenefits.com.

The new Dental Plan—Something to Smile about!



IASCOE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

School has just begun but it is never too early to be thinking about scholarships!

IASCOE will again this year be offering 4 scholarships to high school seniors, graduates, or full time college students, up to the Bachelor Degree level. (Full-time is a minimum of 12 credit hours). Eligibility requirements are a minimum of a “C” average (using the 4.0 system) in **both** junior and senior years of high school or as a college student. These scholarships are worth \$300 and are paid after the completion of the first semester of post secondary education. The applicant must be a legal dependent of an **IASCOE** member, a member’s spouse, or even be an **IASCOE** member. The **IASCOE** member must be a county FSA employee with membership during the last five consecutive years or has been a member since becoming a permanent FSA county employee, including the current year.

DON’T MISS OUT ON THIS OPPORTUNITY!! Part of your annual dues goes directly to the **IASCOE** scholarship fund. If you or someone you know is an active member and will have a college bound student or has a student currently in college, take advantage of the **IASCOE** scholarship program. The scholarship application may be printed from the NASCOE web-site @ www.nascoe.org. Once you are at the site, click on “scholarship” and you will find the scholarship application. You may type in your information and print the application, or print the application and complete. **BE SURE TO PRINT THE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION CHECKLIST** as well as this page will assist you in making sure you have all required information submitted.

Please note the checklist return date should be **January 31st** for the Iowa Scholarships. State winners are then forwarded on to the Area Scholarship committee to be judged for Area and National awards.

Please return the completed applications to me at the address below by January 31st, 2010.

DON’T PUT IT OFF, GET YOUR APPLICATION COMPLETED TODAY!

Tammy Pruin

16316 190th St

Mason City, IA 50401

515-532-2849 (Office phone)

515-532-3506 (Office Fax)

tammy.pruin@ia.usda.gov

IASCOE Legislative Report December 2009

Did you receive the CAP WIZ informational message regarding the FERS sick leave provisions in the Defense Bill signed by the President? If not, are you wondering why you didn't? Iowa has 225 subscribers to the CAP WIZ legislative alert system that NASCOE provides as part of the legislative process. That is just a small percentage of our IASCOE members. Unfortunately not all of our subscribers have even sent the alerts as they are notified. There is a current alert regarding Health care reform that is now active and going to Senators only. So far Iowa has only had 94 respond sending 208 letters. If you are wondering why that isn't 188 letters (2 Senators X 94 subscribers taking action), that is because some changed the name and sent for a spouse. Our system only looks at email address it is coming from so it appears that the email address has sent the letter twice. Just a reminder, you may only get one response from that senator's office. If you have changed your email address or mailing address, please get to me the new information and I will update in the system. I have a lot of people who have several email addresses attached to their name. This happens because they went in and added it as new rather than just an edit.

If you have any questions regarding the current legislative actions, please contact Dee Lehn or myself, Tammy Eibey

P.S Iowa does lead the Nation in subscribers and also the number who have acted on the current alert...we can improve though!



INFORMATIONAL NOTICE ONLY!

FERS Sick Leave included in Defense Bill

NASCOE's Members are heard

FERS Sick Leave

On Wednesday, October 28, 2009, President Obama signed into law the Fiscal Year 2010 Defense Authorization bill, which includes several benefit improvements long sought by NASCOE and other professional employee associations, including the National Association of Retired Federal Employees. NASCOE applauds the efforts of legislators and the President for their part in this beneficial change for employees and hearing the collective voices of the professional associations who have supported the legislation

The new law allows:

federal agencies to re-employ federal retirees on a limited, part-time basis without offset of annuity;

Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) workers to initially credit half, and in 2014 all, of their unused sick leave toward retirement;

Currently, employees covered by the Civil Service Retirement System are allowed to credit their unused sick leave toward their retirement annuity. FERS employees did not receive any benefit from unused sick leave upon retirement. NASCOE has been working behind the scenes to end the inequities under the two retirement systems, which has hurt productivity and increased agency costs.

This new provision gives employees greater flexibility in the way to use their sick leave to best serve their needs, whether they need the leave for immediate medical concerns, "short term disability" to recover from a debilitating disease or if they choose to take the monetary benefit from leave that was not needed during their career.

Concerns over budget resulted in the compromise of phasing the sick leave credit in gradually until 2014.

Jim Moran, (VA) has carried the torch for federal employees on this issue and deserves the majority of the credit for consistently keeping this before the leadership. A big THANK YOU and job well done is extended to all of those persons that sent Cap Wiz letters, presented this idea at the legislative conference and continued to stay in touch with their representatives on this issue.

Your NASCOE Officers, Executives and Legislative Committee

EMBLEMS!

Chris Greider, Emblems Chair

THENASCOESTORE.COM is your one-stop shop for emblem sales. What a variety of things to buy!

The store is provided as a benefit to NASCOE members (as well as all USDA-FSA employees). They provide a variety of officially sanctioned emblem and logo items. They make every effort to process all orders in two weeks. NASCOE's website is www.nascoe.org. Remember, **NASCOE gets a percentage of sales from all items ordered online. This money goes strictly to the NASCOE Scholarship fund.**

REGISTERING FOR THE FIRST TIME, BE SURE TO USE YOUR HOME EMAIL ADDRESS, NOT YOUR .GOV ADDRESS.

ALL TEE SHIRTS ARE REDUCED 25%. STOCK UP AT THIS PRICE. ORDER 4 OF THESE SALE TEES, AND ORDER ONE OF THE NASCOE 50th ANNIVERSARY TEES, ENTER THE CODE "FREETEE" AND YOU'LL GET THE ANNIVERSARY TEE FREE.

SOME HAVE BEEN ASKING WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO OFFER FLEECE JACKETS??? LADIES, CHECK OUT ITEM 91021.

- Polo & dress shirts for office attire
- Long & short sleeve denims for both men and women
- Ladies sleeveless denim shirts
- Embroidered **USDA-FSA** t-shirts
- Embroidered sweatshirts
- Screen printed T-shirts
- Embroidered logo jackets
- Head Wear
- USDA and FSA Emblems Items

New items have been added to the website that will be really nice for the cooler season just around the corner. Check out the new Sweatshirt and the new full-zip hooded jacket. The jacket is a Made in USA product. More Made in USA products as well as Eco-friendly items are currently being added.

The Nascoe Store has a huge variety of items with either the USDA-FSA or the NASCOE logo on them. GIFT COUPONS IN \$10, \$25, \$50, AND \$100 INCREMENTS ARE AVAILABLE. Anything that you need for any purpose; if they don't have it, call and they will see about offering as an item.

SPECIAL NOTE: Please note that all credit card transactions will show on your statement as thenascoestore.com/BEJs Advertising, 706-867-7571. Charges to your credit card will be made when order is received.

New software, new procedures, new problems!!

Do you have a recommendation to improve our web based environment? Adapting to change has become a constant in our FSA lives. I want to share with you an opportunity -- an opportunity to contribute your ideas! Please submit recommendations or suggestions to the NASCOE Programs Committee.

The key function of the Programs Committee is to present ideas and solutions obtained from us in the field to FSA Management in Washington, DC. Your fellow co-worker's suggestions have improved program efficiency and delivery. I recently made my own suggestion regarding the format of a web-based form. I look forward to seeing my recommendation create change for the better!

As we endure these changes, I am asking all IASCOE members to consider submitting a recommendation or suggestion to the Programs Committee. The Negotiations/Consultation form has been included in this newsletter or a fillable excel document is available through the NASCOE website for your use. I encourage you to forward your recommendations to me or Darlene Schouten, NASCOE Secretary at nascoesecretary@gmail.com before the December 15th deadline. Especially with our frustrations with payments this past month it is no better time than the present to share your suggestions for change! The Negotiation Form is located on the NASCOE website www.nascoe.org look on the home page or under NASCOE Officers, then Secretary. The Programs submission form is under Committee then Programs. Follow instructions on the form and on the webpage.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jessica Yuska

IASCOE Programs Chair

Home address: 3211 W 18th ST, Davenport, IA 52806

Email: jesshovie@hotmail.com

Deadline for Submission is December 15th



NASCOE
Negotiation/Consultation Submission Form

Please select the category that best represents your concern:

Staffing/Personnel Benefits Program Policy/Procedure Workload IT Miscellaneous

ISSUE (Background and Facts):

POSITION:

RECOMMENDATION FOR RESOLUTION:

HANDBOOK/NOTICE REFERENCE(S):

.....

Name of Contact _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

County/State/Area _____

NASCOE PROGRAM EFFICIENCY

Submission Form

STATE _____ **COUNTY** _____ **DATE** _____
ISSUE *(i.e. program efficiency/area of concern and procedure reference if applicable):*

FACTS *(i.e. circumstances of the concern):*

SOLUTION *(i.e. your suggestion for correcting the inefficiency):*

Submitted By: _____ **Phone:** _____
(name and address)

_____ **Email:** _____

Items of concern may be submitted at anytime. Timing could be critical to program efficiency. It is not necessary to wait for negotiation/consultation time. These items will be acted on upon receipt.

Mail or email to your State Program Chair

(State Program Chair add comments and forward to Area Program Chair. Area Program Chair add comments and forward to Area Exec and National Program Chair)

State Program Chair comments: _____

Area Program Chair comments: _____



Subscribe To the IASCOE Newsletter

To receive an email notification of new IASCOE Newsletters and web page updates go to our web site at www.iascoe.org and click on the subscription link.

RETIREMENTS

Several of our friends have decided to trade in FSA for R&R (one acronym for another!).

Gary Larson – Jones County

Bruce Cordes – STO

Pam Spear – Cedar County PT

Ginger Sheetz – Keokuk County PT

Linda Saylor – STO

JoAnn Carter – Hardin County CED

Linda Cashen- Buchanan County PT

Kathy Reimer—Clayton County

Daniel Brack—Black Hawk County

Joyce Wright—Story County



KITCHEN WISDOM!!

Martha Stewart says...Stuff a miniature marshmallow in the bottom of an ice cream cone to prevent ice cream drips



Maxine says...Just suck the ice cream out of the bottom of the cone, for Pete sake!

You are probably lying on the couch with your feet up eating it anyway!

Contribute To the Next IASCOE Newsletter

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

SUGAR COOKIES

1 c butter (softened)	2-1/2 c flour
1-1/2 c powdered sugar	1 tsp baking soda
1 egg	1 tsp cream tartar
1 tsp vanilla	¼ tsp salt

Cream butter and sugar. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Sift together flour, soda, cream tartar and salt. Add to creamed mixture. Chill dough until firm. On floured surface roll out dough, cut shapes and sprinkle with sugar. You might have to add a little flour when rolling out, the dough may be sticky. Be sure your surface is well floured. Bake for 6 – 8 minutes in a 400-degree oven. Frost with powdered sugar frosting tinted with the Christmas colors of your choice. Hint: I use almond flavoring in my frosting, instead of vanilla. It gives the cookies a different flavor and everyone loves them!



Powdered Sugar Frosting

6 TBS Butter	1-1lb powdered sugar
1 ½ tsp almond flavoring	Milk

Cream butter; gradually adding about ½ of the powdered sugar. Beat in the flavoring and a couple TBS milk. Gradually add remaining powdered sugar. Add the milk gradually in order to get the consistency you want for spreading. I leave it thicker and some like it to be thinner.

Separate the frosting into separate bowls so you can add food color as desired. Frost and sprinkle with colored sugars, cinnamon imperials etc as you like.

**The little one is my youngest daughter, Marie
Today she is 19 and attends UNI.
Enjoy your children and grandchildren,
They grow up so fast!!!!**

Submitted by Cindy Pistek

Ginger Sheetz Retires

Submitted by Dee Ann Lehn

After 17 years of service to FSA, Ginger Sheetz, Keokuk County Program Technician retired on September 30, 2009. Ginger has specialized in such programs as Price Support and Compliance throughout her career. She plans to enjoy her free time at home with her husband, Jim. She will, however, spend the first few weeks convalescing as Ginger had a knee replaced on the Monday following her retirement. She will be missed not only by her co-workers but also by the producers she served over the years.

District Director, Bob Wegend, and Dee Ann Lehn, Keokuk County SED, present Ginger with her retirement gift from FSA.



FAREWELL

Submitted by Teresa Heck

Shirley Whitaker, program technician in Polk Co, retired after 26+ years of service. She started working for the Polk County ASCS Office back in April 1983 when the county offices were very busy administering the "PIK" program.

Shirley had been the CRP PT since the program began back in 1986. She also was the Administrative PT for the last 9 years. Shirley intends to spend more time in her flower beds and traveling. Shirley and her husband, Craig, will be cruising around the U.S.A. in their street rod, a 1937 Chevrolet coupe.



Happy retirement!

HORNETS AT THE TERHARK HOME

Our family was walking to Church one beautiful late summer Sunday morning when I noticed a large batch of bright red leaves on a large tree planted in the cult de sac next to our house which seemed odd since the rest of the tree had bright green leaves. We were walking around the tree when we spotted it – the largest hornet nest that I had ever seen.



That afternoon we notified the neighbors of the nest to prevent any possible accidents that could occur with several hundred hornets hanging in the tree and many rambunctious kids throwing footballs and baseballs in the area very close to this location. The guys were in a huddle determining how many cans of Raid it would take to allow one person to climb a ladder and remove the troublesome nest. Deep in my mind I didn't care how many cans of Raid it would take because I wanted it. I could picture the gigantic mass of horror hanging from my mantel in the basement so every evening that I went down to watch the big screen TV, I could remind myself of my heroic act. The problem was the hornet's nest was hanging on a tree in common ground which means that no one really owns it. This told me that the first person to get it keeps it. I also knew that the weather was too warm to try to pluck it from the tree with hundreds of angry hornets flying around, so I needed patience – which isn't easy for me to come by.

After several weeks of eying the nest every night coming home from work I had an evening where I anticipated doing a project that I could not complete so I thought "Tonight is the night that I get the nest." Needless to say it was dark by the time I was ready to start the project, but I didn't care. The temperature was around 40 degrees so I thought the hornets would be a little slow. I put a coat and gloves on to reduce the amount of skin exposure I had in case something bad would happen – like having hundreds of hornets flying out at me. I asked for Joni's assistance and handed her the only Raid can that I had for use in case things turned out a little sour. She had a few choice things to say as we were going out the door.

It was dark so I needed a flashlight, and after careful observation I figured out a way to get the hornet's nest down. I have a ladder like you see at the fair which can be set up in a hundred different ways of which I have only figured out two, so I expanded that as high as it could go and carried it out to the hornet's nest. I thought that by climbing up the ladder I could cut the nest down. I noticed the first problem - the ladder was shorter than the height of the nest. Not a problem, thought I. I have one of those saws on a pole for cutting down high branches. I'll just use that. I found that in the garage and fully extended it, carefully unwinding the rope to pull for the cutting tool I was going to use. I also asked Joni to get a kitchen garbage bag to put the prize in once it was down.

I climbed up the ladder with my cutting tool in hand to cut the hornet nest down, and when I looked down to the ground I thought that the fall of the nest would definitely ruin it when it impacted the cement from that height. That would never do, so I climbed down the ladder to find the most convenient way to protect the prize that I was about to obtain. My first thought was that Joni could hold the garbage bag and catch it, but I believe she had some choice words concerning option A. My next option was for something softer for the nest to fall in – a lawn chair - it should bounce in the chair and safely land on the ground.

I meticulously lined up the lawn chair to use as a cushion for the prize to fall into. I placed the flashlight in my mouth so I could see what I was doing, climbed up the ladder, cut the branches that the nest was created around, and the prize fell, bounced in the lawn chair, and safely landed onto the ground without a single hornet flying out at Joni or me. I tried to cut the branch as close to the nest as I could, and it was during this time that I did need to use a little Raid as some dazed hornets slowly crawled out of the nest. I then grabbed the garbage bag to put the prize in,



but with the remaining branches and leaves still on the thing I couldn't get it to fit. I then asked Joni to get a larger garbage bag while I started putting my tools away – ladder, lawn chair, loppers, Raid, etc.

She came back with the bag, we placed the hornets nest in the bag, and I tied the top of the bag in a knot. She made a comment to the extent of "Congratulations, now what are you going to do with it."

I knew that coldness would slow them down, so I just put the bag in the deep freeze until I knew what else to do with it. Needless to say that didn't impress Joni. I went in the house for a celebratory beverage, and I decided to call my parents to brag a little about what amazing feat I accomplished. Upon visiting with them I started thinking about Raid right next to food probably wasn't too good of an option. After I hung up the phone I decided to take the bag out to the back patio until the next morning to decide what to do with it.

The next day the kids in the neighborhood wanted to see the thing so I took it out of the bag. Needless to say the hornet's nest didn't return to the bag after that moment since the temperatures were a little warmer. When the hornets started emerging wondering what happened to their abode I thought I should leave it next to the tree in our yard. The problem that occurred was it started raining, when it wasn't raining the nest was too wet to put anywhere and eventually became damaged.

Needless to say that is the story. Nobody was stung, nobody was hurt, the hornet nest is now removed from the tree, and much to Joni's excitement it is not hanging from my mantel. Joni's

version has a little different twist to it that involves the Raid can and a cell phone in case she needed to call 9-1-1. If you are interested in her side of it you will need to visit with her.

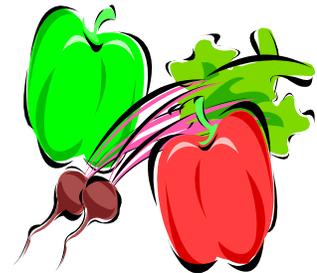
FUN FACTS!

Submitted by: Jessica Yuska

Did You Know? In 1892, President Benjamin Harrison urged citizens to participate in the 400th anniversary celebration of Columbus' first voyage. **It was during this event that the Pledge of Allegiance, written by Francis Bellamy, was recited in public for the first time.** In 1937, President Roosevelt proclaimed October 12 as "Columbus Day" and in 1971, President Nixon declared the second Monday of October a national holiday. *Source: history.com*

Snacks Under 100 Calories

Grapefruit – ½	60
Navel Orange – 1 medium	70
Apple – Medium	80
Bell Pepper – 1 medium	30
Tomato – 1 medium	35
Cucumber – 1 medium	45
Lettuce – 1 head	90
Bottled Water	0
V-8 Juice, 8 oz can	78
Quaker Rice Cakes- 2	70
Kellogg's Frosted Mini Wheats, 12 squares	100
Hard-Boiled Egg	70
String Cheese – 1	80
1 cup skim or 1% milk	100
Jell-O Fat-free pudding snacks	100
Jell-O sugar-free pudding snacks	100



JOHN BAHNSEN (FLOYD COUNTY CED) HAS A VERY TALENTED WIFE!

CHARLES CITY - Some women daydream about luxurious vacations, sleeping in, a romantic rendezvous.

Kim Bahnsen's thoughts often stray to adrenaline-pumping plots that involve new and creative ways to off someone. She gets caught up in the details, like where to hide the body. Her imaginative tidbits aren't all gloom and doom; the incessant "what if-ing" eventually leads to a steamy love scene or two.

Bahnsen, 52, of Charles City, isn't planning a life of crime and passion. Rather, the elementary school teacher, wife and mother of five, also is a published writer with a very active, if at times morbid and racy imagination. The award-winning author of almost 30 books, Bahnsen - who writes under the pseudonym Kylie Brant - is finding success in the romantic suspense genre.

And only in recent years did she discover that not everyone walks around with a running plot line in their head. Now that was a shocking discovery.

"I thought everybody had those," Bahnsen quipped.

"Even when I was a kid ... I'd just sit back and it's like I had a little movie reel going," she added.

Bahnsen's new romantic thriller series, "The Mindhunters," is being released this fall by Berkley Sensations, a line of the Berkley Publishing Group, part of the Penguin Group. "Waking Nightmare," which debuted in September, follows a forensic profiler and a police detective as they trail a serial rapist who customizes his torturous schemes to reflect each victim's worst fears. "Waking Evil," released Tuesday, and "Waking the Dead," due out Nov. 3, are also tales of crime, adventure and lust.

At least three more novels are planned for the series.

The new series with a new publisher is a deliberate step toward the dark and sinister. Bahnsen strives to write the types of books she can't always find on the shelves: gritty, edgy, intelligent and suspenseful stories topped off with a satisfying romance. Her first stories crafted for Silhouette Intimate Moments included elements of intrigue but always prioritized the love story.

"I'd always try to push suspense and they'd say more romance," Bahnsen said.

Bahnsen said she started writing in 1990 out of desperation. After completing a master's degree in special education, Bahnsen decided to treat herself to some light reading.

"I decided I didn't want to read anything intelligent for a year," she said.

When her favorite authors couldn't write fast enough to satisfy her voracious appetite for fiction, Bahnsen started writing her own. She finished a manuscript, called a publisher, and was informed by a "very snooty receptionist" that she wasn't following protocol.

But Bahnsen persisted and her second manuscript, and then her first, eventually sold after some major revisions. Today, she has her hands full spitting out plots fast enough for Berkley.

In April, Bahnsen received a Career Achievement Award from Romantic Times Magazine. In July, she won the overall Daphne du Maurier award for mystery and suspense.

Factual accuracy is important to Bahnsen, who takes the time to run her ideas by police sergeants and crime lab managers. She also uses the Internet to track down a former hostage negotiator and SWAT team trainers.

Bahnsen's husband, John, is proud of his wife's success, and the couple joke that her obsession with murder can make for interesting, if uncomfortable dinner conversations.

"She's worked hard at it," he said.

Bahnsen's agent, Danielle Egan-Miller of Browne & Miller Literary Assoc. in Chicago said the author has the skill and the dark imagination to find her place in a larger market. Bahnsen's characters are relatable, interesting and sexy, Egan-Miller said.

Bottom line? Bahnsen is a talented writer who tells a good story.

"Iowans should be proud of her," Egan-Miller added.

Virginia Ruzicka, head librarian at the Charles City Public Library, is impressed with Bahnsen's phrasing and vocabulary in books that also are easy to read. Plus, she vouches that the author is a nice person.

"She's got quite a good following here in Charles City ...," Ruzicka said.

To learn more about Bahnsen and to read excerpts from her books, go online at www.kyliebrant.com.

Posted in [Lifestyles](#) on Monday, October 12, 2009 12:00 pm Updated: 7:59 pm.

TRAVEL IOWA:

Submitted by Anna Hornbaker, District 9 Publicity Committee Member

Twelve Unique Villages:

The Villages of Van Buren consists of Birmingham, Bentonsport, Bonaparte, Cantril, Douds, Farmington, Keosauqua, Lebanon, Milton, Mt. Sterling, Selma and Stockport. all historical communities located within Van Buren County in Southeast Iowa. Visitors and locals alike enjoy taking a relaxing drive or walk through our beautiful woodland areas, or having a quiet picnic in one of our many parks. We have no fast food restaurants and not a single stoplight to alter the ambience that our county prides itself on. The peace and tranquility of small town life offers you the opportunity to enjoy the season to the fullest. We invite you to come experience the Villages of Van Buren ... a world left untouched by time. <http://villagesofvanburen.com/>

Six-Time Tourism County of the Year

- Awarded "Iowa Tourism County of the Year" in 1989, 1991, 1997, 2000, 2002 and 2004 . . it's easy to see why the Villages of Van Buren are one of Iowa's top tourist destinations. We are also proud to be included as one of only nine Iowa locations in the best-selling book ***"1,000 Places to See Before You Die" in the U.S. and Canada.***

December events include:

Event:	Enchanted Forest Walk
Date:	December 1-31
Location	Cantril
Description:	Feel the spirit of the holidays as you walk through the holiday lights and displays in Waubonsie Park. Free will donation.
Contact:	For information: 319-397-2401
Web Site:	http://www.cantril-iowa.com
Event:	Christmas Lighting Contest
Date:	December 2
Location:	Keosauqua
Description:	The Keosauqua Chamber of Commerce will host a lighting contest for homes with the judging to be held on Wednesday, December 2nd. Five places awarded.
Contact:	Alisha Poling @ 319-293-3794

Event: **Festival of Trees**
Date: **December 4-6**
Location: Keosauqua
Description: Dozens of decorated trees, wreaths, etc. based on the theme "Nature's Noel" on display at the Roberts Memorial Center at the N edge of Keosauqua. A variety of live music throughout the weekend. Trees, etc. purchased through a silent auction during the weekend. Proceeds to Christmas for Kids. Sponsored by the Lions Clubs of Van Buren County.
Hours: Friday, Dec. 4- 5-9 PM, Sat. Dec. 5 - 9-8; Sun Dec. 6 - 12-3

Event: **Breakfast on Main Street**

Date: **December 5**

Location: Bonaparte

Contact: For information: 319-592-3400

Event: **Christmas Home Tour**

Date: **December 5**

Location: Keosauqua

Description: The Keosauqua Chamber of Commerce will sponsor a Christmas Home Tour. Refreshments will be served at Tomorrow's Memories at 701 Broad Street in Keosauqua. Tickets for home tours are \$5 per person and may be purchased at Community First Bank or at any of the homes on the tour.

Contact: Alisha Poling @ 319-293-3794

Event: **Christmas Open House**

Date: **December 5 & 6**

Description: Discover the Scenic Rivers Wine Trail located in the heart of the Midwest with a "Christmas Open House" on the Northern Wine Trail. Featuring the following wineries: Whispering Pines Winery of rural Keosauqua, Kaiser Home Winery of rural Keosauqua, Crane Winery of Selma, Cedar Valley Winery of Batavia and Stone Fox Winery of Birmingham. Hours for the wineries are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Contact: Steve & Becki Tucker @ 319-293-6294

Web Site: <http://www.whisperingpines.biz> <http://www.scenicriverswine.com>

Event: **High Tea**

Date: **December 6**

Location: Keosauqua

Description: The Keosauqua Chamber of Commerce will host a High Tea with two settings available, 1 p.m. or 6 p.m. at Village Cup & Cakes. Tickets are \$25 per person and are available at Community First Bank on November 16.

Contact: Alisha Poling @ 319-293-3794

Event: **A Taste of Christmas**

Date: **December 11-12**

Location: Bonaparte

Description: Elegant candlelight dinner and tour of homes.

Contact: For reservations or information: 319-592-3400

Event: **Christmas in Milton**

Date: **December 12**

Location: Milton

Description: Mr. & Mrs Santa will visit the historic depot at 6:30 PM.
Soup and sandwich luncheon at the Methodist Church beginning at 11 AM.
There will also be a Nativity display at the Methodist Church beginning at 9:30 AM.

Event: **Santa Comes to Town**

Date: **December 12**

Location: Douds

Description: Enjoy a delicious soup supper served by the American Legion from 5 to 7 PM and a visit from Santa Claus at 6 PM.

Contact: For more information: 641-777-3054

Event: **Selma Jam**

Date: **December 20**

Location: Douds

Description: Old fashioned jam session. Bring your instrument & join in.
Potluck dinner @ noon, Jam @ 1pm.
Held at the Douds Community Center.

Contact: For more information: 319-796-4644

New Grandmother

Submitted by Dee Ann Lehn

Cathy Fry, PT in Keokuk County, is a new grandmother. Her first grandchild, Madison Taylor Fry entered the world on October 8, 2009. She weighed in at 7 lbs. and 12 oz.



How were you at the “Blast from the Past”?

Rex Wittrock, CED Calhoun County - Jim Richardson, District Director - Richard Jevne, CED Sac County - J C North, CED Plymouth County - Jim Bergman, CED Osceola County - Marvin Wachter, CED Cherokee County - Ray Anderson, CED Buena Vista County - Dennis Olson, CED Pocahontas County - Alan Donaldson, CED Sioux County - Ron Ruevers, CED Obrian County - Mike Mussel, CED Clay County - Larry Lago, CED Dickinson County - Steve Waller, COT - JoAnn Rowenhorst, CED Lyon County



The IASCOE Director was Tammy Eibey

Wasn't that fun????



Happy Holidays!



HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

Check out the holiday traditions celebrated by some of our IASCOE family

Cindy Mensen (IASCOE President) – I make Scott’s favorite candy with a Reese’s peanut butter cup inside. I also make a ham ball using my grandmother’s grinder.

Cindy Pistek (IASCOE Publicity Chairman) – Every Christmas Eve we go to Mass at 4:00 pm and then come home for our traditional Christmas Eve supper. Each year our family invites someone to supper who might not have somewhere to go for Christmas Eve. We have wild game of some sort (pheasant or duck) and King Crab Legs!

Lisa Forburger (COT) – I enjoy singing in the choir for Midnight Mass at St. Joseph’s Catholic Church in Wesley. Our family gets together before Mass and enjoys Mom’s oyster stew with snacks while we play a friendly board game.

Rhonda Cooper (PT in Union County) — We watch the National Lampoon movie “Christmas Vacation”

Meghan Hermiston (FLO in Cedar County) – We went to grandma’s house and while we cousins were playing, grandma would disappear (to do chores outside etc). Soon we would hear “jingle bells” and grandma would come back inside saying she “found” this bag full of presents on the doorstep.

Tammy Eibey (FLO in Delaware County) I remember when I was younger helping my mom, Grandmother and my Aunts make lots of cookies and candies for the holidays at our house in Sioux City. To this day, I get out my mom’s recipe box and find those family favorites. They are worn and torn from use but I make ones that are my brother’s favorites and ones that I liked too. I also make some of the items that my children were fond of. It is a good way to remember our family members who are no longer with us. We always talk about Grandma Betty, Great Grandma Nan and Aunt Mary....Auntie Marilyn still is baking away for us “kids” in Spirit Lake!

