



# February 2018

## IASCOE NEWSLETTER



## 2017/2018 IASCOE OFFICERS

### President

Jennifer Comer  
PT Page County



[Jennifer.comer@ia.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.comer@ia.usda.gov)  
[jennifercomer71@gmail.com](mailto:jennifercomer71@gmail.com)

### Vice-President

Jesse Wagner  
CED Fayette County



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[Jesse.wegner@yahoo.com](mailto:Jesse.wegner@yahoo.com)

### Treasurer

Judy Dameron  
PT Louisa County



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[jldameron@hotmail.com](mailto:jldameron@hotmail.com)



### Secretary

Wendi Denham  
CED Mahaska County



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[wendi.muir@yahoo.com](mailto:wendi.muir@yahoo.com)

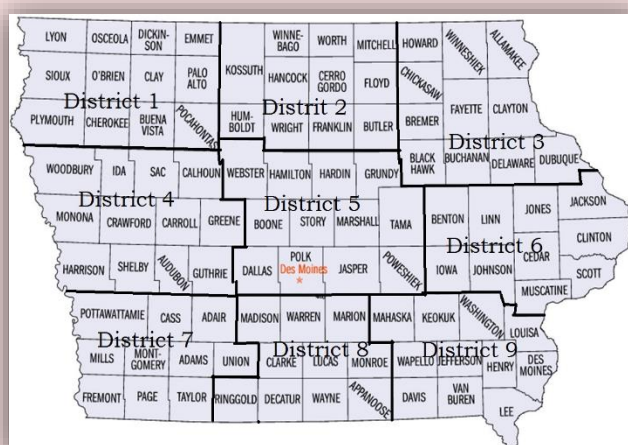
"Real leadership is leaders recognizing that they serve the people that they lead."

# 2017 - 2018

## ***IASCOE DIRECTORS & ALTERNATE DIRECTORS***

District Number	Program Technician/ County	County Executive Director/ County
1	Director Karen LaCour, Dickinson Alternate Samantha Erie, Buena Vista	Jeff Davis, Plymouth
2	Director Cindy Pistek, Hancock Alternate Danielle Sidles, Kossuth	Angie Christian, Kossuth
3	Director Candace Fette, Clayton Alternate Karla Langreck, Fayette	Jesse Wegner, Fayette Andrea Carroll, Winneshiek
4	Director Cathleen "Skip" Simons, Carroll Alternate Donita Kenkel, Shelby	Steve Luke, Shelby Pat Warmbier, Harrison
5	Director Karla Novotny, Tama Alternate Kitty Benda, Marshall	Katie Kramer, Jasper
6	Director Angie Reynolds, Muscatine Alternate Jessica Yuska, Scott	Matt Berg, Johnson Jennifer Ness, Iowa
7	Director Jennifer Comer, Page Alternate Nancy Gress, E Pottawattamie	Cindy Bebout, Fremont/Mills Chris Irvin, Page
8	Director Ronda Harrison, Lucas Alternate Stephanie Hanson, Monroe/Appanoose	Kathy Henely, Wayne Jayne Ruble, Warren
9	Director Judy Dameron, Louisa Alternate Diane Nicholson, Mahaska	Wendi Denham, Mahaska Elizabeth Benjamin, Davis

At Large Directors: Dustin Miller, Krystal Schatz, Mary Roberts, Jayne Ruble



# COMMITTEE MEMBERS

## BENEFITS & LEGISLATIVE CHAIR

**STEVE LUKE & JESSIE WEGNER, Co-Chairs**

<i>District</i>	<i>Member</i>	<i>County</i>
1	Rex Wittrock	Buena Vista
2	David Stromer	Hancock
3	Ron Pethoud	Chickasaw
4	Pat Warmbier	Harrison
5	Teresa Simonton	Poweshiek
6	Renee Schultz	Cedar
7	Chris Irvin	Page
8	Kelly Cain	Madison
9	Vacant	

## AWARDS CHAIR – KAREN LaCOUR

**SCHOLARSHIP CHAIR – CINDY BEBOUT/KATHY HENELY**

1	Vacant	
2	Tammy Pruin	Wright
3	Candace Fette	Clayton
4	Donita Kenkel	Shelby
5	Kathy Baker	Marshall
6	Vacant	
7	Lynette Gruchow	East/West Pottawattamie
8	Stephanie Hanson	Monroe-Appanoose
9	Lanie Benjamin	Davis

## PUBLICITY CHAIR/Newsletter – Tammy Eibey

1	Paul Berte	Pocahontas
2	Megan Ruby-Friedow	Kossuth
3	Luke Hawkins	Black Hawk
4	Heather Muenchrath	Shelby
5	Karla Novotny	Tama
6	Allison Vavroch	Benton
7	Jamie Newbury	Cass
8	Jayne Ruble	Warren
9	Deb Rurup	Mahaska



## **COMMITTEE MEMBERS cont'd**

### **MEMBERSHIP CHAIR – JONI BIRKHOFFER**

1	Lisa Forburger	Palo Alto
2	Rosalie Carlson	Worth
3	Shawna Helle	Clayton
4	Cathleen "Skip" Simons	Carroll
5	Katie Kramer	Jasper
6	Joni Birkhofer	Cedar
7	Susan Lange	Cass
8	Marla Morlan	Monroe-Appanoose
9	Deanna Rood	Marion

**EMBLEMS CHAIR** – Kitty Benda, Marshall and Kathy Baker, Marshall

**PROGRAMS CHAIR** –Angie Christian, Kossuth

**NAFEC CHAIR** – Mary Roberts, Calhoun

**CONVENTION/RALLY CHAIR-** Angie Christian, Kossuth

**CONVENTION REGISTRATION** – Mary Roberts, Calhoun

**CONVENTION AUCTION** – Cindy Bebout- Fremont/Mills  
Cindy Pistek- Hancock

**IASCOE WEB MANAGER** – Brian Beach, Sac





## A Message from our Acting State Executive Director Robert Wegand

*“We The People”* was the phrase our forefathers used to begin the preamble to the Constitution nearly 250 years ago; *“The Peoples Department”* is the phrase the Abraham Lincoln used in describing the newly established United States Department of Agriculture over 150 years ago. *“People”* is a very big part of both of those historic moments and *People* is still to this day the business we are in at the USDA. Sure, we deal with Farm Records, Midas, Recons, ARCPLC, Compliance, Conservation Programs, Commodity and Facility Loans, Farm Ownership and Operator Loans just to mention a few things but if it were not for the people we serve and administer these programs (our farmer/producers) for we would not have a job. And I must say for the most part we are very, very good at serving the *“People”*, our producers the farmers and landowners of Iowa. We are in the people business, we provide service to people. *“We the People”* and *“The Peoples Department”*!

Sometimes I feel our focus is so intently directed on serving our Ag clients we fail to adequately serve those that serve with us – each other. The energy, vitality and service that we put into our program areas likewise is not always put into those that we serve with. *We the People* means each other as well; and means accountability to each other, it means treating each other the way you would want to be treated, it means having patience and not being short or ornery with fellow employees; it means realizing we are not alike and acting accordingly; it means being respectful of others; it means communicating in a civil manner and in dispute resolution. It also means being accountable not only for your personal actions but also for your program and professional actions; it means being accountable for getting the job you were hired to do. It means working together as *We The People* in *The Peoples Department*.

FPAC: Farm Production and Conservation – what should we expect? We are told more efficient and better service to farmers, cutting down on redundancies and duplication of efforts, and working together. So, what does that mean (it all sounds pretty good to me) – on the local level I don’t think that means a lot of change if you have a good working relationship and are working together with our sister agencies of NRCS and RMA – after all we are all out here for the same reason and that is to serve those that walk in our doors. Change whether it be at home, socially or in the work place can often be a good thing. The USDA has gone through many changes in its history and I for one feel change over the years has been a good thing (I was once told if you were not changing and moving forward you were getting left behind). Probably the biggest change that I experienced was when ASCS and the FmHA merged to become today’s FSA. There was a lot of dissention in the field and fear of the unknown but those that accepted the change, accepted each other and moved forward experienced a smoother transition and had a much more rewarding career than those that didn’t. To be honest with you I do not expect nearly the change at the local level that we experienced when ASCS and FmHA came together – FPAC has FSA, NRCS, and RMA under a single Undersecretary. We still have our same mission areas, don’t we all serve production agriculture? – we are not merging multiple agencies into one as we did with FmHA and ASCS. I will move forward knowing the only thing that I have control over in this process is my attitude and my attitude will have the most influence on how I weather any change that may lie ahead.

When writing for the last IASCOE newsletter I couldn't welcome our new SED, but I can now – Welcome Amada De Jong! I feel very fortunate Amanda is our SED, we have worked a very short time together but I am impressed with her intellect, her background (more on that later), how personable she is and probably as much as anything how quickly she grasps and jumps right in to the her role as Iowa SED. Amanda comes to us from North East Iowa by way of Ames (ISU undergrad), Iowa City (U of I Law degree), Capitol Hill (worked on current farm bill), Senator Grassley's WDC Office, the USDA in WDC, and most recently from Des Moines working with the Iowa Corn Growers Association. Amanda's credentials to say the least are very impressive and the time I have worked with her makes me feel very good about the leadership in the Iowa Farm Service Agency going forward.

I want to end this by saying Thank You to everyone in Iowa FSA, as busy as this last year has been for me as acting SED it has also been the most rewarding. I have been able to work with many more people than I would have otherwise had the chance to work with. I have been able to see and appreciate all areas of the state – it is no wonder the DD's are so protective of the counties they serve. I have been able to witness how we all work together in our own different ways to provide great service to Iowa Agriculture. This last year has provided me the opportunity to experience what makes Iowa FSA what it is, and causes me to swell with pride when I think of the people and agency I work with – after all we are in the people business. Thank You!

Sincerely,

Bob Wegand.





IASCOE President  
Jennifer Comer

Greetings from (balmy) Southwest Iowa. OK – just kidding, it's cold here too! As I sit down to write this, I am finishing up a busy NASCOE/IASCOE day. We are gearing up for the 2018 IASCOE State Convention, the 2018 NASCOE Midwest Area Rally and had our first 2018 NASCOE National Convention conference call! This can only mean one thing...SPRING is around the corner and a fresh perspective is on its way!!

I am also writing my last newsletter article as IASCOE President. I can't even begin to express how honored I am to have served as your President for the last three years. A lot has happened in three years and without the support and commitment from each officer, district board director, committee member, and member none of it would have come together. Iowa has set the bar high many times within NASCOE, you should all be proud! The highlight of my term has been getting to know so many people around our state as well as around the country. Hosting the National Convention in 2016 was such a fun experience, a lot of hard work went into it but at the same time, so many rewards came out of it. We get the opportunity each day to serve some of the greatest, most hard working people in our state, but watching Iowa come together, to serve our fellow employees across the nation speaks volumes of the kind of people working for FSA. Iowa has also had the National Distinguished Service to FSA/Agriculture winners the last two years; we have had a National Scholarship winner, and numerous nominees and applicants in both areas. This year alone, Iowa had 11 DSA nominations and 12 scholarship applicants. We have secured a scholarship fund that allows us to provide state scholarship to several winners as well. This year we will be hosting the Midwest Area Rally in conjunction with our State Convention and I have no doubt, Iowa will shine again not only as the host but also in attendees. Again, without the commitment from each of you, it would not be possible.

For those of you that may be new to IASCOE or maybe have taken a break from being active, I encourage you to get involved. The rewards far outweigh the work. Start out as a Committee member, attend a convention, a rally, or even the national convention, you will not be sorry you did it. I am proud of the work that Iowa has done in the last three years and I can't wait to see where we go....

So with that, I will close out my last article with this; *No matter how bad the situation is...NEVER let go of the rope!* I have been blessed the last three years with people around me that have never let go of the rope!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your IASCOE President, it has truly been an honor!!

*Jennifer*







IASCOE Vice-President  
Jesse Wegner

**Top 10 Reasons to Come to the 2018 IASCOE Convention / MWA Rally in March**

Everyone enjoys a good Top 10 list, right? Of course you do! Here is MY list of the top 10 reasons to come to Des Moines March 22 – 24 and attend the IASCOE Convention / Mid-West Area Rally.

- 10- Leave the Northern tundra of Iowa and head to the tropics of Des Moines to see if spring is officially here (for inquiring minds the first day of spring is March 20<sup>th</sup>).
- 9- Enjoy sometime away from the kids at the luxurious downtown Marriott.....ok that might just be me☺!
- 8- Entertainment! Live music! The band “Farm Rock” will be performing Friday night. Specializing in Classic Rock and Country. Check them out on Facebook.
- 7- Get valuable retirement planning information from NASCOE’s official benefits provider, Dillard Financial Solutions. Someone once told me, there are always valuable tidbits of information to be gained from any retirement seminar you attend.
- 6- Get involved with team building events. Scavenger hunt in the Des Moines skywalks or join in on the bean bag tournament.
- 5- Meet your IASCOE / NASCOE leadership / representatives from the National FSA office and hear what they have been doing for you! Benefit updates, Negotiation updates, Farm Bill updates.
- 4- Meet our new SED, Amanda De Jong, and STO personnel. Ask them questions and put a face with the voice you have been hearing on conference calls.
- 3- Meet new and interesting FSA colleagues from across the state and (7) surrounding states at the Mid-West Area Rally: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio & Wisconsin. See old friends, make new friends and share your stories from the field.
- 2- FSA management continues to show their commitment to NASCOE by granting the use of Administrative Leave. Further guidance will be coming on the exact time allowed.
- 1- Take some time to invest in yourself and let your voice be heard! The annual IASCOE Convention is for you, the member. Employee participation is the driving force that makes our association so respected and valuable. This year’s convention will have something for everybody whether it be entertainment, financial planning, meeting our new SED and STO personnel, or seeing old friends and making new ones. I will see you in March!

Jesse

IASCOE Treasurer  
Judy Dameron



### *Duties of the Treasurer*

*The FY for IASCOE begins July 1 and runs to June 30. As your IASCOE Treasurer, I collect dues, record them and keep track of how many have paid with a check vs payroll deduction. It is very important that the membership transmittals have been completed entirely and returned to me in good time. I am required to reconcile the reports received from NFC. I also receive the associate membership dues.*

*I make quarterly membership payments to the NASCOE Treasurer, Curt Houk. The last payment is due June 30 and it is crucial this completed on time because this determines how much money we will get in assistance for travel to the National Convention.*

*In the fall, I patiently wait for the Scholarship winners to submit their proof of enrollment in college so that I can pay them. Our Federal Taxes are due by November 15, so I usually run all my reports in Quicken and get those to the accountant in September or October.*

*Our state convention is usually in March and I am responsible to pay all bills and expenses related to the convention. I reconcile and balance all accounts monthly. I have attached a spreadsheet showing our current accounts and activity.*

*Judy*



**2017-2018 Financial Report by Category - All Dates**  
6/30/2017 through 1/31/2018

1/31/2018

Page 1

Category	6/30/2017- 1/31/2018
<b>INCOME</b>	
Annual Convention Reimbursement	119.84
Fundraiser	211.67
Interest Inc	82.30
Membership	26,579.73
MWA Rally Reimbursement	75.18
National Convention Reimbursement	341.24
Raffle Ticket Income	65.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>27,474.96</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Annual Convention Expense	119.84
Director Expense	1,001.25
Election Expense	112.23
Insurance, Bus	100.00
Membership Expense	13,453.75
National Convention Expense	1,485.92
Postage and Delivery	49.00
Scholarship Expense	1,200.00
Tax Preparation Expense	250.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>17,771.99</b>
<b>Balance Forward</b>	
Bal Fwd NON-PROFIT CHECKING XX0773	57,192.46
<b>TOTAL Balance Forward</b>	<b>57,192.46</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>66,895.43</b>

**National Convention Financial Report**  
7/1/2015 through 1/31/2018

1/31/2018

Page 1

Category	7/1/2015- 12/31/2015	1/1/2016- 12/31/2016	1/1/2017- 12/31/2017	1/1/2018- 1/31/2018	OVERALL TOTAL
<b>INCOME</b>					
Uncategorized	0.00	310.49	0.00	0.00	310.49
Decorations Income	0.00	55.00	0.00	0.00	55.00
Hospitality Room	0.00	800.00	0.00	0.00	800.00
Misc.	0.00	397.36	0.00	0.00	397.36
Raffle Ticket Income	0.00	21,920.00	0.00	0.00	21,920.00
Registration Income	0.00	35,405.10	0.00	0.00	35,405.10
Scholarship	0.00	13,757.67	0.00	0.00	13,757.67
Sponsorship	0.00	20,400.00	0.00	0.00	20,400.00
Tea Towels & Shirts	0.00	1,392.00	0.00	0.00	1,392.00
Wine Pull	0.00	1,700.00	0.00	0.00	1,700.00
Bal Fwd NATIONAL CONVENTION 20...	0.00	32,240.85	0.00	0.00	32,240.85
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>128,378.47</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>128,378.47</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Uncategorized	0.00	0.49	0.00	0.00	0.49
2016 National Convention Expense	0.00	0.00	7,500.00	0.00	7,500.00
Banners & Decor& Programs	0.00	309.14	0.00	0.00	309.14
Cash & ATM	0.00	300.00	0.00	0.00	300.00
Decorations	0.00	43.06	0.00	0.00	43.06
Entertainment	0.00	7,400.00	0.00	0.00	7,400.00
Friday Night	0.00	8,663.10	0.00	0.00	8,663.10
Golf Outing	0.00	683.25	0.00	0.00	683.25
National Convention Expense - Volunte...	0.00	12,681.22	0.00	0.00	12,681.22
Picture Expense	0.00	860.00	0.00	0.00	860.00
Raffle Ticket Expense	0.00	4,103.12	0.00	0.00	4,103.12
Registration Expense	0.00	720.00	0.00	0.00	720.00
Returned Deposit Fee	0.00	115.00	0.00	0.00	115.00
Scholarship Expense	0.00	9,902.00	0.00	0.00	9,902.00
Shirts & towels	0.00	4,627.44	0.00	0.00	4,627.44
Tour Expense	0.00	4,290.38	0.00	0.00	4,290.38
Transportation	0.00	8,518.43	0.00	0.00	8,518.43
Travel	0.00	33,677.12	0.00	0.00	33,677.12
Youth Activities	0.00	425.87	0.00	0.00	425.87
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>97,319.62</b>	<b>7,500.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>104,819.62</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>31,058.85</b>	<b>-7,500.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>23,558.85</b>



## IASCOE Secretary Wendi Denham

As it is almost Valentine's Day, some are thinking about cards and letters. Being a Peanuts fan, I think about how Charlie Brown is always disappointed that he never receives any mail, especially at Valentine's Day. Meanwhile Charlie's friends, and his dog, Snoopy, seem to land a windfall of mail! As your IASCOE Secretary, I was busy about a month ago preparing a flurry of mail--ballots to send out for the election. In addition, I will soon be counting ballots and will be busy writing letters of congratulations to all of the newly elected directors. So, some of you have been luckier than Charlie Brown, as you have recently received, or soon will receive, mail from me!

This year, Districts 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 were up for election. Ballots were sent to the applicable county offices and were due back to me by January 20<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to all of the offices that returned their ballots timely. I would also like to extend my gratitude to all of the dedicated IASCOE members who agreed to run for election and serve their districts. District representation is so important for the association. IASCOE needs voices from all areas of the state. Employees rely upon their IASCOE Directors to voice their ideas and concerns. Directors are also an integral part of the communication process, relaying important updates and information along to the counties they represent timely and efficiently.

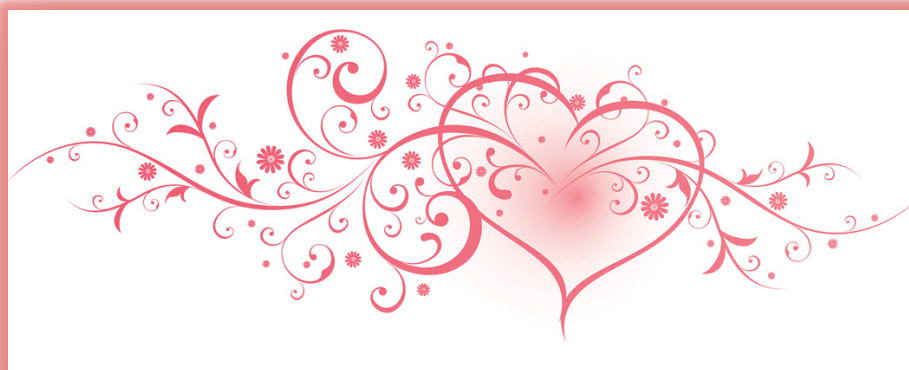
Be on the lookout soon for the names of your newly elected directors. In addition, while that information will not go out to everyone by mail, it is important all the same! Finally, Happy Valentine's Day to all. I look forward to seeing you at the Convention and MWA Rally in March!

Wendi Denham, Secretary

**For More Information:** [www.nascoe.org](http://www.nascoe.org)

<http://midwestnascoe.org/committees/publicity-web/>

<http://www.iascoe.org/>





# Registration for IASCOE Convention and NASCOE Midwest Area Rally

Location: Des Moines Marriott Downtown, Des Moines, Iowa

## IASCOE Convention – Thursday, March 22, 2018

- \$10 Thursday Only NASCOE/IASCOE/IACS/IASE Members- Includes meeting materials, morning coffee, and afternoon break
- \$10 Thursday Evening Activities NASCOE/IASCOE/IACS/IASE Members - Includes Hospitality with light snacks/appetizers. Bean bag tourney and/or a Scavenger Hunt in the Sky Walks of downtown Des Moines
- \$10 Spouse/Guest of Member will attend Thursday evening activities
- Scavenger Hunt (check if participating)**

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## NASCOE Midwest Area Rally – Friday, March 23 – Saturday, March 24, 2018

- \$45 Member
  - Thursday Evening Activities - Includes Hospitality with light snacks/appetizers. Bean bag tourney and/or a Scavenger Hunt in the Sky Walks of downtown Des Moines
  - Friday AM Breakfast
  - Friday Evening Hospitality, light meal, LIVE BAND- Farm Rock (Country/Classic Rock) (silent and live auction to benefit the scholarship funds)
- \$15 Spouse/Guest of Member
  - Thursday Evening Activities
  - Friday AM Breakfast
  - Friday Evening Activities

*\*\*Cash concessions will be available for purchase during lunch break Thursday & Friday\*\**

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## Attending Both IASCOE and MWA?

- \$50 Member (all inclusive)
- \$20 Spouse/Guest (all inclusive)

**MAKE ROOM RESERVATIONS @**  
Des Moines Marriott Downtown  
700 Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, IA, 50309  
Phone: (515) 245-5500

A block of rooms have been reserved under the group:

**IASCOE MWA18**

(Valid until February 28, 2018 @ \$109/per night)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Checks Payable to IASCOE**

**Return To: Mary Roberts**  
51814 Little Clear Lake Road  
Albert City, Iowa 50510-8610

**Deadline to Mail Registrations - March 10, 2018**

**After March 10<sup>th</sup> register at the door**



# IASCOE Convention DRAFT Agenda!

## IASCOE Convention Agenda- Thursday, March 22, 2018

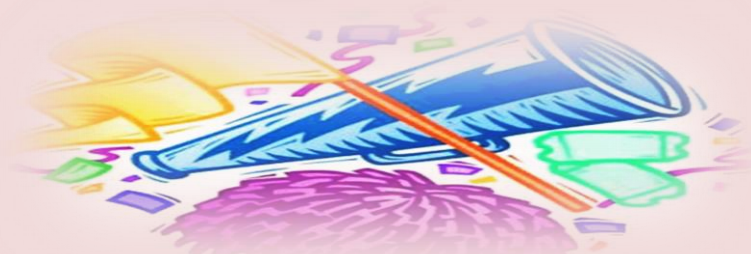
- 8:00AM Registration Starts
- 9:00AM Emblems Store Opens  
Vendors Set Up
- 10:00AM Pledge of Allegiance  
Opening remarks by IASCOE, SED, STC Committee
- 10:30AM Benefit / Legislation Updates  
Legislative & Benefits Updates: Steve Luke, Iowa Chairperson  
NASCOE Updates:  
President Dennis Ray  
MWA Alternate Executive and Legislative Co-Chair Jackson Jones  
NAFEC: Mary Roberts  
Introduction of Committees (include membership promo)
- 11:30AM Committee Meetings
- 11:45AM Past Presidents Luncheon (location?)
- 12:00PM Lunch – concessions available
- 1:00PM Committee Reports
- 1:15PM Dillard Financial Solutions- benefits training
- 2:00PM STO Question / Answer Roundtable (approximately 30 minutes each)  
Production Adjustment/Price Support/NAP/Disaster  
Conservation/Compliance  
Farm Loan Programs  
Admin/HR/SED/STC
- 4:30PM Sick Leave Awards and Recognition
- \*5:00PM Social Hour, Windows Room (bar and light appetizers)
- \*7:00PM Scavenger Hunt in the Sky Walk

\*times are subject to change



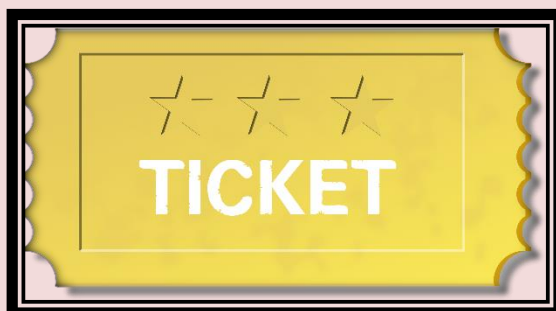


Iowa is hosting the 2018 Mid-West Area Rally in conjunction with our state convention. The Rally is planned for March 22-24, 2018 at the Downtown Marriott in Des Moines. We have decided to bring back the old raffle tickets! This will help IASCOE defer some of the costs. Please contact a director for more information. We hope to see you there!



**“We’ve got Spirit, Yes We Do! We’ve got Spirit, How ‘Bout You?”**

IASCOE will be having a Spirits Raffle with proceeds to help defray costs associated with hosting our conventions. We are asking each county to donate at least one bottle of your favorite adult beverage. (Ex. Wine, Rum Chata, Crown, Schnapps) Raffle tickets will be sold at convention. Please contact Mary Roberts to arrange a pick up or deliver to the IASCOE Convention March 22.





The scholarship auction at the IASCOE/MWA Convention will be held on Friday evening of the convention. The auction will include both live and silent auction items. All of the funds raised at the auction goes towards the scholarships offered by IASCOE/NASCOE. The funds raised are divided between IASCOE (75%) and NASCOE (25%). These scholarships are available for members and children/grandchildren of members. Naturally, we cannot have an auction without items to auction and that is where we need your help. **Please consider contributing an auction item from your county – it would be great to have every county represented!** Since this is also the Midwest Area Convention, plenty of buyers will be ready to bid. In order to accommodate those members who cannot be present, we will be posting photos of items up for auction on share-point. Get a photo of your auction item to one of the chairpersons and we will get it posted on share-point. If you wish to bid on something, but are unable to attend, someone in attendance may be willing to bid for you! If you have an item you wish to contribute, but aren't able to attend, send it with someone you know who is going or contact your District IASCOE Director and we will get it to the convention. Iowa has always lead the charge when it comes to generosity and teamwork, let's make this the best Midwest Area Auction in history!

Auction Chairpersons:

Cindy Bebout – District 7 Director

Cindy Pistek – District 2 Director





## “Selfie” Skywalk Scavenger Hunt



Join in the 2018 IASCOE fun!

Are you heading to IASCOE this year? How familiar are you with downtown Des Moines? The Downtown Marriott, where the convention is being held, is directly connected to a four-mile-long skywalk, which gives visitors the ability to walk to hotels, restaurants, coffee shops and more!

We wanted a fun way to show you what the downtown area has to offer, so in conjunction with Catch Des Moines, we will be having a “Selfie” Scavenger Hunt Thursday evening, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, during hospitality. Participants will be randomly grouped into teams of five. Each team will be provided with a map, a clue card, and their very own selfie stick. The first team to return with all of their group selfies, in front of the correct skywalk points, wins! There will be cash prizes, as well as a bonus prize for the team with the best group selfie!

The hunt will take approximately one hour, and will showcase some of Downtown Des Moines’ historic buildings, as well as some of the new construction. You’ll see the lobby of the brand new, extremely elegant, Downtown Hilton, as well as finding the Court Avenue Brewing Company, where they are known for their handcrafted brews and house root beers.

Teams will be limited, so if you think you would like to participate in this event, please email [daniellesidles@gmail.com](mailto:daniellesidles@gmail.com). Also, don’t forget to send in your registration! We look forward to seeing everyone at this year’s convention!

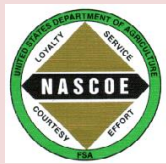
### 1. **sel·fie** [ 'selfē ]

**NOUN** informal

**selfies** (plural noun) · **selfy** (noun)

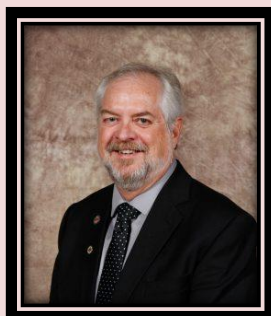
a photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically one taken with a smartphone or webcam





# NASCOE Pre-Negotiations Meeting

## Update: January 15, 2018



Update from NASCOE President Dennis Ray on the Pre-Negotiations meeting held on January 13 and 14 in Grapevine, Texas.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJFWjpJosp4>

NASCOE's Officers, Execs, National Committee Chairs and Area Negotiation Consultants gathered in Grapevine, Texas for two full days of meetings. We are thankful to our members who submitted 47 items to be reviewed for our Negotiations with management!







## MIDWEST AREA NASCOE NEWS:

### National Association of FSA County Office Employees

MWA Executive Report  
2018 Pre-Negotiations Meeting Report  
Grapevine (Dallas), Texas  
January 12 – 15, 2018  
Christopher Hare

Greetings Midwest Area (MWA) NASCOE Members. One week ago, your NASCOE Executive Committee, National Committee Chairpersons, and your area Negotiation Consultants all traveled to Grapevine, Texas for our 2018 Pre-Negotiations meeting. The meeting I must say was a very productive meeting. We covered everything on the agenda and then some. There were 48 negotiation items submitted. The MWA submitted 15 of those items. Great job! Thirteen of these items will be an “IT bundle” covering a plethora of IT concerns that were submitted. It looks like we are going to negotiate 10 items. One of those items was combined with 5 others in regard to Staffing / Personnel. Our team has three new Negotiation Consultants this year. However, by their professionalism, knowledge, drive, and energy they presented as if they were “old pro’s” at being a Negotiation Consultants.

As I sit here compiling my report, I have the news on in the background. The number one story is the Government shut down. This is a very emotional time for all of us. I want everyone to remain calm and try to keep a positive attitude and image. We may not be at work, but our reputation as USDA employees was built on our resilience. Hopefully we will be back to work without a break.

I want all members to know that we are hearing you loud and clear concerning staffing and workload. NASCOE is working diligently to ensure that we are a part of creating an accurate workload report and system.

The next item I feel needs addressed is the OneUSDA and USDA reorganization. I want everyone to know that NASCOE, and our political consultant, are working hard for you to ensure we are being heard through the reorganization process. We are ensuring that service to our producers and our employees are being considered throughout this process. We have asked our consultant to provide an overview of where we are at in this reorganization. I will forward this once we receive this update. I want to point out to all members, **our consultant is a valuable asset too us**. Last night, (January 19, 2018) he was in constant communication with the Executive Committee well past midnight, and again before 5:30 a.m. Saturday morning. As many of us were up most of the night watching our futures play out before us, he too was watching and working hard for us.

I have been assigned the duty of reviewing the current Roles and Responsibilities for all Committee’s. It was determined that we should review and make applicable changes to ensure our Responsibilities Handbook is current and up to date.

#### **Publicity/ Webmaster -**

I will start the reports with Publicity. Teresa has informed me that she is ready to start working with states teaching them how to use the MWA website. Teresa has heard from IL, IN, MI, MN, and WI. She has not heard from OH, IA (static page), or MO (static page). IA, MO, and OH please contact Teresa in regard to the email she sent and the information she is requesting of you.

## **Membership –**

We have been provided a listing of ALL county office employees in our area. I will be working with LeAnn on how we would like to proceed using this list for our area. Jump teams were discussed. I am going to visit with LeAnn, and the leadership in Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin about the potential need for a jump team. Those three states have membership in the 60th percentile. PT Leadership Trainings would be a good place to promote NASCOE. I encourage states to have the Membership is Important Flyer at all PT training's. I was told that there is a section in the training that allows employee associations to be discussed. If time allows, this would be a good time to discuss NASCOE.

## **Awards/ Scholarships/ Emblems-**

The Midwest Area had 61 Scholarships applications of the 154 NASCOE submissions this year. That is amazing! The MWA also had 41 of the 73 Distinguished Service Awards submitted to NASCOE. Thank you all for taking the time to apply and recognize those we serve with in the county offices! As states start to have their conventions, please make sure you are contacting Tina Young to have emblems available for sale at your conventions.

## **Benefits-**

I have been contacted by a few states in regard to locating JM Marketing information on the nascoe.org webpage. Once on the NASCOE home page, navigate to *WHO IS NASCOE*, then *NASCOE AFFILIATES*. There you will find the link to JM Marketing.

## **NAFEC-**

We had a success story in one Minnesota County where six County Committee Members joined NAFEC! This was good to hear. Mary Roberts sent out the NAFEC packet to all states. Please ensure that County Committee Members throughout the MWA are informed of their right to join. County Office employees can join as associate members. If you did not promote NAFEC to your County Committee during the 2018 Organizational Meeting, please do so at your next COC Meeting.

## **Legislative –**

Donny and Jackson, along with Hunter, provided a Legislative Update to the group. Again, as I sit here today, I personally did not expect the shutdown to occur.

- **PAC – Political Action Committee:**

- Currently there are 724 active contributors and a total of \$3,315.00 per pay period. That is an increase of 79 new contributors since PP25 of last year (2016). Currently the MWA has 10% of membership contributing to the PAC. Are you? If you aren't, why not? \$1-3 a pay period is unnoticed.
- Do you realize you may be spending more daily on coffee or pop than what you would spend daily on PAC? The PAC will help you keep that paycheck, whereas coffee or pop won't. Think about this:

***I stop every day at Casey's for a 32oz. Coke or 24oz coffee. Multiply that by 18 workdays a month. I was spending \$17.10 a month on drinks for work. Instead, I decided the PAC was worth contributing to more, so I could have the job that provides me my paycheck. I decided to start donating \$3.00 to the PAC and start making my own coffee at home. I am money ahead in my wallet AND I feel I am participating in the PAC, which is another type of "job insurance" to me! Start contributing today! Every little bit helps!***

I also want to inform everyone that Sara Bateson will be assisting Kay Lumsden with the Congressional Contact listing. Both Kay and Sara are looking forward to working with each other and will be in contact with states soon.

**Programs – Jamie Garriott, CED Indiana**

Since July 1, 2017, the Midwest Area has submitted 26 of the 70 NASCOE Program submissions so far.

**2018 Midwest Area (MWA) Rally- Des Moines, Iowa & 2018 State Convention Schedule**

The IASCOE (Iowa) leadership, Jackson Jones, and I had our first MWA Rally Conference Call on Friday, January 5, 2018. IASCOE is hosting the 2018 MWA Rally in Des Moines, IA March 22 – 24, 2018. The ideas and excitement they are planning is shaping up to be what looks like a great rally. The registration form and hotel information is set to be released this week. I have included on this email the registration form. Please make sure you register and make your room reservations timely when the information is released.

**MWA State Convention Schedule**

Illinois – March 9 -10

**Iowa – Midwest Area Rally March 23 – 24**

Minnesota – April 6- 7

Wisconsin – April 20- 21

Indiana- April 27

Michigan –May 5

Missouri – TBD

Ohio – TBD

I want everyone to know that Debbie Staley did a great job representing the MWA as your Negotiations Consultant, along with Jackson Jones, as your Midwest Area Alternate Executive. These two deserve a thank you the next time you see them. I am very proud to serve our area with them by my side.

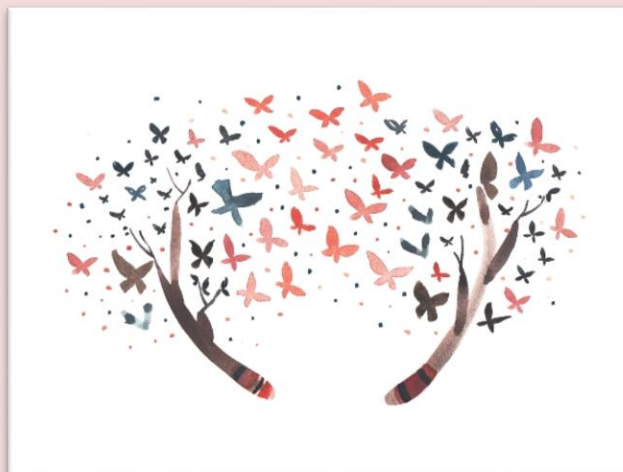
Respectfully submitted,

Chris Hare, Midwest Area Executive

Contact information:

Phone: 765-505-3355

Email: [Chrishare05@gmail.com](mailto:Chrishare05@gmail.com)





## News from NAFEC – Mary Roberts, IASCOE NAFEC Chair

NAFEC has been working on issues that hinder the structure, strength, and integrity of the COC system. Most recently, NAFEC President Craig Turner and NASCOE's NAFEC Committee Chairperson Billy Wayne Denison attended the Pre-Negotiations meeting in Dallas, TX. They are working diligently with NASCOE to share thoughts and ideas with management that include the need for monthly COC meetings and to clarify the COC's specific role as the CED's direct supervisor in the performance planning process, mid-year reviews, and the evaluation process. NAFEC provides support to our local grassroots form of government and we need to do everything in our power to help strengthen this organization. Our county committee members understand the unique scenarios and needs of the producers. Without that local input we would not be able to serve the county as well as we do. NAFEC is the voice that can take concerns to the next level when issues arise.

As I write this update, the sun is shining and the snow from Monday's furlough blizzard is melting. I find it hard to believe that we are less than 2 months away from spring. Soon there will be baby calves out on fresh green grass and flowers blooming. However, before that can happen we will see the end of another continuing resolution. Hopefully an agreement will be reached, and we will not have another shut down. As I think about what I can do and to help avoid the shutdown, I realize how important it is to support the organizations that fight for our producers and the programs we administer. Ultimately, these organizations are battling for FSA's piece of the pie too. Membership with NASCOE, NAFEC, and your local agricultural organizations help to strengthen the voice when it comes time to divvy out the budget and ultimately the writing of the upcoming Farm Bill.

"For as little as 50 cents per week, you can support NAFEC as an associate member and strengthen your voice". The FSA 444 and your state office can get that set up for you. The other option you have is simply writing a check for \$20 annually to cover your associate member dues. If you have not already signed your County Committee up for NAFEC, the time is now. NAFEC's membership year starts January 1<sup>st</sup> and membership drive documents were intended to be disbursed to all counties prior to your organizational meeting. However, I delayed releasing NAFEC membership documents as I knew there were changes coming on the membership application form. I hope to have the new membership drive documents to you before this newsletter is printed. All current and past County Committee members and advisors are eligible to sign up for regular membership. They can sign the FSA-444 and have \$4.00 taken out from each paycheck or write an annual check for \$40.00. All members receive a complimentary \$1,000 life insurance policy, but regular members are also eligible for additional benefits that can be obtained by contacting JM Marketing. I strongly encourage each of you to hold a minimum of 10 COC meetings per year. This will insure that your committees are fully informed of everything happening in the office and in the county as well as prove the value of the COC system is seen at all levels.

As IASCOE's NAFEC chairperson, I will do anything I can to assist you and your COC when questions or issues arise. Please do not hesitate to call or email at any time and I will do my best to address your questions as timely as possible. If you would like me to talk to your COC during one of your meetings, please give me a call and we will get something set up.

Respectfully Submitted,

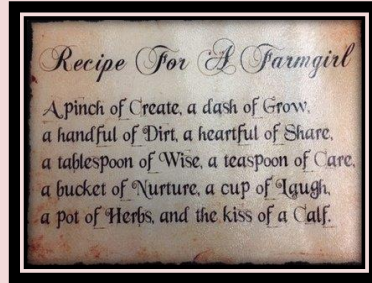
Mary Roberts



# NASCOE EMBLEMS: 8% of all sales go to the NASCOE Scholarship Fund!



Tall Apparel



Gift Ideas



Bags and Purses



Dress Shirts and Polos



T-Shirts



Outerwear

## NASCOE Gear Provider:

### **Superior Trophies, Screen Printing and Embroidery**

216 South Main Street

Marion, KY 42064

(800)342-9273

[nascoebysuperior@gmail.com](mailto:nascoebysuperior@gmail.com)

<https://nascoe.org/store/>





## IOWA TAKES THE AWARDS CAKE.....AWESOME

I just wanted to extend my appreciation to all of those who submitted nominations for NASCOE/IASCOE Awards consideration for the 2017 calendar year. Iowa had a leading number of submissions for nominations for the Distinguished Service Awards across the Midwest...Yeeessss!

### **Extra Mile Award**

An Extra Mile Award certificate is virtually for ANYONE, not just NASCOE/IASCOE members that have gone the “Extra Mile”! Do you know a young person that donated hair for the Locks for Love program? Or how about a USDA Service Center that went all out for Breast Cancer Awareness day? Bottom line is that with this certificate, you can show your appreciation to anyone, just to say “Thank you!” for what you have done. The certificate comes to you as a professionally prepared certificate to present to your honoree. Just send the name of the recipient along with the reason they earned the Extra Mile Award to your IASCOE State Awards Chair and the certificate will be mailed to you!

### *Distinguished Service Awards*

There are three Distinguished Service Awards to honor your fellow NASCOE/IASCOE Members that have gone over and above in their:

- Service to Communities**
- Service to NASCOE**
- Service to FSA- Agriculture.**

Nominations have ended for the 2017 year, however you may begin putting together your thoughts on a deserving fellow NASCOE/IASCOE Member for any of the above categories that you feel will be deserving of the nomination for 2018. The online submissions, when opened for 2018, can be found under the Awards link (Midwest Area) on the NASCOE website at [www.nascoe.org](http://www.nascoe.org). The nominations do not have to be lengthy, simply outline the number of producers and farms impacted by your nominees actions and what you feel highlights the accomplishments of your nominee that the Judges can consider when reviewing your nomination. You may wish to put your thoughts together in a Word document then copy and paste into the online submission, as you must complete your submission in one setting. For help in preparing the nomination, please see the section under the Awards link on the NASCOE website.

### **Sick Leave Certificates**

The NASCOE Awards program offers sick leave certificates to persons that have for the first time reached a sick leave milestone during their career with FSA. Sick leave certificates are a great way for a state to recognize NASCOE/IASCOE Members whom have reached their first 1,000, 1,500, 2,000, 2,500, 3,000 plus each additional increment of 500 hours of unused sick leave. The certificates are issued at the State, Midwest Area Rally, and/or National Conventions as applicable. NASCOE also provides a plaque for NASCOE Members whom have achieved 2500 or higher levels hours of unused sick leave and is awarded at the National Convention. Simply send the name, county, position held, and # of hours reached as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year to your District Awards Committee member or State Awards Chairperson no later than January 20<sup>th</sup> each year.

If you have any questions on any of these awards, please visit [nascoe.org](http://nascoe.org) or do not hesitate to contact your IASCOE District Awards Committee person as listed on the [iascoe.org](http://iascoe.org) website with questions.

Karen LaCour, IASCOE State Awards Chairperson

# Benefits

A new benefit for NASCOE members is now available. The Sam's Club benefit is back - please see the flyer below for more information! If you have questions, please contact your area benefits chair.



## Join or renew and receive a \$10 gift card\*

### Members-only Services

**legalzoom**

Special discounts on legal services and bundles

**LifeLock**

Save up to 25% on identity protection services\*\*



**ClubPickup**

A convenient, fast and free service



### FREE Rx Program†

Plus members can receive five select prescriptions for free and deeper discounts on qualifying prescriptions



### How to Redeem

1. Print this offer or show it on your mobile device at your local club's Member Services Desk
2. Show proof of Membership with NASCOE

### Associate Instructions

For new or renewed memberships:  
Key in item #980036421  
for \$10 gift card

\*Join or renew as a Sam's Plus®, Sam's Savings® or Sam's Business® Member and receive a Sam's Club® Gift Card worth \$10

This offer is limited and may be terminated or changed at any time. You must be 18 or older to purchase a membership, and membership is subject to qualifications. Gift card will be provided at the time membership card is issued or upon renewal. This offer may not be combined with any other offer or promotion. Only one gift card per primary member. Gift card may not be used to pay for membership fee, travel purchases or select services, and must be claimed within 30 days of membership sign-up or renewal connected with this program. Membership cards are non-transferable and are valid at all Sam's Club locations worldwide. Walmart® and Sam's Club associates are not eligible for this offer. A Sam's Plus Membership and Sam's Savings Membership include one primary card and one spouse or other household member 18 or older card. A Sam's Business Membership and Sam's Plus Membership for business include one primary card, one company card and one spouse or other household member 18 or older card. Primary memberships are valid for one year from the date of issue. Offer not valid online. Visit [SamsClub.com/privacy](https://www.samsclub.com/privacy) to view our privacy policy. Offer not valid in Puerto Rico. For a limited time only. One-time use only. Only original offers will be accepted. Offer void if copied, purchased or sold. Offer valid through JANUARY 31, 2018

† Compare to retail pricing. 25% savings is only available to Sam's Plus Members.

‡ Free prescriptions are available to Sam's Plus Members only and not to non-plus members. Offer is not transferable and available only at Sam's Club Pharmacies, and is not available on [SamsClub.com](https://www.samsclub.com). Only the quantity, formulation and strength stated on the Extra Value Drug List ("EVDL") itself will be offered for \$0. Full list available at [SamsClub.com/freerx](https://www.samsclub.com/freerx). There will be a cost for quantities greater than the listed quantity. Prices listed in the EVDL do not apply to purchases submitted to any health benefit program, pharmacy benefit program, insurer or government health care program. Free medications are not available in the following states: CA, GA, HI, MA, MD, ME, MN, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, VT, WI and Puerto Rico. This offer may not be combined with other offers, discount card or discount arrangements, or promotions. Free prescriptions are not available when the listed prescriptions are dispensed as part of a compound. Valid prescription required. Other restrictions may apply. Terms subject to change without notice. See your local Sam's Club Pharmacy for details. Taxes or other fees may apply.

## **Program Submissions By Angie Christian**

Have you ever been “Frustrated” when new software comes out and you wonder if the person who created it ever worked in a county office? Have you worked with new software that does not flow correctly, does not give you all the information you need or missing information that you feel should be included? Or do you want a reporting feature and there are no reports that have been created for us to use? We **HAVE** a solution for you!

### **PROGRAM SUBMISSIONS!!**

Go to the **NASCOE** site (<https://nascoe.org> ) and make your suggestions. There are people in NASCOE who are working for you to look at these questions and forward these suggestions on to the individuals in Washington DC who can help make these changes. Last year at our IASCOE Convention, I challenged each County Office in Iowa to submit one program submission. Though that goal is seeing progress I know and believe with the quality and forward thinking staff we have we are still able to obtain this goal. This takes less than 5 minutes to do when visiting the NASCOE website.

There are step-by-step instructions that will walk you through completion of a submission on our IASCOE website page. If you want something submitted and do not wish to submit on your own, please contact me and as your Program Submissions Chair, I am pleased to create a submission on your behalf. It is a fantastic tool for us to offer improvements and work on changes we need to improve our efficiency in the office and continue to provide the best customer service possible to our farmers and ranchers. Once your request has been reviewed and passed on to WDC, they will research and find a solution.

The solutions are posted under NASCOE’s website under recent posts. No submission is ever deleted, you can also search submissions using the search feature and find previous submissions with answers on the NASCOE website. I would prefer you tried to make a process easier than to sit at your desk and complain about a program every time you use it. If you think about it, if Washington does not know that it is broken, they will never fix it.

As your Program Submissions Chair, I am encouraging you if have any suggestions to make our programs easier, please consider using the NASCOE site and have your voice heard. Please do not sit there and complain **MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!**

Angie





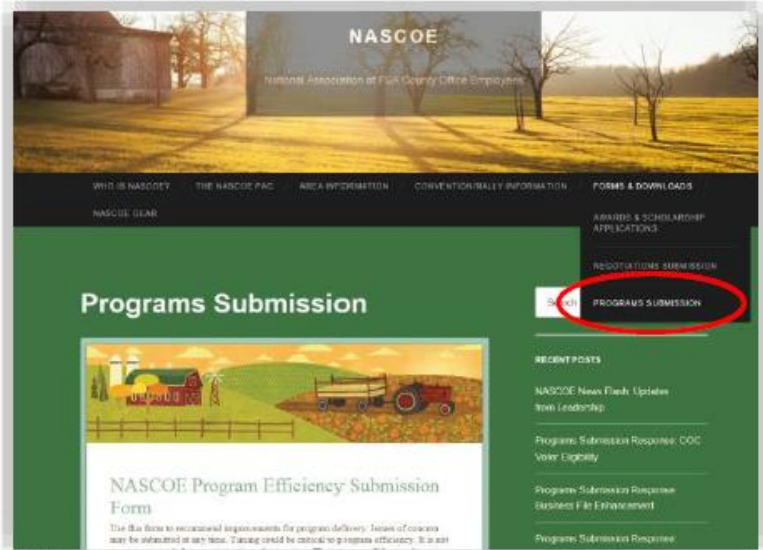


# NASCOE can take your PROGRAM EFFICIENCY SUGGESTIONS directly to the National Specialists!

Have a solution to a program or software problem or inefficiency?

**1** Visit [nascoe.org](http://nascoe.org) and submit your idea through the Program Efficiency Submission Form.

**2** A state, area, or national programs chairperson may contact you for further clarification of the problem/solution, and will keep you informed of their communication with WDC!



**3** Once the National Programs chair has consulted with the National Office, the response will be shared on the NASCOE website.

Programs suggestions can be submitted on work time and NASCOE has the ability to work on these ideas year-round, not just at negotiation time. Send in your ideas as soon as you think of them. NASCOE wants to see prompt results when it comes to your ideas for how we can improve the way we do business!



# DISTRICT #1'S NEWEST MANAGERS



SAMANTHA ERIE: CED, O'Brien County since September 2017.

I am Samantha Erie, CED in O'Brien County. I live on an acreage just outside of Newell, IA, with my husband, Joshua, and our 4 children (Taylor, Jackson, Leon, and Aven). We enjoy our time, as family, being outdoors. When we are not cheering on the kids in sports, we love camping, gardening, fishing, and horseback riding.

I have been with the Farm Service Agency for 15 1/2 years. I started my experience with the agency in the Pocahontas County office as an intern, during my senior year of high school. After I graduated, I was offered a Temporary PT position and a year later, I was hired as a Permanent PT. I worked in the Pocahontas County Office for 12 1/2 years, and transferred to Buena Vista County where I worked for a year and a half before getting accepted into the County Operations Training program. I trained for a little over a year before accepting a CED position in O'Brien County. I have thoroughly enjoyed the last 5 months here in O'Brien and have met many wonderful people.



DANIELLE HARRIS: FLM, Dickinson, Osceola, and Lyon Counties since October 2017.

Danielle (Dani) Harris started as the Farm Loan Manager in the Dickinson, Osceola, and Lyon County Offices in October 2017. Dani grew up on a beef cattle and row crop operation near Rochester, MN along with her two brothers and a sister. She graduated from Stewartville High School. After high school, she attended the University of Minnesota Crookston (UMC) earning a bachelor's degree in both Agricultural Business and Animal Science. After graduating from UMC Dani started her career with USDA as a Farm Loan Officer in the Nobles County Minnesota office. She worked there for 7 years before accepting the manager's position in Sibley. She will be married to Cody Carlson on March 3, 2018. Together with her fiancé, they operate a row crop, corn and soybean, operation located in Heron Lake, Minnesota. During her spare time, she enjoys snowmobiling, reading, camping, and spoiling her mini dachshund, Jed.



# Wellness Day



Kossuth, Humboldt and Webster County employees got together on September 20, to enjoy some good company and a day away from their desks at the “The Community Orchard” in Fort Dodge.

The day started with a meal provided by the orchard and continued to a tour of their orchards and of their facility. We were told about how the operation got started and was able to pick our own apples off the trees. Even though the outside temperature was extremely warm, the facility that held the apples after they were picked was kept at a very low temperature, so that the apples would stay hardy and crisp.



The best part about the tour was being able to go into the kitchen and enjoy the amazing aromas of apples pies, apples tarts and my favorite apple streusels being made!





We were able to end our tour by listening to Ms. Johnny Appleseed singing along with her guitar and drinking apple cider.

Here is a little information on how the orchard got started. This information was provided by “The Community Orchard” website. <https://www.communityorchard.com/about>

Community Orchard began in the early 1940’s when a local medical doctor and his wife bought the current farm. Originally, it was operated as a dairy. Dr. Paul Otto and his wife Edna were friends of a professor of horticulture at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Otto invited his professor friend to come down and visit them at their newly purchased dairy farm.

During their visit they talked about planting a few different varieties of apples to see what might grow in Iowa.... after a few years the trees began to produce, and the good doctor gave his apples away to his patients. He started getting knocks on the door from local people wanting to buy some of his apples. The next fall they sold their apples underneath a tree from a farm trailer opening the gate at 1:00 p.m. to find cars eagerly lined up hoping to buy apples. The customers would run back to the wagon and within 30 minutes, the doctor would sell out of produce and be forced to turn away many customers.

After some time, they decided to continue to plant trees. In 1952, the dairy barn was turned into an apple barn and in 1962, they advertised for a full time hired man to help with the orchard. This man was my father-in-law. Greg and I were married in 1970 and 1971 was my first season working at the orchard. In 1981, we became 50% owners and in 1990 we purchased Greg’s parent’s half. Greg, the little pumpkin boy working for his parents, began growing pumpkins at the age of eight.

Written by Megan Friedow



# Counter Skills Training “Team” Work

Submitted by Angie Reynolds, Lyn Berg, and Mary Kay Schmidt

Hello fellow PT's! To start we want to thank each person in attendance for the PT Counter Skills Training that the three of us facilitated. Without the excellent participation in each class, our job would have been very difficult. You all made it a breeze! We also owe NASCOE a big thank you as they played an enormous role in finally getting this training to happen.

I have been with the agency for 15 years and this was the first opportunity that I have had to participate in this type of training. I enjoyed every second of it and I learned so much from PT's in other offices. I understand that some of the 20+ year PT's may have been dreading coming to the training as you have already been through every possible scenario thru your time with the agency. But truthfully, the 20+ year PT's had so much knowledge, examples, and solutions to bring to the table that they helped so many of us PT's grow during the sessions without even knowing it.

Everyone knows the old saying “laughter is the best medicine”. Well, the three of us had enough laughs to be the healthiest PT's in the state! Each session brought out new reasons to laugh. If we can't laugh at ourselves then who can we laugh at is the approach we took and boy did we succeed at that. The three of us did not know each other going into this and we came out of it with stories and a bond that will always be present.

A quick explanation of the picture of our team...we decided to do a little role-playing to liven things up. And, that we did! Lyn was the PT helping the producer (Mary Kay) with CRP Mid Contract Management paperwork. Mary Kay was trying to explain the type of activity she completed (burning) and in her explanation was trying to tell Lyn that her husband was out there with a water tank in case the fire got out of control. However, she could not think of the words so it came out as “fire squirter” and she has not heard the end of it since. The next session a county office brought Mary Kay her very own fire squirter! We will not go into some of the other laugh worthy incidents, as we may never be asked to facilitate again if we do, but I think the Oelwein attendees will know exactly what we are talking about. And yes, Mary Kay was the also the topic of that one! Sorry Mary Kay but you are very entertaining!!!

Thank you for all the memories fellow PT's. We are truly blessed to work with a group of people as dedicated and resilient as FSA PT's!

Angie Reynolds, Mary Kay Schmidt, Lyn Berg



Team 1 Trainers: Angie, Mary Kay and Lyn





Anamosa Training Site



Washington Training Site



Oelwein Training Site





After 35 years of dedicated service, Janice Webb has retired from Louisa County. She was our CRP expert and ADMIN specialist. Her last day of work was February 2. Janice is pictured here with the Louisa COC Chairperson, Susan Edwards.



# FOR YOUR HEALTH!

The following article was published in the September 9, 2017 issue of Iowa Farmer Today. The author, Dr. Mike Rosmann, is one of our Shelby county producers. Many days, even more important than assisting a producer with applying for one of our programs, we are “psychologists” and listen to their concerns and worries. Given the stresses that come along with working with our producers who may be going through a disaster, Dr. Rosmann reminds us how important it is to take care of ourselves.

Heather Muenchrath

September 9, 2017 / [www.IowaFarmerToday.com](http://www.IowaFarmerToday.com)

RURAL LIVING NE 21

## People who serve distressed farmers seek emotional support and respite

“Compassion fatigue” describes how providers of services to people going through disasters feel when they become weary of assisting the people affected by trauma.

Although this year is not a disaster for many agricultural producers, it is shaping up to be more challenging for some farmers and for the people who provide support services to distressed farmers and disaster victims.

Drought, too much rain, hurricanes, volatile commodity prices and uncertain financial outcomes this growing year are major concerns. I’ve been hearing from agency officials who serve farmers and storm victims in one way or another that their staff members are getting tired, but they don’t want to relinquish their important service roles.

SOME OF the worries shared with me are from USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) personnel, agricultural mediation specialists and lenders, who report that farmers are contacting them for assistance more frequently than usual.

The providers want to know how to deal with their own stress.

FSA office staff have to have superb capacity to understand the worries of the people they interact with on the other side of the office counter.

I enjoy and appreciate the people I interact with in my county FSA. We share humor, informative discussions, and they look out for me (somebody has to!).

These competent FSA employees are gracious, helpful, careful to protect confidentiality, careful also to not draw unwarranted conclusions, and they are emotionally intuitive about the concerns of the farm-

### Farm and Ranch Life

By Dr. Mike Rosmann



*All caregivers should adhere to the guiding principles: First, do no harm, and second, heal thyself — that is, take care of oneself to better serve others.*

It’s a sign that respite and recovery are needed by the service providers.

Guilt sometimes accompanies caregivers’ loss of enthusiasm for their work, but it shouldn’t. Caregivers want to continue serving, but their personal “compassion fuel tanks” are empty.

Family members can experience similar compassion fatigue, such as when caring for loved ones with debilitating illnesses like Alzheimer’s disease, or when dealing with any overwhelming complaints that wear them out.

All caregivers should adhere to the guiding principles: First, do no harm, and second, heal thyself — that is, take care of oneself to better serve others.

SIGNS OF compassion fatigue usually include the following:

- Feeling irritable and annoyed by more requests for help and sometimes even by little things.
- Trouble sleeping and enjoying things that have been fun in the past.
- Wanting to avoid coworkers and clients even though that is not a typical feeling.
- Occasional atypical outbursts of anger, trouble concentrating and diminished planning capacity.
- Feeling more tired than usual without a clear explanation except for previous hard work.

Although these are not the only signs of being emotionally drained, and sometimes physically drained as well, they are key indicators of compassion fatigue. What can caregivers do to restore themselves?

USEFUL TIPS and resources to help caregivers include:

- Respite, recreation, times away when not thinking (on purpose) about feelings of obligation, sleeping soundly, talking with others about subjects unrelated to service concerns, laughing and just plain “goofing off” are therapeutic.

● Drinking alcohol or using medications may help temporarily, but their benefits quickly play out, rendering them ineffective until conscious efforts to change behaviors like those noted above are implemented. Then longer-term adjustment can be achieved.

- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Disas-

ter Technical Assistance Center at <http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac> has literature and tips for dealing with emotional overload and grief.

Other sources for understanding and dealing with compassion fatigue include:

- [goodtherapy.org](http://goodtherapy.org): <http://bit.ly/2nNFhAR>
- [compassionfatigue.org](http://compassionfatigue.org): <http://bit.ly/2iYA8HK>

COMPASSION FATIGUE dissipates gradually and we can return to work, but keep an eye on wearing out again.

It’s a sign of healthy management of caregiving when we take time to recuperate, and not a weakness. The people we work with can learn this from us as caregivers.

*Dr. Mike Rosmann is a psychologist, farm resident and former crisis counseling program manager. He and his wife live near Harlan, Iowa. Contact him at [mike@agbehavioralhealth.com](mailto:mike@agbehavioralhealth.com).*



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## District 7

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Submitted by Todd Perdew, CED, Adams/Union:

It is one of my favorites, I have made this many times. This recipe is good for when it's dad's night to cook. Gets 3 stars because it is cheap, fast, and good!

### **MEXICAN PORK & BEAN SOUP**

2 boneless top loin pork chops, diced  
½ onion, chopped  
1 14 ½ oz can chicken broth  
1 15 oz can Mexican-style chopped tomatoes  
1 15 oz can pinto beans, drained  
2 tsp chili powder



In deep saucepan, brown the diced pork with onion; stir in remaining ingredients and bring to a boil. Lower heat, cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Servings: 4

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Submitted by Jamie Newbury, PT, Cass:

### **GLAZED LEMON BLUEBERRY SCONES**

2 c Flour  
¼ c Sugar  
4 tsp Baking Powder  
½ tsp Salt  
½ c COLD Butter, shredded  
1 tbsp. Lemon Zest  
1 Egg  
½ c Milk  
¼ c Lemon Juice  
1 c Blueberries, coated in small amount of flour (fresh or frozen; if frozen, do not thaw)



Preheat oven to 400. Whisk dry ingredients together several times in large bowl. Stir in shredded cold butter and lemon zest. Whisk together egg, milk, and lemon juice. Pour into flour mixture; mix until blended and soft dough forms. Gently stir in blueberries.

Place dough on floured surface and knead gently several times (do not squish blueberries). Pat into a circle ¾ in thick.

Place on greased cookie sheet. Score into 8-12 pieces. Sprinkle with coarse sugar, if desired.

Bake 15-17 minutes at 400 degrees or until golden. Cut into wedges on score lines. Cool slightly. Drizzle with glaze.

Serve warm.

**Glaze:** ½ c Powdered Sugar mixed with 4 tsp Lemon Juice, lemon peel to taste.



## February is Heart Health Month

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. The good news? It is also one of the most preventable. Making heart-healthy choices, knowing your family health history and the risk factors for heart disease, having regular check-ups and working with your physician to manage your health are all integral aspects of saving lives from this often-silent killer. **FEBRUARY IS HEART HEALTH MONTH.** Make a difference in your community by spreading the word about strategies for preventing heart disease and encouraging those around you to have their hearts check and commit to heart-healthy lives.



## Heart Attack Symptoms

Symptoms of a heart attack or myocardial infarction can vary greatly from person to person, but in order to help you identify a possible heart attack, we have listed some of the most common symptoms below:

- Approximately 2 out of every 3 people who have heart attacks experience chest pain, shortness of breath or fatigue a few days or weeks before the attack.
- A person with angina (temporary chest pain) may begin to find that it takes less and less physical activity to trigger the pain. Any change in the pattern of angina should be taken very seriously and brought to the attention of your physician.
- During a heart attack, a person may feel pain in the middle of the chest, which can spread to the back, neck, jaw or arms. The pain may also be felt only in the back, neck, jaw or arms rather than the chest.
- A person having a heart attack may have gas-like pain or pressure in the stomach area, which is often mistaken for indigestion. The pain is similar to angina, but it is usually more severe, longer lasting and does not improve with rest or a nitroglycerin pill.
- It is important to note that approximately 1 out of every 3 people who have heart attacks do not feel any chest pain. Many of these are women, non-Caucasian, older than 75, have heart failure or diabetes or have had a stroke.
- Nausea & vomiting which are sometimes mistaken for food poisoning or the stomach flu
- Lightheadedness or dizziness
- Shortness of breath, especially in older people
- Feelings of restlessness, sweatiness, anxiety or a sense of impending doom



- Bluishness of the lips, hands or feet
- Heavy pounding of the heart or abnormal heart rhythms
- Loss of consciousness (This can be the first symptom of a heart attack!)
- Disorientation resembling a stroke may occur in older people.
- Also, older people, especially women, will often take longer to admit they are not well and to request medical assistance.

## Helping a Victim of a Heart Attack

Half of the deaths from heart attack occur in the first 3 or 4 hours after the onset of symptoms, so it is important to know and recognize the warning signs.

- If you think that you or someone in your presence is having a heart attack, call 911 IMMEDIATELY! Every minute you delay can result in more damage to the heart muscle.
- Having the victim chew an aspirin after the ambulance has been called may help reduce the size of the blood clot.

## Helping a Victim of Sudden Cardiac Death

- Call 911 IMMEDIATELY!
- Begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation or CPR. CPR can double or triple a cardiac arrest victim's chances of survival.
- Utilize an automated external defibrillator (AED) if one is available. Follow the instructions provided by the unit. Many public places such as airports and shopping malls now have AEDs. Brain death begins in only 4 to 6 minutes after cardiac arrest, but it is often reversible if treated within a few minutes with defibrillation, or an electric shock to the heart, as from an AED, to restore a normal heartbeat.

The chances of survival for a victim of Sudden Cardiac Death drop by 7 to 10 percent with every minute that passes without CPR and defibrillation, and very few attempts at resuscitation succeed after 10 minutes, so the key is to ACT QUICKLY!



# HEALTH ALERT!



## FLU PREVENTION

### CONTROL COUGHS

1



#### CONTROL COUGHS

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze...or cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

### WASH HANDS

2



#### WASH HANDS

Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you cough or sneeze...or clean with an alcohol-based hand cleaner.

### AVOID THE FACE

3



#### AVOID TOUCHING FACE

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

### MINIMIZE CONTACT

4



#### MINIMIZE CONTACT

Try to avoid close contact with sick people. Stay home if you are sick for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer.

Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures. Talk to your doctor about vaccines and prescription antivirals. For more flu prevention information, go to: [www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov)

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