



# Iowa Association of FSA County Office Employees

## IASCOE News Winter 2024





# 2024 IASCOE Annual Convention

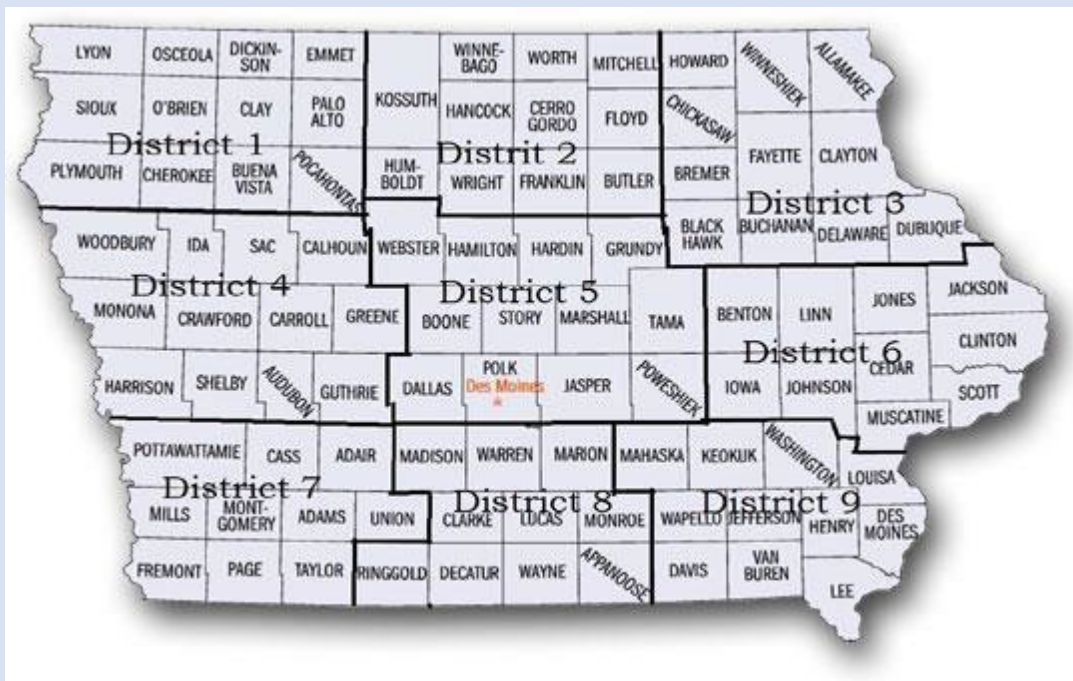
*Mark your calendars – more information to be released soon!!*

When: March 22 - March 23, 2024

Where: Gateway Hotel - Ames, Iowa

We APPRECIATE your continued support for our Annual Scholarship Auction. Please consider providing donations for the silent and live auctions benefiting scholarships mentioned in this issue. Kudos to those who create themed baskets and/or provide a donated item. It is wonderful to see creativity from county offices around the state. You won't want to miss the auctions on Friday night!! If you need help getting your donations to the convention, please reach out to your IASCOE director in the coming weeks to coordinate delivery.

**Stay tuned for meeting agenda AND a special announcement!!**





## Message from IASCOE President, Todd Perdew

Another year has flown by. What started out as a great planting season turned dry later on. We were able to complete ARC/PLC in a timely manner and acreage certification went very well. In my office I am very fortunate to have a wonderful staff. Many of us experienced dry weather and disaster programs. In my county of Taylor we were very busy with emergency haying and grazing and we had some LIP applications due to heat.

Many of us have unfortunately dealt with hiring and retention issues. In August I went with VP Scheuring, Secretary Comer, Treasurer Dameron and Delegate Johansen had a chance to sign our labor agreement and visit with the state committee about various issues. It is obvious that we have a state committee that understands the challenges that we face in the field office. They were very willing to listen and we were able to provide them information on issues that we deal with at the county office level. I had a chance to go to NASCOE Convention in College Station Texas, it was great to be around members from other states and hear their struggles, challenges, and victories.

Through it all the can do attitude was shown. As always we turned out a quality product, and that product is program delivery and customer service. It makes me very proud to be a member of a group of people this willing to serve the producer and to carry out the agency mission no matter what. The flexibility and adaptability that you have shown is without parallel. Thanks to all of you!





Greetings, IASCOE members.

Thank you for your commitment to Iowa farmers and your fellow members. You all make an important difference in helping Iowa FSA deliver on our mission. Your service to Iowa agriculture is tremendous and unique. Thank you for working together, along with NASCOE, to help make Farm Service Agency an amazing place to be a public servant.

The Iowa agricultural community is facing a lot of challenges. But that also means we have tremendous opportunities to lean into those challenges. It's an honor to be working with the IASCOE leaders and members to help leverage the opportunities in front of us. I'm proud to be a member of the Biden-Harris Administration. NASCOE and all the state organizations are doing a great job in helping our administration put its vision into practice. You are truly making a difference.

I've enjoyed attending many IASCOE state conventions starting back in 2010 when I joined the Iowa FSA state committee. It was great being with the IASCOE members at last spring's annual convention in Ames. It was amazing to finally be again in person! Know that you have my full support and the support of Iowa FSA state office leadership as you plan your next state convention. The work your association does is invaluable to the success of Iowa FSA.

**Matt Russell**

State Executive Director

USDA-Iowa Farm Service Agency

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I hope this newsletter finds you well. As we head into the new year we face some budget uncertainties and are fortunate to have our NASCOE team providing input to our national leaders with our best interest in mind. This year did not disappoint in delivering challenges to county offices. Like in all offices, we met the learning curve associated with administering revenue-based programs and the associated technology requirements. We are in the third year of a dry spell right now in west central Iowa and it is starting to make noticeable impacts. I know there are areas in similar situations across the state, some worse. With rain on my mind, my kids and I were recently watching Star Wars, A New Hope, and for the first time in the countless times I've watched it in my life, Tatooine's moisture farming suddenly occurred to me as a respectable choice in livelihood; Luke should have reconsidered leaving and undertaken a different approach. All that water the Death Star used came from somewhere... In the livestock department, our pastures and wells are stressed with many producers hauling feed and water almost as soon as cattle were turned out. Generally, we were pleasantly surprised with crop yields considering our precipitation, corn more-so than soybeans. This year's yields were definitely a testament to today's hybrids. Conditions like these also reaffirm the importance of what we do in FSA, with standing ad hoc livestock disaster programs for producers. In November, two benefits trainings (TSP, FERS, Social Security, etc.) were held in southern and western Iowa. Dillard Financial Services put on the training, and I heard good feedback from attendees. We will continue to try and get similar trainings scheduled in the near future. No matter where you are in your FSA career it's important to understand your benefits and retirement. With all of the new hiring going on in the county offices, whether you are a manager or coworker, thank you, for discussing membership with new employees to our agency. If you are onboarding a new employee or have new hires in your office and would like to have an IASCOE member discuss membership and benefits with them, please do not hesitate to let one of us know; we would be happy to provide them with any info and discuss what IASCOE is and what it does. Lastly, we are currently working on planning our State Convention for 2024 and will reach out with details when we have everything finalized.

Happy Holidays and New Year!  
Brandon Scheuring-VP



## WHY IASCOE?

In my 22-year FSA career, I have always been an IASCOE member. I didn't have a choice; it was forced upon me by my CED when I was hired. I had NO idea what it even was, I just knew my dues were coming out of my check every PP, End of Story.

It didn't take long for a group of individuals to approach me and ask if I wanted to go to the State Convention with them. The first couple of times I declined. I didn't know what it was, I didn't know many people, I had a ton of reasons why I didn't want to go.

Then one year, in a weak moment, I agreed to go. Not only did I agree to go, but I agreed to help with the registration table. I had the time of my life! Without that group of individuals, I would not be an active member of IASCOE today.

That group of individuals consists of Joni Birkhofer, retired now and enjoying life to the fullest. Devalyn Wilson, retired now and enjoying life to the fullest. Tammy Eibey also retired now and enjoying life to the fullest. And Judy Dameron, who will soon be retired and enjoying life to the fullest.

Without that group, I wouldn't be doing what I am today for IASCOE. But more importantly, without IASCOE/NASCOE constantly fighting for us to have and keep the benefits that we have as employees, they would not be as comfortable in their retirement that they worked long and hard to achieve.

I guess what I am trying to say, is with that core group having such an influence and impact on my career, and now they will all be retired, it is up to us, the next generation of 'core group' to get the newer employees informed and energized about joining. Let them know how important it is to have representation at the National Level to fight for our benefits and to be our voice!

Not to mention all the relationships we build with employees across the state and in other states. Attending a State Convention for another state is the best. You meet so many people and get to party without the stress of organizing your own convention. I mean participate....not party.....oooops.

If you are a current IASCOE member, I encourage you to be an active member. Get on a committee, come to the State Convention, reach out to employees who are not a current member and encourage them to join! And to Non- Members, it's time to join us cool kids and become a member! You will NOT regret it!

Submitted by:  
Angie Reynolds



## WWII Veteran Roger H. Charbonneau

Father of Louisa County PT, Judy Dameron

In honor of Veteran's Day, I would like to share this article that was in our local papers. Our veteran is very special to us and I'm glad he was able to share his story. He is 99 years old and resides in the Wapello Care Facility next to my office.

On May 11, 2023, I had the distinct honor and privilege to interview one of Louisa County's eldest WWII surviving members, Roger Charbonneau.

Roger was born in Oakville, IA, in 1924. He worked on the family farm and struggled to survive the great depression as most American's did during that time. On Sunday, December 7, 1941, while having dinner with his parents at his residence in Oakville, Roger heard about the bombing of Pearl Harbor over the radio. Most folks did not have a TV at that time and relied on the radio for entertainment and news.

On September 8, 1943, Roger was drafted in the United States Army Air Corps (later changed to the United States Air Force in 1948) and reported for duty at Camp Dodge, Iowa. While attending basic training, Roger qualified with the M-1 Carbine rifle and received his aerial gunner's badge. After basic training, Roger was assigned as a tail gunner on a B-17 Flying Fortress, the "Forever Amber" and he took to it right away. Everyone else on the aircraft was close enough to other crewmen for conversation, at least over the head set communication system. The noise from the engines blotted out normal conversation. The tail gunner on the B-17 was all alone.

Prior to departing the US, Roger advised that all US bomber crews had to complete thirty missions before they could return to the US. Roger and his crewmates flew the "Forever Amber" from the east coast of the US to England and immediately began their bombing missions over Germany. He also said that when they arrived in England, the bombing mission requirement was increased to thirty-five missions.

Roger advised that most of his missions were escorted by US P-51 Mustang fighter aircraft which at that time had the capability by using "Drop Tanks" that would allow for additional fuel necessary to reach Germany. Roger said that they usually maintained an altitude of thirty thousand feet and flew their missions during daylight. Flying at altitudes above 27,000 feet meant it got very cold in the aircraft, often below freezing temperatures. Outlets in the sides of the aircraft allowed the crew to plug in electric suits to stay warm. The crew also required oxygen above 15,000 feet and oxygen tanks



were located throughout the aircraft. In the event of having to bail out, Roger said that all crewmen had the same outfit to include a parachute, map, and a .45 caliber pistol.

Ironically, Roger would have to bail out of the "Amber Forever" while returning from a bombing mission over Germany. He recalled the pilot advising that they had an engine on fire and to immediately bail out of the aircraft. The "Forever Amber" was flying over France as Roger bailed out from the doomed B-17. I discovered after further research, on April 10, 1944, the "Forever Amber" received damage from an ME-262 cannon that destroyed one of the starboard engines, causing the fire.

Roger parachuted and landed safely on French soil. Soon after, he linked up with partisan forces and was eventually repatriated back to England. Roger was reassigned to another plane and crew. He would go on to complete 35 bombing missions and returned to America on a ship as the Allies declared victory over Europe. Roger was awarded the Air Medal with 5 Oakleaf Clusters, European-African-Middle Eastern Service Medal with 4 Bronze Stars and a Distinguished Unit Badge for his service during World War Two.

When asked what lessons he would pass on for today's generation, Roger said "Stay out of war".







# 2023 IASCOE Scholarship Recipients

IASCOE Scholarships were awarded to five applicants in 2023. Traditional scholarships in the amount of \$500 were awarded to Tyler Humiston, Louisa County; Catherine Pethoud, Chickasaw County; and Rylee Wickham, Jackson County. Chance Hall, Jones County, was awarded a \$250 vocational scholarship and Ross Evans, Wayne County, was issued a \$250 grandchild scholarship.

***Tyler Humiston*** (Debra Humiston, Louisa County PT) is a senior at Columbus Community High School, where he runs track and cross country. He has also involved in basketball, FFA, 4H, the school newspaper and yearbook. Tyler works part-time repairing tractors and agricultural machinery. In his spare time, he enjoys tinkering with and repairing his grandpa's antique tractors. Tyler plans to attend Parkland College and become a diesel technician. Congratulations, Tyler!





**Catherine Pethoud** (daughter of Chickasaw County CED Ron Pethoud) will be attending the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. She plans to double major in Developmental Psychology and Special Needs. Throughout high school she has been involved in cross country, track, choir, band, and drama. She also teaches Wednesday night church at her local

church. Congratulations, Catherine!

**Rylee Wickham** (daughter of Eric Wickham, Jackson County PT) served on the student council, and participated in softball, track, basketball, cross country, and swim team during high school. She was selected for the National Honor Society and the National Council on Youth Leadership. Her community volunteer hours qualified her for a silver cord at graduation. She plans to pursue a degree in Biology with a minor in Business. Congratulations, Rylee!





**Chance Hall** (son of Holly Hall, Jones County PT) is currently a senior at Anamosa High School. During his high school career, he has been involved in community activities such as the Jones County Youth Beef Team and East Greenfield 4-H Club. He played football, ran track and has been a part of his school's FFA program. He plans to attend

Northwest Iowa Community College in Sheldon to pursue an Associates of Applied Science in Powerline Technology. Congratulations, Chance!

**Ross Evans** (grandson of Kathy Henely, Wayne County CED) plans to major in Aerospace at Middle Tennessee State University, with a goal of becoming a commercial pilot. During high school he participated in cross country, track, and soccer. He is a member of the National Honors Society and the Community Club. He has been invited to be a member of the honors college at Middle Tennessee State University. Congratulations, Ross!





**\*\*Editor's note:** *Sincere apologies as this publication was not issued timely to share with those who may have had an interest in applying for scholarships or awards – please consider applying beginning October 2024 and prior to the January 15, 2025, deadline.*

The 2025 scholarship applications will be accepted on the NASCOE website through January 15, 2025. Annual scholarships accepted through IASCOE/NASCOE include:

- **Traditional Scholarship** (member's child) graduating high school senior or first year college freshman, full time student with a minimum of 12 hours
- **Open Continuing Education Scholarship** (member, spouse, child, or grandchild) 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or 4<sup>th</sup> year, or graduate student, with 6 or more credit hours per semester
- **Member Continuing Education** (NASCOE member) continuing their education
- **Continuing Education for Adult Children of Members** (member's adult child, or grandchild) 5 or less credit hours a semester
- **Part Time Scholarship** (member's child) less than 12 hours at an accredited college, university or trade school
- **Grandchildren Scholarship** (member's grandchild) 12 or more credit hours per semester
- **Associate Member Scholarship** (associate member, spouse, child, or grandchild) minimum of 6 hours of enrollment
- **Vocational Scholarship** (member's child) full-time student in technical or trade school

All scholarship applications are competitive, and all applicants are evaluated on the basis of ability, incentive, and personal characteristics. IASCOE scholarships can only be awarded one time in each scholarship category.

The Scholarship committee would like to thank the individuals and county offices that consistently donate items for the live and silent auctions which allow IASCOE to award scholarships each year.



# 2024 NASCOE Awards

## Sick Leave Awards

- Sick leave certificates are awarded for members with accumulated sick leave of **500, 1000, 1500, and 2000** hours.
- Plaques are awarded to permanent employees who are NASCOE members in good standing with accumulated sick leave of **2500, 3000, and 3500 +** hours.

Hours should be based on total accumulated hours as of **December 31, 2023**

**Deadline to submit hours to Jennifer Comer, IASCOE State Awards Chair is February 1, 2024. Please submit nominees to: [Jennifercomer71@gmail.com](mailto:Jennifercomer71@gmail.com)**

## Distinguished Service Awards

We all know and work with outstanding individuals within our Agency that go above and beyond every day and consider it “part of the job”. It is time to recognize these folks for the work they do. The DSA program encourages recognition of NASCOE members who make outstanding contributions in the Areas of **Service to NASCOE; Service to FSA-Agriculture; or Service to Community.**

The nomination process is easy! Nominees must be full members of IASCOE/NASCOE in good standing. Nomination forms are available at [www.NASCOE.org](http://www.NASCOE.org) under Forms and Downloads. You need to include the name, address, email and telephone numbers of the nominee and nominator, the award being recommended and a brief description of why the nominee is deserving of the award. The nomination information should be brief, factual and specific.

Nomination period begins October 2024 with deadline of **JANUARY 15, 2025**, per official nomination format provided at [www.NASCOE.org](http://www.NASCOE.org)

Any questions please feel free to contact me at [JenniferComer71@gmail.com](mailto:JenniferComer71@gmail.com) or 712-303-1157!! The Awards process is very quick and easy to complete, I know we have great people in Iowa, who are very deserving of this award!



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- Estate planning services \*
- Education plans for children
- Annual reviews of your FERS benefit statement
- Assistance with conversions and rollovers for your TSP
- Quarterly & annual retirement check-ups

\* We partner with affiliate companies to provide these services.

## SERVICES WE OFFER

- Federally Licensed Consultants throughout all 50 states
- Phone support for our NASCOE members - Monday through Friday 9am to 5pm EST
- Supporting states and members through comprehensive federal benefit training
- Quarterly and Annual TSP Reviews
- TSP Rollovers and Conversions
- Spousal Rollovers and Conversions
- Assist with spousal retirement benefits
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- Analysis on your retirement income
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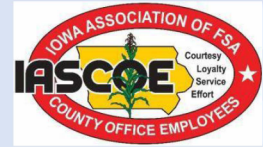
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# 2024 NASCOE CONVENTION

**AUG. 7 — WEDNESDAY**

**THREE THEMED TOUR CHOICES:**

- JOHN DEERE
- FOODIE
- ART

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**EVENING ACTIVITY:**  
QC RIVER BANDITS BASEBALL  
MODERN WOODMAN PARK  
BALLGAME, DINNER & PIN TRADING

**AUG. 8 — THURSDAY**

CONVENTION CONVENES

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YOUTH ACTIVITIES & FIELD TRIP

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**EVENING ACTIVITIES:**  
SCHOLARSHIP DINNER AUCTION  
DAVENPORT POKER RUN

**AUG. 9 — FRIDAY**

CONVENTION CONTINUES

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YOUTH ACTIVITIES & FIELD TRIP

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**EVENING ACTIVITY:**  
JOHN DEERE PAVILION  
FOOD TRUCKS & ENTERTAINMENT

**AUG. 10 — SATURDAY**

CONVENTION ADJOURNS

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YOUTH ACTIVITIES & FIELD TRIP

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**THREE ACTIVITY CHOICES:**

- RIVER & HISTORY TOUR
- FREIGHTHOUSE FARMERS MARKET
- CHANNEL CAT WATER TAXI TRIP

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**EVENING ACTIVITY:**  
NASCOE AWARDS BANQUET  
1920'S THEME & FORMAL ATTIRE

# 2024 NASCOE CONVENTION

AUGUST 7TH -10TH

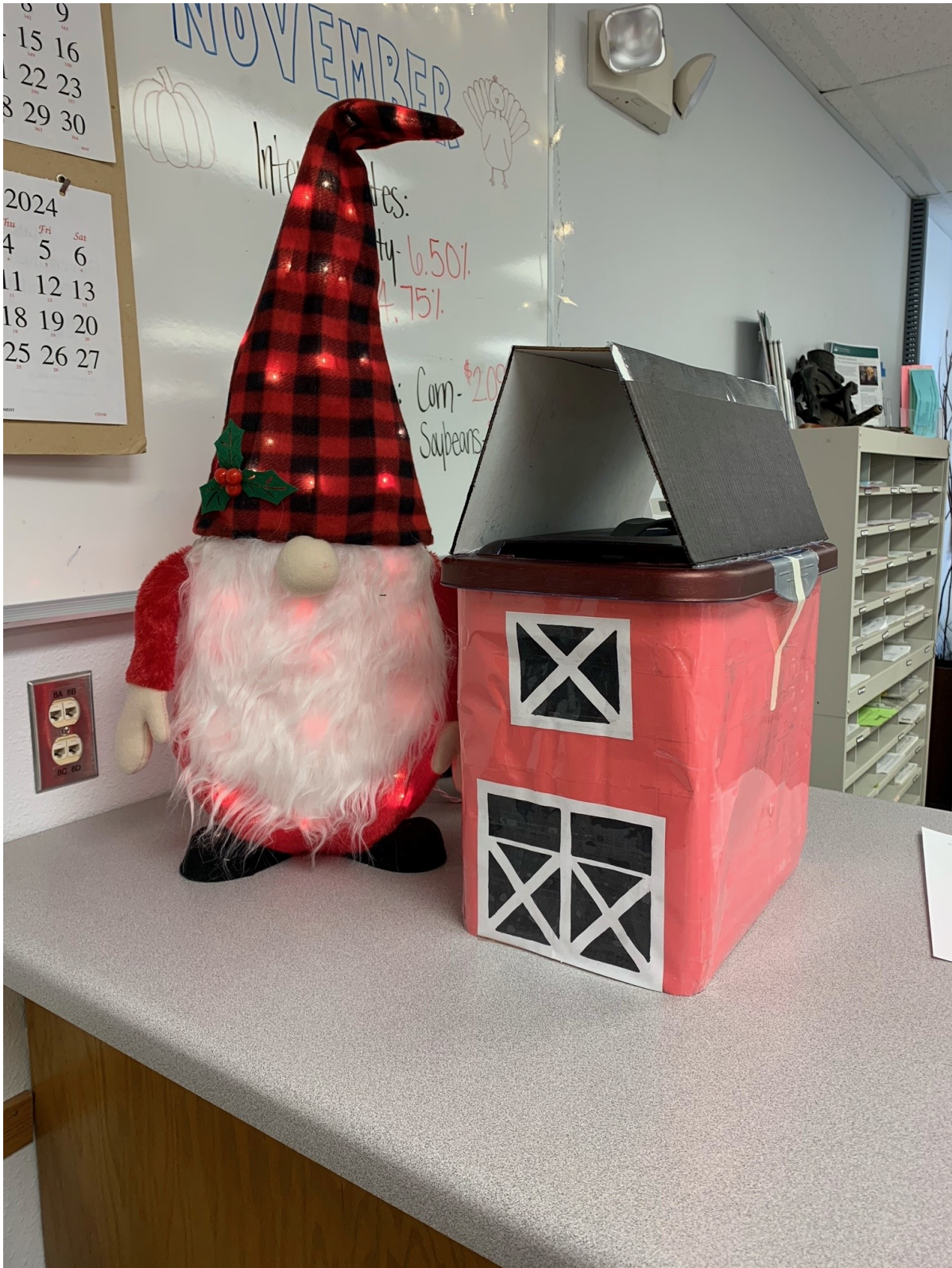
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[VISITQUADCITIES.COM/2024-NASCOE-NATIONAL-CONVENTION](http://VISITQUADCITIES.COM/2024-NASCOE-NATIONAL-CONVENTION)

## HEAD TO THE HEARTLAND HOTELS

For the upcoming 2024 NASCOE Convention, we have selected the best hotels in town – Hotel Blackhawk, The Current, and The Double Tree. Each hotel offers its unique features and amenities, so scan the QR code for more detailed information about each one.

HOTEL BLACKHAWK	THE CURRENT	THE DOUBLE TREE
\$159 plus tax	\$159 plus tax	\$139 plus tax



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