

The Iowa Association Of FSA
County Office Employees

IASCOE NEWS

June 2004

IASCOE President's Report

By Tom Lane – President / CED Henry County
June 2004

Greetings Membership!!

It is hard to believe that a year has passed since I first received the honor of being elected President of this wonderful association. It has been an interesting year. A year full of changes. Further, the one ahead of us appears to be filled with even more changes. We are faced with tighter budgets, pressure to continue providing outstanding customer service in the face of declining staffing numbers, and shifting to an eGov based work environment that much of our clientele has not embraced as a way of doing business. I am encouraging all persons to take advantage of any computer training that comes your way. It will be good business for us to become savvy with the computer. It will allow us to better serve our customers and us.

Thank you to all the persons who attended the annual convention in April. For those who didn't get the opportunity, your Board of Directors did a great job of putting together a convention that was informative and fun. Our featured speaker, Marilyn Adams, reminded us of the importance to be ever vigil in cause of safety. I would like to give a special "Thank You" to Julie Hall, Steve Waller, and their crews for the presentation on FSA family members serving in the war on terrorism. Also, I wish to thank Steve Abbas and Mike Houston for representing Iowa so well at the Legislative Conference in early March. Steve and Mike gave a presentation on their trip at the convention. They were a strong voice for our members.

The National Convention for NASCOE is being held on July 28 – 31, 2004 in Baltimore, Maryland. This convention gives association members the opportunity to interact with the Washington D.C. leadership of our agency on a face-to-face basis. Association business is conducted also. There will be discussion on the creation of a PAC (Political Action Committee), continued efforts to establish a dental insurance program that is workable, recognition of fellow employees for the outstanding work they have done in their home communities and states, and election of national officers. With that, I would like to congratulate Trice Smith of Benton County for her selection as the Midwest Area Winner for the **SERVICE TO NASCOE** Distinguished Service Award and Tammy Eibey of Delaware County for her selection as the Midwest Area Winner for the **SERVICE TO FSA-AGRICULTURE** Distinguished Service Award. Their nominations were submitted for consideration to be national award winners and make Iowa very proud!!!

Well, I guess I have rambled long enough. Remember, we can work to help guide the changes that are coming our way or we can choose to just accept what happens. Additionally, I would remind everyone that the annual membership drive will soon be under way. If you were a member this past year, thank you. Your participation helped develop a stronger association "choir". If you were not a member, please consider becoming a member. Each "voice" we add to the "choir" creates a louder sound for you in Washington D.C.

Tom

Cover Photo Taken By Brian Beach – IASCOE Webmaster & PT Sac County

FROM THE DESK OF DERRYL MCLAREN, SED

I hope you have all accomplished your spring cleaning, because Summer will be here soon. What began as a flawless planting season and acreage certification process has suddenly become complicated with the weather. But, hey, this is Iowa!

Our focus remains concentrated on the new Farm Business Plan, GIS, and E-gov. All three of these priorities share a common theme of modernization. Commodity programs will eventually shift to Web-based, as well. We are living in an information society, and we expect our access to information to be instantaneous. We owe our jobs and career employment to the farmers we serve, and these producers will continue to anticipate more from us in connectivity and interaction. Light pulses surging down a fiber-optic cable, however, will never replace the personal contact our producers continue to demand in their local USDA Service Centers. The numerous forms farmers sign as a prerequisite to payments are legal documents. As such, producers deserve an explanation and interpretation before committing their signature.

Most of the pertinent issues to inform you are static: Budget (same), Employment (no RIFs, no furloughs, no early retirement), CRP (??), TOs (funding committed). Washington is still controlling our backfills and hiring authority, and we have numerous requests in the pipeline awaiting approval. As counties acquire their GIS database, we have reserved enough TOs to assist the process through fiscal '04.

Several of the early GIS counties are approaching the final certification of CLUs. We will keep you informed of their success. These counties will also be the first to recognize and utilize their GIS database to acquire supplemental informational "layers" from other agencies of local, state, and federal government to add roads, pipelines, soil types, storage facilities, railroads, fiber-optics, etc., etc., to our maps. We are working as quickly and diligently as possible to finish the GIS digitizing for the State.

By the time you receive this message, a new acronym will have been added to our jargon, the Budget and Performance Management Scorecard (BPMS). This will revolve around an approved Logic Model driven by the FSA Vision Statement and Mission Statement. Strategies and Goals will be formulated to measure outputs, and, thereby, performance. This BPMS will drive the budget for the Agency and our personal Performance Plans. Once you have come-to-grips and understand what I just said, we will provide further details and explanation.

My life as a farmer spans over 30 years, and I am a "river-rat" to boot. Through that time, floods and droughts have dealt me many disappointments. That same land and commodity prices have also been richly rewarding at times. As a farmer, I have learned to only worry about those things for which I have direct input or control. For everything else, I adapt. I hope Mother Nature will be kind to us in Iowa this year. May I extend to all of you my sincere wishes for a productive and rewarding Summer of '04.



Heritage, Tradition, Pride

By Alan Donaldson - IASCOE Vice President
CED - Sioux County

We've just finished what I facetiously call one of the year's major holiday's, Tulip Festival. It's a 3 day celebration in May held on the 3rd Thursday, Friday and Saturday. During this time thousands of people come to Orange City to be a part of the Dutch culture and become a "Dutchman" for a few days. Part of the event's attraction is seeing the town pull together for 3 days to make visitors welcome and put Orange City and the Dutch heritage in it's best light.

Literally hundreds of people dress in authentic 18th century Dutch costumes and entertain the visitors who come. One of my favorite parts of the festival is the parades. If we're lucky and the weather cooperates, we'll have two parades per day. The parades are filled with floats, bands, and Dutch heritage walkers. Before the parade begins the streets are inspected by the mayor and town council to see if they are clean enough for the Tulip Queen and her court to ride on. Of course, according to tradition, they are never clean enough so the mayor calls out the water carriers (boys and men with buckets) in Dutch costume and the street scrubbers, (women and girls with brooms) also in Dutch costume. They then scrub the length of the parade route, about 8 blocks. After the street is scrubbed, the color guard from the American Legion marches with the American Flag, then comes the Pride of the Dutchmen Band dressed in Dutch uniforms and wearing wooden shoes, and then the float bearing the Tulip Queen and her Court. All of the other bands and floats follow.

In Orange City, we just love the high school band. I know that in a lot of schools band membership is not a pass to popularity. In Orange City people will go to football games even if we're not having a good season, just to hear the band play the National Anthem and perform at half time. In Orange City, kids aren't ridiculed because they are in band, they are questioned if they aren't band members. Hundreds of parents fill the stands at football games to watch the game and the band, many times hundreds of parents are at a football field somewhere in the area on Saturday to watch the band perform in completion.

What's so special about the band? I think it's the sense of pride each of the members feels toward

the band and toward the band's tradition. It also has something to do with confidence in their abilities and the goal of achieving excellence. Over the years the band has played in the Tournament of Roses Parade, the Fiesta Bowl Parade, the Orange Bowl Parade and made many other major appearances.



Another motivating force behind the band is the Director, Mr. Steve Connell. Mr. Connell has been the band director for almost 30 years now and although he is the leader of the Pride of the Dutchmen band, his heritage is 100% Irish. He's a tireless band promoter and an enthusiastic community supporter.

Mr. Connell looks out for his band kids, he expects a lot from them, and he knows that they won't let him or themselves down. One of Mr. Connell's traditions comes at the end of the last parade on Saturday night. During the last parade, all of the seniors line up in formation at the front of the band, whether they play trombone or flute. They take the place of honor. After the band has gone through the parade route, Mr. Connell stops the band at attention and personally goes to each of the seniors, thanks them for their hard work and dedication, and gives them a hug. He always says that this is the best band he has ever had, the best group of senior leaders and he is going to miss them. There is rarely a dry eye in the group at that point. Then he says something that motivates the band for next year. He says, "Next year we're going to be even better!"

Heritage, pride, tradition, that's what I think about when I think about those of us who work for the FSA. It probably sounds corny, but when I think about all that FSA employees have accomplished and about what IASCOE members and directors have achieved, I am extremely proud of all of you.

Mr. Connell and I are living proof that you don't have to be Dutch to be proud of your Dutch community. I'm also sure that even though some times you get discouraged and feel that no one knows what you are going through on the job, you are appreciated. Thank you for supporting IASCOE and in turn allowing IASCOE to help you. We've accomplished a lot together but to paraphrase Mr. Connell, "Next year we're going to do even better."

Membership Committee Report

Dan Wells, State Chairperson

May 2004



The 2003 IASCOE Membership topped out at 85.7%. I want to personally “Thank” all of you for your continued support. Without a strong membership many of the goals set by our organization could not be achieved. 2003 has been recorded in the history books and now it’s time we focus on 2004.

I have the privilege of being from District #7, which last year had the highest percentage of IASCOE members in the state at 98.1%. I know several other districts have very high percentages and some did not; however there is always room for improvement. I would like to challenge any district to meet or beat District #7 this year. With a strong membership even more goals can be achieved and the stronger our association will become.

Our continued goal is to have as many members as possible in Iowa. Each member of this committee would be more than willing to answer any questions you may have concerning membership and the benefits associated with being a member. I am also available to all of you. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

I would like to introduce you to the 2004 Membership Committee:

District 1 is represented by Ron Reuvers from O’Brien County
District 2 is represented by Vicki Pederson from Floyd County
District 3 is represented by Sheri Rodman from Clayton County
District 4 is represented by Judy Vos from Woodbury County
District 5 is represented by Rod Biensen from Story County
District 6 is represented by Carma Reiss from Benton County
District 7 is represented by Jolene Fechter from Page County
District 8 is represented by Sally Crall from Monroe County
District 9 is represented by Lisa Taylor from Davis County

Be sure to get your dues in early for our “Early Bird” specials. Our winners last year were:

Diane Danielson – Buena Vista County
Sharon Lovstad – Kossuth County
Terri Coats – Sac County
Diane Burke – Clinton County
David Kastengren – Wapello County

Be More in 2004,
Dan



HI - I hope everyone has had an enjoyable spring and are all geared up for certification. We have had some of our big farmers already in this year, so hopefully the workload will be more spread out and it won't be so hectic the last two weeks of June.

June also means it is the time for IASCOE dues. The membership committee voted to continue the incentive for early dues again this year. Any employee who has their dues paid or signs up for payroll deduction by June 15th 2004 will be eligible for the drawing in which 5 members will be refunded \$50 of their membership dues.



Last year our state membership was at 86% and it would be fantastic if we could increase that number. Congressional members listen more to an organization with a high percentage of membership. Because we are not Federal employees, NASCOE fights for every benefit we receive. This includes everything from the yearly cost of living increases to job reclassifications. For a very small cost per pay period, you can be a member of an organization that is truly representing your interests. Let's help by providing our support through membership.

I hope everyone takes the time to enjoy the summer with family and friends.

Sue Beemer
IASCOE Secretary/Treasurer
PT Taylor County FSA



A Tribute To The CRP Program

with apologies to Andy Worhol

By Michael Berg (husband of Kathleen Berg PT Keokuk County)

Attempting to burn my CRP

The authorities knew my name

The Fire Department came to deny me

My 15 minutes of flame

IASCOE DIRECTORS MINUTES

2004 IASCOE Convention

Starlite Best Western

Fort Dodge, IA

April 1, 2004

7:45 P.M.

Officers Present: Tom Lane, President; Alan Donaldson, Vice President; Sue Beemer, Secretary/
Treasurer

Directors Present: Rosie Kahl, John Bahnsen, Connie Safley, Steve Kennedy, Joni Birkhofer,
Rich Kleppe, Dan Wells, Terry Pauling, Tammy Eibey, John Landgraf, Denise Dugan, Vicki
Heeren and Sandra Johnson.

New Directors Present: Elaine Gordon, Cindy Mensen, Julie Hall and Cindy Pistek.

Guests Present: John Bartenhagen, Judy Dameron and Carole Dawson.

President Tom Lane called the meeting to order at 7:45 P.M.

SECRETARY AND TREASURER REPORT

The directors reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting. Dan moved and John seconded the minutes be approved as written. Motion carried by all directors. The financial report was reviewed. Rosie moved and Joni seconded the report be accepted. Motion carried by all directors.

OLD BUSINESS

Web Site – Tammy has already started looking for articles for the next newsletter in June. She would like an article from the officers by the last of May. Articles from directors, county offices employees and state office would be great. Tammy does a tremendous job with the newsletter and her efforts are truly appreciated.

Mini Legislative Conference - A big thanks to Mike Houston and Steve Abbas for representing IASCOE in Washington, D.C. during the Mini Legislative Conference. NASCOE has hired the Redding Firm. They seem to be very well respected in WDC and it is good to be connected with them.

2004 Convention – We discussed the committee assignments for Convention. They are as follows:
Registration – Steve and Connie
Hospitality – John Bahnsen
Door Prizes – Rich, Joni and Terry
Raffle – Rich, Joni and Terry
Year Book/Annual Report – Sue and Jeff
Past President/Retiree's Lunch – John Landgraf

Thanks to those who put together the hospitality bags during our meeting. That was great. The breakfast banquet will be at 7:30 A.M. with the Awards Presentation to follow at 8:30 A.M. Speakers will be James Mace, JM Marketing; Derryl McLaren, State Executive Director; Merlin Plagge, State Committee Chair and Doug Frago, Deputy Administrator for Field Operations. The main speaker will be Marilyn Adams, Founder of Farm Safety 4 Just Kids.

NEW BUSINESS

2004 Staff Ceiling - We had a very lengthy discussion on 2004 staff ceilings and use of workload to determine this. Currently there is a freeze in place and the State Office has to make a request to Washington to fill vacancies. Tom will take the Directors' concerns to the Partnership Council meeting at State Office on April 7, 2004.

Midwest Area Reports - Tom had handouts for the directors. They were as follows: Midwest Area Report by Dan Root, NASCOE Midwest Area Executive Committee Person; Mini-Legislative Conference Report by Chris Hollis, Midwest Area Legislative Chair; and the NASCOE Position Papers. Three position papers were taken to the hill. They were fiscal year 2005 Appropriations, Homeland Security and Animal Identification. After meeting with RMA officials the Crop Insurance Reform paper will be implemented through the department.

Midwest Area Rally – Iowa has several people planning to attend the Midwest Area Rally on April 23 & 24. IASCOE delegates will be Rosie Kahl and Tammy Eibey.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Benefits and Legislative – Steve and Terry gave report. Mike Houston and Steve Abbas will have a report on the Mini-Legislative Conference during the Committee Meeting on Friday. Derryl will have comments from State Office and take questions or concerns. The Health Savings Account doesn't currently apply to FSA but may in the future. Steve and Terry thought this would be a benefit because this account would roll over into the next year versus losing the unused portion of your savings which is the option that is currently in effect. They will start off their committee meeting going over Benefits – giving the other committee members an opportunity to attend the Legislative portion.

Awards – Connie gave report. We have approximately 50 sick leave awards to be presented and 2 distinguished service awards.

Scholarships – Vicki gave report. There were 17 applications and 4 will be awarded scholarships of \$300.00 each. Cindy Pistek will be chairperson of scholarships for the 2004-2005 year. She hopes to do everything on the web site, as it would be a savings to IASCOE. She would also like to change the deadline to be postmarked January 31st.

Membership – Dan gave report. We have 16 counties that will receive certificates for either 5 – 10 – 15 – 20 – 25 – 30 – 35 or 40 consecutive years of 100% membership. Three counties, Dickinson, Story and Polk have 45 years of 100% membership. Currently NASCOE has no recognition for a county with over 40 years of 100% membership. Jeff Davis brought a sample plaque for the directors to see. A plaque similar to the one Jeff brought would be approximately \$30.00. Terry moved and Rich seconded we purchase a plaque for all counties that achieve 45, 50, 55, 60 years (and so on) of 100% membership. Jeff Davis will have these plaques made and it will be his decision on the appearance of the plaque. Motion carried by all directors. For the 2003-2004 year we had 85.7% membership with 40 associate members.

Publicity – Tammy gave report. We discussed this earlier in the meeting when we reviewed the web-site update.

OTHER ITEMS

- Election of Officers – We will meet at 10:30 A.M. to elect officers and take director pictures.
- Wisconsin Convention – Will be held April 16 & 17
- Indiana Convention – Will be June 25
- National Convention – Will be in Baltimore July 28 – 31.
- Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 P.M.

IASCOE DIRECTORS MINUTES

April 2, 2004

10:40 A.M.

Officers Present: Tom Lane, President; Alan Donaldson, Vice President; Sue Beemer, Secretary/Treasurer

Directors Present: Rosie Kahl, John Bahnsen, Connie Safley, Steve Kennedy, Joni Birkhofer, Rich Kleppe, Dan Wells, Terry Pauling, Tammy Eibey, John Landgraf, Denise Dugan and Sandra Johnson.

New Directors Present: Elaine Gordon, Cindy Mensen, Julie Hall and Cindy Pistek.

Guests Present: Mike Houston, Trice Smith, Jolene Fechter, Kathy White, Steve Abbas, Jeff Davis and NASCO President Steve Morrison.

President Tom Lane called the meeting to order.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

First on the agenda was the election of officers. John nominated Tom Lane for President and Dan seconded the motion. Alan moved nominations cease, Connie seconded and motion carried unanimously. John nominated Alan Donaldson for Vice President. Rosie moved nominations cease, Dan seconded and motion carried unanimously. Tom nominated Sue Beemer for Secretary/Treasurer and Connie seconded. Alan moved nominations cease, Terry seconded and motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Derryl McLaren, State Executive Director, will talk about staff ceilings and how workload played a part in that determination at approximately 2:15 P.M. at the Benefits and Legislative Committee meeting. He will entertain questions at that time.

NASCOE President, Steve Morrison had recently returned from Washington, D.C. and discussed some items. Dollars are very tight and trying to find ways to save money. The contract for training with Farm Loan employees was set up last year and is on going. This will not have a drastic impact in the State Office budget. OMB will address short falls in budget with a new strategic plan that will assign a cost to every output the County Office does. This might be the next opportunity to work on PT classification. OMB's interest is the dollar bottom line. If we can justify a dollar amount for each job we do we may be able to incorporate that with

classification of PT's. We are also moving towards a pay for performance pay scale. The big push is for completion of certifying our CLU's as soon as possible. After this is completed it will save many days in workload. It will have a big effect on all compliance activities and reconstitutions.

Steve also discussed E-Gov. Only a small amount of producers want to use this at the current time. As time goes on it will play a bigger role in the County Office.

Mike Houston and Steve Abbas represented IASCOE at the Mini Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. They presented a very good report on their activities while in Washington. NASCOE has hired the Redding Firm, a very well respected agency on the hill.

We took pictures of the 2003-2004 directors and the 2004-2005 directors.

Meeting adjourned at 11:55 A.M.

Respectfully submitted

Sue Beemer
IASCOE Secretary/Treasurer
PT Taylor County FSA

What is Reiki

Submitted by Trice Smith - CPT Benton County

Reiki has been taught in the West since the 1970's as a form of spiritual development and healing. Channeling energy can be referred to as "chi" which you may have heard of. An example the method when acupuncturists use needles to encourage flow through energy channels that run the length of your body. This is "chi."

Reiki started originally as a Japanese method of energy flow. You may have used the Japanese massage technique called Shiatsu which uses finger pressure on acupuncture points to achieve a similar effect. The Japanese adopted the Chinese view of body energy which is know as Tai Chi. This is a graceful system of exercises that helps circulate the energy flow bringing everything into balance.

In India the same energy is know as 'prana' which uses breathing exercises and yoga to harness the energy. The channels are called chakras which run the bases of your spine.

The idea behind all of these is that is you try to harmonize your energy system and put your body in the best position to heal itself on all levels including physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. The Chinese belief that the energy is not only within your body but also surrounds it. Feng Shui has been developed to arrange your environment to allow for the smooth flow of energy or chi eliminating bad areas.

Reiki seems to be the same as you can focus the energy on yourself or share it with others. If you want to read more about Reiki visit the web.

IASCOE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2004 IASCOE Convention

Starlite Best Western

April 2nd – 3rd 2004

Convenes 3:30 P.M.

The 2004 Annual Convention convened at 3:30 P.M. on April 2nd 2004, in the Zodiac Room at the Starlite Best Western in Fort Dodge, IA. The following people briefly addressed the assembly:

James Mace – J M Marketing

Dennis Olson – State Administration Officer

Dan Root – NASCOE Midwest Area Executive Committee Person

Steve Morrison – NASCOE President

The General Assembly resumed Saturday, April 3rd, at 9:30 A.M.

Alan Donaldson, IASCOE Vice President, opened the Saturday morning session. The HHB 1/194th Field Artillery, Fort Dodge, IA had the presentation of colors. Sandy Johnson, PT from Washington County, sang the Star Spangled Banner. Becky Marcum, PT from Monona County, led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. Julie Hall, CED Kossuth County and Steve Waller, CED Clay County had a very nice slide presentation and spiral bound book acknowledging military personnel of FSA employees and their families.

Vice President Alan Donaldson acknowledged our out-of-state guests. They were:

Steve Morrison, NASCOE President from Missouri

Dan Root, Midwest Area Executive Committee Person from Minnesota

Mary Aukes and Marilyn Dunn from Minnesota

James Mace, JM Marketing

James Mace, representing J M Marketing, briefly discusses some of their insurance policies that are available. Anyone interested in any of the policies they offer, should contact them for further information. Jim then presented IASCOE with a \$100.00 donation.

Derryl McLaren, State Executive Director

Alan introduced Derryl McLaren, State Executive Director. Derryl wants to assure our agency is farmer friendly and keep the farmer headed in the right direction. Everyone needs to embrace change. GIS and E-Gov are two very important changes entering our lives. They will have a dramatic impact on compliance workload. Offices will have additional help when we get our maps and start certifying CLU's.

Merlin Plagge, State Committee Chairperson

Merlin Plagge, State Committee Chair, was the next speaker. He brought greetings from all the Committee Members. They are as follows: Rozanne King, Rafael Morales, William Northey and Dan Petersen. The State Committee has just completed 8 meetings around the

state, discussing procedures with County Committee Members. They feel this opens up the line of communication between SC and COC. We need to have the COC structure in place to insure all programs are carried out in a fair way. The State Committee and County Committee are both very appreciative of all the work it took to accomplish putting the new farm bill in place.

Recognition of IASCOE Past Presidents

At this time the IASCOE Past Presidents that were in attendance were recognized. They were Larry Niles, Mike Houston, Steve Abbas, Jerry Frank, Jolene, Fechter, Trice Smith, and John Landgraf. The 2004-2005 IASCOE Directors are as follows:

Introduction of 2004-2005 Directors

District 1: Rosie Kahl and Alan Donaldson
District 2: Cindy Pistek and Julie Hall
District 3: Tammy Eibey and Cindy Mensen
District 4: Cheryl Nickolisen and John Landgraf
District 5: Connie Safley and Steve Kennedy
District 6: Johi Birkhofer and Rich Kleppe
District 7: Sue Beemer and Dan Wells
District 8: Elaine Gordon and Terry Pauling
District 9: Sandra Johnson and Tom Lane

Committee Reports

The Committee Chairperson respectfully submitted the minutes from their committee meetings that were held on Friday, April 2nd, 2004. The motion carried to accept all minutes as read.

The four scholarship winners were: Bryan Schmidt, Melissa Gerlach, Alycia Heneke and Tyler Schwarck. They each will receive a \$300.00 scholarship in the fall to the college they are attending.

There were two distinguished service awards this year. Becky Kunze received the Community Service Award and Patrice Smith received Service to IASCOE/NASCOE.

Resolution

The motion carried to forward the following resolution through the appropriate channels for consideration:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY IASCOE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Formally establish "Veteran's Preference" according to Title 5, United States Code for the County FSA Office Personnel System in compliance with the Veteran's Preference Act of 1944.

Doug Frago, Deputy Administrator for Field Operations

Vice President Donaldson introduced our next speaker, Doug Frago, Deputy Administrator for Field Operations. Doug has held his current position for the past two years and has enjoyed working with NASCOE during that time. It is very important to have representation in Washington. With the completion of DCP the stress level between producers and County Office employees has lowered considerably. PT reclassification across the board isn't going to happen, but there could be other ways to take segments of that plan and implement those. Doug also discussed budget and staffing. There will probably be no supplemental funding this year. Washington D C looks at all positions to see if they are critical to fill. Employees need to be careful in their decisions in using the Internet. Doug felt NASCOE should focus on things that can be changed such as; COC appointments, receipt for service, customer statement, and office consolidations.

Marilyn Adams, Founder Farm Safety 4 Just Kids

Marilyn Adams, President, founder and spokesperson of Farm Safety 4 Just Kids was the guest speaker for the Convention. She had a very nice presentation and slide show explaining her organization.

Raffle Winners

Book donated by Marilyn Adams
Phyllis Reineke – Taylor County

Twenty-five dollar raffle winners were:

Terry Dalen – Dickinson County
Lorene DeBoer – Lyon County
Sally Allan – Butler County
Vicki Pederson – Floyd County

One hundred dollar winner:
Mark VonArb – Sioux County

Two hundred dollar winner:
Mark VonArb – Sioux County

Congratulation to all the winners!!

Adjournment

Vice President Donaldson adjourned the meeting at 12:30 P.M. Jeff Davis moved and Dan Wells seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted

Sue Beemer
IASCOE Secretary/Treasurer
PT Taylor County FSA

IASCOE SCHOLARSHIPS!

Submitted By Vicki Heeren
PT Franklin Co. FSA &
IASCOE Scholarship Chair 03/04



IASCOE awarded four \$300 scholarships for 2004.

Bryan Schmidt, Mother, Donna is a PT in Shelby County. Bryan plans to attend Iowa State Univ. majoring in Engineering with a minor in music.

Tyler Schwarck is a student at Hawkeye Community College with a Natural Resources Management major. Janine, his Mother, works in Mitchell Co as a PT.

Alycia Heneke will be attending Wartburg College majoring in Social Work. Donnell Kilburg is her Mother and she is the CPT in Jackson Co.

Melissa Gerlach will have a nursing major at Mount Mercy College. Her Mother, Sandra, is a PT in Jackson Co.

Congratulations to these outstanding young people. Best wishes for the future to them and to all the excellent students that applied for this year's scholarships.

We are pleased to announce that Iowa also has a Midwest Area Scholarship winner this year!

Bryan Schmidt. Bryan has had a brilliant high school career-Concert & Marching Band, Southwest Iowa Honor Marching Band, Drake Honor Jazz Band, Iowa High School Music Assoc Honor Band, pep band, honor roll all 4 years, Who's Who Among American High School Students, Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Member, Scholastic Writing Awards Silver Key for Poem Collection submitted to national competition, Student Council, Key Club, Jr/Sr Prom Organization, played soccer all 4 years, was on the swim team all 4 years and was assistant instructor, actor & lighting director for drama during 11th & 12th grades and mentored elementary students. WOW! He also works with his father in his design business and he works with his brothers in a snow removal/lawn care business. The list is too lengthy on his community services and church participation to include but he enjoys his part in a percussion band, Sheltered Reality, which travels to multiple states bringing homelessness awareness to communities.



Congratulations to Bryan and his family, they must be very proud.

Minutes of the Publicity Committee Meeting

2004 IASCOE Convention

April 2, 2004

1:30 p.m. Neptune Meeting Room

Starlight Motel

Fort Dodge, Iowa

Roll Call started the meeting with a representative from each District being present.

1. Larry Lago – Dickinson
2. Lisa Forburger – Kossuth
3. Connie Straw – Howard
4. Deb Ostrander – Green
5. Kitty Benda – Marshall
6. Trice Smith – Benton
7. Carole Dawson, Taylor
8. Elaine Gordon, Union
9. Dee Lehn – Keokuk
10. Tammy Eibey - Chairperson

Website and newsletter on the web were discussed with positive comments from the committee.

A discussion was held on making sure that all counties in each district are notified to send news articles for the newsletter that is completed quarterly, March, June, September and December. Ways to accomplish this was discussed. We also need to include title, author and County on each article.

We had 2 national awards winners last year in Iowa, Lisa Forburger, Human Interest and Roseanne Woerner, Humor.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:30.

Lisa Forburger, Secretary

And I was afraid of
Daddy Long Legs!!!

YIKES!

Picture submitted by Robin Rode
PT Kossuth County



MWA RALLY REPORT

Submitted by Tammy Eibey - FLO Delaware County

Hello IASCOE Members!

On April 23 & 24th, 8 IASCOE members attended the Minnesota Convention and Midwest Area Rally. Those from Iowa in attending were: Jolene Fechter, CED page County, Steve Waller, CED Clay County, Denise Dugan, PT Woodbury County, Rosie Kahl, PT Lyon County, John Landgraf, CED Sac County, Kathy White, CED Iowa County, Trice Smith, CPT Benton County and Tammy Eibey, FLO Delaware County.

Friday night we participated in a bowling outing/ tournament at a local bowling alley. There were some in attendance who came with their own balls and shoes who were good and then some of us who weren't so prepared or so good. But everyone attending had a good time and I think there were close to 50 people trying to bowl.

Saturday began with the Minnesota Association Meeting. The SED, John Monson, addressed the group. John had been a CED in Minnesota and past Midwest Area Legislative Chair for NASCOE prior to being appointed as SED. He welcomed all those in attendance. He told the group to start looking at new ways of doing business and incorporating the new technology in the delivery of FSA programs. We were also encouraged to look past the CO/GS systems and recognize and work as 1 FSA. All need to get along during the next few years when budget will get tight and changes will happen.

Doug Grove, STO Administrative department spoke about how he deals with leases and negotiations. He is retiring in May and wanted to thank all the employees for their cooperation and friendship during his career. The MNASCOE group gave him a certificate for their new cookbook.

Richard Roberts, Senior Policy Advisor for OCIO (IT) spoke regarding the IT Convergence of all USDA departments into this new OCIO. The new OCIO will be its own little department and will handle USDA's IT issues. There will be about 750 employees brought out of FSA/NRCS/RD to be IT people in the field. Now there are between 1300 & 1500 IT employees. He also showed the group a new laptop that they were looking into getting for the agency. He said that all program areas must now report to them how their proposed program delivery and software will affect the IT system.

A JM Marketing representative spoke to the group about their policies. They have options for heart policies, life insurance, long term care and they are looking into finding a dental program.

Mark Bertram, Minnesota Ag Credit Specialist Association President addressed the group. He thanked MNASCOE for their support and help during the 1165 series changes. He invited all to attend their convention in September.

Ron Jacobsen, President of the Minnesota Soybean Growers Association thanked the group and FSA for all the hard work and patience during the DCP sign up and implementation of the Farm bill. The group continues to work in partnership with MNASCOE and hope it will continue that relationship in the future with Ag policy development.

Minnesota State Congressman, Gil Gutknecht spoke regarding Budget. He said it will be difficult for Ag to get a bigger piece of the “pie” as long as American troops and our Country is at WAR. High commodity prices and an overall low cost for our food will keep our issues on the back burner. He is a ranking committee member on the Ag or Budget Committee in the House. He said that his counterparts know who FSA is and that we are the heart of USDA and very important to the local ag sector nation wide. He encouraged our group to continue forming alliances with other ag commodity and ag groups. We need to be in the lead when the next Farm Bill is being addressed. Larger numbers talk in DC. All states were encouraged to get 100% membership.

We broke for lunch and had a nice banquet. The group held a live auction to raise money for their scholarship program. It was a success. They raised more than \$300. The Midwest Area rally began at 1:30.

Dan Root, Midwest Area Exec for NASCOE opened the meeting. Dan is a CED in South Central Minnesota. He welcomed all attending and began the business meeting with roll call of the rally delegates. He discussed items that NASCOE had been working on for the members including PT reclassification, budget and temp hiring, legislative conference overview from March, and the NASCOE position papers. They are posted on the NASCOE web site.

Minnesota SED, John Monson again addressed the group and state again that all employees need to be working together as one FSA or it could come back and hurt the agency in the future.

We were addressed by 2 Ohio delegates requesting that the Midwest Area support their bid to host the 2006 National Convention in Cleveland. They will be making the bid at the National Convention in Baltimore late July.

South Dakota then addressed the group and asked for the Midwest Area support and participation in the 2005 National Convention to be held in Rapid City sometime in August 2005.

Both states had raffle tickets at the rally to support their convention and help defer some costs.

Steve Morrison, NASCOE President and CED from Missouri, spoke to the group. He thanked all the support he has received from the Midwest Area states during his time with NASCOE and especially during his term as President. He told the group that the Midwest Area has strong individual groups and many hard working individuals who are pushing for more support and benefits for their members. Budget and staffing levels are on going battles and major areas of concern especially when our country is at war. There was much effort put into PT reclassification. This issue is not a done deal with NASCOE and they will be looking at ways to address it with the administration again soon. E-Gov needs to be addressed by the agency and they need to be realistic in the usage and potential usage in the near future. Steve also wanted to encourage all employees to somehow get involved with their respective state organizations. Membership numbers count and every voice counts!

Doug Frago, DAFO administrator spoke to the group about the 1165 series and how it has been received by employees. He said we need to get some interest in E-Gov but be realistic and show the department/administration that farmers are not prepared and/or do not want to give up face to face contact in the county office. Budget is tough and means less temps if any. He is approving all essential hiring in the states on a case by case basis. He said that NASOCE needs to choose the battles wisely if to have impact on decisions. We were also encouraged to form alliances well in advance of the next farm bill negation process and come prepared for what NASOCE wants in term of employees and funding!

There was a short Q & A:

FERS getting sick leave credit at retirement- probably never

IT convergence- out of agency budget, 750 employees, possible pay for service involved.

Concern over COC election process-This will be looked at and evaluated. Maybe 1 more year to try the process this way.

We listened to the Committee reports;

Membership- is 90+% for MWA Good but could/should be 100%. We were give a handout regarding what membership and NASCOE has done for employees since the 1960's.

Publicity- MWA awards were given out for Best Newsletter, Best Human Interest Article, Best Humor article and Best Web site. Sorry but I didn't write the names down. I think Illinois did really well with winners as did Wisconsin.

Scholarship- Iowan Bryan Schmidt won the MWA \$1000 scholarship and is in the judging for the National scholarship to be awarded at the National Convention in July.

Emblems- There was a display near the registration table with various items available at the website thenasocstore.com, NASCOE get a percentage back on all sales.

Benefits- JM marketing has many options available. The amusement park cards are available. There is a good list of benefits on the NASCOE website.

Awards- Rosie Kahl from Iowa is the MWA Chair announced the winners:

MWA for Community Service to Roger Colbert from Missouri

MWA for Service to NASCOE to Trice Smith, Iowa

MWA for Service to Agriculture to Tammy Eibey, Iowa

Legislative- Chris Hollis from Indiana, the MWA legislative chair addressed the group and discussed the changes to the mini legislative conference that was held in March. He gave a good overview and said the response from those that attended was positive. A few kinks need to be worked out but overall a positive experience. The group also discussed the CAPWhiz offer for legislative updates. The Execs will decide if NASCOE will pursue this option.

Steve Waller, CED from Clay County, Iowa, addressed the group and asked the MWA group for their support in a resolution regarding adding a "Veterans Preference" to the hiring process for CO employees. It would be similar to the federal system. It was agreed to support recognition of our veterans.

Concluding the meeting was the candidacy announcements for NASCOE:

Dan Root- Announcing for NASCOE Vice President

Chris Hollis- Announcing for MWA Executive

Michelle Stahl- Announcing for MWA Alternate Executive.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the Midwest Area Rally, please contact one of the Iowa group that attended. Rosie Kahl in Lyon County will also be sending notes out. So we can add together since every person hears or picks up things a little bit differently. Jolene Fechter also took pictures. I would encourage all employees to be members and get involved. Don't be just on the sidelines and complain!

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Eibey

2004 Midwest Area Awards Report

April 24, 2004

Mankato, MN

Submitted by Rosie Kahl – PT Lyon County

Fourteen nominations were submitted for DSA awards.

STATE	AGRICULTURE	COMMUNITY SERVICE	NASCOE
Illinois	Deb Halpin	Julie Hassler	Mary Marchello
Indiana	Susan Frettinger Amy Barber	Amy Barber	
Iowa	Tammy Eibey	Becky Kunze	Patrice Smith
Michigan			
Minnesota			Mark Zinnel
Missouri		Roger Colbert	Bertsell Smith
Ohio		Mary Jo Berryman	
Wisconsin			Marion Koca

MIDWEST AREA WINNERS

FSA Agriculture	Tammy Eibey
Community Service	Roger Colbert
NASCOE	Patrice Smith

Great JOB!!!!!!

The MWA publicity awards were given to

Jo Ann Binger, Illinois – Best Newsletter

Darlene Schouten, Minnesota – Best Single Issue

Jerald B Quinton, Illinois – Best Website

Les Maierhofer, Illinois – Best Feature Story (Humorous)

titled “Thank Heavens for Cheese Curds”

Charlene Neukomm, Illinois – Best Feature Story (Human Interest)

titled “Health Hunters in Action”

NASCOE Legislative Mini-Conference Report

Submitted By

Mike Houston - CED Cherokee County
& Steve Abbas - CED Franklin County

We attended the NASCOE legislative mini-conference on March 8 - 10. This was held in Washington DC. Historically NASCOE has a full legislative conference every two years and Iowa sends 6-8 delegates to represent us. During the off years, NASCOE will have a mini-legislative conference and normally NASCOE officers, executive committee persons and national chairpersons will contact key Congressional members. In 2004, the NASCOE leadership determined there were some very key issues and they asked each state organization to send one or maybe two representatives to contact key Congressmen. The key Congressmen targeted in Iowa were: Senator Charles Grassley, Chair of Senate Finance Committee; Senator Tom Harkin, minority leader of Senate Ag Committee; Congressman Tom Latham, House Appropriations committee; Congressman Jim Nussle, Chair of House Budget committee.

The fifty to sixty NASCOE members that attended the conference met on Monday evening and discussed position papers. NASCOE is now represented by the Redding firm as our legislative consultant and Mr. Bob Redding talked to our group and what his firm did to line up appointments with key Congressional people. Mr. Jim Little, FSA Administrator, also talked to the group about budget matters. There was a rather aggressive discussion with state delegates and NASCOE leadership regarding staffing and budget issues.

The Redding firm had lined up our appointments with the Senators and Congressmen, however, we had a conflict with the timing of the Latham appointment. We met with Latham's aide on Monday afternoon. On Tuesday, we hit the "Hill" to keep our appointments with Senator Grassley and Congressman Nussle. On Tuesday evening, the Redding firm had lined up dinners with certain Congressmen and Senators. We had dinner with Mark Halverson (aide for Senator Harkin). We thought this was a very productive

session. Since Senator Harkin is the minority leader of the Senate Ag Committee, Mr. Halverson represents all of the Democrats on the Senate Ag Committee. Mr. Halverson is very knowledgeable of farm programs and FSA and we thought he was very receptive of our position papers.

Initially, NASCOE had four position papers. 1) Opportunities in Crop Insurance Reform, 2) Fiscal Year 2005 Appropriations, 3) Animal Identification Plan, 4) Homeland Security and the Farm Service Agency. At our Monday evening meeting, we were told an agreement had been reached somewhere at a very high level between RMA and FSA regarding the crop insurance issue. We were informed that this was no longer an issue and the two agencies were working together to resolve whatever differences they had. The Fiscal Year 2005 Appropriations paper was a large issue and we attempted to inform our Congressmen and Senators of this matter. Mike is an expert on livestock identification and he gave our Congressmen and Senators excellent information. All Congressional and political people are interested in homeland security and they intently listened how the FSA could assist. We learned that Florida FSA people have been key members of disaster teams in their disaster/emergency situations for the past several years.

We would like to thank the IASCOE board of directors for asking us to represent Iowa at the mini-legislative conference. We do have some very key Congressional people in Iowa and remind IASCOE members to keep in contact with the Congressional members and aides who visit their local communities. It is very important to keep a good relationship with those people. We had several staffers in WDC tell us they know FSA people personally and they appreciate the communications with them. It keeps them in touch with hometown issues. We would also like to thank Mike's son, Scott, who lives in Arlington, VA. Scott took some time off work and taxied us around WDC as well as giving us some history lessons about WDC and Arlington.

NASCOE Accomplishments

During the 1960's

- Government Life Insurance
- Civil Service Retirement
- Severance Pay
- Increased Leave Earnings
- Transfer Employment into USDA without loss of grade, leave or tenure
- Pay Increases – Timed with Civil Services

During the 1970's

- Reclassification of CED's and PA's
- Secured "Saved Grades" where grades were reduced due to reduction in workload and/or reclassification.
- Credit for past County Office experience in lieu of education for CED training positions.
- Vacancies in jobs above the County Office level now released to the County Office.
- Secured a Washington consultant to represent interest of County Committee employees.

During the 1980's

- Grievance Procedure
- Travel Co-op and NASCOE Travel Service
- Scholarship Program
- Legislative Fund
- Eye Wear service discount
- Advertising Program Assistant vacancies to County Offices within the state
- Magic Kingdom Club Card
- Passage of Transfer Bill
- Supplemental Insurance on payroll withholding
- Upgrading of PA job description
- Negotiated with Management for a significant increase in number of Grade 2 offices.

During the 1990's

- PA reclassification approved
- CED reclassification approved
- CPA reclassification eligible for upgrades
- Lead PA grade increase in shared management offices
- Compressed work schedule made available
- ASCS/FSA Awards Program increased 500%
- Donor Leave Program Implemented
- Grievance procedure reintroduced in handbook procedure
- Appeals procedure information available to those needing
- Scholarship program increased
- Legislative program improved
- Maxi-flex Implemented

Recent Accomplishments of NASCOE Through Negotiation & Consultation with FSA Management each year, NASCOE meets with FSA Management to negotiate or consult items submitted by members of NASCOE. Throughout the years, NASCOE has successfully negotiated member's concerns. Some of the more recent accomplishments include:

1995

- FSA agreed to establish a Classification Task Force to continue to work on a new method of classification where grades are based on knowledge, skills, ability and complexity instead of workload. To bring CED grades more in line with other similar management positions in USDA, the grade CO-10 was eliminated and all CO-10 CED's were upgraded to CO-11.

1996

- NASCOE requested that the CED job description be expanded to include Ag Credit responsibilities.
- With the Agency downsizing and budget constraints, NASCOE expressed the need for an employee buyout and/or early retirement options. The buyout was offered in 1996 and 1997.

1997

- CED Classification system implemented removing management grades from being determined totally by the workload report. Most CO-9 CED's upgraded.
- With the changing environment of the agency, NASCOE requested that FSA rescind the rule requiring that a CED remain in their first county for 18 months.

1998

- NASCOE requested and management agreed for cross-training of all FSA programs including FLP.
- Before 1998, GS and CO were treated differently when it came to awards and performance ratings. NASCOE fought to achieve parallel benefits between CO and GS with regards to awards and performance.

1999

- NASCOE requested that Maxi-flex be implemented. FSA agreed to offer this alternative work schedule to CO employees.
- NASCOE requested and management agreed to allow two CPT's in large shared management counties.
- CED's in shared management offices received laptops per NASCOE's request.

2000

- NASCOE accomplished a significant increase in CED upgrades including all remaining CO-9 CED's.
- NASCOE accomplished reconsideration of all county office closures

2001

- NASCOE got CO and GS employees on a level playing field when competing for federal jobs
- NASCOE got loan approval authority for CO employees who complete training

2002

- NASCOE negotiated with FSA to ensure that suspensions pending investigation will occur only when credible evidence is produced.
- NASCOE got NAP added under the Program Variety element and soybean/oilseeds added under the Crop Production element in the CED Classification and Pay Plan.
- NASCOE got all FSA employees, their family members, and County Committee Members eligible to apply for direct and guaranteed loans through FSA.

Each Year

Yearly cost of living and locality pay – Each year NASCOE must request that County Office employees receive the COLA that other federal employees receive.

Recent Legislation in Effect with NASCOE's Support

- The Friendly Family Leave Act – Allows employees to take sick leave to care for ill family members or to attend a funeral of close family members.
- Passage of the Hatch Act reforms – Allows CO and GS employees more freedom to work on Political Campaigns.
- Increase of two new TSP Funds – International Stock Index Fund and a Small Cap Fund.
- Rights to Withdraw TSP Funds – Funds can now be withdrawn at 59 ½ years of age.
- Federal Retirees will receive COLA's in January of effective year
- Employee Transfer Rights – Allows CO employees to apply for GS positions without losing status.
- The Transfer Bill – Allows CO employees to transfer to GS positions without losing step in grade.
- 2002 Farm Bill – Allows CO employees the right to loan approval authority and makes all FSA Employees, County Committee Members, and their families eligible to apply for direct and guaranteed loans through FSA

Future Goals Of NASCOE

Establish and project a sense of pride in FSA and the NASCOE organization.

Strive to protect and improve benefits that employees currently have.

Continue to work toward PT and CED upgrades and other benefits with a priority on those who have waited the longest on these improvements.

Emphasize the need for training to improve the image and ability of FSA & NASCOE people to serve this national agriculture community.

Work for and actively pursue good working relationships among employees of all USDA agencies.

Seek benefits and privileges that are equal to those enjoyed by other federal employees.

Continue to work with and support the County Committee System and the National Association of Farmer Elected Committees (NAFEC).

Continue to work and support Commodity Groups in promoting agriculture throughout the nation.

Keep NASCOE members and potential members informed about NASCOE activities

Strive to attain proper staffing levels for the county offices

Strive for 100% Membership of FSA employees in NASCOE.

2003 NASCOE Activity Report

Working to help understaffed County Offices

Farm Service Agency is the only agency in government to have the President of the United States request an increase in it's staffing in his 2003 budget request to Congress thanks to the tireless efforts of the volunteers of NASCOE. We then sent a team to Washington, in October, to work with our Legislative Consultants and meet with the Administration and Congress to explain why we need this increase to be reflected in PERMANENT STAFFING. This issue was also addressed with management by NASCOE's Officers and Executive Committee in their meeting in November and is sure to be a top priority at the Legislative Conference in February.

Working to upgrade Program Technicians

After years of negotiating with management about PT upgrades, we finally got them to meet with us on the subject. As a result, NASCOE hired the man who wrote the book on elements and standards. We had him assist us in writing job descriptions that truly reflect the unique difficulties and responsibilities of a PT's job that will most effectively communicate these concepts to the federal classifiers we are trying to convince. We are expecting these years of efforts to bear fruit in the near future.

Working to improve CED grades

NASCOE is working hard to insure that you are getting all the workload credit you deserve to get you closer to an upgrade while insuring you don't lose any workload because of "pen and ink" changes in the latest farm bill. We've also worked hard to eliminate the grade 9 as a management position so that you don't have to worry about further down grading.

Working to insure fairness in office closures

NASCOE is working with NAFEC and other farmer-oriented organizations to insure that you, your county committee, and the producers served by your office have a say in any future plans to close FSA County Offices. NASCOE and NAFEC believe that any closures should be by mutual agreement of all COC's involved and voted on by all affected producers.

Working on cost of living increases

Before any CO Employee can receive the cost of living increase that Congress approves for other federal employees, it must first be requested by NASCOE. If NASCOE does not request it, you WILL NOT RECEIVE this year's 4.1% cost of living increase. This alone more than covers the cost of your annual dues. We are also supported efforts to give all employees a 1% locality increase, which Congress approved in mid-February.

Working to give you more support

If you support any of our current efforts, NASCOE needs your help. Our strength IS our unity and nothing supports our efforts more than 100% membership. Any County Office Employee and most GS Employees at the county level serving under permanent appointment are eligible to be voting members of NASCOE through your respective state association. Temporary Employees, retirees, COC members, STO Employees and other interested parties are welcome and encouraged to join at a reduced rate as Associate Members of NASCOE.

If you are an employee or COC member, you can fill out an FSA-444 and give to your payroll PT so that you can enroll in automatic withholding - for just pennies a day.

TORNADO DESTROYS HOME – DISASTER FUND CREATED

On Friday, May 21, 2004, a tornado touched down in Pocahontas County and carved a path of destruction 2 miles wide from the east edge of Rolfe to Bradgate, which is just inside the Humboldt County line. Samantha Zeman, PT from Pocahontas County, lived on an acreage that was in the direct path of the tornado. Thankfully, both Samantha and her husband made it to the basement just seconds before the twister hit and were not harmed.

Their home sustained damage so severe that it will have to be razed. The young couple lost everything in the house, their 2 vehicles, a much loved horse, and all the baby things that they had purchased in anticipation of their first child which is due July 10.

The Pocahontas Co. FSA Office has set up a disaster fund. Funds collected will help the Zeman's purchase the many things that they will need when they find suitable permanent housing. This is a wonderful opportunity for Samantha's "FSA family" to assist her during this time of need. You may contact either Anita Fischer or Coelet Hammen at the Pocahontas Co. office if you have any questions.

You may send your monetary contributions to:
Justin and Samantha Zeman Disaster Fund
% Rolfe State Bank - Rolfe, IA 50581

Submitted By Barb Gerveske - CED and the entire Pocahontas County FSA Office Staff

GREETINGS FROM DISTRICT 3

Hello from District 3 in NE Iowa and one of your new directors, Cindy Mensen. I am the CED of the Clayton County FSA Office. We have every program imaginable...maybe not cotton or tobacco, but a close call on everything else.

I think FSA employees should be nicknamed the "Survivors". We survived the phenomenal 2003 DCP sign-up, and are now asked to survive certification, GIS, and possibly run another ECP program simultaneously. Please don't say the phrase "CRP sign-up" out-loud. Less people and more work. Can we survive any more?

I think our NASCOE President was right. He wrote about FSA's proposed "Budget Based Performance Management System" in the April NASCOE Newsletter. Sounds like FSA leadership is working out a system to justify our budget dollars by measuring our performance. Those daily contests to see who certified the most farms will become even more competitive! I believe FSA employees will fare well and survive the performance test since we are working our hardest every day. The only problem I see is how to measure the work that we can't get accomplished. We all need to stay unified with the IASCOE team. Somehow we need to make Congress understand we can't always be expected to outperform yesterday over and over again. That "somehow" includes action on your part. Each FSA employee (who hopefully is also a member of IASCOE) needs to make sure the work they do gets credited. Count workload accurately. Tell the farm community (voters) that we are tired. Tell them we could serve them better if we had more employees. Have them tell your story to Congressional representatives. Temporary office help is wonderful but permanent employees would be better. If we sit back complacently, we will be asked to "super perform" over and over again. Take action by first paying your dues and then take an active interest in what IASCOE and NASCOE are all about.

Submitted By Cindy Mensen - CED Clayton County & District 3 Director

“New” Face In IASCOE District 8

Submitted By Rhonda Cooper
PT Union County & IASCOE Publicity Committee



The Wayne County FSA welcomed Joyce Frost as their new CED at the beginning of April. She replaces Jerry Taylor who retired last September.

Joyce and her husband, Doug, live on their farm north of Kellerton in Ringgold County, where they raise cattle. They have 2 grown children, and 2 (soon to be 3) grandchildren.

Joyce began her career with ASCS as a PT in the Ringgold County FSA Office in 1983. She entered COT training in 1994 and was hired as a CED in Clayton County. She later transferred to Fremont County and has now moved even closer to home by transferring to Wayne County.

The staff at Wayne County feels very fortunate to have Joyce join them.

Helping Hands At Keokuk County FSA

Submitted by Dee Ann Lehn
CED Keokuk County



Keokuk County FSA found a couple of extra pairs of helping hands on “Take Your Son/Daughter to Word Day”. Tyce Schmidt, son of Mary Kay Schmidt and Daniel Collins, son of Janis Collins spent the afternoon of April 15, 2004 working at the office. The boys first helped prepare maps for crop certification. Later in the afternoon, under the supervision of Keokuk County DC, Larry Stevens, Tyce and Daniel contributed to Earth Day activities by planting trees and sowing native grasses on the hillside behind the office building.



25 RULES OF NATURE

SUBMITTED BY TAMMY EIBEY - FLO DELAWARE COUNTY

1. If you are too open-minded, your brains will fall out.
2. Don't worry about what people think; they don't do it very often.
3. Going to a church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
4. It isn't the jeans that make your butt look fat.
5. Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity.
6. My idea of housework is to sweep the room with a glance.
7. Not one shred of evidence supports the notion that life is serious.
8. It is easier to get forgiveness than permission.
9. For every action, there is an equal and opposite government program.
10. If you look like your passport picture, you probably need the trip.
11. Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of checks.
12. A conscience is what hurts when all your other parts feel good.
13. Eat well, stay fit, die anyway. (Just remember how lucky you were to get a free trip around the sun.)
14. Men are from earth. Women are from earth. Deal with it.
15. No man has ever been shot while doing the dishes.
16. A balanced diet is a cookie in each hand.
17. Middle age is when broadness of the mind and narrowness of the waist change places.
18. Opportunities always look bigger going than coming.
19. Junk is something you've kept for years and throw away three weeks before you need it.
20. There is always one more imbecile than you counted on.
21. Experience is a wonderful thing. It enables you to recognize a mistake when you make it again.
22. By the time you can make the ends meet, they move the ends.
23. Thou shall not weigh more than thy refrigerator.
24. Someone who thinks logically provides a nice contrast to the real world.
25. If you must choose between two evils, chose the one that you've never tried before.

GREENE COUNTY ATTRACTIONS

Mahanay Bell Tower

This 14-story Carlton Tower commands a breathtaking view of Jefferson and the surrounding countryside. Take a glass elevator ride to the 120 ft. observation deck. 14 cast bells chime the time of day and play bell concerts regularly. Located at 100 East Lincolnway. Open daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day 11am - 4pm or call (515) 386-2155 for appointments.



Raccoon Valley Recreational Bike Trail

This hard surface bike trail begins at the Old Milwaukee Depot, on the east side of Jefferson and extends 18 miles connecting to the existing Vada trail, continuing on to West Des Moines. Enjoy the 600 foot trestle across the North Raccoon River. For more information call Greene County Conservation (515) 386-4629.

Milwaukee Railroad Depot

Listed on the National Register of Historical Places. It serves as the trail head to the Raccoon River Valley Recreational Bike Trail. The Depot houses tourist information and railroad memorabilia. For more information call Greene County Conservation (515) 386-4629.

Greene County Courthouse

Built in 1917, the courthouse boasts a classic rotunda with a stained glass ceiling. Offices are accessed through archways of marble that feature murals depicting the "progress of civilization as recorded in Iowa". The rotunda floor is a mosaic of the county seal with the theme Home of the Home of Plenty. Located at 106 E. Lincolnway, Jefferson. Open Monday - Friday, 8am - 5pm. For more information call (515) 386-2388.

Abraham Lincoln Statue

This 1918 bronze statue of Abraham Lincoln stands on the courthouse lawn as a monument to the Lincoln Highway, known as Old Highway 30. It was created by the English sculptor Hastings. Located at 106 East Lincolnway.

Lincoln Highway

Local citizens donated money to pave Lincoln Highway across Greene County, the first paved section in Iowa. Memorabilia is exhibited at the Milwaukee Railroad Depot. For more information call the Lincoln Highway Association (515) 275-4966.

Lindsey Memorial

This monument is in honor of the Jefferson native, World War II Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Capt. Darrell R. Lindsey. Located at 106 E. Lincolnway.

Greene County Historical Museum

This museum displays a diverse and extensive collection of artifacts including Indian and early settlers of the mid 1800's. Located at 106 East State. Hours: April-December, Wed - Sat, 2pm - 5pm and Sun, 2pm - 4pm for more information call (515) 386-8544.

Jefferson Telephone Museum

This museum houses a unique collection of historical telephonic equipment including old telephones, switchboards, and other articles. Located at 105 W. Harrison, Jefferson. Hours: Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm, for appointments call (515) 386-4141.

Railroad Caboose in Churdan

This restored caboose reminds residents and tourists alike of Churdan's railroad history. Located along Highway 4.

Gallup House

This house is the boyhood home of George Gallup, founder of the Gallup Poll. It was built in an unusual octagonal shape in the early 1900's. Gallup was born and raised in Jefferson and lived in the octagon house until he graduated from high school in 1919. Private residence. No tours. Located at 703 South Chestnut, Jefferson.

Lincoln Square Building

This unique building renovation, the Lincoln Hotel built in 1855, has transformed the 47 room structure into a collection of shops and offices. Located at 117 East Lincolnway, Jefferson.

Scranton Water Tower

This 1897 all steel elevated water tank landmark has a capacity of 48,000 gallons and stands 140 ft. high. It is the oldest water tower still in service in the U.S.A. For more information call Scranton City Hall, 712-652-3888.

Deal's Orchard

This 3rd generation apple orchard has 55 acres of trees with 35 varieties. Other fresh produce is available in season including raspberries, cherries, tomatoes, sweet corn and pumpkins. Each year about 25,000 - 30,000 gallons of fresh apple cider is processed. Celebrate the harvest on the 2nd weekend in October at the Annual Fall Festival. Located 3 miles west of Jefferson on Old Highway 30 and 1/4 mile south. For more information call (515) 386-8279.

Bell Tower Square

An array of specialty shops, restaurants and businesses line the heart of downtown Jefferson. The Mahanay Bell Tower, Greene County Historical Museum, Abraham Lincoln Statue, Lindsey Memorial and Greene County Courthouse are all within walking distance.

Alpha Studio

Tour this studio and watch the artists at work. Internationally renowned artists from Holland, New York, California and Iowa display their creations. A variety of artwork ranging from glass, wood carving, watercolor, oil, pastel, clay, bronze and cut paper decorate this unique gallery. Open seasonally June - October by appointment, call (515) 386-3598. Located at McKinley & Elm.





Mahanay Bell Tower Jefferson, Iowa

The Mahanay Memorial Carillon Tower was dedicated in 1965 according to the wills of the late Wm. Floyd and Dora L. Mahanay. The 162 foot tower features 14 cast bells and an electronic carillon that chimes every quarter hour. Patriotic and religious music are played at 11 A.M., 2 P.M. and 5 P.M. daily. An elevator ride to the observation deck at 120 feet offers a spectacular view of surrounding Greene County.

— Admission —

Adults: \$1.00

Youth 12 & under: 50¢

- Open daily Memorial Day - Labor Day 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Open weekends in May and September
- Other times by appointment.
Call 515-386-2155.

Groups and bus tours welcome.

Location

Jefferson is located at the junction of U.S. Hwy. 30 and Hwy. 4. The Bell Tower can be seen on the skyline and is right on the courthouse square.

OTHER GREENE COUNTY ATTRACTIONS:

- Greene County Historical Society Museum
 - Greene County Courthouse
 - Jefferson Telephone Museum
 - Abraham Lincoln Sculpture
 - Lindsey Memorial
 - Deal's Apple Orchard
- Annual Bell Tower Festival
- Many state and county parks
 - Raccoon Valley Bike Trail
 - Alpha Studio/Gallery

For information contact

Jefferson Area Chamber of Commerce

220 N. Chestnut, Jefferson, IA

Call 515-386-2155

See more of Jefferson on the Internet at:

www.jeffersoniowa.com

Photo by Catchlight Photography, Jefferson, Iowa

Contribute To The Next IASCOE Newsletter

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



MARSHALL COUNTY FARM SAFETY 4 JUST KIDS PROJECT

Rosemary and Jennifer Chapman (Mother and Daughter) were presenting the Farm Safety 4 Just Kids Program to the public at the Marshalltown Center on Sunday, February 8th, 2004. Most of the office staff and even a COC member were present at some time during this weekend for the Big Boy's Toy Show exhibition.

Rosemary is the Farm Safety contact person for Marshall County. FSA has joined Marilyn Adams, the founder of Farm Safety 4 Just Kids in order to make our communities safer. Rosemary has volunteered to take on this project and is committed to its excellence.

Rosemary delivered 3139 posters sets to 12 different Marshall County Schools. Of those 630 (20%) of them were re-written in Spanish and delivered to the appropriate schools. Out of the 3139, 278 (9%) posters were either picked up by Rosemary or delivered here.

1ST PLACE WINNERS FOR THE FARM SAFETY 4 JUST KIDS POSTER CONTEST MARSHALL COUNTY

The judges were Joyce Thomas (COC Advisor), Sally Wilson (Extension Director) and Gene Nevin (Retired Extension Director). The criteria the judges used for selecting the posters were the message (50%), visual effectiveness (30%), originality (10%) and universal appeal (10%).

The following were the Marshall County Poster winners:

Kindergarten	Jake Goecke, W. Marshall Elem.
1 st grade	Joshua Benzing, E. Marshall Elem.
2 nd grade	Kaylee Clemens, Fisher Elem.
3 rd grade	Keagan Johnson, Franklin Elem.
4 th grade	William Smith, Clemons Lutheran
5 th grade	Erika Hilleman, St. Mary's Catholic School



Back row: William Smith, Keagan Johnson and Erika Hilleman
Front row: Joshua Benzing, Jake Goecke and Kaylee Clemens

The Marshall County winners were eligible to compete at the District IV Poster Contest along with the other 12 counties winners. Keagan Johnson went on to win the District IV Poster Contest for the 3rd graders. We are very proud of her and all of the other children who took their time to participate in the Farm Safety 4 Just Kids poster contest.

Article submitted by Kitty J Benda - CPT Marshall County FSA.

District 2 completed a survey of ten questions. This is the summary.

1. Most talked about tourist attraction in the county.

- Kossuth - Nativity scene built by the POWs in WWII
- Humboldt - Hillside Christmas spectacular
- Winnebago - Pucker Brush Days and the WIT Rally
- Hancock - Britt Draft Horse Show, Pilot Knob, Britt Race Track
- Wright - Heartland Museum, Clarion, Jenison Mechem Morial Art Center, Belmond; State Welcome Center, Dows; National Teddy Bear Convention, which is part of the Clarion Festival in the Park.
- Franklin - Franklin County Fair, rated as one of the best county fairs in Iowa
- Mitchell - Cedar Valley Memories, Farm Equipment Museum, and Steam Engine Show
- Floyd - Fossil Park in Rockford Iowa
- Butler - Butler County Speedway
- Cerro Gordo - Clear Lake and Music Man Square
- Worth - Proposed casino

2. Oldest resident in the county

- Kossuth - Evelyn Ollom or Hazel Parrot, former ASC employees
- Humboldt - Not sure, they keep dying as soon as you figure out who the next oldest is!
- Winnebago - 105 year old lady from Buffalo Center who went for a motorcycle ride on her birthday.
- Franklin - Steve Abbas' grandmother, Carrie Abbas is 101.
- Mitchell - Dorothy Graff, 100 years old.
- Floyd - 100 year old man in Charles City, Iowa
- Butler - Nida Dralle
- Worth - Just died!

3. Best food in the county.

- Kossuth - Maggie B's, Algona
- Humboldt - Any fish or critter that Gary Venneman smokes and shares!
- Winnebago - Branding Iron in Thompson- best steak
- Hancock - Sawmill in Klemme, Subway in Garner
- Wright - Beef, pork, chicken, and garden fresh vegetables
- Franklin - Ridge Stone in Sheffield
- Mitchell - Debbie's Café
- Floyd - Captain Bly's in Rockford
- Butler - Pizza Ranch
- Cerro Gordo - Beef, Sweetcorn and Birdsall's Ice Cream
- Worth - Pizza at Casey's

4. Prettiest drive

- Kossuth - Call Park, Algona, Union Slough Fish and Wildlife Refuge
- Humboldt - Hillside Christmas spectacular in Humboldt
- Mitchell - River road between Osage and Mitchell
- Winnebago - Pilot Knob State Park, Forest City, and Thorpe Park
- Hancock - North side of East Twin Lake, Eagle Lake
- Wright - Northern Iowa River Greenbelt Scenic Drive
- Franklin - Mallory Park area
- Floyd - Green Belt County Park along the Shell Rock River in Nora Springs
- Butler - Greene River Drive
- Cerro Gordo - Drive along the Shell Rock River

5. Best kept secret

- Kossuth - Mulligan Stew Recipe in St. Joe at church festival held 3rd Wed. in August
Humboldt - Harness racing at the Humboldt County Fairgrounds
Mitchell - Interstate Park hydro electric dam at Mitchell
Winnebago - Is at the Branding Iron in Thompson
Hancock - Sledding at Eagle Lake
Wright - Iowa River Players Theater-Rowan; recent production was "The Nerd" and coming productions are August "The Odd Couple" October "Steele Magnolias"
Franklin - Blue Grass Festival held in May and September of each year at the Franklin County Fairgrounds and the Iowa arm wrestling championship held in April of each year in Hampton.
Butler - Lawrence Welk and his band played at dances in Greene IA
Cerro Gordo - Northwestern Steakhouse
Worth - If I told you it would not be a secret, would it!

6. Unusual events to attend

- Kossuth - ABATE Motorcycle Rally held the 4th of July Weekend at their park.
Humboldt - Harness racing at the Humboldt County Fairgrounds
Mitchell - Bratwurst Days at Stacyville
Floyd - CABA Little League Tournament in Charles City
Winnebago - Bed races at the July Jubilee in Lake Mills
Hancock - Crystal Lake Bullhead Days
Wright - Winterfest at Lake Cornelia 1st Sat in Feb. Many fun things to do plus kite flying on the ice. Also safety demonstrations
Franklin - Sister-Friend weekend held in August at Hampton
Butler - Herb fest
Cerro Gordo - Band Festival in Mason City, Civil War Reenactment
Worth - Hmmmm, let me think about that one.

7. Interesting history fact

- Kossuth - Gopher College and the world's largest cheeto on display in Algona
Humboldt - Humboldt's former name was Springvale
Mitchell - The 1923 Osage High School boys' basketball team won the all schools state championship and placed 3rd at the national tournament.
Floyd - The last person lynched in Iowa by a mob was off of the main street bridge in Charles City
Winnebago - Call Cliff Hill, he has an awesome fact sheet!
Hancock - Hobo Days has been celebrated in Britt since 1900. Duesey Days in Garner. Veterans Wall in Garner and the Armstrong House in Britt
Wright - Birthplace of the 4H emblem
Franklin - The old REA plant about 3 miles south of Hampton was the first REA Coop in the nation to generate electricity for farmers. In 1956 Maysville was the first town established in Franklin County. The central railroad was built in 1870 between Ackley and Hampton and thus, Hampton became the county seat instead of Maysville, Maysville was located about 4 miles south of Hampton. An old stone schoolhouse still sits on the site.
Butler - Butler Center Prairie
Cerro Gordo - Meridith Wilson born in Mason City. Filming of "The Music Man" in Mason City. Dillinger's bank robbery at Frist National Bank in Mason City. Frank Lloyd Wright buildings and houses in Mason City.
Worth - If Worth County would had been located 4 miles north, we would be Minnesotans!!!

8. Healthiest thing to do in the county.

- Kossuth - A day away from FSA at the Spring Valley Golf Course south of Algona.
Humboldt - Biking on the 3 rivers trail after consuming thirty some hotdogs in the contest explained in question 2.
Mitchell - Walk one of the several nature trails located throughout the county.
Floyd - Walk or ride the bike trails in Charles City
Winnebago - To go swimming and exercise at the YMCA and ride the bike trails from Forest City to Pilot Knob State Park.
Hancock - Shop in Garner, fishing, and relay for life.
Wright - Unhealthiest-breath the air around hog and chicken confinements.
Franklin - Play golf on the 4 golf courses located in the county. You can also walk or ride a bike around Beeds Lake, which is a state park, located just NW of Hampton.
Butler - Ride the bike trails
Cerro Gordo - Walking and biking trails.
Worth - Run, jog, walk, and eat bean sprouts.

9. Best picnic spot

- Kossuth - Smith Lake
Humboldt - Gotch Park where the east and west forks of the Des Moines River meet
Hancock - Crystal Lake Park
Mitchell - Spring Park near Osage
Floyd - Wildwood Park in Charles City
Winnebago - Pilot Knob State Park or Thorpe Park
Wright - Lake Cornelia
Franklin - Harrimans Park located on the north edge of Hampton, Beeds Lake located just NW of Hampton, or Mallory Park, Maynes Grove, and Robinson Park.
Butler - Heery Woods
Cerro Gordo - East Park in Mason City
Worth - Immediately behind County Office

10. Coldest beer in the county

- Kossuth - We are still investigating and some of us really like this mission!
Humboldt - Don't know, we need to cut loose after work someday, investigate and we will report back!
Mitchell - Janine Schwark's refrigerator.
Floyd - Retlaw's Riverside Sports Bar & Grille in Charles City
Winnebago - Vinje Pub and Kevin Hauan's refrigerator
Hancock - One in a barrel full of ice!
Wright - Whatever is on ice at the time.
Cerro Gordo - Bud Light, or Mug Rootbeer!
Franklin - You can get a great pizza and the coldest beer at the Hometown Pizza and Pub in Coulter.
Butler - Busch Lite
Worth - Tavern in Northwood actually keeps beer in freezer!

What fun this has been compiling. I am going to attach this survey to my Iowa Map and keep it in the cubby of my car and check as many of these things out as I can. Especially those best kept secrets! I thank all the counties in district 2 for helping me with this survey.

Submitted By Lisa Forburger - PT Kossuth County



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

In wearables, we offer something for everyone:

- Polo & dress shirts for office attire
- Long & short sleeve denims for both men and women
- Ladies sleeveless denim shirts
- Embroidered NASCOE t-shirts
- Embroidered sweatshirts and pants
- Screen printed T-shirts for field days and fairs
- Embroidered logo jackets

We also have embroidered shirts with the RASCOE logo and a shirt embroidered especially for NAFEC members. Individual County Committees will be able to special order - call us for details!

Don't forget about logo items. From coffee mugs to golf umbrellas; we offer a unique way to express your NASCOE pride in or out of the office. Gift certificates are also available to make giving easier!



Item #3038 - The Basic Tee Shirt embroidered with the USDA-FSA logo offered in 9 different colors
White, Charcoal, Pebble, Lime, Deep Red, Pink, Gold Nugget, Sky, and Copper.

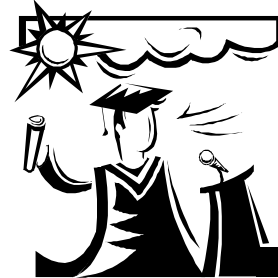
There's a color for everyone.

Special Offer!!!!

Thenascoestore.com will be discontinuing the "Can Do" and the "NASCOE Tractor" tee shirts. For every order that we receive for one of our # 3038 Basic Tee shirts, we will include FREE either a "Can Do" or a "NASCOE Tractor" shirt of same or similar size until our supply of "Can Do" and "NASCOE Tractor" shirts are gone. WHAT A DEAL!!! Or if you want one of the other shirts, go on our web site and check out the great prices on the discontinued items. To receive your free Tee, all you have to do is put in the remarks section of your order "FREE TEE SHIRT" and we will do the rest. Order one or several of these Basic Tee Shirts. You will not be disappointed.

BILL GATES' SPEECH TO MT. WHITNEY HIGH SCHOOL IN VISALIA, CA.

Submitted By Tammy Eibey - FLO Delaware County



Love him or hate him, he sure hits the nail on the head with this!

To anyone with kids of any age, here's some advice. Bill Gates recently gave a speech at a High School about 11 things they did not and will not learn in school. He talks about how feel-good, politically correct teachings created a generation of kids with no concept of reality and how this concept set them up for failure in the real world.

Rule 1: Life is not fair - get used to it!

Rule 2: The world won't care about your self-esteem. The world will expect you to accomplish something BEFORE you feel good about yourself.

Rule 3: You will NOT make \$60,000 a year right out of high school. You won't be a vice-president with a car phone until you earn both.

Rule 4: If you think your teacher is tough, wait till you get a boss.

Rule 5: Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity. Your Grandparents had a different word for burger flipping -- they called it opportunity.

Rule 6: If you mess up, it's not your parents' fault, so don't whine about your mistakes, learn from them.

Rule 7: Before you were born, your parents weren't as boring as they are now. They got that way from paying your bills, cleaning your clothes and listening to you talk about how cool you thought you were. So before you save the rain forest from the parasites of your parent's generation, try delousing the closet in your own room.

Rule 8: Your school may have done away with winners and losers, but life HAS NOT. In some schools they have abolished failing grades and they'll give you as MANY TIMES as you want to get the right answer. This doesn't bear the slightest resemblance to ANYTHING in real life.

Rule 9: Life is not divided into semesters. You don't get summers off and very few employers are interested in helping you FIND YOURSELF. Do that on your own time.

Rule 10: Television is NOT real life. In real life people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go to jobs.

Rule 11: Be nice to nerds. Chances are you'll end up working for one.

Employees at the Dickinson County FSA Office have brought their tractors and farm machinery to work.



Sheryl Fastenow, Karen LaCour, Jan Wiemers, Terry Dalen

With the addition of the new Farm Service Agency office equipment, the employees at the Dickinson County FSA office felt it would be important to show their appreciation for the customers we serve by setting up a farm scene commemorating agriculture using farm toys, buildings, and field settings according to the seasons in Northwest Iowa. Employees donated the miniature farm toys, farmstead buildings, and animals. What farm related items they did not have, they made. The farm setting is a conversation piece with area farmers when they visit the office and numerous thanks as well as favorable comments have been received from them including expressions of appreciation for the FSA office's open display of support for their occupation. Of course there are the numerous arguments amongst the farmers in the office with respect to referencing the incorrect color of some of the equipment. As one farmer stated for the benefit of his neighbor standing beside him at the FSA counter, "Hey look at that - it looks like your place. I am sure glad to see that the FSA folks recognize how important it is to have a machinery transport truck as part of the necessary farm equipment in order to haul that red colored equipment like yours to town for the constant repair it requires!"



Submitted by: Larry Lago, CED Dickinson County

IASCOE Day Trip Notes – District 8, Lucas County

Dave Lundquist, CED at Lucas County, submitted the following interesting facts about Lucas County:

Chariton, Iowa web page: <http://www.chariton.org/> (Chariton is the county seat)

Chariton Chamber web page: <http://www.charitonchamber.com/>

Quick facts: <http://www.charitonchamber.com/community/commun.quickfacts.htm>

As with many small communities in Iowa, Chariton has turned to tourism to supplement local business revenue. Those pages can be found at:

<http://www.charitonchamber.com/tourism/tourism.htm>

Misc. tidbits:

- Lucas County was named after Robert Lucas, the first territorial governor of Iowa.
- Lucas County is the birthplace of John L. Lewis, the longtime president of the United Mine Workers in the first half of the 20th century.
- Chariton has a community movie theatre, financed by local donations, which charges only \$2 for admission !!!
- Lucas County has a substantial Amish population, mainly in the SW corner of the county (little known fact).
- The "Williamson Tap" has an assortment of locally-famous hamburgers, including the 1 pound 'Papa Burger'. Yikes !
- Lucas County is the birthplace and home of the co-founder of Hy-Vee Food Stores - Dwight Vredenburg.
- Lucas County has a beautiful State park - Red Haw State Park, located just outside the city limits of Chariton. Great for camping, fishing, swimming, trails, etc. etc. The park gets its name from the Hawthorn tree, but it is well known for the beautiful Red Bud trees, which populate the park.
- The first light bulb in the State of Iowa was turned on in Lucas (in Lucas County) - Edison had invented it the year before. Used in a coal mine.
- Lucas County holds the state record for the largest Flathead Catfish caught - was caught in 1958, weighing in at 81 pounds!
- "Pipers" is an old-fashioned grocery market on the NE corner of the Chariton square, which also makes their own chocolate candies, sent around the world!



Spring Remodeling Woes

Submitted by Trice Smith,
CPT Benton County

It has been the year everyone in Benton County to go through some type of building project or remodeling. Our experiences have been quite interesting to say the least so we decided to share them with you.

Cal and his wife Megan decided to do a couple of projects this spring. They started a ceramic tile floor in the laundry room and kitchen. After removing all the appliances and preparing the floor they came to the conclusion with 5 kids it may be too costly and opted for laminate wood flooring. He did FINISH a screened in porch that was supposed to be a summer project but took 4 YEARS to complete. As Megan came closer to the delivery of their second child the "honey do list" got quite large and the urgency was kicked into high gear to complete all the projects. Cal frantically stayed up late at night to finish what he could. He was almost grateful that Megan delivered little Benett early.

Paula decided it was time to update the 1960's look of her basement family room. The orange shag carpet with matching laminate bar top was not hitting the Better Homes and Gardens front page. Her husband Bill thought it was still in good shape and nothing needed to be changed. She decided it was best not to talk or ask opinions of a man that does not believe in change! It only makes them nervous and we should avoid our husbands any unneeded stress. Right ladies? After moving heavy items by herself up a flight of stairs through the laundry room, to the garage and then to the burn pile the room was ready for the carpenter to begin his work. "Oh you mean we have to pay someone to do this!!##??" was her husbands comment. Next story.....

Carma had a new breezeway built from her garage to the house. To her dismay the Asian beetles thought it was a perfect summer home for them. They moved in before the place was furnished. Everyday they basked in the sunny southern window and enjoyed the nice surroundings. Finally the day came and the breezeway was completed and they received their eviction notice from Carma. Anyway they needed to go get back to their original job of fighting aphids!

A "possessed garage door" was trying Teresa's nerves. If you really know Teresa this would surprise you because she usually does not get rattled easily and can have some strange tendency's herself. For years she has been into Reike, which is a type of Oriental spiritual healing. (See article in this newsletter) The garage door would go up and down at will, never knowing if it would decide to make its move as you entered or left the garage. Each morning Teresa did the Earnhart Jr, jump start to get out of her garage to avoid any mishaps. After so long she realized it was not some long lost relative trying to communicate with her and decided it was time to fix the problem. Problem found... something was eating the electrical wires underground. Is it Cousin Ralph?

Paulette's husband decided it was time to have a new machine

shed built on their farm. After a lot of hard work it was finally completed. This was when Paulette decided that the old shop was hers! What a great shop for her to work on her plants and flowers. To keep her husband and sons from coming into "her" domain she had to take some drastic measures. Garlands of brightly colored flowers were hung from the work bench and pink and lilac handled tools were purchased as she would be sure that they would not disappear into the new shed. Pots of planted flowers are set everywhere so that nothing can be parked in her domain. With all this her hard work everyone in the family agrees this is "Moms space."

Kathy has promised all the people in her household that they could have a room decorated in whatever color or theme they would like. Husband John wants a "Harley" living room. OK, she can live with that. Her Grandson Colton thought it is time that Grandma gets rid of the flowered wallpaper in his room and opted for a jungle theme. That was ok with Kathy too. Emma the Granddaughter decides she wants a pink room. So "pretty as pink" was the color that Kathy painted. It was the hottest pink you ever saw so she toned it down a little with some sponge painting. But there was a reason for her madness in letting everyone have their way.....now her husband John gets to sleep in a purple bedroom with fairy appliques on the walls. Happy Dreaming John!!!!

Earl and his wife Marge built a new house and they did much of the work themselves. Their house is in a new subdivision of Vinton but very close to a cemetery. Well it seemed that Earl's house would be cutting off the "easy access" of one family to their cemetery plots. Even though there was the main access to the cemetery the family insisted on having access through Earl's yard. Earl was visited many times by a family member to trying to convince him it was the right thing to do. Of course Earl was polite but stood his ground and denied them access. We tell him to be careful walking outside on full moon nights because revenge can be pretty wicked. You never know who could be lurking in the shadows.

My husband and I purchased an older home and we are in the process of remodeling it. The bedroom was a total nightmare. I always thought that I was a Martha Stewart type but the painting of this bedroom challenged me to my limit. I first bought the wrong paint (glossy) but continued to paint the room anyway!## **First mistake.** Then I decided to leave the glossy but stripe the bottom with glossy and matted stripes. Returning from lunch one day I started with the wrong paint and ended up with one large glossy stripe! **Second mistake.** Oh well the bed covers that mistake! My third try to get something right I decided to try the tissue paper texturing that you see so many do on the new remodeling shows. Well I can tell you now that it does not work well on plaster walls. After scrapping for 2 days it was finally removed!! **Third error!** My fourth try I sand painted the top of the walls with a matt paint to cover the tissue I could not remove. Needless to say this project tried my nerves, and if I can find any left I will finish the rest of the house!!

As you can see we all had a little fun with our decorating and remodeling projects but hope that there are none planned in the near future.

THE PERILS OF POLLY P.T.

PART ELEVEN

Written By Roseanne Woerner, PT From Wapello County

Created by Dee Lehn, CED Keokuk County

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

I guess it's a simple matter of fact that I get into trouble every single day. Sometimes I am the instigator of minor irritations with my fellow coworkers...I 'X' out of my computer before I shut it down...I don't tally my timesheet correctly...I act before I think, etc. Other times, I am the instigator of major irritations and people don't talk to me for days.

Take Stevie Corona for example. Last winter, I accidentally sent him on a food plot spot check where he had to ride a mule. Honestly, I intended to go myself, but when I reviewed Handbook Procedure, I discovered that I had to check fifteen percent of our food plots instead of ten. Stevie wanted them done right away and he even offered to help. So when I divvied things out, he wound up with Harley's map because it was in his area. Also, I found out about the mule just before I was ready to leave the office and I'm certain that I'm allergic.

I'll never forget how Stevie looked when he came back to the office. Even though it was winter, he was sweating. I think his perspiration level must have bumped into overdrive when the mule got spooked and took off down the hill with poor Stevie barely able to hold onto the reins. He also developed a stress fracture after the mule stepped on his foot, but the good news is that his limp is barely noticeable now, four months after the fact.

He was sullen after that for quite some time, but yesterday, when I was up at the counter certifying a producer, Stevie overheard the conversation. You see, I am a city girl and I've never had a chance to ride in a tractor, so when Stevie told me that I could come out to his farm and help, I was elated. And while I'm really excited about the opportunity, I'm

also a bit scared because I'm thinking that he has a score to settle with me over the mule thing. I can see it in his eyes.

I'm uncertain about proper planting attire, so I show up at Stevie's house in my blue jeans and tennis shoes. Glenda, Stevie's wife tells me that Stevie has already gotten started and that we are supposed to meet him in the forty-acre field on the east side of their property. Glenda's pretty friendly and we have a nice little chat on the way, but I'm nervous because she seems to find a lot of humor in the fact that Stevie is letting me plant, plus she brings along two cameras.

Stevie is just finishing a row of beans when we pull up to the field, so he makes a turn, stops the planter and hops out of the cab, careful not to put too much weight on his bad foot. He hasn't had any breakdowns yet and even though the ground is dry, the beans are going in pretty good, so he is smiling as we approach.

He hustles me into the cab...well...he attempts to hustle me into the cab of the tractor, but the stairs are small and fairly steep. I'm not about to move too fast, no matter how close he is or how much he breathes down my neck. Glenda is already shooting pictures. I am thinking that Stevie will tell me what to do and then leave, but to my surprise, and probably relief, he sits down next to me.

The engine is still running and it's pretty noisy. We are in a confined space and my seat is so high I feel like I am perched in the air. There are gobs of levers and gearshifts to contend with, but Stevie assures me that all I have to do is drive and he will take care of the rest. "Push the right pedal," he says.



I do and we are off.

The first thing that I notice is the tires. They are smooth rubber with a ridge in the middle. Maybe, because they have no tread, I am settled with this floating sensation, as if I'm not really in control at all. I'm not scared though because we are slugging through the field at a snail's pace.

"Do you want to go faster?" Stevie asks.

I say no.

The steering wheel is big and it seems to have a lot of play. Stevie keeps looking over his shoulder at something, but I'm not taking my eyes off the deepest groove in the field, no matter what. Things seem to be going well, but then we near the end of the field Stevie starts to speak his sentences in threes. This drives me nuts because he makes these rapid-fire statements again and again. "Don't go so fast, don't go so fast, don't go so fast," he says. "Left pedal, left pedal, left pedal."

Okay, so there are three pedals on the floor and I'm wondering if he means the far left pedal or the left pedal that is next to the pedal

on the right. Already I am confused, but I don't have time to ask which one to push because there is a strained sense of urgency in his voice. I take a chance and hit the far left pedal.

It seems to be the right choice and I'm assuming this will calm him down, but then he's yelling in my ear, "Don't turn so sharp, don't turn so sharp, don't turn so sharp," as we wind our way back from the opposite end of the field.

When we reach our midway point, he has stopped shaking, and as we approach the place where we started, the tightness in his voice has almost completely disappeared. I'm thinking that this is going to be a big forty acres if he loses control so easily, and I am happy to stop when he tells me. As soon as my feet are off the pedals and my hands are off the steering wheel, his smile returns. In fact, his smile lights up his face and he seems extremely happy as I exit the cab, I can only assume that he really enjoyed showing me how to plant. I notice that he's sweating a bit too and so I'm thinking that maybe he just sweats easily; maybe he just *seemed* nervous; maybe he really did have a good time after all.

He thanks me for coming out and I thank him for showing me the ropes. On the way home, I decide that Stevie's a pretty good guy and that I should try to reciprocate his kindness in some small way. That's when it hits me. I can be his planting buddy. I can take my vacation next spring and help him get his crops in. He can't possibly say no, especially now that I am so well trained.

The End

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