

IASCOE

The Iowa Association Of FSA County Office Employees

July 2015



2015/2016 IASCOE OFFICERS

President

Jennifer Comer
PT Page County

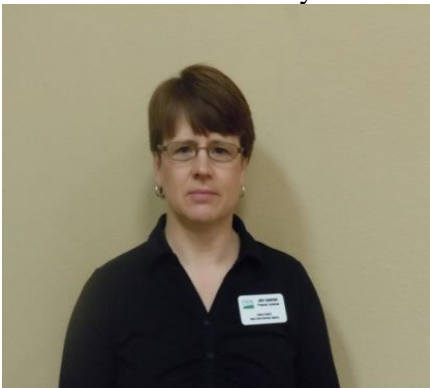


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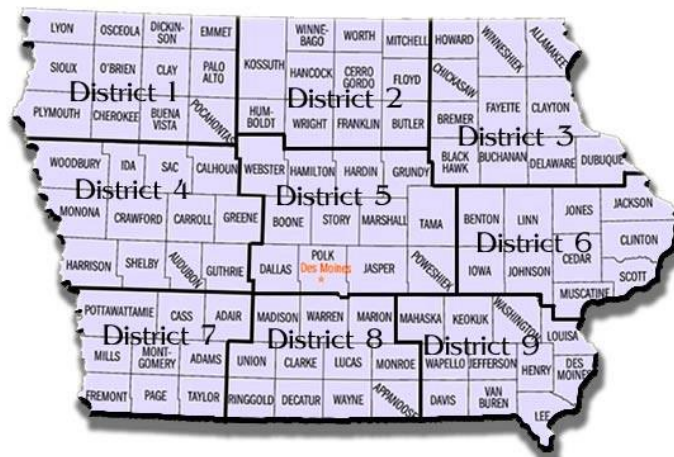
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**2015-2016
IASCOE DIRECTORS & ALTERNATE DIRECTORS**

| District | Program Assistant and County | County Executive Director and County |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| 1 Director Alternate | Karen LaCour, Dickinson Samantha Erie, Pocahontas | Les Zobrist, Clay Larry Lago, Dickinson |
| 2 Director Alternate | Cindy Pistek, Hancock Danielle Sidles, Kossuth | Barry TerHark, Cerro Gordo Angie Christian, Kossuth |
| 3 Director Alternate | Andrea Carroll, Clayton Meghan Koenigs, Howard | Heidi Nickol, Delaware |
| 4 Director Alternate | Cathleen Borst, Carroll Donita Kenkel, Shelby | Steve Luke, Shelby Pat Warmbier, Harrison |
| 5 Director Alternate | Alisha Lust, Jasper Travis Moore, Hamilton | Curt Houk, Poweshiek Justin Bahnsen, Polk/Dallas |
| 6 Director Alternate | Joni Birkhofer, Muscatine Renee Schultz, Cedar | Kris Koth, Jones Randy Madsen, Muscatine/Scott |
| 7 Director Alternate | Jennifer Comer, Page Monica Robinson, Cass | Cindy Bebout, Fremont/Mills Chris Irvin, Page |
| 8 Director Alternate | Keith Wheeler, Madison Ronda Harrison, Lucas | Daniel Curry, Ringgold Kathy Henely, Wayne |
| 9 Director Alternate | Judy Dameron, Louisa Deanna Rood, Mahaska | Dee Ann Lehn, Keokuk |



COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2015-2016

LEGISLATIVE CHAIR – Steve Luke

BENEFITS CHAIR – Dee Lehn

| District | Member | County |
|----------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1 | Rex Wittrock | Buena Vista |
| 2 | David Stromer | Hancock |
| 3 | Adriana Foxen | Buchanan |
| 4 | Pat Warmbier | Harrison |
| 5 | Teresa Simonton | Poweshiek |
| 6 | Renee Schultz | Cedar |
| 7 | Chris Irvin | Page |
| 8 | Kelly Cain | Madison |
| 9 | | |

AWARDS CHAIR – Karen LaCour

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| | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------|
| 1 | Larry Lago | Dickinson |
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| 5 | Kathleen Baker | Marshall |
| 6 | Amy Castillo | Johnson |
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| 8 | Kathy Henely | Wayne |
| 9 | Lanie Benjamin | Davis |

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| | | |
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| 1 | Paul Berte | Pocahontas |
| 2 | Angie Christian | Kossuth |
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| 4 | Heather Muenchrath | Shelby |
| 5 | Karla Novotny | Tama |
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| 8 | | |
| 9 | Patty Steffensmeier | Des Moines |

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| | | |
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| 5 | Katie Kramer | Jasper |
| 6 | Randy Madsen | Muscatine/Scott |
| 7 | Susan Lange | Cass |
| 8 | Marla Morlan | Monroe |
| 9 | Deanna Rood | Mahaska |

PROGRAM CHAIR – Keith Wheeler, Madison

EMBLEMS CHAIR – Kitty Benda, Marshall

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2015 Awards & Scholarship Committee



2015 Publicity Committee



2015 Legislative and Benefits Committee



2015 Membership Committee

PAST IASCOE PRESIDENTS

1959-61 Kenneth Hatcher
1961-62 Raymond D Vanderhorst
1962-63 Luther Stock
1963-64 William H Holiday
1964-65 Charles Bacon
1965-66 Gaylor A Thayer
1966-67 V. Deane Thornton
1967-68 Marguerite Liddle
1969-70 Warner C Walrath
1970-71 Janet Hemm
1971-72 Carl Lantz
1972-74 James A Riekens
1974-76 Cecil F Zollars
1977-79 Garnita Ewart
1979-80 John Ace Parker/Gary Brewer
1980-82 Gary Brewer
1982-84 Larry Niles
1984-86 Joe McLaughlin

1986-87 Pat Drew / Ronald Parker
1987-88 Mike Houston
1988-90 Ronald Reuvers
1990-92 Steve Abbas
1992-94 Kevin Fitzpatrick
1994-95 Jerry Frank
1995-97 Kevin McClure
1997-99 Jolene Fechter
1999-01 Trice Smith
2001-03 John Landgraf
2003-05 Tom Lane/Alan Donaldson/
John Landgraf
2005-07 Dee Lehn
2007-09 Steve Kennedy
2009-11 Cindy Mensen
2011-13 Jeff Davis
2013-15 Curt Houk

A Message from our State Executive Director



How would you answer question number four? Well, first, what is question four? The fourth question I ask in the employee surveys I have been doing is: *What is the best thing about working for FSA?* The responses to this question have varied from practical – “the benefits”; to the personal – “my dad is a farmer and now I can talk to him about programs. It gives me something that I can have a conversation with him about.” I can truly understand the

benefits answer. Our benefits are pretty good and in rural communities, we need them. Unfortunately, I relate to the other comment from the wrong side. My daughter and I would have a difficult time with a conversation about farming or FSA. Not the way it should be but...

The surveys have went extremely well and I am pleased, no, thrilled with the results and answers. The majority of the answers to question four were “working with our producers” and “working with co-workers”. But beyond that question and those answers are conversations on the other questions which lead to a unique idea. There are several good suggestions/ways of doing business that I will include in the “white paper” I write as a report to DC on this project. Such as a ‘No PT Left Behind’ annual training on all programs for all PTs in the state. The same with annual manager’s training. Yes, this would be expensive, but maybe it could save more than it costs. There are quite a few suggestions about software changes and with the way it has been working, I understand where they are coming from. To me, the suggestions all show that good ideas come from the trenches where the work is done.

The one point in all of this that I would like to make is that you, the hard working FSA Iowa family, care about our producers and each other. Thank you for your honesty when talking to me. Most importantly, thank you for your hard work and dedication supporting Iowa’s food producers.

John Whitaker
SED



2015-2016 IASCOE President

Happy Summer!! I wasn't sure if we were ever going to see it this year. Here in Southwest Iowa all we could get was cold, wet, rainy days! As I write this it is 89 degrees and sunny. The farmers are extremely busy in the field as they have not turned the dirt for almost three weeks; could make for a *long* certification season.

The last newsletter, I introduced myself as the new Vice President for IASCOE, this one, I come to you as the new President of IASCOE. Congratulations to Curt Goettsch on his recent hiring as the Chief Program Specialist for Conservation/Compliance, we wish him well and look forward to working with him in this new capacity. When Curt called to let me know he had been offered and accepted the position, I am not going to lie, I was a little nervous for my new role, after all I thought I would have a couple of years' experience before I took the reins. But if there is anything I have learned while working for FSA is, things change on a daily basis. So here I am, ready to take this on and excited for the opportunities that are coming our way. As with any of the past and present officers, I am committed to the ideals of NASCOE/IASCOE and our membership. My approach to this position is that we are all in this together, I am simply serving as a 'spokesperson', so please don't hesitate to contact me with any of your concerns or questions, I am happy to visit with any of you and get to know our membership better.

As most of you know, Iowa was chosen as the site of the 2016 NASCOE National Convention. This is a huge opportunity for Iowa to shine, our convention will be held the first week of August at the DoubleTree by Hilton, Hotel Cedar Rapids Convention Complex in downtown Cedar Rapids. This is the first time in 50 years, Iowa has hosted this event. During this week, Iowa will play host to over 1000 Farm Service Agency employees and their families. An event of this magnitude can't be accomplished by the efforts of just a few people, and that's where you come in. I know there is an enormous amount of talent within this agency and I would be honored to work with each of you to make this a memorable experience and showcase Iowa FSA and Agriculture. We are looking for several volunteers to help coordinate tours, plan kids activities, help in fundraising, plan banquet events, decorate, or just to smile and greet attendees when they arrive in Cedar Rapids. Whatever it is, we can find a job for you! If you have an interest in helping out, please give me a shout as soon as you can, it seems like a long ways off but let me tell you, the wheels are in motion and there is PLENTY of room on the volunteer bus! You can call me on my cell phone (712-303-1157), or email me at iascoe.pres@gmail.com. Please take a couple of minutes to review the list of committees in this newsletter and decide where your talents will fit in. I am excited to build some great teams and really let Iowa shine in 2016!

Looking forward to visiting with all of you soon.

Jennifer Comer,
IASCOE President



IASCOE Secretary

Summer is finally here!!! The crops are planted, certification is winding down and the enrollment process has begun (at least I would imagine so by the time this newsletter is posted). County fairs, family get-togethers, vacations and all those things that “things to do”. This past 10 months has been a whirlwind of activity and stress at the office, take time to be with your friends and family- enjoy yourself.

I realized when I read the last newsletter I neglected to let you all know a little something about your new IASCOE Secretary. I have been with the agency for 28 years working with the annual farm programs and payment limitation. My husband and I farm in Hancock and Monroe Counties. Yes, that is a lot of distance between the two counties, but it was the perfect place to start our purebred Angus cattle operation. My husband’s brother and our son both live in Albia so they help keep an eye on the cattle and the crops when we can’t be there.

Leonard and I have three grown children – yes, we like the empty nest. Our son Doug is a quality technician for Pella Corporation in Pella, our daughter Kathleen is a sales associate for a home builder in the Chicago area and our youngest daughter Marie is in supply management at John Deere in Waterloo. We have two grand-children; Ashley is 17 and Tucker is 7 months old.

I have been a director for IASCOE for many years. During that time I have seen many changes in our agency and our benefits. I have watched and participated in the many ways that this organization works to benefit not only its employees, but its customers as well. Legislative Conferences, legislative fly-ins, conference calls, meeting with Congressional leaders at the local level and newsletters are all ways that NASCOE works for YOU. I am happy to be a part of such an active organization that truly has our best interest at heart. If you are a current member, you are one of our great assets. If you are not yet a member, we invite you to become a member of IASCOE/NASCOE. I know it’s a cliché, but together we can and have made a difference.

Cindy Pistek

IASCOE Secretary

2016 National Convention Sub-Committees and Members

Here is your chance to get in on the planning of the 2016 NASCOE National Convention. Take a look at the committees we need to fill, think about what sounds like a good fit with your talents and let Jennifer Comer know ASAP. If you have questions about the specific duties of a committee, give me a call or email, I would be happy to visit about it.

Don't see a committee that suits you but have other areas of interest in planning or maybe you have a contact at a potential sponsor; we need those too. We will have marketing packets ready for everyone soon that will arm you with all the particulars for sponsors and donors, of any size. In the meantime, take a look at the list, give me a call and let me know where you want to help out.

Financial/Fund Raising/Sponsorship Committee:

Judy Dameron, Financial Chairperson
Jennifer Comer
Cindy Pistek
Curt Houk
All Members to help in fund raising!

Publicity Committee

Kris Koth, Co-Chair
Anna Boecker, Co-Chair

Youth Committee

Heidi Nickol, Chair

Retirees Luncheon Committee

RASCOE of Iowa Members

Golf Tournament Committee

Al Kiewiet, Chair
Rex Wittrock

Door Prize/ Favors Committee

Candace Fette, Chair

Banquet/Meals Committee

Mary Roberts – Chair

Auction Committee

Katie Kramer, Chair
LeeAnn Davis

Transportation Committee

Curt Houk, Co-Chair
Jeff Davis, Co-Chair
Mike Praska

Decorating Committee

Dee Lehn, Chair
Teresa Simonton

Tours Committee

Tom Lane, Chair
Adriana Foxen
Randy Madsen

Information Committee

Devalyn Wilson, Chair
Wendi Denham

Registration Committee

Joni Birkhofer, Chair
Jane McCulley
Debra Rurup

Entertainment Committee

Angie Christian, Chair

NEW EMPLOYEE IN TAMA COUNTY



Pictured above are two of Tama County's employees, Matt Kemp and Suzanne Lux.

Suzanne started on June 1st as our TO. She is originally from Jefferson, Iowa. She and her family moved to Toledo in 2004 due mostly to her husband's job as a Construction Superintendent for a commercial contractor, Larson & Larson.

Suzanne has worked as a para-professional for the last 7 years for the South Tama School District and KeBecca Education Services. She is also an Independent Consultant for Scentsy Fragrance.

Suzanne and her husband Troy have two sons, Kyle and Erik. Kyle is a senior and Erik is a sophomore at the University of Northern Iowa. Kyle wrestles for the Panthers and Erik plays football. She really enjoys it when all of her family is able to get together, as it seems like it doesn't happen much now that they are away at college.

Suzanne is excited to spend the summer working at our FSA office in Toledo!

IASCOE District #1 New Employee Introductions:

Cherokee County: Amy Glienke. Amy and her husband farm near Washta, some distance from her childhood homes of Virginia (Go Navy) and Nebraska (Go Huskers). As an adult living in Nebraska, Amy worked in Social Services after obtaining her degree in Psychology. Amy was raised in a farm family which grew her love of agriculture and laid the foundations for her advocacy for women farmers. Amy currently raises cattle with her husband as well as row crops; there are many heated discussions on which is better Black or Red Angus, in the Glienke household. They are currently experimenting with a backyard flock of chickens as a means of organic pest management. Bee hives are being planned as an addition to the Glienke farming operation. Reading, gardening, and fishing fill any remaining time. Amy began employment in Cherokee County in February of this year. Amy has been a natural fit to the Cherokee FSA and enjoys supporting other producers, farmers, and ranchers. Amy's programs include cost share, Price Support, Farm Records, and MPP-Dairy.

Pocahontas County: Tara Dolan. Tara resides in Pocahontas County with her husband Tim and four young children. Tara is from Algona originally and continued her college education at the University of Northern Iowa. Tara spent the past 11 years working in Des Moines for Nationwide Insurance. Recently they decided it would be nice to raise their children in a rural community, so they moved to Pocahontas where her husband Tim was born and raised. In her limited free time Tara enjoys being a Mom to her busy kids, attending sporting events – especially the Iowa State Cyclones, golfing, and spending time with family in Chicago, Dallas, Pocahontas and Algona, IA. Tara's FSA programs include Compliance, Acreage Reporting, MPP-Dairy, FSFL, and Citrix.

A Trip down Memory “Lane”

By Kris Koth

Times are frustrating right now. Our deadlines are tighter, our staffing is shorter, our budget is smaller, and our computers... well, let's not even get started. As the year-end gets closer we start to wonder how we'll finish certifications, ARC/PLC signup, CRP, and everything else knowing the timeframes, budget, staff, and computers we have. As I was looking back through IASCOE newsletters, past President's and Vice-President's articles, I stumbled across a column from Tom Lane in March of 2003. Times are different today than they were then but I think his message is still the same.

“You have seen athletes “play over their heads” at times. Why? Because of the challenge and its acceptance. It is the people who look at struggle as a blessing who achieve the big rewards of life. The hard surgical cases- ones where life hangs in the balance- are given to skillful surgeons who know what it takes to save those lives. The tough engineering problem goes to an engineer who has always accepted a challenge and found a way to succeed.

The same can be said for employees of the Farm Service Agency. Over the years, FSA employees have been challenged to provide needed services for the producers/borrowers of their counties, with very limited resources and extremely tight timeframes. Every time, FSA employees have accepted those challenges and found ways to succeed.

Challenges abound again for us this year. From finishing DCP signup – to a new CRP signup—to the disaster program just enacted by Congress—to whatever life holds. I encourage you to accept all challenges that lie ahead, find a way to succeed and achieve the big rewards of life.”

Tom's message is 12 years old but I believe it's still a good one. We know we have many challenges ahead of us. How will we let the challenges define who we are as a person or even as an Agency? As Tom did, I encourage you to accept those challenges that lie ahead and find a way to succeed.

June Facts:

- Is clearly the sixth month of the year
- Is one of four months of year with 30 days in it
- Is named after the goddess of marriage (Juno). I think this is why they say June brides have the most fun. I don't know that there is proof of this though.
- Is the month with the longest daylight hours of the Year; This is so we (at FSA) can get certification complete, run/drive to baseball & softball games for our sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, grandsons, & granddaughters. Oh yes, and begin Enrollment into ARC/PLC.
- Has three birthstones... Can you name them? Alexandrite, the Moonstone, and the Pearl. Do you know what they stand for? I didn't so I read about them on google. You can search it if you are really interested.
- Has two birth flowers which are honeysuckle and the rose. Can anyone guess what these flowers represent for June? Honeysuckle they say, traditionally stands for bonds of devotion, love, fidelity, and generosity. The rose depending on the type, has 11 different meanings. If you are into figuring out flower languages, I'll have you know I learned that, roses have or are among the most important for languages. Me personally, I just hope if I plant a rose bush in the near future it will grow. In the month of June I get so busy I hope I have enough time to water it and I just know I won't have time to figure out the language it speaks. Ha ha
- Has three US holidays, one international holiday, eight observances that are recognized for the entire month, and three other notable dates/events.

The holidays I found are as follows:

- o Flag Day (June 14th)
- o International Picnic Day (June 18th)
- o Father's Day (3rd Sunday in June)
- o Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year (June 21st)

The eight observances recognized for the entire month of June are as follows:

- o National Oceans Month
- o Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride
- o African-American Music Appreciation Month
- o National Caribbean-American Heritage Month
- o Great Outdoors Month
- o Cataract Awareness Month
- o Men's Health Month
- o National Safety Month

Other Notable dates/events are as follows:

- o World Oceans Day (June 8th)
- o National Flag Week (June 14-20)
- o National Pink Day (June 23rd)

June is the only month that I can find a "bug" named after. June bugs or June Beetles are typically seen at night when light attracts them.

- Astrological Signs are Gemini & Cancer
- Fruits & Veggies for June are: Cherries, Plums, Pluot, Aprium and Okra

Hope you find some of these June Facts interesting; the tricky part will be to remember them for next June so you can celebrate the entire month. On to July! 😊



WISCONSIN IS INVITING YOU....

Where: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

When: August 12- 15, 2015

What: NASCOE Convention National Convention

Here is where you will be staying and what we are planning for you to enjoy your time in Milwaukee:

The Potawatomi Hotel, Casino and Convention Center, tours, events, and much more! Our hotel offers free shuttle service to and from the airport and other area attractions, free covered ramp parking, free valet parking (highly recommended!), seven different dining experiences, full service casino, friendly attentive staff, large sleeping rooms with refrigerators and awesome views of downtown Milwaukee, and located within walking distance of Harley-Davidson, Miller Park and Milwaukee's 3rd Ward famous river walk!

TOURS:

The **Wisconsin Farm Tour** takes you to Koepke Dairy Farms Inc, Growing Power and Serenity Farm of.

The Koepke's are five generations strong producing high quality milk, contented cows, and award winning land stewardship in the heart of Wisconsin. They also market their own cheese under the LaBelle label. Growing Power is Urban Agriculture's "Poster child" for the rest of the Country! From aquaculture, to multi-level vegetable crops being harvested all year, to the digester that creates energy, to the design of the roofs on the greenhouses to use all of the rain water collected, to the worms that feed the fish and fertilize the vegetables – nothing goes to waste! Lunch will be at Serenity Farm of Wisconsin. Laura and Paul Phelps own a CSA that they provide a variety of vegetable crops to their customers. Paul is also an artist that specializes in stain glass – you will be amazed at his creations as you enjoy you lunch and get to tour the farm.

The **Wisconsin Industry** tour boasts two national manufacturers that are known worldwide and home-based in Wisconsin – Case-IH/New Holland in Racine WI, and Harley-Davidson in Milwaukee. .

The Case-IH/New Holland tour starts you at the beginning of the assembly line and works through all of the steps and then you get to see the finished tractor pulling off the line. Lunch will be served in the Case IH education center before you head back to Milwaukee to tour the Harley-Davidson museum.

The guided tour at the fantastic Harley-Davidson museum starts in a footprint of the small garage the friends built their first motorcycle. You are then taken through history with your guide leading the way. After the guided tour, you are free to take a test drive on a real Harley-Davidson motorcycle which is on what looks like a treadmill – it was a real rush running through the gears!

The **Wisconsin Brewery Tour!** BEER...BEER...and MORE BEER!

We'll start you off at the historic Pabst mansion (sorry! No free samples of beer on this tour). Here you will learn all about the Pabst family and how they brought the title, Beer City, USA to Milwaukee.

Then you will head to Miller/Coors and see one of the largest breweries in the world – and yes, you will also get to sample along the way!

Lunch will be provided at Lakefront Brewery. Lakefront is a craft brewery that has many award winning brews you can sample. They still use the line to bottle the beer that was made famous with the glove on the bottle during the intro to the Laverne and Shirley show.

Finally we will change gears a bit and take you to the only distillery in Wisconsin – the Great Lakes Distillery. There you will learn the art of a world class distillery, and get to sample some of the finest spirits ever made!





Breast Cancer Awareness

By Anna Boecker

Breast cancer is the abnormal growth of cells located in breast tissue. This growth usually forms a large grouping known as a tumor. This cancerous cell growth can then invade surrounding tissue or spread to other parts of the body, known as metastasizing. While the vast majority of breast cancer diagnoses occur in women, men can also develop breast cancer. Breast cancer is the second most common cancer diagnosis (after skin cancer) for women in the United States.

It is important to recognize the symptoms of breast cancer early to increase the chances of effective treatment and survival as much as possible. Unfortunately, breast cancer is often not diagnosed early as symptoms are not obvious or women do not take the steps necessary for early detection. However, here are a few symptoms to look for, particularly for individuals who have a family history of cancer:

- Thickening in the breast or armpit.
- A change in the size or shape of the breast.
- Changes in the skin of the breast, such as a dimple or the turning inward of the nipple.
- Changes in the nipple such as the scaling of skin.
- A green or bloody discharge of the nipple.
- A change in the color or feel in the skin around the nipple.

It is also important for women to perform self-examinations of their breast as well as to have a yearly mammogram, typically after the age of 40 or 50, depending upon your risk factors. Often the first sign of breast cancer is a hard lump or nodule that is painless but located within the tissue of the breast. If such a lump is discovered, inform your doctor as quickly as possible as the removal of the tumor within a short time frame can greatly increase the chances of curing the cancer.

There are more than 3 million US cases diagnosed per year in the United States.

Pink is used for the [breast cancer](#) ribbon. Pink communicates youth, peace, femininity, a sense of calm, and health.

Here's the latest twist on the pink ribbon symbol - [men with breast cancer](#) now have their own ribbon.. The male breast cancer ribbon is pink and blue - in order to help us remember "**men get breast cancer, too!**"



