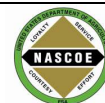


NASCOE Newsletter
Summer 2011
May June July



What Now?
Myron Stoup
NASCOE President



It seems like an eternity since I wrote the last newsletter article. Only because so many issues have come forward, that affects all of us as employees and as members of this organization. This has kept NASCOE very busy. Since there is not near enough space to address them all I will try to discuss the larger items.

We all are very aware of the budget restrictions place on our daily work life for this fiscal year. Many of the issues NASCOE has been working on are purely budget driven and it appears this will be the scenario for the next fiscal year also. Budget is driving the FY11 VERA (early-out), driving the restriction on County Committee meetings, the cancelation of the NASCOE Negotiation meeting, etc. Budget has driven Congress to debate the raising of the National Debt ceiling. I am also concerned items included in this debate will be further attacks on employee's pay and benefits.

All employee organizations will take positions as proposals adverse to our pay and benefits are introduced. It makes perfectly good sense that these organizations partner with each other in addressing the adverse attacks on employees and deliver a unified message. NASCOE has used the membership database to keep you informed of pay and benefit alerts. But only if you have submitted your personal email address to the database custodian, the National Membership Chair. NASCOE has partnered with NARFE (an organization over 300,000 strong) on alerts affecting our pay and benefits. This allows NASCOE leadership resources to work on other continuous issues, and there are several.

NASCOE has addressed the COC meeting restrictions with the National Office and have also assisted NAFEC in their response. COC members need to voice their concerns and be heard. Members are encouraged to join NAFEC so their voice is unified and stronger. Timely customer service is what we pride ourselves on and this restriction is a budget driven barrier we have to work around. The NAFEC leadership has recently held meetings with Department officials and Secretary Vilsack in regards to the recent changes to COC members and their restrictions.

On a brighter note, the recently released assessment on civil rights known as the Jackson Lewis report supports two areas the NASCOE PT Team has been working on. A better trained workforce supports the idea that we need teachers providing training instead of program experts. Training should be taught instead of receiving a power point presentation attached to an email. Better cross training between Farm Loan Programs and Farm Programs equals better customer service and also supports another position discussed by this team, a hybrid position that requires a higher set of skills.



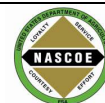
The current Congressional debate on FY12 Budget and the national debt ceiling could have a direct affect and could drive the development of the next farm bill. All Agriculture groups are very nervous about the cuts that will occur, including NASCOE. Any position that shows greater efficiency and cost savings should get attention from the crafters of this law. The NASCOE position delivered to members of Congress identified program delivery areas that could be more efficient and could save tax payers dollars. No Agriculture group has taken a definitive Farm Bill position thus keeping their options open. Given the restricted baseline funding available, drafting the next Farm Bill will be a very difficult process for the House and Senate Ag Committees to work through. The Senate Ag Committee will likely complete the first draft and could be completed as early as this fall.

I know many members are feeling frustrated, nervous, and anxious when reading all the media articles written about attacks on government workers pay and benefits; and the future of the programs we deliver. I hear your comments and read your messages. I want to reassure you that NASCOE hears you and has worked almost nonstop this year on your behalf. So take a moment and reflect on what is truly important in your life.....your family, your health, your faith, your job..... During tumultuous times we need to remind ourselves to keep everything in perspective once in awhile.

The success of any organization lies in its membership and their level of engagement. NASCOE's greatness has been achieved through a strong membership and that is what will see us through this challenging period. I am confident, that with all your help, we will be successful in accomplishing the tasks at hand. We have survived difficult challenges before and we will this time.

As I wind down my second year representing you as your President I want to extend a thank you to everyone. It has truly been an honor serving in this capacity.





We're Not a Cliché

By

John R Lohr

NASCOE Vice President

Wow, is the budget a “beast,” and unfortunately that beast is driving the public sector employee bus down some rough roads most of us would rather not travel.

The other “elephant” in the room is the yet-to-be enacted 2012 Farm Bill. Of course as USDA employees, our careers are closely tied to both annual funding levels and these multiple-year farm bills.

Now we're faced with the “perfect storm” trying to upset our FSA world. The will of Congress is currently to reduce spending, while at the same time most agricultural sectors are in a record high price period and not as reliant on the programs we deliver. Not the best time to write a farm bill if you are an FSA employee.

Are we sunk? History would tell us that our ship is not sinking--just in for some rough sailing. We've had these rides before. My most vivid recollection is the USDA re-organization of the 1990's and the uncertainty about ASCS's survival. Well, ASCS did not survive; but the new, leaner and better positioned FSA did emerge and has served agricultural producers of this country well for almost two decades.

Very candidly, I hope investments in initiatives like MIDAS come along quickly so we are better equipped to cope with new programs and reduced staffing. These technology improvements are absolutely essential.

So where is your employees association in this fracas? Well, we are front and center, and the NASCOE website along with our quarterly newsletter and bi-weekly NASCOE Now are the windows that give you a front seat for all the action. From my first-hand experience as your Vice President, I will assure you that no stone is being left unturned in our efforts to get the best possible outcome for you, the NASCOE member.

Every NASCOE member can help immensely by participating in CAPWIZ and the PAC on the legislative side of things and by working together during these challenging times. Get involved with your state or national association. We need all the volunteers we can get.

Finally and most importantly, let's not sell ourselves short. County office employees and the locally elected Committees have been doing an exceptional job for decades delivering programs to farmers and ranchers. Help spread the word whenever you can.

Unlike a cliché, the Farm Service Agency has not lost its original effectiveness or meaning. Take heart, believe, understand, plan, and take action.



Greetings Everyone! It's hard to believe that summer has officially started. For many of us it seems we skipped from winter to summer. Here in western New York we had the wettest spring on record. Most crops are behind schedule and prevented planting is prevalent. We have been very fortunate to have not suffered the severe weather many other states have this spring. Acreage reporting is in full spring and so far CARS seems to be cooperating. Only SIX more weeks till the 2011 NASCOE Convention in Corpus Christi, TX. The first registration has passed already. Don't forget to send in your registration form by July 1st to take advantage of the \$5 savings. If you haven't made your hotel reservation, do it today. The main hotel is booked already and over flow hotels are now being utilized. For those of you that have made your reservation and need to cancel; PLEASE DO NOT. Contact Penny Kelton so she can use those rooms for others.

I have been recently notified that NYASCOE was withdrawing its 2013 Convention bid. To date I have not received any other bids for 2013. I would urge all states to please consider or reconsider hosting the 2013 NASCOE Convention. This is the annual meeting for the NASCOE Executive Board. If a state does not submit a bid, the NASCOE Executive Board will select a site. If you have questions please feel free to contact me. The Convention Handbook is posted to the website for further clarification.

As you are aware this year's negotiation face to face meeting with management in WDC was cancelled due to budget. Items were submitted by email and responses were just received back last week. The board has not had a chance yet to review responses together. A general conscience of the board is that many questions still need to be worked on. During our recent visit in WDC the Executive Board spoke with Acting Administrator Bruce Nelson on the importance of this face to face negotiation meeting and the importance it has to 8000 FSA employees. We are still hoping this meeting will be granted and we will be able complete this year's negotiations session.

As I close this article I would like to reassure everyone that you have a very hard working Executive Board. Our most recent meeting in WDC was proof of just that. We could have very easily had a two day board meeting due to the amount of items that we needed to address. We were fortunate to have meetings with several employees at the Ag Building, in addition to updates legislatively on the farm bill. We will continue to strive to secure as much as possible for our membership. There is no denying that this is going to be a very rough year, but always remember that your NASCOE Executive Board is committed to our membership.



Respectfully Submitted,
Annette M. Hyman
NASCOE Secretary



2011 CONVENTION DELEGATES REMINDER

DIRECTORY CHANGES

If your state association has had changes since last fall when your area directories were compiled by your Area Executive; please email names, positions, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses to the NASCOE Secretary at ahymana@aol.com so the NASCOE directory may be updated. Thank you!

2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND/OR NATIONAL CONVENTION DELEGATES

ALABAMA	CATHY BLACKBURN AND SHERYL BLAKELY	06/20/11
ARIZONA		
ARKANSAS	MARTY CONLEY AND DAVID GOODSON	06/08/10
CALIFORNIA-HAWAII		
COLORADO	CHAD HART AND NADENE GAYNOR	07/27/05
CONN-RHODE ISLAND	HOWARD ROOD	06/24/11
DELAWARE-MARYLAND	CAROLE HILL AND GREG HUDSON	06/14/11
FLORIDA	MICHAEL NORDLUND AND PATRICIA SORENSEN	08/05/09
GEORGIA	BARBARA WEBB AND BARBARA JACKSON	08/07/10
IDAHO	DALE GEORGE AND JENAE PRESCOTT	07/09/10
ILLINOIS	SARA BATESON AND CHARLENE NEUKOMM	06/13/10
INDIANA	DARLA NORRIS AND ROBERT BUCK	05/13/11
IOWA	JEFF DAVIS AND CINDY PISTEK	05/16/11
KANSAS	BRANDON WILSON AND VICKI FRY	08/04/10
KENTUCKY	DAVID DUKE AND PHYLLIS BERRY	07/10/10
LOUISIANA	CRAIG MCCAIN AND BEVERLY GIBSON	08/05/10
MAINE	TINA LABBE	08/04/10
MASSACHUSETTS	JULIE VIVEIROS	08/06/08
MICHIGAN	ROSEMARY GALLAGHER AND ELLEN WILSON	05/13/11
MINNESOTA	CAROL TIGHE AND DAN ROOT	07/14/10
MISSISSIPPI	JOHN NORRIS AND AMY MOORE	07/22/10
MISSOURI	KATHY POST AND JACKSON JONES	06/03/10
MONTANA		
NEBRASKA	CINDY HALL AND SHERRY STUBBENDECK	08/07/10
NEVADA		
NEW HAMPSHIRE		
NEW JERSEY		
NEW MEXICO	TERRY CARTER AND THERESA WHITNEY	06/07/11
NEW YORK	LAUREEN FUESS AND KATHRYN HEMSTREET	05/17/11
NO CAROLINA	PAM POLLARD AND LORRAINE DILLARD	08/05/10
NO DAKOTA	GLORIA COVERT AND KRISTI GJESTAL	08/07/10
OHIO	MARK VANHOOSE AND CHARLENE STONE	05/16/11
OKLAHOMA	AMBER NASH AND ANDREA PETTIJOHN	06/23/11
OREGON	KEVIN MACINTYRE AND PHIL MORTON	07/14/09
PENNSYLVANIA	SHARON WEIGLE AND DAN SMEAL	06/24/11
SO CAROLINA	WES DANIELS AND GLENN THOMAS	07/19/10
SO DAKOTA	DAWN NAGEL AND KAY MASSINGALE	06/23/10
TENNESSEE	DONNY GREEN AND RANDY CARTER	08/07/10
TEXAS	DARVIN COLLINS AND DANIEL LANGE	08/12/09
UTAH	DALE FOWERS AND JIM HALL	06/15/10
VERMONT	LAWRENCE PARKER AND TRACY DERRY	06/13/11
VIRGINIA	BRENT WHITLOCK AND ANTHONY LANDRUM	08/04/10
WASHINGTON-ALASKA	GEORGE JAQUISH AND BETTY SNELL	07/06/10
WEST VIRGINIA	ERIC MC CARTNEY AND MILES VISER	06/24/11
WISCONSIN	MARY BEHM AND JOHN BAIRD	05/30/11
WYOMING		



Budget

7/1/2010 through 6/30/2011 Using 10/11 Budget

6/16/2011

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Category Description	7/1/2010 Actual	- Budget	6/30/2011 Difference
INCOME			
09-10 member dues	22,532.50	22,533.00	-0.50
Emblem sales	770.00	750.00	20.00
Interest Inc	3,933.33	7,000.00	-3,066.67
jm donations	9,831.04	9,831.00	0.04
member dues	353,973.47	404,000.00	-50,026.53
YTB Income	834.06	1,275.00	-440.94
TOTAL INCOME	391,874.40	445,389.00	-53,514.60
EXPENSES			
10 Natl Conv	27,747.76	27,000.00	-747.76
2011 Nat Conv	2,578.10	30,000.00	27,421.90
2012 Natl Conv	905.10	1,500.00	594.90
Ads	75.00	150.00	75.00
Annual Report	747.69	748.00	0.31
Area Chairs - conv	9,450.00	10,850.00	1,400.00
Awards	3,658.36	5,280.00	1,621.64
Awards-Schol-Emblems Co	764.91	980.00	215.09
Bank Charge	0.00	100.00	100.00
Benefits Committee	227.19	500.00	272.81
Cap Wiz	19,800.00	19,800.00	0.00
Computer	4,855.47	5,875.00	1,019.53
Conf call -execs	2,596.53	2,300.00	-296.53
Conservation Co Testimony	2,223.47	2,224.00	0.53
Emblems Acct	762.00	750.00	-12.00
Exec board to leg conf	6,298.53	8,000.00	1,701.47
future committee	9,035.01	9,035.00	-0.01
Gifts Given	721.72	1,000.00	278.28
Holden Mtg	220.00	220.00	0.00
Insurance, Bus	4,575.86	4,543.00	-32.86
Leg awards	429.97	1,430.00	1,000.03
Leg Co Org mtg	4,136.66	5,000.00	863.34
Leg consultant	93,965.53	96,200.00	2,234.47
Leg full conference	65,853.35	75,000.00	9,146.65
Legal, prof fees	5,596.54	7,200.00	1,603.46
Legis Committee	46,953.27	400.00	-46,553.27
Legis fly in	0.00	12,500.00	12,500.00
Membership 1st time conv	3,986.12	5,000.00	1,013.88
Membership Committee	619.51	1,125.00	505.49
Membership Jump Teams	2,988.72	12,000.00	9,011.28
mtg w management	12,918.47	6,000.00	-6,918.47
NAFEC Promo	0.00	250.00	250.00
Neg mtg	7,881.30	4,000.00	-3,881.30
Newsletter	13,721.96	16,000.00	2,278.04
Office	131.97	200.00	68.03
PAC promo cost	267.60	267.00	-0.60
PAC travel	7,626.33	7,500.00	-126.33
Peterson & DAFO mtg	2,749.54	2,750.00	0.46
Postage and Delivery	2,687.72	2,700.00	12.28
Pre-neg mtg	23,032.99	24,000.00	967.01



Budget

7/1/2010 through 6/30/2011 Using 10/11 Budget

6/16/2011

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Category Description	7/1/2010 Actual	- Budget	6/30/2011 Difference
Programs Committee	0.00	100.00	100.00
PT Work Group	6,118.40	5,000.00	-1,118.40
Publicity awards	1,326.70	4,500.00	3,173.30
Publicity Committee	270.35	1,115.00	844.65
Reorg mtg	13,855.56	12,000.00	-1,855.56
Special meetings	0.00	3,536.00	3,536.00
Stipends	5,494.44	5,262.24	-232.20
Supplies, Bus	279.80	1,500.00	1,220.20
Tax, Business			
Fed	967.92	1,000.00	32.08
State	50.00	50.00	0.00
Other Tax, Business	-13.50	0.00	13.50
TOTAL Tax, Business	1,004.42	1,050.00	45.58
Travel - Area conv	3,313.61	5,200.00	1,886.39
Travel - state conv	12,191.07	15,000.00	2,808.93
travel website	0.00	22.00	22.00
Utilities			
Internet	8,230.28	7,500.00	-730.28
Telephone	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other Utilities	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL Utilities	8,230.28	7,500.00	-730.28
WIFE conv	623.90	0.00	-623.90
TOTAL EXPENSES	445,498.78	472,162.24	26,663.46
OVERALL TOTAL	-53,624.38	-26,773.24	-26,851.14

Net Worth - As of 6/16/2011:2

As of 6/16/2011

6/16/2011

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Account	6/16/2011 Balance
ASSETS	
Cash and Bank Accounts	
CD 5-26-09	107,074.89
General fund checking	110,001.45
new CD 6-29-10, 75K	75,855.84
Ohio Legacy 40K	40,884.22
Ohio Legacy CD 1-4-09	110,010.84
Scholarship	26,190.11
TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts	470,017.35
TOTAL ASSETS	470,017.35
LIABILITIES	0.00
OVERALL TOTAL	470,017.35

Submitted by:
Shelly Odenkirk, NASCOE Treasurer





SEA Report:

Over the last four years I have been honored to serve two years as SEA alternate executive and two years as the SEA executive committee member. It has been a life changing experience that has afforded me the opportunity to see the talent, diversity, and dedication that makes FSA the greatest agency in government. There is no question the County Committee system has worked to provide the American farmer with a qualified staff that comes from rural communities and relates to the need of today's farmer.

In mid June the NASCOE Executive Board attended a meeting with management in DC. Our schedule allowed for some Congressional visits. During my visit to Capitol Hill, I noticed that the halls were completely over run with other associations and groups lobbying Congress. A few thoughts crossed my mind. "If not NASCOE, then who?" As a county office employee who is working on your behalf? Who has the resources or compassion to stand up for your job if NASCOE doesn't? The answer is simple, no one does. In the last four years I have seen many positive things take place in NASCOE but there are two critical parts missing. We need members to get involved in their state associations and we must continue to grow our PAC. If membership steps up and becomes active we will survive future budget cuts and program changes. A lot of county office employees are doing their part already; I hope each of you will. In the end we all have a lot to lose. It takes personal sacrifice to become active. Your paycheck should be worth the sacrifice.

I would like to end my last article with a huge thanks to the SEA for supporting me. When I was elected to the position, I pledged that I would be a strong advocate for county offices and our county committee system. I have kept my word and based every decision on that pledge. I want to thank my area committee chairs and judges for the work they did. I appreciate Wes Daniels for serving as my alternate and my predecessor Cliff Fussell for showing me the ropes. I look forward to seeing each of you at the National Convention.



Respectfully Submitted

Perry Dykes

SEA Executive



Hello from the NEA!

The NEA Folks remain very busy certifying acres, along with SURE, NAP, CRP, DCP, ACRE, FLP, and other FSA Program Work! We hardly have time to pay enough attention to the hot burning issues going on now with FSA. And there are many!

There are many items that have been at the forefront of NEA Members lately. And here are a few major ones:

1. NASCOE's Negotiating Program has been very much interrupted this past year. National Management Office's failure to meet this year's demands has caused concern. What will the Labor Management agreement include next year? We suspect there will be a need for changes with the NASCOE Negotiating process.
2. There is a definite concern of disconnect with NASCOE executive board, Legislative Committee, and Bob Redding that needs to be corrected. Especially now with all the legislative things going on within FSA/USDA! This could be accomplished sometimes on the NASCOE Website.
3. The Budget Shortfalls are causing things to seem like we are continuing to lose our ability to provide adequate service to our agriculture producers. Budget happenings that I have heard of in the NEA are the elimination of Temporary employee positions, limited COC meetings, limited newsletters, no supplies, no postage, cease comp & credit hour usage, taking away the DD & COR vehicles, no travel funds, and rent payment issues, just to name a few.
4. 2012 will be very challenging for FSA and NASCOE as we move forward with the new Farm Bill.
5. With recent changes by regulations, there seems to be a draining to our unique county committee system and it has caused a major issue with most employees. Employees think members of the COC are employees and should be paid out of program funding. The lack of needed COC meetings is causing more non face to face meetings which is a problem and we feel that management needs to correct this situation.
6. What is going to happen after Buyouts?
7. The possibility of employees earned pay, health, and retirement benefits being cut are a big concern also.

I have much to brag about in the NEA!

- Our 2011 NEA Rally was very productive. During the Saturday Business Meeting we had special guests who spoke to us. They were Michael Wooten, DC DAFO; Steven Peterson, DC Disaster Branch Chief; members of the MIDAS Work Group, Charlotte Sanders, RASCOE; Myron Stroup, NASCOE President; Terry Stehr, NASCOE Legislative Co-chair; and Charles Cawley, MD SED. The Scholarship Auction made over \$1300. I was pleased that there were approximately 65 members from all of the NEA States in attendance. It was a very educational, fun, and interesting meeting with good food and great company. I sincerely thank the Delaware & Maryland employees for their "Outside the Ordinary" job hosting the 2011 NEA Rally.
- In March, approximately 25 NEA members from all the states attended the 2011 Full Legislative Conference in WDC. Meetings with numerous new members of Congress went very well considering the difficult budget situation. The focus of our position papers was on recent proposals regarding our federal benefits, and cost savings measures to the government by FSA being administrator of all conservation programs & the sole agency responsible for crop reporting. It was a very productive conference and brought forward many 1st time attendees.



- The NEA had Newsletter entries. They were from New York and Delaware/Maryland. The NEA National winners are: Best Single Issue, NY June 2010 Issue (Ted McKay Editor); Best Feature Story Human Interest, "I want my mommy" (Laura Briggs, NY); and Best Feature Story Humor, "Because It Makes Me Laugh" (Lorrie Dandignac, NY).
- We were very well represented with many DSA Awards and Scholarship Awards submitted in the NEA. There were DSA awards in every category, and many exceptional youth scholarship entries made. The NEA winners were; DSA Service to Community, Tom Della Rocco, NY; DSA Service to NASCOE, Dean Pendergast, NY; DSA Service to FSA/AG, David Holck, NY; and NEA Scholarship Program, Kevin Holck, NY.
- Dean Pendergast, NY, is the National winner of the DSA Service to NASCOE Award.
- Tina Labbe, Maine, has completed fine work with the PT Opportunity Team for the NEA.
- A Jump Team opportunity occurred in the NEA this year when NASCOE was invited to the state of New Jersey to help and support their association. The journey was made by NASCOE officers Annette Hyman, John Lohr , and myself. Visits were made to every office plus the NJ STO and were very productive. Some new members have joined the association. They are getting prepared for a new year election now with added members interest in stepping up to the plate to be officers of the association. It has been a very learning experience for me with the wonderful employees of New Jersey.

We were honored to have our NASCOE President, Myron Stroup, with us at the NEA Rally. The NEA thanks him for the hard work he does as our leader of NASCOE.

Communication is THE KEY to the success of any organization! I am always telling NEA Members to get on board with the NASCOE Website! There you can find the most recent FSA News, whether it be Legislation, Budgeting, or NASCOE, just to name a few. Deb Esselman, Myron Stroup, and others are doing a great job posting the latest website news updates.

The NEA may be small in numbers, but we are large in service! I sincerely thank the NEA Alternate Lorrie Marquis, the NEA Committee Chairs, the Negotiation Consultant Howard Rood, the Committee Judges, the State Presidents, and every member for their great support during year 2011 in the NEA. I thank everyone for their great, detailed committee reports that each have provided.

This past year as Executive has been a very learning experience for me. I thank you so much for the never ending support and for YOU allowing me to be a part of this wonderful team; working together for the benefit of all FSA County Office Employees. This has been an opportunity for me to give something back to NASCOE, which has given me so much over the years.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patsy Wiles, NEA Executive Committeeperson





Farkle©, Anyone?

Have you ever played the game “Farkle©”? My daughter introduced it to me not too long ago. The game goes like this; you roll six dice, ones and fives count 100 and 50 respectively. If you get three of a kind or more or a straight (1-6) or three pairs you can also score. As long as you keep scoring you can keep rolling, but if you don’t want to risk it you can “bank” the points you have and pass the dice to the next player. You can keep rolling until you “Farkle©”, or fail to roll a scoring die.

I was playing this game the other day and thought about how much this game can be like life. You can take the easy way out and quit early, or you can take a chance and keep going. If you quit early, you’re not going to have a very high score and you’re probably going to lose the game. If you keep going you are taking a chance of losing your turn without adding any points, but you have the potential of scoring very high and winning the game. If NASCOE is going to keep winning we may have to take some risks.

Times are changing. For example, funding seems to be getting more and more limited. This year for the first time in many, many years FSA did not pay for a negotiation meeting with NASCOE. This is just one example of the changes that are taking place.

With that in mind, we need to come up with different ways of doing things. There will be some discussions at the National Convention about things that can be done to ensure that NASCOE continues to be a vital organization, yet change with the times. We need your input. What things are important to you? Some of us have been around a long, long time and sometimes can’t see what changes need to be made. Some of us would just like to keep the sure thing and not take the chance of “Farkling”.

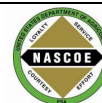
Sometimes we have to take a chance if we’re going to keep scoring. Please be thinking about ways we can keep our organization vital in these changing, uncertain times. If you’re not going to be able to attend the convention, please let your Area Exec know your thoughts.

Let’s keep NASCOE rolling!



Cindy Hall

NWA Executive



Be Informed, Be Involved

Charlene Neukomm
MWA Exec



Now, more than ever, is the time to come together. It is the time for ALL FSA EMPLOYEES to band together to be UNIFIED! Every day there are articles published that describe the scrutiny that Agriculture and Farm Programs are facing. We cannot sit by the roadside and let any opportunities pass us by. We must become unified now and be ready to act when called upon.

How can you help? How can you be involved? For starters, become a NASCOE member. If you were a member last year, now is the time to renew your membership for the upcoming year. If you have never been a member or have let your membership lapse, JOIN NOW! One Unified Voice speaks loudly. The more NASCOE members there are, the louder our voice speaks.

Join CAPWIZ. It is easy to sign up for and easy to use. You can join by going to www.nascoe.org. CAPWIZ does not send junk to your email nor will you be inundated with junk messages. It is a service that NASCOE has paid for that allows an Action Alert to be delivered into your home email inbox. (You can never use your government email or government computer for CAPWIZ.) The Action Alert is written by NASCOE's Legislative Committee and is usually a message that is time sensitive and needs to be delivered to Congress. The unified message is already written for you. You need only to access it and fill in your name and address and hit send. Your zip code gets your message to the correct Congressman for your district. If your Congressman gets 50 or 60 messages all with the same opinion on a topic, he/she is very likely to give it some attention.

Donate to the NASCOE PAC. What is a PAC? PAC stands for Political Action Committee. As I see it, our PAC is a financial donation from NASCOE members to support elected officials who support Agriculture and the NASCOE purpose. Imagine what kind of impact we could have if every FSA COF employee gave only \$1 per pay period. With 8,000 FSA COF employees, that would add up very quickly and could do so much for Agriculture and for FSA Employees! You can even opt to have it done by payroll deduction. Would you really miss \$1 or even \$2 from your check? That is a bottle of water or a soda every two weeks to donate to a cause that is working to protect YOU. You can sign up for the PAC right on the NASCOE website.

NASCOE has created a database, with the help of the State Associations. Please submit your home email address and/or home mailing address when you renew your membership this year. The database has been created to assist in things like verifying membership eligibility for JM Marketing Insurance and getting Legislative information out to the membership, as Legislative information cannot be disseminated with the government system.

Every two weeks, a new publication of the NASCOE Now is released. It contains the latest, up to date information that affects you. Please make sure to check it out. Do not forget to check out our website at www.nascoe.org.

If you have any questions about getting involved, please feel free to contact me. I would be glad to hear from you. My email is mwaexec.charlene@yahoo.com.



Rose Colored Glasses

Twenty three years ago when I began work for ASCS it was an exciting time. I graduated college on July 30th and started work on August 1st. Wow my first paycheck was gratifying, as small as it was, and the challenge of a new job invigorating! Having an opportunity to work with farmers and ranchers seemed to be a perfect fit for me. That first week on the job I joined NASCOE, and the following year I attend my first State Convention, which also happened to be the National Convention in Tulsa (Tulsa Time in 89).

Over the next Twenty plus years I lived in three locations here in Oklahoma, raising my family and always trying to be the kind of employee I believed anyone should be, regardless of their job or circumstance. I have been blessed and the job with FSA has been a good fit for my family and I. NASCOE has also been an awesome experience and looking back, while I would do some things differently, for the most part my career has been very rewarding.

Looking to the future it would be very easy to see a very dark future for FSA and NASCOE, (if you will) somewhat similar to wearing dark colored glasses. We have many challenges in front of us as we begin a new farm bill. From misconceptions about Federal employees and the job we were hired to perform, to miscommunication and unfavorable reviews of our county committee system of government, we are under attack. All of these things have a tendency to divert us from the job we have before us, serving the American farmer and rancher. Just like today, there were folks back in 1988 telling me I was crazy to go to work for ASCS. I have also heard many of the old timers talking about 1972 and its many difficulties. We have always had difficulties. However, NASCOE and FSA have always risen to the challenge and we will do so in the future. So while many are choosing daily to wear dark colored glasses, my desires are to look at things from a positive perspective. With this my last article as an executive committee member of NASCOE, I want to leave you with a few of my most inner thoughts on life and choosing to wear rose colored glasses.

1. Maintain your spiritual life. Having faith in Almighty God and Jesus Christ has allowed me to weather many storms at the office, and in my personal life.
2. Give time to your family. Show them and tell them you love them.
3. Be kind and considerate to your office staff and co-workers; we spend about as much time with them as anyone else. Let them know you appreciate them.
4. Live life by the golden rule; do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
5. Put in a full day's work for a day's pay. One of our trademarks as COF employees has been our work ethic. Give the taxpayer everything you can while you are on the job.
6. Always remember our NASCOE Motto; Loyalty, Courtesy, Effort & Service!
7. Last but not least, go home when office hours end. The job will always be there when you return and everyone needs to rest and be recharged.

In closing, I want to say it has been my honor to serve the SWA and all of NASCOE on the Executive Committee; May God Bless America and May God Bless each of you.

Kevin Dale, NASCOE
SWA Executive Committee





NASCOE Summer 2011 Awards, Scholarships and Emblems (ASE)

Hello my fellow NASCOEites! What a great time of year for the NASCOE ASE Programs! The NASCOE DSA winners and the NASCOE Scholarship winners have been selected by the judging committee. It was so gratifying contacting each winner by phone to let them know the fantastic news! Each and every winner was so excited to learn the news that they had won. I would also like to personally thank all of the State DSA and Scholarship Committee Chairpersons and Judges, Area DSA and Scholarship Committee Chairpersons and Judges, and National judges for their countless hours promoting, tabulating, and making the ultimate decisions that lead to the National DSA and Scholarship winners! In addition, I would like to personally like to thank the State and Area Emblems Chairpersons for their enormous efforts delivering NASCOE Emblems items to your State Conventions and Area Rallies! Thank you all so much!

Congratulations to all of our State and Area DSA and Scholarship winners and runners-up! On behalf of NASCOE, I wish all of you the very best in your future endeavors!

It is my extreme honor to announce our three National Distinguished Service Award winners and our National NASCOE Scholarship winner, and our NASCOE Members Continuing Educations Scholarship Winners. Your winners this year are:



Dean Pendergast, Geneseo, NY 2011 Distinguished Service to NASCOE



Joseph L. Schultz, Pickstown, SD 2011 Distinguished Service to Community



Ellen Alveraz, Abilene, KS 2011 Distinguished Service to FSA – Agriculture



Renita Goetz, from South Dakota is the 2011 NASCOE Scholarship Winner



Tammy Lake, NWA 2011 NASCOE Members Continuing Education Scholarship Winner



Jennifer Norton, MWA 2011 NASCOE Members Continuing Education Scholarship Winner



Amanda Hughes, SEA 011 NASCOE Members Continuing Education Scholarship Winner



Jessica Masching, MWA 2011 NASCOE Members Continuing Education Scholarship Winner

Congratulation to all of the National and Area DSA, Traditional NASCOE Scholarship and NASCOE Members Continuing Education Scholarship Award Winners! We are all very proud of you and wish you the very best in achieving your long term goals! For the complete nomination forms, please make sure and visit www.nascoe.org shortly after the NASCOE Convention in August to see the pictures of our 2011 winners!



NASCOE Memorial Scholarship Fund

As the title above suggests, the NASCOE Scholarship program is a tribute to all of our fallen members that have touched our lives in so many ways. We have discussed changing the name to honor a recently lost member of the NASCOE family, and ultimately decided that this is a Memorial Scholarship program that honors those that have devoted their lives to ensuring all NASCOE Members receive the same benefits as their GS counterparts.

Purchasing items at the NASCOE Auction to help raise funds is awesome if you can be there. If you are not going to make it to Corpus Christi and would like to honor one of your fallen loved ones by memorializing them with a donation to the NASCOE Scholarship fund, please let me know and I can send you the Memorial donation form (oasen@charter.net) God Bless and Thank you all!

NASCOE Scholarship Auction Items Needed!

Please let me know if you will be shipping your NASCOE auctions to the convention. I will provide you with the address and date the items should arrive. We'll take it from there! Email me at oasen@charter.net by July 15th if you need this information.

NASCOE Emblems Notes:

If you have been holding off to make your purchases at the NASCOE Store at www.nascoeemblemsonline.com and shop the great deals on a secured web site, now is the time to buy your favorite items! We are at the point in sales right now that Era Jarrard (retired FSA employee and now owner of the NASCOE Store) gives the Scholarship fund the max she can afford in commissions. Era has been so good to us and the Scholarship program, please take advantage of her special offers and proudly display your "new look" FSA logo items! Thank you Era! If all of you in your office purchase new clothing items with the new logo, please get a group photo and send it to me! I will post it in the NASCOE Now for all to see! Not only is it a great moral booster, but you are also benefiting the NASCOE Scholarship fund! **Reminder to State Outreach Specialists**, Era Jarrard, the NASCOE Store, is a female owned small business making her a perfect candidate to meet the JWOD requirements for your upcoming purchases!

I hope all of you are signed up to get the alerts when the latest edition of NASCOE Now is posted! If not, please go to www.nascoe.org and simply click on the Sign Up Now button on NASCOE Home page. NASCOE Now has up to the date information concerning Awards, Scholarships and Emblems (not to mention all of the other information you want to know!). I try and get information to you in each edition to make sure you are current on all that deadlines, emblem specials, and scholarship programs available to you and your family members.

Have a great Summer and I hope to see all of you in Corpus Christi in August!



Respectfully submitted,

Tom Oasen

NASCOE Awards, Scholarships and Emblems (ASE) Chairperson



MEMBERSHIP Committee News

How is the weather where you are??? In Oklahoma, it's been HOT just about as far back as I can remember now. We have set some record temperatures lately... I was hoping to see spring! Instead we have had a preview of August!

As summer is upon us, so are the reminders of what needs to be done before the National Convention gets here. Hopefully you have reserved your room in Corpus Christi. You will not be disappointed. Texas has an amazing time planned.

So here are my reminders: Forms for most anything I will need from you are on the Membership page of the NASCOE website. These include: the NASCOE Memorial Form (due July 1st) and the 40, 45 & 50 year Membership Recognitions (were due by June 15th). If you haven't sent in the form for 40 or 50 years of membership, send me an email and I'll let you know if you can still submit it. It will depend on how late I can place my order. If your state has a county that has 5-35 years of continuous membership (in 5 year increments), please let me know and I will get the certificate template to you so that you can present it to your counties.

Dues for the 4th quarter need to be in NO LATER than June 30th. This is very soon and so far we have not received many. PLEASE remember to get your dues in.

If your home email address has changed, please let me know so that I can update the database. Also, if you don't receive periodic messages from me, then I don't have your home email address and would appreciate you sending it to me so I can add it to the database.

I am continuously amazed at the hard work that goes in to making sure NASCOE runs smoothly. We have some truly devoted people that give their free time to work for us. Please remember to thank your NASCOE representatives. Consider becoming more active in your state organization.

Thanks for everything you all do to support NASCOE!



Angie Bierman – NASCOE Membership Chair

nascoembrshpgal@yahoo.com



NASCOE Publicity Report

June 2011

Over the past several months NASCOE has issued several emails using the National Database. We received that information from your state's membership information. If your state did not provide this information to the National Membership Chair, you are missing out on up to date information. This database is also used when members request a password for the members on page on the NASCOE website. When I get a request, I verify membership with the National Chair; I then issue the password and send a reply through the nascoewebmaster email account with the sign on id and password. Since October I have issued over 600 user id/passwords. Our account with Bravenet is only for 1000 passwords and I have inquired about getting more space added but currently 1000 is their maximum. One thing I have noticed is that there are very few of the ids and passwords being used. I don't want to go through the process of reissuing, so I am not deleting records already established. If you think you requested one or lost your info, please get hold of me prior to making another request. As a reminder, you have to be a member of your state/NASCOE to receive access to these pages. I have only had a few that we have denied access. That is pretty good considering the number of requests. One other thing to keep in mind is that the system does not automatically issue the password. I get the email and have to do the verifications. Both Angie and I do have families and commitments other than NASCOE so sometimes there is a delay in getting the information back to you. If you have questions or need one quickly, Please email me directly. I sometimes don't have time to daily check that email account.

The publicity committee has stayed busy issuing the NASCOE Now issues and another Newsletter. The website has also be maintained and updated! The site contains our most up to date information for members and I encourage you to check this site often. A big thank you to our webmaster, Deb Esselman-Baird from Wisconsin! Please contact your Area Publicity Chair or myself if you have any items that you need assistance with....

Make sure your state gets your email information to the National Membership chair! This is a different distribution list compared to CAP WIZ and the website update notification listing. If you need assistance, let me know! There is a lot of information out there available...USE IT!

Stay Informed!

Tammy Eibey

NASCOE Publicity Chair





Communication

This is an interesting and multi-faceted word. What does it mean to you?

Generally it means to receive and respond to verbal or written messages between individuals or groups. Sounds pretty easy, but good communication seems to be a lost art in many cases. I experienced this just today with my staff. We were all talking AT each other, but not really communicating our real thoughts in a good manner. I had to stop the words that were freely flowing out and bring us all back to the issue we were trying to discuss. Eventually we were on the same page, but it took a conscious effort to get there and feel as though we were actually communicating. I think everyone can relate to that.

NASCOE officers have been making the same concerted effort to be sure everyone is getting the information sent out to everyone in a clear and consistent manner so that there is little room for wrong interpretation. This can be extraordinarily difficult because the members have their own thoughts and concerns and may not always understand fully what the officers are trying to convey. That is called a “barrier” in communication classes. We all need to comprehend that what the officers send out has been well thought out and presented in the best possible manner.

In order to ensure that ALL members are getting the SAME messages at the SAME time, the officers post their communications with members on the NASCOE website at www.nascoe.org. This enables all members to see what the President or Vice President may have to say on various issues without 10 forwards and maybe some side comments. That is the goal of good and open communication.

Now, the burden lies on the members to also provide good feedback to the officers via the state officers, the area Execs. This line of communication provides the best means of response to the officers. If the state officers and the Execs receive comments on similar subjects, they can put those together and give a summary to the officers, rather than Myron or John trying to read and sort sometimes volumes of emails on perhaps just a few topics. This is far more efficient than getting mired down in massive amounts of messages.

We all need to remember that communication, good communication, is a two way street. There are many issues facing FSA employees now and in the near future. I know our officers are working tirelessly on our behalf and are committed to keeping the members informed. But, it is also your responsibility to check the website regularly for updates and the latest information.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Esselman
NASCOE Webmaster
www.nascoe.org





BUDGET, BUDGET, BUDGET

This subject is currently driving everything from benefits, staffing, farm bill and everything in between. When the appropriations process gets tight enough that you begin to see cuts in the USDA budget that affect nutrition programs it is time to be concerned. I hope everyone has been keeping up to date on the pieces of legislation that have been introduced that will negatively impact our benefits. Please read Tony Augustine's article for more detailed information on those pieces of legislation. Everyone is painfully aware by now of the employee cuts that are projected or being implemented as a result of the House passed agriculture appropriations bill. This could have been much worse if not for the vigilance of Bob Redding, your leadership and relationships that have been built with all of our legislative tools. There were several amendments filed that would have taken additional funds from FSA to reinstate funding for nutritional programs and other pet projects. Ultimately these were defeated to preserve the final appropriations number that Farm Service Agency received in the House. We hope the Senate appropriations will restore some additional funding and we will be working hard behind the scenes to make this happen. NASCOE's position is that county office employees are mission critical for implementation of federal farm programs and every county level employee possible must be kept in place. The greatest fear is that massive employee cuts of the projected magnitude will lead to further efforts of reorganization and office closure impacting our ability to service the farmers and ranchers of this country.

It is even rumored that the farm bill may be rushed through this fall with reconciliation in an effort to avoid additional deeper cuts. This article is not about gloom and doom but **IT IS A CALL TO ACTION!** Every member cannot be an officer, executive board member or committee chair. Many of you are unable to attend national, area or state meetings. However, you possess just as much power as persons in leadership or any meeting attendee. Please do not sit idly by as we are engaged in battle for the very existence of the Farm Service Agency. Don't wait until the final decisions have been made and the battle is lost to ask the question what could I have done?

There are at least four invaluable legislative tools that you have at your disposal that do not require you to ever leave your local area. Political Action Committee (PAC) is one of those tools. **The biweekly commitment of the value of 2 bottles of water can have a major impact when combined with other members collectively.** If you are one of the 420 PAC members recruit one new member and if you have been considering establishing an allotment do it **NOW!** FSA needs you! An educational power point is on the web along with step by step instructions with everything you need to get started. If you need additional assistance with an allotment contact Charla Daly or Mike Mayfield. The next is the commitment to a stronger NAFEC. We need the



strongest partner possible in the battles we are fighting over budget and farm bill. **YOU** can help by signing up your county committee for NAFEC. If COC members will sign up for payroll deduction they are full members of NAFEC regardless how many meetings are held per year. Please do not delay in helping with this initiative. We need them now so they can be educated on how to help preserve our agency and its service to producers. Another of those tools is CAPWIZ. We have about 40% of our employees participating to send their opinions and positions to congressional members on issues that affect FSA employees. We need to be greater than 50%. The volume of responses that we are able to generate directly affects the priority placed on our issues. Finally, visits with your congressional members or staff while they are in the district. Developing that personal contact locally makes all other responses much more effective. Members and staff are much more accessible in small hometown forums and they are very interested in hearing from constituents. Three of these tools cost you absolutely nothing and one costs a minimal \$1.50 a week. Preferably choose to participate in all four activities. However, at least choose one or two to assist you leaders and legislative team. We cannot stress enough what a dangerous budget environment we are in and how important the outcome of the next farm bill is to the future the Farm Service Agency and its employees.

In conclusion, your legislative team will continue to diligently watch and work on your behalf on benefits legislation, appropriations, county office and committee preservation and the farm bill. If you have any questions about any of the legislative tools that have been discussed or legislative issues in general please do not hesitate to call or email a member of your legislative team. Our emails and phone numbers are available on the NASCOE web page. Any assistance that you can provide your legislative team will be greatly appreciated.



NASCOE Legislative Co-Chairs

Mike Mayfield and Terry Stehr



BENEFITS Under Attack

As Congress ponders ways to reduce the federal deficit and spending, federal employee benefits have been targeted as an area where the public generally supports making changes that will affect all federal employees. Since January, many pieces of legislation have been introduced that would negatively affect our benefits, but most so far have not gained any momentum and are sitting idle in committee.

One bill recently submitted is HR-2114 which would reduce the federal workforce by 10% through attrition and only allow only one employee to be hired for every three employees that leave. The legislative committee will follow this bill to see if it will gain momentum or not. Another idea that has surfaced, but does not yet have legislation introduced is to change the retirement annuity computation from using the employee's high 3 average salary to a high five average salary. This would reduce the retirement annuity for both CSRS and FERS employees.

A frequently discussed idea is to further freeze COLAs for another three years beyond the two year freeze already implemented for a total of five years. The rationale for this is the perception that government employees are paid more than the average employee in the private sector. This flawed logic ignores the fact that lower paying tasks such as janitorial work are contracted out by the government and the federal workforce is more highly educated and specialized than the private sector.

One of the ideas that is gaining momentum and has support from both Republicans and Democrats is to have FERS employees contribute a greater percentage of their salary toward their FERS annuity. Currently, FERS employees pay 0.8% of their salary each pay period for their FERS retirement contribution. Recent discussions among Congressional leaders and Vice President Biden want to increase your contribution from 0.8% to 5.8% of your salary each pay period without any increase in your retirement annuity when you retire. An employee that makes \$45,000 per year has \$13.84 each pay period deducted from his/her paycheck. If the increase is adopted to make you pay 5% more into FERS you would have to pay in \$100.38 each pay period. That means each paycheck would be \$86.54 less than now. It will be very important to have all employees express their opposition to their Congressmen if any legislation includes this proposal.

Submitted by:

Tony Augustine

MWA Legislative Chairperson



NASCOE PAC REPORT

Respectfully submitted by: Charla Daly, SEA Legislative Chairperson

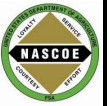
I have some VERY good news to report on the NASCOE PAC! The NASCOE Legislative Team set a goal of \$45,000 in annual contributions and 575 members contributing between the 2010 and 2011 National Convention. As of today we are projected to reach \$44,746 in annual contributions and 435 members contributing! This is an AWESOME show of how dedicated the members of NASCOE are to protecting and growing our agency with the issues that we are currently facing. Since the National Convention in Hot Springs Arkansas, the NASCOE PAC has grown by 167 new members or increased allotments!

Currently, South Carolina is leading the charge with an increase of 440% membership for 2011! North Carolina is second with 250% increase! Hat's off to both of these states for stepping up and supporting our NASCOE PAC! We are very close to reaching our 2011 goals, but why would we want to just meet them when we could very easily exceed them!

Any NASCOE member that joins the NASCOE PAC and contributes at least \$3 per pay period (\$1.50 per week) or any current NASCOE PAC member that increases their current allotment by at least \$3 per pay period will be eligible for a drawing for one of 5 one hundred dollar bills at the National Convention in Corpus Christi, TX! Also, the state with the largest membership increase will be awarded \$250 at the 2011 National Convention!

If you are not currently a NASCOE PAC member, now is the most critical time to start contributing. It's easy and it only takes a couple of minutes. You can find instructions on the NASCOE website, or contact your NASCOE Area Legislative Chairperson.





Got Stress?

In light of all the "Cost Savings" measures being utilized throughout the FSA and other Federal Agencies, I thought a little help on how to deal with the stress associated with the workplace might be of some help. Along with our everyday duties we now face the uncertainty of what our workforce will look like come the first of September due to the upcoming VERA (early-out) period. That alone has caused stress for some employees by necessitating they make an extremely difficult decision in a relatively limited timeframe.

The following information has been borrowed from About.com.

How to Deal with Stress At Work

According to research, the percentage of Americans who are stressed at work is high, and it's only getting higher. According to the CDC's National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, studies have found the number of Americans who are "extremely stressed at work" range between 29% to 40%. And, in a poll on this site, over half of respondents are so stressed at work that they feel close to or consumed by burnout much of the time.

Unfortunately, work stress has significant health consequences that range from the relatively benign -- more colds and flus -- to the more serious, heart disease and metabolic syndrome. (See this article for more on [job stress](#) and health.)

Because stress at work is so common, finding a low-stress job may be difficult or impossible for many people. A more realistic choice would be to simply adopt more effective strategies to reduce stress at work. Here are some stress management techniques to try.

Start Your Day Off Right

After scrambling to get the kids fed and off to school, dodging traffic and combating [road rage](#), and gulping down coffee in lieu of something healthy, many people come in already stressed, and more reactive to stress at work. In fact, you may be surprised by how much more reactive to stress you are when you have a stressful morning. If you start off the day with good nutrition, proper planning, and a [positive attitude](#), you may find the stress of the workplace rolling off your back more easily. (See this article for [morning stress relief](#) strategies.)



Be Clear on Requirements One of the factors that contributes to [job burnout](#) is unclear requirements. If you don't know exactly what's expected of you, or if the requirements keep changing with little notice, you may find yourself much more stressed than necessary. If you find yourself falling into the trap of never knowing if what you're doing is enough, it may help to have a talk with your supervisor and go over expectations, and strategies for meeting them. This can relieve stress for both of you!

Stay Away From Conflict

Because interpersonal [conflict](#) takes a toll on your physical and emotional health, and because conflict among co-workers is so difficult to escape, it's a good idea to avoid conflict at work as much as possible. That means don't gossip, don't share too many of your personal opinions about religion and politics, and try to steer clear of colorful [office humor](#). Try to avoid those people at work who don't work well with others. If conflict finds you anyway, try these [conflict resolution](#) strategies.

Stay Organized

Even if you're a naturally disorganized person, planning ahead to stay organized can greatly decrease stress at work. Being organized with your time means less rushing in the morning to avoid being late and rushing to get out at the end of the day. Keeping yourself organized means avoiding the negative effects of [clutter](#), and being more efficient with your work. For more on organization, visit [About.com's Personal Organization site](#).

Be Comfortable

Another surprising stressor at work is physical discomfort. You may not notice the stress you experience when you're in an uncomfortable chair for a few minutes. But if you practically live in that chair when you're at work, you can have a sore back and be more reactive to stress because of it. Even small things like office noise can be distracting and cause low-grade frustration. Do what you can to ensure that you're working from a quiet, comfortable and soothing workspace. (See this article on [noise pollution](#) or this one on [creating an ergonomic workspace](#).)

Forget Multitasking

Multitasking was once heralded as a fantastic way to maximize one's time and get more done in a day. Then people started realizing that when they had a phone in their ear and were making calculations at the same time, their speed and accuracy (not to mention sanity) suffered. There is a certain kind of frazzled feeling that comes from splitting one's focus that doesn't work well for most people. Rather than multitasking, try a new strategy known as [chunking](#).

Walk at Lunch

Many people are feeling ill effects from leading a sedentary lifestyle. One way you can combat that, and manage stress at work at the same time, is to get some exercise during your lunch break and perhaps take short exercise breaks throughout the day. This can help you blow off steam, lift your mood, and get into better shape. (See these tips on getting [exercise for busy people](#).)

Keep Perfectionism In Check

Being a high achiever can help you feel good about yourself and excel at work. Being a perfectionist, on the other hand, can drive you and the people around you a little nuts. Especially in busy, fast-paced jobs, you may not be able to do everything perfectly. But striving to just do your best and then congratulating yourself on the effort is a good strategy. Your results will actually be better (perfectionists tend to stress about little mistakes and sometimes drop the ball because they can't do things well enough), and you'll be much less stressed at work. (Take this quiz to examine your [perfectionism](#) level, and to find strategies for [overcoming perfectionism](#).)

Listen to Music on the Drive Home

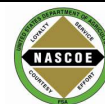
Listening to [music](#) brings many benefits, and can offer an effective way to relieve stress after work. Combating the stress of a long day at work with your favorite music on the drive home can make you less stressed when you get home, and more prepared to interact with the people in your life.

For more on workplace stress and other life issues, visit the following link: http://stress.about.com/od/workplacestress/Managing_Job_Stress_Getting_Along_With_CoWorkers_and_Thriving.htm

Respectfully submitted by:



Phillip Morton
NASCOE Benefits Committee Chairperson



Programs Committee

Get ready for fun and sun in Corpus Christi, Texas at the National Convention. I hope everyone can make it to this big occasion. I know the folks in Texas have worked really hard at getting this year's convention together.

I want to thank everyone for all of their hard work during this tough year and for the experience as Program Chairperson. I will not be serving next year as it is time for someone else to hold the reigns. It has been a great experience and getting to meet all of the wonderful people across the nation.

I will continue to encourage everyone to submit your request to your Area Programs Chairperson, for the SWA(TX, NM, OK, KS, UT, CA, HI, AZ, CO & NV) Mike McDonald mike.mcdonald@tx.usda.gov, for the NWA(WA, OR, ID, MT, NE, WY, SD, & ND) Linda Benzel lindabenzel@msn.com, for the MWA(WI, MI, MN, OH, IN, IA, IL, & MS) Rosemarie Gallagher rosemarie.gallagher@mi.usda.gov, SEA(KY, VA, AR, TN, NC, SC, LA, MS, AL, GA & FL) Patricia Sorensen patricia.sorensen@fl.usda.gov, NEA(CT, RI, DE, MD, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, VT, & WV) Sandy Truslow sandy.truslow@me.usda.gov or me at john.marquess@tx.usda.gov. If you are new at this and are unsure how this works let me explain. During your workday, you may encounter obstacles in implementing one of FSA's various programs and determined that there is a better process to accomplish the same goal. NASCOE provides a voice for this process so that your constructive ideas and solutions will be delivered to the National Office, to hopefully streamline program delivery. This is also an opportunity to voice your excitement and support for the processes that are working great, to hopefully encourage, similar types of strategies and ideas that are already successful. This opportunity that NASCOE offers is your communication line to the National Office from the front line. The Programs Committee is ready to assist you in delivering your innovative ideas so FSA may continue successful Farm Program delivery. As always I look forward to working with each of you.

Please check out the Programs Committee page on the NASCOE website to see the suggestions and responses we have received already.

A big thanks to Linda Benzel, Patricia Sorensen, Mike McDonald, Rosemarie Gallagher, and Sandy Truslow who served this year as Area Program Chairs, for all the wonderful help and hard work they provided to this committee over the last twelve months.

I look forward to hearing your great ideas. I can still be reached by email at john.marquess@tx.usda.gov, by phone at (work) 254-386-3913, (work) 325-648-3118, (home) 254-386-5622, or (cell) 254-386-7949.

See you in Corpus!

Thanks,



John Marquess

National Programs Committee Chair



2011 NASCOE CONVENTION

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS

AUGUST 11-13, 2011

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10TH

King Ranch 8 am - 4:30 pm www.king-ranch.com

USS Lexington/Texas State Aquarium 9 am - 3 pm

[USS Lexington](#)

[Texas State Aquarium](#)

Day at the Beach *On your own*

NASCOE Golf Tournament 1 pm

Southwest Area Night "Savor the Southwest" 6:30 pm - Midnight

YOUTH ACTIVITY-Get Acquainted Hospitality 4 pm - 5:30 pm

THURSDAY, AUGUST 11TH

NASCOE Scholarship Auction 6 pm - 8:30 pm

Casino Night "Ocean's 13th" 9 pm - Midnight

YOUTH ACTIVITY-Texas State Aquarium - 10 am - 3:30 pm

www.texasstateaquarium.org



FRIDAY, AUGUST 12

RASCOE Luncheon 11:30 am - 1 pm

Texas Night "Sea, Sun and Fun" Beach Night 6:30 pm - Midnight

YOUTH ACTIVITY -Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History 10 am - 3:30 pm www.ccmuseum.com

SATURDAY, AUGUST 13

Social Hour 6 pm - 7 pm

NASCOE Awards "A Night Under the Texas Stars" 7 pm - 9 pm

DANCE - LIVE BAND 9 pm - 1 am

YOUTH ACTIVITY -NRA Safety Rules and Beware of Bullies 9:30 am - 11:30 am

YOUTH ACTIVITY -Arts and Crafts 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm

YOUTH ACTIVITY -Pizza Party with Games 6 pm - 9 pm

For information regarding reservation availability you may call

1-800-843-6664 (1-800-The-Omni).

Make sure you let them know you are with NASCOE

Sign up for the Loyalty Program for special benefits and offers!

You can purchase TASCQE Raffle Tickets for

\$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00 for the chance to win

Gift cards in the amount of

\$500, \$250, \$100, \$75, \$50 and \$25



2011 NASCOE CONVENTION

"SPARKLING CITY BY THE SEA"

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS
AUGUST 11-13, 2011

by Gaylynn Covey, Convention Publicity Co-Chair

Here it is close to the end of March and NASCOE committees have been preparing for the NASCOE Convention for the past year. We are going to have a TEXAS-size good time and fun scheduled events for you to enjoy while in beautiful Corpus Christi. Included in this issue is the Registration form which you get a discount if you turn it in by June 15th. Don't forget that the cut-off date to make your hotel reservation is **July 15, 2011!** That is fast approaching so let get those registration forms and reservations made before it's too late!

There are so many activities for young and old to enjoy! This will be the perfect time for families to enjoy and explore Texas and not only some of its history but the beautiful beaches.

On Wednesday you can select from a variety of activities – There is the **USS Lexington and Texas State Aquarium, The famous King Ranch**, and for those who just want to relax and enjoy the beach, there are several beaches that you will want to check out-Port Aransas, Mustang Island, South Padre National Seashore and Corpus Public Beach. And of course we can't forget the avid golfers- the **Golf Tournament** will tee off at 1:00 pm. Be sure and include Handicap and preferred team members on your registration form.

Take note that there is a lot of **FREE** events that you will want to attend and dress as a Southwest/Western character for Southwest Area Night, and as a Casino/Gambler/Gangster character for Casino Night. Texas Night will be a Beach Party you won't want to miss- and this will be the perfect time to wear those LIME GREEN convention t-shirts!

Here is a little information about some of the tours and what you will encounter and experience while there.

Imaginations run wild aboard the **USS LEXINGTON**. The sights, the sounds are so real and so intense you become a part of the story the second you step foot aboard this World War II era aircraft carrier. There's an adventure around every corner as you make your way through the maze of tunnels and ladders. Your seat becomes a cockpit in our **Flight Simulator**. You get behind the controls at our all-new **Virtual Battle Stations**. And the three story tall **MEGA Theater**...well you'll just have to see that for yourself.

Exhibits at the Texas State Aquarium

Dolphin Bay

Get an up close and personal look at Atlantic bottlenose dolphins. Our 400,000-gallon saltwater exhibit features three male dolphins: Shadow, Kai and DJ, and visitors can experience these majestic marine mammals above the water and even below, in our unique underwater viewing room, featuring a 70-foot acrylic window.



Hawn Wild Flight Theater

Featuring a variety of trained birds, including hawks, owls, falcons and parrots, and other exotic small mammals, these highly entertaining and informative presentations showcase various feathered species and deliver an inspiring and empowering message of wildlife conservation.

Tortuga Cay

All of the sea turtles in Tortuga Cay were rehabilitated and then deemed them non-releasable. Tortuga Cay's natural lagoon-like habitat allows visitors to view the sea turtles from above and below the water.

Otter Creek

North American River Otters are native to Texas and Otter Creek provides the perfect opportunity to watch these playful animals interact with each other and with their trainers. Through protected contact, our trainers are able to have enrichment sessions multiple times daily when visitors can witness the high intelligence of these otters.

Eagle Pass

Opened in April 2009, Eagle Pass promotes a strong message of backyard conservation. All of the raptors featured in this exhibit were rescued and rehabilitated at the Texas State Aquarium. Perhaps the most regal raptor of the exhibit is Grace, a bald eagle. Rehabilitated in Alaska, Grace was deemed non-releasable and will have a home in Eagle Pass, where visitors can get a personal look at America's bird, something you may not be able to do in the wild.

Measuring over 60 feet long, 20 feet high, and containing 36,000 pounds of rockwork shaped to mimic a west Texas canyon, Eagle Pass is a first-class bird of prey exhibit that showcases both the Aquarium's raptor collection and wildlife rehabilitation efforts. Our goal is that Aquarium guests will walk away with a better understanding of these majestic creatures, and more importantly, what each of us can do to ensure their survival.

Living Shores

Several touch pools, six aquariums, and three interactive computer kiosks help the public discover the different habitats of the Laguna Madre, and Padre Island bays and estuaries. Visitors can safely interact with species such as hermit crabs, lightning whelks, and pencil urchins in our largest indoor touch pool.

Islands of Steel

Get an underwater view of the habitat formed around an oil platform in the Gulf of Mexico. Islands of Steel is our largest indoor exhibit, at 125,000 gallons, and it represents an underwater view of the habitat formed around an oil platform. In the past, when oil and gas companies were finished with a platform, they would dismantle it and unknowingly destroy the habitat.

Flower Gardens

This 40,000-gallon exhibit replicates an actual coral reef located approximately 300 miles straight out the Aquarium's back door in the Gulf of Mexico. Watch tarpon, green moray eels, porcupine fish, French angelfish, cow-nose stingrays and barracuda interact with our divers during our daily Diver in the Water presentation.

Floating Phantoms

Our Floating Phantoms exhibit is fascinating to visitors-seeing these stinging creatures from a safe perspective is incredible. This 800-gallon exhibit at the Aquarium features a wide variety of species including Pacific sea nettles, moon jellies, purple stripe jellies and Atlantic sea nettles, many of which are found on our local beaches.

Amazon

Dare to enter the mysterious world of an Amazon rainforest. Encounter the exotic, the fierce and the deadly as you explore the diversity of species, our connections with the animals and products of the rainforests, and the need to preserve this unique natural resource.

Stingray Flats

Don't be scared! Touch sharks and stingrays in our largest outdoor touch pool, and learn what you can do to protect stingrays in the wild



Swamp Tales

Swamp Tales tells the conservation success story of the American Alligator, as well as highlights species that are currently threatened and what visitors can do to help protect them.

Visitors will learn about the challenges that animals in our region have faced and how people have made progress in solving these challenges. Some stories are successful; some species are still threatened, endangered, or protected, and guests will learn how they can help in these conservation efforts.

Swamp Tales features Bo, a 10-foot American alligator, and six species of freshwater turtles.

King Ranch

The King Ranch comprises 1,250,000 acres, four-fifths the size of Delaware!

The Meaning of the "Running W" remains a MYSTERY

Some have said that it represents one of the ranch's many diamondback rattlesnakes or the Santa Gertrudis Creek, while others are sure it signifies the sweeping horns of a Texas Longhorn bull. The Running W could also be interpreted as a section of a continuing wave pattern – signifying the uniting of the past with the present and suggesting continuity into the future. Regardless of its meaning, the Running W brand is handsome and practical, designed to heal quickly, thwart rustlers, and grow with the animal that bears it -- just as it has evolved with King Ranch through the generations. Today the Running W appears on both prize-winning cattle and top quality leather goods as an indisputable icon of the American ranching industry.

Museum

The King Ranch Museum's permanent collections include: Toni Frissell's award-winning photographic essay of life on King Ranch in the early 1940's; saddles from around the world, guns including a King Ranch commemorative Colt Python .357 magnum revolver (serial number KR1), a limited edition series of full-scale replicas of historic Texas flags, and antique carriages and vintage cars, including *El Kineño*, a custom designed Buick Eight hunting car built for Congressman R. M. Kleberg, Sr., in 1949 by General Motors. A new permanent exhibit displays a sculpture of Mrs. Henrietta King and her son-in-law Robert J. Kleberg, Sr., beside the first artesian well that was drilled on King Ranch in the summer of 1899.

Saddle Shop

Unable to find saddles and tack that met Captain King's rigorous specifications, he addressed this problem the way he approached many others – he decided to solve it himself. Captain King assembled a group of first-rate craftsmen at the ranch who made saddles of such fine quality that news of their superiority spread quickly. Within a few years of the end of the Civil War, the King Ranch Saddle Shop was providing saddles and tack not only for the vaqueros who tended the burgeoning herds bearing the Running W brand, but also for many other ranchers and cowboys on both neighboring and distant ranches.

The vast array of first-rate home furnishings, luggage, furniture, clothing, and, of course, saddles that King Ranch today makes available for sale to the public are direct outgrowths of the earliest efforts of 19th century King Ranch leather craftsmen. Although the variety of goods they offer is much larger than it was during the early days of the shop, their commitment to using the highest quality materials and craftsmanship still imbues everything they sell. You can see that commitment in action today at the King Ranch Saddle Shop in the historic Ragland Mercantile Building in downtown Kingsville, Texas, where descendants of the original Kineños who helped Richard King tame the Wild Horse Desert still employ the high standards of craftsmanship that they learned from their forbears to create goods that are both elegant and functional.

Our Texans are ready to greet you with a great big "HOWDY" so come prepared for lots of good food, fun times, meet new people and reacquaint old friendships and most of all learn more about what direction FSA is taking in the future and what is in store for us as employees.



**52nd Annual NASCOE
Convention 2011 Drawing**
Chance To Win a
“2010 Polaris Ranger 400”
Value \$7,999
\$20.00 Ticket

Need Not Be Present To Win.

*Drawing to be held on August 13, 2011 at the
NASCOE convention in Corpus Christi, Texas*

The cost of a raffle ticket is not a charitable contribution. Sales tax (if not exempt) and title transfer fees are the prize winner's responsibility. Prizes are not transferable and are not redeemable for cash.



**For more info or Tickets
Contact: Kelly Lindsey @ 940-553-4394**

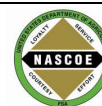
2011 NASCOE GOLF TOURNAMENT

The site for the 2011 NASCOE Golf Tournament will be at the Northshore Country Club in Portland Texas. This is a beautiful 18 hole premier golf course in the Coastal Bend area. Features include a championship links style course with exceptional golfing along the shores of Corpus Christi Bay.

Also to be noted: This is the site of the very 1st NASCOE golf tournament held back in October 20, 1988.

The golf tournament will be on August 10, 2011 starting at 1:00 pm. The \$45.00 tournament fee includes green fees, cart, range balls, discount gift card on merchandise purchased at pro shop, 2 drink tickets and lunch. There will be place winners, longest drive, closest to pin, and participation goodies. Transportation will be provided to and from the course, which is a short drive from the hotel.

Darrell Guidry and Grady Kelley are co-chairing the tournament and are excited about making this the best golf tournament ever. We would like to invite everyone to come and enjoy a wonderful afternoon, golfing with friends and family along the Gulf of Mexico.



52nd NASCOE Convention
August 11th – 13th, 2011
Omni Bayfront Hotel
Corpus Christi, Texas
800-843-6664

2011 REGISTRATION FORM

Name:		Other Guests:	
<i>Circle one:</i> Delegate Member DD RASCOE NAFED Honorary Mtr			
Address:			
Work Phone:		Cell:	
		FAX:	
		Email:	

"Sparkling City by the Sea", Corpus Christi, Texas, will be the site of the 2011 annual NASCOE Convention. Guests are reminded to ask for "NASCOE" when making reservations at the Omni Hotel to take advantage of the special \$87.00 per night single room. Cut-off date for reservations is July 15, 2011. We encourage you to sign up for "Omni Select Guest" program for benefits prior to making reservations.

Please register for ALL events you are interested in even if there is no charge!

Everyone over the age of 13 must register and pay registration fee;
NASCOE Honorary Life Members only need to register.

Date/Times	Events	Cost per person	How Many?	Total Due
***	Registration Fee <i>before June 15, 2011</i>	\$30		
***	Registration Fee <i>after July 1, 2011</i>	\$35		
***	Registration Fee <i>after July 15, 2011</i>	\$40		
Wednesday Aug. 10 th 8:00am - 4:00pm	"King Ranch" (Transportation and meal included) Working ranch; guided tour of cattle & horse operations, gin, feed lot & mill, farming, Saddle Shop	\$50		
Wednesday Aug. 10 th 9:00am - 3:00pm	"USS Lexington/Texas State Aquarium" (Transportation included; Lunch on your own - restaurants located in area)	\$26 12 & Under - \$17		
Wednesday Aug. 10 th <i>On Your Own</i>	"Day at the Beach" (Transportation <i>not</i> provided) tour area beaches of Port Aransas, Mustang Island, South Padre National Seashore, Corpus Public Beach	Free		
Wednesday Aug. 10 th 1:00pm	NASCOE Golf Tournament (Lunch included) NorthShore Course in Portland <i>Handicap: _____</i> <i>Preferred Team Members:</i>	\$45		
Wednesday Aug. 10 th 6:30pm - Midnight	Southwest Area Night - "Savor the Southwest" Shrimp Boil (Offsite, Transportation & Meal included) 9:00pm - DJ/Dance (Omni Bayfront) <i>If you wish, dress as Southwest/Western character for dance</i>	Free		
Thursday Aug. 11 th 6:00pm - 8:30pm	NASCOE Scholarship Auction <i>Show your support with your presence and/or participation</i>	Free		
Thursday Aug. 11 th 9:00pm - Midnight	Casino Night - "Ocean's 13" (Meal <i>not</i> included) <i>If you wish, dress as Casino/Gambler/Gangster character</i>	Free		
Friday Aug. 12 th 11:30am - 1:00pm	NASCOE Luncheon	\$26.25		
Friday Aug. 12 th 6:30pm - Midnight	Texas Night - "Sea, Sun and Fun" Beach Party (Offsite, Transportation & Meal Included) Family Entertainment; Live Band Music by "Flashback" <i>Wear your Lime Green Convention T-Shirt</i>	Free		



Saturday Aug. 13th 6:00pm - 7:00pm	Social Hour	Cash Bar		
Saturday Aug. 13th 7:00pm - 9:00pm	NASCOE Awards Banquet - "An Evening Under Texas Stars"	\$35		
Saturday Aug. 13th 9:00pm - 1:00am	Dance to music of Live Band	Cash Bar		
***	"Sea, Sun and Fun" Convention T-Shirt	\$15	Size(s) _____	

Note - All provided transportation will leave from Omni Bayfront Tower.

For Deep Sea Fishing details/arrangements, contact: Captain Kelly's (361) 749-5597 or Fisherman's Wharf (361) 749-5448 www.wharfcats.com

Youth Activities

Youth's Name(s): _____ Age(s): _____

Date/Times	Activities	Cost per person	How Many?	Total Due
Wednesday Aug. 10th 4:00pm - 5:30pm	Get Acquainted Hospitality (snacks provided) <i>Meet & greet other Youth present</i>	Free		
Thursday Aug. 11th 10:00am - 3:30pm	Texas State Aquarium (bring lunch money for Food Court at Aquarium)	\$8		
Friday Aug. 12th 10:00pm - 3:30pm	Corpus Christi Museum of Science & History (bring lunch money for Food Court)	11+ \$12.50 6-12 \$6		
Saturday Aug. 13th	9:30am-11:30am - "NRA Safety Rules" and "Beware of Bullies" <i>Teach kids ways to defuse bullying, report bullying, and ways to stop it</i> 1:30pm-3:30pm - Arts & Crafts (snacks provided)	Free		
Saturday Aug 13th 6:00pm - 9:00pm	Pizza Party with Games <i>attend our pizza party while Mom & Dad attend NASCOE Banquet</i>	Free		

must submit Parental Consent Form for any and all Youth Activities;
form available at www.tascoc.org or at Registration Desk at convention.

Sub-Total Page 1: \$ _____
Sub-Total Page 2: \$ _____

Registration Total: \$ _____

<p>RETURN THIS FORM & MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: TASCOC</p> <p>TASCOC c/o Schleicher Co ESA P.O. Box G Eldorado, TX 76939-1231</p> <p><i>Questions?</i> Call: (432) 684-6781 Herb Sorley (806) 385-4475 Penny Kelton</p>	<p>Important Information for Those Arriving By Air To Corpus Christi International Airport</p> <p>Shuttle Service Provided by: TASCOC & Omni Bayfront Hotel</p> <p>Arrival Date & Time: _____ Airline/Flight Number: _____ Number in Party: _____ Departure Date & Time: _____</p>
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We're baiting your hook!

Additional Convention Information available at www.tascoc.org



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Northwest Area

Southeast Area

Southwest Area

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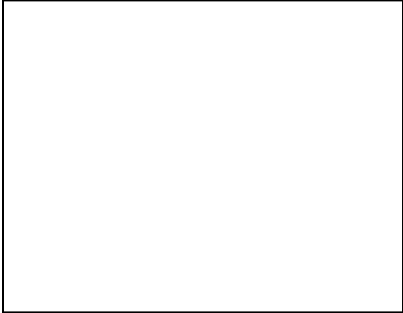
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deb.esselman@wi.usda.gov



National Association of FSA County Office Employees

746 Perry Road
Strykersville, NY 14145

CHANGE SERVICE REQUIRED



Pass Around!
Be sure all employees are given the opportunity to read this newsletter. Please allow your County Committee this opportunity as well.

VISIT THE NASCOE WEBSITE
AT:
www.nascoe.org

If your newsletter was incorrectly addressed or if you received more than one copy, Please note the problem below, make sure the correction beside the address below and send the change to:

Annette Hyman
746 Perry Road
Strykersville, NY 14145

-
- My names is misspelled
 - My address is wrong
 - I received more than one copy
 - Please drop me from the mailing list

SEND ANY NEWS AND/OR PICTURES OF YOUR EVENTS TO:
Tammy Eibey
1597 220th Street
Manchester, Iowa 52057
Or
siouxcitychick81@hotmail.com