

## Spring, 2020

Happy spring! Things are blooming, flowers and gardens are being planted, and farmers are getting out and getting some crops in the ground! Hopefully we are past the point of spring blizzards as well! There is enough going on in the world, we do not need to add that stress and worry to the mix!

I hope this finds you all healthy and adjusting to our current work situation. In my office, we were able to be approved for the staffing exemption, but that just allowed one additional employee back in the office. We are fortunate so far in Gregory Co. that we have not had a positive test at this point. Even though this virus has inconvenienced our professional lives, we are fortunate to still continue to work and receive a paycheck. This pandemic has adversely affected those we serve and our customers, who are also neighbors and friends, need us now more than ever!

This weekend would have been our NWA Rally/State SDASCOE Convention at the Lodge in Deadwood. Unfortunately, that along with most things, has been cancelled. We have conducted several meetings by conference call and most recently, the NASCOE board hosted a meeting via conference call. The main intent of that meeting was to determine the fate of the national NASCOE convention that was scheduled for this August in Savannah, GA. The NASCOE Executive Board spent many hours researching options and weighing the pros and cons of going ahead as planned, delaying the convention until later in the year, or cancelling the convention and rescheduling Georgia for 2022. In the end, it was decided by a vote that the NASCOE convention for 2020 will be cancelled and Georgia will be rescheduled to host in 2022.

Even though our state and national conventions have been cancelled, NASCOE is working tirelessly for its members. Our NASCOE President is in constant communication with DAFO and DAFP so our concerns are being relayed to the highest levels.

Even though our conventions have been cancelled, we still must find a way to hold our annual business meeting. We are exploring options and when we have something decided, we will let the membership know. We have the conference call option available, but I would like to explore other options first before making

the final decision. Once the decision is made and a date is decided on, an agenda and meeting details will be provided to membership.

If this pandemic has done anything, it has made us appreciate our family, friends, coworkers, and our customers. We miss that day to day contact. It has definitely upped our technology game though! We even got my 80-year-old mother using Zoom!

We have many new employees and I will be personally contacting them very soon to give them the opportunity to join our association. Once again, NASCOE has stepped in and helped procure additional dollars for salary and expenses, hence all the new hires! I hope that if you are a current member in an office that has hired recently, that you have already spoken to that new employee about the benefits of NASCOE and SDASCOE and encouraged them to join and support us! It will mean more coming from a coworker they know than someone sending them a letter. Emblems by Superior is still offering that \$25 gift card for clothing and emblems until July 31<sup>st</sup>! It is a great incentive for those who have never been members! Just complete the membership application and the FSA-444 for dues withholding and send it to me! For those who chose to join right away, thank you and welcome to SDASCOE! Make sure to check out our website as well as the national association's website at [www.nascoe.org](http://www.nascoe.org). Make sure you enter your email address on NASCOE's web page, so you are kept up to date on how your associations are working for you and your benefits. And touch base with the director from your area so he/she has your personal email address to receive important information from your state association. Ask that director how you can become more involved!

We have a lot on our plates in the coming months. Just know that your associations are continuing to support all of us! We will get through this, TOGETHER!

Please reach out to me with any questions, concerns, or feedback. My email address is [maryjane.west@yahoo.com](mailto:maryjane.west@yahoo.com) and my cell phone is 605-280-1724. Thank you for all you do to support your customers and SD agriculture.

