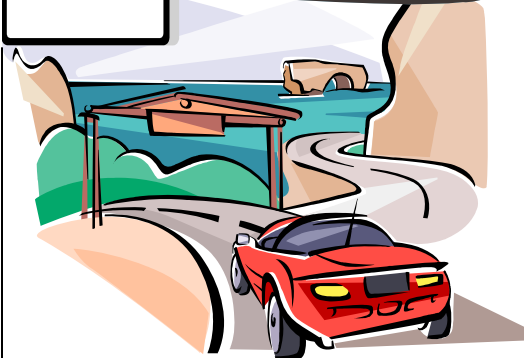


ALL ROADS LEAD TO ... WALL

SDASCOE CONVENTION May 1-2, 2009



Window to the West

SDASCOE NEWS

March 2009



REPRESENTING YOU

THROUGH SDASCOE

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

President: James Anderson, Brule Buffalo
Vice President: Peggy Groen, Lincoln
Secretary/Treasurer: Dianna Shafer, McPherson

DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Alternates:

#1 EJ Goetz, Walworth	Rodney Strand, Edmunds
#2 Stan Lamb, Codington	Joel Foster, Grant
#3 Rachael Kirkebak, Union	Lynn Chilson, Lincoln
#4 Keith Zanter, Clay	Josh Pesek, Bon Homme
#5 Lonnie Sharping, Brule-Buffalo	Carmen Jessop, Lyman
#6 Jennifer Chavez, Hyde	Laurie Pfeifle, Hand
#7 Jodie Schrempp, Ziebach	Alan Voller, Perkins
#8 Kay Massingale, Mellette-Todd	Cindy Walker, Fall River-Custer

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Awards & Scholarship

Colleen Peterson, Jackson

Benefits

Jeanie Emmett, Brookings

Legislative

Larry Olsen, Minnehaha

Membership

Lori Jones, Mellette-Todd

Programs, Emblems

Roxie Stambach, Ziebach

Ways & Means

Cathy Olstad, Fall River-Custer

Publicity

Bonnie Nickelson, Hand & Hyde

Dawn Sheehan, Sully

Webmasters

Jennifer Chavez, Hyde

Marcia Bunger, Lake

South Dakota CAPWIZ Coordinator : Becky Zirpel, Gregory County

NORTHWEST AREA

NWA Executive

Cindy Peterson, Minnehaha

Benefits Chair

Becky Zirpel, Gregory County

SD RASCOE PRESIDENT: Al Dangel, STO retiree

NATIONAL RASCOE PRESIDENT: Gene Vognild, Minnehaha retiree

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MARCH , 2009

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PRESIDENT'S INSIGHT

I want to thank each of you for being a member of SDASCOE. It takes a supportive group of members to build an effective employee association. SDASCOE is all of us. It is the dues you pay that shows you support SDASCOE and its goal to promote and maintain our employee benefits. SDASCOE is the many volunteers who devote so much of their personal time and energy to preserve and attain our benefits. It never ceases to amaze me how devoted these volunteers are on our behalf. We need to remember these individuals are volunteers and they work for you.

These elected volunteers serve to direct the functions of SDASCOE for the greater good. The SDASCOE officers and board would like to say thank you to each of you for your commitment and support.

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What is happening these days? Well, the SDASCOE officers and board of directors held their Spring Board meeting in Chamberlain, SD on March 4th and 5th. This meeting is usually held in Huron so the board can hold a joint meeting with the State Executive Director and the State Committee. Since there is not a State Executive Director or a State Committee at this time, I decided to hold this meeting at a central location. Mr. Kostel is the Acting State Executive Director and was invited to this meeting. Mr. Kostel did attend and a question and answer session was held. For the detailed report on the questions and answers, you will need to review the minutes of this meeting enclosed in this newsletter. The meeting was informative and many issues were decided. Again, the minutes and the reports from each of the program chairs will reflect the business addressed at this board meeting.

I continue to make improving our communication with each other one of my priorities. I am not talking about the skills of communication; I am talking about the processes of. By this I mean, the way we keep each of you informed. The SDASCOE website is up and is taking shape. I encourage you to access the website at <http://geocities.com/sdascoe>. By visiting the website, you will be able to see what is going on and this is an excellent way to find out about who, what, when and the where of the happenings of SDASCOE. Check it out and read the report from our webmasters requesting your input on the website.

Larry Olson, Peggy Groen, EJ Goetz and I, on behalf of SDASCOE, are going to Washington DC on March 17th and 18th for the legislative conference. We have appointments set up to meet with all of our congressional members on March 18th. A detailed report will be put on the website when we get back.

I am going to make a plug for a couple of issues before I close. Have you heard about CAPWIZ? NASCOE has invested in a legislative tool called CAPWIZ. CAPWIZ allows a person to view their congressman's voting record, receive alerts from NASCOE when action is needed, used to contact your representative and senators with a message written by you or a prepared message from NASCOE. This tool is a paid for benefit. NASCOE has paid for this service and there is no cost to you to sign up. I would encourage everyone to sign up for CAPWIZ and if you need assistance to do so, feel free to contact Becky Zirpel. **DO NOT SIGN UP USING THE GOVERNMENT COMPUTER.** Please read Becky's CAPWIZ report in this newsletter.

The last issue is the National data base. This is being established as a way for NASCOE and SDASCOE to contact you in the future. The usage of the government computer system is getting more restrictive. There is a need to find a way to communicate with everyone and this is why they are working on the National data base. We are working on system for you to provide this information to Dianna through the website. So, watch for updates on the website for information on this issue. 1

Respectfully, Jim Anderson

COMMENTS FROM YOUR VICE PRESIDENT

As I reported in the last issue I've been working on writing position descriptions for SDASCOE Directors, Committee Chairs, President etc. so all members know what is involved in the duties of their SDASCOE leadership, but also to encourage members to volunteer for these positions.



As I was working on the Benefits description I thought about how Benefits are the foundation of our organization. After all...

Within 2 years of their organizational meeting in 1959 the newly formed NASCOE had convinced Congress to grant ASC employees Health Insurance, Life Insurance, Retirement and a 9% Pay Increase!! Before NASCOE, ASC employees had none of these Benefits !

Let me repeat, before NASCOE, ASC employees had none of these Benefits!!

Please don't take your Benefits for granted.
We all Benefit from the Benefits (Sorry, but I just couldn't resist).

Since that time NASCOE has worked to keep those Benefits and has gained many more for it's members – such as...Sick Leave for Family Care, Compressed Work Schedules, CED pay increases, annual COLA's, PT pay increases (remember when PT grades were increased from GS-6's to GS-7's? Current GS-7's owe that to NASCOE) and the list goes on and on...

To Non Members enjoying these Benefits:
NASCOE learned 50 years ago that combined voices can produce great results!
Please add your voice to NASCOE and help keep the Benefits we now have
and work to gain more Benefits in the future
(NASCOE is currently working on FERS sick leave credit at retirement
and PT reclassification... again)!

To Members and Potential Members:
If you haven't yet attended a NASCOE Convention
(if you helped host in 2005 that was fun,
but not hosting is a whole different experience)
now is a great time to start.
This year NASCOE is celebrating its 50th Anniversary!!
Come join us in August in Gatlinburg, TN as a proud SDASCOE/NASCOE member.

Enjoy your Benefits!!

Peggy Groen, Vice-President



TAKE A MINUTE TO READ THE MINUTES

SDASCOE Spring Board Meeting Minutes March 4-5th, Chamberlain, SD

The SDASCOE Board of Directors met in Chamberlain, SD on March 4-5th, 2009. SDASCOE Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs met with the Acting SED Mr. Kostel at the AmericInn from 7-9 pm for a question and answer session. Questions and answers 1-17 were completed by Mr. Kostel for Newsletter publishing.

Mr. Kostel stated we are going through a big transition and changes are foreseeable. We can expect to see differences in the Farm Bill even though the same people in congress were the members who voted for the Farm Bill. With the new President taking office it's inevitable we will deal with many more changes to come as it's just a huge transition.

He reiterated the STO staff is there to assist the county offices through the changes to come. He used GIS mapping as a scenario and stated Jamie had completed 4-5 offices with the mapping process and so far the appearance of the maps has been greatly received. Plans are to complete the balance of the counties within 60 days. The plans are to complete the process on an annual basis. He stated Jamie was an asset to the project and GIS program and spends a good deal of her time on task forces in Washington DC and will be attending another project in March. He would like feedback from the county offices and any suggestions you may have please contact the STO.

He said he did not have available information on the PT reclassification as he didn't know a great deal about the request but while on a conference call recently it was mentioned there were some conclusions and thought that the association would be happy with the results. He felt NASCOE would be contacted prior to the STO and would be informed of the information available possibly within two weeks.

He said we were in the second round of the enrollment processing of LincPass requiring every employee to have security identification. The process was required to be completed in phases and some cards have been delivered but are waiting for tracking documentation. LincPass is an immense security item and they want to be able to have a tracking device so at the present are waiting on the software.

Also, he said routinely the states are asked for a report on estimated retirees to determine how many requests are needed for replacement COT's and FLOT's. The STO always requests both as they are not considered a count against our ceiling. FLOTs we probably won't receive and COTs we don't know but asked for 6 and sounds like a big number but it's not. STC selects COTs and are patiently waiting to hear an approval. There are a lot of factors to consider. He encourages any employee interested to apply when the positions open and not to worry about the number of vacancies, just apply.

There are four temporary positions based on personal health issues with the staff in the COF. There are 154 temporary positions available nationally so the request has been made for 22 FTE's from the farm bill which would include our regular position FTE's like field reporters. He said he was waiting for the request to be confirmed and didn't think we would get the full request but was hoping for a good chunk or at least half the number requested. The base line is 18-19 but again that includes fieldmen. The requested 22 will role over through next year. This is the first time we have heard of "two year money" as usually at the end of the year the funding is gone.

He stated we have all heard about the recommendation of Craig Schaunaman for SED by Representative Tim Johnson. Mr. Schaunaman was on the STC for 8 years previously.

He stated national training has been suggested for the end of May which won't be helpful for us. There have been discussions on pushing off the ACRE program and he was discussing with Paul Hanson if it would be beneficial to have further training within our state. He said we are all struggling, have to make decisions and changes continue to be made.

He said the Stimulus Package will affect farm loans and we don't know what's coming. We have a farm bill but changes have been made to Payment Limitation and Adjusted Gross Income. We continue to see changes and receive conflicting information.

He said there are no potential buy-outs in the future as buy-outs are basically used for overstaffing and we are at and below this criterion.

He said the STO continues to use old data 2005-2006 for the most to least list since we no longer have workload COF's anymore. We don't have the bodies for work measurement and are just trying to hire the most people possible in critical areas.

He anticipates PP10 for activation of Web time and attendance. He gave a short discussion on awards and felt some of the questions presented should be left for the incoming SED's consideration.

The following are the questions submitted by the SDASCOE membership for Mr. Kostel to address:

Are there any plans to change the remaining Shared Management offices?

- **Aurora/Douglas**
- **Walworth/Campbell**
- **Hand/Hyde**

At the present time, No, the new Administration may take a look at these once a budget is received.

What about filling the remaining CED vacancies? All of the COT's have been placed. CED vacancies may have to wait until a new class of COT's are trained.

What are the plans and timelines for hiring COTs and FLOTs? We have requested ceiling exempt positions from the National Office. We will monitor the status of our request and hire accordingly.

What about filling the PT positions in the understaffed offices? We have a number of vacancies presently being advertised and filled. As vacancies occur and our budget is received we will look at understaffed offices.

Any projection on the SED and STC placements? Projections of the SED placement, since recommended by Senator Johnson, would be mid to late April.

According to ADM-WO-701, all counties were to either terminate or convert their temporary employees to intermittent status, but the employee would not be allowed to work. Did ALL counties do this? If not, what was the criteria for getting authorization for the intermittent or temporary employee to work? If so, why was this information not made available to ALL county offices? No, all counties did not, there was no specific criteria, these were considered critical based on unique situations.

What is the possibility of having PT's, in critical areas during this new farm program transition, attend meetings in conjunction with the CED management meetings? As always we will have the broadest attendance we can reasonably afford within our budget.

When there is a program question addressed to the STO specialist, would it be possible for the specialist to address the question and answer statewide rather than just to the office requesting the information? We realize the specialist receive a lot of questions but when a question is asked more than once does it not save time and frustration for all if it was addressed statewide? This idea has been offered before and as this scenario presents itself we will do it. Right now things changes quickly it sometimes is not feasible or helpful.

Will the Thursday conference calls continue? They will continue as needed.

Were the DD's and supervisors told everyone should be rated Fully Successful? Many employee's have stated they were told during their performance rating that a Fully Successful rating is the highest they could receive based on the offices performance. Is it not the intention of the performance rating system to evaluate each employee on their individual performance? No, Yes.

Will there be buy-outs offered in the next 2-5 years? There are a lot of employees that fall into this retirement range. It could be very “cost effective” for USDA to offer the buy-outs, re-hire younger permanent employees that will have lower insurance premiums and would be lower on the salary scale. This would also increase the chance of keeping employees longer. There are no buyouts being planned. Previously buyouts were used to reduce staffing levels not to hire cheaper employees. There is an inherent cost to train that would offset savings.

Why are we still using data from 2005 through 2007 to compile our most to least staffing guide? The reliability of this information in respect to all the staffing and workload changes since then is quite questionable. There are offices that were shared management in those years that are not shared management now and vice versa, as well as offices that did not have a CED at that time and now have one, or vice versa. The data is out there and the ability to pull that new data is there, even if we are not submitting workload reports. In order for offices to be represented more accurately, a different system needs to be introduced. This is the only data we have; ARS is behind schedule therefore we are unable to use it at this time. Even though the data is still there we would need to use resources both County and STO to gather and analyze the data. This would not be feasible since ARS will be the new system in the near future and we are short on resource.

What are the chances for hiring temporaries to balance the workload that is going to hit with all the new programs implemented in the new farm bill? It would be more beneficial to hire permanent employees to distribute the workload evenly, rather than hire a temporary employee, get them trained, and then lose them because there is no money left or they have gotten a job offer for a permanent position somewhere else. If there will be no temporaries hired, will there be overtime authorized in order for the offices to get the work done? We will use all available resources we are given to implement the Farm Bill. We have requested 22 FTE for the balance of FY.

Any talk or news on reorganization within USDA? There is no new discussion however; it is early in the new administrator to determine their position.

Any idea when the US Bank Purchase Card reconciliation will be implemented? This is coming out the week of March 9th.

Any talk about follow-up training on PL, Attribution, ACRE, SURE, etc? Yes, there have been rumors about some national training. We are anxiously waiting so we can make plans pending the timing of this National training.

Any updates on the happenings with the PT reclassification? No updates but we should hear something soon.

Mr. Kostel then thanked those present for the opportunity to visit with him.

The meeting was then called to order at 9pm, all present were welcomed by President Jim Anderson. Jim then stated as a reminder for all present that officers and directors may propose motions and committee chairs and guests may voice opinions but are not permitted to vote.

PRESENT: Officers in attendance were Jim Anderson, President; Peggy Groen, Vice President; and Dianna Shafer, Secretary-Treasurer. Directors attending were EJ Goetz, District 1; Stan Lamb, District 2; Racheal Kirkebak, District 3; Lonnie Sharping, District 5; Jennifer Chavez, District 6; Jodie Schrempp, District 7 and Kay Massingale, District 8. Committee Chairs attending were Colleen Peterson, Larry Olsen, Lori Jones, and Roxie Stambach.

MINUTES AND FINANCIAL REPORTS:

The minutes for the Fall Board meeting held September 24, 2008 were accepted as published. The financial report was given. Please review publication in the newsletter. Racheal Kirkebak made a motion to approve both the minutes and treasurers reports. Kay Massingale seconded the motion. All were in favor; motion carried. A discussion was held on a few items for future expenses and receipts.

A short discussion and decision was made to send a carbon report of the Directors Reports and contact to the president to keep communications open at jlascocoe@midstatesd.net and reports should also be carbon copied to the Secretary for filing.

Peggy Groen is working on updating the duties and description handbooks and will be sending the copies for review to current and past committee chair. Following the review copies will be sent to the directors for a final proofing prior to submitting the completed handbooks to the SDASCOE website.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Colleen presented the reports for Awards and Scholarships.
Jeanie was unable to attend so Jim gave the report for Benefits.
Larry gave the report for Legislative.
Lori gave the report for Membership.
Roxie gave the reports for Programs and Emblems.
Publicity did not submit a report.
Cathy was unable to attend so Jim gave the report for Ways & Means.

Becky was unable to attend so Jim gave the report for CapWiz. Becky did stress in her report how easy and informative CapWiz is. Presently there is an Alert on FERS sick leave which is very important. If you are signed up and not receiving the alerts please contact Becky Zirpel and she will forward the information on to Tammy for a re-instatement.

Jennifer gave the report on the Website <http://www.geocities.com/sdascoe/>. The site is being improved and updated constantly. If there is an item you would like to see please contact your director or Jim for submission. We want to utilize and make the site beneficial and have a great potential to make this an awesome information Website.

Copies of the respective reports submitted by Colleen Peterson, Awards and Scholarship; Jeanie Emmett, Benefits; Larry Olsen, Legislative; Lori Jones, Membership; Roxie Stambach, Programs and Emblems; Cathy Olstad, Ways and Means; Becky Zirpel, CapWiz; and Jennifer Chavez and Marcia Bunger, Webmasters; will be published in the newsletter.

E J Goetz made a motion to approve the Committee reports as submitted. Jodie Schrempp seconded the motion. All were in favor; motion carried.

A discussion was held on the request to change the by-laws for the purpose of separating the secretary and treasurer positions but also allowing one member to assume both positions. The proposed change was published in the newsletter 60 days prior to membership vote which will take place at the state convention in Wall.

Meeting to resume at 8 AM on March 5th, 2009

A discussion was held on the upcoming legislative conference trip to Washington DC leaving March 17th. An executive decision was made to send four attendees: Larry Olsen, Legislative Chair; Jim Anderson, President, Peggy Groen, Vice President and EJ Goetz, Director. Cindy Peterson will be attending representing the NWA. All participants will attend all sessions and meetings have been scheduled with Representative Herseth-Sadlin and Senators Thune and Johnson.

Due to the earlier than normal dates for the NWA all far west rally and the scheduled Board Meeting, travel arrangements had to be made so an executive decision was made to appoint Larry Olsen and Becky Zirpel as delegates to the rally with Peggy Groen and Mary Johnson as alternates. The NWA rally requested a \$10 or less item to be donated in a basket for the Rally. At this time there has not been any mention of a scholarship item for an auction.

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A motion was made by Racheal Kirkebak to appoint Larry Olsen and Jeanie Emmett as delegates for the National Convention in Gatlinburg, TN. EJ Goetz seconded the motion. All were in favor; motion carried. A motion was made by Racheal Kirkebak to appoint Jim Anderson and Peggy Groen as alternates for the National Convention in Gatlinburg, TN. Jodie Schrempp seconded the motion. All were in favor; motion carried. A discussion was held on the caucus room since there are no extra facilities available and the decision was made to have Jim and Larry review the situation and make a decision.

A discussion was held regarding director elections, redistricting according to the by-laws to follow the state districts, the June 1st deadline and updating the by-laws. Presently six of the current districts would be affected. The general session will make the decision to redistrict or change the by-laws. Once the decision has been implemented by the general session a nominating committee would then need to compile nominees and Peggy would process the election ballots directly after the convention if instructed by the general membership to meet the deadline as spelled out in by-laws. The ballots would be forwarded to each COF with a request to return immediately.

Marcia Bunger has made a request to host the 2010 State Convention in Madison with more information to be made available at the 2009 State Convention in Wall. Madison does not support a convention center but the Dakota Play house was an option although there were concerns over the daily rate of \$400 and there were other aspects being reviewed.

The decision was made that the SDASCOE credit cards usage was primarily for website maintenance and flights, and usage was very limited in other areas.

There was a discussion on encouraging sign up for CapWiz and Stan Lamb made a motion for two (2) drawings of \$25 each for those members that use Capwiz and based on directors authorization continue annually. Jennifer Chavez seconded the motion. All were in favor; motion carried.

Plans were then discussed for preparations of the 2009 State Convention in Wall. The banquet will be held in the Community Room, downtown Wall, followed by a dance and Karaoke. Plans are to have a tour set up of the Minute Man Missile Site and local attractions. There will be an agenda sent for registration and this sounds like a great convention and one you shouldn't miss.

There being no further business Racheal Kirkebak made a motion to adjourn and Jodie Schrempp seconded the motion. All were in favor; motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianna Shafer, Secretary-Treasurer



TREASURER'S REPORT



Checking Balance Carried Forward 5-3-2008

\$3,233.29

Receipts:

Dues-Regular	\$19,211.47
Dues-Associate	\$1,600.00
Interest Income-Checking	\$13.95
Cash-CD Balance	\$0.00
2008 State Convention	\$3,040.00
2009 State Convention	\$0.00
NW Area Rally	\$2,343.25
NASCOE-Legislative	\$0.00
NASCOE/Delegates	\$1,456.00
Board Meeting	\$30.00
Donations	\$200.00
Ways & Means	\$1,492.00
Emblems	\$808.00

Total Receipts

\$30,194.67

Expenses:

Dues-Regular	\$9,165.00
Dues-Associate	\$1,320.00
2008 State Convention	\$4,700.85
2009 State Convention	\$0.00
NW Area Rally	\$3,368.88
Bank Service Fees	\$44.20
NASCOE-Delegates	\$2,509.30
NWA Rally-Delegates	\$0.00
Memorials-Flowers	\$0.00
Board Meetings	\$0.00
Secretary of State Recording	\$10.00
Donations	\$100.00
Emblems	\$1,108.00
Legislative	\$0.00
Postage	\$213.48
Publicity	\$342.93
Supplies	\$187.48
Travel/Mileage	\$2,237.74
Ways & Means	\$558.27
Awards/Scholarship	\$0.00
Membership-Drawings	\$0.00
Qwest-Conference Call	\$0.00
Equipment-Laptop/Printer	\$0.00

Total Expenses

\$25,866.13

NET AMOUNT

\$7,561.83

TREASURER'S REPORT, page 2

Checking Account Summary:

Location	Balance	APR	Interest
CorTrust Bank-Leola	\$7,561.83	0.50%	\$13.95
*Interest earned applied to Checking Account Balance			

Certificate Of Deposit Summary:

Location	Total Value	APR	Maturity	Initial Value	Interest Accrued
First National Bank-Yankton	\$1,893.68	2.24%	1/17/2011	\$1,855.48	\$38.20
	\$5,155.46	4.16%	4/21/2013	\$5,000.00	\$155.46
	\$5,155.46	4.16%	4/21/2013	\$5,000.00	\$155.46
	\$13,685.92	4.75%	1/20/2011	\$11,906.45	\$1,779.47
	\$11,494.56	4.75%	1/20/2011	\$10,000.00	\$1,494.56
	\$11,494.56	4.75%	1/20/2011	\$10,000.00	\$1,494.56
	\$511.27	3.01%	4/21/2009	\$500.00	\$11.27
CorTrust Bank-Leola	\$511.27	3.00%	4/21/2009	\$500.00	\$11.27

**TOTAL CHECKING/
CERTIFICATES**

\$57,464.01

I certify as Secretary-Treasurer of the SDASCOE association the Annual Report Domestic non-profit form has been filed for the year 2008 and the 2008 Annual Electronic 990 Exemption filed.

|

Dianna Shafer,

SDASCOE Secretary-Treasurer

02/26/09



COMMITTEE REPORT

**SDASCOE SPRING BOARD MEETING
CHAMBERLAIN, SD
MARCH 4TH AND 5TH 2009**

Distinguished Service Award nominations were received in the following categories: Community Service and Service to FSA – Agriculture..

Winners in each category were forwarded to the Northwest area chairperson for further judging. The winner of each category will be announced at the State Convention.

I would like to remind all members of the ***Professional Improvement Award*** that is offered to NASCOE members. Persons nominated who meet requirements will be recognized for taking advantage of educational opportunities available to them. Any NASCOE member may submit an application or nominate another member. There is no time schedule for these awards. Nominations can be submitted any time throughout the year for an employee serving under a permanent appointment.

Another reminder is that of the ***Extra Mile Award*** which recognizes NASCOE members and their children that go the Extra Mile in their community, their church, their jobs, and in their schools. The program is designed to recognize members and their children for specific contributions by the nominee. Nominations for these awards are not competitive. Nominations may be made at anytime during the year, there are no deadlines.

These nomination forms can be found on the NASCOE website and will also be available on the SDASCOE website.

There were nine ***scholarship*** applications received. These applications were forwarded to the Northwest area chairperson for judging.

I will be making a request for counties to submit the names of SDASCOE members for sick leave awards to be presented at the SDASCOE convention.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Peterson
SDASCOE Awards Chairperson

**A
W
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R
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S**

COMMITTEE REPORT

Benefits

Merry Christmas – oops! I mean Happy Spring?!?! I guess we're still in South Dakota, and it is still winter. I was looking forward to our SDASCOE spring meeting in Chamberlain, but one of my favorite sayings is...If you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans! Please contact me if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas for our Benefits committee to check into. Below is the March Benefits newsletter from our National Chairperson, Becky Zirpel.
Jeanie Emmett, SD Chairperson

MARCH 2009 MONTHLY BENEFIT NOTES

The most important item coming up is the Far West Rally! Have you made your plans to attend? It is not to late – check out the flights or special (flight and motel room) for the Rally on www.nascoetravel.com. Remember if you are having troubles accessing this site go to the parent site at www.ytbtravel.com/nascoe.

I have had questions lately on Alltel (imagine that)! Alltel has been complicated to work with and it really should not be. Verizon has been in the process of buying out Alltel for lack of finding better words to use. It is a merger in the process so you will see Alltel and Verizon in the same sentence. With this or until it is done they appear to still be operating separate when it comes to our benefits. That makes Alltel discount available only to the Members of NASCOE or Associate Members and Verizon is for all Government employees.

Remember to check with your State Benefits Chairperson for the quarterly discounts on accessories and for the information to sign up with Alltel for the monthly discount on your service.

FOR THE FERS EMPLOYEES

Reps. Jim Moran (D-Virginia) and Frank Wolf (R-Virginia) introduced legislation that provides federal employees under the FERS retirement system a sick leave benefit equal to that of employees under the CSRS retirement system. If enacted, the "FERS Sick Leave Equity Act" would add any unused sick leave to the number of years an employee has worked for the purposes of determining their annuity during retirement.

"This bipartisan legislation will correct a longstanding inequity between the two federal retirement programs," Wolf said. "It also will increase efficiency by cutting down on use of sick leave prior to an employee's retirement, which has cost taxpayers \$68 million each year."

In 1969, Congress added a sick leave benefit for CSRS employees after data showed that the use of sick leave went up dramatically nearing the time of retirement. The Civil Service Commission - the forerunner to OPM - estimated that half of all retiring federal employees had no sick leave whatsoever; their reports showed that retiring employees prior to 1969 used an average of 40 sick leave days in their last year of employment.

A Congressional Research Service report from August 2007, found that sick leave balances are lower for FERS employees than CSRS employees. Independent studies by the Bureau of Prisons have reached the same conclusion with OPM confirming it in their own analysis. Moreover, in a recent survey of FERS and CSRS employees, 85% of CSRS employees said they conserved as much sick leave as possible. On the other hand, 75% of FERS employees said they would use as much sick leave as possible during their last years.

I would say keep watch for a CAPWIZ alert on this. You can help speak for something that would benefit you, but through your own time!! NOT through your office or use of Government time. Would this be a GREAT Benefit for all FERS employees???

Becky Zirpel, National Benefits Chairperson

COMMITTEE REPORT

SDASCOE SPRING BOARD CHAMBERLAIN, SD MARCH 4 -5, 2009

By Larry Olsen, SDASCOE Legislative Chair

There will be a NASCOE Legislative Conference in WDC on March 17, 18, and return the 19th of March. There will be 5 of us attending from good ole SD. SDASCOE President James Anderson, SDASCOE Vice President Peggy Groen, and SDASCOE Director E. J. Goetz, Cindy Peterson and myself (Larry Olsen) SDASCOE Legislative Chairman. Cindy will be attending as NWA Exec. Items to discuss are:

1. **FERS/sick leave credit for length of service or compensation. Bill Status (HR 1108 & HR 5573)**
2. **USDA reorganization? Status if there is a plan. Chairman Peterson from the House Ag Committee alluded to a possible re-org during Farm Bill debate.**
3. **Separate line item in the budget for Salary, Expenses, IT (especially), and Staffing.**
4. **Program Technician Re-Classification to increase Grade and within grade increase.**
5. **Increase in Government percentage contribution of health insurance premium. Insurance for Dependent children age increase (currently up to age 22 if going to school).**

These would be the main topics and our main concern, which is implementing the farm bill to the producers of South Dakota.

Other priorities that may be pursued if opportunities present themselves include:

- * Educating congressional members of FSA mission (not a problem for our legislators. Fortunately they are very aware of our role).
- * Windfall Elimination
- * Increase within grade steps
- * Bereavement leave
- * Whistleblower protection
- * Sick leave donation from CO to GS and GS to CO employees
- * TSP regulatory review
- * Prevent retirement recalculation from high 3 to high 5 (SD delegation will bump this one to the top)
- * Change leasing authority to save money and time

There will be a Congressional reception for only key contact groups from the House and Senate Ag Committee, House and Senate Appropriations Ag Committees, with a few others identified by NASCOE Consultant Bob Redding on Wednesday, March 18th at 6:00 PM.

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LEGISLATIVE REPORT, PAGE 2

The following House Ag Committee members have been chosen-

The 28 Democrats who will serve on the committee are:

Chairman Collin C. Peterson, Minnesota

Representatives: Tim Holden, Pennsylvania; Mike McIntyre, North Carolina; Leonard L. Boswell, Iowa; Joe Baca , California; Dennis A. Cardoza, California; David Scott, Georgia; Jim Marshall, Georgia; **Stephanie Herseeth Sandlin, South Dakota**; Henry Cuellar, Texas; Jim Costa of California, Brad Ellsworth of Indiana, Timothy J. Walz of Minnesota, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, New York; Steve Kagen, Wisconsin; Kurt Schrader, Oregon; Deborah L. Halvorson, Illinois; Kathleen A. Dahlkemper, Pennsylvania; Eric J. J. Massa, New York; Bobby Bright, Alabama; Betsy Markey, Colorado; Frank Kratovil, Jr., Maryland; Mark H. Schauer, Michigan; Larry Kissell, North Carolina; John A. Boccieri, Ohio; Earl Pomeroy, North Dakota; Travis W. Childers, Mississippi; Walt Minnick, Idaho.

The 17 Republicans (with one vacant seat) who will serve on the Committee are:

Ranking Member Frank Lucas, Oklahoma

Representatives: Bob Goodlatte, Virginia; Jerry Moran, Kansas; Timothy V. Johnson, Illinois; Sam Graves, Missouri; Mike Rogers, Alabama; Steve King, Iowa; Randy Neugebauer, Texas; K. Michael Conaway, Texas; Jeff Fortenberry, Nebraska; Jean Schmidt, Ohio; Adrian Smith, Nebraska; Robert E. Latta, Ohio; Phil Roe, Tennessee; Blaine Luetkemeyer, Missouri; Glenn W. Thompson, Pennsylvania; Bill Cassidy, Louisiana* and *one vacancy*.

The following members are on the Senate Ag Committee:

Democrats:

Tom Harkin- IA (Chairman)

Kirsten Gillibrand- NY, Michael Bennet- CO, Amy Klobuchar- MN, Patrick Leahy- VT, Kent Conrad- ND, Max Baucus- MT, Blanche Lincoln- AR, Debbie Stabenow- MI, Benjamin Nelson- NE, Ken Salazar- CO, Sherrod Brown- OH, Robert Casey- PA, and Amy Klobuchar- MN.

Republicans:

Saxby Chambliss- GA (Ranking Member)

Richard Lugar- IN, Thad Cochran- MS, Mitch McConnell- KY, Pat Roberts- KS, Lindsey Graham- SC, Mike Crapo- IN. **John Thune- SD**, and Charles Grassley- IA..

If any SDASCOE Member has an issue that they believe should be considered or addressed, please contact your SDASCOE area Director or myself before the conference with your concern.

On Tuesday March 17, 2009 of the Legislative Conference there will be a mandatory training for all conference attendees starting at 2:00 – 6:00 PM. NASCOE Consultant Bob Redding will conduct the training on position papers. All appointments will be made for Wednesday as there is nothing scheduled but visits so that NASCOE members can maximize our presence on the hill at one time.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT, PAGE 3

March 18, 2009 SDASCOE Legislative Conference Attendee appointment schedule is:

- 10:30 AM** Senator John Thune and Legislative Aide Brendon Plack
- 1:00 PM** Representative Stephanie Herseth Sandlin and Legislative Assistant Ashley Martin
- 3:30 PM** Senator Tim Johnson and Legislative Assistant Cyndi Bartels

We are in some scary times. What a change a year has brought. I believe we are fortunate that a farm bill is not under debate this year.

The passage of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 Farm Bill covers the 2008-2012 crop years. This does not mean that the bill could not be revisited in some form.

The new administration is busy with the task of filling positions in the Agency and State Offices (SED and STC). Senator Tim Johnson has recommended to the Obama administration Craig Schaunamun for SED. No word on State Committee recommendation at this time.

Wish I had more news. This report seems a little lame to me, but hopefully I will be full of news after the NASCOE Legislative Conference. Happy Signup to everyone!

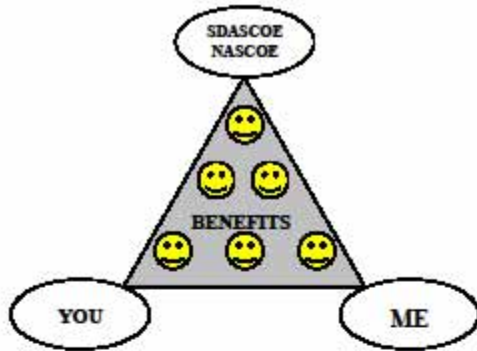
The opinions and comments expressed in this report are those of the author. Most of the material in this report is a gathering of bits and pieces of several news articles and personal contacts. This article does not represent official policy.

**Respectfully submitted,
Larry Olsen, Legislative Chairperson**



COMMITTEE REPORT

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SDASCOE MEMBERSHIP

2008 – 2009 MEMBERSHIP
3 - 4 & 5 - 09

275 TOTAL COUNTY OFFICE EMPLOYEES
270 COUNTY OFFICE EMPLOYEE MEMBERS
5 COUNTY OFFICE EMPLOYEE NON-MEMBERS

} **98.2%**

81 TOTAL GS OFFICE EMPLOYEES
11 GS OFFICE EMPLOYEE MEMBERS
70 GS OFFICE EMPLOYEE NON-MEMBERS

} **13.6%**

67 ASSOCIATE MEMBERS — DOWN SOME FROM PAST YEARS

* * * * * ADDITIONAL TIDBITS * * * * *

- ⇒ JULY — ORIGINAL 2008 – 2009 INVITATION TO BECOME MEMBERS IN NEWSLETTER
- ⇒ OCTOBER — REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL MEMBERS IN NEWSLETTER
- ⇒ OCTOBER — LETTER SENT TO FIVE NON-MEMBERS
- ⇒ FEBRUARY — LETTER SENT TO FIVE NON-MEMBERS WITH FSA-444 & PAYMENT INFO SHEET
- ⇒ FEBRUARY / MARCH — 8 "NEW" FULL TIME PT'S BEING HIRED
- ⇒ 3 COUNTIES NOT AT 100% — TWO OF THESE COUNTIES ONLY 1 PERSON SHORT
- ⇒ 2008 – 2009 GOAL → → → AS ALWAYS — STILL STRIVING FOR 100%! 😊
- ⇒ THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE HELPED IN THE PROCESS OF KEEPING OUR MEMBERSHIP UP!
- ⇒ NEW IDEAS ON HOW TO GET THE REMAINING PERSONS & FUTURE NEW EMPLOYEES ON BOARD ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED
LORI JONES
SD MEMBERSHIP CHAIRPERSON
3 - 4 & 5 - 09

COMING TOGETHER IS A BEGINNING;
KEEPING TOGETHER IS PROGRESS;
WORKING TOGETHER IS SUCCESS!
Henry Ford

COMMITTEE REPORT



Is it a Negotiation Item.... or Program Inefficiency?

Do you have an item you would like to submit but just not sure where it should be submitted? Here are some things to consider to help you decide:

NEGOTIATION ITEMS

Your concern should be submitted as a **Negotiation Item** if any of the following apply. To help you decide ask yourself these questions:

Are you looking for a change in FSA policy?

Are you concerned that established FSA policy is not being followed?

Are you concerned about changes made in established policy? (COC Elections)

Does it involve individuals?

Does it involve a group of individuals?

Does it concern Position Classification or Grades?

Does it pertain to FSA policy on holidays, leave, travel, credit hours?

Is your concern about personnel issues such as:

Adequate training,

Inaccurate position descriptions,

Value of performance evaluations?

Concerns about staffing and budget?

Do you question if Workload is being credited for work that is being done, or have a concern that workload is not being credited where the work is being done?

PROGRAM INEFFICIENCIES

Your concern should be submitted as **Program Inefficiency** to the Programs Committee if any of the following apply. To help you decide ask yourself these questions:

- * Do you have a specific question about a program or a suggestion for improving the processing of a program?
- * Is it concerning one of the FSA programs or applications (Conservation, PS, SCIMS, ADP/IRM)?
- * Do you have a constructive suggestion to improve the efficiency of one of the new web-based applications for a program?
- * Are you offering a better way to process paperwork?
- * Have you exhausted all other avenues for information, but still need clarification of program rules or regulations?
- * Is it an issue with conflicting handbook policy? (2 handbooks/2policies/1 Issue)
- * Do you have a specific question about a program function that is not in the handbook, such as, "Where in Workload and/or Work Measurement do I count field visits for emergency programs?"



Go to Nascoe.org/programs.htm and submit your online electronic form today.

**What happens with your submission?
read the NWA Negotiation Report on Page 41**

Emblem sales remain the backbone of the scholarship program. Please visit the website www.nascoeemblemsonline.com. There are several items with the new FSA Logo on it. Check this site out. With the State SDASCOE convention coming soon, there will be emblem items on hand. Check out the new and the old on sale. Support the scholarship fund.

Respectfully, **Roxie Stambach, Chairperson**

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SDASCOE'S WEBSITE

Check it Out :

<http://geocities.com/sdascoe>

Jennifer Chavez and Marcia Bunger, Webmasters

SDASCOE NEWS

Three issues of the SDASCOE NEWS were printed in 2008.

The Newsletter is mailed to approximately 188 recipients and is also available on the SDASCOE website.

Our Thanks to Ryan Wenz for printing the newsletter and to Brenda Wicks for handling the mailing of the newsletter. It is much appreciated.

If you have any suggestions for improvement of the newsletter, please let us know. Remember, YOU are the reporters...we merely prepare it for printing.

Thanks Everyone.....

Bonnie Nickelson & Dawn Sheehan

COMMITTEE REPORT



March 4th & 5th, 2009

Print Raffle: Tickets are being sold for \$1.00 each and 6 for \$5.00. Artists for this year's drawings are yet to be determined.

(Probably Terry Redlin and Jon Crane)

Room Raffle: Room raffle tickets are \$1.00 each, with the winner receiving a free room for the night of May 1st at the convention in Wall or \$50 in cash, if unable to attend.

Thanks again for your support of these SDASCOE fundraising projects. They are only as good as you make them!

Respectfully,
Cathy Olstad
SDASCOE Ways and Means Chairman

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SDASCOE STATE CONVENTION 2009



ALL ROADS LEAD TO

WALL

MAY 1-2, 2009

Are we **“Off the Wall”** by thinking there will be **“Wall to Wall”** attendance at the 2009 SDASCOE Convention to be held in – you guessed it – Wall, South Dakota. The dates are Friday and Saturday May 1st and 2nd.



We hope you will be **“Climbing the Wall”** to make your reservation at the at the Plains Best Western Motel @ 1-800-528-1234 or 279-2145. All rooms are \$67.00 + tax. Ask for the SDASCOE Block of rooms.

You can also e-mail them at jackie@bestwesternplains.com.

Please make your reservation by: April 15, 2009.

The convention will be held at the Wall Community Center. It is located across the street from the Wall Drug Store. There is parking available behind the community center.



Window to the West



Here's what's happening:

Thursday

April 30

There is a social gathering planned for Thursday night. Anyone interested should meet in the hotel lobby and the plan is to go to the Two Bit Saloon in Quinn, SD for supper and entertainment.

Friday

May 1

a.m. Friday morning a Golf Scramble is planned at the Wall Community Golf Course, it is located 1 mile South and 1 mile West of Wall. Contact Mike Goetzing, 685-1239, with any questions.



For those that are not interested in golfing there is a tour of the Minute Man Missile planned for Friday morning also. We will meet at the community center at 9 and travel as a group to the site. The tour will begin at 10 am. The tour will begin at Launch Facility (missile silo) Delta-09 on the south side of exit 116, Interstate 90. We will then travel 11 miles to the east where we will tour Launch Control Facility Delta-01. the tour will take approximately two hours. For more information on the missile you can visit their website at:



<http://www.nps.gov/mimi/>



p.m.

Attend SDASCOE Committee meetings and learn more about SDASCOE and the issues facing FSA employees.

Friday night Banquet and Entertainment - Tourist night

Friday evenings entertainment after the banquet will be provided by KC Karaoke. Please come dressed as a tourist.



Saturday

May 2

Speakers, Business Meeting

Saturday's roll call:

Please bring an item that represents tourism in your county and tell about it.

The Registration form is on next page -
Please call for your reservation and send in your registration -
TODAY !!!!

ALL ROADS LEAD TO WALL
2009 SDASCOE STATE CONVENTION
 May 1 & 2, 2009
 Wall, SD



Plains Best Western Motel – 1-800-528-1234 or Jackie@bestwesternplains.com
 All Rooms \$67/night – Ask for SDASCOE BLOCK Call by April 15, 2009

All meetings will be held at Wall Community Center on main street across from Wall Drug
 (parking is available behind the community center)

Roll Call – Bring an item that represents tourism in your county

Name: _____ Guest(s): _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Contact Phone Number: Sue at Bennett/Shannon (605)–685-1239

Event	Description	When	Number Attending	Price	TOTAL
Thursday Evening Social	Social Gathering at the Two Bit Saloon in Quinn, SD (4 miles E of Wall)	Thursday Evening		Supper on your own	
Golf Scramble	Golf Tourney Wall Community Club	Friday 9:00 9 hole scramble		Contact Mike Goetzinger (605) 685-1239 Ext 2 or email	Pay day of event
Tour	Tour the Minute Man Missile (See SDASCOE Newsletter for more detail)	Meet at the Community Center Friday @ 9 am to car pool		\$5	
Banquet & Dance	Social 5:30 Banquet 6:30 KC Karaoke	Friday May 1, 2009		\$25.00	
Friday Night Banquet & Dance & Saturday Luncheon	Social 5:30 Banquet 6:30 8:30 – 1:00 AM KC Karaoke DJ Karen Voller	Friday & Saturday		\$35.00	
Saturday Only	Soup & Sandwich Buffet Soup Sandwich 2 salads, desert & drink	Saturday Noon		\$15.00	
Grand TOTAL - Please make check payable to SDASCOE. Payment must be included with registration form.					

Mail completed form and payment to:
Pre-registration due by April 17, 2009

Questions: call (605) 837-2166 (Jackson County) or
 (605) 685 – 1239 (Bennett County)

Bennett/Shannon County FSA
 706 Hwy 18
 Martin, SD 57551-1535

RASCOE / SD

Greetings from the realm of retirement. I know you don't want to hear about the golfing in Arizona and other fun things but I have to mention it anyway.

Diane and Doug Dangel joined Marsha and I in Arizona for some golf and warm weather fun. It was only 75 or 80 degrees. Only problem was we didn't stay long enough. Actually we were working on "deprogramming" Diane after her recent retirement. I would say the operation was a success. She didn't miss work at all, didn't even hardly talk about it either. We pronounced her fully retired.



I was trying to recruit her as a RASCOE member but then realized that she had been an associate member of RASCOE for several years already. This leads me to a discussion of membership. Current employees may become associate members of RASCOE for a mere \$15 annually. Why would you want to be a RASCOE member? We are working on legislative issues that will affect most of you someday. One such item is the health care "Premium conversion" issue. This would allow retirees to pay healthcare premiums with pretax dollars just as current employees do. This is affecting retirees, whether CSRS or FERS.

South Dakota RASCOE has always prided itself on leading the nation in membership. Let's keep that tradition going. Currently, Georgia is making a very good attempt at knocking us out of the leadership role. We can't let that happen.

Just send your dues into our secretary:

**Marilyn Van Liere
18284 475th Ave
Clear Lake, SD 57226.**

She will be thrilled to hear from you!

In a couple of weeks it will be spring, on the calendar anyway. With spring come thoughts of the annual SDASCOE convention. Hopefully the attendance will be "Wall to Wall". I heard that somewhere. Just remember, **RASCOE is an organization that will go to the "Wall" for you.** Enough humor for now. I hope everyone makes it to Wall and enjoys the great company and fun times. See you there.

Al Dangel, SD President

RASCOE

SD Luncheons



Attending the January 09 RASCOE Luncheon were: Left side: Ken Stucky, Lynda Steichen, Betty Donovan and Charles Donovan.

Right Side: Doris Stucky, Evelyn Peterson, Mary White and Dorene Becker.

APR 20	Yesterday's Cafe 2216 Broadway, Yankton	SEPT 21	Fry'n Pan Restaurant 21st & Broadway, Yankton
MAY 2	SDASCOE/RASCOE Convention Wall, SD	OCT 20 Tues	Sportsman's Rendezvous Main Street, Tyndall
JUNE 16 Tues	Pony Creek Hwy 37, Parkston	NOV 16	Pizza Ranch 15 th & Broadway, Yankton
JULY 20	Bonanza 2409 Broadway, Yankton	DEC 21	Minerva's Restaurant E Hwy 50, Yankton
AUG 17	Ramada Inn Mitchell (formerly Holiday Inn)	3rd Monday of every month unless designated otherwise. Come join us !!	

RETIREMENT....just do it and enjoy!

Contributed by Lynda Steichen

Two bits of wisdom were offered me very early in my career.

First, retire while you still know why you wanted to be home with your spouse.

Second, when you retire, sit in your rocker until you're bored, then get up and do something.

I have a third.....finances! Reality check, your annuity check is paid on the 1st working day each month (no check every two weeks).

I didn't follow advice #2, I took a job doing what I thought would be 'fun', selling clothes. After sitting for 30 years, standing and walking around the store 8 hours a day was a huge adjustment, my legs hurt so much I could barely get out of the car at the end of the day. And the two to three days a week were sometimes FIVE! I missed my whole first summer of retirement by working. I still haven't begun any of the projects I saved for my retirement days.

The final wisdom here is when your age and years of service meet, take the plunge, retirement is a wonderful time of your life. No matter how you spend it, working, volunteering or whatever, just enjoy it!

RASCOE / Nat'l.

Hello to all you good people from RASCOE. It is time to bring you up to date on what is happening in our ass'n.

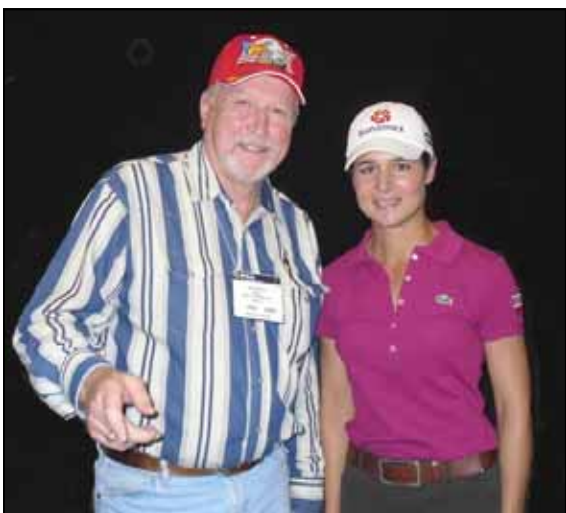
The new administration has been in contact with our Wash. Representative Dave Senter, seeking information on our concerns. Larry Mitchell from Dave's office has sent information to them with our legislative goals and has sent several letters to key Congressional people and news releases on behalf of RASCOE.

Also, Gerald Elson, our V.P. and Legislative Chairman will be attending the NASCOE Leg. Conference in March, making some key visits on behalf of RASCOE. Mr. Senter has made some appointments for Gerald & he will be taking our position papers to them and discussing our concerns.

Meanwhile, Shirlee and I have been in FL leaving the snow & cold for you "working people" to enjoy !! I attended a golf expo in Orlando and had my picture taken with Lorena Ochoa, who is the **NUMBER ONE** lady golfer in the world. Of course, while I had the chance, I gave her some advise on how to play the game!!!!!! Listening to me, she won't be number one very long!!!!

Enjoy the rest of the Winter and we look forward to seeing everyone at the SDASCOE Convention in May.

Gene Vognild, National RASCOE President



Pictured at left is South Dakota's own Gene Vognild with Lorena Ochoa.

Lorena plays on the U.S.-based LPGA Tour and is currently the number one ranked female golfer in the world. As the first Mexican golfer of either gender to be ranked number one in the world, she is considered the best Mexican golfer of all time.



IN THE MILITARY

THANK - YOU

Name	Branch	Current Location / Service History	SDASCOE / FSA Relative
Josh Horstman		Currently Deployed to Iraq	Husband of Angie Horstman, FLO Hutchinson Co.
SPC Katie Boesch	US Army	Currently in Iraq (#2) Scheduled to return to Texas in April '09.	Niece of Mike Goetzinger CED; Bennett/Shannon
SPC Dan Boesch	US Army	Currently in Iraq (#2) Scheduled to return to Texas in April '09.	Spouse of SPC Katie Boesch
Cpt. Matthew Strand	Army Infantry	Returned from Iraq in July, '06. Currently at Ft. Benning, GA	Son of Rodney Strand, CED Edmunds Co.
Staff Sgt. Shaye Melton	Air Force	Currently stationed in RAF Mildenhall, England	Son-in-Law of Cathy Olstad, PT Fall River-Custer Co.
CPT Neil L. Sanders	Army	Returned Home from 2nd deployment to Iraq	Brother-in-law of Kari Sanders, PT Fall River/Custer
Frank Moser	SD Army NG	Served 1 Year in Iraq	Brother-in-law/ Kari Sanders, PT Fall River/Custer
Cpt Michael Thompson	Air Force	Currently stationed in Albuquerque, NM	Son of Stan Thompson, CED Marshall Co.
Cpt. Matthew Thompson	Marine Corp	Stationed in OK. Occasional trips to and from Afghanistan	Son of Stan Thompson, CED Marshall Co.
Sgt. Josh Bryant	SD Army NG	Served in Iraq 2003-2005. Recruiter in Redfield, SD	Son of JoDee Bryant, FLO Faulk Co.
Zach Carter	US Navy	Stationed in Pensacola, Florida	Nephew/Stacy Smith, PT Pennington
Staff Sgt. Ryton Hitzel	US Air Force	Stationed in Minot, ND	Son/ Ruby VanderMay, TPT, Jackson
SPC Phillip Olson	SD Army NG	147th 1st Field Artillery, FSC in Webster – On alert	Nephew of Kathy Lindquist, DD
SPC James Olson	SD Army NG	147th 1st Field Artillery, FSC in Webster – On alert	Nephew of Kathy Lindquist, DD
PV2 Joshua Olson	SD Army NG	147th 1st Field Artillery, FSC in Webster – On alert	Nephew of Kathy Lindquist, DD
MP Aaron Monteith	SD Army NG	235th Military Police, Currently serving in Afghanistan	Nephew of Kathy Lindquist, DD
SPC Scott Fried	101st Airborne	Deployed to Bagdad, Iraq in Sept.. 2007 for 15 months. (#2)	Son of Peggy Fried, PT , Perkins
Rob Schoenwald	Marine Corp	Currently deployed to Iraq	Son/ Edie Schoenwald, PT Turner
PFC Tracy Lennick	SD Army NG	Completed AIT at Ft. Lee, VA, Nov. '08	Son of Bonnie Nickelson, CED Hand & Hyde Counties
Sgt. Jason Lunders	SD Army NG	Currently in Mississippi training. Home for Christmas, then to Iraq.	Nephew of Mary Rae Peterson PT in McCook County.
Craig W. Nelson	Air Force	Stationed in Arizona. Served previous tour of duty overseas;	Nephew of Mary Rae Peterson and Peg Schmidt, PT's , McCook
PFC Caleb Schaefer	SD Army NG	Deployment to Iraq , April 2009	Son/ Debra Schaefer, McPherson PT
PFC Katherina Schaefer	SD Army NG	Completed AIT in Ft. Leonard Wood, MO. Attending BHSU.	Daughter/ Debra Schaefer, McPherson PT
SGT/ E6 Joshua Schaefer	Admin. NCO	Rapid City, SD	Son/ Debra Schaefer, McPherson PT
PFC Jacob Busser	SD Army NG	Completed Basic Training at Ft. Leonard Wood, MO. Dec. 2008	Son of Lisa Busser, PT Lake County
TR Hill	Air Force	Stationed in Omaha NE	Nephew/ Charlene Lolley, Retiree

Brule-Buffalo PT Moonlights as : *Exotic Rancher*

When Lonnie Sharping, Program Technician, leaves Chamberlain after a hard day of work at the office, he rushes off to Pukwana, SD where his many animals are patiently awaiting his return. These aren't just your ordinary cats, dogs, and livestock, but each one is special and unique.

Lonnie states that he was born into an "exotic" odd family (Lonnie's own words) that has raised "different" livestock and birds all of his life. Over the years they have raised zebra, ostrich, African antelope, buffalo, and camels, as well as cattle and horses of all sizes. He currently has a few mini appaloosa mares about to foal and have some mini calves on the ground. The incubator is also running and hatching ducks, geese, quail, pheasants and chickens. He is currently building a monkey barn. The monkeys are still in Wisconsin as there is no heat in the building at this time. (He'd hate to have their tails freeze off !)

The latest addition to his animalistic family is baby boy Owen who is shown below with his mother, Chloe. Owen was born on March 4 and weighed in at 120 pounds.



Maybe, with just a little persuasion, Lonnie would show you around the next time you are traveling by on I-90. If you timed it right, you could also take in the

Pukwana
Turkey Races !



FAT A Poem by Stan Thompson



As I sit here with my belly in my lap,
I think of all the things I've ate that made me so darn fat.
There were the cream filled cupcakes I ate with delight
And then there were cream puffs that felt oh so light.

I had caramels and cookies and fudge galore
I even had some chocolate covered peanuts I bought at the store.
I had cheese cake and pretzels all covered with some goo
And I choked down a piece of pumpkin bread or was it really two?

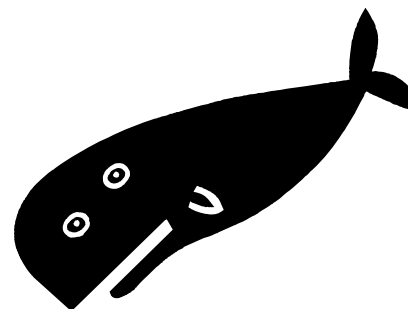


I had cheese and lunch meat and crackers piled high
I ate and ate until I could only sit back and sigh.
I ate my fair share and then had yours and hers as well
I ate so much that finally my stomach began to swell.

But after some sitting and some squirming all around
I discovered I had room left so I grazed one more round.
I found some smoked turkey and some peanuts in the shell
I found a caramel ball of some kind that tasted mighty swell.

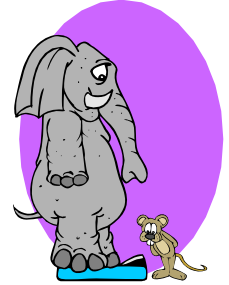
At night I'd step on the scale and shake my head with disbelief
My wife must have broken it just to cause me loads of grief.
I started to worry and wonder and ponder my woes
I think it all started when I could no longer see my toes.

Avast there, Moby Dick, I heard someone cry
And when I turned to look the one they pointed at was I.
I really did not see the whole thing for you see
When I looked into the mirror I could not see all of me.



FAT continued

I vowed to go on a diet and to slim myself back down
I promised I would shape right up and no longer be the clown.
I would not eat anymore than did my favorite wife
I would follow her good habits for the rest of my life.



I'm really much more fond of the food she doesn't eat
She likes plant life while I go in for more meat.
Actually I'm am doing ok with eating her meals I guess
So far I have eaten them up until May, I must confess.



We bought a new treadmill to help with my plight
It is a monstrous machine and oh what a sight.
It will do most anything and will weigh you with ease
When I stepped on it said "One at a time if you please."

If they would make sweat pants new office attire
I'd get along just fine hiding my new spare tire.
I think Osh Kosh should make bib overalls available in tan
They could bill it as a fashion statement designed just for Stan.



I could get rich by making fat clothes acceptable
People would wear my clothes and look real respectable
It sounds like a plan and something I should pitch
Maybe I can work on being fat to help make me rich.

The more I think of it the more practical it sounds
Everyone can be happy with a waist that is quite round
I better get busy as this idea is just way too sweet
I just may have to celebrate by having something sweet to eat.



Stan Thompson is the CED at Marshall County

FAULK COUNTY



The FFA Organization in Faulkton has New Booster Club

The Faulkton FFA Booster Club hosted its first meeting last Tuesday. Sarah Stratmeyer, FFA Advisor, informed the group who attended of her vision for the FFA Booster Club and how they will function for the FFA Chapter.

“They will provide many resources to the chapter, including employment opportunities for Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) projects, serve as guest speakers in the classroom, and financial resources for anything from travel to educational scholarships,” said Stratmeyer. For the 2009 year serving as President will be Sandy Bowar, and as Sec./Treas, JoDee Bryant.

Sandy Bowar is the County Executive Director and JoDee Bryant serves as the Farm Loan Officer in the Faulk County FSA Office.

Pictured are Jim Slunecka, Jenni Pernini, President Sandy Bowar, JoDee Bryant, Sec/Treas, Kris Meyer, Kevin Arbach, and Kinsey Town.

20 YEARS OF SERVICE



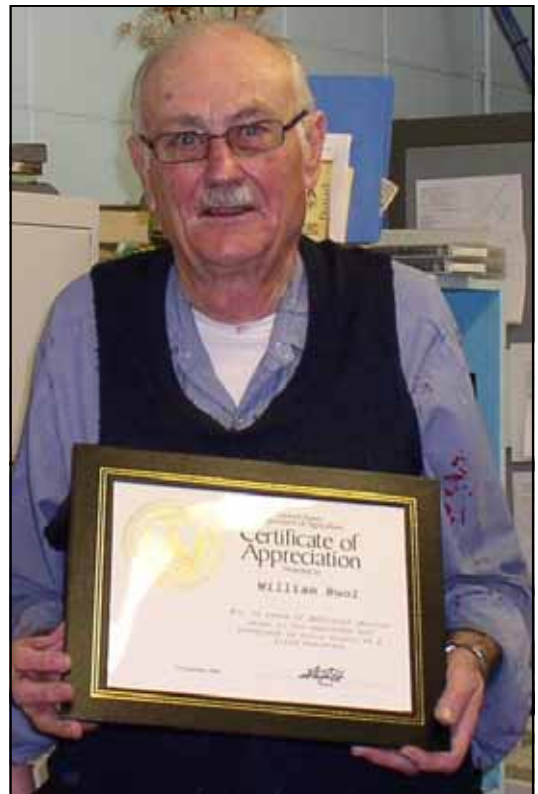
Cindy Geditz (center), Program Technician in the Edmunds County Office, received her certificate for 20 years of service to FSA at a recent County Committee meeting. Cindy is pictured with COC Chairperson, Joyce Vetch and Rodney Strand, CED.

EDMUNDS
COUNTY

SULLY COUNTY

30 YEARS OF SERVICE

The Sully County FSA Committee thanked Fieldman, Willis Buol, for 30 years of service to the Sully County FSA office. Willis began working at the FSA office upon his retirement from the military. He has been actively keeping producers in line when it comes to grain bin loans and spot-checks for the past 30 years. His service to producers and the Sully FSA staff is greatly appreciated.



LAKE COUNTY



L-R: Donna Rensch, COC Vice Chair, Lana Molskness, PT
John Minnaert, COC Regular Member.

10 YEARS

Congratulations to
Lana Molskness and
Lisa Busser for
reaching their 10-year
milestone in FSA
Service.

Both are PT's in
Lake County.



L-R: Donna Rensch, COC Vice Chair, Lisa Busser, PT, John
Minnaert, COC Regular Member.

10 YEARS

HAND COUNTY



25 YEARS

Kris Stevens

20 YEARS

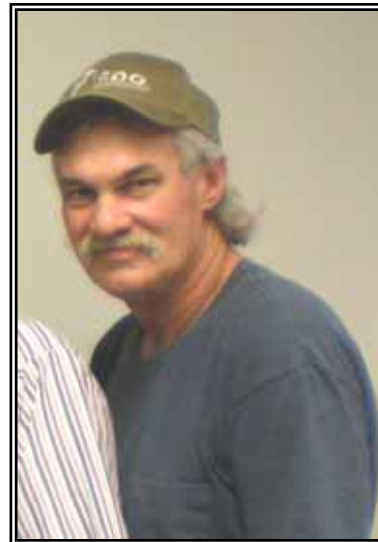
Jean Johnson

25 YEARS

Susi Odden

Back Row: DD Ron Russel, CED Bonnie Nickelson and COC Chair Monty Rogers, presented Length of Service Awards to three Hand County PT's. **A total of 70 Years. WOW !**

George Schade, Hand County COC, reached his term limits and was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation for his dedicated service. His humor and educational stories will be missed.





SANBORN COUNTY

A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to Todd VanWalleghen, outgoing Sanborn County FSA Committee member. Todd began serving in January 2000 and completed his 3rd term at the December 4th meeting.

Thank-you Todd !

SULLY COUNTY

A Plaque from the Sully County FSA staff and a certificate of appreciation were presented to Allen Weischedel, outgoing Sully County FSA Committee member. Allen began serving in April 2000 and completed his third term in December 2008.



Turner County

DD Brad Wilkens, left, is shown presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to Steve Graber for his 9 years of dedicated service on the Turner County Committee.

THANK YOU COC MEMBERS !!

They're outta there !

DEUEL COUNTY

Jeannie Lutz received her certificate for 30 years of service from John Anderson, DD. Jeannie retired on December 31, 2008.

Wishes may be sent to Jeannie Lutz, P.O. Box 62, Gary, SD 57237



BROOKINGS COUNTY

Congratulations to *Lois Buus*, Program Technician in Brookings County.

Lois retired on February 27, 2009 with 26 years of service.

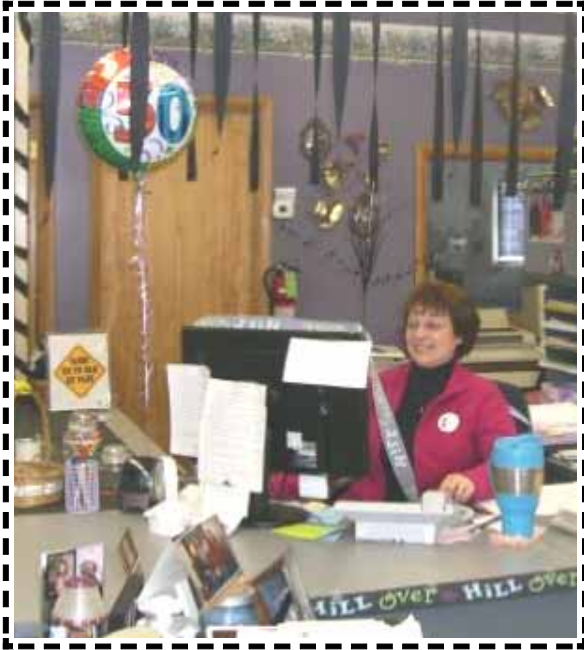
Notice the clean desk - and the big smile!! We wish Lois the best. May your quilting days be happy!!



Congratulations !

Over the Hill

Campbell County



Vanessa Goehring, PT experiences the THRILL of turning **50**.

Isn't it great to have co-workers to remind you of your Big Day ??

MCPHERSON COUNTY

NEW CED AT MCPHERSON COUNTY FSA OFFICE



Janelle Serr has begun her new duties as the County Executive Director at the McPherson County FSA Office in Leola, SD on March 1, 2009. As of May, 2009 Janelle will have 19 years of FSA experience. Janelle comes from Dupree, SD. She started as a Program Technician in May, 1990 in Dupree, 9 years later she became a Farm Loan Officer and 9 years later is now a CED. She and her husband, Greg, have a ranching operation in Ziebach County. They have three children: Danette-age 31, John-age 24 and Katie-age 21; one grandchild and one on the way. Janelle has moved to Leola and looks forward to working with McPherson County area producers.

Bennett-Shannon

Open House



FSA Employees pictured at their Open House were, from left, Scott Huber, Collette Palmer, Mike Goetzinger, and Sue Sigman.

The Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Badlands RC&D offices hosted an open house Monday, Feb. 23, to showcase their new building just West of the Martin city limits on Hwy 18.

According to Mike Goetzinger, the Farm Service Agency and the NRCS offices had been at their former location in Martin on Hwy 18 since 1971. Prior to 1971, both offices were on Main Street, but in different offices on separate sides of Main Street.

The Badlands RC & D recently moved their office in with the other agencies.

Thought for the Day

by Mark Twain

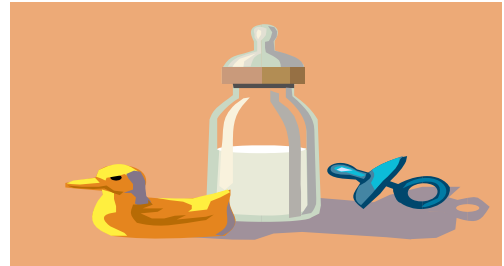
Always acknowledge a fault. This will throw those in authority off their guard and give you an opportunity to commit more.

Lincoln County



Charlie and Peggy Groen (PT) have some exciting news to share. They are grandparents again !!

On January 27, 2009 their son Chris and girlfriend Jessica had a sweet baby boy. Juden Joseph MacDonald weighed 7 lbs 1 oz. He joins big sister, Macie, who just turned 4.



Clark County

Marty and Michelle Bertsch are the proud parents of a baby boy born at 12:56 a.m. on February 18. Marty is the CED at Clark County.

Matthew Lynn weighed 7 lbs, 13 oz. and was 19 ½" long.



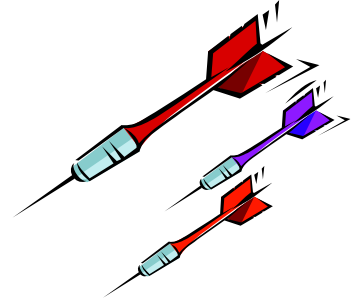


From left to right (back row): Jared Schaefer, Joshua Schaefer, Emily and Caleb, Deb Schaefer, Matt Schaefer, Austin Schaefer. Front: Brianna Schaefer and Katie Schaefer.

McPHERSON COUNTY

Caleb Schaefer, son of Matt and Deb Schaefer (PT in McPherson) married Emily Warne, daughter of Kevin and Angela Warne of Estelline, on December 6, 2008 at the Hamlin Reform Church, rural Castlewood. Caleb is employed with Ludwig Concrete Construction and is a member of the SD National Guard. He is being deployed to Iraq this spring. Emily is employed at Hauffe Dental Clinic in Brookings as a dental assistant.

Hyde County



Standing: Jennifer Chavez, Karla Hyde, Charlie Hyde. Seated on Curt Forgey is Sarah Runyan.

Jennifer Chavez, PT and Sarah Runyan, NRCS DC, were members of the 2nd place team at the Women's State Dart Tournney, Division P. Other team members included Jennifer's sisters Karla and Charlie Hyde. Their mascot was Curt Forgey, the Hyde's cousin.

Winners



**ALL WEST AREA RALLY
MARCH 26TH – 28TH, 2009**

The Northwest Area will be joining with the Southwest Area to hold an ALL WEST RALLY in Reno, Nevada from March 26th through 28th. Plans are for a tour on Thursday, March 26th, with the business meeting being held on Friday and Saturday.

The ALL WEST RALLY will be held at the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino, PH# 1-800-648-5080. Prices are \$99 for a room and \$120 for a suite. Be sure to ask for the NASCOE block.

I will not be making group flight plans. However, Becky Zirpel has found a deal thru NASCOE Travel that includes flight + room at around \$410 for 2 traveling together. Not sure how many plan on going, but the Rally is coming up soon, so start making plans!

**SDASCOE CONVENTION
May 1st - 2nd, 2009
Wall, SD**

Rooms are at the Best Western Plains Motel, Ph# 279-2145 under SDASCOE block. Room prices are \$67 each. Make plans NOW to attend our State convention.

**50 YEARS OF NASCOE
50TH NASCOE CONVENTION
AUGUST 12TH – 15TH
GATLINBURG, TENNESSEE**

CALLING ALL CONVENTION TRAVELERS – I am in the process of planning for travel to TENNESSEE for the 50th annual NASCOE convention.

I need to hear from those of you who plan to attend. As of today, I haven't heard from anyone!!! Surely, there are many of you who would like to be a part of the happy traveler group from South Dakota. I will be making room reservations soon. Then depending on the number of people, we can look at options for travel, via trains, planes or automobiles!

SO.....please let me know if you'd like to be a part of the infamous South Dakota "NASCOE gang". Give me a call if you have any questions, comments or suggestions.

You can contact me at the office (605) 539-9232 or Home (605) 853-3299. Or email me at mary.johnson@hur.midco.net.

Mary, your Travel Coordinator

2009 Pre-Negotiations Report
Embassy Suites, Charlotte, North Carolina
Kevin MacIntyre, NWA Negotiation Consultant

I think that everyone should have some idea about what NASCOE is trying to accomplish with the Negotiation / Consultation process. The Pre-Negotiations and actual Negotiation meetings in WDC, takes one into a part of our job few get the opportunity to experience. Let me try to explain; try to describe the experience, this thing known as Negotiation/ Consultation.

From the time you as an employee submit a suggestion, NASCOE officers and Area Executives are already working to categorize and catalog every employee suggestion. After the deadline is over, the work starts in earnest. Meetings are arranged and national officers, area executives, program chairs and area negotiation consultants sit down to review and discuss exceptionally beneficial suggestions.

The team discusses the impact of every submitted suggestion in light of, if accepted, how it might affect our employees and members across the country. After a usually lengthy discussion, the team determines what suggestions or concerns should be taken to WDC as either negotiations or consultations. The difference here between the two categorizes is very slight as far as I can ascertain. My take on the difference is this; if the employees don't have what has been suggested, then NASCOE negotiates with management to obtain the item or benefit. If the employees already have what has been suggested, but it needs to be changed or improved in some way, then NASCOE consults with management to implement such a change. It also seems that most benefits are negotiated and most program concerns are consulted.

The surveys, research, personnel, time put into this process every year is mind boggling. And why do people volunteer their time and energy to do this? Because as members of NASCOE our suggestions and concerns are all reviewed and acted on by members of our NASCOE family. These NASCOE representatives believe that this is one of the most important duties of service to our members. I would encourage anyone with an interest in this process to talk to your Area Executive and inform them of your interest.

Again, if you want to find out more about this process, check out the NASCOE website. The Negotiation and Program Committees are listed under the Committee sections on the left hand side of the site. Check out, you might just learn something new.

Now let's review:

1. Concerned FSA employees across the county submit new ideas, cost savers, program improvements and employee work concerns throughout the year until the December 15th deadline.
2. After the deadline, the NASCOE Secretary sorts the items into various categories such as working conditions, staffing, budget, personnel, employment practices and benefits. The Secretary then compiles the requests into a Pre-Negotiation handbook and sends them to the NASCOE Officers, Area Executives, NASCOE Committee Chairs and Area Negotiation Consultants.

NWA Negotiation Consultant Report, p.2

3. This group then meets after the New Year to review each item as submitted. It is at this Pre-Negotiation meeting that NASCOE determines its position on the item, and what the next step will be.
Some items are referred to the appropriate NASCOE Committee (Legislative, Programs, Benefits etc).
Some are determined to be Negotiation or Consultation items and will be reviewed by the NASCOE Officers with Management.
And of course, some will not be presented at this time due to timing or possible adverse circumstances to NASCOE.
4. Each item to be consulted or negotiated is then assigned to a team usually consisting of an Area Executive officer and a consultant.
5. This team then sends each person who submitted an item, a letter informing them of the status of their submitted item.
6. At this point the Area Executives and Consultants begin researching their assigned items. This may include surveys, researching procedure, or contacting employees with personal knowledge concerning their items.
The item team then writes a NASCOE position for each item. The Negotiation/ Consultation items along with their NASCOE positions are then forwarded to the FSA management team for their response.
Sometime in the spring, the Officers, Exec's and Consultants will meet with Management to review the Negotiation and Consultation items.
Each and every one of the team members takes part in the discussions, NASCOE explains our position on the items and management explains their position. Hopefully, a mutual resolution between NASCOE and FSA will be reached. Each side's promised action or tasks are recorded for each party's mutual approval.

Virtually every benefit NASCOE has gained throughout the years is due to this process. Even though some of our gains are not immediate, the education, and the ground work is laid down for future negotiations and hopefully future successes.

Some Negotiation/Consultation items reviewed this year were:

Program Technician Reclassification.

Temporary Shared Management extended beyond 52 weeks.

Increased training for all supervisors in the 5-tier Performance Plan and the associated Awards Program.

Protection of COF employee PII

Request for Increased Face to Face Training for all Employees.

Prolonged Security Clearance and FSA-13A issues.

Maintenance for AS/400 & S/36 equipment.

These are just a few of the many issued discussed. If you have any specific questions or want more information on a discussed item, please feel free to contact me at my home or office.

Kevin MacIntyre, NWA Negotiation Consultant

CAPWIZ

Becky Zirpel,
SD CAPWIZ Coordinator
March-April-May SDASCOE NEWS

*NASCOE has invested in a legislative tool called **CAPWIZ**. CAPWIZ allows a person to view their congressman's voting record, receive alerts from NASCOE when action is needed, contact their representative and senators with a message they write or a prepared message from NASCOE, and use the "tell a Friend" option to get additional people to send the desired message. It is useful and can serve many purposes.*

CAPWIZ IS

EASY TO USE

EFFECTIVE

EFFICIENT

QUICK

LEGAL

SAFE

- * Easy because the letters are done for you by our NASCOE Legislative team – you just need to hit the send key and it goes to your respective congressional representatives in WDC
- * Effective because the ease of using this method and email is the best way to send you correspondence
- * Efficient way to communicate in today's technology
- * Quick – It reaches your Senators and Representatives immediately
- * It is legal to use as long as you do this all from your HOME computer
- * Safely received by your Congressional contacts without worry of viruses, powder in the mail etc

Remember the more letters received the more attention it will get in WDC. **CAPWIZ** is our best avenue, as employees, to contact our representation in WDC.

In order for me to communicate immediate actions needed with important SDASCOE/NASCOE business it is necessary to have an up to date email system. Let me know of changes in your HOME email and make sure you update your change in **CAPWIZ**.

The following is some information about SD **CAPWIZ**:

SD - 137 Subscribed 30 – Unsubscribed or Canceled SD has sent 0 - 82 alerts since CAPWIZ started.

Be watching for a possible alert on FERS sick leave credit - Reps. Jim Moran (D-Virginia) and Frank Wolf (R-Virginia) introduced legislation that provides federal employees under the FERS retirement system a sick leave benefit equal to that of employees under the CSRS retirement system. If enacted, the "FERS Sick Leave Equity Act" would add any unused sick leave to the number of years an employee has worked for the purposes of determining their annuity during retirement. This is one time CAPWIZ helps any employee that is under the FERS system!

!!! REMINDER !!!

DO NOT USE YOUR GOVERNMENT EMAIL! SUBSCRIBE AND SEND FROM HOME!



Legislative Organizational Meeting Report

Mike Mayfield and Loren Nelson

January 15-16, 2009

Charlotte, N.C.

The Co-Legislative chairs and Area Legislative Chairs along with President Bonnie Heinzman and Vice President Myron Stroup met in the Embassy Suites Plaza on January 15-16, 2009 for an organizational meeting due to having four new Area Legislative Committee Chairs.

Bonnie welcomed the members to the meeting. Bonnie indicated to stay in touch with the Area Execs and gave an update of her report. Myron also welcomed the group and with a new congress and administration, there are potential for changes and opportunities, depending on the situation. Travel authorizations were discussed and how that works.

Everyone introduced themselves and gave some background on each of them. The new members are Patricia Sorensen (SEA); Rob Gallinger (NEA); Tony Augustine (MWA); Darin Slack (SWA); and Paula Reed (NWA). Paula is the only returning member from last year. After introductions and backgrounds were given, it was obvious that our group had very diverse backgrounds. This is important in that things are different from different areas, but this group has to work for all of NASCOE. Legislators all have different “buttons” to push, and it is up to all of us to find out what those buttons are!

Communication was discussed and Area Legislative Chairs were encouraged to give input on items and issues. We discussed how often we should establish conference calls, and whether we should have them quarterly, monthly, or something else. It was decided that we would have monthly conference calls to start out with and decided to have them the first Thursday of the month at 3:00 PM Central time. In addition, we stressed that information Mike and Loren send out to the Area Legislative chairs would be CC'd to Area Execs and Alternate Execs. In addition, information coming back from the Area Legislative chairs to Mike and Loren should be CC'd to Execs and Alternate Execs as well to keep everyone in the loop. Communication is priority one!

The Area Legislative Chairs were charged with surveying their respective states to get all the states Legislative chairs names, states, telephone numbers, and email addresses (home and work) and report back to Mike and Loren via a listing of all of them by the end of the month.

It was suggested that the Area Legislative chairs visit with each state Legislative chair to find out about them and interview them for ideas. Sometimes the need for asking questions to get information may be needed as well.

The group had a brainstorming session to come up with legislative ideas for this year. The group had a great discussion and many good ideas were presented. The Committee felt that it was very important to create a priority list to concentrate the group's efforts.

NASCOE Legislative Organizational Meeting Report, pg. 2

The group then established the top 5 priorities to pursue during this legislative session. They are:

1. Reorganization (If initiated by Chairman Peterson)
2. FERS/Sick Leave
3. PT Classification
4. Separate line item for Salary, Expenses, IT and Staffing
5. Insurance for Dependent children age increase

Other priorities that may be pursued if opportunities present themselves include:

- Educating congressional members of FSA mission
- Windfall elimination
- Increase within grade steps
- Increase Government percentage of health insurance premium
- Bereavement leave
- Whistleblower protection
- Sick Leave donation from CO to GS and GS to CO employees
- TSP regulatory review
- Prevent retirement recalculation from high 3 to high 5
- Change leasing authority to save money and time

Other areas of interest will be watched for opportunities to include legislative language that would be of benefit to NASCOE members.

Another item of discussion was how best to introduce NASCOE to the young, tech savvy, legislative staffs. Our hope is to have a short video on the page that introduces them to NASCOE and its accomplishments. The intent is to make it easy for them to access information about our positions and be able to cut and paste to create reports for staff meetings. Also, we would like to make this page the first one they will access to find agriculture information through links that are included. The goal is to make this a page that staffers come to rely on regularly for information and in turn they will be constantly exposed to the NASCOE message. The executive committee agreed with this idea. Therefore, a subcommittee of the legislative committee is being established to work on this project.

CAPWIZ was discussed and how important this tool is to our membership. There are currently 2740 enrolled in CAPWIZ. CAPWIZ is not limited to membership either, but should include farmers, ranchers, Feed store managers, etc., for those that will carry our story. We need to use this to send to friends, family members, neighbors, etc.. However, remember only to include person(s), if they are a friend of NASCOE and will help us in our support. You do not want to add someone that is NOT in support of our mission that ultimately would go against us.

The Area Legislative Committee needs to come up with two CAPWIZ goals for each of their areas by the first conference call February 5th, and report to Mike and Loren. They are:

1. Goal to increase CAPWIZ enrollment by state for their Area.
2. Goal to increase the number of responses via CAPWIZ from Area.

CAPWIZ reports were distributed to Area Legislative chairs and Execs for their review to assist them in establishing strategies to accomplish their goals.

NASCOE Legislative Organizational Meeting Report, pg. 3

A lengthy discussion on PAC was undertaken to help the committee better understand what an important tool it is for our legislative arsenal. PAC money is used to help congressional members who share our common interests. It is the way business is done now in WDC, and almost every group or business has a PAC. Money is more dominant now than ever before. This needs to be increased to stay in the game. From our past experiences direct signups are the best at state, area, national, legislative conferences, and other places such as state farm bill or training meetings held in states. There has to be a contact person established for each of these functions to set them up and help out. At these events we need folks there with computer(s) to help members sign up. If secure computer lines are needed for that function, a funding request needs to be sent to the Legislative Co-Chairs.

The Employee Personal Page seems to be the easiest and most effective method to enroll members. All the member needs is their eAuth sign in and password. Select Financial Allotment. Enter routing number for bank and our PAC account number. Enter how much you want to contribute, and complete registration form that will be sent to Mike Mayfield (or person overseeing the PAC signup). Once the event is over, the person overseeing this process needs to gather the forms and send to Mike. The PAC has seen steady growth since the establishment of the allotment process and we must continue that growth. The Area legislative chairs were asked to establish a goal for each area to be accomplished by the next national convention. The deadline for this goal to be established is by the February conference call.

One success story is that NASCOE recently invested in an Alabama Congressional candidate, Bobby Bright. We were the only Ag group that supported him during the election. He won his race and is now on the House Agriculture Committee. We need to take care of our base in the Agriculture Committees, Appropriations, and other supportive congressional members.

PAC is another tool to enhance our Legislative capabilities and we need to strengthen this!!

The PAC balance is kept low on purpose as we utilize these funds in the best places to benefit NASCOE.

Legislative Committee Awards were discussed. We have the following awards:

1. PAC award of \$250 for the State with the largest increase from this past National Convention to the National Convention in Tennessee this fall.
2. Coalition Partner of the Year Award which goes to someone who partners with us on our issues with NASCOE in WDC.
3. Clyde Payne Legislator of the Year Award goes to a Legislator that has helped NASCOE with their issues, and is usually given at the Legislative conference if it can be worked out.

Reorganization was discussed and items such as what USDA can do to make services cheaper and more efficient. Chairman Peterson has mentioned on several occasions the reorganizing of USDA. We believe his idea of Reorganization is about efficiency and what will make USDA more effective. Our goal is to be proactive in our approach and visualize what FSA should look like as an Administrative agency next year and 10 years from now. There may be hearings starting on this in February/March after which we expect Chairman Peterson to disclose his plan. FSA is prepared for this action based on membership input that was solicited in the legislative committee meetings that were held this summer in Omaha, Nebraska at the national convention.

NASCOE Legislative Organizational Meeting Report, pg. 4

Legislative Duties were assigned to the Committee as follows:

Paula Reed - NAFEC/RASCOE Coordinator
Tony Augustine – Benefits
Patricia Sorensen – PAC
Darin Slack – Coalition Partners
Rob Gallinger – REORG and NASCOE NOW
Mike Mayfield/Loren Nelson – Webpage updating

NASCOE Consultant Bob Redding addressed the group on Friday and worked with the group throughout the day on the legislative conference and other legislative areas.. Bob explained to the group that he reports when there is potential or actual Legislative activity. When this occurs he seeks council from NASCOE as discussions are passed through the Legislative board.

USDA has 15 slots to be filled due to change of Administration. The Blue Dog Coalition will be key players in the House and Senate. Also the Black Caucus will be strong.

A Legislative Conference has been scheduled for March 17-18th in WDC. Hotel arrangements have been in the works to find the best rate and accessibility and for the dates we were looking at. Shelly has confirmed the Hotel as the following for March 17-18 and Shelly will have more details coming out on this as well. It will be at the DC Renaissance which is within a few blocks of the Metro and not far away from capital hill.

Conference attendees should begin to arrive Tuesday morning as there will be a **mandatory** training for all conference attendees starting at 2:00 – 6:00 PM. Bob Redding will conduct the training on position papers. If you absolutely cannot get to WDC by starting time, you may have to come Monday night. **No appointments to be made on Tuesday!** The Legislative Committee recommended to the Executive board that each state be reimbursed \$900 for this session. The states can bring in more people from their state like many have done before as long as they are responsible for the cost. The executive board approved the legislative committee request. Additionally, the board agreed that only those states with key contact requirements and the lack of sufficient financial resources could request additional assistance from NASCOE.

All appointments will be made for Wednesday as there is nothing scheduled but visits!! So NASCOE members can maximize our presence on the hill at one time. This has been a problem in the past, so this year we want all visits to be made on Wednesday. Remember to bring your best contact for that particular congressional member to the conference! This does not have to be a member. It could be a county committeeperson, farmer, or rancher that supports FSA.

The target areas will be the House and Senate Ag Committees and House and Senate Ag Appropriations Committees. States that do not have a member designated from these key committees will be delivering our position papers on Benefits!

There will be a Congressional reception for only **key contact groups from the House and Senate Ag Committee, House and Senate Appropriations Ag Committees, with a few others identified by NASCOE Consultant Bob Redding on Wednesday, March 18th at 6:00 PM.**

NASCOE Legislative Organizational Meeting Report, pg. 5

NASCOE members expected to attend this will be the Legislative Committee, officers, Execs, and key attendees to the conference for our key contact group. All members attending this conference cannot attend this reception due to cost.

Reports from all visits are due to be given to a member of the Legislative Committee prior to departure from WDC, and conference attendees are encouraged to travel home on Wednesday if they can arrive home at a reasonable time. This is a business meeting only and if members want to stay longer on their own time and dollar that will be up to them.

For those that cannot fly home Wednesday will leave on Thursday.

We will be requesting a list of all attendees by **February 22nd**, for scheduling and rooming purposes. This includes the state where they are from and the correct spelling of the name requested on name tag. Do not bring FSA business cards! Bring NASCOE Business cards if possible. Tammy Eibey has a template to go by that will create professional looking cards.

Because this is NASCOE's 50th Anniversary year, it was recommended that this be placed on our name tags and Position papers as this is quite an accomplishment in time!!

Specific committees with specific folks and topics will be addressed with the group further as soon as all members have been established.

IMPORTANT: According to NASCOE Consultant Bob Redding, when you make your appointments for that Wednesday, make sure you include in your request that you would like a picture for your newsletter, local paper, or website. This adds strength to getting to see your congressional member as they like these types of publicity in papers, websites, etc.!

We thought the session went well with the Area Legislative Committee. Nobody walked out so that was a good sign, and the members took a lot of notes. We appreciated having this session. We got to know each other better as we come from different areas and different backgrounds as well as personal interests, and lifestyles. In addition, bringing everyone up to speed on how things work and where we are at was appreciated by all. We look forward to this upcoming legislative year!

Respectively Submitted,

Mike Mayfield and Loren Nelson



SOUTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF
FSA COUNTY OFFICE EMPLOYEES

BONNIE NICKELSON
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Nostalgia time....

During these times of change, we thought it would be fun if some of our “older” (not necessarily age wise, but years of service wise) and retired folks would share some tidbits on what they remember about FSA (aka AAA, ASCS) such as PIK certificates, manual calculations, 680’s, 566’s, plus the addition of the 36, etc. Let’s try to let the newer folk know how lucky they are to have computers.

E-mail your info to:

Dawn: dmnagel@yahoo.com or dawn.sheehan@sd.usda.gov OR

Bonnie: lbnick@sbtc.net or bonnie.nickelson@sd.usda.gov

Or mail to the return address shown on this newsletter. THANKS !

See you at :



Window to the West