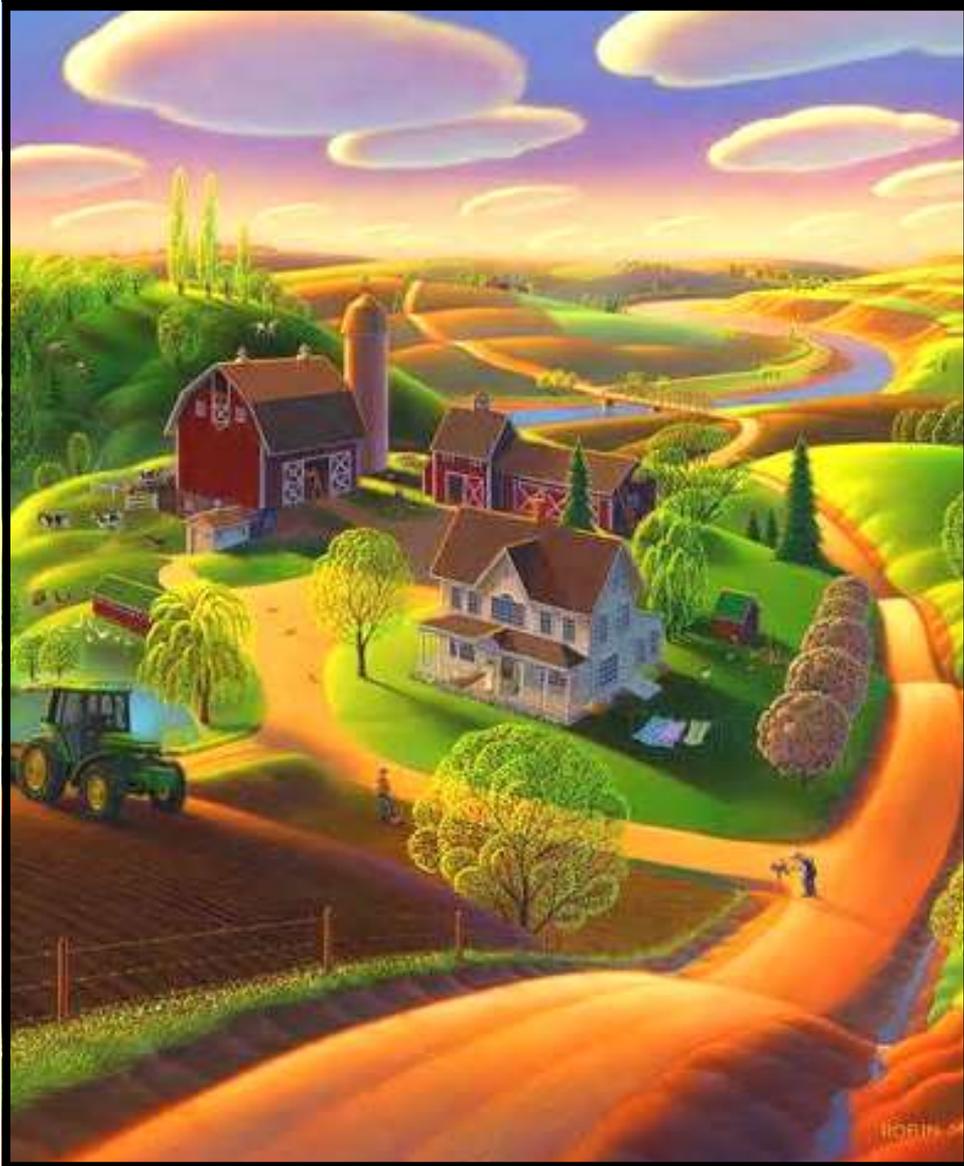
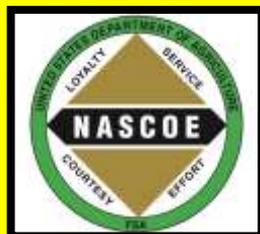


NASCOE

SPRING NEWSLETTER

2014





The General Session at the SEA Rally in Little Rock, AR included Q & A Session with Greg Diephouse, DAFO, and Kim Graham, DAFP. Notes from the Q & A start on page 14.

BBQ Ribs & Fried Catfish were enjoyed out by the river at the SEA Rally.



Nascoe Friends having a great time in Little Rock!

CHALLENGING TIMES FOR NASCOE

By Mark VanHoose, President



It is an exciting but challenging time for NASCOE leadership and members. The beginning of Farm Bill roll out has started, and I am already hearing that the continual cutting of staffing levels has left us in a position of not being able to provide quality service. And yet more challenges are on the horizon. Let's review:

- **CBS Letter:** NASCOE has sent a letter to the Deputy Administrator of Field Operations stating NASCOE's "must haves" for the CBS (Central, Branch, Satellite) office structure plan. If you haven't read this letter you can find it on our home page at www.nascoe.org. Looking at our current staffing levels it will be a challenge to deliver this Farm Bill as we move into the meat of the commodity programs. I know that members in the West are struggling to deliver the new livestock programs. Rest assured we shall continue to work with management and Congress to find a compromise that provides adequate staffing and a footprint that meets the needs of American agriculture.
- **Employee Survey:** I know that the human resources division has launched the 2014 County Employee Viewpoint Survey in May to offer you the opportunity to express your thoughts and opinions regarding your job. Management was very concerned

that so few Program Technicians participated the last time. I want to encourage all employees and **especially Program Technicians** to participate in this survey. This is a great tool to give direct input on your concerns so don't miss this opportunity.

- **On the Road Again:** I have been on the road a lot at conventions and rallies and the energy level has been great. Membership levels are up. Newer employees are attending and getting active. In the NEA area, new employee Sarah from Connecticut was two months on the job and attending her first rally. At each function I see a few of our new members who are ready to step up and lead. Membership levels are up nationally and employees are stepping up to the challenge to make sure FSA and NASCOE stays strong. I want to encourage our state leaders to make sure these newer members are engaged and assuming leadership roles. A state chairperson job is a great place to start. Never be afraid to approach a new employee about being a member. If you need help contact me.
- **See you in Oklahoma:** I think our national convention in Oklahoma City could be our best ever. The Oklahoma Association is working hard at making sure you will have a great time. We have invited the Secretary of Agriculture to speak to you. Also the Chairman of the US House of Representatives, the Honorable Frank Lucas, has been invited to speak. The social

(Continued on page 4)

NASCOE VP Report

5/1/2014



While traveling during the month of April on the NASCOE convention trail, most of the questions have been about when we will start training and working on the new farm bill and CBS. My travels have taken me to Illinois, Mississippi, Arkansas, and North Carolina. The hospitality at every place has been the best and seeing and visiting with good friends has been priceless.

During my visit to Illinois, we discussed the newly released CBS that was shared with NASCOE by FSA management the week before in DC. We were also told by the STO staff that COC meetings were still being limited at this time because they hadn't received their budget numbers for this year, yet. There was a lot of concern about staffing needs and implementing the new farm bill. Strengthening COC authority was discussed by several in attendance. Retirement also seems to be of interest to many that were there.

I enjoyed meeting the Illinois SED and STO staff and listening to updates from them. As always it was great to be among friends and being made to feel as if you were home. Additionally, I would like to thank MWA Exec Dennis Ray for chauffeuring me to and from the airport and for all he does for his area and NASCOE.

In Mississippi we discussed CBS, but the greatest concern seemed to be staffing, as they are way under their current ceiling. It was great to get to meet and speak with Latrice Hill, Outreach Director for FSA/DAFO, who is from Mississippi and was home to visit with former co-workers and family. She graciously shared her experiences with MACOE members. There were also several in attendances that talked to me about planning to retire soon. I also witnessed my first crawfish race, while getting to eat some of the tasty mud bugs. In addition, we were introduced to Dillard Financial Solutions' version of "The Price is Right", hosted by Steve Dillard, which we all enjoyed. As I have traveled, I

(Continued on page 5)

events will be fantastic and the hospitality will be tremendous. Mike Lee is the convention chair and he knows how to plan a convention. In fact, Mike was the convention chair for the convention in Oklahoma City many moons ago for my very first national convention. Get your rooms booked and make plans to attend today!

While I have touched on a few topics that NASCOE is working on, there are many that are too sensitive to discuss right now but know we are working

hard to represent you and provide the best working conditions and benefits we can. One thing I want you to do for me. I want you to work hard while at work and then go home after your day is done. Try very hard to forget about work once you get home and enjoy your free time and your family. Please know that the reasons that work is piled on your desk and payments are slow to get out is not your fault. Do not donate your time. It is important that you take care of yourself. As always, it is a great honor to serve as your President and please keep me informed of your concerns.

have been fortunate to have the opportunity to visit and share with friends and fellow NASCOE members everywhere, and MACOE members certainly made me feel at home. Thank you all. I was able to attend the convention because Mississippian John Norris, the SEA Exec, was speaking in Virginia to the VASCOE membership.

I returned home for two days after Mississippi and then traveled to Arkansas for the SEA Rally. Sabrina Conditt and her crew of AASCOE members put together a great event. They masterfully handled the last minute changes to the agenda caused by management's cancellation of the video teleconference and Bruce Ward's retirement. The Arkansas folks served us a crawfish boil on Wednesday night and on Thursday evening served us some of Butch Kelley's famous ribs with some fried catfish that I understand was delivered from Mississippi. Kim Graham with DAFP addressed program and farm bill implementation with us and graciously answered questions. The agenda also included DAFO, Greg Diephouse, who spoke to us about several current issues presently affecting FSA. Greg also explained CBS, the restructuring model for FSA. Greg and Kim then fielded questions from the audience. We all really appreciated them being able to attend the Rally and share valuable information with us, face to face. Steve Dillard and the Dillard's Financial Solutions team did a retirement seminar and during the banquet had fun with the crowd with their version of the "Price is Right". John Norris, SEA Exec did an excellent job leading the business sessions.

I just got home today from three days at Carolina Beach, North Carolina, where I attended the NoCASCOE Convention. Brent Orr shared some information about the new programs we will implement with the new farm bill. DAFO, Greg Diephouse, shared information about CBS and assured us that management was doing all they could to make this concept of restructuring as employee friendly as possible as they go forward. We were introduced to Greg's family as well as we got to wish him a "Happy Birthday". One thing that was noticed by everyone at the convention was the nineteen people, four out of one office, that were recognized for 25, 30, and 35 years of service. This kind of brings home the fact that within the next few years over 60% of our employees will be eligible for retirement. Pender Sharpe, STC Chairman, spoke at the general session and talked about the technology changes he has experienced in his years of farming. He related that we, FSA, needed to modernize and be willing to change. Mr. Sharpe also stated that even with modernization, he still wanted to be able to discuss, face to face, his options on various farm programs with his CED and FSA staff that he has grown to depend on. Again, being with our NASSCOE family was special and a lot of fun.

Wrapping up, it is important that we realize we still have a lot of important programs to deliver to the greatest farmers in the world. The Livestock disaster programs are addressing great needs across the country. The other programs will be released later in the year, and we have been told that we will have face to face training in

(Continued on page 6)

order to be prepared to implement these programs. CBS, while just a concept at this time, has created a lot of concern; we must remember that so far management has maneuvered through all the budget changes and staff reductions without having to administer a RIF. They have also assured us that they do not intend to RIF anyone when implementation of CBS begins. NASCOE has responded to management, our concerns and suggestions, and we appreciate

management giving us the opportunity to weigh in on the CBS concept. All of the traveling and opportunities to visit with NASCOE members, all over the country, constantly reminds me of why NASCOE is important and what an honor it is to serve as your Vice-President.

Respectfully submitted by,
Wes Daniels
NASCOE Vice-President



L to R:

John Norris, SEA Exec,
Kimberly Graham,
DAFP, Wes Daniels,
NASCOE VP,
Greg Diephouse, DAFO

At the SEA Rally in
Little Rock, Arkansas

April 2014



L to R: Pamela Rhoades, SEA NAFEC
Chair, Mississippi, Congressman Rick
Crawford, AR, and Craig Turner,
NAFEC President, Texas



L to R: David Curtis, SEA Alt Exec,
AR, Congressman Rick Crawford, AR,
Wes Daniels, NASCOE VP, SC

Budget
7/1/2013 through 6/30/2014 Using Budget 13/14

Category Description	7/1/2013 Actual	Budget	6/30/2014 Difference
INCOME			
12,13 dues	27,220.00	27,220.00	0.00
13,14 dues	245,406.75	294,606.00	-49,199.25
2012 convention refund	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00
Disard quarterly	15,700.00	19,000.00	700.00
Emblem sales	198.00	100.00	98.00
Interest Inc	254.39	1,200.00	-945.61
jm donations	6,991.38	6,991.00	0.38
JMM Monthly	4,600.00	3,600.00	-4,500.00
YTB Income	38.01	200.00	-161.99
TOTAL INCOME	510,698.53	564,808.00	-44,319.47
EXPENSES			
2013 convention	34,329.29	35,500.00	-929.29
2014 National Convention	326.00	31,900.00	31,573.40
2015 National Convention	6,749.88	1,000.00	-4,749.88
Annual Report	1,214.18	600.00	-714.18
Area Chairs - conv	8,300.00	13,260.00	4,960.00
Awards	4,367.42	4,482.00	-485.42
Awards-Schol-Emblems Co	659.49	607.00	-52.49
Benefits Committee	126.28	670.00	543.72
Computer	1,603.87	4,000.00	2,396.13
Conf cat -execs	3,311.36	3,000.00	-311.36
Gifts Given	973.09	950.00	-23.09
Insurance, Bus	359.00	359.00	0.00
Leg awards	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Leg Co Org mtg	1,995.92	3,500.00	1,504.08
Leg co state events travel	375.00	10,000.00	9,625.00
Leg consultant	93,660.00	119,000.00	19,500.00
Leg Ty In-conference	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Legal, prof fees	2,668.87	4,185.00	1,326.13
Legis Committee	663.71	500.00	-393.71
Membership Awards	662.76	663.00	0.24
Membership Committee	0.00	260.00	260.00
Membership Jump Teams	0.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
mtg w management	4,401.68	3,072.00	-1,329.68
NAFEO Co Org Mtg	711.55	712.00	0.45
NAFEO Commitee	1,018.62	3,500.00	2,481.38
Neg mtg	9,711.43	12,500.00	2,788.57
News Releases	76.00	600.00	625.00
Newsletter	0.00	7,000.00	7,000.00
Postage and Delivery	309.83	580.00	270.17
Pr-mtg mtg	8,606.32	12,500.00	3,893.68
Programs Committee	0.00	100.00	100.00
Publicity awards	1,018.91	3,500.00	2,481.09
Publicity Committee	204.67	1,000.00	795.33
Reorg mtg	17,700.85	18,000.00	-1,700.85
Spends	1,385.22	1,385.00	-0.22
Supplies, Bus	350.11	340.00	-10.11
Tax, Business			
Fed	459.00	828.00	369.00
Other Tax, Business	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL Tax, Business	459.00	828.00	369.00
Travel - Area conv	2,861.38	8,000.00	5,138.62
Travel - state conv	11,528.31	17,000.00	5,471.69
Utilities			
Internet	7,446.99	10,335.00	2,888.01
Other Utilities	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL Utilities	7,446.99	10,335.00	2,888.01
TOTAL EXPENSES	231,888.84	349,288.00	111,281.06
OVERALL TOTAL	78,808.69	11,838.00	66,970.69

Net Worth - As of 4/29/2014:2
As of 4/29/2014

Account	4/29/2014 Balance
ASSETS	
Cash and Bank Accounts	
First National CD 3-18-13	111,254.99
General fund checking	143,269.86
Ohio Legacy 40K	116,472.38
Scholarship	50,059.82
TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts	421,057.05
TOTAL ASSETS	421,057.05
LIABILITIES	0.00
OVERALL TOTAL	421,057.05



Secretary's Report



Happy Spring Everyone! It feels so good to finally have some warmer temperatures and sunshine here in New York as well as many other states. Ground is finally getting worked here and the wonderful aroma from slurry storage is abundant. I just returned from the NEA Rally in Martinsburg, WV. WV did a great job hosting. It was great to meet so many people and enjoy the historic sites in the area. I look forward to a return trip to tour the battlefields.

The NASCOE 2014 Negotiations Meeting was held in Washington DC on March 25 and 26. This year management paid for the NASCOE Executive Committee and Negotiation Consultants to attend. This has not been the case for the last few years. A big thank you goes out to FSA Management, as this will help the NASCOE budget stay in the black this year. We had fewer items than in previous years, but we were able to give the proper time and attention to each item. I want to thank my 2014 Negotiation Consultants: Susan Mackey Taylor - NEA, Sabrina Conditt - SEA, Crystal Dibley - MWA, Harold Boggs - NWA, and Lynette Bond - SWA for all of their hard work and dedication in helping make this a successful negotiation session.

The 55th NASCOE Convention will be held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma August 11 - 16 this year. The main hotel is the Renaissance Hotel at 405-228-8000 and the Tuesday overflow hotel is the Sheraton at 405-235-2780. This year you can register online and pay with PayPal in addition to the paper form registration. Don't wait; take advantage of the \$35 early registration. The NASCOE website has all the convention tour and event details. OKASCOE is planning a family fun packed time for all. Check it out and register today!

I want to thank everyone for their continued support as your NASCOE Secretary. NASCOE is such a routine part of my day. I enjoy working with the Executive Committee and membership to ensure a better work day for all FSA employees and to ensure that we provide quality service and meaningful programs to our agriculture producers.

Respectfully submitted,
Annette M. Hyman

~~~~ CANDIDACY ANNOUNCEMENTS ~~~~

Announcements of persons desiring to run for any NASCOE office are due **May 15th** to the NASCOE Secretary. Please email all announcements to Annette Hyman at ahymana@aol.com. All announcements are to go to the NASCOE Secretary first. All announcements will then be posted at the same time as soon after June 1 as practical. In no way is this to be construed that announcements must be publicized in this manner as candidates may, if they so desire, initiate their own mailing. The NASCOE newsletter will not to be used for announcements of candidates. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that the announcement has been correctly posted. All announcements will be forwarded to the Publicity Chair and posted at the same time. If you have any questions please contact Annette Hyman, NASCOE Secretary.

Thoughts From the Midwest Area

Dennis Ray, MWA Exec



It just doesn't seem right that it is already May as I write this article. As it has been the case the past few years, it has been extremely busy lately. We have just completed the spring rush of convention season in the Midwest Area. In addition to five state conventions and a joint Minnesota convention/Midwest Area Rally, the last week in March also included four days in Washington DC with the rest of the negotiation team meeting with management. Throw in the release of the President's FY-2015 budget and the Secretary's Central, Branch and Satellite proposal, and you have the makings of an extremely interesting few weeks.

Now before you start thinking I am complaining, let me assure you that the past few weeks are exactly what I thought I was signing up for when I asked to serve as MWA Exec. While you may not know what the issues are going to be when you take the job, you can be certain that there will be issues. Granted, it would have been nice to be able to catch our breath for a little while once the Farm Bill was passed and Congress agreed to a budget deal to avoid sequestration, but just as in life, we don't get to pick and choose when adversity calls.

For the first time in a few years management financed the negotiation session. I would like to thank Administrator Garcia and all those who contributed to the decision to finance the trip. The negotiation process is one of the most foundational principles

of our association, and it is critically important to membership. There were several first timers on the negotiation team, and it is exciting to see new people involved. We had the opportunity to meet with IT, DAFP, DAFO, Administrator Garcia and Associate Administrator Candy Thompson to discuss the negotiation items that had been submitted by membership. We hope to see positive changes from the items that were negotiated.

At the same time we were meeting with management, the Secretary announced his Central, Branch and Satellite concept for FSA office structure in front of the Senate Ag Appropriation Sub Committee. Once the Secretary made a public announcement, management was able to start disclosing some of the details about the concept with NASCOE. We spent some the afternoon discussing this proposal with Deputy Administrator Greg Diephouse and his staff. NASCOE was asked what our "must haves" would be as we move forward with the CBS concept. NASCOE, and the other employee associations, were given until April 21st to submit our must haves. I want to thank all those members who submitted their thoughts and concerns.

As I have traveled to the various state conventions and the MWA rally, the uncertainty about our future is the most pressing concern expressed by membership. The cuts to the County Office side of our agency called for in the President's budget, the Secretary's proposed CBS concept, the reduction of staff and resources to do our jobs effectively, the inability to backfill

(Continued on page 10)

**Central Branch Satellite
Some Plain Speaking
from the South West Area
By Brandon J. Wilson,
SWA Executive**



rule about telling stories from back home. The good news however, was that I kept all of them to a minimum. Today, the bad news is that I have a blank sheet of paper and three pages to write. Bear with me please.

Back in March I traveled with the NASCOE Executive Board to Washington D.C. for a meeting with management. I remember sitting in the hallway of the South Building, just getting ready to go into the conference room when Wes Daniels, NASCOE Vice President grabbed my coat sleeve and said “remember, when the floor comes open, no one wants to hear about how y’all do things in Nemaha County- especially the Administrator.” What he was saying is that I should keep the distracting stories about dust storms, wheat and “whatever else” to a minimum. The bad news that day was that I broke the

By now you have all heard about USDA’s new Central Branch Satellite (CBS) plan, which will eliminate approximately 2 out of every 3 CED’s, restructure the number of PT’s in each office and create branch and part-time satellite locations. CBS is supposed to streamline FSA and make the agency more defensible when fighting for future Congressional appropriations. Along with CBS, management also wants to close 250 County Offices (COF). CBS was officially announced several weeks ago by the Secretary. Since the announcement was made,

(Continued on page 11)

vacancies with permanent employees and the impending challenges of administering a new farm bill have taken a huge toll on employee morale. The employees that are left are doing what they can, but question why resources are being cut now when there will be so much work involved with getting the new programs rolled out to producers.

As we move forward I hope we can get to the point where there can be more transparency on the future of our agency. With very little information being shared to date, employees are left to speculate how any office restructuring might impact them personally. Usually this leads to assuming the worst case scenario. I would encourage states to be in discussion with your SED as this office structure concept proceeds. Our employees

deserve timely, accurate and detailed information about how their position might be affected in any proposal, and they need to be able to make informed decisions about their future. This is not possible as long as employees are uninformed and left to speculate.

I would like to invite all of you to attend the National Convention in Oklahoma City on August 13-16th. Information is available on the NASCOE website. One of the biggest benefits of attending the convention is that you have the opportunity to meet and talk to members of management that are making the decisions that affect our future. The Oklahoma Association is working hard to make sure that your trip to the convention will be both informative and enjoyable. I hope to see each of you there.

everyone in the COF wants to talk about CBS. They want to talk about how the plan was designed by folks far away in Washington and how the plan will have an effect on the field employees who had no input on the plan when it was created.

Recently, NASCOE was asked by management to respond to the plan and to provide NASCOE's "must haves" for any change in how FSA is organized. NASCOE was happy that the opportunity was presented and drafted a response. I would venture to say that management probably wasn't too excited about the NASCOE response when they received it. I would even venture to say that NASCOE President Mark Vanhooose probably "caught heck" over the deal. To completely understand where the NASCOE response came from, one needs to understand COF employees, their history and what they do for their communities. Imagine that COF employees are the hardest working employees in all of USDA. We make up the majority of the total employees that are employed by FSA. We are not unionized. We strive to serve our customers day in and day out. We stay late after work to get the job done. We happily work with limited tools. We serve as a buffer between rural America and the Administration. We help our customers with complex requirements. We help make America's food source secure and viable. We help other agencies. We make payments as soon as possible. We even make the Administration look good by doing our job well. All this and we didn't get a say in the CBS plan while it was being developed. We were even told that it didn't exist. Again, keep in mind this is a plan that

only affects the field. Not those who created it. My point is this- all those reasons listed above contributed to the genetics of the NASCOE response. It is also important to know that the response had the full support of the Executive Board when it was created initially. Later, it was very popular amongst the membership in the field. If you haven't yet seen the NASCOE response, it is contained in this newsletter. You should also look for the NAFEC response.

So where do we stand today? At this point I think our most challenging scenario is that CBS is fully implemented as it stands now. Another tough scenario would be that CBS fails and we don't get more staffing. Our best case scenario is that a group of employee organizations, COC's and STC's all work together at the local level to identify and implement reforms. This scenario also requires that an honest workload model is utilized to measure what COF's do on a daily basis. It also requires that the Administration ask Congress for funding accordingly.

Although hard to see, I feel like the news is still reasonably good at this point. Consider this: 6 months ago we weren't on our producers' radar because there was no Farm Bill. Six months ago, the Administration developed the 2015 budget before sequestration ended and before we had a Farm Bill. Six months ago, the NASCOE membership didn't really know that CBS was coming their way from the Administration. Fast forward to today and look at where we are: we have more workload now than in the previous Farm Bill, Congress and

(Continued on page 12)

Farmers are now noticing how slim our staffing is and they are worried about Farm Bill delivery.

So now what? Moving forward, it is important NASCOE recognizes that FSA is in need of structural change so that it can indeed be defensible in future limited budgets and that NASCOE is willing and happy to work with our sister organizations, Congress and the Administration on the common goal of customer service. To that end, here is a simplified summary of what NASCOE stands for and what NASCOE has offered management:

- Modernization based on truthful and generally accepted workload measurement.
- Reasonable protections for COF employees during any modernization.
- Upward mobility opportunities for PT's.
- Identification of offices that can be closed immediately provided NASCOE has real input at the local level. NASCOE believes that the number of offices that could be closed is substantial and that the closure of these offices would generally be agreed upon between the public, Administration, STC's, COC's and NASCOE. Closing offices as a collaborative effort results in forward progress on modernization and reduces the chances of Congress stopping all office closures all together.

While this all plays out, it will be important for NASCOE members to hold their State Presidents and Area Executives accountable to the membership. Make sure your leaders are on the stick and listening to your

concerns. Members can do this by reading newsletters, e-mail, attending meetings and providing feedback. Also, remember that all politics is local. NASCOE members must be ready to tell our story to stakeholders when called upon by NASCOE and be willing to strike while the iron is hot.

Get Engaged...Be a part of the conversation on shared management



You know, as we head into that newly rising sun know to us as the CBS, it is hard to see the horizon from the blinding rays it emits. Those rays come in the form of fear, doubt, distrust and to borrow some famous words, "so dang many unknown unknowns". As we talk more about the CBS office structure, we can foresee an increase in shared management. And that is not all bad.

But what would be bad, is if we as an association and more specifically as state affiliates, don't hold our state management to the provisions set forth in the handbooks as it applies to the SED's and STC's in regards to the implementation of shared management.

Check it out, handbook 27-PM (Rev.1) par.52 C specifically states that "Before STC approval of the establishment of a shared management operation, SED **shall** consult with the NASCOE State affiliate". That is a part of the FSA/NASCOE Shared Management Agreement (27-PM exhibit 8), signed and dated in August of 1998 and still in effect today. Another thing to consider during these

(Continued on page 13)

conversations is the satellite or type 3 offices. Your state affiliate should be in the conversations concerning the creation or retention of these part-time offices as well, handbook 16-AO (Rev. 3) par. 286 E, Part-Time Service Center, states that the SED's and STC's are to use the same procedure as in 27-PM (Rev.1) par. 52 C.

As you can see, some folks a day or two back foresaw a need to create the language discussed above. Now it is up to those of us that are here today to utilize those tools to help shape the future of the FSA, ensuring reasonable access for our American producers, and retaining quality employment for the members of NASCOE and all FSA employees.

State President's, if you have not already done so, you need to pick up the phone and call your SED and get the conversation going. To not do so will be letting your state membership down, and failing to fulfill the duties of your position. Any member or employee can call their STO and have a conversation on shared management, but it is much more orderly and professional if the President or their designee is the contact for the STO.

So let's ramp up our conversations with our State management and work towards an equitable plan for the future. Let's get engaged.

Respectfully submitted,

Phillip Morton

NWA Executive

philcatmorton@hotmail.com



**SEA Report
John Norris,
SEA Executive**

The Southeast Area Rally was held in Little Rock, Arkansas April 9-11. It was a great event full of education and fellowship. The rally kicked off with a crawfish boil put on by the Arkansas State Association. It was a great time to get together and visit as everyone was coming in for the rally. More people arrived on Thursday. Attendees were able to pick up registration packets and explore Little Rock prior to a rib cookout and fish fry. The cookout was on the banks of the Arkansas River and despite the wind making set up a little difficult, I didn't hear one complaint about the food!

Business meetings began on Friday. Special guests included Greg Diephouse, DAFO and Kimberly Graham with DAFP. After presentations from both guests, a question and answer session was completed. A complete list of those questions and answers will be emailed to you soon. That afternoon Dillard Financial put on a retirement session which was very educational. Congressman Crawford of Arkansas also visited the group and extended his support for everything we do in the County Office and for our farmers. Friday evening ended with a silent and live auction. The auction raised over \$4000 for the scholarship fund.

(Continued on page 14)

NASCOE business continued Saturday morning. There was a lot of discussion about the new CBS office structure plan. Wes Daniels, NASCOE President discussed what is known by the National Board at this time and encouraged members to submit questions and ideas to the board. Questions and comments submitted by the Southeast area to me have been sent to the NASCOE board and compiled with those from the other areas. Those have been sent to Greg Diephouse, DAFO. You will be informed of the responses when we receive them. Craig Turner, NAFEC President and Pam Rhoades, SEA NAFEC Chair discussed the importance of all COC members being NAFEC members and for NASCOE members to also become associate members of NAFEC. NAFEC is very supportive of county office employees and our association, so I also urge you

to consider this membership. Kevin Wooten, NASCOE Legislative Co-Chair discussed the current plans of his committee. He emphasized grass roots politics and encouraged NASCOE members to cultivate a relationship with their local senator and congressman especially if they are on the Ag and/or appropriations committees.

The rally wrapped up with the awards banquet. There were very deserving award recipients in the SEA and we wish them luck in the national competition. Please check your email and watch for upcoming information about things affecting each of us as county office employees and as always please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,
John Norris
 SEA Executive

**Q & A Session from the SEA Rally
 By Renee Boykin, SC**

- Q: What is the timeline for implementing CBS?**
 A: RIF's are off the table, Work with SED's to determine staffing needs, take as long as possible, decisions not made and all up in the air, everyone will retain job and grade, Location is questionable but relocation expense will be paid.
- Q: Under CBS reorganization, can we assure COC will retain responsibility of CED's?**
 A: Yes – not changing supervisory structure – not part of this initiative
- Q: Is the final 2014 budget based on current employees?**
 A: 2014 target ceilings were given to states last May, then we had VERA's and VSIP's, hiring freeze has affected some states more than others, new target ceilings soon
- Q: How would Satellite Offices be determined?**
 A: SED's evaluate workload and distance, type of producers/strikeforce County, work with State Association, CBS plan and implementation not clear cut
- Q: Supervision – FLM's won't be Office Managers?**
 A: Offices with CED and FLM – lot of discussion, April 21st Comments

(Continued on page 15)

from NASCOE, meet with SED's, model firmed up, guidance in May/June

Q: How does 250 Offices fit in CBS Plan?

A: No target offices/No list, in 2015 look at Farm Bill Implementation and look at the 250 at that point, may consolidate offices but no list now, 250 number came from dollars and the 2/20 rule.

Q: Why are PT jobs being advertised outside of the agency when below ceilings?

A: Situations in some states are below 14 ceilings, some states received authorization to hire from all sources back in December, some jobs you see coming online now are from the December authorization

Q: When looking at the 250 offices to close will you consider the number of PT's in the office before or now – my office has gone from 7 PT's to 1 PT now and the dirt has not gone anywhere – the same amount of farmers are still planting.

A: Hope those offices will not be included, 2/20 is in the regs, looking at Base Acres to measure where the work is

Q: How can CBS plan be implemented without CED competition?

A: No one will lose job/grade, reassigned within State, relocation expense paid, retirement eligible?, VSIP/VERA possible but not along with Farm Bill implementation, next two years should be heavy workload

Q: Is there a workload model for CBS?

A: Goal is yes, in good hands coming up with workload model, no draft yet

Q: Temporary appointments end 9/30/2014 – will they be extended?

A: Chances are high for extension

Q: What type of tools/technology is needed to implement CBS?

A: more laptops/travel money/technology/maybe in the next 5 years we will be taking the ipad to the farm

Q: What will the COC structure be in CBS Offices?

A: not determined/they are a valuable part of CO's/more Outreach functions/

Q: From a retiree, instead of hiring Temps off the street, why not hire retired FSA under contract?

A: Important to consider/should be a part of this and can be

Q: What happens if the COC does not concur with management decisions under CBS or shared management?

A: work with COC in the process/challenge the COC to come up with a better option

Q: Switching topics, is there an option under the PLC/ARC to build crop bases where the farm has cropping history in the past 5 years?

A: Maintain 2013 crop bases/2008-2012 planting history/zero base acreage on the farm now will stay zero – no building bases/no BF plan/

- Q: When will direction be given to States on CBS Plan?**
 A: Give direction to SED's in late May/early June/looking at where FL Teams are now/not saying these will be Central Offices/Type 1 could be Central Offices
- Q: Three person offices will be a significant CED reduction; will there be a position role other than management?**
 A: No – no plan right now/no plan for displaced CED for new position
- Q: Satellite Office Space?**
 A: RD Model of 175 sq ft/downsize lease 175 to 200 sq ft
- Q: TPPP Program Software for revised contracts?**
 A: The software has been developed and is in the testing phase/ pushing for end of April to be in CO's
- Q: Will workload such as reporting crops be considered when looking at CBS?**
 A: compliance workload will be considered for CBS/heaviest workload areas will be looked at when creating models/IT Infrastructure will be in place for satellite offices

Q & A Sessions with WDC Folks are just one very important part of Conventions! ATTEND YOUR CONVENTIONS/RALLIES/NATIONAL CONVENTIONS! IT IS YOUR ORGANIZATION!

**Will CBS Work For You
 By Bo Epting
 NEA Executive**



During the Negotiation Session in March 2014, the Central, Branch Satellite (CBS) plan was revealed by Management to NASCOE. NASCOE was told that there was a workload tool process being constructed to try to determine exactly where the work is being done. According to Management, this tool is to make sure that we have adequate staff doing the necessary work. Then in 2015, they will probably suggest a realignment of some of the offices and a strengthening of those offices.

The Secretary stated that the new office concept is not about saving money but increasing the agency efficiency. It sounds like we saved by not back filling the 815 Full Time Employees' positions that were

reduced through VERA/VSIP, however this has not saved on rent for office space. With fewer staff, it is expected that travel may increase not just in terms of travel dollars, but also in time lost while driving. Here in the NEA we are faced with large distances between the county offices in reference to time traveled. When I refer to distance, I'm talking actual driving miles and not as a crow flies. It may be very likely that another County office is 20 miles from the next county however; you are going over two mountain ridges to get there. In the winter, that is a very different situation. Keep in mind, NASCOE has big concerns over CED's having to compete against each other for the CED job. DAFO has stated that they would not take competing off the table. With roughly 60% of USDA's workforce eligible to retire, who are we going to be able to ask for help? We will simply have to do the same as what we have been

(Continued on page 17)

doing only with a lot less. I have read where they want to start pushing our producers to use the internet more frequently. The secretary has stated that there will be no office closure or re-alignments to the county offices in 2014. Instead, this would be done in the middle of implementing a very complex and heavy workload farm bill in 2015 and forward. There is major concern with staffing in the NEA. I do not want to think that being understaffed is going to be the new norm.

Employee Associations were asked by Management to comment on the CBS plan and to provide a "must haves" list to management. After requesting feedback from membership, NASCOE submitted a response to management on behalf of all COF employees and all COC members.

Some of the must haves NASCOE sent to management were:

- NASCOE wants a seat at the table to discuss the new workload tool.
- The plan must be employee friendly. PT's must not have to decide between driving excessive distances (lessor of 50 miles

or 60 minutes from home) and leaving their job.

- Attrition must be used to determine when an office would be reclassified as a branch office. A county office with an incumbent CED shall not be reclassified as a branch office if that results in the CED being in competition for the central office supervisor position.
- Upward mobility opportunities for PT's.

In closing, your NASCOE leadership team is a hard working group that always focuses on what is best for membership. With the many challenges still facing us it is time to voice concerns and be proactive. I encourage you to stay involved in your respected states, and up to date with information. We encourage membership to stay in communication and to continue to share concerns with NASCOE. With your help we will have another productive year and get through this on top.

Respectfully Submitted
Bo Epting
NEA Executive.



Oklahoma Association of FSA County Office Employees

55TH ANNUAL CONVENTION RAFFLE

GRAND PRIZE:
 Polaris Ranger 800 XP EFI (green) or 800 Razor (red)
Value \$10,700
Second Prize:
 \$750 Bass Pro Shop Gift Certificate
Third Prize:
 \$500 Cash

Drawing will be held
Saturday, August 16, 2014
 at the
 National Convention
 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Need not be present to win!

NASCOE, LET'S GO TO OKLAHOMA!!!

Time to send in your Registrations!



55th NASCOE CONVENTION

August 11 - August 16, 2014

Renaissance Hotel (Main Hotel)

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

405-228-8000

[Click Here for Link to Renaissance Hotel](#)

Sheraton (Overflow for Tuesday only)

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

405-235-2700

[Click Here for Link to Sheraton Hotel](#)

Name: _____ Guest _____

Circle One: Delegate Member RASCOE NAFEC Honorary Member District Director

Address: _____

e-mail: _____

Phones: Work _____ Cell _____

Please choose ALL EVENTS that you plan to attend—even if it is FREE!

Honorary Life Members and guest under 13 years of age may attend the Convention free as our guest. Your registration is essential so that we can be prepared for the correct number of attendees to each event.

DATES/TIMES	EVENT	COST PER PERSON	# ATTENDING	TOTAL \$ DUE
POSTMARKED BY JUNE 15, 2014	REGISTRATION	\$35		
POSTMARKED FROM JUNE 16 - JULY 15	REGISTRATION	\$45		
POSTMARKED AFTER JULY 15	REGISTRATION	\$65		
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13 8:00 - 4:00	AG TOUR OKC STOCKYARDS TOWN AND AUCTION, LUNCH AT CATTLEMEN'S, BRAUM'S DAIRY, EXPRESS RANCH	\$40 Meal Included		
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13 8:00 - 4:00	ARBUCKLE MOUNTAIN TOUR. TURNER FALLS AND CHICKASAW CULTURAL CENTER	\$40 Meal Included		

For your Convenience, go to www.nascoe.org and complete the online form and pay with Paypal!

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13 8:00 – 4:00	OKC TOUR. OKLAHOMA CITY MEMORIAL AND NATIONAL COWBOY & WESTERN HERITAGE MUSEUM	\$40 Meal Included		
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13	GOLF TOURNAMENT	\$30		
WEDNESDAY, 7:00 p.m.	MASQUERADE PARTY	Free		
THURSDAY, AUGUST 14	DISCOVER BRICKTOWN	Free		
FRIDAY, AUGUST 15	RASCOE LUNCHEON	\$30		
FRIDAY, AUGUST 15	OKLAHOMA NIGHT OFFSITE - REMINGTON PARK - TRANSPORTATION AND MEAL INCLUDED	\$10 FREE IF YOU WEAR 2014 CONVENTION T-SHIRT		
SATURDAY, AUGUST 16 6:00 – 7:00 PM	SOCIAL HOUR	CASH BAR		
SATURDAY, AUGUST 16 7:00 – 9:00 PM 9:00 – MIDNIGHT	WILD WEST SHOW, NASCOE AWARDS BANQUET AND COUNTRY HOE-DOWN	\$45		

YOUTH ACTIVITIES:

Must submit Parental Consent Form for any and all Youth Activities.
(Form available at www.okascoe.org or at Convention Registration Desk.)

Youth Name(s): _____ Ages: _____

DATE/TIME	ACTIVITY	COST PER PERSON	# ATTENDING	TOTAL \$ DUE
WEDNESDAY 6:00	GET AQUAINTED	FREE		
THURSDAY, AUG 14 TH	ZOO & BURGERS	\$20.00		
FRIDAY, AUG. 15 TH	ICE SKATE/PIZZA	\$20.00		
FRIDAY, AUG. 15 TH	REMINGTON PARK	FREE		
SATURDAY, AUG 16 TH	TRAMPOLINE JMOVIE	\$30.00		

PURCHASE YOUR 2014 NATIONAL CONVENTION T-SHIRT FOR \$20

COLORS AVAILABLE: ROYAL BLUE AND ORANGE

Quantity _____ Color _____ Size _____ \$ _____

PURCHASE YOUR 2014 NATIONAL CONVENTION DISC OF PICTURES @ \$20 \$ _____

Convenience fee for Pay Pal... \$5.00 \$ _____

2014 NASCOE NATIONAL CONVENTION REGISTRATION TOTAL \$ _____

RETURN YOUR COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORM AND CHECK PAYABLE TO:

OKASOCE
C/O ANDREA PETTIJOHN
3969 ST HWY 92
CHICKASHA OK 73018-7021

INFORMATION NEEDED FOR THOSE ATTENDEES ARRIVING AT THE OKLAHOMA CITY AIRPORT:

ARRIVAL DATE AND TIME: _____

AIRLINE/FLIGHT NUMBER: _____

NUMBER IN PARTY: _____

DEPARTURE DATE AND TIME: _____

QUESTIONS: MIKE LEE 405.238.6236 ANDREA PETTIJOHN 405.224.1381

Legislative Committee Report



Your Legislative Committee continues to be focused on four areas:

1. **Farm Bill Implementation,**
2. **FY 2015 Appropriations,**
3. **Model Service Center Concept and the “CBS Proposal”**
4. **Strengthening our grassroots effort.**

The Legislative Committee Chairs traveled to Washington D.C. in late March. We met with House and Senate Ag staff to see what we could learn regarding farm bill implementation. At that time—they knew about the same amount of detail as we in the county offices knew regarding policy and procedure being written...and basically had only seen the 4 page farm bill fact sheet released several weeks earlier. Since our visits in late March, we have all learned more about the implementation progress.

Additionally, we have seen several more facts sheets specific to Disaster programs, actually received Disaster training, and have begun a signup of LIP, LFP, and ELAP. It’s good to see some progress!

With the passage of a new farm bill that provides significant work to get implemented and \$100M in funding, it was quite a surprise to see a proposal for consolidation of additional county offices, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, further reduction in staffing level. NASCOE quickly developed a position on this proposal: **We recognize the need for consolidation of some FSA offices and could support a consoli-**

ation plan that included an accurate workload assessment to ensure offices are consolidated into the appropriate locations. While we recognize that attrition in our agency will continue to take place—we have serious concerns about a plan that actively seeks to reduce FSA workforce at a time a new farm bill, with very different and complex programs, is getting ready to be implemented.

The Senate Ag Appropriations hearing on 3/25/14 and the House Ag Appropriations hearing in early April revealed that there are over a 20 members of appropriations/ag approps committees that have significant concern about the timing of this proposal and how it will impact serving agriculture going forward. Senator Mark Pryor, Chair of Senate Ag Appropriations, asked the Secretary about possibility of delaying this action for a year or so to get farm bill implementation. Representative Robert Aderholt, Chair of House Ag Appropriations, asked the USDA panel: Is now the right time to eliminate employees in FSA county offices? Commodity groups across the country can see the absence of staff in our offices and are publically asking the question of USDA: When will producers begin to see FSA offices with additional staff? Finally, folks on Capitol Hill are taking particular interest in the MIDAS software. They are aware that a Model Service Center concept becoming reality is critically dependant on MIDAS. Capitol Hill is aware that new farm bill programs such as ARC and PLC will run in the Web Farm environment instead of the MIDAS environment. They are also aware that MIDAS is behind schedule

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and some have indicated to me that this product has already cost more than the initial expected cost at completion.

We have submitted language to both House and Senate Ag Appropriations to disapprove the President's request to consolidate 250 COF and eliminate 815 Non-Fed FTE's and provide adequate funding to continue the FY 2014 staffing level for COF employees. NASCOE recognizes the need for consolidations in certain areas across the country. To ensure that consolidations are carried out in the appropriate manner we have submitted the following language to Senate and House Ag Appropriations: "None of the funds provided to the department of Agriculture may be used to consolidate or close and FSA county offices until 180 days after the Secretary conducts, completes, and submits an evaluation of workload assessments by State to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate."

The Take Home Message Today....

Be confident that NASCOE is concerned about consolidations being in the right places and is adamant that ALL employee associations be part of process in evaluating workload. We are aware that a workload evaluation is supposed to take into account anticipated workload in the new farm bill. Our concern is that there may not be enough credit given to work in new farm bill. Further, a more accurate picture of new farm bill workload may not be known until 12 to 24 months from now.

Regarding the future staffing levels in FSA: Even if we make the right

number of consolidations in the right places, continuing to lose staff due to attrition or an active reduction plan such as VERA/VSIP with very few opportunities to backfill positions at some level will result in county offices remaining significantly understaffed—adversely affecting service to American agriculture. Continuing on the theme of staffing and technology---MIDAS can be a great tool and an asset to the agency. However, we are easily a decade away from a significant portion of farmers and ranchers transacting FSA business online. The generation that continues to do the lion's share of production agriculture in America will demand to conduct business in person in his/her local FSA office instead of turning on the computer.

Please know that your legislative committee is working hard for the members of NASCOE. As always—we continue need your help from home to make sure our messages are heard loud and clear. Please know you can contact anyone on the LC at any time with questions for concerns.

Your Legislative Committee.



Patricia Sorenson, Programs Chair;
 Congressman Rick Crawford, AR;
 Stephanie Bradley Fryer, Membership
 Chair at the SEA Rally!

**NASCOE Newsletter
April 2014**



A couple of months ago I wrote an article for the NAFEC Newsletter titled "What's good about the Committee System?" After hearing a lot of positive comments about it, I've decided to share some excerpts from the original article with all of my NASCOE friends.

Back when I was a kid I remember going to the ASCS office with my dad. One of the things I remember was when one of his friends was running for the County Committee. For dad, it was an important thing to have a good honest person elected to the Committee. Back then the elections were somewhat like our electoral college. Community committee members gathered for an election and they both nominated and elected individuals to represent their area. The ASCS County Conventions, as they were called back then, were always interesting as a large number of farmers and ranchers gathered to democratically elect the best person to represent their respective area. For dad and a lot of other kids of the depression, the County Committee's (formerly County Control Associations) were the best thing going for a federal government of which they were all a little bit leery. From a historical stand point that is exactly why the committee system was formed in the first place. As a way to show the agriculture community, federal farm programs would have oversight by none other than their friends and neighbors.

Now let's fast forward to 2014. We have a farm bill that needs to be implemented. A lot of decisions will

need to be made in regard to livestock disaster programs, re-computing bases, establishing yields, and in some cases hearing appeals presented by farmers and ranchers in your communities. It's the county committee system that will provide this due process and I'm still glad it's around and working effectively. Neither in private industry, nor in government, is a system better without local oversight. One man or woman making all of the decisions is always suspect, but an oversight board of directors or committee in the case of FSA, provides checks and balances. These checks and balances are the foundation of the American way. Just as Lincoln said, "Of the people, by the people and for the people", remarkable, but that is exactly what the County Committee system stands for, and that's exactly what's good about it!

In closing, I just want to urge you to share with your local COC's the fact that NAFEC is all about FSA, the COC system, and the support of COF employees. We have a great ally in NAFEC and I just hope each of us understands how much these men and women give voluntarily to make our agency more responsive to our customers, to provide jobs for each of us in our local communities, and to ensure grass roots involvement in agriculture for future generations.

I hope you will share the message the next opportunity you have.

Kevin Dale, Oklahoma
NAFEC Committee Chair

NAFEC Support for NAFEC Directors

To help ensure a good number of NAFEC attends the National Convention in Oklahoma City this summer NAFEC will provide cost share assistance as shown below.

- **National Officers - NAFEC provides all cost in excess of what states provide NTE 100%**
- **Area Directors – NAFEC provides \$500 over whatever states provide, NTE 100%.**
- **State Directors – NAFEC provides \$250 over whatever states provide, NTE 100% and for one director per state with one exception.**
- **If your state has both an area director and state director NAFEC will pay \$500 for the area director and an additional \$250 for the other state director.**

State Associations are really encouraged to visit with your NAFEC directors and to provide additional assistance to help them attend the convention. This is one of the most important things you can do for NAFEC. After a decision is made, please let your area NASCOE/NAFEC Area Committee (Greg Hudson – NEA, Pamela Rhodes – SEA, Randy Tillman – MWA, Scott Tieman – SWA and Billy Denison – NWA) member know exactly how much your state can assist and if your NAFEC director will be attending.

NASCOE Membership Calendar

JULY 1 - The NASCOE dues year begins.
Now is the time to send out information to your counties asking them to renew membership.
Communicate with your counties, ask directors to help with membership drive within their districts.
AUGUST - National Convention Month
SEPTEMBER 30 - End of 1st quarter - 1st QTR Transmittal due within 10 days.
SEPTEMBER 30 - DATABASE DUE
OCTOBER 10 - 1st quarter dues transmittal due / Submit to NASCOE Treasurer Shelly Odenkirk
NOVEMBER - Communicate with your counties, ask directors to help with membership drive within their districts.
DECEMBER 31 - End of 2nd quarter - 2nd QTR Transmittal due within 10 days.
JANUARY 10 - 2nd quarter dues transmittal due / Submit to NASCOE Treasurer Shelly Odenkirk
FEBRUARY - Communicate with your counties, ask directors to help with membership drive within their districts.
MARCH 31 - End of 3rd quarter - 3rd QTR Transmittal due within 10 days.
Begin promoting 40 YR/45 YR/50 YR membership awards
Begin submitting info of deceased members for NASCOE Memorial Presentation
APRIL 10 - 3rd quarter dues transmittal due / Submit to NASCOE Treasurer Shelly Odenkirk
Communicate with your counties, ask directors to help with membership drive within their districts
JUNE 15- Deadline to submit names and counties for membership awards
JUNE 30 - 4th quarter dues transmittal due - you are submitting earlier in order for NASCOE Treasurer to compute delegate assistance to NASCOE convention for your state.
JULY 1- Deadline to submit names for NASCOE Memorial

Membership Report

Stephanie Bradley Fryer,
National Membership
Chair



It is a very important time for FSA employees to be NASCOE members. There are so many plans involving the agency and employee’s future that it is essential that county office employee’s voices be heard.

NASCOE has worked tirelessly over the past year from the Farm Bill to now management’s new office structure plan. The NASCOE board has increased its communication efforts. The board not only disseminates the information it has to the members but is also actively soliciting questions, concerns and suggestions from the membership. It is important that you communicate with NASCOE just as NASCOE is trying to better communicate with you. Contact your State’s President or your Area Executive and talk over your issues with them. If they can’t help you, they will be able to elevate it. Remember to give your home email address to the leadership in your state so that you will be included in important emails and information so that you will stay in the loop. Check out the website and “like” the NASCOE facebook page, your state’s page and any other state’s page.

Membership has seen a slight overall increase in percentage from last year. A copy of the latest membership report is attached. The Southwest Area has even increased by 8%! Due to fluctuations and uncertainty of hiring, please send in your “on board” numbers to the treasurer when submitting your dues. This lets us have

a more accurate membership percentage. If someone is hired you can just add their figure to the next quarter and hopefully have a new member!

All but one state has submitted dues transmittals for the year. I commend everyone for their membership recruitment and retention of members. It would be very easy time for people to jump ship but your efforts in your states prove just how hard you are working. Thank you for letting FSA employees know how important their membership is especially at this time.

States should take opportunities at upcoming trainings to speak to non-members and encourage them to join. This doesn’t mean you have to have time on the agenda but you can take time on breaks and before and after meetings to visit with other employees in the state. Go to the NASCOE website and gather materials to explain benefits to them. Highlight recent events where NASCOE fought for its members. Take plenty of FSA-444s to sign people up for dues withdrawal on the spot!

Please watch the NASCOE membership calendar for upcoming deadlines for awards and memorials. Please contact me anytime!

-Stephanie Bradley Fryer
NASCOE Membership Chair



2013/2014 NASCOE Membership Report

5/21/2014

Page 1

STATE	Total CO employee 13-14	Total GS employee 13-14	TOTAL	TOTAL CO Members	No GS Members	CO Members % To date	12-13%	11-12%	Associate Members	Allow GS as Members	Current Transmittal # & date submitted	
	YES	NO										
NORTHEAST												
CT/RI	14	4	18	11		79%	79%	80%	5	1		3rd qrt 4-10-14
DE/MD	58	8	64	51	1	88%	82%	78%	3	1		3rd qrt 4-10-14
ME	24		24	19		79%	81%	84%		1		3rd qrt 4-10-14
MA	14	0	14	11		79%	79%	75%			1	1st qrt 11-8-13
NH	13	3	16			0%	0%	89%			1	
NJ	18	5	23	8		44%	44%	50%			1	2nd qrt 1-13-14
NY	118	96	208	88		89%	88%	87%	8	1		1st qrt 10-15-13
PA	110	25	135	65		69%	68%	67%			1	2nd qrt 2-5-14
VT	17	15	32	15	2	88%	90%	89%	4	1		FINAL 4-25-14
WV	44		44	34		77%	82%	75%			1	FINAL 1-21-14
TOTAL	422	154	576	312	3	74%	78%	75%	21	8	2	
SOUTHEAST												
AL	137	21	158	134	9	98%	82%	99%	15	1		3rd qrt 4-10-14
AR	182	6	188	151	6	93%	96%	95%	28	1		3rd qrt 4-25-14
FL	63	15	78	51	1	81%	72%	83%		1		3rd qrt 4-22-14
GA	233	99	293	267		89%	86%	87%		1		3rd qrt 4-17-14
KY	220	106	326	173	4	78%	78%	57%	18	1		3rd qrt 4-10-14
LA	112	79	191	96		86%	86%	84%	12	1		2nd qrt 1-6-14
MS	179	51	230	141	2	79%	83%	82%	41	1		2nd qrt 1-6-14
NC	250	71	321	212	4	85%	84%	83%	107	1		3rd qrt 4-17-14
SC	99	27	126	78		79%	67%	84%	36		1	2nd qrt 1-21-14
TN	195	87	282	177		81%	82%	82%	20	1		3rd qrt 4-17-14
VA	140	52	192	85		61%	53%	60%			1	3rd qrt 4-10-14
TOTAL	1853	634	2487	1371	17	83%	82%	82%	252	8	3	
MIDWEST												
IL	410		410	371	2	80%	89%	81%	28	1		FINAL 4-22-14
IN	288		288	180		63%	69%	73%	10		1	2nd qrt 3-11-14
IA	448	118	564	387	7	87%	83%	96%	85	1		3rd qrt 4-17-14
MI	170	89	229	121		71%	70%	69%	8	1		3rd qrt 4-10-14
MN	317	76	393	279	1	88%	88%	94%	7	1		2nd qrt 3-11-14
MO	246	107	353	234	1	68%	78%	80%	21	1		2nd qrt 3-20-14
OH	268		268	235		88%	90%	90%	42		1	3rd qrt 4-17-14
WI	230	80	310	178		77%	75%	88%			1	3rd qrt 4-10-14
TOTAL	2473	440	2913	1983	11	80%	83%	87%	171	6	2	
NORTHWEST												
ID	86	24	110	70	1	81%	78%	77%	4	1		2nd qrt 4-10-14
MT	155	55	210	109	2	65%	68%	71%	4		1	3rd qrt 4-10-14
NE	305	58	363	212		70%	68%	74%	5	1		2nd qrt 2-24-14
ND	201	61	262	181	1	90%	90%	95%	34	1		FINAL 3-28-14
OR	86	20	106	30		50%	58%	52%	2	1		FINAL 2-24-14
SD	224	71	295	217	8	97%	97%	98%	41	1		3rd qrt 4-17-14
WA/AK	73	46	119	48		63%	84%	83%	1	1		FINAL 4-10-14
WY	41	28	69	31	10	76%	65%	67%	10		1	3rd qrt 4-10-14
TOTAL	1145	380	1505	887	22	77%	77%	89%	101	6	2	
SOUTHWEST												
AZ	25	0	25	20		80%	58%	58%			1	FINAL 12-28-13
CA/HI	98	55	153	72	2	73%	51%	63%		1		FINAL 3-14-14
CO	103	20	123	58		56%	57%	62%	5	1		2nd qrt 1-13-14
KS	387		387	348		94%	93%	93%	73		1	3rd qrt 4-10-14
NV	12	4	16	10		83%	0%	0%			1	FINAL 1-21-14
NM	46		46	30		65%	68%	65%	2	5		3rd qrt 3-18-14
OK	187	115	302	175		94%	94%	89%	31		1	3rd qrt 4-10-14
TX	480		480	372		81%	78%	78%	51		1	3rd qrt 4-10-14
UT	41	18	59	31		76%	77%	82%			1	3rd qrt 4-10-14
TOTAL	1339	212	1551	1113	2	83%	76%	80%	182	9	4	
GRAND												
TOTALS	7032	1796	8732	5698	55	81%	80%	82%	727	37	13	
12-13 totals	7484	1625	9109	5985	58	80%	82%	83%	761	38	12	
11-12 totals	7678	1621	9299	6327	63	82%	82%	82%	859	38	12	
10-11 totals	8638	1863	10501	7150	70	83%			979	33	12	
09-10 totals	8661.5	1934	10595.5	7192	82	83%			1056	34	12	
08-09 totals	8651	1988	10639	7179	79	83%			1112	34	12	
07-08 totals	8637	1986	10623	7239	86	84%			1065	34	12	
06-07 totals	8647	1820	10467	7371	82	85%			1041	34	12	
05-06 totals	8823	1954	10777	7498	84	85%			1258	34	12	
04-05 totals	8209	1960	10169	7708	84	84%						
03-04 totals	8529	2110	11439	7697	90	83%			1146			



PROGRAMS UPDATE

Patricia Sorensen, Programs Chair

Spring is here and summer is just around the corner. Our weather in Florida has been really nice. I took this picture when we spent a long weekend in April at our favorite beach and wanted to share with you.



Okay, now it is time to get to business. Here's an update of what's been happening and what's coming soon:

- **Field to the Hill:** This spring NASCOE traveled to WDC. This group included the Executive Board, Negotiating Consultants, and National Chairs. While there I was able to visit with several National Program Specialist to discuss program issues that are ongoing in the county offices. I also accompanied Benefits Chair, Elyse Musil to several meetings with the Department of Human Resources.
- **Negotiations:** In between visits I sat in on the NASCOE Negotiations session with National Office staff. Discussions ranged from ensuring County Offices have the necessary resources to deliver new programs to closing the gap on the disparity between states regarding performance management ratings. It is always fascinating to watch as the Consultants negotiate on your behalf. It is apparent they are passionate about what they do.
- **Working into the Future:** Our farm bill is in place and as we wait for program directives to be issued under the new Farm Bill I'm thinking now is a good time for a little spring housecleaning. One thing in the works is to archive program submissions from prior years. The hard copies will be put into an electronic format so that we can incorporate them into the programs webpage. Our webpage is getting a new look and will be more user friendly. This will help when searching for specific program items. I am excited to be a part of this process. This is your Programs webpage! I welcome your suggestions and ideas so feel free to contact me at: patricia.sorensen@fl.usda.gov.

NASCOE Awards, Scholarships and Emblems Spring 2014



Greetings from your NASCOE Awards, Scholarships and Emblems Committee! We would like to thank all of our State Awards and Scholarships Chairpersons as well as all of our State and Area Judges that found the competition in both NASCOE Scholarship programs as well as our Distinguished Service Award nominees to be very difficult to judge as they were all phenomenal this year! We would also like to send a special Thank you out to our State Emblems Chairpersons for using their marketing skills to share all of the new items that are available at the NASCOE Store and then made them available for you at the Area Rallies and State conventions – We have received many nice comments on the quality of our products and service Era Jarrard provides to our customers – Thank you everyone!

NASCOE Awards

I am proud and humbled to present you with your 2014 NASCOE Distinguished Service Award winners. Our national winners this year are:

- ◇ **For Service to FSA-Agriculture, from Idaho, Janie Hudson**
- ◇ **For Service to Community, from Mississippi, Janice Kinard**
- ◇ **For Service to NASCOE, from Oklahoma, Andrea Pettijohn**

I had the distinct honor of contacting our national winners and all have informed me that they will be making plans to join us at the NASCOE convention in Oklahoma City to receive their awards at the awards banquet. I hope all of you will also be able to attend the NASCOE convention to join us in honoring these three exceptional individuals!

As we have done in the past, we will post the nominations on the NASCOE website for the three winners for all of you so that you may read about all they have accomplished. Quite a remarkable group!

For our Area Distinguished Service Award nominators of your Area winners – you will soon be receiving your \$25 gift certificate to the NASCOE Store! Please watch for a notification email that will be sent to you soon!

NASCOE Scholarships

The new NASCOE Continuing Education/Collegiate Education Scholarship was a great success and many qualified individuals applied for the \$1,000 scholarship award. For the first time we had NASCOE Members whom are attending college courses while being fully employed at FSA and our eligible

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full time college students whom are in their second and later years of college competing for one national award. The judges were overwhelmed by the level of competition this year! The judges wish all could be the winner, but ultimately agreed on our national winner. We are proud to announce that your national NASCOE Continuing Education/Collegiate Education Scholarship is:

◇ **Leslie Ann Warner from Kalamazoo, Michigan**

Congratulations Leslie, and we wish you the very best in your future endeavors and advancement in FSA! “Administrator Warner”, has a very nice ring to it if I do say so myself!

The “traditional” NASCOE Scholarship Area Winners are now in the hands of the national judges. Their task is very daunting, as they have to judge the top five in the nation to come up with our national winner! We will know by mid to late May who they have selected as our national winner. When the judging is final and we know who our national winner is, I will let everyone know who our national winner is and who our Area winners are once the judging is completed.

NASCOE Store Emblems

Era Jarrard has created many new items that she has available for you at the NASCOE Store! The best way to see all of the new and many other existing popular items is to simply visit the NASCOE Store at www.nascoeemblemsonline.com (if you misplace this article and cannot remember the link to the website, just visit NASCOE.org and click on the link provided on the home page). While you consider purchasing merchandise at your State convention or Area Rally, or even on line, if you do not see an item in your size/color choice, please let us know – chances are we have it in stock for you or can get it to you within days of your order. Got ideas!?! Please let us know! We are always open to any new ideas that we can offer to your fellow NASCOE members! We are just an email or phone call away!

Again, on behalf of the NASCOE Awards, Scholarships and Emblems Committee, we look forward to seeing all of you in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in August at the NASCOE convention!

Sincerely,

Tom Oasen

NASCOE Awards, Scholarships & Emblems Chairperson



Success & Benefits **By Elyse Musil,** **Benefits Chair**

Success is the accomplishment of one's goals through various attempts or endeavors. Success can only be measured by one person, yourself. To be successful one has to work hard, be dedicated, communicate, have support, and be a team player.

The College World Series was first played in Omaha, Nebraska in 1950 with a total attendance of 17,805 people. During the first 10 years, the College World Series lost money and was unsuccessful. However, four Omaha Nebraska natives maintained their faith and interest in the College World Series to keep its status in Omaha. The people of Omaha, its business leaders, city officials, and volunteers embraced the chance to host the College World Series. They worked hard with the NCAA to make it a huge success. Continued fan support has made the College World Series a very special place for teams to compete for the NCAA National Championship.

The 2014 NCAA Division I Baseball Championship is held June 14-25th at TD Ameritrade Park Omaha, Nebraska. General Admission tickets are \$11 for single game tickets, and \$80 per book (10 tickets per book). A limited number of reserved seats will be available for purchase on game days at the TD Ameritrade Park Omaha box office starting at 10 am. Reserved ticket price ranges from \$29-\$34. For more ticket information please go to NCAA.com/CWS. The College World Series provides a "Fan Guide" which

can be viewed on their home website, Facebook, and their Mobile App. The "Fan Guide" Lists all the fun and free events throughout the tournament. Besides the College World Series, Omaha also is home to The Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium. Group Admission Rates for Zoo Admission are \$9.00 for children (ages 3-11) and \$14.00 for adults (ages 12 and over). Group Admission Rates for the Zoo and Lozier IMAX Theater Combo Rate are \$13.50 for children and \$18.50 for adults. With several attractions for both kids and adults, Omaha is a great location for a budget friendly family vacation.

These prices are all at full cost prices, however, tickets to the Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium can be found at a discounted price for AAA members. The Benefits Committee has worked hard to obtain AAA discounts for various states. AAA offers a wide variety of benefits and services. Members can enjoy 24-hour roadside assistance, fuel delivery service, auto insurance, tours, cruises, vacation packages, free maps, AAA living magazine, discounts at thousands of businesses nationwide, and dozens of other benefits. Other nationwide AAA discounts include: discounted tickets to a Minnesota Timberwolves game, Universal Orlando, Universal Studios Hollywood, SeaWorld, Segway tours, Dell, DIRECTV, and various hotels. All AAA membership information can be found on the benefits "members only" website, under your states name.

To make this project a success, the

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Benefit's Committee is challenging each of you to contact your state's president and benefit's chair and urge them to set up a AAA discount for your state! As always, please contact myself or your area benefit's chair if you have any questions about obtaining this discount, or if you have any suggestions or comments.

Respectfully Submitted By:



Publicity Report

I am extremely glad that it is time to do the Spring Newsletter! That means that things are finally warming up, flowers are blooming, birds are singing, and the garden is growing! My favorite time of year! I hope everyone reads the articles in this newsletter. There is a lot of good information concerning issues that NASCOE is addressing as we look towards the future of FSA.



Publicity Contest

The submissions in the publicity contest have been judged and the winners have been notified! All websites, newsletters, and feature stories were awesome and the scores were very close. A big Thank You to everyone who took the time to enter the contest! There are a lot of talented people in FSA that work hard for their State Associations. I would like to see more states submit entries in the publicity contest next year. The winners for the 2013/2014 Publicity Contest are as follows:

Best Overall Newsletter: Tascoe Tales, Kristal Rater, Editor, Texas

Best Single Issue: Tascoe Tales, November 2013, Editor, Texas

Best Website: www.tascoe.org, Kristal Rater, Webmaster

Best Feature Story—Human Interest:

“Navy Ship Homecoming” by Karen Leschper, Texas

Best Feature Story—Humor:

“Agency Memories” by Barry TerHark, Iowa

I hope to see all the winners at the National Convention in Oklahoma City in August. They will be receiving their award at the convention banquet on Saturday evening. Congratulations again to all winners!

Convention Picture CD

All pictures taken at the 2014 NASCOE convention by Mike Thomas, Photographer, will be compiled into a CD. By purchasing this CD you will have all pictures of the general session, tours, & evening events. This is a great deal! You can order the CD for \$20.00 directly on the 2014 Convention Registration Form. If you have not heard, you can go to www.nascoe.org and pay online using PayPal. It is very simple!

How do you get NASCOE Information?

Nascoe has been working very hard making sure the latest information gets to membership. It takes everyone doing their part to receive information. The

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Nascoe Now is emailed and posted to the Nascoe website and Nascoe News facebook page each month. The Now contains good information each month. Newsletters are published quarterly with all being emailed and posted to the website/FB Page. The Spring Newsletter will be mailed.

The Nascoe News Facebook page has almost 1500 “likes” today and is a great resource for receiving information and alerts. The home email membership database continues to grow and I would encourage everyone to get your home email on the list. The Nascoe website is updated continuously with the latest information. So you see, there are many ways to find out what is happening with our jobs and benefits at FSA. Your employee organization is working for you!



Respectfully submitted,
Renee Boykin
 Nascoe Publicity Chair

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Above: John Norris, SEA Exec, accepting a check from Steve Dillard of Dillard Financial Solutions at the SEA Rally.



Bo Epting,
NEA Exec

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**Brent Orr receiving a STAR Award at
the NOCASCOE State Convention.**

**Thanks Brent for all you do for
NASCOE!**



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Candy Thompson, Associate Administrator, speaking at the MWA Rally.



Congressman Collin Peterson, Minnesota, speaking at the MWA Rally.



Mark Rucker, DAM, speaking at the NEA Rally.



Greg Diephouse, DAFO, speaking at the NoCASCOSOE State Convention.



Mark VanHoose, Nascoe President, speaking at the NEA Rally.



MWA Rally Attendees Photo taken by Teresa Dillard, Dillard Financial Solutions.

**National Association of
FSA County Office Employees
746 Perry Road
Strykersville, NY 14145**

CHANGE SERVICE REQUIRED

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

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