



WASCOE Newsletter

WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF FSA COUNTY OFFICE EMPLOYEES

September 2023

2023-2024

Officers

President:

Shelby Niskanen, Clark County

Vice President:

Chris Pannier, Washington/Ozaukee County

Treasurer:

Jon Beam, Outagamie County

Secretary:

Shelly Daug, Juneau County

2023-2024

Area Directors

Area District 1:

Heather Kirkpatrick, St. Croix

Susan Schwebach, Dunn

Mallory Harrelle, Eau Claire

Area District 2:

Sheila Buchholtz, Richland

Sharon Baecker, La Crosse

vacant

Area District 3:

Jodie Groeschel, Outagamie

Stephanie McCarthy-Wondercheck, Fond du Lac

Brandi Bender, Fond du Lac

Area District 4:

Joelle Fiedorowicz, Oconto/Marinette

Serena Mense, Jackson

Stephanie Knutson, Portage

Area District 5:

Dawn Oliver, Green

Lori Edquist, Racine/Kenosha/Milwaukee

vacant



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<https://nascoe.org/>

<http://wisconsin.midwestnascoe.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/WIWASCOE/>

HERE IS WHAT I KNOW – THOUGHTS FROM THE WASCOE PRESIDENT

NASCOE continues to represent our working interests in Washington DC. It is because of our integrity and customer service that Zach Ducheneaux, FSA Administrator was able to secure the 6% retention incentive for 26 pay periods (for employees on board as of PP 12). NASCOE negotiations team secured medical and retirement benefits, and updates to our work software. Be sure to read the 2022 NASCOE Negotiation items posted on our home e-mail and on the WASCOE website. I encourage you to talk these benefits over with non-members. Keep informed by reading the general information on the NASCOE website and on the NASCOE APP.

Clint Bain and David McBryde, NASCOE Legislative Co-chairs, gave a short report during the recent shutdown call on September 26, 2023. The House agriculture committee did not recommend any budget cuts to the Farm Service Agency. This is a big win for NASCOE as other government agencies had their budgets decreased. The Senate is proposing a \$15.8 million increase in the FSA budget. Likely the resulting compromise will be somewhere in between. NASCOE is grateful for Congress and the Administration's acknowledgement of the agency's effort to serve the producers of this country.

So where does the FSA budget go? The following information was shared at the 2023 NASCOE convention in College Station, TX. The budget goes to: #1-Pay and salaries, #2-IT costs, #3-Rent (\$120 Million), #4-Operations (\$105 Million), \$16.2 million allocated for awards, and hoping for a 5.21% pay increase on January 1, 2024.

NASCOE has implemented a new APP to serve the membership with updated news and events. The APP was developed to give the organization a modern feel and a place to post sensitive information. General information will continue to be posted on the NASCOE website.

Please make the time to download the APP. Directions can be found in the link on nascoe.org. You will need the following information:

- First and last name
- Personal e-mail (cannot use work e-mail)
- Membership type (regular member, associate member, or honorary lifetime member)

The request is forwarded to the Midwest Area Membership Chair - LeAnn Oltmanns, Illinois (leann.oltmanns@nascoe.org). LeAnn verifies your membership with Jon Beam, WASCOE treasurer. You will receive an e-mail from noreply@glueup.com with a link to register your account. You may download the APP to login or login from the NASCOE.org website. You will have to create your own name and password.

Dawna Hines, NASCOE Publicity Chair offered this suggestion - if you are unable to download the APP go to the NASCOE web page and click on "JOIN NASCOE". Follow the steps to add your contact information so your name is added to the workflow for membership verification.

Lastly, there will be an all-member call October 12, 2023, at 7:00 pm to vote on the secretary of state merger. Background: NASCOE had to update their business profile with the election of a new treasurer. NASCOE was registered in New York where a previous treasurer set up the business structure. Through the cutover from old to new treasurers, it was noted that doing business in New York state was more expensive than in South Dakota. New York will not release our business obligations until there is an all-member vote. Please attend the meeting to cast the vote to change the business profile from New York to South Dakota (this process is the secretary of state merger). NASCOE needs 100-members for a quorum. The WASCOE publicity chairs will notify WASCOE members of the voting details, time, and link to join the meeting.

Have you checked out the new items on the Emblems by Superior? There are some cute items to refresh your work wardrobe. Fifteen percent of the sales goes to the NASCOE scholarship fund. In 2022, \$64,000 was donated to the scholarship fund.

Thanks for your support! Have a safe fall.

Shelby Niskanen
WASCOE President

WANTED

WASCOE is seeking individuals from the membership to serve as a director on the board. WASCOE need **one person each** for Area 2 and Area 5 (see WASCOE Areas map on the last page).

On average, the board meets each quarter with a few more meetings closer to the State Convention. WASCOE directors are asked to listen to membership concerns and share that information at the board meetings. Directors are asked to review the agenda before meetings and come up with an idea or two to contribute to the conversation.

Your time and leadership are needed to move WASCOE forward. Please contact Shelby Niskanen at s3morse@yahoo.com or call at 715-470-3250 if you have any questions and/or to volunteer.

Thanks for your help!

Save the dates:

- ❖ **October 9, 2023 – 10:00am** - WASCOE Board meeting via Zoom. All members welcome to attend. Link will be sent via email.

- ❖ **April 26-27, 2024** - WASCOE State Convention
 - Chalet Landhaus Inn, New Glarus, WI
 - Theme to be determined

- ❖ **April 4-6, 2024** - Midwest Area Rally, co-hosts MN/ND
 - Moorhead, MN/Fargo, ND

- ❖ **August 7-10, 2024** - NASCOE National Convention, hosted by IASCOE
 - Quad Cities (Davenport), IA
 - Theme "Headed to the Heartland"
 - Bring your favorite "Roaring 20's" attire

Dear Membership,

Treasury

There are not a whole lot of updates for the treasury since November. We have collected \$6016.28 in dues so far this year. Our quarterly dues to NASCOE have been \$5,000.00 through the 3rd Quarter. Just a reminder that \$55 of every member's dues goes to NASCOE. Our rates are one of the lowest around.

Our greatest expense so far this year was sending our delegates to the National Convention in Savannah, Georgia at a cost of \$2,630.56. We spent \$295.61 to provide lunch at several new employee orientation meetings while providing an overview of what WASCOE offers and the benefits of becoming a member.

WASCOE receives a stipend from NASCOE for delegates to the National Convention. The stipend is calculated by taking the cost of airfare from the state's capital city to the destination, multiplied by the state's amount of membership, multiplied by the number of delegates. Currently our membership is at 52%. The greater our membership, the more NASCOE helps to defray the cost with their stipend.

Coming up is our annual WASCOE convention on April 21, 2023 at the Metropolis Resort in Eau Claire. The cost of the convention is \$14 for lunch, \$23 for dinner, and if you register for both lunch and dinner, the total is \$30. Dillard Financial Services, Inc. will make a donation to WASCOE based on the number of attendees. The more attendees, the larger the donation! So, make your plans to attend!

Don't forget about our cash raffle! There are 250 tickets being sold at \$20 each. There are \$2,000 in prizes to be awarded. The prizes are: 1st - \$1,000, 2nd - \$500, 3rd - \$250, 4th - \$100, 5th - \$50, 6th - \$50, and 7th - \$50. The net income taken in helps with our general fund which is used for delegate and convention expenses, as well as general operating expenses.

Website

Our website contained outdated information and some areas were incomplete. It took a weekend, but I cleaned it up by updating each page with current committee chairs, emails, applicable committee page links, and more. I put designed it with a more consistent look and format for each page so it would be familiar when browsing each page and where information may be located.

A new page titled, "*WI FSA News*" is where you will find information regarding Wisconsin-specific information such as shared management updates, WASCOE Officer and STC/SED meetings, etc. The *Benefits* page was updated with all the benefits available as noted on the NASCOE benefits page. The *Conventions and Events* page has current information on our convention as well as everything relating to the Midwest Area Rally which will be in Grand Rapids, Michigan from April 27-29, 2023.

Current news and information will be posted on the main page and direct you where to go to read more. Check back as more information is added. Our website is: <http://wisconsin.midwestnascoe.org/>. We are also on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/WIWASCOE/>.

As always, contact me at bearsfan2003@gmail.com with any questions, ideas, or comments you have. ☺



Jon Beam
WASCOE Treasurer

Why Join WASCOE/NASCOE?

WASCOE is an association consisting of dedicated employees just like you; employees who have the goal of making sure that FSA is a premier place to work!

NASCOE is the only association recognized by management to formally negotiate on your behalf. For example, recent negotiation items included increasing pay grades for employees and making sure the performance rating process is uniformly applied to all. The process to submit issues for consideration in the negotiation process is very simple and is a great conduit for improving the workplace.

A robust legislative program that employs one of the top consultants in Washington, DC to make sure FSA is recognized as the “can do” agency when it is time to administer farm programs, thus insuring a high level of accuracy at an economical cost to taxpayers. More programs ensure a long career as you embark on your FSA journey. NASCOE’s legislative agenda includes making sure that FSA employee benefits are maintained and improved so we are always vigilant in watching benefits legislation.

NASCOE offers other benefits ranging from retirement planning/products to scholarships for children of our members. Also, in the rare instance when an employee faces an adverse action by the agency (and I do mean rare, but it is nice to know) NASCOE also provides one free hour with the NASCOE attorney to assist you in making the best decisions in those circumstances. For more detailed information, please visit our benefits page.

How to become a member:

[Membership Application](#) / [FSA-444](#) / [Withholding Amount Memo](#)

Payroll Deduction

The easiest way to become a member and ensure you remain a member is to enroll in payroll deduction. For a small bi-weekly deduction, you can enjoy all the benefits and have peace of mind that you are always current with your membership. By enrolling in payroll deduction, you also ensure you get the \$5 discount! To enroll in payroll deduction, complete the membership application, the FSA-444, withholding amount memo, and return them to our treasurer, Jon Beam, at the Outagamie County Office.

Check and Mail

If you wish to pay by check, complete the membership application and mail it with a check made out in the amount indicated by your current grade to our treasurer, Jon Beam, at the Outagamie County Office. Associate memberships are always at the rate of \$45 annually.

You can find all the information you need to become a member of WASCOE/NASCOE here:

<http://wisconsin.midwestnascoe.org/wisconsin/membership/>

Marilyn Lentz

Membership Chair



Publicity & Webmaster Committee

Jon Beam & Shelly Daugs

Follow WASCOE on Facebook or check our website to get the latest updates and information.

If you are a WASCOE member, make sure you are receiving email updates. If you are not getting WASCOE emails and are a registered member contact Jon Beam at bearsfan2003@gmail.com.



The WASCOE website is at: <http://wisconsin.midwestnascoe.org/>



The WASCOE Facebook page is at: <https://www.facebook.com/WIWASCOE/>

The NASCOE website is at: <https://nascoeinfo.wpcomstaging.com/>

WASCOE is divided into 5 areas. Each area has directors representing the WASCOE members from their respective part of the state.

