

FEBRUARY 2026

WASCOE

"MOOS" BRIEF



2026 Call to Convention

FROM THE PRESIDENT

All County Office employees (members and non-members) are welcome to attend the Wisconsin Association of County Office Employees (WASCOE) annual convention on March 20, 2026. The theme of the convention is "Watch Yourself Grow through NASCOE." The focus of our convention is to make the most out of your membership by participating in the convention, networking with your colleagues, and understanding your retirement and membership benefits.



Our convention includes interactive discussions with State Office staff, Midwest Area representatives, Blue Cross/Blue Shield representatives, and Dillard Financial Services Inc. (NASCOE retirement benefits provider). We will hear from the Food + Farm Exploration Center about the history of the venue. Our guest speaker will be Jenna Byrne, co-editor of Hoard's Dairyman.

To participate in this lively event, mail in your registration by February 28, 2026. Buy raffle tickets to offset the cost of the Convention. Please create and bring an item for the scholarship auction. Bring some money and bid up the items to make it fun.

WASCOE membership supports educational opportunities by funding traditional, technical, and continuing education scholarships to members, their children and grandchildren.

The WASCOE Board of Directors is looking forward to seeing you in Plover!!

~ Shelby ~

WHAT'S INSIDE:

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- Scholarship Auction
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 - Directors
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 - President
- Convention Registration Form



<http://wisconsin.midwestnascoe.org>



<https://facebook.com/wiwascoe>

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"MOOS" BRIEF



2026 WASCOE Convention



food + farm
EXPLORATION CENTER

Where:

Food + Farm Exploration Center
3400 Innovation Dr
Plover, WI 54467

When:

Friday, March 20, 2026



Important!

Please note the date to mail your registration has **changed to Feb. 28** to allow time to submit our final numbers for lunch planning to the Exploration Center.

Join us for the 2026 WASCOE Convention. The agenda will be posted closer to the event.

Dillard Financial Solutions Inc. will be presenting and have information available for you. They are the National benefits provider for NASCOE. Representatives from **Blue Cross Blue Shield** will also be present. We are excited that several of our **Wisconsin State Office** employees will be coming!

We will have 30 minutes to explore the many interactive exhibits in the Exploration Center!

Lodging: Below are several nearby hotel options located near the Exploration Center. You may choose to stay at any hotel in the surrounding area.

Comfort Inn

Plover-Stevens Point

1560 American Dr
Plover, WI 54467

(715) 496-2007

Choicehotels.com

AmericInn by Wyndham

Plover-Stevens Point

1501 American Dr
Plover, WI 54467

(715) 254-8418

Wyndhamhotels.com

Hampton Inn

Plover-Stevens Point

3090 Village Park Dr
Plover, WI 54467

(715) 295-9900

Hilton.com



<https://explorefoodandfarm.org/>

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2026 WASCOE Convention

Scholarship Auction

We encourage all County Offices to prepare and donate a basket or item to our scholarship auction.

Those attending the convention can bring their donations with them. Not attending the convention? You can still donate a basket - just send it along with someone who is attending or contact an Officer or Director to make arrangements for getting it to the convention.

Unsure of what to donate? Some great ideas from the past have been:

- Gardening Baskets
- Baby/New Mother Baskets
- Blankets
- Pictures of Barns & Cows
- Handmade Crafts
- Sports Theme Baskets
- Basket of Gift Cards
- Coffee/Tea Basket
- Grilling & BBQ
- Social & Night Life
- Wall Hangings & Decor
- Lottery Tickets Basket
- Local Specialty Chocolates/Cheese
- Board Games/Family Night Activities
- Camping & S'mores
- Build your own Charcuterie Board

MWA Rally & NASCOE Convention Delegates

WASCOE is looking for delegates to represent Wisconsin at the Midwest Area Rally in Cincinnati, Ohio, from April 9-11, 2026, and the NASCOE Convention in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan from July 29 - August 2, 2026.

Delegates to these NASCOE event would be eligible to receive reimbursement for travel, lodging, registration, banquet fees, and other eligible expenses. If you are interested in being a delegate and would like more information, please contact Jon Beam, our treasurer.

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2026 *Candidacy Announcements*

Mallory Harrelle - Director - Area 1



I'm just a New England girl living in a Midwest world! I'm originally from Connecticut (I graduated from the University of Connecticut - go Huskies!) and followed my passion for agriculture out to the heartland.

I think that the work that NASCOE and WASCOE does is incredibly important and have been a member since I began at FSA in 2018. I live and work in beautiful Eau Claire County. Outside of work I love spending time outdoors with my husband and working on our small hobby farm consisting of a small zoo of cats, dogs, chickens and horses.

In 2023, I was elected as a director for Area 1 and I am running for re-election this year. I appreciate your support!

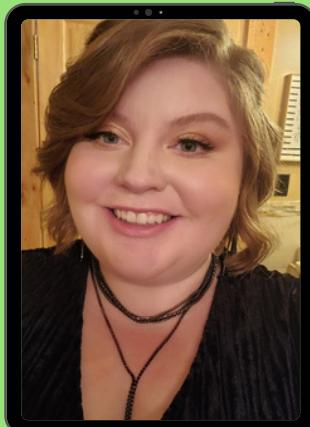
Mallory Harrelle

Shelby Stensven - Director - Area 2

I'm a Program Analyst in the La Crosse County Office and program responsibilities include conservation, conservation compliance, dairy margin coverage, and payment eligibility. I started with FSA as a temp in 2016 while I was in college at UW-River Falls and moved into a full-time role after graduating. When I'm not at the office, I enjoy going to concerts and live music, and hanging out with my cat, Gizmo.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelby Stensven



malloryng476@gmail.com



shlbstensven8@gmail.com

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2026 *Candidacy Announcements*

Brandi Bender - Director - Area 3

I have been with Fond du Lac FSA for 6 years. I grew up on a dairy farm in Green Lake County that is still operated by my family today. I am the youngest of my family with 4 older brothers.

I graduated from Marian University and recently was the assistant coach at Marian for the women's basketball team for the past two seasons (23-24 & 24-25).

This past fall instead starting another basketball season coaching I was blessed with my daughter, Myla. Just like me, she is the only girl surrounded by her 5 Bender boy cousins. I have been enjoying and loving being her mom.

I feel being a part of WASCOE is important as it has played such an important role in ensuring CO employees get equal federal employee rights and benefits. This helps us do our jobs and serve our local ag producers.

Brandi Bender



Area 5 Director Needed!

Area 5 currently has no candidates for director.

Are you a member in Area 5 and are interested in being a part of the Board of Directors? If so, please contact Shelby Niskanen, WASCOE President, regarding your nomination.



bbender1221@gmail.com

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2026 *Candidacy Announcements*

Stephanie Knutson - Director - Area 4

Hello WASCOE,

My name is Stephanie Knutson and I would like to continue being your Director. I am located in Portage County and have been with FSA for three years. Since the beginning, I have been involved with different WASCOE positions as a member, as a Director, and as Secretary. I was selected to represent Wisconsin at NASCOE'S 2024 National Leadership Training and 2025 National Convention. In 2025, I was one of the Midwest representatives at NASCOE'S Membership Work Group which led to my current role as Midwest Area Membership Chair. I am so grateful for these opportunities and roles.

Throughout these years I have gained knowledge from members within our state and within our nation. As your director, I am able to communicate knowledge, updates, and events at the local level.

My goals as your director include improvements in communication, creating an environment that fosters growth and community, and to reignite passion in everyday tasks.

I believe being a WASCOE member strengthens the county office for everyone. When we are able to share experiences, learn from each other, and make contacts throughout WASCOE, it leads to a strong community. That community can help uplift on the hard days. To remind us that at the end of the day, we are proud to provide services that help our local neighbors and the nation as a whole. The more members we have in WASCOE, the louder our voice is, and the more positive impact we can have in keeping our benefits and improving our work systems.

I'm looking forward to growing WASCOE with you. Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Knutson



sokee334@gmail.com



stephanie.knutson@nascoe.org

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2026 *Candidacy Announcements*

Chris Gordon - Vice President

Hi WASCOE,

My name is Chris Gordon and I am currently Vice President of WASCOE and would like to run for a final term. I was elected in 2023 and appointed to fill the vacant position in 2021. I work out of the Washington/Ozaukee County office.

I have been a member of WASCOE since I started with the agency in 2019. Why ?? Prior to FSA, I worked for the Dept of Defense (War), but also a career in HR in the private sector. I have learned that if you complain about something, you better try to do something to change it. NASCOE is that "something". Without this group fighting for us, we would be working for minimum wage with no benefits. This Something had done the work way before most of us were with the agency in order to give us the working environment and conditions that we have and will keep doing it. They help to resolve what I complain about.

I am married to David, and have 4 sons, a stepdaughter and step son, 7 grandkids, 3 Pomeranians, 15 chickens, 2 bunnies and a goat. My favorite color is green and I am the dangling donut eating contest champion of Sheboygan County. My grandpa was the first farmer in Washington County to own a tractor and that 1917 John Deere Waterloo Boy is still sitting in my dad's shed!

Chris Gordon



chrisplus3@hotmail.com

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2026 *Candidacy Announcements*

Heather Kirkpatrick - Vice President

I'm Heather Kirkpatrick and I will be running for Vice President of WASCOE.

I grew up in the Barron area and got my Bachelor of Animal Science degree from UW-River Falls. My husband (Matt) and I now reside in rural Menomonie with our 2 year old (Josie), along with a couple horses (Lila, Addie) and a couple dogs (Khloe, Maisie).



I've been with FSA as a CED for a little over 10 years. I spent the majority of my COT training in Buffalo, Trempealeau and Jackson Counties. My CED career started in Dunn County, adding St. Croix County shortly after that. I've been an Acting CED in Barron, Pierce, Rusk/Sawyer and Chippewa Counties as well. I even spent a month working in Puerto Rico! Spending time in a multitude of offices has given me an interesting and varied perspective on staffing, workload, HR and program implementation.

I've been a WASCOE director for Area 1 for several years now, and I believe I could further expand my role as an advocate for WASCOE members as the Vice President. My greatest strengths are in my written and verbal communication skills, along with having strong organizational skills. I look forward to the opportunity to serve as the WASCOE Vice President.

Heather Kirkpatrick



kuch6@hotmail.com

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2026 *Candidacy Announcements*

Jon Beam - President

Dear WASCOE Members,

My name is Jon Beam, and I am announcing my candidacy for WASCOE President.

My journey with FSA began in 2002 as a temporary Program Technician in Monroe County, from there to Colorado with a full-time position, and then back to my home state of Wisconsin. I currently am a Program Analyst in Outagamie County these past ten years.



Association Involvement

- **Treasurer** - Since 2015, I have been actively involved in WASCOE as your Treasurer. In 2018, I was tasked with reinstating our tax-exempt status with the IRS. The result being WASCOE's tax-exempt status was reinstated, and in working with the IRS, we received a complete refund of the \$3100+ penalty we were assessed. I was recognized with an award at the 2019 WASCOE Convention for my commitment as treasurer. As your treasurer, I have diligently worked to streamline the treasury, its recordkeeping, and to be cognizant of where WASCOE is financially, recommending cost-saving measures that are respectful of our members' dues.
- **MWA Publicity Chair** - In October 2024, I was offered the opportunity to become the Publicity Chair for the Midwest Area. As I continue to develop in this role, I have been keeping the Midwest Area abreast of NASCOE news through our MWA NASCOE Facebook page and website.



bearsfan2003@gmail.com



jon.beam@nascoe.org

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2026 *Candidacy Announcements*

Jon Beam - President (cont.)

- **Publicity** - In 2018, I became a co-chair for the Publicity committee. My initial task was to create a website for our association. The Midwest Area offered to host websites through their web service, which has served us well. This past year, our co-chair stepped down, and I assumed the remaining Publicity duties. Appreciating creativity, I redesigned the WASCOE newsletter and gave it an identity, the WASCOE "Moos"letter. The goal in mind was to create something that was eye-catching, yet informative, with the hope of inspiring conversations about WASCOE.

Leadership and Vision for the Future

I was encouraged to attend my first Midwest Area Rally in 2018. What an experience! I saw the passion our members have for the work we accomplish and support of our members through their participation in NASCOE.

I attended NASCOE's Leadership Conference in Tampa, Florida, in 2024. Being able to interact with NASCOE's leadership and other members was invaluable. The opportunity gave me the chance to ask questions, network, learn, and grow.

As the MWA Publicity Chair, I have been involved with NASCOE Leadership at the Area and National levels. Participating in leadership meetings, I discovered all states share similar goals. Kayla Mattson, NASCOE President, listened and set these three key priorities for NASCOE:

- **Empowering County Office Staff** – We must continue to fight for adequate staffing, resources, and training to ensure we can serve our producers effectively. She is a firm believer in the County Committee system and will continue to promote its vital role in local program delivery.



bearsfan2003@gmail.com



jon.beam@nascoe.org

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2026 *Candidacy Announcements*

Jon Beam - President (cont.)

- **Strengthening Communication** – Transparent, consistent communication is critical. She will lead efforts to enhance how we engage with members and find new ways to connect with non-members, showing the real value of NASCOE's work on their behalf.
- **Growing Leadership and Membership** – We must cultivate new leaders and ensure our membership grows stronger. That means supporting emerging voices, mentoring future leaders, and being visible and accountable as NASCOE representatives.

I feel WASCOE will benefit greatly by directing our focus to these priorities. Recently I suggested to the Board of Directors to set a standard date each month for our monthly meetings and invite our membership to attend, to learn more about WASCOE and the discussions that take place during Board meetings.

From my experiences and participation in WASCOE, I am aware of the unique responsibilities, privileges, and challenges that come with leading such a great Association to the benefit of all members and employees.

I encourage everyone to become an active member when time allows. I was once reminded that one will get out what one puts into something. This comment made me stop and ponder, "if I put nothing in, I can expect nothing in return; but if I put everything in, I can expect everything in return". This has been motivating thought.

I am asking for your support and would be honored to continue serving all our members as your WASCOE President if given the opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Beam



bearsfan2003@gmail.com



jon.beam@nascoe.org

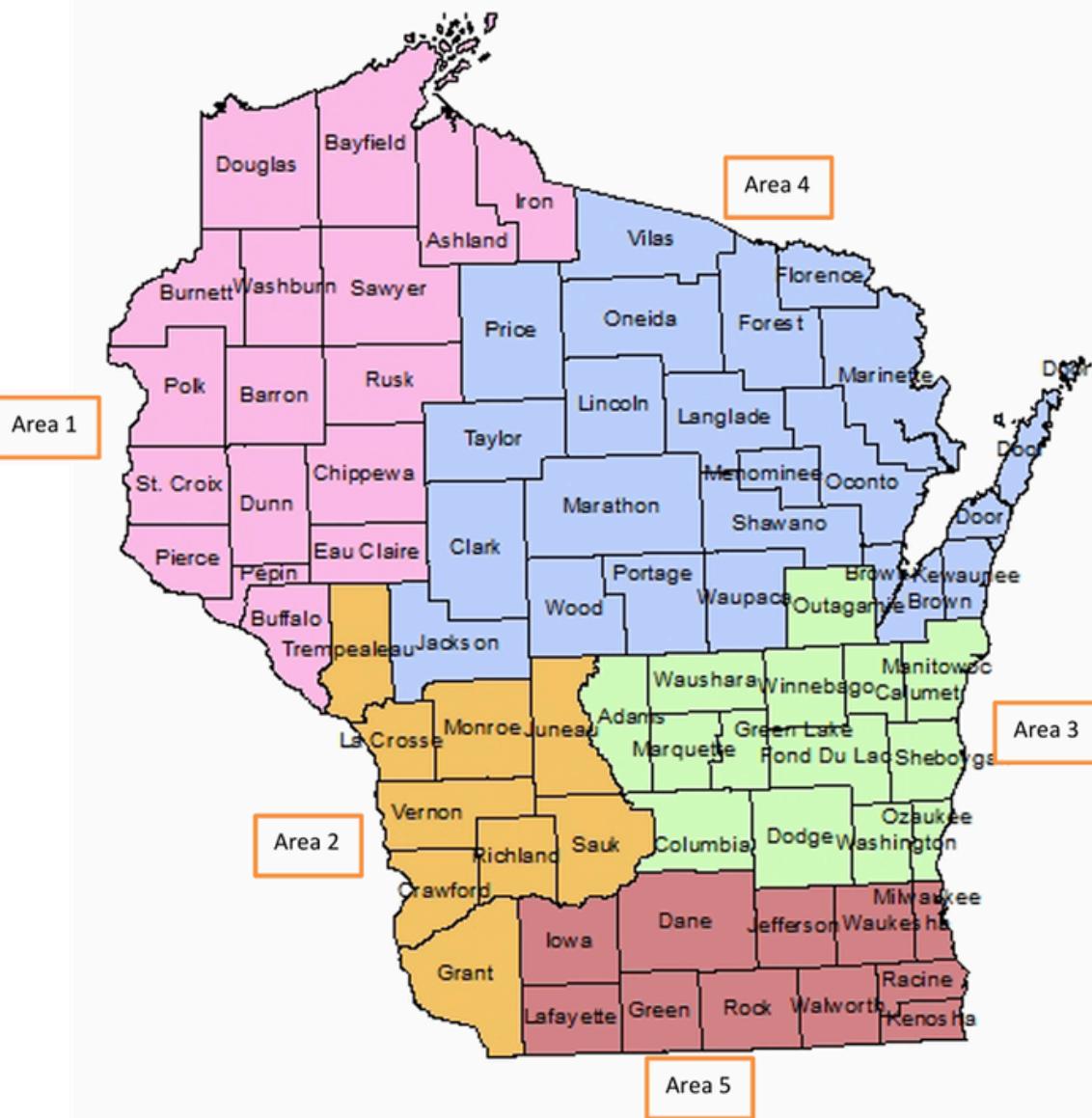
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WASCOE Area Map



2026 WASCOE Convention

Friday, March 20, 2026



food+farm

EXPLORATION CENTER



Where: Food + Farm Exploration Center
3400 Innovation Dr.
Plover, WI 54467

Hotels: **Comfort Inn Plover-Stevens Point**
1560 American Dr Plover, WI 54467
(715) 496-2007
Choicehotels.com

Lodging: As the convention is being held at an independent site, hotel lodging is on your own. Here are several nearby options for you to consider. There are other hotels in the Stevens Point and Plover area at which you can make reservations.

Lunch: Soup & Grilled Cheese Buffet

- Wisconsin Chili & Cheddar Grilled Cheese Sandwich on Country Bread
- Tomato Bisque & Provolone Grilled Cheese Sandwich on Asiago Thyme Sourdough
- Fresh Baked Cookies or Brownies

AmericInn by Wyndham Plover-Stevens Point
1501 American Dr
Plover, WI 54467
(715) 254-8418
Wyndhamhotels.com

Hampton Inn Plover-Stevens Point
3090 Village Park Dr
Plover, WI 54467
(715) 295-9900
Hilton.com

First-Time Attendee:

Are you a first-time attendee at the WASCOE convention? If you are, indicate below and you will be entered into a drawing to receive your registration on behalf of WASCOE. A \$40 value! A winner will be selected for every 25 people registered! Must be present to win.

Scholarship Auction Reminder:

If you wish to donate an item for our scholarship auction, please bring it with you or send it with someone who is attending the convention.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Guest: _____

First-Time Attendee (Yes or No): _____

Convention Registration is **\$40** per person, which includes lunch buffet.

Total enclosed: \$ _____

Send this registration form and your check made payable to "WASCOE" to:

Jon Beam, Treasurer
3369 W Brewster St
Appleton, WI 54914

Mail no later than Saturday, February 28, 2026

Questions?

Contact Jon Beam & Shelby Niskanen
Jon: bearsfan2003@gmail.com
Shelby: s3morse@yahoo.com