



# News Letter

AUGUST 2011

WWW.CASCOE.ORG



## President's Column

Colorado FSA,

We've seen a lot of changes in recent weeks and months. Changes in the way we do things and changes as folks say good bye. Those that have been with this outfit for a while will obviously note these changes the most. I sometime think back of programs such as ARP and folks that have long retired or passed on. We still work for a great agency. It's the people who make it great and solid representation that holds us COF employees together. Straight out, if you're not a member of CASCOE, we ask that you consider becoming one. Together, we are FSA Colorado.

With regard to our CASCOE outreach, the officers and directors have been faced with the challenge of figuring out how to get the word out to the field regarding CASCOE/NASCOE information. Do to the unavailability of the office computer send short notes of information, we have decided to go backward to a simpler format.....the mailed out paper newsletter. We're all busy, but our intentions are to send this out monthly and to the county office. Being monthly, they'll be shorter and to the point. We also ask that the management and staff of each office pass the newsletter around for sharing rather than file 13. A copy may be emailed to you as well at your home address.

The CASCOE website: Be reminded that our website, cascoe.org, remains open and available. Check it out and thanks to Linda Lowitz of Delta County for maintaining that site.

The CASCOE state convention is coming up soon, October 14-15. This year Otero County is hosting and we will be meet in Rocky Ford, touring Bents Fort along with our annual meeting and activities. The invitation is open to all and an informational flyer will be out soon. We strongly encourage anyone and everyone to consider attending. It is a great opportunity to be heard and share with others.

Respectfully,

Kevin Reeves, President

## CASCOE CONVENTION

2011

Rocky Ford

Oct. 14-16

Keep up with the latest info  
@ [WWW.CASCOE.ORG](http://WWW.CASCOE.ORG)



Remember to contact Mary Manley with your contributions for the scholarship silent auction.

## From the Secretary

*I think it is important to remember what CASCOE is about. Taken directly from the by-laws: "To strive to maintain and improve the confidence, esteem, and respect of the public for Farm Service Agency county office employees, and to promote the welfare of the employees." Now; when things are changing so fast it is even more important to remember how important employee associations can be. Now; in the midst of budget turmoil, it is even more important that our voices be heard. Now; is*

*(Continued on page 2)*



## VICE-PRESIDENTIAL NOTES ETC

I recently sat in on the NASCOE SW Area State President's teleconference, with Kevin Dale.

Farm Bill – Currently -

Department of Ag is in a tough environment. Long term outlook is not bright with the proposed budget situation. State SED's have been working on plans to deal with the projected cuts. The Administrator has encouraged SED's to consult with State Associations with the plan development. NASCOE encourages states to have some involvement. Kevin urged Presidents to make contact with the SED if they haven't contacted you.

Legislative update CAPWIZ put out an alert recently regarding the Administration's efforts to set reduction numbers for the 2012 FY prior to even receiving the budget allocation. Many felt that setting these ceilings was premature and might hurt us in the future. NASCOE is urging caution to insure that we're not cutting prematurely at the expense of our employees.

An alert last week posted by NARFE concerned proposed changes to the COLA process. They determined a huge affect on retirees and future retirements. A potential reduction of over \$200 a month in certain situations was mentioned. The big \$ impact was the potential increase on taxes on withheld health benefits. All were encouraged to check into this and contact their representatives. The NARFE site can be used just as the CAPWIZ site.

Debt ceiling talks are leaning toward a larger package with great affect on Agriculture and our employees. The August 2<sup>nd</sup> deadline is coming fast. Agriculture subsidies and Employee benefits are laying on the butcher block.

Vilsack was out meeting with commodity groups and has discussed potential extensions of portions of the current farm bill. The Secretary apparently voiced concerns regarding the considerations of extensions. There is some thoughts that if considering an extension that they should be for longer periods to help reduce the insecurity and to add stability and also this would help in the long term budgeting process.

NASCOE is monitoring all these aspects and wants the membership to know that this is just a start and that this is going to be a long tough process.

Question was raised regarding a Legislative Conf. this fall? Much depends on the process of the Farm Bill. With all the issue's on the Hill NASCOE assures its membership that they are working to insure that the membership is represented and that the legislators are informed of the impacts that their actions will have on American Agriculture and our employees!

Budget Cut's! Drought, Fires, Too much rain! ——Take your pick! For either farmers or COF employees that last year has been quite a ride. This may be the beginning of one of the most important times for CASCOE. With the changes in federal programs and federal employment, your involvement in this process is becoming more important than ever! I hope that all of our employees will take the opportunity to tell their CASCOE representatives what on their mind, provide guidance and suggestions

Chuck Hannigan, VP!

*(Continued from page 1)*

*the time to step up and participate. No matter how small or insignificant you think your statement may be, it is important, it could make a difference. Those individuals in Management, Top Management will never understand what is important and what is needed unless they hear from the employees. CASCOE through NASCOE is the perfect way to make a difference. Don't get frustrated when changes don't happen right now, some things take time. Change will happen, let us all work together to make being an FSA employee something to be proud of.*

### *Election Time!*

*This year positions are available for Secretary/Treasurer, District Director 1 and District Director 3. Any active leave earning county FSA employee is eligible to hold these offices. Members may submit nominations at least two weeks prior to the annual convention (October 14-15, 2011) and at the annual convention. All elected officers will take office on January 1 and must submit a written agreement to serve.*

### **President:**

Kevin Reeves, CED-Alamosa County  
2306 County Road 110 North, Mosca, CO 81146  
Office (719) 589-5661 Home (719) 378-2492  
E-Mail: t337idalia@yahoo.com

### **Vice President:**

Chuck Hanagan, Otero/Crowley County, CED  
25722 County Road 25, LaJunta, CO 81050  
(719)469-9969  
E-mail: hanagans@yahoo.com

### **Secretary Treasurer:**

Janae Rader, PT– Bent County  
2304 W 6th Street, Las Animas, CO 81054  
Office (719) 456-0120 Cell (719) 980-1833  
E-Mail: Janae.rader@centurytel.net

### **Past President**

Nadene Gaynor, PT-Kiowa County  
611 Highway 59, Kit Carson CO 80825  
Office (719) 438-5851 Home (719) 962-3295  
E-Mail: nadene.gaynor@co.usda.gov