

NCACES Meeting
Oct. 5, 2007
2405 Williams Hall

Minutes by Natalie Hampton

President Rhonda Sherman called the meeting to order, following a time for refreshments. Board member Andrew Benke led the group in an ice-breaker exercise, asking everyone to create a license plate that described themselves.

Rhonda had members introduce themselves, then she introduced all board members present. She then recognized Past-President Mike Yoder for his service. Mike received a gift certificate from NCACES.

Board member Theresa Nartea announced that awards nominations would be accepted until Dec. 1, 2007. She encouraged members to nominate a worthy member or team. President-Elect Natalie Hampton described a new award, the "Special Specialist Award." County field faculty will be asked to "vote" for their favorite specialist and tell why.

Rhonda reminded members that officer elections have been moved to the May meeting. The association's \$6 annual dues will be collected for the coming year, beginning in February. Finally, Rhonda reminded everyone that the Federal Forum will meet Dec. 14 in Kannapolis. NCACES can bring 12 representatives to the meeting.

Natalie discussed changing the NCACES Web site from a traditional Web page to a page in the Extension Wiki. That way, anyone can make timely changes to the Web site. Theresa mentioned that members at N.C. A&T State University did not receive the meeting email. She offered to forward announcements to A&T faculty, if notices could be sent directly to her.

Andrew shared results of a members' survey about topics or priority areas for NCACES. The top two areas of interest were 1) integrated programming and 2) communication of important topics, administrative decisions and trends. The top way that specialists said the organization can benefit them was networking.

Rhonda led the group in a breakout discussion on the future of NCACES. Two groups shared their thoughts on these matters (Rhonda has these notes).

Administrators Ray McKinnie and Jon Ort reported news from their respective programs. McKinnie said that A&T has a new chancellor, Stanley F. Battle, who is "intense and focused." He reported that the Extension Program is in the midst of a new Plan of Work and is developing goals and initiatives. He also reported that a new animal science specialist will be hired at A&T. He said the Extension Program's budget is in good shape.

Ort thanked members for their well wishes during his recent illness. Though his recovery has been slow, he is feeling much better, he said.

Ort updated the group on a new plan to merge Extension's seven districts into six districts. The new plan will save \$200,000 in salary funds.

Currently, 100 percent of Extension's state budget allocation and 93 percent of federal funds goes into salaries. Ort is asking counties to return \$1 million in positions and campus to return \$1.5 million over the next three years. Since 2001-2002, Extension has lost \$13.5 million in operating dollars, Ort said.

Rhonda called the meeting adjourned. Board members stayed for a brief meeting afterward.