



# NACOP NOTES

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

NOVEMBER 2014

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Message from the Administrator
- 2014 ARS Office Professional of the Year
- Helpful Hints & Tips
- New Area Configurations
- Mid West Area Spotlight

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## Message from the Administrator



Dr. Chavonda Jacobs-Young

Hello ARS Office Professionals. Thank you for this opportunity to let you know how much I appreciate your dedication and willingness to go the extra mile.

The support of my staff of administrative professionals was critical to helping me to transition into the Administrator role; and they are continuing to help me to navigate through this transformational period.

They masterfully manage my schedule; they make sure that I have the information and documents I need; and they take my messages, make my apologies, and even make sure I do my timesheets correctly!

The work they do behind the scenes gets little notice by others, but their help is instrumental to my success as your leader and as representative of the world's greatest agricultural research organization.

That success is, and always will be, a result of their initiative and hard work. And you need to know how much I value the contributions each of you make every day to help maintain the level of excellence that ARS has demonstrated for 60 years and counting.

It takes all of us to be this good!

The mission of NACOP serves to build on this excellence — *to enhance the office support profession through training, mentoring, and recognition.*

I support you in those efforts, and I whole-heartedly encourage you to look for opportunities within your office, or within the Agency to advance and develop your careers.

And I want you to realize that the good work you do at your desk extends beyond your office, your group, and even Headquarters, and is greatly appreciated throughout ARS.



Editor: Dawn Reed, SEA, Representative

## 2014 ARS Office Professional of The Year

*"The principle value of Brooke's work comes from her ability to take initiative and leadership in accomplishing the goals of our research, administrative and outreach programs."*

*"She has demonstrated a high level of self motivation and the ability to manage a very complex schedule of office work, frequent meetings, outreach activities and committee assignments."*



**Submitted by: Brooke Bowers, PWA Representative**

We congratulate Brooke Bowers from the Pacific West Area, Boise, Idaho on receiving the 2014 ARS Office Professional of the Year Award for "outstanding commitment and performance in administrative support."

Brooke started her Federal career at the Northwest Watershed Research Center (NWRC) in Boise, Idaho, in September 2005 as a student Office Automation Clerk. In 2009 Brooke was converted into the SCEP program. Brooke completed the requirements for her Bachelor's Degree from Boise State University in August 2010 in Human Resources. In September 2010 she was promoted to full-time Program Support Assistant at NWRC. She completed a detail as a Administrative Officer this past year. She also began serving on the OSAC in July 2011 as the recorder, and has since been placed on NACOP where she serves as Outreach Coordinator.

Ms. Bowers' Research Leader, Dr. Fred Pierson, stated that, "Brooke has assumed a high level of responsibility over all administrative duties for the Boise location during a time of reduced budgets. Her doing so has allowed the Unit to continue to function not only without interruption, but in a highly efficient manner." He went on to state, "The principle value of Brooke's work comes from her ability to take initiative and leadership in accomplishing the goals of our research, administrative and Outreach programs. She has demonstrated a high level of self motivation and the ability to manage a very complex schedule of office work, frequent meetings, outreach activities and committee assignments."

Brooke truly enjoys her career and is proud to work for ARS. In her free time, she enjoys hunting, backpacking, camping, fishing, cooking, Zumba, volunteer, work, and music. She is very close to her family and loves being outdoors. Her career aspiration is to secure an Administrative Officer position with USDA-ARS. When asked about how she felt about receiving the award, Brooke stated, "I was shocked. I wouldn't have been able to accomplish it without the support from all the Scientists and Technicians at NWRC, especially from my RL whose mentorship has helped me grow immensely in my career. "

When asked for her advice to fellow Office Professionals, Brooke said, "Enjoy your job and do it with integrity. Never stop progressing, always keep moving forward." She went on to state, "Get out of the office and visit the field, don't be afraid to get your hands dirty."

Submitted by: Janel Nierman, PA Representative

## Balance.....



We all need balance in our lives – between school, work, family, fun, exercise – how do we get it all done and stay BALANCED?

The Webster dictionary has over 10 definitions of balance but for my purpose I want to look at these two: 1. an aesthetically pleasing integration of elements, and 2. Mental and emotional steadiness. I believe in order to have mental and emotional steadiness, one must have pleasing integration of elements in one's life. Whether those elements are faith, children, work, spouse, education, exercise, TV viewing; unbalanced living can cause stress levels to soar. We do not want that to happen to you.

From Healthy Lifestyle, Adult Health (<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/adult-health/in-depth/work-life-balance/art-20048134>), there are several steps to creating a good balance between work and home life. Some consequences of work-family imbalance are fatigue, lost time with friends and loved ones, and increased expectations from the employer. To help balance work and family time, you will need to take a few steps to exam your career and personal life expectations. These are a few tips to help you get started:

- \* **Track your time doing work tasks and personal activities** – Which are most satisfying to you? Cut or delegate ones you do not enjoy or share concerns with others or employer.
- \* **Look at work options** – flex hours and job sharing.
- \* **Learn to say NO** – at work and at home, don't accept tasks out of guilt or false sense of obligation. You'll have more time for activities that are meaningful to you.
- \* **Leave work at work** – put a cap on time spent on work and switch gears when you are with family.
- \* **Manage your time** – with to-do lists, family calendar, and household tasks. Do what needs to be done and let the rest go.
- \* **Create a support system** – co-workers and friends to share tasks or pitch in during an emergency at work and home.
- \* **Nurture yourself** – eat healthy, get enough sleep, take part in physical activity, do something you enjoy alone or with your partner.
- \* **Know when to seek professional assistance** – use the EAP ([http://archive.opm.gov/employment\\_and\\_benefits/worklife/healthwellness/EAP/](http://archive.opm.gov/employment_and_benefits/worklife/healthwellness/EAP/)) service that is available when you feel things are beyond your ability or you need some guidance.

“How to Balance Home and Work” ([http://www.ehow.com/how\\_134235\\_balance-home-work.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_134235_balance-home-work.html)) has 11 similar tips to help you get organized and set priorities at home and at work. Even home life can get crazy when everyone has events taking them in various directions. Incorporate your spouse and children in the process of creating a better balance for you; and in turn, it will assist them to stay balanced without driving you to the nut house.

You will need to examine your priorities all the time; it is a continuous process as your family, interests, and work life change. Do not think balance will happen in a few short weeks – it will be a work in progress but well worth the effort. As you continue to review and pare down belongings, commitments, and responsibilities to focus on what really matters to you, you will find the right mix to keep you BALANCED!

## Helpful Hints & Tips

Submitted by: Cathy Lonaberger



### Display table headings at the top of every page in MS Word

When you create a lengthy table, Word doesn't display the table's headings (i.e., the table's first row) at the top of each page that contains a portion of the table.

This can make multi-page tables hard to read. However, you can easily configure Word to repeat a table's heading row wherever the table breaks across pages.

If you'd like to use just the first row of your table as a repeated heading, place the insertion point anywhere within the table's first row. Or, if you'd like to use more than one of the table's top rows as your table headings, select them first. Next, choose Table | Heading Rows Repeat from the menu bar.

When you do, Word automatically repeats the selected row contents wherever the table breaks across pages. In addition, Word automatically adjusts the placement of repeated heading rows so that when you add or remove rows from the body of the table, the repeated heading rows always appear at the top of the page.

And keep in mind that Word doesn't display repeated row headings onscreen when Normal, Outline or Web Layout view is active. This behavior is by design; even though repeated row headings aren't displayed in these views, they're still applied when you print your document.



**Melissa Stiefel, Sr.**  
Co-Chair, MWA



**Tangele {Tee} Terry, Jr.**  
Co-Chair, HQS

## Message from the Co-Chairs

By: **Melissa Stiefel, Sr. Co-Chair, MWA**  
**Tangele {Tee} Terry, Jr. Co-Chair, HQS**

This fall has brought about a big change in the structure of the Agricultural Research Service. As of October 1, we now are comprised of five Areas instead of eight. These Areas are the Pacific West Area, Plains Area, Midwest Area, Southeast Area, and Northeast Area. This consolidation also impacts the structure of the local Councils in each Area. The National Advisory Council for Office Professionals would like to assure you that the Council is a very viable resource and will continue to serve management and office professionals throughout ARS.



# Useful Tips For Keeping Your Office Green

Submitted by: Darleen Nelson, SEA Representative

Office environments can be brutal to the environment. With all the electricity being used for lights and computers, plus all the paper and office supplies going into the garbage every day, there certainly are a lot of environmental hazards.

## 1. Save Electricity

Instead of taking the elevator every day, use the stairs. Turn your lights off every time you leave your office or area, even if it's only for ten minutes. Use windows to their maximum capacity. Draw back the curtains and let all that natural light in! Turning off your cell phone when it's finished charging is another great way to save electricity. During the summer months, close the blinds partially. This will keep the room from heating up and using more air conditioning.

## 2. Reduce Supplies

Keep track of how much paper and toner you use. Just keeping track of how much paper you're wasting is sure to make you pay attention to it and reduce the number. Use any paper that can't be used for scrap paper. Use it to take messages, write reminders, etc. Instead of making copies of very large documents, email them or put the document together in a Power Point presentation. When possible, read

documents on the computer rather than printing them out. Always use the "Print Preview" option before printing something out. This will let you see if there are mistakes in your document and save you from printing it out twice. Email phone messages and other messages instead of writing them on paper.

Regularly update mailing lists and delete any that are out of date. Don't use fax cover sheets when you don't absolutely have to.

## 3. Share Stationary

Ask that reports be printed once and passed around the office for everyone to read instead of printing out a different report for every person. Share supplies such as staplers, hole punches, etc. instead of buying each person their own. Use labels that can be reused for sending out packages and then reuse the packages. Use tape dispensers and pens that are refillable rather than buying new ones.

## 4. Recycle

Buy recycled paper products. Make sure that anything that will be going through a machine such as a printer or photocopier can handle high volumes of recycled paper. Also buy remanufactured toner rather than buying new. Use recycling bins. Set a few up for paper, aluminum, and cardboard and place them throughout the office. Use a reusable mug for your coffee instead of using a paper or plastic cup several times a day. Car pool with a friend on the way to and from work or take the bus.

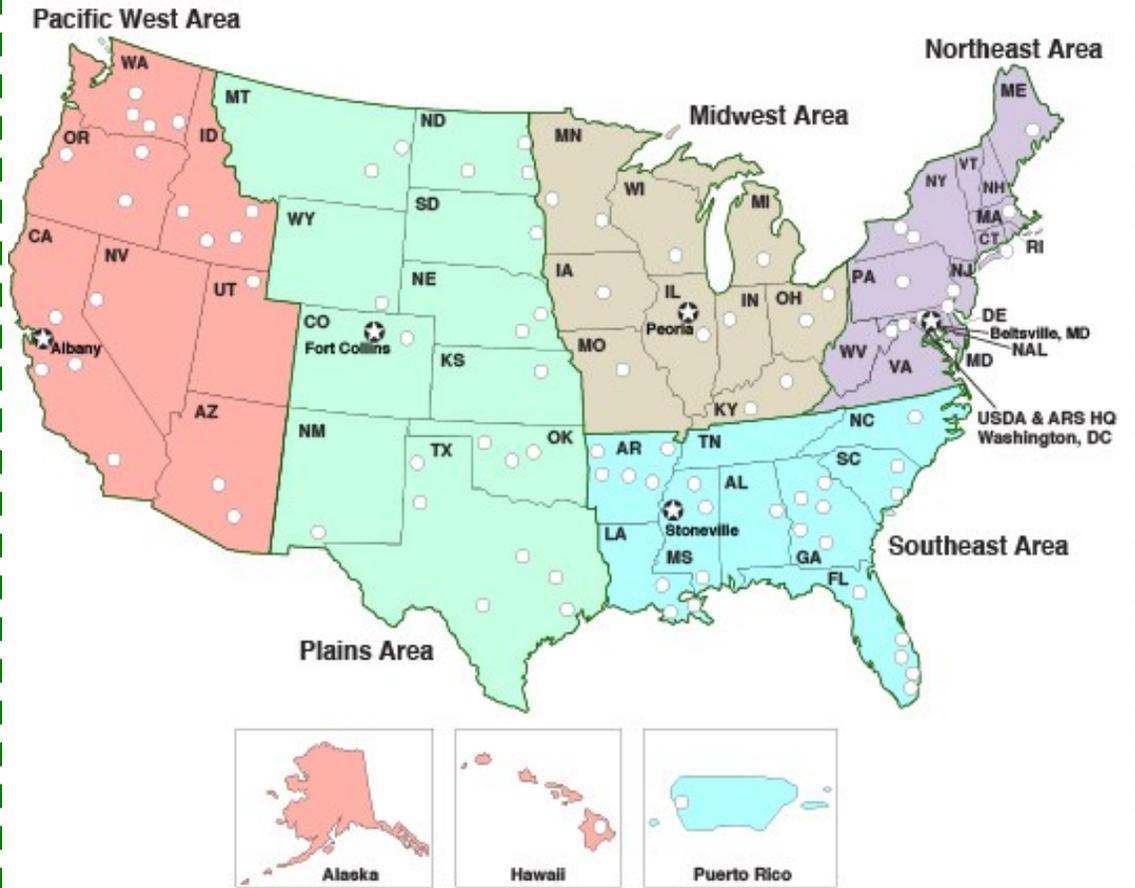
## 5. Pass It On

Tell your office that you're going green and encourage everyone to join in!

Going green is especially important in today's day and age when everyone's worried about using up our resources and reducing consumption. Office spaces are one of the easiest places to go green, and maybe even save some overhead costs too!

# New Area Configurations

Submitted by: Cathy Lonaberger, HQ



**Southeast Area**  
**Northeast Area**  
**Plains Area**  
**Midwest Area**  
**Pacific West Area**

## Midwest Area



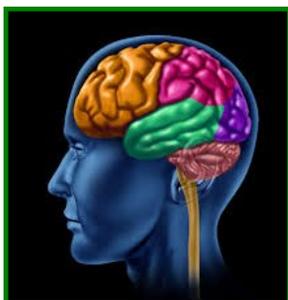
Submitted by: Missy Stiefel, Sr. Chair, MWA Representative

The Midwest Area (MWA) in the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) covers nine states with thirteen locations within those states, and the goal of the Midwest Area Council for Office Professionals (MWACOP) is to *ensure that ARS has highly skilled office professionals working as team members to meet the strategic goals of the Agency.*

MWACOP's vision is for office professionals to function as integral team members in achieving the Agency mission. It is also our vision that positive communication, training, and networking heighten job performance which leads to job satisfaction.

Building on the training aspect mentioned in our vision, this past July 29-30, a Training Workshop was conducted for Office Professionals (OP) in the MWA. Approximately 35 OPs attended the two-day training, which was held at the National Center for Agricultural Utilization in Peoria, Illinois. Some training topics included Ethics, RPES, OSQR, ARIS/AIMS, Technology Transfer, and Customer Service. Guest speakers were recruited from our MWA Office, the Eastern Business Service Center, and Administrative and Financial Management. Mari L. Gomez, Work/Life and Wellness Program Specialist, our last speaker, gave a presentation entitled, "Working with Different Personalities," which was very appropriate and informative as ARS is comprised of many people from many different backgrounds with many different perspectives.

Recently, the 2014 ARS Awards Program Winners were announced. The MWA was proud to see that **Sherri Buxton** received the Customer Service and Technical Expertise Award in the area of Administrative and Program Management. Sherri was awarded this honor for "outstanding customer service, process management and improvement, and development of office professionals in the Midwest Area." Congratulations to Sherri!



## Brainteasers

Question 1: Which weighs more, a pound of feathers or a pound of bricks?

Question 2: What occurs once in every minute, twice in every moment, yet never in a thousand years?

Answers on page 8

## Current NACOP Members



*Tangele "Tee" Terry, HQ, Jr. Co-Chair; Pat Berry\*, HQ; Cathy Lonaberger, HQ, Technical Advisor; Melissa Stiefel, MWA, Sr. Co-Chair; Brooke Bowers, PWA; Dawn Reed, SEA, NACOP Notes Editor; Brenda Holmes, NEA, Webmaster; Linda Parnell, PA, Ex-Officio; Janel Nierman, PA; Darleen Nelson, SEA, Recorder; Rose McIntosh\*, NEA; Not pictured: Trudy Pinkerton, PA.*

*\* no longer a member at time of this publication*

*Brainteaser Answers:*

*Q1: Neither, they both weigh the same.*

*Q2: The letter m.*