

A Personal Story

Laura Stanton (OH) and Donna Donald (IA), NEAFCS Members

Laura Stanton reached out to us here at the National Office with this story to share just after our first ever Virtual Annual Session was held:

I have a pretty incredible story that I wanted to share. It's a bit long but I hope you will take the time to read it.

This week, I have been consumed by a national conference for NEAFCS (National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences). We should have been in Snowbird, Utah but instead, the conference was held virtually.

Yesterday, I had a virtual poster session that required me to keep a Zoom meeting room open so people could "pop in" to ask questions about my presentation, *Living a Life Elevated: The Benefit of Silence Across the Lifespan*.

I had several people pop in and out. However, I had a wonderful chat with an Extension Specialist from Iowa State University. She told me she was drawn to the topic and was interesting in learning about my experience with silence and my background. She asked great questions and I enjoyed talking with her.

Later that day, I was preparing for my Ignite presentation on the same topic. I was thinking about my first NEAFCS Conference, decades ago, during my first stint with OSU Extension (1998-2002). I had won the New Professional Award that year and knew I had kept a newspaper clipping from that event. That clip would tell me what year I had attended the conference.

Amazingly, I found my old Extension file with the newspaper clipping I was looking for. The date of the article was December 10, 2001. In the picture, I am receiving the award from Donna Donald. And guess what? Donna was the woman I had been chatting with earlier in the day about the importance of silence.

I instantly got chills. I have to believe that it was not a coincidence that the two of us reconnected. I immediately scanned the newspaper clip and sent Donna an email with our picture together. We have already had two great email exchanges.

So, in case you need a reminder: It's a small world and people show up at profound and significant times..... if you are paying attention.

