



Renewing Your Membership!

Barbara Wollan (IA), Treasurer

Your affiliate Treasurer and/or your membership chair has likely reminded you sometime recently that now is the time to renew your NEAFCS membership, and I want to add my two cents to that reminder. First of all, the process is easy – simply log in to the NEAFCS website, find “[Dues Renewal](#)” under the Member Resources tab and make any needed updates to your member profile. Then print the confirmation page or the confirmation email you are sent and send it to your affiliate treasurer along with your check for national and state dues. It’s one of those easy tasks that we just need to DO, rather than procrastinate.

In my younger years, as a single parent with two young children, I remember needing to plan for the timing of that check. Money was tighter then than it is now that my children are “launched.” But I never once questioned the importance of those dues. Why? Two main reasons:

- 1) As a college student and young adult, my mother had (through her example as well as her words) helped me understand the value of professional organizations. She shared ways in which professional associations helped her stay up-to-date in her field, and she also shared a firm belief that if there was an organization that advocates for her profession and helps her profession move forward, then she felt it was her responsibility and her privilege to support that organization. The result was that I came into FCS and Extension already expecting to be part of NEAFCS.
- 2) I was fortunate, as a new Extension professional in Illinois, to quickly experience the benefits of membership via regional association meetings that helped me build strong relationships with my new colleagues, with particular support from an FCS colleague in my own county office. On top of that, the national meeting was held in Illinois that year, so even though I was just a newbie, I was encouraged and funded to take advantage of all that a national meeting offers. Those early experiences cemented my belief that this organization holds great value for me.

Our national organization, as well as each state affiliate, strives to provide that value to all our members. This year’s virtual annual session was just one example of our ability to create valuable experiences through many different channels. Your membership and involvement in NEAFCS is an investment in your own professional future. Over the long term, the dues you pay and the time you invest will prove to be small investments that pay off richly in the form of growth and learning, professional advancement, opportunities and relationships.