

**NEAFCS Network
February 2021**

President's Message:

Dianne Gertson (TX), President



Please click the image above to view this month's President's Message

Mentioned in the President's Message:

- [Donate \\$21 in 2021 to the President's Charity](#) - the NEAFCS Endowment
- [NEAFCS Leadership Ladder](#)

The first 5 people to [email me](#) with the location of the icon will be entered into a drawing for a free registration to the 2021 NEAFCS Annual Session.

Professional Development Update: Webinars & Proposal Reviews

Patricia Brinkman (OH), Vice President of Professional Development

The co-chairs of the Program Subcommittee are busy getting proposals out for peer-review. Please be patient if you submitted a proposal. With each proposal being reviewed by five people it takes time to do our review process. They will get back to you as soon as possible. Thanks to all those who are reviewing proposals. We appreciate your service to our organization.

If you missed the “Leadership Experience: The new Mentoring and Leadership Opportunity for NEAFCS members” on Thursday, February 4, you can watch it by going to our website Webinar Archives. Webinars are listed under topics.



Our next webinar is “Coffee Time: Exploring Health Benefits and Cautions” on Tuesday, March 16 at 3 PM Eastern. [Registration is available now.](#)

We are in the process of reviewing two proposals so keep watch for future webinars. Do you have a presentation you could share? [Complete the online proposal form.](#) Webinar proposals are peer-reviewed. We also have an evaluation form which will provide you with feedback after your presentation.

Living Well

Mary Liz Wright (IL), Vice President of Public Affairs

March is Living Well month—get ready for a new way to observe our tradition! Vincent Webb, (North Carolina) and his subcommittee members have been working diligently on a series of videos that will inspire all of us to Live Well. Stay tuned, watch our Facebook page and be prepared to be inspired!

For easy ways for you to spread the word, please go to our website, <https://www.neafcs.org/living-well-month-campaign>.



Raising kids
Eating right
Spending smart

Living
Well™

An Invitation to Become an NEAFCS Judge

Julie Garden-Robinson (ND), Vice President of Awards and Recognition

We need and greatly appreciate our NEAFCS Awards and Recognition judges! I want to sincerely thank all the 2020 judges again for fulfilling their role on a timely basis during our historic and challenging time.

Collecting the names of potential judges using a Google form worked well last year, so I will use the same process. Please fill out the linked form by March 3: <https://forms.gle/L2aRHpwRM2t7RFGo7>

I will randomly select about 60 judges plus alternates to judge the applications. Everyone will be informed whether (or not) they were randomly selected.



Reminders/Timeline:

- Remember that all applications are submitted through our NEAFCS Awards portal.
- Please do not sign up for categories where you are submitting an individual or team award (to the best of your knowledge). I am able to “swap out” judges, if that should occur but sometimes that becomes challenging.
- State deadlines vary but usually are two to four weeks ahead of the national deadline (March 15). Please check with your state affiliate Vice President of Awards and Recognition.
- March 15: Our national deadline for submissions. There are no exceptions to this deadline.
- April 1: Judges receive applications for review.
- April 15: Deadline to complete your judging and submit your scores.

Thank you for providing this service to our organization. You will be provided with detailed directions if you are selected to be a judge.



I hope that we are able to meet in person and celebrate the many accomplishments of our great members in 2021! Please let me know any questions you may have. Best wishes to all in 2021!

Julie Garden-Robinson
Julie.garden-robinson@ndsu.edu
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Embracing One Another's Uniqueness

Elizabeth Brunscheen-Cartagena (KS), Diversity Subcommittee

Often, children who believe that everyone sees the world the same way, learn by the age of 5 that other perspectives exist. That painful struggle of pulling and yielding thrusts us into the basics of relationships; the recognition of differences in others. At what point in life do we stop recognizing those differences and return to making great friendships like we did as children?

Candice Bosteels, founder and managing director at IdentiCy explains, “Our experiences, our preferences, our education, our upbringing all contribute to the model of the world we have, and it makes us who we are. That is not necessarily a bad thing--it becomes problematic when we start treating groups of people as less favorable, or we make bad decisions based on that model.”



Everyone has tendencies or preferences based on that framework mentioned above. What steps can be taken to counteract those unhealthy approaches? Here are a few suggestions: Be open to learn about difference where you live; for instance, cultural, socio-economic, religious beliefs, and education systems. Recognize and act upon those unhealthy preferences when they show up. Blend and interact with different types of people. Get exposure so your eyes can see behind-the-scenes realities. Be the spark that improves the environment in your house, at work, or wherever you go. A fire in a forest starts with one spark.

“Diversity is not about how we differ. Diversity is about embracing one another’s uniqueness.” - Olayinka Joseph

What Are the Changes to Awards in 2021?

John Fuller (MO), Chair of the Awards and Recognition Training Subcommittee



2020 has been a year of change. Awards and Recognition is no different in 2021. Here are those changes this year.

- The American Cleaning Institute has decided they are no longer sponsoring an award.
- Financial Management Award in memory of Dean Don Felker is now a \$500 cash award for one national winner. The award is being sponsored by Purdue University.
- The Past Presidents’ New Professional Award now recognizes members within their first five years instead of three within cooperative extension. The award recipient must attend the national session to receive the award.
- The Extension Disaster Education Award was added last year. It recognizes innovative educational programs and outreach efforts that help individuals, families or communities become more resilient and decrease the impact of natural and human-made disasters.
- Social Media Education and Social Media Education - Online Video Award have been combined.

Communication award changes

- 1st place winners will now receive a \$300 voucher for Annual Conference Registration fees.
- Photography is not a separate award.
- The educational curriculum package has moved to its own category.

If you need additional information, please contact your state Vice President for Awards and Recognition.

Meet the Board

Patricia Brinkman (OH), Vice President of Professional Development

Hi, NEAFCS family! I, Pat Brinkman, am honored to serve as your Vice President of Professional Development. A little about my background, I became aware of Extension through 4-H as I grew up on a dairy farm in another county in Ohio. Although I accepted a position as an FCS teacher after college, I always thought I would enjoy working with Extension. Now after working 20 years as FCS Educator in Fayette County, (half-way between Columbus and Cincinnati), I still love my job. My farming background has been helpful in this rural farming county, although I have not lived on a farm for years.



My specializations are health, wellness, and food safety including teaching ServSafe classes. I am part of the Live Healthy Live Well team providing email challenges, Facebook messages, text messages and blog articles. I try to practice what I teach so eating healthy and being physically active are important to me. I do love dark chocolate, and ice cream is part of the food

groups. My dog keeps me walking, but I admit I don't like the cold so it's short walks these cold winter days.

I enjoy traveling and have lived and taught in southern Delaware and southern California. I recently moved to Columbus to live near my four grandchildren, so I could spend more time with them.

Professional Development is a way of life for me. I love learning, reading, and research, besides sewing and cooking. I want to help people live healthier, happier lives. Please contact me <mailto:brinkman.93@osu.edu> with suggestions on webinars, or how we can serve your professional development needs better.

Member Spotlight Video



Click the image above to watch this month's Member Spotlight video featuring Jocelin Villarreal, Texas.

Are you ready (financially) for NEAFCS in Grand Rapids?

Barb Wollan (IA), Treasurer

I think we're all ready to be back together at a face-to-face annual conference this fall – the virtual conference was remarkably valuable, but it's not quite the same as being together. But on the other hand, are you financially ready? That might be another question. Some of you can skip this article, because your conference costs are fully covered by your employer. But others are responsible for part or even all the cost, which is not a small thing.



We're FCS professionals, so we know the drill: set the target amount you need or want to save and divide it into small chunks: \$100/month from February through November will give you \$1,000 to work with. It's simple. But depending on your situation, keeping that up all year can be difficult as you hit financial bumps in the road. There's no magic wand, but here are some ideas. See if any of them are useful to you.

- Make sure your lifestyle costs noticeably less than your income. Living "within" our means is not good enough; we need to live "beneath" our means if we want to get ahead. That could mean changing some things you've grown accustomed to, but it's worth it to build security, as well as to be ready for Grand Rapids.
- Involve your family. Your family members all have things they'd like to accomplish, too; instead of just saving for NEAFCS, consider expanding your monthly savings to include other family goals (new computer? redecorate a bedroom? weekend at a theme park?). How can making your savings goal bigger help? It's all in the motivation of your family members. Instead of grumbling about not going out for pizza, they may be enthusiastic, because it's helping the family reach important goals and they are included in those goals. If you have precocious children, they may even ask you: "why are you spending \$4 on coffee? Isn't our saving important to you?" Don't you love it when your children quote the plans back to you?!
- Make sure you also have a plan for periodic expenses (ex: car insurance every 6 months, or back to school costs). If you don't, those will derail your saving plan when they arise throughout the year.

I know – I'm preaching to the choir. You all know these things! So, I saved the best two ideas for last:

- Build a list of what you are looking forward to at NEAFCS in Grand Rapids and add to it throughout the year. And keep that list **VISIBLE**. Keep a bright-colored index card or sticky note in places where you might need a reminder – in your checkbook, on your computer monitor, with your credit and debit cards. That will remind you in moments of temptation. **AND** keep reading newsletters and other NEAFCS messages – those messages will give you more items for your list of what you're looking forward to.
- Recruit a "saving buddy." Find someone (in your state or elsewhere) to check in with regularly so you can stay motivated and on track! Maybe it's someone you're looking forward to seeing in Grand Rapids! Working toward a goal is easier when you have a partner.

Introducing the Van Andel Museum!

Danielle Melching (MI), 2021 Annual Conference Committee Planning Member

Greetings from Michigan! My name is Danielle Melching, I am a member of the 2021 Annual Conference Planning Committee. I would like to take a brief moment to introduce the Van Andel Museum, located in downtown Grand Rapids - where the welcome event is being held.

The Van Andel Museum was first established in 1854, making it the oldest museum in Michigan! The museum that we see today opened in 1994 and is made up of more than 250,000 special artifacts. In the fall of 2015, the Van Andel Museum collaborated with the Grand Rapids Public Museum School, as well as Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids Public Schools, Kendell Collage of Arts and Design and the



city/downtown of Grand Rapids to help offer educational programming and hands-on learning experiences for learners to explore culture, history and science.

The Van Andel Museum is focused on providing an environment that will interest a diverse audience. There is a wide range of exhibits throughout the museum that will surely interest all age ranges. The museum also includes a curiosity shop (where you can find a souvenir) and a café (where you can grab a to-go snack, beverage, pre-packed lunch or bakery item). Lastly, there is an online shop which can be found [here](#).

We are looking forward to seeing you at the Van Andel Museum for our 2021 Annual Conference!

21 Tips for 2021

Barb Wollan (IA), Treasurer

What kind of tips do you want to hear from your Treasurer? I pondered that a moment, wanting to surprise you and be non-financial with my tips. But I couldn't do it. Dianne kicked us off last month with two wonderful philosophical tips; this month I'll shift gears with a couple of very pointed and practical tips.



1. This is a tip I practiced faithfully when I was a young professional, and then a newly-divorced mom – when money was a little tighter than it is for me now. I reminded myself that my mileage reimbursement checks were intended to address the *full* cost of driving my car, not just the immediate costs like gas and insurance; therefore, **I always saved half of my mileage checks**. I kept that money in a designated subaccount of my savings and protected it so that it was available for the costs of car repair, and then for a down payment on my next vehicle. The peace of mind and financial reserve that created was priceless. *I confess that since I have a better cushion built up now, I no longer maintain that habit, although I have no doubt it would still serve me well.*
2. **Finish at least a few things every day.** Sometimes I am so wrapped up in big never-ending projects that it seems like I never get anything finished. Finishing one or more finite tasks (send my newspaper column; write the email to volunteers; make the phone call(s) I've been putting off) gives me a feeling of accomplishment that helps me keep moving on those giant things.



Future issues of the NEAFCS Network will include recognition of members who have passed. If you would like to report the death of a NEAFCS member, [please click here](#).

[Patricia Margolis](#) (KY), Life Member
[Benita Peoples](#) (KY), Active Member