

## President's Message

*Julie Garden-Robinson (ND), NEAFCS President*

**Julie Garden-Robinson**  
NEAFCS President



Click the image above or visit <https://youtu.be/JgNqNctaJDw> to watch this month's President's Message

North Central Food Safety Extension Network (NCFSEN) <https://www.ncrfsma.org/north-central-food-safety-extension-network-ncfsen>

Field to Fork resources (horticulture, nutrition, food safety and preservation resources) <https://www.ndsu.edu/agriculture/extension/field-fork>

## What YOU Need to Know NOW in NEAFCS!

*National Office Staff*

*This feature of the newsletter highlights current reminders of member benefits, programs, and approaching deadlines to keep you in the know.*

- **May 15, 2023** - [Endowment Project Grant Proposals](#) Due
- **May 15, 2023** - [NEAFCS 2023 Leadership Experience Call for Proposals](#) Due
- **June 1, 2023** - [Spring Life Member Get-Together via Zoom](#)

## GET TO KNOW THE NEAFCS EXECUTIVE BOARD

**Hometown:** Chicago, IL



**KEISHON THOMAS**  
Southern Region Director  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA EXTENSION

### Why are you a part of NEAFCS?

I love Extension and the work that we do. Working with professionals from across the nation is inspirational.

### What advice would you give your younger self as a new educator?

Organize electronically as soon as possible.

### What's your most used productivity tip?

Make a to-do list for the week on Friday of the previous week. Choose 3-6 items daily to complete and cross them off. Repeat next week.

### Three items you'd take sailing in Rhode Island:



Your work in Extension in one word:  
*Phenomenal*

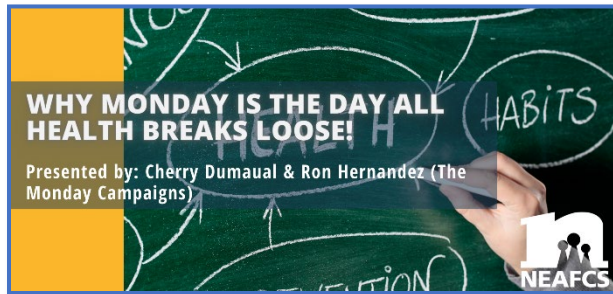


# Efforts to Provide Professional Development Opportunities

*Marcia Parcell (IN), VP Professional Development*

The Professional Development Subcommittees of Program Development and Webinar are trying to provide professional development to our members. The program subcommittee has been organizing the concurrent sessions and showcase of excellence presenters for the 2023 Annual Session and mapping out monthly webinars of presentations from the 2022 Annual Session.

The webinar subcommittee hosted The Monday Campaigns: "Why Monday is the day all health breaks lose!". If you



missed the webinar, you will want to view the archived recording. You will want to take advantage of Mondays to encourage behavior changes in your work. We thank Cherry Dumauil and Ron Hernandez of The Monday Campaigns for sharing

their multiple resources. This is the second year that The Monday Campaigns has provided a professional development opportunity for NEAFCS.

The Professional Development Committee is also excited to host upcoming sessions for the Diversity Committee. **The Professional Development Committee has also planned committee meetings for May 17<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM.** If you want to be part of the Professional Development Committee as a program development or webinar member, sign up through the NEAFCS website to receive emails about this upcoming meeting. Please contact Marcia Parcell, Vice President of Professional Development, with other professional development needs or ideas.



# Writing Your 2024 Award Application: Plan, Persevere, and Win

*Diane Reinhold (IL), Awards and Recognition Training Committee*

As the 2023 awards season ends, now is the time to start planning for next year's awards. Perhaps you have already decided which award you will apply for and have begun developing your timeline for gathering impact data and other critical information needed to write a successful application. Many educators incorporate this aspect into their program development or strategic plan for the upcoming programming year.



Within Family and Consumer Sciences, we are committed to connecting our local communities with evidence-based education and promoting the health and well-being of individuals through our programming efforts. **Highlighting our work through awards is an integral part of our profession.**

**PLAN:** When developing our programs, we employ many resources, many requiring a multi-step process. This is important in program planning and critical to writing award applications. Each step we take, from completing a needs assessment, developing learning and programming objectives, determining the best evaluation design for a program, utilizing learning theories, creating a research-based curriculum with supplemental and marketing materials to implementing the program, will need to be detailed in our award application.

**PERSEVERE:** Of course, we cannot forget the culmination of our efforts as we analyze data, assess impact, and review our programming efforts to strengthen our program further. Although these steps may seem tedious, they are essential to developing quality programs and writing a successful award application because they encompass the key elements of our NEAFCS Award outlines. This is the perseverance part; it can be challenging but worthwhile.

**WIN:** When writing your application, have the materials used to create your program easily accessible, and the data used for composing your impact will make the writing process much more manageable. The final aspect is winning. **Remember that you may not win an award the first time you apply, which is okay.** Disappointing, yes, but it's still okay. You can always apply the following year, which allows you time to gather more impact data and strengthen your application.

The other thing I want to share is that just because you didn't win an award doesn't mean YOU didn't WIN. **Winning means different things to different people and YOUR impact on your community and the people you serve within your community - that's where the real winning comes in.** With that, I encourage you to plan, persevere, and win.

# Making an Impact

*Jennifer Bridge (KY), VP Public Affairs*

I hope each of you “lived well” during the month of March! The advocacy committee did an outstanding job creating and providing resources for you to promote the eight dimensions of wellness.

**Please let us know how you used the materials or ideas for enhancing Living Well in 2024.**



The education committee editors along with other volunteers completed their work on the 2023 Impact Statements. Danielle Jessup worked her magic and they have been posted to the NEAFCS website under the public affairs section. This year, we added an extra component with a one page document containing eye catching infographics with links to the completed impact statements. These will be available for those attending PILD to share with their congressional leaders during hill visits. **As members, feel free to share these with local leaders and decision-makers to share the impact NEAFCS and FCS professionals are making in their communities and throughout the country.**

To further enhance the impact data, the marketing committee created a series of infographics with both state and national data to correspond with statement areas. The committee is also working with Will Ferguson from our national office to finalize an individual impact statement template. **Be on the lookout for a webinar on creating and using these wonderful resources.**

The dedication of the committee chairs and active members on the Public Affairs committees is evident in the great materials they have created for you to use. If this area interests you, please sign up for a committee, participate in a webinar, and become an active member of NEAFCS. If you have questions, feel free to reach out to me. Together, our organization is stronger.

Thank you for all you do!

# Is a Picture Always Worth a Thousand Words?

*Lorrie Coop (TX), Diversity Committee Member*

We've all heard the term, "A picture is worth a thousand words", right? We use images daily to add emphasis and help clientele better understand the content. Now, think about someone trying to navigate a website or learn about a particular topic through a digital publication containing pictures with a visual impairment. **Inaccessible web content means that people with disabilities are denied equal access to information and can exclude people just as much as having steps at an entrance to a physical location would for someone using a wheelchair.**

People with visual impairments navigate the web in various ways, such as using screen readers to speak the text that appears on a screen. While screen readers work great for written content, they need our help with visual content. We must tell the reader what is displayed, like we use captioning for someone with a hearing impairment.

**Alternative text, or alt text, is like a caption but different because it lives inside the code of a document or website.** Whenever a screen reader encounters a visual image, it relies on the code to describe it.

Alt text should be added to images, such as photos, infographics, clip art, charts and tables, and can be done easily when creating documents using the tab found under the Picture Format tab in Microsoft Word. Alt text can also be added when editing photos on social media platforms under advanced settings.



Man and woman viewing bluebonnets and maroon bluebonnets on a walk through the Texas A&M University Campus Gardens

When adding alt text, use language appropriate for your audience's age, background knowledge, and purpose in viewing the image. Be specific. Avoid starting the description with "a photo of" because the user already knows it's an image. The description should describe the subject in detail, the setting, and the action and should typically be 1-2 sentences and less than 100 characters. **The**

**description should always end with a period, even if it's not a complete sentence.** This tells the screen reader to pause after reading the alt text.

For example, when describing the photo below, one might say, "People looking at flowers." However, a better description might be, "Man and woman viewing bluebonnets and maroon bluebonnets on a walk through the Texas A&M University Campus Gardens."

Remember, adding alt text not only helps to bring stories to life and make subjects easier to understand, it also improves accessibility and makes digital content inclusive to everyone while also ensuring we are providing the best user experience to all of the people we serve.



# NEAFCS Endowment Offers Benefits to Members

*Karen Ensle (NJ), Endowment Committee*

There are advantages of a significant and growing endowment to the NEAFCS board officers, fundraiser committee, and our management company. Here is a list of some benefits:



- **Creates an ongoing source of income.** Because a permanent endowment is an invested pool of money that provides a reliable source of income in perpetuity, the organization can count on annual distributions for its members and the scholarships they apply for and receive. The donor or board of directors may design funds for our endowment. Appropriate investment and spending policies will preserve the endowment's purchasing power.
- **Enhances stability and prestige.** A well-managed endowment sends a message of planned long-term stability, fiscal responsibility, and financial viability. It enhances the organization's prestige and credibility.
- **Relieves pressure on the membership funds.** Annual membership costs tend to rise along with the cost of providing services and operating the organization. Still, the ability of the annual budget to meet increasing demand is not limitless. An endowment can provide annual support for the organization's operating budget.
- **Allows program expansion.** NEAFCS program expansion can be funded with distributions from the endowment funds used for scholarships with project proposals due May 15<sup>th</sup> and Annual Awards and for other purposes designated by individual members or recommended by the board of directors.
- **Provides independence.** Endowment contributions designated for specific purposes can provide a measure of independence from economic, governmental, and political forces. Consider donating your income tax refund or in memory of a former member, friend, or family member.
- **Offers flexibility for NEAFCS management.** Endowments offer options to meet new challenges by providing greater financial flexibility and self-sustaining income streams. Endowments can augment uncertain income sources, broaden the overall revenue mix, and improve the income statement.
- **Builds a pipeline of future gifts.** A growing endowment builds a pipeline of gifts that will mature in the future. An organization that attracts deferred gifts and celebrates the love for our national Extension, FCS organization enhances our future financial security and positions NEAFCS to enjoy increasingly larger gifts.
- **Encourages outright gifts.** Outright gifts and other planned gifts are being encouraged as we build our NEAFCS endowment. Members and retirees who have decided to make an endowment gift to the organization are likely also to make gifts to the organization's other campaigns.

As NEAFCS members contribute to the endowment fund in 2023 and yearly, it provides numerous benefits to members for awards and scholarships, which enhance our professional development and our ability to receive recognition for the excellent Family and Consumer Sciences Extension education work we do in communities that impact families across the US.

# Preserving Your Professional Life

*Casey Ford (AK), Mentoring and Leadership Committee*

As I sit here in Arkansas, it is clear that “spring has sprung” and I know I am not the only one who notices my calendar becoming full. Spring flows into summer packed with food preservation programs and 4-H camps and contests, and summer ends with County Fair season. This brings me to the idea that I first heard in a seminar as a senior in college – called your “Professional Shelf Life.”

I know that when I started my career, I was fresh out of college and unmarried, and as I write this, I am approaching my 2<sup>nd</sup> wedding anniversary with hopes to start a family soon. I also want to have a long and fulfilling career in Extension. That last fact makes the concept of a “professional shelf life” all the more important to me because I know that despite how passionate I am, burnout is a very real thing that I am not immune to (despite what the senior year of college version of me thought).



More and more, I find myself looking at my career life and asking myself – “Is this sustainable?”, “Can I keep this pace for the long term without neglecting my marriage, family, or health?” **I have determined that I do not want my career to be a flame that burns hot and fast – but I want it to last. So over the past few years, I have developed some strategies that I am still perfecting to preserve my professional shelf life:**

- 1. Be aware that not everything will be done – or at the very least done to perfection.** At the beginning of the year, I aim to meet with my office and other agents I work with to schedule the big events that need to be penciled in. I have learned that getting these professional and personal events on the calendar is best early.
- 2. Recognize the signs of burnout in yourself.** For me, this looks like irritability (at work and at home), fatigue, lacking a feeling of accomplishment, and just a general not being as excited as I usually am. When I start to recognize these signs in myself – I know its time for a break.
- 3. Set up boundaries around your personal time.** These boundaries are not necessarily hard and fast rules as there are exceptions. Some of these boundaries include not staying late on Fridays, limiting how many weeknights per week that I stay late, blocking off holidays and other significant weekends (birthdays, anniversaries, etc.), and limiting how many weekends in a row that I have work-related events.
- 4. Develop systems in your professional life that allow processes to be more streamlined, organized, and efficient.** I hate the feeling of being rushed or being unprepared and it is my personal opinion that feeling this frequently would contribute to the deterioration of my professional shelf life.

I hope these are some strategies that you can apply for yourself during this busy season to help “preserve your professional shelf life”



# Journal of Extension Report for NEAFCS

*Dana Wright (WV), Journal of Extension NEAFCS Representative*

The Journal of Extension continues to work diligently to make the Journal of Extension a premier source for Extension Professionals. **Below are some of the highlights of the issues the Board has been working on to improve institutions' readership, authorship, and subscription enrollment.**



- Three years after implementing a new editorial model, Clemson University Press (JOE publisher) has successfully cleared the backlog of author submissions.
- Since implementing the current editorial model, which includes multiple editors, turnaround time related to article submission has improved drastically and contributed to increased readership of the JOE.
- The Journal of Extension receives an average of 300 article submissions annually. Currently, each journal issue contains 20-24 articles.
- Viewer downloads of articles published in JOE are going strong. In October of 2022, article downloads and views reached 8700.
- An increase in the number of JOE articles cited by authors for educational and academic materials continues to grow.
- Because of the increase in JOE viewer downloads and citations, Clemson University Press is preparing to apply for an impact factor. This will be a remarkable step toward establishing JOE as a premier source of academic research information.
- JOE currently has enough articles to publish issues 60-1 through 60-3, with consideration for publishing an additional "special edition" publication in 2023.
- The marketing committee has drafted a tip sheet they believe will be helpful for authors to promote their article in JOE. The committee is also exploring ways to better market JOE.
- **The Journal of Extension seeks Extension Professionals to serve as reviewers of articles submitted for publication. Interested persons should email [JournalofExtension@clemson.edu](mailto:JournalofExtension@clemson.edu)**
- Authors should be advised that there is a new submission process. For details, visit <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/joe/>
- The most recent publication is now available at <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/joe/>
- The Board is exploring ways to provide reviewer recognition to professionals who serve as a reviewer for the Journal of Extension (JOE).
- The Board of Directors met March 22-23, 2023 in Clemson, South Carolina. Due to university travel bans, board members may attend meetings deemed "in-person" virtually.
- I highly recommend that NEAFCS consider inviting Drew Griffin, Director of Clemson Extension Publishing and senior editor of the Journal of Extension, to provide webinars related to authorship and booth space and travel accommodations for NEAFCS annual conference.
- The next in-person meeting of the board is scheduled for September 19-22 in Red Lodge, Montana.

# What do the movie "Dirty Dancing" and NEAFCS have in common?

*Christine Kneip (WI), Historian*

When you think about the 1987 movie hit "Dirty Dancing" starring Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Grey, who does not start singing..." I've had the time of my life..." and can see that epic final dance? The movie, set in the Catskill Mountains at the Grossinger Resort, is a tale of summer love and resort vacations. What is the link to NEAFCS? **Fifty years ago, in 1973, our association held its Annual Session at Grossinger's!**



Executive Vice-President of the Resort, Elaine Grossinger Estess, shared "The Grossinger Tradition" at the Sunday evening dinner hour, setting the stage for a week of meetings and special activities. Cleo Bryan, Oklahoma, was President that year, with the conference theme being "A Time For Renewal," which encouraged personal, professional, institutional, and association renewal. Keynoter Dr. Oddvar Berg encouraged members to "take time to learn, to live deeply and put more emphasis on the heart and not so much on the intellectual."

**Highlights of the meeting included a 3-part in-depth series on renewal, member "Crosstalks," the presentation of the new "Paraprofessional Award," luncheons hosted by the Campbell Soup Company and General Foods, 61 educational exhibits, and MUCH more!** The traditional closing of the annual meeting was a fashion show by Simplicity Pattern Company, Inc. and Coats and Clark, Inc. The registration chairman reported a total registration of 1361 attendees. **The Grossinger shared that it was the longest and largest convention held at the hotel.**

While no "dirty dancing" was recorded at the Annual Session, I would love to hear what members that attended the session remember about the Grossinger and this incredibly special resort that no longer exists. **Please let me know if you were there and have stories to share!**

FYI- the genesis of this article was sharing what was happening 50 years ago. It became a historian's "rabbit hole" as I did some research on Grossingers, the Borscht Belt, watched "Dirty Dancing," and can't stop singing, " I've had the time of my life.....in NEAFCS!"

# Explore the Restaurant Scene in Providence

*Lisa Fishman (ME), Hospitality Committee*

There are lots of options for dining that are within a short walking distance from the Convention Center. The [Providence Warwick Convention and Visitors Bureau website](#) lists more than 80 delicious options for State's Night Out or just a lunch on your own.



**If you are rooting around for a great spot for a large group reservation, be sure to call ahead to make sure the restaurant is open on Tuesday nights (State's Night Out is on September 12<sup>th</sup>)** and that they can accommodate your group. There are a number of spots for enjoying a casual drink with some new-found friends, and lots of cozy options for a hot cup of your favorite morning beverage, all within a few minutes from your Downtown hotel.

Providence has many ethnic restaurants from which to choose, but **the city is perhaps most famous for its Italian food**. A strong Dominican population has also migrated to Providence, bringing big Latin American flavors to the area

*Resources:*

<https://www.goprovidence.com/restaurants/downtown-providence-restaurants/>

## Eastern Region Highlights

*Jesse Ketterman (ME), Eastern Region Director*

Greetings from the Eastern Region. It is the time of year when you are excited about Spring and yet you have another snowstorm or cold weather. Our Ag colleagues are wrapping up their winter training sessions and 4-H partners are preparing for summer fairs. **Our state affiliates are busy planning their summer meetings and look forward to gathering in person.** Something we do not do as often anymore.



With the upcoming conference in Rhode Island, **many in the region are participating on various committees planning for the Annual Session.** I can't thank Shauna, Gina, and Maria enough for their leadership on the planning team. As with many throughout NEAFCS, our states have submitted their awards and we look forward to hearing about our regional and national winners. Additionally, many just found out their proposals were accepted for the Annual Session. Congratulations, and I look forward to hearing about all of your hard work.

# GET TO KNOW THE NEAFCS EXECUTIVE BOARD

Hometown: Rocky Ridge, MD



**JESSE KETTERMAN**  
Eastern Region Director  
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

## Why are you a part of NEAFCS?

You become a better professional networking with your colleagues throughout the country. I have developed wonderful relationships as a result of being involved in NEAFCS and other professional organizations.

## What advice would you give your younger self as a new educator?

Seek opportunities to collaborate with colleagues outside of FCS. It gives you a greater understanding of the true meaning of Extension.

## What's your most used productivity tip?

One task at a time. Eventually you will get caught up.

## Three items you'd take sailing in Rhode Island:



+



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Your work in Extension in one word:  
*Rewarding*




## Additional News & Opportunities for NEAFCS Members

- The Alzheimer's Association "[Boost Your Brain - Staying healthy in body and mind](#)" virtual [presentation](#) on May 15, 2023
- HBA 2023 Educator Awards – Entry Deadline – EXTENDED TO May 31, 2023
  - **NEW! Bake to Give – The Maddie Kruse Youth Award** (<https://www.homebaking.org/maddie-kruse-award/>)
  - HBA Educator Award – <http://homebaking.org/educator-award/>



# NEAFCS Network Newsletter *Question of the Month*



Having read the April NEAFCS Network Newsletter, can you answer a question found in it? Monthly, the **first five people** to answer the question correctly will be entered into a drawing for registration for the 2023 Annual Session to be selected in Summer 2023. To view and answer this month's question, visit <https://forms.gle/mVgSnVijr7Yk8ck49>