

2009 President's Report
Judith Edwards Breland, Ph.D.

It is a privilege and pleasure to serve as the 60th President of the National Extension Association Family and Consumer Sciences as the members celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Association, September 15-18, 2009, in the Southern Region in Birmingham, Alabama.

Each presidency faces different challenges and opportunities. The vision of the leadership of NEAFCS over time has kept the Association viable and member driven. There have been policy changes through the years that allowed the Association to move forward to meet challenges and opportunities.

During the 2008-2009 year, the Board considered recommendations gathered at a town hall meeting during the 2007 Annual Session. The recommendations were presented as a White Paper to the 2008-2009 Board by Past President, Carol Schlitt, and a committee of members. These recommendations suggested ways to meet challenges facing the Association.

The Board expanded its look at ways to meet member needs while retaining the positives of leadership development in light of the challenge of a downturn in the national economy, an Association budget that reflected deficit spending, and changes in leadership development opportunities through the Joint Council on Extension Professionals (JCEP). At the two Regional Leadership Meetings in 2009, a series of questions were posed to the Affiliate Presidents and Presidents-Elect to further look at challenges to and direction for the Association. The Board began the process of determining policy to broaden the use of technology for professional development, association management, and reaching the general public with researched-based information.

While the Board could do little to impact the national economy, deficit budget spending within the Association was carefully examined. Policy was changed to reflect that meals for Board and JCEP travel would no longer be paid by the Association. In addition, the Spring Board meeting was conducted electronically, so there was not a face-to-face meeting with the associated travel expenses. When the Joint Council Extension Professionals voted in June, 2009, to move to one professional development meeting in a central location for 2010, it became imperative that the Board look at the costs of both Board Representative travel as well as the cost of leadership training for Affiliate officers as part of the Regional Leadership meeting. The registration fees and travel costs for Affiliate officers for the Regional meetings, paid for by the national association, represented approximately 60% of this year's budget deficit. A session for presidents and presidents-elect was incorporated into the Annual session for 2009 to determine how to best handle Association leadership training in the future.

Looking at possibilities is a trait of Extension Family and Consumer Science practitioners. Assuming a can-do attitude, a project of publishing a resource/cookbook was embraced during the two JCEP leadership meetings. The project, under the leadership of Debra Cotterill, Treasurer, the Regional Directors and the Vice President for Member Resources, was enthusiastically endorsed during the Regional Meetings and embraced by the membership. The Book committee met with the publishing house representatives during breaks in the Board's first-ever web-based Spring Board meeting. This allowed the committee to do the face-to-face work with the publisher while also participating in the Board's web-conference. All 50 states submitted a factoid to go with a recipe, members contributed resource materials and recipes, developing and refining them, and the book delivered to the publisher. The project was accomplished in record time and ready for advance sales more than two months before Annual Session, and orders continued to be accepted in the Exhibit Hall in Birmingham.

As part of the 2009 Annual Session, exhibits played an important addition to the educational offerings as well as contribute to the financial stability of the Association budget. The Exhibit Committee, under the leadership of Debbie Simmons-Gray, recruited and provided a variety of exhibits, including the HUD Healthy Homes Pavilion, an extensive exhibit that provided environmentally friendly educational information as well as complimented the overall value of the other exhibits.

Programmatically, at Annual Session, a roundtable session and conversation opportunities were introduced as community building opportunities to get more involvement from members in defining the gifts and possibilities for the Association as we move into lean financial times for organizations as well as individuals and families. Members provided outstanding concurrent sessions, which combined with pre-conference workshops and general session speakers, and an afternoon with *Southern Living Magazine*, incorporating over 18 hours of professional development.

The Endowment Committee, begun in 2004 with a target of \$300,000 by 2009, has developed a guiding policy and will continue to strive for the objective so that generated interest can be used to support the designated areas.

The 75th Anniversary Committee, chaired by Patricia Powley, worked throughout the year to focus member attention on the rich history of our Association and to create a celebration throughout the Annual Session, including allowing members to gather in the Diamond Room for energizing, discussing, and reminiscing. Historian Cheryle Jones Syracuse, encouraged States to update their histories for inclusion on the website with materials of merit that has evolved into a section of historical archives on the NEAFCS web page. Cheryle also contributed numerous articles for the monthly e-newsletter throughout the 75th anniversary year, and encouraged other members to contribute articles of interest, which the members have enjoyed reading. A national poll, conducted for the 50th anniversary celebration in 1984, was replicated and published in July, looking at areas of concern for individuals, families and communities, 25 years after the first survey was conducted and results published.

As the history was gathered, it became apparent that some years are marked by more change than others. The 2008-2009 year was a year of great change by NEAFCS - some change as a result of partnership with the Joint Council of Extension Professionals, some as a result of the national economy, and some resulting from fiscal necessity. These changes, reflected in the documents of the Association, allow the members to honor the past as they move forward to embrace the future.

As a footnote: During the annual session 75th anniversary celebration, Mr. Whitmore played the organ for us on September 17. He had been ill but graciously made the organ resound within the building making it a most memorable evening. We were sorry to hear that he passed away not long after the celebration and is now playing the organ for the angels.

Did you travel for a winter board meeting? Where was it? *Winter Board was in Dallas, TX*
Where were the regional leadership meetings?

Eastern & Southern Regions February 10 – 12, 2009 Regal Sun Resort, Orlando, FL

Central & Western Regions February 18 – 20, 2009 Marriott Del Mar, San Diego, CA

How many people attended annual session? *619*

How many members belonged to the association that year? *2241*

What was the dues? *\$70*

Please list all your board members, their association titles and states (there is a photo online already)

Judith Breland (MS), President

Mary Ann Lienhart-Cross (IN), President-Elect

Kathy Dothage (MO), Immediate Past President

Debra Cotterill (KY), Treasurer

Kathleen Olson (MN), Secretary

Marsha Lockard (ID), Vice President for Awards & Recognition

Judy Kovach (TN), Vice President for Member Resources

Rhea Bentley (GA), Vice President for Professional Development

Linda Huyck (MI), Vice President for Public Affairs

Carolyn Wissenbach (PA), Eastern Region Director

Amy Peterson (NE), Central Region Director

Judy Hetterman (KY), Southern Region Director

Chris Koehler (WA), Western Region Director

