MSACOP News Notes

Mid South Area Council of Office Professionals   *Editor Marlene Coley*

Fulton Becomes Senior Chair, MSACOP *by Marlene Coley, Stoneville, MS*

Telecia Burton, Program Support Assistant, Oxford, MS, turned over Senior Chair duties to Linda Fulton, Secretary, Mississippi State, at the MSACOP Annual Meeting held in conjunction with the National Advisory Council of Office Professionals in St. Louis, MO. Linda served as Second Chair the previous year.

Other newly elected officers include Tammy Dorman, Secretary, Auburn, AL, as Second Chair and Marlene Coley, Program Support Assistant, Stoneville, MS, as Recorder.

Other issues discussed at the Annual Meeting included membership selection process, revisions to the MSACOP Charter, the MSAOP Website, plans to organize and have an MSA Office Professionals meeting to be held in the spring of 2007 , the budget, committee assignments and 2005-2006 accomplishments.

(Submitted by Marlene Coley)

Linda Fulton, Senior Chair

Tammy Dorman, Second Chair

Marlene Coley, Recorder

10 Golden Rules & Assertiveness Helps You Get the Job Done
(Submitted by Tammy Dorman, Auburn, AL)

1. Understand the value of your time
2. Set priorities on a daily basis as well as a long-term basis
3. Set short-term and long-term goals
4. Make a "to-do" list
5. Budget your time
6. Be flexible
7. Learn to say "No"

8. Use a planning system
9. Don't be a perfectionist
10. Get help

"How to Get Organized When You Don't Have the Time"   by Stephanie Culp

Seven techniques for professional effectiveness

1. Use "I" statements
2. Keep your responses short
3. Pay attention to your voice tone and pitch
4. Watch your nonverbal messages
5. Enunciate your words clearly
6. Be respectful of personal space
7. Pay attention to you physical appearance.

The Indispensable Assistant—Skillpath

Laugh to Improve Your Health *(Submitted by Marlene Coley)*

Want a totally free, simple way to boost your spirits and your health with no pre-scription needed? Then you want to laugh and smile as much as possible.

As simple as it sounds, laughing and smiling lets you get swept away with overall good hu-mor, and is beneficial to the cardiovascular sys-tem, respiratory sys-tem, muscular system, central nervous system and endocrine system.

So laugh ... smile ... go check out a funny movie or learn a new joke. Whatever it takes to put a smile on your face is what you should be doing.

Research also shows that laughing can boost the immune system, helping the body to stay disease free and fight colds and the flu, and can help people with type 2 diabetes process sugars after meals.

If you are facing an illness, having a positive outlook and a sense of humor will keep your body open to healing. If you are healthy, laughing will help to make sure you stay that way, and can add enjoyment to your work and home life and reduce your daily stress.

Of course, it can be hard to keep a positive out-look all the time. Simply taking the time to focus on the positive and be thankful for the good things in your life can help, but if you are strug-gling with negative emo-tions that you just can't seem to overcome there are tools that can help you deal with all kinds of negative emotions and stress.

But a little laughing and smiling will also go a long way toward improving your health, so try it--you have nothing to lose! There are so many things out there to smile about and all you have to do is find one. Try something out of the ordinary like walking barefoot through the grass, taking time to watch the sunrise or go-ing to a comedy club, and don't overlook the joy in everyday things like talk-ing to your kids and walk-ing the dog. You'll be amazed at how much brighter things can be-come when you look at them through smiling eyes.

By Dr. Joseph Mercola with Rachael Droege

OP Highlights *by Marlene Coley*

In each News Notes issue, we will be featuring MSA Office Profes-sionals from around the area.

For this issue we are intro-ducing Ginger Carden, Secretary (OA) for the Poultry Research Unit at Missis-sippi State, MS. Ginger has 20 years in Federal service. She attended Wood Jr. College and has taken numerous ARS training courses. Ginger is married to Martin Carden and has three chil-dren, Stacey (39), Vanessa (30), and Charisie (25).

She is active in Women's Missionary Union at Double Springs Baptist Church in Maben, MS, and has been the church pianist for approximately 40 years. Ginger also enjoys read-ing, writing poetry and songs, and playing with her 5 grandchildren.

One of Gingers poems is to the right and another on following page.

Home Front

It's here - - war.

A President's declaration.

Special news reports.

A nation on it's knees

Cries out to Almighty God,

  "Keep them safe."

War.

Soldiers, planes, missiles, bombs,

  Ships, tanks, and bullets.

Good-bye kisses, tearful hugs.

Stiff upper lips with quivering chins.

Heads bowed praying,

  "Protect them, Lord."

War.

Long distance phone calls, relayed messages.

Hours slip into days,

As a nation ages before our very eyes.

A small child asking,

  "Mommy, will I have to go?"

Hope, fear, heartache, love, and compassion,

Mingle together in a world of waiting.

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills

from whence cometh my help...

My help cometh from the Lord.."

Peace.

In turmoil and terror,

Deep within the spiritual heart,

Peace that passeth all understanding,

That comes from knowing God is in charge,

And will give us strength to face ____ ???

Tomorrow.

Ginger Fulgham Carden

January 18, 1991©

Computer terms: A brief, handy glossary *(Submitted by Marlene Coley)*

Alpha - Software undergoes alpha testing as a first step in getting user feedback. Alpha is Latin for "doesn't work."

Beta - Software undergoes beta testing shortly before it's released. Beta is Latin for "still doesn't work."

CPU - Central propulsion unit. The CPU is the computer's engine. It consists of a hard drive, an interface card and a tiny spinning wheel that's powered by a running rodent - a gerbil if the machine is a 286, a ferret if it's a 386 and a ferret on speed if it's a 486.

Default Directory - Black hole. Default directory is where all files that you need disappear to.

Users - Collective term for those who stare vacantly at a monitor. Users are divided into three types: Novice, Intermediate and Expert.

 Novice Users -- People who are afraid that simply pressing a key might break their computer.

 Intermediate Users -- People who don't know how to fix their computer after they've just pressed a key that broke it.

 Expert Users -- People who break other people's computers.

Error message - Terse, baffling remark used by programmers to place blame on users for the program's shortcomings.

File - A document that has been saved with an unidentifiable name. It helps to think of a file as something stored in a file cabinet - except when you try to remove the file, the cabinet gives you an electric shock and tells you the file format is unknown.

Hardware - Collective term for any computer-related object that can be kicked or battered.

Help - The feature that assists in generating more questions. When the help feature is used correctly, users are able to navigate through a series of Help screens and end up where they started from without learning anything.

Input/Output - Information is input from the keyboard as intelligible data and output to the printer as unrecognizable junk.

Memory - Of computer components, the most generous in terms of variety, and the skimpiest in terms of quantity.

Printer - A joke in poor taste. A printer consists of three main parts: the case, the jammed paper tray and the blinking red light.

Programmers - Computer avengers. Once members of that group of high school nerds who wore tape on their glasses, played Dungeons and Dragons, and memorized Star Trek episodes; now millionaires who create "user-friendly" software to get revenge on whoever picked on them at school.

Reference Manual - Object that raises the monitor to eye level. Also used to compensate for that short table leg.

Day's Work

With a smile and a 'Good Morning''

We begin a new day

The work's piling up

But there's more on the way.

'Could you...' 'Would you...''

'When you get a minute…'

'Did you get that report out?

Oh – you've already sent it!'

ARMPS, ARIS, and STAR

Email and CATS,

Door buzzing, phone ringing,

I think I'll go bats!!!

'Thank you, good job.'

Oh, by the way

It's all in a day's work

Here at U.S.D.A.

Ginger Carden

June 22, 2006

Fratesi Selected As MSACOP Technical Advisor

Drusilla Fratesi was recently selected as the Technical Advisor to the National Advisory Council of Office Professionals (NACOP) and will represent the Mid South Area Office Professionals.

The announcement was made at the MSACOP Annual meeting held in conjunction with the NACOP Conference in St. Louis, MO, by Dr. Deborah Brennan, MSACOP sponsor. Drusilla is the Executive Assistant to the Mid South Area Director, Dr. E. G. King, in Stoneville, MS.

(By Marlene Coley)

Happy 4th of July

Mid South Area Office Professionals of the Year Selected

Congratulations!

Linda Fulton, Secretary, Mississippi State, MS, was selected as the GS-6 and above MSA Office Professional of the Year for 2006. Linda was nominated by her supervisor, Dr. Johnie Jenkins, Director of the Crop Science Research Laboratory. He said, "Linda's accomplishments provide an immeasurable impact as her method of functioning within her job provide scientists additional time for research which would otherwise not be available." Dr. Jenkins also stated that, "Linda exceeds the expectations in every aspect of her job as evidenced in her Performance Evaluations."

Linda will receive a $2,000 award for the GS-6 and above level.

Latonya Ingram, Office Automation Assistant for the Southern Insect Management Research Unit, Stoneville, MS, was selected as the GS-5 and below Office Professional of the Year. Dr. Craig Abel, Research Leader, said, "She not only exceeded the performance for her own Performance Elements but also successfully performed the duties of a vacated Program Assistant position for a full 10 months during her evaluation period. Some of the extra duties she performed included developing an ARMPS for the MU, formatting OSQR reports, SY's RPES cases, and processing a large number of research agreements."

Latonya will receive a $1,000 award for the GS-5 and below level.

Hello, Are You Listening? (*Submitted by Drusilla Fratesi, Stoneville, MS*)

Communicating effectively is one of the most valuable assets an individual can possess in terms of career advancement and long-term career success. It is just as critical in our personal lives when we communicate with family and friends. A crucial part of effective communication is listening. One of the reasons we have difficulty with listening is that our minds work five to seven times faster than our mouths. Listening, however, is a skill that can be practiced and learned.

A large difference exists between "Listening to Respond" and "Listening to Understand". Our normal listening pattern (to respond) finds us impatiently waiting for the other person to finish so we can give our answer. Often it is obvious that we didn't understand their message. The preferred method of listening (to understand) calls for us to fully understand the other person's point of view before we respond. This sometimes requires additional questions and repeating the intended message to be sure it was understood. Steven Covey, in *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, said we should seek <u>first</u> to understand <u>before</u> being understood.

In order to improve our listening skills when involved in a conversation, we should consider the following:

- Show with non-verbal communication that you are engaged in the conversation and open to hearing.

- Recognize any prejudices you may have toward the speaker or subject and ask for clarification instead of making assumptions.

- Listen to understand underlying feelings the speaker may have. Notice how something is said as well as the actual words used.

- Do not interrupt. Think carefully before you speak. Get in the habit of pausing after the other person finishes speaking.

The Greek philosopher Zeno once said, "The reason that we have two ears and one mouth is that we may listen the more and talk the less." However, superb listening requires a mental discipline uncommonly found in most people. The challenge for all of us is to work on being better communicators by being better listeners.

CATS Shortcut (*Submitted by Marlene Coley*)

If you do a lot of purchasing for your unit, chances are you have multiple AD 700's to approve. Rather than pulling up each 700 and approving separately, you can approved them all from one location.

On the CATS opening screen, do the following:

- Click on "Requisition Approval"

- Select your CRIS

- All 700's that need approving will be displayed.

- Select the first 700 and either click on credit card or approved.

- If a credit card purchase, select the person that made the purchase and click OK.

- Click "set status"

- Select the next 700 and follow the same steps.

9 Steps to Get Organized for Financial Success! *(Submitted by Madeline Hall, Baton Rouge, LA)*

1) Filing system.

When it comes to getting organized, everything needs a place, a home, a spot. The basic filing cabinet is the best way to organize the paperwork.

The hanging files are the best. They're just easier to work with, easier to access.

Once you have a filing cabinet, and some hanging files, create a file for each bill and bank account, for example, mortgage/rent, electric, cable TV, water/sewer, checking account, savings account, etc. For credit cards, I name the file by the bank name and the last four digits of the card number, i.e., "Citibank 4323."

Lastly, create one more file called, "Bills Unpaid." This is the place to put all those annoying statements until you have time to write the checks.

2) Take care of the mail when it arrives.

Don't let the mail pile up! As soon as you bring in the daily stack of bills, go through each envelope immediately. I open every bill, throw away all the frivolous inserts, staple the statement to the bill-payment envelope, then place it in the Bills Unpaid file

Now, when you're ready to sit down and take care of the payments, all your bills will be in place and you won't have to go through each envelope before writing the check.

3) Use accounting software.

I know everyone reading this article right now has a computer. That means you should be using software to track your spending and organize your financial life. I have searchable records of every credit card charge and check that I've written in my entire life!

The best part is that I don't bounce checks. It's easy to balance your checking account using the computer. There's no adding, subtracting, etc. You just match the checks (and ATM withdrawals) with your bank statement, and everything should balance. If it doesn't, then you can quickly find the problem.

A word of caution: if you do use software, then you MUST back up that data! It won't take long for you to completely abandon those paper ledgers, but PLEASE make a back up EVERY

time you work on your bills!

Keep in mind that tracking alone won't solve money problems. For example, in 1995, I created a report for the year that detailed all my spending by category. I spent 18% of my income on the mortgage, 11% on groceries, 9% for utilities, 6% on federal tax, 6% on social security tax, 6% on property tax, 5% on medical.

4) Enter the transactions into the computer.

The software will not be helpful unless you enter the transactions. A strategy for accomplishing this is to put all credit card receipts in the Bills Unpaid file as soon as you get home from shopping. Then you can enter these transactions into the computer on the same day you pay bills.

It's your way to make sure you really did charge every item and write every check. It's the way to detect fraud and bank mistakes!

5) Pay bills on a specific day.

The one lesson I learned early on is that I didn't want to be tortured by dealing with bills every single day. That's why I put the bills in the Bills Unpaid file, and that's why I choose to pay bills once every two weeks--on pay day, always a good time, when I had the money.

Each transaction is carefully recorded in the computer. It's important that on this "bill pay day" everything matches. My billing statement matches what I have in the computer and all accounts balance. All check numbers line up so there are no missing checks.

6) Balance your checking account.

I've already mentioned this point, however I cannot stress it enough. Many people do not balance accounts, and it's very costly if you don't. The consequence: bouncing checks. The fees for this can be as high as $35 from your bank and $35 from the bank of the person who you wrote the check to.

7) Create a list of all bills and debts.

One sheet of paper listing all bills, debts, due dates, contact phone numbers, etc. is one of most powerful tools for financial success! I've included many of these worksheets in my best-selling book, Credit Card and Debt Management.

Each time you pay bills, be sure to update the list. I started out with a list on paper, then I moved to

using Excel. Now, because I have so many credit cards, I had to create an Access database to track that information.

8) Create a list of credit offers.

You know that "junk mail" from your credit cards? Well some of those low rate offers are actually VERY good! I always keep a list of current offers from all of my active credit card accounts. Usually, half of my credit card banks are offering me transfer deals with rates less than 5.99%! Some are even a true 0%!

I also keep a list of new credit card offers; however, I do prefer to take advantage of the offers from my current banks since I have a long history of doing business with them, giving me more bargaining power.

The key here is to create these lists. This way, if one of your current credit card banks raises their rate, you don't have to look very far to find a better deal!

9) Start a financial notebook.

I keep all my notes on the computer, but there was a time when I actually wrote in a book, how barbaric is that!

Whether by hand or in a computer, this is very important! You need to have detailed notes when you contact your credit card banks, checking bank, mortgage company, etc., because sometimes the phone reps don't make the proper notes in your account, and you'll need to reference your notes to keep all those banks in line.

Your financial notebook should include your strategies, for example, "Be sure to transfer the $2,000 balance from the Discover card to the Advanta 3.9% offer by 11/25." The beauty of keeping an organized notebook is that you can refer to your notes, which means you don't have to think about all the details all the time.

So there you have it. I have followed these steps for financial organization for years with incredible results. I've kept my interest costs down, I only have to deal with bills and payment one day every two weeks, I have corrected many bank errors, and I don't have to think about financial details on a moment-to-moment basis. *(By Scott Bilker)*

Stoneville Office Professionals Elect Officers *by Marlene Coley*

Stacye Harrison, Office Automation Assistant for the Southern Weed Science Research Unit was recently elected by the Stoneville Office Professionals as chairperson of the group. Stacye will organize meetings on a quarterly basis. "I am really looking forward to working with the group and hope to be helpful as chairperson. I am extremely eager to work with Donna to assist the group in moving forward." Stacye is married to Lee Harrison, Jr., and attended Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University. She has been with ARS for 2 years. She enjoys singing, swimming and working with the youth at her church.

Donna Signa, Office Automation Assistant in the Application & Production Technology Research Unit was elected as Co-chairperson. Donna will assist Stacye in meeting preparations and fill in when Stacye is not available. Donna enjoys tennis, catering, reading and monogramming. She is married to Frank Signa, Jr. and has 3 children, Frank, III – 17, Francine – 16, Severino (Seve) - 13 . Donna has been with APTRU for two years.

Stoneville Office Professionals Organize

The Stoneville Council of Office Professionals (SCOP) had an organizational meeting, June 20th, at the National Biological Control Laboratory facility. The group consists of approximately 23 members including summer temps.

The SCOP plans to meet quarterly and use the time as a training opportunity. Programs along with invited speakers will discuss topics pertinent to their jobs such as ARMPS, Travel, ARIS, and CRIS Projects.

Networking with other members will afford an opportunity to share tips and help newer employees understand the many processes that are involved in being an Office Professional.

The group plans to meet at different facilities on the Stoneville campus to form a closer bond between the different units.

 If you would like to organize a local office professional group in your area, contact any MSACOP member.

By Marlene Coley

Check Your Credit Cards (*Submitted by Alice Redditt, Stoneville, MS*)

A man at a local restaurant paid for his meal with his credit card. The bill for the meal came, he signed it, and the waitress folded the receipt and passed the credit card along. Usually, he would just take it and place it in his wallet or pocket. Funny enough though, he actually took a look at the card and, lo and behold, it was the expired card of another person. He called the waitress and she looked perplexed. She took it back, apologized, and hurried back to the counter under the watchful eye of the man. All the waitress did while walking to the counter was wave the wrong expired card to the counter cashier, and the counter cashier immediately looked down and took out the real card. No exchange of words --- nothing! She took it and came back to the man with an apology.

Verdict: DEVELOP THE HABIT OF CHECKING YOUR CREDIT CARD EACH TIME IT IS RETURNED TO YOU AFTER A TRANSACTION!

Whenever you are using your credit card, take caution and don't be careless. Notice who is standing near you and what they are doing when you use your card. Be aware of cell phones, many have a camera these days. When you are in a restaurant and the waiter/waitress brings your card and receipt for you to sign, make sure you scratch the number off. Some restaurants are using only the last four digits, but some still put the whole number on the receipt.

Telephone Etiquette *(Submitted by Telecia Burton, Oxford, MS)*

Answering Calls:

- Answer promptly (before the third ring if possible).

- Before picking up the receiver, discontinue any other conversation or activity such as chewing gum, typing, etc. that can be heard by the calling party.

- Speak clearly and distinctly in a pleasant tone of voice.

- Always identify yourself when you answer the phone: This is _____."

- Learn to listen actively and listen to others without interrupting.

- Use hold button when leaving the line so that the caller does not accidentally hear conversations being held nearby.

- When transferring a call, be sure to explain to the caller that you are doing so and where you are transferring them.

- Remember that you may be the first and only contact a person may have with your organization, and that first impression will stay with the caller long after the call is completed.

- If the caller has reached the wrong unit/department, be courteous. Sometimes they may have been transferred all over the organization with a simple question. If possible, attempt to find out where they should call/to whom they should speak. They will greatly appreciate it.

- When the called party is not in, the following responses should be used to protect the privacy of the office staff and to give a more tactful response:

Taking Messages:

- Be prepared with pen and message slip when you answer the telephone.

- When taking messages be sure to ask for:

- Caller's name (asking the caller for correct spelling)

- Caller's phone number and/or extension (including area code)

- Repeat the message to the caller.

- Be sure to fill in the date, time and your initials.

- Deliver the message promptly to the appropriate person.

Making Calls:

- When you call someone and they answer the phone, do not say "Who am I speaking with?" without first identifying yourself: "This is _____. To whom am I speaking?"

- Always know and state the purpose of the communication.

- When you reach a wrong number, don't argue with the person who answered the call or keep them on the line. Say: "I'm sorry, I must have the wrong number. Please excuse the interruption." And then hang up.

- If you told a person you would call at a certain time, call them as you promised. If you need to delay the conversation, call to postpone it, but do not make the other person wait around for your call.

- If you don't leave a number/message for someone to call you back, don't become angry if they are not available when you call again.

What You Mean:	Tell the Caller:
"He is out."	"He is not in the office at the moment. Would you like to leave a message?"
"I don't know where he is."	"He has stepped out of the office. Would you like to leave a message?"
"He hasn't come in yet."	"I expect him shortly. Would you like to leave a message?"
"She took the day off."	"She is out of the office for the day. Can someone else help you or would you like to leave a message?"
"He doesn't want to be disturbed"	"He is unavailable at the moment. Would you like to leave a message?"
"She is busy."	"She is unavailable at the moment. Would you like to leave a message?"

The theme of the Conference was **"Partnership for Success"** which included sharing information on how to support the ARS mission, learning ARS' vision for the future, networking with peers, and training sessions (conducted as breakout sessions).

Tuesday, May 9, 2006

We were welcomed by Dr. Steven R. Shafer, Director, Midwest Area (the Midwest Area was the host Area).

Dr. Edward B. Knipling, Administrator, shared with us the ARS vision and pointed out that office professionals are key to this vision and the mission of ARS.

Mr. James H. Bradley, Deputy Administrator for Administrative and Financial Management, and sponsor for the meeting, also welcomed us and reiterated the need for office professionals to be recognized as a fundamental part of the Agency.

Ms. Barbara King, EEO Specialist, Northern Plains Area, made a presentation on "America: Abundant Diversity" in such a way that we were inspired to really listen to all "groups" of people. People of different ethnic origins and backgrounds have different perspectives that only enrich the situation in a positive and broad way.

Ms. Suzie Humphreys (outside speaker) spoke on "Partnership for Success". Her basic theme was "I Can Do That". Through humorous life stories she inspired us to say "I Can Do That" rather than say no because of fear of failure, lack of experience, or qualifications.

Wednesday, May 10, 2006

Mr. Dave Carter, Director, Special Programs, Administrative and Financial Management, presented the following, "7 Habits: Building Trust and Relationships" which was based on the book "7 Habits of Highly Effective People" by Stephen R. Covey. The seven habits covered were: (1) Be Proactive, (2) Begin with the End in Mind, (3) Put First Things First, (4) Think Win/Win, (5) Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood, (6) Synergize, and (7) Sharpen the Saw. There was hand clapping to music and total audience participation with this presentation.

Dr. Deborah Brennan, Associate Director,

Mid South Area, gave a presentation on "The Art of Writing Your Performance Documentation" which was prepared by Diane Strub, Deputy Area Director for Business Management, Midwest Area. Dr. Brennan added her own special twist to the presentation which was a wonderful presentation. We were proud to have the Mid South Area represented in such a way. The following items were pointed out: (1) make sure your standards reflect what you do, (2) standards should be measurable (impact, quality and quantity), (3) keep a tickler file on accomplishments throughout the performance year, (4) write accomplishment documentation in such a way that shows initiative, (5) do not be modest, (6) tie your documentation to Mission, Strategic Plan, etc.

Ms. Nancy Hightshoe (outside speaker) presented the following, "Out of Harm's Way-Make Smart Safety Choices". She mentioned such things as (1) utilizing a P. O. Box rather than a physical address for mailing purposes, (2) when you have the "uh-oh" feeling, trust your instincts, (3) there is only a window of 20-30 seconds in an attack situation, (4) stay calm and be courageous, (5) visualize a safe outcome, and (6) during a hotel stay when you leave your room, leave the closet door open and partially fill the bathtub with water (this way if an intruder tries to hide in the bathtub, it has water in it, and if the closet door is closed when you return, someone may be hiding in the closet). These were just a few of the ideas presented to make us more aware of our surroundings.

Thursday, May 11, 2006

Dr. Adrianna Hewings, former Director, Midwest Area, started the day with the presentation "Getting Your Message Across". Dr. Hewings has been a long-time supporter of office professionals and their role as key personnel in the Agency. She imparted good advice on how to handle difficult situations in an office environment. Basically, there should be no talking about someone "behind his/her back". Deal with the problem directly, but in a respectful way.

Next on the agenda was Mr. Jeff

Schmitt, Program Specialist for the Cooperative Resolution Program for the REE Mission Area, making a presentation entitled "Our Positive Role". As the title suggests the purpose of the presentation was to "understand our positive influence and impact on the efficiency of our teams". We should appreciate differences in employees, create a relaxed environment, listen actively, ask open-ended questions, believe in yourself, be forgiving, support one another, and gain understanding and trust. The following was a very effective part of his presentation, CHANGE: C – Control; H – Handle Conflict; A – Attitude (80% of success is attitude, 20% aptitude); N – Now is the time to get out of your comfort zone; G – Get outside your comfort zone; E – Expect the Best.

Also, he asked that we remember that, "Leaders inspire/managers manage deadlines, etc."

Our Keynote Speaker was Ms. Traci Lynn (outside speaker). Her presentation was entitled "Attitude is Everything" which ties in with the above information (80% of success is attitude, 20% aptitude). Her presentation inspired and motivated a person to have the confidence to excel with a positive attitude and be an inspiration to others around you.

In addition to the above General Sessions the following Break-out Sessions were offered: AFM Overview, Web Page Design, Adobe Acrobat, Excel, PowerPoint, Public Speaking, Retirement, Writing and Proofreading Skills, Tips & Tricks (Computer).

Each attendee chose four (4) break-out sessions to attend. Compliments abounded from all of the sessions.

This Conference was a great motivational and networking opportunity available to ARS Office Professionals. This type of opportunity is available in very few organizations, and we are privileged to be among the elite. ARS definitely makes us feel like a major contributor to the organization.

(Submitted by: Linda Fulton, Mississippi State, MS)

Pictures submitted by Madeline Hall and Lucienne Savell

St. Louis, MO

MSA Representatives

NACOP
National Advisory Council for
Office Professionals

What we can
You
Your Un
Your Suppo
www.arsnet.usda.

USDA Agricultural Research Service

2006

More Pictures are available at 2006 Conference:

Mid South Area Council of Office Professionals

MSACOP

The **Mission** of the MSACOP is to provide a resource for the Area Director's Office and all levels of management for matters relating to office professionals.

The **Goal** of the Council is to enhance office professions through training, networking, mentoring, and recognition of office support employees. It is the desire of the Council to work with all levels of management to assure that office support staff are highly skilled and motivated professionals and to assure that the clerical and administrative needs of the Mid South Area and ARS are met.

New MSACOP Members Selected *by Marlene Coley*

Lynda Taylor, Program Support Asst. in the Biological Control of Pests Research Unit, Stoneville, MS, was selected from a number of applications to serve on the MSACOP. Lynda will serve a 3-year term and will be an asset to the council bringing 18 years of experience.

Lynda is married to Ronnie Taylor and has 3 children, Mandi Booker, Shana Dobbins and Brent. She enjoys studying the Bible, playing the piano, vacationing with her husband and family, spending time with the grandchildren, and cooking.

Lynda graduated from Rolling Fork High School and attended Mississippi Delta Junior College.

Also selected is Anne McGee, a Secretary (OA) for the Cotton Ginning Research

Unit at Stoneville, MS. Ann joined ARS in January, 2004.

Ann is married to Ralph McGee, II and has three children, Ralph, III, Lucy, and William.

Ann graduated from Washington School in Greenville and has attended Mississippi

Delta Community College and Delta State University.

Ann has worked for Delta Community Mental Health, North Sunflower county Hospital's Alcohol and Drug Unit, and the Greenville Arts Council.

Ann enjoys playing lots of tennis, making jewelry and reading.

The MSACOP welcomes Lynda and Ann and we look forward to working with them in the future.

"Welcome to the Weight Loss Hotline! If you need a new excuse for cheating on your diet, press 1. If you need a new excuse for skipping your workout, press 2…"

Submitted by Janell Becker