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2013

NEON, Winter 2013-2014

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**Special points of interest:**

- WIIFM—Looking for the reward?
- Report from Scholarship Winner
- Affiliate Reports
- 2013-14 Administrator of the Year

Winter Issue 2013-2014

## Message from the President

Greetings!

I am proud to say that NEOPA is off to a fast-paced and productive year. The NEOPA board has been busy addressing members' concerns and looking at ways to provide professional development and support to the educational office professionals in Nebraska.

Special thanks to our local affiliate UNOPA for all their hard work in making the Fall Workshop, "Charting a New Course with NEOPA" a tremendous success! If you were unable to attend the Fall Workshop, please keep **April 11, 2014** open on

your calendars as the members of NDE BRIDGE plan to bring more professional development your way with the NEOPA Spring Conference – *Turning the Page: What Will Your Next Chapter Be?*

**April 10, 2014** will also be a special time for NEOPA, as we celebrate our 50th Anniversary – the planning committee tells me there will be a tour of the Capitol and an anniversary banquet. There will be other special surprises as well. Stay tuned.

I would like to extend my congratulations to this



year's NEOPA Administrator of the Year, Dr. Candice Batton, Director of the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska at Omaha. Dr. Batton was nominated by Barbara Homer. We will forward Dr. Batton's application onto

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## WIIFM....looking for the reward? Carol Bom, CEOE, Nominating Director

Once again, in January 2014, the NEOPA Nominating Committee will begin making phone calls to encourage members to run for an elected office for 2014-2015. Not again, you say? Why is that? Perhaps it is because you have never considered the *many* benefits of serving as an elected officer for your association, whether state or local association.

Some benefits I have discovered as an elected officer include:

- ⇒ Strengthening relationships among peers
- ⇒ Developing a network of skilled professionals
- ⇒ Activating leadership skills
- ⇒ Learning about dealing with "difficult" people
- ⇒ Cultivating a love of

learning as I hear what others are reading/ learning

- ⇒ Admiring the strengths of others as I see them lead, grow and develop
- ⇒ Meeting some of the best people in our educational offices
- ⇒ What can you add to this list?

We will be looking for a President-elect, Vice President, and Secretary to serve on the NEOPA Board of Directors.

- ⇒ As NEOPA continues to search within to build our strategic plan and build our association, please look within yourself and let that inner person who

wants to grow, say "yes" when we call to invite you to serve as an elected officer.

- ⇒ Please contact me with any questions you may have regarding this opportunity. [Carol Bom](#)

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## President's Message Continued

NAEOP for consideration as the NAEOP Administrator of the Year.

Special recognition also goes out to: Jolene Palmer, Nebraska Department of Education, who was presented with an Honorary membership; Mary Guest, who was recognized as the recipient of the first NEOPA Member Scholarship for NAEOP Conference attendance; and 60 NEOPA members who were recognized for their PSP accomplishments.

In early January, watch for an email nomination letter with job descriptions of the officer positions. We will be looking for individuals to place their names on the ballot for President-elect, Vice President and Secretary. Please make Carol Bom, CEOE, Nominations

Director, and her committee's job easy – agree to place your name on the ballot. I have found my time in NEOPA very rewarding and I am glad I took the step outside the box.

Strategic Planning continues with an all day retreat, **Saturday, January 11, 2014**, at the Staybridge Suites in Lincoln. Jolene Palmer will help to facilitate the re-writing of the NEOPA Bylaws. If you would like to attend, please RSVP by **November 27**. YOUR voice is important.

ENGAGE . . . *people*  
ENRICH . . . *lives*  
EXPLORE . . . *ideas*  
EMPOWER . . . *professionals*

Lastly, I am pleased to announce an Ad-Hoc

committee will be meeting to develop a proposal to host the 2016 NAEOP Annual Conference and Institute in Nebraska. What does this mean to the NEOPA membership? You would be able to get a look at a National Conference right in your backyard – many are unable to travel to the conference but members hear us talking about our experiences!! Nebraska has the potential, we just need everyone on board.

I hope you are now re-energized and ready to move **NEOPA: Onward & Upward!!** As we close out 2013, please have a Joyous Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!

Gretchen Walker, CEOE  
2013-14 NEOPA President

ENGAGE . . . *People*  
ENRICH . . . *lives*  
EXPLORE . . . *ideas*  
EMPOWER . . .  
*professionals*

## Dr. Candice L. Batton named Administrator of the Year

At the NEOPA Fall Conference, Dr. Candice L. Batton was named 2014 Educational Administrator of the Year. Dr. Batton, Director of the multi-campus (UNO, UNL with a working agreement with the Kearney Campus) School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, serves as an Associate Instructor and Administrative Fellow for Academic and Student Affairs. Described as a true example of an exceptional leader, Dr. Batton has been instrumental in the development of online opportunities for students at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Despite budget constrictions, her department is ranked 18th in the country, due in no small part to Dr. Batton's leadership.

In addition, Dr. Batton serves in leadership roles in various professional organizations. These organizations include the Homicide Research Working Group, the American Society of Criminology, the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Justice, and the Citizen Police Advisory Board.

In her acceptance speech, Dr. Batton credited the people that she works with as the key to her success. Her nominator said, "You could not find a more supportive Administrator. She consistently demonstrates professionalism, fairness and courtesy to all levels of faculty,

staff, and students. Trustworthy and fair-minded, she is well-liked by everyone."

Nominated by Barbara Homer (UNOPA), Dr. Batton was given a plaque, a \$250.00 stipend, and a one-year membership to NEOPA.



Barbara Homer with her boss Dr. Candice L. Batton

## Fall 2013 Workshop

Submitted by: Jane Schneider

The new mission statement to provide Professional Development and Support for Educational Office Professionals was portrayed at every turn of events during the 2013 Fall Workshop. What a great way to start the day by being reminded that I was one of the lucky people to be part of such an important organization. Everyone needs support and that was certainly one of the things I got all day long and then carried with me after the workshop.

Jolene Palmer talked about being a leader, a drifter or a sinker. It was fun to be made aware that all of us can be all three things at certain times. It is also a helpful concept to think about the people in my office and try to understand them better. Not everyone likes to do things the same way and their abilities depend on their own personalities. Having that knowledge will help me look at them and myself in a new way.

We were treated to a talk by Brent Gaswick who gave a view of how people from different generations work. He said that it is possible to have four generations of people in the workplace. They are traditionalists, baby boomers, generation Xers, and Millennials. So, thinking about people between the ages of 20-70 getting along in the workplace means that we need to consider where we all "came from" in order to work well together.

At the "Retirement Planning with a Purpose" I learned some very helpful tips. I decided to go home and do a check of our insurance policies beneficiaries for our 401 retirement plans. Also decided to look into doing a will. We haven't done that yet but we are planning to get that underway – soon!

As always, one of the best times for me was to listen to Jan Deeds to get good ideas



about getting mentoring during "Taking the Mystery out of Mentoring." This is something that has been on my mind for a long time. Jan told us about her life and how mentoring affected her. I could have listened to her talk longer about her own experiences, just because she is so interesting and entertaining.

I heard several people complimenting Ranelle Maltas and the information from the PowerPoint session. Luckily, she had some extra handouts and I took one to see if I can make it work better for me. I couldn't fit that session in with all the others but having a handout will be helpful.

Heath Tuttle and Brad Severa had just as much fun as we did sharing fun mobile devices and apps during the session on "Social Media in the Workplace." You could tell

that their jobs, working with technology, is really not work to them--it is a pleasure. They answered our many questions about technology and they answered all our questions very well. The time spent with them went by so quickly, I think we could have used more time in that session. They offered to come back and do a session where we all bring our phones and get help using them.

It was really inspirational to celebrate the Administrator of Year Award with Barbara Homer and her boss Candice Batton. You could tell from the emotion from both of them during the lunch that Candice is truly a great boss and that Barbara is truly a great employee.

Some special celebrations took place. We celebrated the five members who completed the E-Series, the 60 members who received their PSP awards and renewals, and Mary Guest for receiving the first NEOPA Member Scholarship for NAEOP Conference Attendance.

I have the 2014 Spring Conference and 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on my calendar (April 10-11, 2014) I am very excited at the idea of hosting NAEOP in the summer of 2016. Wouldn't that be a great way to show everyone that we truly are an organization that provides professional development and support for educational office professionals? See you at the next conference!



**Jane was a recipient of the NEOPA Scholarship Award to be used for Professional Growth Opportunities**



## Wayne Educational Office Professional Association

Last year was a productive year for the Ladies of WEOPA! Each month we took a section of our constitution and reviewed it for correctness and relevance, and moved through the processes to change the areas that needed changing. It was tedious, but necessary; and resulted in a completely updated document that should guide us through the next decade or so!

One of the changes made was moving our membership year start and stop dates to coincide with NEOPA's. As a result of this action, our nominations and elections timelines had to be moved up as well. Once the process was

changed and approved, the nomination committee sprang into action. The 2013-2014 officers are: President, Tammy Meier; Vice President, Suzanne Penn, CEOE; Secretary, Denise Mostek; Treasurer, Carol Stephens; and Historian, Amanda Hank.

WEOPA started the semester off by welcoming the students back to campus with homemade cookies in the Hahn building and in the Library during the first week of classes. As always, they were well received! We have a



variety of programs scheduled for our monthly meetings this year and so far we've had: an update of our campus construction projects, by our Campus Project Manager; an overview of the growing/planting stages of our green spaces, by our Grounds & Arboretum Director; an update of the campus re-keying process, by our Campus Crime Prevention

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## Lincoln Public Schools Association of Educational Office Professionals

Our Community Networking Committee has provided several excellent ways for our membership to volunteer in our community. On October 10-11, members assisted the Foundation for Lincoln City Libraries Book Sale at Lancaster Event Center by stocking books on tables and tallying books for purchases. Members are also volunteering for The Book Box, an organization that collects and delivers books to put in the hands of elementary students in Lincoln. They are also promoting our members to contribute to the Toy Drive for the Center of People in Need.

We also have established a Mission Statement Ad Hoc Committee and are in the process of surveying our members on how they see LPSAOP



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## University of Nebraska Office Professionals Association

My theme for this year is "Stepping Up and Stepping Out...making UNL a friendlier place." Inspiration for this theme came from UNOPA's mission statement and speakers at a couple our monthly meetings. In many ways we were reminded that with all the changes in technology, it is up to staff to make UNL a friendlier place. We are quite often the face of our department. With some help from a little book titled, *Smile & Move: a reminder to happily serve* by Sam Parker I started a Smile & Move campaign with a monthly focus on each of the areas that are laid out in the book.

UNOPA had its second annual bunco social in July and we have many members involved in Secret Friends for the academic year. UNOPA's Career Development Committee has also been working hard at offering workshops and brown bag lunches that are relevant to our

Continues page 7

## Omaha Educational Office Professional Association



Like so many other local organizations in the country, OEOPA has struggled to rebuild waning memberships. In the past few years this topic has been in the forefront, even with some members literally wanting to throw in the towel. Had everyone listened, there would no longer be an OEOPA. That would be unfortunate as we will celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary soon!

Fortunately, with the determination of a few, we have turned a new leaf (so to speak). We created an adhoc committee naming it: Association Practices, to focus on membership needs and how we could renew our former partnership with administrators in our focus district. Our focus district is

Omaha Public Schools, but we have opened our membership options to include other educational institutions in our



metro area, by amending our constitution and bylaws. Not only have we opened up to the metro area, we are expanding membership options to all office professionals and not limiting the opportunity to be part of OEOPA to only the office personnel classification in our district. Anyone in the Omaha metro area need only contact: [jason.woods@ops.org](mailto:jason.woods@ops.org) to find out more information on joining OEOPA.

After much exploration into the state and national membership realms, we realized that there are so many other job classifications in our district we could be embracing. In fact, by early November we will vote on a proposal to expand membership options in this very way.

Our adhoc committee met with Human Resources and Staff Development administrators to renew our mentoring and professional development for office personnel and hope that we can do the same with other administrators for other



Continues page 7

## NDE Bridge Engages and Fund Raises

The NDE Bridge Engage Community has created two opportunities for NDE employees in the month of November and December designed to raise funds and build community.

The month of November creates an opportunity for us to reflect on things for which we are thankful. Building on that notion, Engage thought that the NDE staff would be thankful for the comfort of jeans in the middle of the workweek. With the

support of Deputy Commissioner Dr. Swisher, Engage set out to lead a simple fundraiser each Wednesday in

November to benefit the General and Member Scholarship Funds. NDE employees were quick to

show their gratitude for comfort, and we have already raised over \$300 in the first three weeks.

In December, BRIDGE is offering an opportunity to bring NDE families together to celebrate the holidays and create a special memory with a night at the movies. We

Things I am Thankful For...
1. Wearing jeans* on Wednesdays in November
2. Supporting NDE Bridge 50% to General Fund, 50% to Scholarship Fund
3. Encouraging my colleagues to continue their professional growth
4. Being part of the NDE Bridge Community More info: <a href="http://tinyurl.com/NDEBridge">http://tinyurl.com/NDEBridge</a>
5. Getting into the holiday spirit, in comfort
6. Working at NDE
Suggested donation to participate: \$3 per Wednesday or \$10 for the month Please give donations to Jackie Naber in Assessment
*Jeans should be business appropriate <small>This fundraiser is approved by the Commissioner's Office</small>

Continues page 7

WEOPA Report continued from page 4

Officer; and our annual Friendship Luncheon – Guest Day.

We are looking ahead to the November meeting, where we will tour Providence Medical Center's new Wellness Center addition and the December meeting, which will be our Christmas Luncheon. Every year, in our quest to be of service to the greater Wayne community, our group requests an anonymous family (families) from our local Haven House office and we purchase Christmas gifts for the family/families according to their needs/wants list. This year we have a mom and six kids under the age of 10. It is a relatively small, but important, thing we like to do to help make someone else's otherwise bleak Christmas a little happier.

We hope your semester is running along smoothly and that everyone has a happy holiday season and a fantastic start to 2014!

Submitted by Suzanne Penn

Vice President, WEOPA & NEON Correspondent

LPS Report continued from page 4

and where they want our association to go in the future. Along with this process, we will also be creating a new logo.

LPSAOP has been busy this fall, beginning with our membership drive in July. We currently have 207 active members.

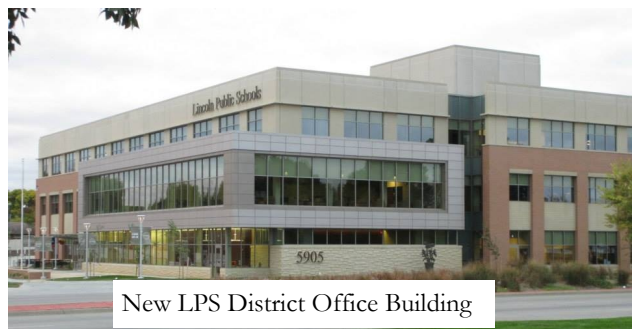
On September 24, our Fall Get-Together was held at Randolph School. Our guest speaker Danielle Herzog, a writer and blogger, provided a very humorous and informative aspect of juggling a career and family while trying to remain sane. Those in attendance enjoyed her presentation as well as the fun ice breakers, fellowship and fantastic food from Valentino's. Those in attendance received PSP credit for 1.5 clock hours.

In October, we had 25 members attend the NEOPA Fall Workshop sponsored by UNOPA. The day-long workshop had outstanding speakers and breakout sessions where those attending definitely gained valuable staff development for continued professional growth and earned 8.5 clock hours toward PSP certification.

We currently have 75+ members that have their PSP Certification. Our PSP Committee held four PSP workshops in October and November with over 30 members attending one of the workshops. There are 18 members currently working on their certification and three members just received their PSP Certification; two Bachelors level and one Advanced III.

Our Community Networking Committee has provided several excellent ways for our membership to volunteer in our community. On October 10-11, members assisted the Foundation for Lincoln City Libraries Book Sale at Lancaster Event Center by stocking books on tables and tallying books for purchases. Members are also volunteering for The Book Box, an organization that collects and delivers books to put in the hands of elementary students in Lincoln. They are also promoting our members to contribute to the Toy Drive for the Center of People in Need.

LPSAOP members have had many opportunities to be involved on all three levels....local, state and national. It has been very exciting to be a part of LPSAOP and help build our association for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



Submitted by:

Susie Ahlberg, CEOE, LPSAOP President



UNOPA Report continued from page 4

members. We just recently had a Brown Bag lunch with a couple of students and one of the directors involved with a new Center for Civic Engagement on campus. It was wonderful to hear students being excited about being involved beyond the classroom and giving back to the community.

We are currently wrapping up our annual Giving Tree project. This year the People's City Mission was selected as our recipient. The response from UNOPA has been overwhelming. I am looking forward to being part of the team that will deliver the many, many items we've collected to help improve the holidays for so many who are experiencing difficulties in their lives right now.

Best Wishes for a wonderful Holiday Season and a very Happy New Year!

Submitted by  
Mary Klucas, 2013-14 UNOPA President

OEOPA Report continued from page 5

classifications of jobs in OPS as they become involved with OEOPA. We continue to communicate with each other on next steps.

Not only is OEOPA working toward relationship renewals, but we continue to strive toward bigger and better opportunities for our student scholarship winners and then try to plan a blessed holiday season for a less fortunate family each year. As we do these worthwhile activities, we build strong ties with each other in realization that what we do, really does matter to someone special!

All year long we conduct fundraising activities to raise the scholarship funds for graduating high school student(s). This is awarded at our annual Breakfast for Bosses in the spring.

Generous donations solicited from the staff of the OPS District are the key foundation to support a needy family every year during the winter holidays. We find it amazing every year the generosity displayed in our community.

A couple years ago, standing rules were written to extend the education stipend opportunity for our members and simply by being active, supportive members, they can reap benefits. This only seems a fit opportunity for any individuals who can dedicate their intentions toward bringing out the best in others!

Submitted by  
Kitty Slezak, OEOPA Publicity Director

NDE Bridge continued from page 5

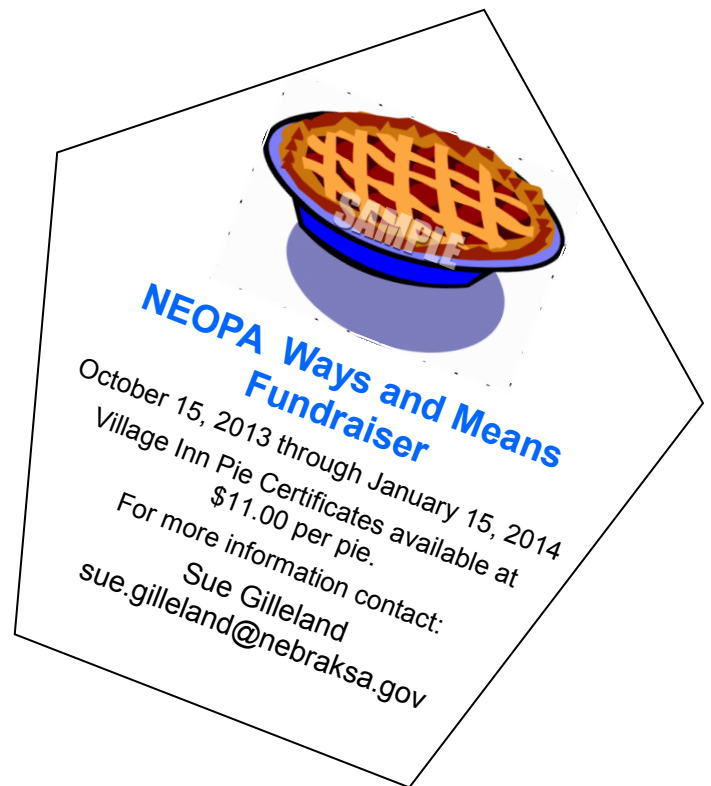
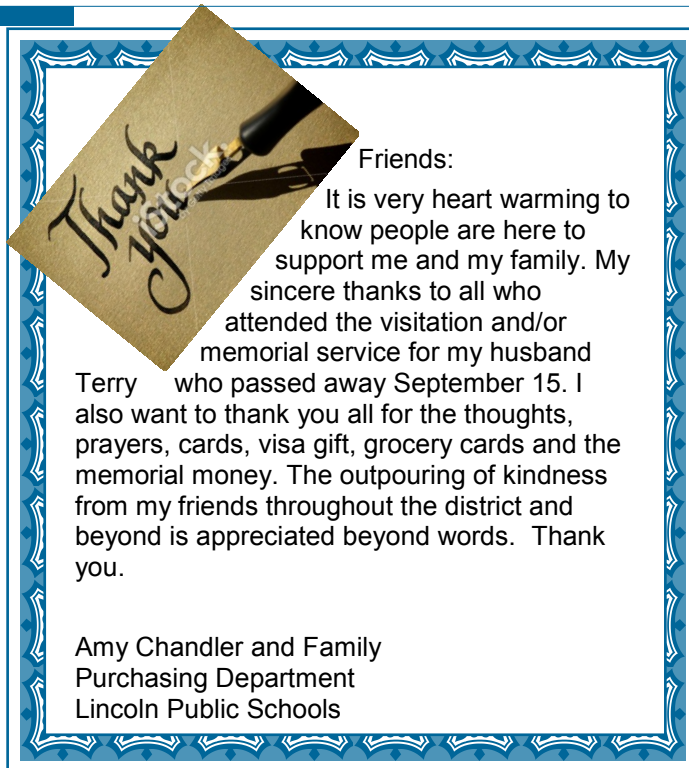
will be enjoying the new holiday classic, The Polar Express, at Lincoln's Joyo Theater, on Friday, December 13.

We are offering tickets at family-friendly prices, as well as Polar Express Kids Packs, that are sure to draw NDE employees and their families for a wonderful community-building event outside of the workplace. We even encourage everyone to wear their PJs! Like the jeans fundraiser, this event will benefit the General and Member Scholarship Funds. Engage is excited to have everyone join the fun...on the Polar Express!

Submitted by  
Kristina Peters







## NEOPA POLO SHIRTS \$20



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Association: \_\_\_\_\_

SIZE:      **M**      **L**      **XL**      **XXL**      **XXXL**      **XXXXL**

Date Ordered: \_\_\_\_\_

Paid by: \_\_\_\_\_ Cash

Date Order Filled: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Check \_\_\_\_\_ Number

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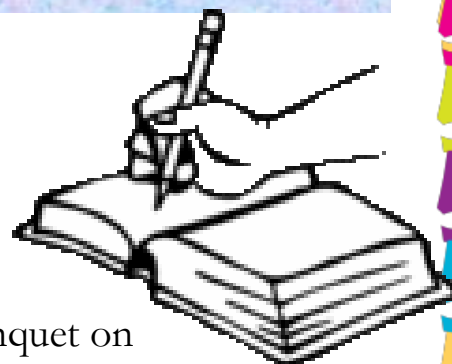
Nebraska  
Educational Office  
Professionals

Merry  
Christmas  
to All and  
may your  
New Year  
be prosperous.



NEOPA TURNS 50 IN  
2014  
JOIN US AT THE  
SPRING CONFERENCE  
APRIL 10-11, 2014

“Turning the Page:  
What Will your Next  
Chapter Be?”



50th Celebration will begin with a Banquet on  
Thursday night hosted by the NEOPA Past Presidents

