

1999 ANNUAL REPORT

The Northern Plains Area Secretarial Council (NPASAC) consists of the following members:

Kathleen Aragon, Laramie, Wyoming
Louise Dalton, Fort Collins, Colorado - Chair
Sandy Mathewson, Manhattan, Kansas
Sharon Peterson, Grand Forks, North Dakota - Recorder
Jan Preston, Lincoln, Nebraska
Olga Lee, Fort Collins, Colorado - Technical Advisor

At the end of this year, there will be changes in the membership according to the charter.

Accomplishments

- Continually provided mentoring, orientation, and basic in-house training for all newly hired secretaries and refreshers for those already on board. The new secretaries who received orientation training were very positive with their comments on the value of such training not only to become familiar with the people they will be in contact with, but also to gain an overview of the workings of an Area Office. More of the same is being done through the Colorado-Wyoming Secretaries Meetings at the Ft. Collins location. Other locations in the NPA have been encouraged to form similar type groups in order to disseminate information and share work related issues that would benefit all. Through this group, it proved possible to request changes in procedures to make everyone's jobs a little easier. Members of the group developed a guidebook called "RMIS for Dummies" that was distributed at the NPA Leadership Meeting in January, 1999 and has proved to be very useful, since it was developed by the users themselves.
- Through our Technical Advisor and NSAC member, Olga Lee, we continue to provide support to the NSAC and also receive support from them.
- Promote programs in support of professionalism in the secretarial field. Five secretaries from the Ft. Collins location recently attended an Administrative Assistants Conference. At the next CO-WY Secretaries Meeting, information gained from this seminar will be critiqued for the others and either recommended or not recommended. Other training sessions have been recommended, i.e., the Franklin Time Management Training, which several of the secretaries have attended, are now using the planner, and depend on the system.
- The NPASAC met November 3-4, 1998 in Ft. Collins, CO, mainly to work on the draft of the NPA Quick Reference Guide. A good bit of planning had already taken place by e-mail and conference calls and this was a working meeting to finalize the handbook. The goal of the Council was to have the handbook geared to NPA's needs and completed and ready for distribution during the NPA Leadership Meeting scheduled for January 1999. One more conference call was planned to go over each chapter before sending the book to the printer. All this was completed in time for the Leadership Meeting. The guide was a big success and is now being used as a reliable reference. Council members received an award for their contributions to the development of the Guide.

- Periodically, we have been asking for feedback on the value of the Council's efforts and all responses have been positive. Requests have been made to us that now that a guidebook has been developed, to please keep it up to date so that it does not lose its value. All in all, the feedback indicates that secretaries do have it a little better for our efforts and now have a more open line of communication with peers through networking, the use of the resource assistants list we developed during the past year, and the two guidebooks developed and distributed at the NPA Leadership Meeting.

Goals

- Continue to provide mentoring, orientation, and basic in-house training for all newly hired secretaries in addition to refresher sessions for those already on board. Refresher sessions will be organized and presented on specific subjects that come up once a year, i.e., ARMPS, or on the RMIS system which is ongoing.
- Continue to provide assistance to the National Secretarial Advisory Council.
- Promote programs in support of professionalism in the secretarial field.
- Identify and provide outside training courses of particular value to secretaries and continue to encourage networking with peers.
- Review the newly developed NPA Quick Reference Guide and issue additions and revisions on a periodic basis.
- Continue to set realistic goals agreed on by the members and rely on feedback for furthering the goals.
- Identify a replacement for Olga Lee as the NSAC Technical Advisor.
- Identify replacements for two NPASAC members rotating off the council.