If you have not already done so, I encourage you to take a look at the December issue of The County Agent magazine. It has a full listing of the awards and professional improvement opportunities available at this year's national AM/PIC in Mobile, AL.

Everyone around the state is doing great programming and I encourage you to submit your work for an NACAA award.

Giving a presentation or presenting a poster at the meeting is not only a great experience, but also can be a good addition to your VITA to assist with your NTT application.

Full application and submission details can be found in the December issue or online at http://www.nacaa.com/. The application deadline is MARCH 15 so don’t delay!

One of the great traditions of MAEP is our annual Explore Missouri summer meeting. This meeting is hosted by the immediate past president of the association and provides an opportunity for them to showcase some of the unique agricultural operations and enterprises happening in their back yard.

As past president, Kevin Hansen is hosting this year's meeting and will be showcasing locations in the Chillicothe area.

The 2014 Explore Missouri will be held on June 12-13. Since this is such a great professional development opportunity, we have again gotten the event listed as an ISE to help defray the expenses. Our thanks to Dave Baker for approving this as an ISE.

Details on actual location, lodging and what attractions we will be visiting will be forthcoming. In the meantime, mark your calendars!
One of the opportunities afforded the chairman of MAEP is to attend the winter JCEP meeting. The title of this year's meeting was **Empowering Leaders for the Next Century**.

The meeting provided an excellent opportunity to not only develop my leadership skills, but also to network with other extension professionals from around the country.

The keynote speaker was David Mitchell, who provided a very informative presentation on the importance of understanding people. He provided several very good examples of different personality styles and how to identify these individuals. A good understanding of people can improve your leadership as it allows you to better work with diverse groups.

All of the associations held business meetings during the conference. One of the topics discussed during the NACAA meeting was the need for everyone to adhere to the submission guidelines for awards and presentations at the upcoming AM/PIC. Unlike previous years, if items submitted do not meet the guidelines, they will not be considered for an award or for presentation. So please read the directions carefully so your submission is not excluded.

Another topic involved membership recruitment. Several different methods were discussed including a tri-fold talking about the benefit of membership that can be distributed to prospective members as well as a new faculty mentoring program. The executive committee will be discussing these as well as other recruitment methods during our upcoming conference call.

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**JCEP Winter Meeting**

During the Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) winter meeting in February, the JCEP Board decided to forego a fifth Galaxy Conference in 2018.

The JCEP Board voted unanimously to create an exploratory committee to propose alternatives for a future Cooperative Extension System-wide conference.