



# NEBRASCOE NEWS

Nebraska Association of FSA County Office Employees **March 2017**

## NASCOE Myths: Debunked A Message From Your President-Jessi Colgrove

The NEBRASCOE Board of Directors has been working to debunk some of the more common myths about NASCOE membership. In the last issue of the NEBRASCOE newsletter I discussed “but I don’t want my membership dues to pay for you to go on trips”. This time, we will focus on “something happened that upset me”. It seems that there are two different ways that members can get sideways with NASCOE...either the board makes a decision that members disagree with, or something adverse happens that is out of NASCOE’s control.

As a board, we aren’t infallible. We are only human and we try to do our best but sometimes we can miss the mark. Unfortunately, these errors can cause members to drop their membership...sometimes to prove a point, or sometimes because the decision we made really goes against someone’s belief system. Here’s the thing though, you need to let us know and give us a chance to make it right. As a member, it is your responsibility to give feedback to your elected representatives and we are only as good as the response we get from membership. Help make us better! A member should never feel like the only way to express their disagreement is to cancel their membership.

Several years ago, Nebraska closed offices and enacted a reduction in force (RIF). Understandably, this was extremely upsetting to everyone involved. NASCOE fought for our members because that’s what we do. Our voices and opinions were heard but we were unable to stop these actions. Negative things are sometimes going to happen to FSA employees, but isn’t that all the more reason to belong to the association that looks out for your best interests? Dropping your membership because something bad happened is like refusing to ever ride in a car after you’ve been in an accident. The car’s safety features may have worked to protect you from harm but the accident happened anyway. As an association, we can’t fix everything but that doesn’t mean that we won’t try.

As we head into the uncertainty associated with a new Presidential administration, we need support from our members now more than ever. Can you imagine the impact we would have at the state level if we could tell our new  
(continued on page 4)

**NEBRASCOE Mission**  
NEBRASCOE strives to maintain and improve the confidence, esteem and respect of the public for FSA Committee Employees. NEBRASCOE employees are dedicated to providing outstanding service to the farmers of this great state.

### Officers

President-Jessi Colgrove  
Vice President-Ann Kurpgeweit  
Secretary-Lisa Wiese  
Treasurer-Shanna Waterman

### Board Members

- District 1: Jessi Colgrove  
Amy Vitosh
- District 2: Joni Johnson  
Mona Fassler
- District 3: Shanna Waterman  
Lisa Wiese
- District 4: Mel Campbell  
Niki Dittmer
- District 5: Linda Robb  
Anne Kelley
- District 6: Sandy Orr  
Heather Amateis
- District 7: Shawna Mitchell  
Ann Kurpgeweit

<http://www.nebrascoe.com>  
<https://nascoe.org>

Email: [nebrascoe@yahoo.com](mailto:nebrascoe@yahoo.com)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

2017 NW Area Rally  
April 27-29, 2017  
Lincoln, NE

2017 NASCOE Convention  
August 2-5, 2017  
St. Charles, MO

# Follow NEBRASCOE on Facebook and On-Line

By Joni Johnson,  
Membership Chairperson



NEBRASCOE has two ways for employees to catch up on association news and information.

Go to our website at: [www.nebrascoe.com](http://www.nebrascoe.com) for information about scholarships, rallies and conventions and to order FSA apparel and cookbooks and read our member association meeting minutes and newsletters. For reminders and updates, follow [NEBRASCOE](#) on Facebook. Both the website and Facebook pages are interactive and monitored, so questions and concerns will be received and addressed as soon as possible. For more information on the website or Facebook page, contact [joni.johnson@ne.usda.gov](mailto:joni.johnson@ne.usda.gov).



## 2017 NEBRASCOE Scholarship Recipients



**Coleman Forst**  
Kansas State University

My name is Coleman Forst and I am a Junior from Marysville, Kansas studying Agricultural Economics and Finance at Kansas State University.

My parents are Jerry (PT in Gage County) and Theresa Forst. This summer I will be interning for Lansing Trade Group in Overland Park, KS, as a Grain Merchandising intern. After graduation I would like to be a Grain Merchandiser.

**Tanner Jared Ourada**  
University of Nebraska, Lincoln

I am a senior at Fillmore Central High School, Geneva, NE. My parents are Marla Ourada, PT Fillmore County, and Steven Ourada. Over my high school years I have been active in Basketball, Golf, Football, Mock Trial, Quiz Bowl, and a member of the Principals honor roll. I will be attending the University of Nebraska, Lincoln in the fall 2017 and study pre-health. After receiving my degree, I plan to continue my education yet again and ultimately become an orthopedic surgeon and then return to my hometown of Geneva.



**Tigh Renken**  
Fort Scott Community College

My name is Tigh Renken and I am from rural Bertrand, Nebraska. My parents are Richard and Annette Renken (PT in Buffalo/Sherman County). I have been very involved in 4-H and FFA Activities over the years and I enjoy raising and showing livestock. I plan to attend Fort Scott Community in Fort Scott, Kansas this coming fall. While at Fort Scott I will compete on the Collegiate Livestock Judging Team and study Agriculture with an emphasis in Animal

Science. Upon graduation from Fort Scott Community College I plan to transfer to the University of Nebraska – Lincoln and complete my Bachelor of Science Degree in Animal Science with an emphasis in Livestock Genetics. While at UNL I hope to be a member of the Collegiate Livestock Judging Team as well. After graduation from UNL I hope to pursue a Masters Degree in Animal Science. Thank you for allowing me to receive a scholarship. I truly appreciate you helping me to reach my educational goals.

# NEBRASCOE Member Spotlight

## Tracy Gaston: New COT + New FSA Friends = A Great Experience

Hello! My name is Tracy Gaston, and I am just finishing up my final days as a County Operations Trainee (COT). This past year has been full of learning new things, meeting new people, and traveling to new places. It has been a combination of “a whirlwind tour” and “slow and steady wins the race.” After all that training, I am excited that I will be the new CED in Boone County starting February 21<sup>st</sup>.

I am originally from Fullerton, but I was living in Indiana when I first became a permanent FSA PT. I had been a temp long ago in my home county, but my husband and I had moved around quite a bit with jobs and school since then. As a PT in Indiana, my programs were Conservation and Compliance (they use different terms there), along with Recons, some GIS and some MALs. I was a PT for about a year and a half before my husband and I decided we wanted to move back to Nebraska, and I decided to pursue a position in the COT program.

After going through COT orientation at the State Office, I was sure glad I had been a PT before! I can’t imagine trying to take everything in as someone brand new to the agency. Not only are there a ton of handbooks to read, but also there are all the acronyms! Thankfully, each COT is matched with a mentor CED to help them through the process. What a relief! My mentor Teresa is an awesome person, and I’m so thankful to have her in my corner.

I had been in the COT program for a couple months before I realized that all the knowledge and experience I was gaining was really only the surface benefit—the biggest benefits of all were the people I had been meeting! FSA is a family—this was something I saw while I was a PT in Indiana, and it was definitely reinforced when I traveled Nebraska as a COT. Everyone wants to help you, just as they want to help the producer. We all really do work together, which is an amazing feeling.

All these new connections have been the best part of my COT training. However, I definitely learned A LOT about FSA programs too. COTs get to devote time to sitting down and reading the handbooks, which most FSA employees might not have the chance to do. As a COT you also really get a chance to interact with experts in the field and in the State Office, and maximize the experience. You get to see the Nebraska FSA team in action from county to county, and see all the different ways we can accomplish the same goals.

Everywhere you go, FSA is a great place to work. I have a great appreciation for not only the positive attitudes I encounter here, but also the great benefits we have available as FSA employees. Many of these benefits would not be available to us if it were not for NASCOE. It’s very comforting to me that we have such wonderful people representing us and fighting for our rights at higher levels. They are an important part of our FSA family, and I am thankful for the work they do.

And I am thankful for all the work that YOU do! I am so lucky to be a part of this agency, and I hope to make the next phase of my FSA career a positive experience. With so many fantastic people to work with, it’s sure to be a success!

*“Coming together is a beginning.  
Keeping together is progress.  
Working together is success.”*

*- Henry Ford*

# NASCOE Myths: Debunked

(continued from page 1)

SED that 100% of county office employees are members? That's HUGE! When the association spoke, the state office would listen. Similarly, we can have the same impact at the national level! With NEBRASCOE membership levels hovering around 65% it is difficult for us to have the kind of impact that we need in order to negotiate for what we want.

If you have never been a member, please consider joining us. Dues are inexpensive and adding your voice to ours will strengthen our numbers and our impact. If you are a lapsed member, I ask you to give serious thought to re-joining NASCOE. If you are unhappy about the way things have been run, contact me. I would be happy to visit with you and address your concerns. This change in administration is a critical time for our association and for FSA employees...help us protect our jobs and benefits!



<http://mascoe.org/2017NASCOEConvention.htm>

## NEBRASCOE NAFEC News

NAFEC is excited to announce Lisa Reinick from Haigler, NE as Nebraska's 2<sup>nd</sup> NAFEC Director. Lisa and Jim Densberger of Raymond, NE are appointed to support NAFEC in Nebraska by disseminating information from the NAFEC Board on key issues affecting the COC system. Any COC member is welcome to contact Lisa or Jim on questions their COC may have. Their contact information is as follows:



Jim Densberger  
402-783-2563  
[densbergerfarms@aol.com](mailto:densbergerfarms@aol.com)

Lisa Reinick  
308-297-3687  
[jlreinick@bwtelcom.net](mailto:jlreinick@bwtelcom.net)

NAFEC and JM Marketing have also announced their 2017 Scholarship. This is a \$1,000 scholarship for current or past COC member and paying full dues as a regular member of NAFEC and have a child, grandchild or great grandchild that has graduated from high school and is enrolled, or in the process of enrolling into an accredited college, university, or trade school this fall. The deadline to submit the NAFEC Scholarship application is June 23, 2017. Further information can be found at

<http://fsacountycommittees.org/newsletters-announcements/>.

Please support NAFEC by becoming a regular or associate member, your voice counts!

**Respectfully submitted,**

*Greg Chewakin*  
NEBRASCOE NAFEC Chair  
402-580-1399  
[gchewakin@gmail.com](mailto:gchewakin@gmail.com)



# ATTENTION: NWA Rally First Timers

Register now to enter your name into a drawing to WIN a \$500 scholarship to help offset the costs of attending the NWA Rally in Lincoln, NE this April 27-29, 2017!

The Winner MUST:

1. Be a NASCOE Member from the Northwest Area and a first time attendee to an Area Rally
2. Attend ALL meetings and designated evening function
3. Register by April 1st

To enter, all the contestant needs to do is register by April 1st and indicate on the registration form that they are a "FIRST TIMER". If you are a first timer and have already registered please email Jessi Colgrove to have your name entered. Once all of the registrations are submitted, they will be verified by the State Presidents and a random drawing will then take place. The winner will be notified prior to the rally that they have won.

\$500 cannot exceed actual expenses.



## What Has NASCOE Done For Me Lately?

By Raela Brandt, NEBRASCOE Past President

At times it can be hard to see what NASCOE is doing for the employees. A lot of work goes on behind the scene and it starts with building relationships with those in leadership positions in the National Office. NASCOE is a respected employee group in Washington D.C and members of leadership are coming to NASCOE with greater frequency for their opinion or insight on upcoming changes or program enhancements.

The following is a list of some of the NASCOE "Successes" over the last couple of years.

- Return of Time off Awards and Cash Awards
- Expansion of Key PT's to one per district for those states willing to embrace the opportunity
- Returning GovDelivery back into the hands of the County Offices to be able to make decisions when key outreach should take place
- NASCOE chosen members are on more task forces than ever before and more PT's than ever
- Building strong relationships with management quickly to address the needs of our members
- Building relationships with the ACRSI team to input and monitor the future of acreage reporting
- A legislative agenda that was effective in procuring and protecting CO staffing dollars above all other concerns
- Having an effective NAFEC committee in place to support the only thing that makes FSA different than any other government agency, the County Committee system
- Planning and implementing a NASCOE budget that has our organization in the black with restored monetary reserves to battle what might come our way

Reduction in PAC banking fees from a high of \$4855 per year in 2013 to a low of \$1661 projected for 2015 which leaves more funds to help candidates in the PAC Members on the National Board are dedicated to working for YOU and they spend a lot of personal time working toward their objectives. The next time you are wondering what NASCOE is doing, you can remember this list and know the board is always striving for progress!

# NASCOE Pre-Negotiation Meeting

NWA Report, January 14-15, 2017  
Washington, DC

There is no doubt about it, this is a time of change...we can either embrace the change or fight it - either way, it is happening. The Pre-Negotiation session in Washington, DC gave me the renewed energy and hope that even though change is coming we are well equipped to handle it.

We had a very informative and productive Pre-Negotiation session and I feel the issues we will be taking to DC this spring are valid and will be well received by management. It is great to watch the negotiation process and see how dedicated the NASCOE Negotiation Team and Executive Committee works tirelessly on behalf of the membership.

In addition to reviewing negotiation items we were briefed by Hunter Moorhead, NASCOE's Legislative consultant, on what we may expect in the very near future – one of which included the naming of Sonny Purdue as our Secretary of Ag. Some priorities of the incoming administration will be Obama Care, Tax Reform, Trade, & Regulatory Reform (EPA & others). As for the Farm Bill, there may be too many issues right now for it to rise to the top – if they were to reopen and start tweaking, there may be nowhere to stop.

We were also presented with a Bridges demonstration from Salesforce, the company that developed the software. It appears to be a very user friendly environment and should make assisting our producers and other customers an easier process. It will also offer a better way to track our interactions with customers and offer a more efficient way of delivering a Receipt for Service. We were exposed to the potential functionalities of the program and where it could eventually take us, it looks very promising.

Val Dolcini and Greg Diephouse both came by and offered their good byes to the group. We have built a great relationship with both gentlemen over the years and they will be deeply missed. We offered them the greatest of luck in their future endeavors, and who knows...we may be seeing them again someday.

Communication is still a main focus in the NWA. We have issued one bulletin this year and our second issue will be published next month. I want to thank everyone that contribute to this publication, it is written for our area by our area and I am grateful for everyone that made, and continues to make, it happen.

Membership is also a main focus. We are gearing up for a membership drive in Montana sometime in March and we will also be doing some work with Oregon to help re-establish both their associations. Members

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## From the NEBRASCOE Cookbook

### Chocolate Caramel Cheesecake

#### Crust

- 2 Cups Graham Cracker Crumbs
- 6 T. Butter

#### Filling

- 14 oz. bag Kraft caramels
- 5 oz. can evaporated milk
- 1/2 - 1 Cup pecans
- 16 oz. Philadelphia cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 Cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 Cup Baker's semisweet chocolate, melted
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla

**Directions for crust:** melt butter and mix with graham cracker crumbs. Press into a buttered springform pan and bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Microwave caramels and evaporated milk until melted. Pour over crust and top with pecans. Mix all other ingredients in mixer until smooth. Pour into springform pan and bake 45 minutes at 350 degrees. Garnish with whipped cream drops around the edge and center, shaved chocolate and mini Hershey bars.

Submitted by Teri Moss, Perkins County

If you would like to purchase a NEBRASCOE Cookbook please contact your District NEBRASCOE Rep!

# FSA Offices Have Long-standing NASCOE Support

By Joni Johnson

Since its formation in 1959, many FSA employees have supported the National Association for County Office Employees (NASCOE) through their state associations. This is very true in Nebraska as well. Many Nebraska FSA employees have been career-long members of Nebraska's state association, NEBRASCOE. During the year, NEBRASCOE recognizes it's members who have 100% continuous NASCOE/NEBRASCOE membership at the time of their retirement with Honorary Lifetime NASCOE Membership certificates and member cards.

NEBRASCOE also recognizes offices that have long-time 100% continuous membership. A review of member records At last year's State Convention, several offices received plaques in recognition for 20 or more years of 100% continuous office membership including:

20 Years: Adams County

25 Years: Gage County and Thurston County

30 Years: Cuming County(33), Dixon-Dakota County(33), Dodge County, Lancaster County (33), Merrick County (33) and Pierce County (33).

Nebraska has several offices who have 100% continuous membership for 10 to 15 years and are working toward the 20-year mark.

Congratulations to the employees in these offices and thank you for your continued support of our employee association.

NEBRASCOE/NASCOE also recognizes individual members for lifetime membership with an Honorary Lifetime NASCOE membership certificate and lifetime member card. It is quite an accomplishment to be a NASCOE member throughout your FSA career. In 2016, a review of member records showed that some retirees who did have lifelong membership did not receive recognition at the time of their retirement. These NASCOE members were recognized along with those retiring in 2016.

In the past year, NEBRASCOE has recognized the following retired FSA employees for their lifetime NASCOE membership and presented them with Honorary Lifetime Membership certificates and member cards: Peggy Haussermann (Franklin Co), Donald Kampschneider (Cuming Co), Rosellen Keller (Holt-Boyd Co), Gail Mach (Pawnee Co), Barbara Malina (Saunders Co), Sharleen Marik (Dodge Co), Robert Nagel (Kimball Co), Kathy Peters (Johnson Co), Joanne Petersen (Stanton Co), Teresa Post (Webster Co), Andrea Rickert (Sarpy/Douglas Co), Juliet Rutt (Adams Co), Doris Schaaf (Holt-Boyd Co), Lynette Soden (Hamilton Co), Larry Steinbrecher (Morrill Co), Sherry Stubbendeck (Otoe Co), Betty Teten (Otoe Co), Steve Tomasek (Dawson Co) and Wendy Wait (Polk Co). At this time, there are several employees who retired in late 2016 who have Lifetime Membership requests awaiting review at the NASCOE level. Those Honorary Lifetime members will be recognized in the next newsletter.

Congratulations to all of those who were recognized for their outstanding support of NASCOE during their careers!!



# NASCOE Pre-Negotiation Meeting

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are what we are about; every member needs to know they are valued and that there is value in the Association.

The NWA Rally details are being finalized for April 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> and the Nebraska State Association has a great Rally planned for us. I want to compliment the entire NEBRASCOE group for their hard work on getting this put together. We plan to have a great meeting and a fun time in Lincoln, Nebraska! Please plan on joining us, as all tracks lead to Lincoln!!

Respectfully submitted,

Jenae Prescott  
NWA Executive

## NWA Rally T-Shirt Design



## Legislative Update March 1, 2017

- House and Senate Ag Committees beginning Farm Bill reauthorization hearings – will continue throughout the spring and summer
- House and Senate Appropriations Committees working to finalize fiscal year 2017 bills – deadline set for April 28
- Fiscal year 2018 Trump budget proposal being reviewed by agencies – no deadline for submission to the Congress
- Congress focused on repeal and replace of Obamacare
- Government wide hiring freeze is causing confusion – Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will provide further guidance within 90 days
- Governor Perdue likely to be confirmed by the end of March – requires Senate Ag Committee hearing and full Senate approval
- USDA officials reviewing options for reducing burdensome regulations via Executive actions *one option is set up task force to identify burdensome regulations, they will be asked to eliminate two regulations for every new one enacted.*
- USDA officials considering agency consolidation and shuffling of the current USDA organizational structure

These updates are from Hunter Moorehead NASCOE Legislative Consultant. The NASCOE Legislative team is staying focused on all issues impacting our jobs. The PAC continues to be NASCOE “muscle” working to protect our jobs.

Linda Robb  
NWA Legislative



April 27-29, 2017

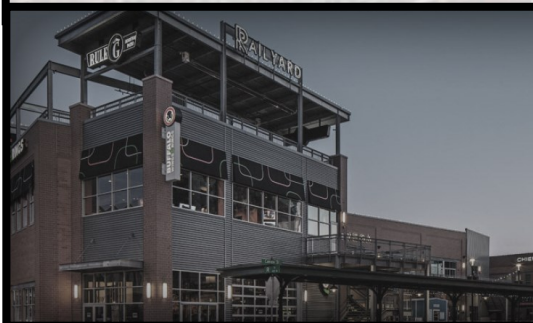
Lincoln, Nebraska



All Tracks Lead to Lincoln as the North West Area membership will come together for the 2017 convention. NEBRASCOE (Nebraska Association of FSA County Office Employees) is the host state for 2017 convention and we are looking forward to hosting all of you in our capital city!

Our host hotel, [Embassy Suites by Hilton Lincoln](#), is within walking distance of the [Historic Haymarket](#) and [The Railyard](#) which has a vibrant atmosphere filled with restaurants and bars, live entertainment, shopping and a public market. Also within walking distance is [Memorial Stadium](#) (home of the [Blackshirts](#) and [Nebraska Football](#)), [Pinnacle Bank Arena](#), and [Haymarket Park](#) (home of the [Lincoln Saltdogs](#) and the [Nebraska Baseball](#)). While Nebraska loves its athletic teams, there are a lot of other things to see and do in Lincoln during your free time! For more ideas you can visit the [Lincoln Tourism](#) website or the back page of this flyer.

To book your hotel for the 2017 NWA Rally you can click on the [Embassy Suites](#) link to be taken directly to the NEBRASCOE room reservation page or call 1-402-474-1111.



# There are lots of fun things to do during your free time in Lincoln!





# 2017 NWA Rally

## Lincoln, Nebraska

### April 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>

Name					
Circle one:	Delegate	Member	RASCOE	NAFEC	Other:
Address					
City/State/Zip					
Phone Numbers	Work:				Cell:
E-mail					
Guest(s)					

Activity	Dates/ Times	Where	No. of Persons	Cost Per Person	Total
Registration	Postmarked by <b>March 1<sup>st</sup></b>			\$25.00	\$
Registration	Postmarked by <b>April 1<sup>st</sup></b>			\$35.00	\$
Registration	Postmarked <b>after April 1<sup>st</sup></b>			\$55.00	\$
Memorial Stadium Tour	<b>Thursday</b> TBD	UNL Campus		Free	\$
Hospitality	<b>Thursday</b> 5:00 pm	Embassy Suites Atrium		Free	
Dinner	<b>Thursday</b>	Railyard, Haymarket & Downtown Lincoln		On your own	
RASCOE Luncheon * Pay at Rally	<b>Friday</b>	Embassy Suites		TBD	
<b>Ultimate Tailgate Party:</b> Enjoy a food spread with all your tailgate favorites and stick around for live music and dancing!	<b>Friday</b> Food: 6:30 pm Band: 8:00 pm	Embassy Suites Dock		\$15.00	\$
<b>NWA Rally Shirts (Circle your choice)</b> <b>*Tanks &amp; V-Necks come in Ladies only*</b>					
<b>T-Shirt</b>	<b>Tank Top</b>	<b>V-Neck</b>	S M L XL XXL XXXL	\$15.00	
<b>Please make checks payable to NEBRASCOE</b>			Total for Rally		\$



# 2017 NASCOE State Convention

## Lincoln, Nebraska

### April – 29th



Activity	Dates/ Times	Where	No. of Persons	Cost Per Person	Total
Nebraska State Convention	<b>Saturday</b> 1:00 pm	Embassy Suites		Fee	
Dillard's Retirement Training <b>Member</b>	<b>Saturday</b> 2:00 – 6:00 pm	Embassy Suites		Free	
Dillard's Retirement Training <b>Non-Member</b>				\$25.00	\$
<b>Please make checks payable to NEBRASCOE</b>		Total for State Convention & Retirement Training			\$
		<b>Total for Registration</b>			\$

#### Registration/Contact Information

Send Registrations to:  
JESSI COLGROVE  
2920 E. Court St., Ste 1  
Beatrice, NE 68310

For questions call:  
Jessi Colgrove ~ 402-806-7065  
Raela Brandt ~ 402-297-7358

#### Lodging Information

Embassy Suites, Lincoln, NE  
Group Rate: \$91.00 + tax  
To reserve your room please call 402-474-1111 or simply click the link below or the link below:

[NEBRASCOE Reservation Site](#)

**Hotel has complimentary full hot breakfast buffet for hotel guests.**

## 50/50 "GOLDEN SPIKE" CASH RAFFLE

50% of the funds will be divided  
into 3 Prizes:

**1<sup>ST</sup>=50%**    **2<sup>ND</sup>=30%**    **3<sup>RD</sup>=20%**

Mail tickets & money to Jessi Colgrove at:  
2920 E. Court St., Ste 1  
Beatrice, NE 68310

Name  
Address

Phone  
E-mail

**\$5/TICKET OR 5 TICKETS FOR \$20**

**DRAWING WILL BE HELD APRIL 29<sup>TH</sup>, 2017. NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN.**



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