

espconnection

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The Newsletter of Epsilon Sigma Phi

October/November 2011

President's Message.....

Justen Smith, National ESP President

The National Epsilon Sigma Phi Conference was a great success in beautiful Syracuse, New York. The timing of the conference was perfect to coincide with the fall colors. Concurrent sessions and poster presentations were of the highest scholarly quality. This year's conference was truly a great professional development opportunity. A big thank you to Joan Lewis and Rod Howe from Cornell Cooperative Extension as well as the New York, Maryland, and Pennsylvania Chapters for hosting such a great conference. A huge thank you goes to all of you that contributed money during the auction and during the endowment campaign. Thousands of dollars were raised for our development fund. These funds are used to provide scholarships, mini-grants, and stipends for our ESP members. I would like to take the time to thank Deborah Thomason, our past ESP President, for her leadership, friendship and many countless hours of work in bettering the Epsilon Sigma Phi organization. I am so pleased she will be on our National Board as

Past President to continue mentorship and further leadership. Deborah's motto as President was "it is all about the members." She is truly committed to the members of ESP. One of the many successful programs she implemented while President was the Regional conference calls between our Regional Vice Presidents and State Chapter Presidents. This is a program that will continue through this next year. My motto as President is "the success of ESP lies in the hands of the Chapters." These Regional conference calls provide an excellent opportunity for our Regional Vice Presidents to help address the needs of State Chapters. State Chapter leadership should be diligent in making sure they are available for these regional conference calls and then forwarding information learned

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A Conference Victory

Jeff Myers, National 2nd Vice President and Past Chair of Resource Development & Management Committee



Our National Conference in Syracuse was a tremendous success on many levels not the least of which was financial. Due to the efforts of many members significant funds were raised through donations to the Development Fund and our Auction.

The Auction raised a total of \$5,050! Thanks to the spot-on leadership of David Ross and his compatriots from Tau (Maryland) Chapter the Auction was executed seamlessly. Of course we couldn't have had an Auction without the 69 donated items from across the country; in fact we had an international item with the ESP Global Relations Committee together creating a worldwide basket of goodies. The monies from the Auction are divided equally between the Organizational and Development Funds and are critical to our operation. We

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Chapter Relations Committee

Mark Stillwell, National President Elect and Past Chapter Relations Chair

The ESP National Conference is the time of leadership transition each year for the Chapter Relations Committee. The ESP 2nd Vice President chairs the committee, so Mark Stillwell, Vice President, moves on and newly elected 2nd Vice President Jeff Myers accepted this leadership role.

The Chapter Relations Committee includes regional vice presidents Kathy Tweeten, North Central; Laura Wilson, South; Ken Hart, West and David Ross, North East; and Robert Ohlensehlen, ESP National Executive Director. We are committed to strengthening chapter leadership through training workshops at the 2012 JCEP Leadership Workshop in San Antonio, TX, and at the national conference.

Building on the success of 2011, the regional vice presidents plan to schedule conference calls with state chapter's leadership in each of the regions. The teleconferences will provide training and information to help new chapter leaders learn their roll and to remember important dates for membership and awards.

Applications have been accepted from new members and returning members to serve on national committees. The few vacant assignments have been filled by those expressing interest at the nation conference. There was a successful effort to recruit life members to each committee this year.



Landmark Trek: Liberty Hyde Bailey Birthplace Museum Committee

Judy Carlson, Ad Hoc History Committee

The birthplace of Liberty Hyde Bailey at South Haven, MI, is a logical inclusion on our virtual tour to Cooperative Extension landmarks.

Liberty Hyde Bailey of Cornell University (New York State College) College of Agriculture was designated chair of the 1908 Country Life Commission appointed by President Theodore Roosevelt. The Commission provided advice and information to enable President Roosevelt to make recommendations to Congress upon the extremely important agricultural matters. Many recommendations in the report were adopted in the Smith-Lever Act passed by the U. S. Congress a century ago.

Beth Clawson, Michigan State University Extension Education near the national

historic site says, "There is a lot of exciting work going on at the humble Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum including a small nature trail and meeting facilities. The volunteers there are working to re-create the original kitchen gardens. The site is definitely worth a visit." She uses the site for Master Gardener training. The birthplace home still stands and the museum's collection is displayed there.

"The report of the County Life Commission made an impression on Congress and the country-at-large making it one of the most important achievements of Theodore Roosevelt's Administration. That part of the report on rural education most interesting to Extension is reported herewith." That is a quote from the book published by Epsilon Sigma Phi in 1952 entitled THE SPIRIT AND PHILOSOPHY

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through these conference calls to their chapter members. The National Board can only do so much in expanding ESP. The true responsibility falls upon State Chapters. State Chapters are on the front lines of recruiting new members, making sure members are nominated for awards, insuring members are aware of opportunities at the national level, and working with their university administrators in holding annual State Chapter meetings and events. For those State Chapter leaders that are new to ESP and feel lost, there is no need to stress. The National ESP Office (Bob Ohlensehlen) and the National ESP Board is here for you. We are here to answer any questions you may have. State Chapter leaders should plan on attending the JCEP Leadership Conference in San Antonio, February 7-9, 2012. This is an excellent training opportunity for new and veteran Chapter Leadership. I look forward as your National ESP President to get to know all of you better this coming year. Please don't hesitate to e-mail or call me if you have any questions or if you have ideas on how the National Board can improve Epsilon Sigma Phi at the National level. My e-mail is justen.smith@usu.edu and my phone number is 801-451-3413. Thank you all for your commitment to the Extension Profession and Epsilon Sigma Phi.



OF EXTENSION WORK. This year, the book has been digitally preserved by ESP and the Pennsylvania State University Library.

For more information go to:
<http://libertyhydebailey.org/museum.html>.

Judy Carlson can be reached by email at carljudycarlson@gmail.com.

Viva La Flor!

Dan Culbert, Alpha Delta Chapter Member, University of Florida/IFAS

Imagine a tropical paradise, with beautiful blue skies, tall mountain vistas, tall rolling ocean waves, and lush tropical vegetation. Such is the tourist's impression of Costa Rica. Now add a dose of reality – in the northwestern area of Guanacaste, the climate is dry. When lush tropical landscapes are added to developments a significant drain on area water supplies can occur. Local landscape and nursery industry professionals were not well equipped to manage their resources to best advantage.

EARTH University in Costa Rica invited the University of Florida Extension Service to offer non-formal training of "Tico" landscape managers. I was part of a team of three county agents and two administrators that spent a week in April 2007 visiting EARTH University's new LaFlor campus near the Pacific coast. In 2008, our team of seven county agents provided two concurrent 7-week programs. Each agent spent 2 weeks at LaFlor, with a new agents rotating in and out each week. The course materials and lessons we developed were taught in Spanish.

A "Master of Gardens" program was designed for nursery and landscape professionals. Another course, "Gardeners of Costa Rica," focused on homeowners and ecotourism personnel. The participants learned about landscape best management practices suitable to the dryland tropics, then practiced concepts by installed demonstration gardens at the campus. After 7 weeks, 47 participants received completion certificates. Pre/post testing results showed up to a 38% improvement in test scores on the concepts taught.

The teaching materials developed are posted on a website, <http://lafor.ifas.ufl.edu>. They are available to others Extension faculty who wish to deliver programs to other Spanish-speaking

audiences. (It also has a link to the Concurrent Session presentation I gave on this project given at the October 2011 ESP Conference in Syracuse.)

This project provided an international experience for Extension faculty to broaden their knowledge of different environments and cultures. As for me, my ability to think and teach in Spanish was vastly improved as a result of this capacity building program. The exposure to new ideas and the opportunity to look at old ideas in new ways; several educational programs and news articles that describe plants and practices that can be used locally have resulted from this project. It has made me a more effective Extension Agent with Latino audiences in Florida.

I plan to return to Costa Rica in March 2012 to meet with a number of the program participants to see what long-term impacts this program has made. And as a member of the National ESP Global Relations Committee, I hope to encourage similar opportunities and promote the value of international Extension work among members of ESP.

I am deeply appreciative of my fellow "Team LaFlor": FAMU agent Alejandro Bolques, UF faculty Larry Halsey, Adrian Hunsberger, Henrique Mayer, David Marshall, Linda Seals, Pete Vergot, plus EARTH University staff Luis N. Bulgarelli and B.K. Singh. Without such dedicated Extension professionals, I never would have experienced these joys of Global Teamwork in Costa Rica.

(Dan Culbert is ESP's 2011 International Service Recognition Recipient and can be reached at indianco@ufl.edu.)

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offer our sincere appreciation to donors and buyers alike. And special gratitude to the Tau Chapter members who gave their time; Dick Angus, Elaine Bailey, Brian Clark, John Lea-Cox, Karol Dyson, Patsy Ezell, Debbie Ross, David Ross, Mary Ellen Waltemire and Sandy Corridon.

Additionally, \$6,785 was raised for the Development Fund. These funds become part of the principle and help move us towards our \$500,000 goal. Once again, it takes the efforts of many members to help

remind conference attendees of the opportunity to give and the great works accomplished by the Development Fund. Special thanks to Patricia Powley, Past National President, for both soliciting donations and serving as the collector and protector of funds! And not risking omitting anyone, thank you to each of you who helped to sell our Conference Apple pins! We were only able to reach this goal by your gracious collaboration and so thank you for both your solicitations and your donations.

During the Conference donations were made by many of the 174 ESP members present. Contributions from members who were not in attendance would be an awesome addition to our conference efforts and accelerate us on to our Development Fund goal! A hundred dollars would be great and yet we sincerely appreciate all contributions which will support ESP Extension workers with professional development and recognition. For information on giving see "Development Fund Giving" on the ESP website at <http://espnational.org>"

ESP Marketing Committee's Poster Presentation at Conference

Mark Stillwell, National President Elect and Past Chapter Relations Chair

Marketing Committee member Elaine Long Bailey, University of Maryland Extension, and Mark Stillwell, University of Missouri Extension and Marketing Committee Chair, presented a poster highlighting marketing best practices and testimonial videos at the 2011 ESP National Conference in Syracuse.

A subcommittee of Elaine Bailey, Debbie Temple and Barbara Petty had compiled the "Best Practices in Marketing" from state reports for the 2011 JCEP Leadership Conference. The subcommittee reviewed those reports for marketing information and compiled as list of best practices. They contacted Kansas, Kentucky and Pennsylvania chapters to learn more about

their successful marketing efforts. The final report is available on the ESP web page. The Texas AgriLife Extension's video "The Extension Professional's Creed" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtJ_Ca1oWvY) was one of four video testimonials highlighted at the poster session. This video was produced in 2008.

Elaine Long Bailey was featured in a testimonial showing how ESP helped meet her needs of a 4-H educator who must collaborate with colleagues in other subject matter areas. (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2mw_cBdi2A)

Dr. Joanne Bankston, Kentucky State University, talks about how ESP provides professional development, leadership development and program recognition

opportunities for Extension professionals at the state and national level. Luke Erickson, University of Idaho Extension, says ESP gives him the opportunity to associate with Extension professionals in other disciplines and across the nation which has helped him revitalize his programming. The 2010 Nation Conference in Jackson Hole, WY, allowed him to share his experience with electronic newsletters and podcasting.

The three testimonial videos will be posted on the ESP National website soon. The committee will continue to develop testimonial videos and is partnering with the Global Relations Committee to highlight the value of international programs.

Life Membership—What's In It For Me?

Bob Ohlensehlen, National ESP Executive Director, and Debbie Bartman, Alpha Nu Member Services Committee

The question has been asked, "What do I get for becoming a Life Member?" A Life Member has all of the rights and privileges of an Annual Member.

Some benefits available to Life Members include:

- Notification and **access to the online ESP Connection Newsletter** (6 editions per year) If you don't have email, you will receive 3 issues per year through the mail.
- Eligible to serve on (and needed for) **National Committees**. **Stipends** are given to committee members to attend the National Conference
- Eligible for Recognition **Awards**
- Eligible for **Scholarships**
- Welcome to attend the **JCEP Leadership Conference**
- Welcome to attend the **PILD Conference**
- Welcome to attend the **National Conference**
- Welcome to attend JCEP-sponsored **Galaxy Conferences**
- Eligible for the **\$100 Life Member Stipend** to attend each National Conference. (*By attending 2 national conferences using the stipend, you will recoup your lifetime membership fee.*)

This year a special national Life Member Committee has been formed to attempt to continue to provide a meaningful experience for those Life Members who have contributed so much to the Extension System throughout their careers. The committee is

composed of Life Members—one from each of the seven standing ESP National committees. The mission of the special Life Member Committee will be to provide input from Life Members into each of the standing committees to enhance Life Member experiences and to address Life Member concerns as relates to the individual committees. The Life Members who make up the special Life Member Committee will then come together as an individual committee to discuss how each of the standing committees can work together to include issues that will benefit those retirees who have chosen to become Life Members. This year is the first year the committee will be actively engaged as a special committee so one of their first tasks will be to determine how the committee can best function to address Life Member issues.



Life Member Committee meets at the 2011 ESP National Conference

Public Issues Leadership Development Conference Set for April 15-18, 2012

Cindy Strasheim, PILD Committee Member, Public Issues Committee Member and Alpha Upsilon Chapter

The Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) will once again hold the Public Issues Leadership Development Conference April 15-18, 2012 at the Alexandria Westin Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia.

PILD will hold a special capstone event to celebrate 150 years of the Morrill Land Grant Act. This is a great time for ALL Extension personnel who are current members of one of the JCEP organizations to submit an RFP that highlights your individual or team efforts using productive education models that are replicable for

other Extension personnel working on similar public issues which affect clientele, volunteers, and local, state, and national Extension programming efforts.

The PILD mission is "to provide leadership and advocacy skills to affect public issues." The 2012 theme is "Cooperative Extension: Relevant Now and Beyond." 13 RFP's will be accepted for oral presentations of 45 minutes and 3 JCEP-sponsored sessions of 60 minutes including time for questions. The JCEP selected presentations each receive a waived registration fee.

Please plan to submit a proposal by November 9, 2011 by 5:00 pm via Google Docs. The Link is available at: <http://www.JCEP.org/PILD.htm>. Criteria for judging includes the uniqueness and relevance of the Extension advocacy program; the demonstrable process for replication; and meeting emerging needs as well as addressing the PILD mission.

All abstracts will be peer reviewed by the JCEP PILD Review Committee.

Applicants will be informed by December 21, 2011.



Communicating with Elected Officials

Laura Wilson, Southern Region VP & Chair of Public Issues Committee

With consideration to today's economic climate, it has never been more vital that Extension professionals be well schooled in effective techniques to contact decision makers. To provide information useful to ESP members making contact with county, state and federal officials, the Public Issues Committee sponsored a concurrent session titled "Communicating With Elected Officials" during the 2011 ESP National Conference in Syracuse. Members of the panel included Gwen Wolford and David Crawford, both from The Ohio State University, and Laura W. Wilson, Southern Region Vice President.

The panel discussion covered tips on developing a rapport with officials and effective ways to make contacts, including face-to-face and electronically. Participants learned that documents providing information on contacting elected officials are available on the Joint Council of Extension Professionals website.

Make a Tax-free Gift from Your IRA to ESP

The IRA Charitable Rollover Legislation is only valid through **December 2011**.

A donor who is 70½ and older can direct distributions of up to \$100,000 per year from their IRAs and ROTH IRAs to a charitable organization, without incurring income tax on the withdrawal.

This is a significant incentive that removes the tax penalty for some donors who want to use their IRAs to fund a charitable gift.

- Gifts can only be made from an IRA. Pension, 401k, profit sharing and other forms of retirement funds do not fall under this legislation. However, donors can roll over non-qualifying accounts (e.g. 401k) into the qualifying IRA account in order to make a gift.
- Gifts can be made to multiple charities in any combination that does not exceed the \$100,000 per year per person limit.
- Gifts from your IRA can fulfill your yearly required minimum distribution in part or in full.
- Gifts can only be made directly to public charities to be eligible for tax benefits. A gift cannot be made to a charitable remainder trust or charitable gift annuity.
- No goods or services of any value can be transferred to the donor in connection with this gift.

The Next Step

Contact both your IRA administrator and your tax professional if you are considering a gift under this law. See "Development Fund Giving" on the ESP website at <http://espnational.org>

2011 Administrator/Leader Scholarship Recipient Nancy B. Stevens Reports on National Conference

It's hard to believe that with my 30+ years in Extension, that I never took the opportunity to attend an ESP National Conference. This scholarship opportunity was just the nudge I needed to head to Syracuse as a "first timer." My first observation walking in was that there was no huge crowd of strangers that is typical at other association national meetings; instead it seemed more like an intimate group. In a matter of days, I started to recognize faces around the room and got to know colleagues at the numerous meals and sessions.

The wide variety of topics was remarkable and thought provoking. I found that the ideas shared were very timely for me as our state is in the midst of a major

reorganization. The sessions about leadership were motivating and I now have a long list of speaker-recommended books that I want to read. The information shared about self-directed teams was helpful as PA is also working in programmatic teams. I am sure I will find myself using some of their open-ended questions with team members to initiate communication among the group.

I also took part in a session about communicating with elected officials – this is becoming a major component of my job and I appreciated hearing a new perspective and some great suggestions. The keynote speakers were fabulous and I can't wait to learn more about energetic leadership.

I came away from Syracuse a few pounds heavier from all of the delicious and plentiful food (!) and rejuvenated by the commitment and professionalism that I experienced. I learned much more about Epsilon Sigma Phi and met so many folks that I now see as role models. The tough economic times and shrinking budgets have been discouraging for Extension folks in recent years but the dedication and enthusiasm for our profession that I saw exhibited in Syracuse far exceeded any negativity. I needed a "shot in the arm" and this conference provided that.

So now I am looking forward to seeing everyone in Mobile next year!

P.S. – I have been enjoying the "tiger nuts" that I won at the auction!

My Farmer to Farmer Experience In Uganda

Ronald Overmyer, Life Member, Alpha Eta Chapter of Ohio

I volunteered for a Farmer-to-Farmer Program administered by the Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA). It is administered by USAID. My assignment was to help a Ugandan maize (what we call corn) sector organization with organizational development issues. The organization is composed of farmers, millers, buyers, input suppliers, institutional representatives, society representatives and government officials. The challenge is to structure the organization so that collectively they can have an effective voice in determining their destiny for the maize sector in the Kasese District. The Kasese District is in western Uganda next to the Congo border in East Africa. The district is a major maize production area for Uganda. They presently have about 1,700 farmers in 16 farmer groups that are part of the organization along with the representatives from the other stakeholders in the maize sector.

Most maize farmers are small subsistence farmers growing one to three acres of maize. They grow two maize crops per year. Due to limited resources and the lack of support services like we have in the U.S., most of them are only producing about 31 bushels per acre. Most of the field work and harvesting is done by hand. They have the capability of raising 120 bushel per acre maize if they used modern technology that is suited to their situation. They would also greatly benefit from an effective agricultural research program, an effective Extension service and an agricultural credit system like we have in the U.S.

I met about 13 stakeholders for five days per week for two weeks in mid-June to conduct training sessions on organizational development. We worked on vision, mission, goals and objective statements that reflected the purpose of the organization. We developed a business constitution that outlined the membership requirements, rights, powers and obligations of the various stakeholder groups in the organization. We developed a five-year plan for the development of the organization and job descriptions for key people in the organization. We outlined potential enterprises that could be developed that would significantly help the farmers and also produce income for the organization. We collected financial information that will be used to develop five-year financial projections for the organization.

I was impressed with the leaders that met with me. They are very intelligent and know their challenges and weaknesses. They recognize that they can only solve them by working together. It is similar to the U.S. farming community back in the late 1800's when farmers formed organizations like the Grange to give them a collective voice in dealing with the railroad monopolies.

Three major production challenges are production cultural practices, proper maize storage and the need for agricultural credit at the farm level. They would like to address the cultural



Ron Overmyer talking with Ugandan farmer group

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Idaho Takes on Education

Grace Wittman, Public Issues Committee Member, Theta Chapter

One of the most controversial laws affecting Idahoans right now is the new Students Come First law. The Idaho Legislature passed the Students Come First law in 2011 with the idea that it would educate more students at a higher level with limited resources. This law will allow state and local school districts to make every classroom a 21st Century Classroom, ensuring that every student has access to a highly effective teacher every year. It gives parents immediate access to understandable information about their child's school and district. No matter where children live in Idaho, they will have access to the best educational opportunities.

More specifically, this law will tie 50% of the teachers' and administrators' evaluations to student achievement, and will require parent input on teacher and school-based administrator evaluations. This law will eliminate tenure for new teachers and will eliminate seniority as a reason for a teacher to keep their job. Teachers will need to have students who are showing growth in student achievement in order to keep their jobs. Teachers will also be placed on a pay-for-performance plan. This plan will allow every teacher the opportunity to make money above and beyond his or her base salary. The idea is not to force educators to work harder, but to pay them for the hard work they are already doing. This is to help Idaho attract and retain the best and the brightest teachers in the classroom.

The last piece of Students Come First is the Advanced Classroom Technology aspect. This part of the law addresses the need to make technology more readily accessible for students and teachers. Each school district will be allotted a certain amount of money to invest in mobile computing devices. These devices are to help engage students through computer-based learning; it becomes the textbook in every classroom, the research tool in science and the word processor in English. The other component of the Advanced Classroom Technology is students will need to complete a certain number of online credits to graduate.

This law looks good on paper, but it is in the implementation of it that we are seeing controversy in our state. The teachers union in Idaho did not support this law and made a valiant effort to make their voices heard during legislative hearings. Over the next few years, it will be interesting to see how the teachers, parents and students feel about this law.

Many changes were made by the legislature to this law before it was passed. With these changes, all Idahoans are hoping to see an improvement in our education system and watch our children attain the skills they need to be competitive in today's world.

(Uganda Continued from page 6)

practices with their own Extension worker to help farmers improve the use of hybrid seed, timely planting, proper fertilizer use and proper harvesting techniques. They would also like to have an Extension worker who will assist the farmers and storage owners with proper storage techniques that will reduce the loss of grain to pests and mold.

Then they would like to establish a credit system for farmers that will allow them to keep ownership of their grain until the market has higher prices. Right now, most farmers have to sell at harvest because of household bills that are due around harvest time. Prices are low at harvest and then tend to increase during the next four months. Farmers need credit to pay the bills at harvest but to delay maize sales until later in the marketing season.

It was also a tremendous cultural experience to visit one of the developing countries of East Africa. I had many experiences with foods, facilities and people that are much different than the experience in the United States but that story is for another time. Just know that there are wonderful people in Uganda who want to improve their quality of life and it is possible to help them on a one-on-one basis.

Ron Overmyer is a former Ohio State University Extension Educator that served in both Ottawa and Sandusky counties. Contact him for a presentation or for more information. rovermyer@roadrunner.com, 419-308-5378

The Global Relations Auction Collection

Kathy Tweeten, North Central Region VP and Global Relations Committee Chair, Upsilon Chapter

The Global Relations auction collection was a huge success! Included in the collection were a:

- Beautiful silk shawl from Thailand from committee member Mary Simon Leuci, NC region
- Books - Zlatu's Diary, a child's life in Sarajevo and Hello World, a children's book about greetings in 42 languages around the globe. Donated by member Nancy Kadwill, life member, NE region
- Booklet - Palabras por la Jadin, words for the garden, an English Spanish dictionary by the University of Florida Extension for the work in Costa Rican Horticulture Program from member Dan Culvert, S region
- Gorgeous silk pillowcases from China donated by member Mark Platten, W region
- Set of ten shellfish forks and spoons from South Korea from member Kathy Tweeten, NC region
- And lastly, a beautiful hand woven fiber bag from Vanuatu (pronounced van wa to) formerly New Hebrides) from Karol Dyson, NE region



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Visit the ESP website at
www.espnational.org

Important Dates Ahead – Mark Your Calendar!

NOVEMBER

- November 18, Deadline for *ESP Connection* articles to the National Office
- Collect and Submit 2012 Membership Dues

DECEMBER

- November/December Issue of *ESP Connection* posted online
- Collect and Submit 2012 Membership Dues
- December 30, Deadline for Regional Vice President Packets to National Office
- Register for 2012 JCEP Leadership Workshops

JANUARY

- January 2, Deadline for Regional Vice President Nomination Submissions to National Office
- January 20, Deadline for *ESP Connection* articles to the National Office
- Register for 2012 JCEP Leadership Conference
- Collect and Submit 2012 Membership Dues
- January 31, Deadline for Electronic Submission of Chapter Reports for JCEP Leadership Conference

