The North Central Chapter of NSAC met the last week in May at Cragun’s Resort near Brainerd. If was a GREAT meeting, with even better weather. Besides the regular audit, accounting and tax updates we heard presentations on the repair regulations, we also heard from a speaker on coaching of our peers. Do you know the right way and the wrong to ask a question? Will your question inspire group participation and production? We hope you will consider joining us at our next meeting.

Julia Sevald from Land O Lakes was elected to the chapter board and Linda Kelly was reelected to a second term. The Board reorganized and our chapter officers for 2014-2015 are: Linda Kelly, President; Ian O’Connell, Vice President; Jim Halvorsen, Secretary, Matt Guyer, Treasurer; and Joel Eichelberger, Past President.

Each chapter is allowed two National Directors. Lynn Smith was nominated at our meeting to serve a three-year term as our National Director. You should have received an e-mail ballot from the National Office. Please cast your vote for our National Director. Mike Mayhew is also serving as a National Director for our chapter. Lynn will be taking Gary Strain’s place on the National Board, as he is just completing his sixth year. He is currently serving as National President and will end his term at the National Convention.

Bob Wacek has served our Chapter as our event organizer for many, many years. He has seen to it that our agenda is ready and appropriate for the CPE program, he sees that the speaker documentation and bios are there, and he secures a good location for our meetings. He is there at our meeting to make sure the meeting runs smoothly and that everyone signs in and out as required. He lines up the evening entertainment and every other year he keeps all the golfers on track to get a hole in one. Words cannot thank him enough. Although he retired from LOL several years ago, he has continued to serve our chapter. He announced at our last meeting that he is retiring from this position, but he has assured us that he will still be at our meetings. (We told him he can’t be too hard on critiquing us.)

Our board members have had some discussion on how to proceed with filling Bob’s shoes. With a board that changes every year, it would seem easier to keep continuity with our programs with the use of a program committee. Different aspects of the program, such as venue, printouts, entertainment can be divided up throughout the board and committee. We had several individuals and firms step forward to volunteer to work on a committee. The Board will definitely still be instrumental in organizing our bi-annual meetings, but having an event committee should help. If you or someone from your firm is interested in being part of this group, please contact one of the board members. We will start to plan our November meeting later this summer. If you have a suggestion for a topic or speaker at a future meeting, please contact a board member.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Maintaining and increasing membership is important to any organization. NSAC is no different. One of the Board’s responsibilities is to provide a reason for you to belong. The bi-annual meeting provides a place to hear about new issues in the co-op world, renew your CPE credits, and talk to peers. Talking to our peers is a good way to keep in contact.
(On a personal note, I once had a boss that sent us to meetings in our field. He stressed that, “If you don’t get something out of a meeting (even if the speakers are terrible), you are not doing your job.”) Talking to others in our field is a great way to connect and learn. If you know someone that would benefit from being a member of our group, please encourage them to attend a meeting or better yet, get them an application and sign them up.

If you haven’t checked out the National website, take time. It is www.nsacoop.org. It has helpful information.

**NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER NATIONAL UPDATE**

From Gary Strain, National President (National Director from the North Central Chapter)

I am currently working on getting a communication out to all of the members of NSAC in advance of our Annual Meeting and Conference in San Diego in August 2014. My objective is to highlight the significant activities that have taken place within the society over the past ten months – and the benefits we hope to achieve as a result of these efforts. Please watch for its release over the next couple of weeks.

Highlights would include:

The Chapter Development and Membership Development committees lead by Kent Erhardt and Robbie Shields, respectively, dedicated themselves to making conference calls with the key leadership of every chapter in NSAC. The intention was to offer coaching, mentoring, networking support, guidance and other encouragements and to work towards strengthening the relationship between the Chapter Leaders and the National Committees. We have already witnessed meaningful results from these efforts.

NSAC has committed to partnering with NRECA for a co-location conference in Denver in 2015. Most of our members in the Electric Cooperative Chapter work for cooperatives that are corporate members of the National Rural Electrification Cooperative Association. NRECA provides multiple conferences for their 900+ corporate members, including an annual Tax, Accounting & Financial Conference. While this will take quite a bit of effort, there is a lot of upside for our organization as we hope to attract new members to NSAC and the ECC Chapter, and as importantly, we expect that this type of scale will allow us to enhance the educational opportunities and the overall conference experience for our members.

The Canadian Chapter Development Committee was created to work towards establishing a NSAC Chapter in Canada. In late 2013, I was contacted by Daphne Rixon; PhD, FCMA, Associate Professor, Accounting and Executive Director of the Centre of Excellence in Accounting and Reporting For Co-operatives (CEARC) at the Sobey School of Business; Saint Mary’s University, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 3C3. Daphne expressed an interest in partnering with NSAC to explore opportunities for a NSAC Chapter in Canada, and she was invited to our mid-Board meeting in New Orleans in February to begin those discussions. Jeff Brandenburg, National Director for the Great Lakes Chapter graciously offered to chair this new committee.

With regards to our own chapter, we recently held our Spring Meeting at Cragun’s in Brainerd. Hats off to everyone that had a hand in putting the conference together. I thought it was exceptional and hope that others in attendance found it to be similar.