The Communiqué is an ESP publication that has been published for several years with the goal of providing timely information to chapter leadership. The publication included deadlines and other key information for chapter presidents, vice-presidents, secretaries and treasurers. At the recent National Conference in Fargo a suggestion was made to send the publication to the entire membership to ensure that all members have the key information to maximize the benefits of ESP membership.

That being said, I am going to use this issue of the Communiqué to provide an introduction to the new ESP website. Those who attended the National Conference had the opportunity to see the new site as it was introduced in numerous sessions. The intent of the new site is to provide additional resources for our members.

The main page of the site has several tabs across the top which are known as the “Main Menu.” Each of the tabs provides a list of menu items. Bringing your cursor over the tab will drop a list of the menu items. Click on the desired item in the list to activate the menu item.

The “About Us” tab provides several pieces of general information about our national organization. Information about the state chapters including web links to those chapters who have websites, as well as chapter contact information is provided.

The “News” tab has recent articles that were previously published on the front page. The Archived News contains news articles that are older but have been stored so that members can access the information beyond the two- or three-month old timeframe.

The “Calendar” tab contains a written listing of important due dates of interest for the year. Plans for the calendar include using a program that will display a monthly calendar similar in look to the format of the “Outlook” calendar that will have dates that are pertinent for the month being viewed.

The “Resource” tab includes items such as the ESP National Handbook and the ESP Chapter Handbook. Both of the handbooks will be searchable. In addition to the online handbook a downloadable version will be available in the Downloads Section. In addition to the handbooks, the Resource Section has a list of recommended speakers, the Ruby Lectures from the past several years and the packets of the recognition recipients for the current year.

The “Links” tab provides assorted links of interest to Extension professionals such as to other Extension organizations including our USDA partners, the Journal of Extension, the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU – formerly NASULGC), Global Extension Information, and the eXtension website.

The “Downloads” tab includes a wide variety of resources that can be downloaded by members. The selections contain artwork including the new logo and other useful artwork and certificates for recognitions of chapter members, with the exception of new member certificates and life member certificates. These will be supplied by the National Office once the requested information has been provided by the chapter making the request. Stationery templates, letter templates, member recruiting brochure, Endowment Fund brochure, and other publications and reports are also available through this selection. The Publication Download section includes the ESP Branding Guide and ESP Style Guide that provides the guidelines and information for the proper use and presentation and marketing of ESP. These guides are valuable as they provide information about accepted styles, colors, etc. The downloads section also includes training materials such as the Chapter Leadership Training PowerPoint that was used at National Conference.

The “FAQ” tab includes questions that are frequently heard by the National Office.

The “Forms” tab will become one of the most highly used areas of the site. When you click on the “Forms” tab you will be taken to a site with a new menu that again offers several choices.
The “Chapter Reports” tab allows the user to choose to 1) update the listing of chapter officers, 2) submit a chapter report for JCEP regional workshop or 3) report your chapter’s committee chairs. Chapter leaders can simply go to the site, select the appropriate form, fill in the required information and press the submit button to send to the National Office over the web. Once the form has been submitted the individual submitting the form will receive an email confirmation that the information has been submitted along with a copy of that information.

The “Scholarship” tab provides the user with all of the scholarship application forms. The user simply selects the appropriate form, fills in the required information and presses the submit button. The application will automatically be sent to the National Office and a request will be sent to the email provided by the applicant requesting the required endorsement of the application. The person being requested to provide the endorsement or reference will be directed to the necessary form, and once completed, the person sending the request will be notified that the endorsement/reference had been sent to the National Office.

The “Grant” and “Recognition” tabs work in the same manner as the “Scholarship” tab.

The “Chapter Recognition” tab provides all of the forms necessary for the recognition awards available to chapter members. Once the chapter awards have been selected and the individuals have been identified for consideration for regional or national awards the individual responsible for forwarding the recipients on for regional and national consideration simply uses the transmittal form so the National Office can identify the chapter recognition forms already on file for consideration by the Scholarship, Grants and Recognitions Committee.

The “Committees” tab contains the New Committee Application form and the Committee Re-appointment form. Again, those interested in being appointed to a national committee can fill out the form, and notification will be sent to the chapter president to provide a reference.

The “Leadership” tab provides the application forms for Regional Vice Presidents and 2nd National Vice President. As before the needed references are contacted and directed to the website to submit the required references.

Finally, the “Forms” tab provides a “Request for Proposals” selection where interested members can submit forms that contain proposals for presentations of concurrent sessions or poster presentations at the National Conference.

Back on the Home Page of the site there is also a menu on the left side of the screen. The items on the menu include links to our affiliates, committee information for 2010 including a list of committee members, Programs of Work, Mid Year Reports and End of Year Reports. You’ll also find the leadership team of National Board members and state chapter presidents listed with contact information. The Professional Development and Public Issues Committees have links and information provided by their committees to the membership. In addition, information is provided about the Development Fund and minutes of the National Board meetings and reports are displayed.

Below the menu, again on the left side, there are links for printable copies of newsletters and Communiqués.

As time passes, more features will be added and members will be allowed increased usage of the website. When these features are further developed we will require members to register so that they have permission to add to the website or to have access to protected areas of the site.

On the top, right side of the Home Page there is a slide show that currently is featuring pictures from the National Conference in Fargo. As the need arises we can change these pictures to tell a story we want to publicize. The next item on the right side of the Home Page is a listing of upcoming meetings in a variety of categories. Clicking on “Upcoming Meetings” will toggle the section open or closed to view the categories of meetings. Selecting an individual meeting will allow the user to see further details provided about the meeting.

The “What’s New” section works similar to the “Upcoming Meetings” except that there are a series of messages that will change each time the user access the website. Again, clicking on the title will open or close the section.

Finally on the right of the Home Page is the “Poll.” This tool will allow us to gather simple information on a topic we choose. It is an elementary tool but could serve some useful purposes.

This has been a whirlwind tour of the website. If you have comments or suggestions, please contact the Webmaster by selecting Webmaster under the “Contact Us” tab.

Bob Ohlensehlen
National Executive Director