3-1-2006

The NEBLINE, March 2006

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I learned that you have to believe in yourself and you can do it!” said one youth who attended a 4-H camp last year. Another youth said, “I loved the high wires and zip line in the dark — and learned not to be afraid of trying new things.” Yet another said, “I learned that you can make as many friends as you want and keep them.”

Specializing in leadership development and team building, 4-H summer camps create positive memories which last a lifetime. Camps are open to all youth ages 5–19 (need not be in 4-H).

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension, through its 4-H Youth Development Program, has been operating 4-H camps for more than 40 years. All staff members are trained and certified by extension.

“We want youth to leave our camp better equipped to make healthy, positive and informed decisions,” said Buzz Wheeler, camp director for the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center.

3 Camp Facilities

With three unique Nebraska locations at Halsey, Gretna and Alma, there are over 40 day and overnight camp sessions and trips this summer! Since the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Camp near Lunceford is closest to Lincoln, many Lancaster County youth attend camps there, however, local youth also attend camps at the other two locations.

The 4-H camps and centers all meet more than 300 standards established by the American Camping Association. The Eastern and State camps have been certified for several years. Last year, the South Central camp also became certified.

Wide Range of Activities

Some 4-H camp sessions offer a range of activities while others focus on a specific theme. For example, “Explorer Elementary” camps are loaded with adventures such as the T.R.U.S.T. rope course, canoeing, shooting sports and creek stomping; and “Aquatic Blit” camps focus on wet experiences such as water slides, fishing and mud Gau Gau.

Most camps include one to three overnight stays in comfortable cabins. Four camps aimed at youth ages 5–8 are one-day camps — and adult chaperones are invited! This year, there are four exciting new camps: “Focus on 4-H,” “Take a Friend, Make a Friend — World Celebration,” “CSI — Gretna,” and “Lights, Camera, Action — Arts/Drama Camp.”

How to Register

2006 4-H Summer Camp brochures have complete information about all camps as well as registration forms. Brochures are available at the extension office or online at http://4h.unl.edu/camps/. New this year, register online at 4h.unl.edu!

Save 10% by registering before April 1. With a variety of lengths, interest areas, locations and prices, 4-H camps fit perfectly with your child's summer activities!

### Nebraska 4-H Summer Camps Provide Ultimate Camping Experience for Youth

#### Date  
**CAMP**  
**AUDIENCE**  
**EARLY BIRD/FEE**

**.APPLICATIONS DUE APRIL 1, 2006**

**EASTERN NEBRASKA 4-H CENTER, GRETNA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Camp</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Early Bird/Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 27</td>
<td>Kids - 4-H Citrus Day Camp</td>
<td>ages 5-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 5-8</td>
<td>Focus on 4-H</td>
<td>ages 8-15</td>
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<td>June 9-10</td>
<td>Take a Friend, Make a Friend</td>
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<td>June 12-15</td>
<td>Niobrara Tube Trip</td>
<td>ages 11-15</td>
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<td>June 19-23</td>
<td>Boldly Bound</td>
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<td>June 20-22</td>
<td>Take a Friend, Make a Friend</td>
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<td>June 26-29</td>
<td>Biking Bound</td>
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<td>July 5-8</td>
<td>Discovery - Middle School</td>
<td>ages 8-15</td>
<td>$162 /$178</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 10-14</td>
<td>Outdoor Skills - Nebraska Game &amp; Parks</td>
<td>ages 8-15</td>
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<td>July 11-13</td>
<td>Take a Friend, Make a Friend</td>
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<td>July 24-28</td>
<td>Aquatic Blast - Elementary</td>
<td>ages 8-11</td>
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<td>July 24-28</td>
<td>Aquatic Blast - Middle School</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 29</td>
<td>Kids - N - Water Day Camp</td>
<td>ages 5-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 31-Aug 3</td>
<td>Take a Friend, Make a Friend - World Celebration</td>
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<td>July 31-Aug 3</td>
<td>Nebraska Canoes, Canoe, &amp; Climb Adventure</td>
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<td>Aug 4</td>
<td>Kids - N - Krazy Day Camp</td>
<td>ages 5-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 5</td>
<td>Kids - N - Water Day Camp</td>
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<td>Aug 7-9</td>
<td>CSI - Gretna</td>
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<td>Aug 10-11</td>
<td>Take a Friend, Make a Friend</td>
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**NEBRASKA STATE 4-H CAMP, HALSEY**

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<th>Audience</th>
<th>Early Bird/Fee</th>
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<td>May 30-June 2</td>
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<td>ages 11-15</td>
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<td>June 5-8</td>
<td>Sandhills Canoe and Fish Combo</td>
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<td>Explorer Elementary</td>
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<td>June 8-9</td>
<td>Take a Friend, Make a Friend</td>
<td>ages 8-11</td>
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<td>June 13-16</td>
<td>Sandhills Academy</td>
<td>ages 14-19</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 19-22</td>
<td>Outdoor Skills - Nebraska Game &amp; Parks</td>
<td>ages 10-15</td>
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<td>June 23</td>
<td>Kids - N - Krazy Day Camp</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 26-30</td>
<td>Outlook Halley</td>
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<td>June 26-28</td>
<td>Explorer Elementary</td>
<td>ages 8-11</td>
<td>$114/$125</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 28-30</td>
<td>Explorer Elementary</td>
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<td>July 5-7</td>
<td>Explorer Elementary</td>
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<td>July 11-14</td>
<td>Niobrara Tube Trip</td>
<td>ages 11-15</td>
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<td>July 18-21</td>
<td>Niobrara Tube Trip 2</td>
<td>ages 11-15</td>
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<td>July 23-26</td>
<td>Focus on 4-H for Girls</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Focus on 4-H for Boys</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 31-Aug 3</td>
<td>Sandhills Sampler 2</td>
<td>ages 11-15</td>
<td>$164/$180</td>
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**SOUTH CENTRAL 4-H CENTER, ALMA**

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<td>Explorer Elementary</td>
<td>ages 8-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 14-17</td>
<td>Your Horse and You</td>
<td>ages 11-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 15-17</td>
<td>Take a Friend, Make a Friend</td>
<td>ages 8-15</td>
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<td>June 19-23</td>
<td>Discovery Ranch Camp</td>
<td>ages 11-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 19-22</td>
<td>Survivor Camp - Fishing/Wildlife Adventure</td>
<td>ages 8-15</td>
<td>$156/$174</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 26-30</td>
<td>Lights, Cameras, Action — Arts/Drama Camp</td>
<td>ages 11-15</td>
<td>$218/$240</td>
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<td>June 26-29</td>
<td>Take a Friend, Make a Friend</td>
<td>ages 8-15</td>
<td>$158/$174</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 27-29</td>
<td>Explorer Elementary</td>
<td>ages 11-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 5-8</td>
<td>Technomores Camp</td>
<td>ages 8-15</td>
<td>$158/$174</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*10% early bird discount by registering before April 1!
Hints for Starting Transplants

Mary Jane Frogge
UNL Extension Associate

Starting flower and vegetable transplants indoors early can be fun. Growing quality transplants requires proper growing conditions, a sterile, well-drained growing medium, proper temperature and moisture conditions and adequate light. Since the home environment is usually not the best environment for growing transplants, problems occasionally develop.

Poor or erratic germination of seed may be caused by improper planting, for example, planting too deep. Uneven moisture and cool temperatures can also cause problems.

Medium to large seeds are sown at a depth of two times their minimum diameter. Fine seed is usually dusted on the surface of the seedbed. Cool potting mix temperatures, below 70 degrees Fahrenheit, enhance germination. Maintain the proper germination temperature and even moisture conditions, as these produce uniform germination.

Damping-off, caused by several fungal and bacterial diseases, is a common problem when growing transplants indoors. Poor or insufficient light, excessive watering, high temperatures, excessive fertilization and crowded growing conditions are factors which contribute to damping-off. Once the seeds have germinated, move the seedlings to an area with some light. If you discontinue damping-off with seedlings grown under artificial light, transplant them at a depth of two inches above the seedlings. The best quality peppers will be short, stocky and dark green. Green algal or brown fungal spots on peppers indicate that the soil surface or substrate is too wet. Potting medium that is too wet is conducive to damping-off and root rot.

A lack of essential plant nutrients produces characteristic deficiency symptoms. Phosphorus and nitrogen deficiency symptoms sometimes occur on vegetable and flower transplants. Phosphorus-deficient plants frequently havepurplish leaves and growth is stunted. Leaves lower leaves may indicate a nitrogen deficiency. Other symptoms of a nitrogen deficiency are stunted growth and small leaves. Apply a soluble fertilizer according to label directions. Transplant the seedlings to an area with some light that is conducive to rooting. If you transplant the seedlings to an area with some light that is conducive to rooting. If you transplant the seedlings to an area with some light. If you discontinue damping-off with seedlings grown under artificial light, transplant them at a depth of two inches above the seedlings. The best quality peppers will be short, stocky and dark green. Green algal or brown fungal spots on peppers indicate that the soil surface or substrate is too wet. Potting medium that is too wet is conducive to damping-off and root rot.

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Don’t Get Trapped in a Smelly Situation

Pocket Gophers in Your Alfalfa? UNL Wildlife Researcher Needs Your Help!

Pocket gophers are ro- dents that live in the soil. They get their name from the narrow, checked cheek pouches outside their mouth, one on each side of the face. These pouches are used to carry food.

Pocket gophers have a small and flattened head, short neck, powerful shoulders and large claws on their front paws. These adaptations help them dig their burrows and live underground. Pocket gophers are often confused with ground squirrels. They are not the same as 13-lined ground squirrels which are often seen during the daytime.

Pocket gophers spend most of their time in their sealed tunnel systems. The mounds they create are typically fan-shaped, and tunnel entrances are usually plugged, keeping intruders out of burrows. The burrow system of one pocket gopher can cover several hundred feet; one gopher can dig hundreds of mounds in a year’s time. No wonder they are so destructive! They are pests of alfalfa and native grassland and can reduce field productivity by 20-30 percent, depending on the gopher population. When they tunnel, they damage and feed on roots. They also feed on above-ground plants, particularly green, succulent vegetation. In our area, they prefer alfalfa fields. Pocket gopher damage at: http://cwdm.unl.edu/Ops/Mounds Stephen Vantisel, UNL wildlife project coordinator is conducting a research project to determine the most efficient trapping method for controlling pocket gophers. He is looking for area farmers willing to give him permission to trap pocket gophers on their alfalfa fields. To be included in the study, fields must have pocket gophers present and have had no pocket gopher control measures for at least one year. He is looking for fields within a one-hour drive of Lincoln. This research will only take a few days. If you would be willing to help Stephen with this study, please contact him at 472-8961.
Collection of Unwanted Pesticides, March 16

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with University of Nebraska Extension, the Environmental Trust Fund, the Nebraska Agri-Business Association and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, will be holding a pesticide disposal collection day on Thursday, March 16 at the Farmers Cooperative Company Fertilizer Plant, Waverly.

If you have outdated or unwanted pesticides may bring them to the site from 8 a.m. until noon. Pesticides should be brought in their original containers with label intact if possible, but pesticides which are not fully labeled are acceptable. The pesticide will be sorted and packaged for shipment to a certified incinerator for disposal.

Remember to protect yourself and your surroundings when handling waste pesticides. You may need to wear personal protective equipment or, as a minimum, unlined neoprene or nitrile gloves, when handling waste pesticides. If the pesticide container has been damaged, pack it in another container that will hold the product if the first container should rupture while being transported. Use a container that can be left at the collection site, if it becomes contaminated.

There are three categories of pesticides accepted:

- Unused, unopened, old or damaged pesticides (includes insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides and fumigants).
- Pesticides of all types (agricultural crops, livestock, homes, lawns, gardens, structural, commercial, and home use in aerosol containers).
- Farmer-supplied electronic transformers containing PCB’s from reno-vated irrigation systems.

Once different wastes need to be handled and disposed of differ-ently, products that fit in one of the categories above are the only ones being accepted. Products not accepted include:

- Pesticide products in pressurized cylinders
- Waste oil or filters
- Antifreeze
- Paints, varnishes and thinners
- Cleaners and solvents

The Waverly site is one of only 20 sites across Nebraska selected for this pesticide collection program in 2006. Don’t miss the opportu-nity to dispose of unwanted pesticides!

Commercial Pesticide Applicator Training

Commercial applicators are persons who apply restricted-use pesticides for any purpose on any property other than property owned or rented by a commercial applicator or for compen-sation. Commercial applicators shall also include any person who applies lawn care or structural pest control pesticides whether restricted-use or general-use, or another person. Public employees (employed by a town, county, state) applying mosquito control pesticides whether restricted-use or general-use to property of another person. Public employees (employed by a county, state) applying mosquito control pesticides whether restricted-use or general-use, must also hold a commercial or non-com-mercial certification.

You must pass a written examination in the general standards cat-eegory and one or more additional categories to become licensed initially as a commercial applicator. A commercial applicator must pass the written examination.

Initial commercial certification training and testing sessions for commercial applicators will be held on March 7 and April 20 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln. General standards starts at 9 a.m. and other categories begin at 1 p.m. or 3 p.m. It is highly recommended you obtain and review written study materials prior to attending the training session for initial certification to improve your chances of passing the written examination.

A commercial recertification sessions will be held March 21 with general standards starting at 9 a.m. and other categories beginning at 1 p.m. or 3 p.m.

Note: Due to time and space limitations, only specific categories will be presented on training days. Call the pesticide education office at 472-1632 or UNL Extension at 444-7180 to learn which specific categories will be offered on a given day.

Call the UNL Pesticide Education office at 472-1632 to register for a specific category. The training fee for either initial or recertification sessions is $30. Commercial applicators who wish to pick up additional certification in a specific category should register as well. The training fee for either initial or recertification sessions is $30. Commercial applicators meeting the requirements for certification or recertification will receive a bill from the Nebraska Department of Agri-culture for $90 for the license fee, good for three years.

Study materials for all commercial categories may be purchased from the pesticide education office, UNL East Campus, 101 Natural Re-sources Building, Lincoln or accessed online at http://pested.unl.edu/.

Diesel vs. Propane Irrigation Systems

Tom Dorn
UNL Extension Educator

**Farmer Question:** Would it pay to switch from a diesel engine to a propane engine on my irrigation system?

**Answer:** When energy prices rise dramatically, it is common to question the feasibility of switching from one energy source to another for irrigation. We can use The Nebraska Performance Criteria (NPC) to compare energy sources. The NPC states the horsepower hours of useful work should you expect per unit of energy from each of the common energy sources used in ir-igation. Table 1 presents the NPC for the common energy sources used for ir-rigation in Nebraska.

Table 1 shows that propane will require 30% less energy than diesel. As you are planning a new irrigation system for your farm, it is common to question the energy con-sumption when comparing one energy source to another. For example, the NPC for diesel is 12.5 water horsepower hours per gal-lon (whp/gal) and the NPC for liquid propane gas (LPG) is 8.89 whp/gal. You would, therefore, expect a pumping plant using LPG to use 12.56/8.89 = 1.42 times as many gallons per hour than the diesel pumping plant when operated under the same conditions. Conversely, a pump switched over from LPG to diesel would be expected to burn 6.89/12.5 = 0.55 times as many gallons of diesel as LPG. Table 2 presents all possible equiva-lent fuel price multipliers for the common energy sources used in irrigation.

You must know the prices of the energy sources being compared. As this is being written, the local contract price of farm delivered ir-rigation LPG is $1.28 per gallon and diesel is $2.18 per gallon. Since we can anticipate using 1.81 times as much LPG for the same amount of water pumped, we can con-pute an equivalent price for diesel. The LPG is $1.28/gal and diesel is $2.18 = $3.22/gal for diesel.

The actual current irri-gation diesel price is $2.18 per gallon so diesel has a lower relative energy cost com-pared to LPG. Conclusion, at current energy prices, it would not pay to switch from diesel to LPG.

The simple approach discussed here ignores dif-fferences in depreciation, maintenance and labor re-quirements between different types of power plants. If you are interested in a more thorough cost comparison analysis, an Excel spread-sheet is available at no cost on the Lancaster County Extension Web site at http://lancaster.unl.edu/ag/crops/irrigcost.xls. You may run this online or down-load it to your hard drive and open it with Microsoft Excel.

**TABLE 1. THE NEBRASKA PUMPING PLANT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (NPC)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Energy Source</th>
<th>Engine output</th>
<th>Pumping Plant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diesel</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>6.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural gas</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>6.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propane</td>
<td>9.30</td>
<td>6.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 2. ENERGY EQUIVALENCY MULTIPLIERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Energy Source</th>
<th>Diesel (Bushels/H)</th>
<th>Gasoline (Gallon)</th>
<th>Propane (Gallon)</th>
<th>Natural gas (Therm)</th>
<th>Electricity (KWH)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diesel</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.693</td>
<td>0.551</td>
<td>0.964</td>
<td>0.551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Gas</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.796</td>
<td>0.551</td>
<td>0.964</td>
<td>0.551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propane</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>0.911</td>
<td>1.009</td>
<td>0.513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural gas (Therm)</td>
<td>2.023</td>
<td>0.140</td>
<td>0.117</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Worried About the High Cost of Fertilizer?

Come to a Biosolids Workshop, March 9

The current cost of anhydrous ammonia is $410/ton. You can save money by fertilizing with biosolids. To learn about Lincoln’s Biosolids program, at- tend an educational workshop, Fertiliz-ing Crop Land with Biosolids, held on Thursday, March 9 from 3:30—8:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road, Lincoln.

Presented by extension and City of Lin-colns personnel, the workshop is aimed at farmers who might want to par-ticipate in the Biosolids Land Application program, though anyone may attend. Please preregister by Tuesday, March 7 by calling 441-7180. If you have any questions, please call UNL Extension Educator, Tom Dorn, at (402) 472-1632.

Biosolids are organic solids separated from wastewater and biologically processed during wastewater treatment to make them safe for land application. UNL Extension in Lancaster County. The cooperative extension program and biosolids project is funded by a long range plan grant from the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, USDA, and the Nebraska legislature.

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Call the UNL Pesticide Education office at 472-1632 or UNL Extension at 444-7180 to learn which specific categories will be offered on a given day.

Call the UNL Pesticide Education office at 472-1632 to register for a specific category. The training fee for either initial or recertification sessions is $30. Commercial applicators who wish to pick up additional certification in a specific category should register as well. The training fee for either initial or recertification sessions is $30. Commercial applicators meeting the requirements for certification or recertification will receive a bill from the Nebraska Department of Agri-culture for $90 for the license fee, good for three years.

Study materials for all commercial categories may be purchased from the pesticide education office, UNL East Campus, 101 Natural Re-sources Building, Lincoln or accessed online at http://pested.unl.edu/.
Pollination Requirements for Tree and Small Fruits

In the flower, pollination is the transfer of pollen from the anther to the stigma. After pollination and fertilization, fruit set occurs. There are two types of pollination. Self-pollination occurs when the pollen is transferred from the anther to the stigma on the same flower, from another flower on the same plant, or from another plant.

If a flower on another plant of the same variety. Self-pollinated plants are said to be self-fruitful. Many plants cannot pro-duce fruit from their own pollen and are considered self-unfruitful. These plants require cross-pollination for fruit set. Cross-pollination is the transfer of pollen from one plant to the flower of a genetically different plant or variety. Pollination is an important factor when selecting and planting tree and small fruits. A list of pollination requirements for the various fruits is presented below. Keep these fruiting requirements in mind when browsing in garden centers or through online catalogs.

APPLES

Most apples are self-unfruitful. A few varieties, such as Jonathan and Golden Delicious, set a good crop without cross-pollination. However, for maximum fruit production plant at least two different varieties.

APRICOTS

Few apricot varieties are reliably hardy in Nebraska. Moongold and Sungold are hardy and self-unfruitful. Plant at least one of each for proper pollination.

PEARS

Most pears are self-unfruitful. A few varieties, such as Kieffer, will set a fair good crop without cross-pollination. However, for maximum fruit production plant at least two different varieties.

PLUMS

Japanese plums are self-unfruitful. European plums are partially to entirely self-fruitful. Hybrid plum varieties (between American and Japanese plums) are self-unfruitful. European plums will not hybridize the plum hybrids and vice versa.

CHERRIES

- Sour or pie cherries are self-unfruitful.

Tree fruits that require two different varieties for pollination should be planted within 50 to 100 feet of one another to insure good fruit set.

SMALL FRUITS

Blueberries

Plant two or three different varieties for maximum production.

Blackberries, Grapes, Raspberries, Strawberries, Currants, Goosberries

These small fruit plants are self-unfruitful.
Stretch Your Food Dollar with Canned Foods

By Dana Wilfferd
UNL Extension Assistant

Six Can Chicken Tortilla Soup

6 servings

1 (15 ounce) can whole kernel corn, drained
2 (14.5 ounce) cans chicken broth (add an extra can for a more brothly soup)
1 (10 ounce) can chunk chicken
1 (15 ounce) can black beans
1 (10 ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chile peppers, drained
Tortilla chips
Low-fat shredded cheddar cheese

Combine all canned products in a large saucepan or stock pot. Simmer over medium heat until heated through. Serve over tortilla chips and top with shredded cheddar cheese.

Source: Nebraska Nutrition Education Program 2006 Calendar

Vary Your Veggies: Tips for Using MyPyramid

Alice Henneman, MS, RD
UNL Extension Educator

“Vegetables are a must on a diet. I suggest carrot cake, zucchini bread and pumpkin pie.” — Cartoon character, Garfield the Cat

The new MyPyramid guidelines recommend eating 21/2 cups daily of a variety of vegetables at the 2,000 calorie level. Garfield’s advice might be fun to follow until you went up a clothing size or two. While it’s OK to eat some of your vegetables as part of your dessert, here are some additional lower-calorie options from http://www.mypyramid.gov.

In General
• Stock up on fresh vegetables for quick and easy cooking in the microwave.
• Buy vegetables that are easy to prepare.
• Pick up pre-washed bags of salad greens and add baby carrots or grape tomatoes for a salad in minutes. Buy packages of baby carrots or celery sticks for quick snacks.

For the Best Nutritional Value
• Select vegetables with more potassium often, such as sweet potatoes, white beans, tomatos products (pasta, sauce and juice), beet greens, soybeans, limas beans, winter squash, spinach, lentils, kidney beans and split peas.
• Sauces or seasonings can add calories, fat and sodium to vegetables. Use the Nutrition Facts label to compare the calories and % Daily Value for fat and sodium in plain and seasoned vegetables.
• Prepare more foods from fresh ingredients to lower sodium intake. Most sodium in the food supply comes from packaged or processed foods.

Make Vegetables More Appealing
• Many vegetables taste great with a dip or dressing. Try a low-fat salad dressing with raw broccoli, red and green peppers, celery sticks or cauliflower.
• Add color to salads by adding baby carrots, shredded red cabbage or spinach leaves. Include in-season vegetables for variety through the year.
• Include cooked, dry beans or peas in flavorful mixed dishes, such as chili or minestrone soup.
• Decorate plates or serving dishes with vegetables.
• Keep a bowl of cut-up vegetables in a see-through container in the refrigerator. Carrot and celery sticks are traditional, but consider broccoli florets, cucumber slices or red or green pepper strips.

Vegetable Tips for Children
• Set a good example for children eating vegetables with meals and as snacks.
• Let children decide on the dinner vegetable or what goes into salads.
• Depending on their age, children can help shop for, clean, peel or cut up vegetables.
• Allow children to pick a new vegetable to try while shopping.
• Use cut-up vegetables as part of afternoon snacks.
• Children often prefer foods served separately. So, rather than mixed vegetables try serving two vegetables separately.

Keep it Safe
• Wash vegetables before preparing or eating them. Under clean, running water, rub vegetables briskly with your hands to remove dirt and surface microorganisms. Dry after washing.
• Keep vegetables separate from raw meat, poultry and seafood while shopping, preparing or storing.
Learn to Recognize Nebraska’s Noxious Weeds

The Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act states it is the duty of each person who owns or controls land to effectively control noxious weeds on such land. Pictured are Nebraska’s noxious weeds which can be found in Lancaster County.*

Musk Thistle
Leafy Spurge
Purple Loosestrife
Canada Thistle
Saltcedar
Plumeless Thistle

Noxious weed is a legal term used to denote a destructive or harmful weed for the purpose of regulation. The Director of Agriculture establishes which plants are noxious. These non-native plants compete aggressively with desirable plants and vegetation. Failure to control noxious weeds in this state is a serious problem which is detrimental to the production of crops and livestock and to the welfare of residents of this state. Noxious weeds may also devalue land and reduce tax revenue.

*Nebraska’s noxious weeds Spotted and Diffuse Knapweeds have not be found in Lancaster County.

2005 Annual Report

The Lancaster County Weed Control Authority approves an annual noxious weed control plan that guides the operations of the staff for the year. It sets forth an overall goal of obtaining voluntary compliance with the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act and the City of Lincoln’s Weed Abatement Program. Efforts are directed at making landowners aware and receptive to the requirements of the law and ordinance and willingness to comply. The inspection program is used to identify property requiring follow-up actions to obtain compliance. Compliance is obtained with 70–75 percent of the notifications being a personal contact, card or letter rather than a legal notice.

Inspection Activity
A total of 7,175 inspections were made of 3,341 sites on 23,848 acres during the year. We found 2,839 violations on 5,723 acres. Violations increased 341 from last year, requiring 583 more inspections. There are four county inspectors outside the city limits of Lincoln and there are three inspectors in the city of Lincoln. Funds from a National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Grant provided for a seasonal inspector for two months to make inspections for purple loosestrife along the streams in Lincoln. The inspection season lasts from April until December.

Lancaster County Noxious Weed Control Program — Infestations were found on 1,004 sites covering 4,908 acres. These infestations were not good for optimum control. The fall inspection season lasted from April until December.

City of Lincoln Weed Abatement Program — Even though the weather conditions were dry, weed abatement demand was greater. The number of weed abatement violations increased by 404. This created a 28 percent increase in inspection workload. There were 4,787 inspections made on 2,141 sites on 1,060 acres. There were 1,835 violations as a result of 1,674 complaints. There was a continuing emphasis on obtaining voluntary compliance of landowners. Almost 94 percent of owners cut their overgrowth after notification. This was accomplished with 70 percent of the notifications being other than legal notifications. Bankruptcy continues to be a problem. We published 142 notifications in the paper. Forced cutting had to be performed on 107 sites at the cost of $13,962. Of these sites, 81 had to be specially assessed for $10,557.

Public Awareness
The major information efforts are a four-page Weed Awareness special insert in the March Lancaster County Extension Nebline, and maintaining and updating Internet Home page. There are 11,000 copies of the Weed Awareness insert published and there were 44,723 hits on the Web site in 2005. Other informational efforts include over 1,000 special mailings, almost 3,000 notifications of violations, several news articles and a state fair exhibit.

Other Activities
Other activities include making inspections for weed-free forage association, attending required continuing education sessions and actively participating in the Nebraska Weed Control Association and the North American Weed Management Association.
Weed Free Forage Certification Program

You can prevent potential noxious weed infestations by insisting on Certified Weed Free forage. As a buyer, you should be aware that noxious weed infested forage products can cost you hundreds or even thousands of dollars down the road. Ask your forage supplier to have their hay certified prior to harvest. Forage growers must call the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority one to two weeks prior to harvesting. There is no charge for the field inspections. There is a small charge for the cost of bale tags.

Lancaster County Weed Control Web site at www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/cnty/weeds provides very useful information about the Authority’s program and activities and about weed control and management. The site is continually being updated.

Via the Web site, you can:
- Contact the Weed Control Authority.
- Make a weed complaint.
- Take a real-time search of current weed inspections.
- Look at a map of noxious weed locations in the county.
- See the latest listing of possible weed special assessments.
- Study noxious weed and weed abatement laws and regulations.
- Learn about noxious weed identification.
- Read about the County Noxious Weed and City Weed Abatement Programs.
- See maps and reports.
- Check on noxious weed controls.
- Learn about managing natural areas in an urban setting.
- Test your knowledge about Nebraska weeds.
- Link to other weed control Web sites.

When Will Weeds Bloom?

GDD by Stage of Growth and Lincoln Date

This information can be used to project the dates the noxious weeds would reach each of its growth stages in a normal year or a year that varied from normal by tracking the accumulations of Growing Degree Days. Growing Degree Day information is available at Crop Watch Weather at http://cropwatch.unl.edu/weather.htm.

Average growing degree days for noxious weeds (by stage of growth) and date this would occur in Lincoln

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Growing Degree Days</th>
<th>Date (May)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bud</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>2005-05-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2005-06-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed Dispersal</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>2005-07-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed Filled</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>2005-08-16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GDD and Stages of Growth of Nebraska Noxious Weeds

The Weed Control Superintendents in counties having an official Nebraska Weather Station were asked to record the dates that 50 percent of the musk thistle, Canada thistle, plumeless thistle and leafy spurge reached their key stages of growth. These observations were made in 1995, 1996 and 1997. The observed dates that 50 percent of the noxious weeds reached each of its growth stages was matched up with 40º F GDD data from the weather stations showing at an average year required to reach each growth stage. Following is the average GDD required to reach the key growth stages for each of the observed noxious weeds and the date that this would occur in Lincoln in an average year.

When noxious weeds bloom depends whether you are in eastern Nebraska or western Nebraska or if the growing season is warmer or cooler than normal. Plants will bloom earlier in eastern Nebraska and earlier if the growing season is warmer. The concept of growing degree days was developed to predict the dates for growth stages for crops. Growing degree days can also be applied to other plants.

Growing Degree Days

The concept of growing degree days (GDD) resulted from observations that plants grow and development are more closely related to accumulation of temperature above a certain base than time alone. The base temperature is a threshold below which growth does not take place. A base temperature of 40º F is commonly used for cool-season crops and 50º F for warm-season crops.

GDD for a particular day are obtained by subtracting the appropriate base temperature from the average daily temperature. Thus, on a day with temperature averaging 60º F, the GDD for a cool-season plant such as noxious weeds would be 60 - 40 = 20. For a warm-season crop such as beans, GDD would be 60 - 50 = 10.

For More Information

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension publication EC30 “2006 Guide for Weed Management in Nebraska” includes herbicide recommendations for noxious weeds. Available at the extension office for $7. For free online at http://www2.ipm.unl.edu/seedl/seeds.
Nebraska Weed Management Areas

Much of the state is now organized into weed management areas (WMAs). Eight of the nine have formed in the last four years. The Lower Platte Weed Management Area (LPWMA) was formed in 2002. It began as an organized effort to fight the non-native weeds invading the Lower Platte River and then encouraged counties upstream to organize and fight these weeds before the seeds could come downstream. The purpose of creating a WMA is to coordinate efforts among landowners and others to manage common weed problems in a common area.

County weed control authorities had been developing annual noxious weed control plans and have been cooperating with public and private landowners and others in carrying out the noxious weed programs. But the WMA's allow for a more formalized way to involve others and to address common problems across a common area and not stopping at county lines.

The Lower Platte River, one of the most significant to the threatened piping plover and Doorly Zoo.

An example of the Web-based mapping program showing purple loosestrife infestations along the Platte River, online at http://www.lowerplattewma.org

Professional Invasive Weed Associations

Participation in the Nebraska Weed Control Association (NWCA) and the North American Weed Management Association (NAWMA) has helped the Lancaster County and Nebraska noxious weed programs. The control authority has contributed to these associations by its membership and participation of its staff. Following is a summary of some professional improvement and certification programs.

Professional Improvement and Certification

NWCA sponsors four continuing education sessions a year. NAWMA has a program that provides a Certified Manager of Invasive Plants which includes Internet available training and resource materials, certification exam and continuing education requirements.

Funding Needs

NAWMA has been a part of the steering committee of the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Pleading Together Initiative grant program which has provided funds for five areas in Nebraska including Lancaster County. A federal “Noxious Weed Control & Eradication Act” was passed with the support of NWCA and NAWMA. When funded, this law will make federal matching funds available to local weed control efforts. NWCA worked with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture and the Agricultural Committee of the Unicameral making noxious and invasive grants available and to get dedicated funding for the Nebraska Noxious Weed Program. Eight projects received grants from funds provided by the Nebraska Environmental Trust including the Lower Platte Weed Management Area.

Improved Laws and Authorities

NAWMA prepared a model invasive plant management act. NWCA working with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture and the Agricultural Committee of the Unicameral used some ideas from the model act to amend the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act to provide funds for five areas in Nebraska and to establish standards for a Weed-Free Forage Program and a Certified Manager of Invasive Plants which includes Internet available training and resource materials, certification exam and continuing education requirements.

Sharing Information

Both NWCA and NAWMA have Annual Conferences and NAWMA publishes a quarterly newsletter that provides for an exchange of information, education, training, weed management programs, and technologies. Both associations have information Web pages. The NWCA address is http://newcaw.org and NAWMA address is http://nawma.org.

Coordinated and Uniform Efforts

NAWMA worked with states (including NWCA) and provinces in establishing standards for a Weed-Free Forage Program and coordinating the development of invasive plant control standards. NWCA is making a state-wide Weed-based weed mapping program available with funding from associations like the Nebraska Environmental Trust. The continued interaction of weed management professionals not only provides these and other benefits, it reenergizes the participants and improves the quality and quantity of performance.
Spotted Knapweed

The mature plants break off at the root and dry hay can spread seed on the roadway caught and dragged by vehicles. Infestations released by the Knapweed inhibits also indicates that allelopathic chemicals released by the Knapweed are considered a major threat to wetland biodiversity. It can spread and form dense stands which block out other plants. The tall plants can change the habitat of wetland and waterway sites so the species that used to grow there are no longer able to survive.

If allowed to spread, it will colonize water margins, ponds and shallow lakes, affecting wetland wildlife. Purple loosestrife also has the potential to clog drainage and irrigation ditches. Each plant is capable of producing millions of seeds, which are mainly dispersed by water. Pieces of plant will also take root. Its ability to reproduce prolifically and spread also contribute to its weediness. This potential for rapid spread and increase in population size mean if we are to have a realistic chance of getting on top of the problem, we have to act quickly.

Until 2001, purple loosestrife was available through garden centers and nurseries. However, it has now been designated a noxious weed under the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act. This means it can’t be propagated or sold. We have requested almost 1,000 homeowners root out plants. Those homeowners, along with many others, have removed the plants. Landowners with the wild plants have been asked to remove these infestations. They are doing so and are providing follow-up control in following years. Homeowners that still have plants are requested to remove them and to encourage others to remove plants they may have. Any ornamental or wild plant should be reported to the Weed Control Authority.

Knapweeds

Knapweed is a serious threat to wetland and upland habitats. Knapweeds are both pioneer species which readily establish themselves on dry, disturbed soils, and they are dominant on many rangelands. They are able to outcompete and displace other established species when they are just getting started than when they become well established. Following is a description of some invasive weeds which have not yet taken hold in Lancaster County. Please report any sightings to the Weed Control Authority at 441-7817.

Purple loosestrife in Lincoln

Wild purple loosestrife in Lincoln (symbols with dots were found in 2005)

Common Reed

Common reed, or Phragmites, is a tall, perennial grass that can grow to over 15 feet in height. Once Phragmites invades a site, it quickly can take over a wetland community, crowding out native plants, changing wetland hydrology, altering wildlife habitat and increasing fire potential. It has been found in a few locations in Lancaster County along Salt Creek and other drainages. Almost 100 miles of the Platte River from North Platte to Kearney has solid stands of phragmites on both banks, adjacent wetlands and islands. It is spreading at an alarming rate. Common reed is reducing the flow capacity of the streams and impacting wildlife such as cranes, waterfowl, least terns and piping plovers. The reed will continue to spread, the trees will increase the threat of floods as rainfall returns to normal or above. It is a heavy water user, using twice as much water as the vegetation it replaces. The scattered infestations along the Lower Platte River have been doubling in the past three years.

Any suspected infestations of phragmites should be reported to the Authority.
As president of Family and Community Education (FCE) Council, I will introduce you to Alice Doane, My husband, Ted, and I live on a farm east of Waverly. We moved to Mark Lemke of Dalton and they have three children, Valerie, Brynne and Connie. Amy is married to Scott Kica of Millard and they have two daughters, Ashlee and Kortney. Extension and 4-H have been a big part of my life. I am a 4-H member and leader for over 50 years. I have been an extension and FCE member for over 45 years. I still think extension clubs, now FCE, are very important for the youth in our county. But like all other clubs and groups, getting new members is very difficult. There are so many opportunities for young mothers to get involved in — sports, school and 4-H activities — that getting people to commit to this important organization is hard.

As FCE members, we will still give lessons, work on scholarships for one hundred college students who have gone into Consumer Science, textile and medical fields, and do volunteer work such as the food bank, children’s home and social agencies.

I would like to thank Jan Boer for her leadership as president of FCE for the past two years. I am looking forward to working with the organization for the next two years.

President’s Notes — Alice’s Analysis

Upcoming Leader Training Lessons

The following community and FCE leader training lessons will be presented at 1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road in Lincoln. Non-FCE members or groups should call Pam at 441-7180 to register for these lessons.

Thursday, February 23 — Health of Children. UNL Extension Educators Alice Henneman (a registered dietitian) and Lorene Bartos will present this lesson.

Focus will be on helping Nebraska parents and their families develop basic skills in food preparation in order to plan and make healthy meals and snacks; adopt a family physical activity plan and develop a positive and healthy self-esteem for the entire family. Whether you are a new parent or a grandparent or family friend, this program will help you better support the health of children.

Thursday, March 23 — Core Giving: Challenges and Rewards. UNL Extension Educator Lorene Bartos will present this lesson which will examine how a person can best meet the needs of an elderly parent or disabled person. Utilizing community resources, maintaining the personal health and satisfaction of caregivers and determining ways to help with environmental and health needs will be addressed. Relationship dynamics of the person in need and the caregiver, in addition to other important issues are discussed in aid in making preliminary plans.

Council Meeting — March 27

The FCE Council meeting will be Monday, March 27, 7-9 p.m. (Note the change to Monday evening.) The program will be making Easter embroidered cards. Supplies will be furnished, cost will be $3.50 payable at the meeting. All FCE members are invited to attend. Call Pam at 441-7180 by March 20 so supply packets can be prepared. Bethline and Live and Learn Clubs are hosting the meeting.

FCE Scholarship Applications Due April 1

A $300 scholarship provided by the Lancaster County FCE Council is available for a graduate of a high school in Lancaster County or a permanent resident of Lancaster County majoring in family and consumer science or a health occupation.

This is open to full-time students believing their sophomore, junior or senior year of college in the fall of 2006 or who have completed two quarters of study in a vocational school. Applications are due April 1 in the extension office.

How Well Do You Know Your Child?

As parents, we sometimes are so busy taking care of our children’s physical need we lose track of some of the details of their lives. This activity will help to make you aware of how much — or how little — you know about your son or daughter.

Directions: Grab a pen and try to see how many of the following questions you can answer. Don’t be surprised if you get stumped along the way. When you get stumped, ask your child to correct your worksheet.

1. What is your child’s favorite food? 2. What occupies your child’s closest friend? 3. If your child could do anything for a day, what would it be? 4. What is your child’s favorite color? 5. What was the last movie your child saw? 6. What is your child’s favorite thing to do after school? 7. Which is your child’s favorite dinner: steak and salad, hamburger and fries or chicken and corn? 8. What has been the biggest disappointment in your child’s life this year? 9. Who is your child’s favorite singer or music group? 10. If your child had a choice to buy a pet, what would it be? 11. Which would your child rather do: wash dishes, mow the lawn, clean their room or vacuum the house? 12. Do your child’s friends call them by a nickname? If so, what is it?

13. What really makes your child laugh? 14. What was the last problem your child came to you for help with? 15. How old do you think your child is? 16. What is your child’s favorite pastime? 17. What is your child’s favorite color? 18. What is the favorite thing to do after school? 19. Which is your child’s favorite dinner: steak and salad, hamburger and fries or chicken and corn? 20. What has been the biggest disappointment in your child’s life this year? 21. Who is your child’s favorite singer or music group? 22. If your child had a choice, would they buy a pet or a toy? 23. Which would your child rather do: wash dishes, mow the lawn, clean their room or vacuum the house? 24. Do your child’s friends call them by a nickname? If so, what is it?

Strong Family Ties Help Teens

Many working parents try to plan a little extra time with their children. But what about extra time with your young teens? Sixth and seventh graders who have strong family attachments and are encouraged by their parents to be independent are less likely to engage in high-risk activities that could affect their health according to research at the University of California, San Francisco.

The study found students with strong family ties are less likely to have ridden in a car with a driver under the influence of drugs or alcohol, to plan sexual intercourse in the next year, or to have engaged in physical fights. These students were also less likely to try alcohol, marijuana or cigarettes. Researchers say the results question the emphasis placed on the belief teens are most strongly influenced by peers. “Older and strong parents are important because they show emotional bonding with family members during adolescence plays a valuable and protective role in teenage health.”

Radon, Indoor Air Quality and Energy Efficiency

Tuesday, March 7, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Holiday Inn Central, Omaha, NE

Registration fee is $40 by Feb. 28 or $50 at the door. For more information, call Lorene Bartos at 441-7180 or go to http://lancaster.unl.edu/home/news.htm

Dusting Tips

A vacuum and the new microfiber cloths (which can be used wet or dry) work very well. Use the brush attachment with your vacuum to clean more items and surfaces. Feather dusters and rags also work but may move dust around more. Dust high to low. The dust that moves around from the top can be caught or has time to settle before you clean the floor.

Dust before you disinfect especially in the bathroom so you’re not moving hair and dirt from surface to surface. The vacuum works well for these as well as for moldings and baseboards.
Barb and Ron Suing

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Barb and Ron Suing as co-winners of March’s “Heart of 4-H Award” in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

Married for 27 years, the Suinges began volunteering for 4-H when their three children joined 4-H.

Barb was leader of the Creative Town Girls 4-H Club for 16 years, was a 4-H Recruiter, has been 4-H Food Superintendent at the Lancaster County Fair for 25 years and has been a longtime volunteer at the Nebraska State Fair.

Ron was leader of the Hills Heroes 4-H club for 6 years, has taught Rocketry at Clover College for 10 years, has been a longtime volunteer at the Nebraska State Fair.

The couple also sponsors plaques at the County Fair. “I like watching our youth grow up and maybe be something more than they may have been without your support and/or advice,” says Barb. Ron says he likes to keep busy — “more than they may have been without your support.”

Barb and Ron were the first to volunteer to clean up debris. “My wife and I would like to express our most sincere ‘Thank You’ to everyone for all the great help you gave in the cleanup effort after our big barn fire,” says Gordon. “All the hard work was greatly appreciated and was a much needed high point after the devastation of the fire.”

Horizon BITS

Scholarship Applications Due March 1

Get your applications filled out! The R.B. Warren 4-H Horse Scholarship has one $500 scholarship available. The Grand Island Saddle Club has four $1,000 scholarships available. You must be currently enrolled and active in the 4-H horse program. You must be planning on attending a college in the University of Nebraska system.

You may apply while in your sophomore year of high school through your sophomore year in college. For complete directions and applications go to 4-H Web site at http://4h.unl.edu/kids/scholarships.htm.

Horse Judging Certification Seminar, March 10

The 4-H Horse Judging Certification Seminar will again be offered the evening before the 4-H Horse Stampede, Friday, March 10 in the Animal Science Building. For more information or a registration form, go to http://animalscience.unl.edu/horse/judges/judges.htm.

Upcoming Spring 4-H Clinics

The Horse VIPS Committee is planning several clinics for 4-H members this spring. There will be a trail clinic and a dressage clinic, one at the end of March and one in April. Details have not yet been worked out, watch for further announcements. For more information, please email Joyce Agena at memaagen@wmconnect.co.

Horse Leaders’ Workshop, April 1

The 2006 4-H Horse Project Leaders’ Workshop will be held Saturday, April 1 at the Hall County Extension office in Grand Island. The workshop will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Topics may include: What’s new in the “new” rule book, dress code updates, bridging the gap between 4-H and breed shows, UNL’s new equine science option and all necessary forms for advanced level III. Cost is $25 per person which includes lunch, breaks and a packet of materials. Registration forms can be picked up at the extension office or online at http://animalscience.unl.edu/horse.

Kiwians Karnival, April 22

The annual Kiwians Karnival, a FREE family event is sponsored by the Lincoln Center Kiwians. This year, it will be held Saturday, April 22, 7-9 p.m. at Elliott Elementary School, 225 S. 26th Street, Lincoln. The Karnival features carnival type games for the kids, bingo for adults, prizes, snacks, fun and fellowship. Kiwians provides prizes and snacks. 4-H clubs are needed to provide carnival-type booths. This is a great community service and leadership activity for clubs. If your 4-H club or family would like to have a booth or for more information, call Lorene at 441-7180.

Jammie Jamboree, June 17

Mark your calendar for the upcoming “Jammie Jamboree” hands-on workshop to be held Saturday, June 17 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Make your own jam-mie bottom to enter in the fair and wear at the Style Revue. More details will be in the April Nebline.

4-H Strategic Plan Survey

Nebraska 4-H is in the process of developing goals for the next five years. Please give your feedback about what’s important to you by filling out a survey online at http://4h.unl.edu.

Lone Star 4-H Club Assists With Cleanup After Chapelles’ Barn Fire

Last August, lightning hit Gordon and Ellen Chapelles’ barn and started a fire which burned the building down. Luckily, the Chapelles herd of turkeys was moved out of the barn safely.

The Chapelles have been involved with Lancaster County 4-H for more than 35 years. They are former club leaders and hosted the Pioneer Livestock Show each spring to give 4-Hers experience showing their animals in public. Ellen was named the Heart of 4-H Award winner in July 2004.

The Chapelles have long sponsored livestock trophies at the Lancaster County Fair. After the fire, several Lone Star 4-H Club members and their families who live near the Chapelles helped Gordon and Ellen clean up debris. “My wife and I would like to express our most sincere ‘Thank You’ to everyone for all the great help you gave in the cleanup effort after our big barn fire,” says Gordon. “All the hard work was greatly appreciated and was a much needed high point after the devastation of the fire.”

Online Training Resource for 4-H Volunteers

An online leader training is available to help volunteers become better 4-H leaders. Volunteers can receive information, tips and ideas on various aspects of the 4-H program at their own pace.

To gain access to the site, users must have an e-mail address and access to the Internet. Sign up by e-mailing Lisa Kaslon at lkaslon2@unl.edu. Instructions and a password will be sent to you on how to utilize this site.

There are many changes in the static exhibit classes, please be sure to read descriptions thoroughly. Also new this year, poultry exhibitors will be expected to participate in herdsmanship duties (helping keep alley clean and keep animals clean, neat and attractive). Exhibitors will be asked to sign up for a two-hour block of time to keep watch over the poultry area.

Deadline for all 4-H/FAA animal entries and 4-H contest registrations is July 7.

Online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h

Contact Lorene at 441-7180.

April Fair Books Due to be Mailed by Mid-March

2006 Lancaster County Fair Books will be mailed to all 4-H families by mid-March.

New in the 4-H areas this year are:
• Youth in Motion
• Model Cars
• Fast Foods
• Special County Theme, “A Slice of the Good Life,” exhibits
• Cattle Fitting Contest (replaces the Pretty Cow Contest)

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The Lincoln Center Kiwanis Club presents Outstanding 4-H Club Awards to the top 4-H clubs participating in the Lancaster County Fair. There are three categories based on number of club members. One category winner is awarded the Wayne C. Farmer memorial cup as the overall Outstanding 4-H Club for the year.

Clubs receive points based on all members' total county fair exhibit and contest placings. The following clubs were recognized at a recent Lincoln Center Kiwanis meeting as well as at 4-H Achievement Night:

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**Rabbits R Us 4-H Club of Lincoln** is the winner of Category I (7 members or less) — and winner of the Wayne C. Farmer trophy as overall Outstanding 4-H Club for the year. At the 2005 Lancaster County Fair, the club's five members were enrolled in approximately 32 projects and entered 128 total exhibits. The club is winning this award for the third time. Becky McHenry is club leader and there are four assistant leaders.

**Cool Clovers 4-H Club of Lincoln** is winner of Category II (8–12 members). The club's 10 members were enrolled in approximately 43 projects and entered 115 total exhibits at the County Fair. The club is winning this award for the first time. Gene and Darlorette Veburg were club leaders (Jean Pedersen is current leader).

**Shimmering Shamrocks 4-H Club of Lincoln** is winner of Category III (13 or more members). The club's 34 members were enrolled in approximately 26 projects and entered 210 total exhibits at the Lancaster County Fair. The club is winning this award for the first time.

City of Lincoln Mayor Coleen J. Seng proclaimed February as "4-H Month" (see above). Rachel Pickrel read the proclamation at Achievement Night.

For a complete list of award, scholarship and pin recipients (as well as additional photos) visit online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4H.
Keep More of What You Work for with Free Tax Preparation

Lincoln’s Volunteer Tax Assistance Program

Volunteers throughout Lincoln are now offering federal and state tax return preparation through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. The VITA is a national program providing free assistance to low-income, elderly, limited-English proficient and disabled individuals who require assistance in preparing their tax returns and cannot afford the services of a paid professional tax preparer.

Volunteers are taught basic tax preparation techniques and technology, enabling them to easily handle most returns or at least know where to find the answer in the IRS quick reference guides. Volunteers are trained to prepare basic Forms 1040 tax returns, including, Schedule A or itemized deductions, claims for the Earned Income Tax Credit, other tax credits and the comparable state tax forms. Volunteers do not prepare business or complex tax returns.

Free electronic filing of the federal tax return will also be available at some locations. Electronically filed tax forms greatly increase the speed of filing returns and help reduce return errors. Combined with direct deposits, the refund can be received within 10 to 14 days.

What You Need to Bring to Tax Preparation Sites

• photo ID and Social Security Card (or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) for self-employed, your spouse and dependents (children, etc.))
• this year’s tax package (if available)
• wage and earnings statements (W-2)
• a copy of last year’s return
• interest & dividend statements (Forms 1099)
• any other information concerning your income and expenses for 2005
• your spouse, if you have a joint return — they must be present to sign the required forms

Do I Qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)?

If you’re like millions of Americans, you work hard but don’t earn a high income. The federal government has several resources including the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), that can help you and your family. The EITC is essentially a tax credit for low-income workers who meet certain qualifications, which usually means more money in their pockets. If you qualify, you could pay less federal income tax, pay no tax or receive a refund.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and its community partners are working to increase EITC participation among taxpayers who have low incomes and meet EITC eligibility rules. We know the rules can be complicated and we want to help you understand all the eligibility requirements.

Claimants must have a valid Social Security number. In addition, one must meet certain residency and filing criteria, including following guidelines for a qualifying child. The following are basic income requirements for 2005:

• a taxpayer’s total earned income must be at least $1 and their earned income and adjusted gross income (AGI) must both be less than:
  • $11,750 with no qualifying child ($13,750 if married, filing jointly)
  • $13,030 with one qualifying child ($15,030 if married, filing jointly)
  • $35,263 with more than one qualifying child ($37,263 if married, filing jointly)

Investment income cannot be more than $2,700.

If you think you might qualify for EITC and would like assistance, you can call 1-800-829-1040 or go to www.irs.gov/eitc and select “EITC Assistant.”

Outgoing board member Phil Rooney (at left) was recognized for his outstanding service to extension. Also pictured is board president Clarice Steffens.

Outgoing board member Phil Rooney was recognized during the January board meeting for his long-time dedication and service to Lancaster County Extension.
There are no place like Nebraska.

At Nebraska, this Lincoln Student Works Smarter, not Harder

Alexis Wimmer, a junior industrial and management systems engineering major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a Lincoln Christian alum, knows there isn’t one solution for every problem. In her major, she uses her critical thinking to make work safer, easier and working with Dr. Susan Hallbeck in tools, “We went to the Medical and a couple of companies have great chance to be part of the the professors really well.”

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THE NEBLINE

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University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension
444 Cherry creek Road, Suite A
Lincoln, NE 68528-1507

Phone: (402) 441-7180

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Mail to:
UNL Extension in Lancaster County
444 Cherry Creek Road, Suite A • Lincol, Nebraska 68528-1507

Sonia Cochran
Extension Education Center
Lancaster Extension Education Center
444 Cherry Creek Road, Suite A
Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507

Phone: (402) 441-7180

E-mail: lancaster@unl.edu • Fax: 441-7148

Lecture on “Aggression and the New American Girl,” Feb. 23

Dr. James Garbarino, a leading authority on child development and youth violence, will present “See Jane Hit: Aggression and the New American Girl” on Thursday, Feb. 23 from 6-8 p.m. at the UNL City Campus Union, 14th & R Streets in Lincoln. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Garbarino is the author of more than 130 articles and 20 books, including his most recent book, “See Jane Hit: Why Girls Are Growing More Violent and What We Can Do About It.” See Jane Hit is not just a powerful wake-up call – it’s a clear-eyed, compassionate prescription for real-world solutions.

This is the first in a series of Signature Speakers presented by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension and Human Science in collaboration with the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth Families and Schools and the UNL Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa.

Sheep, Swine and Goat Workshop, March 13

A free workshop has been scheduled on sheep, swine and goats, Monday, March 13 at 6:30 p.m., at the Kimmel Event Building in Syracuse. This clinic will feature specialized speakers and demonstrations on animal selection, grooming and showmanship along with feeding and nutrition. Clinic is open to anyone. If you have any questions or would like to register call Deanna at 441-7180, or Jim Bauman at 794-5465.

Environmental Award Nominations Due March 16

Nominations are being sought for the 2006 Lincoln–Lancaster County Environmental Awards. Do you know of an individual, business or group who deserves to be recognized for their environmental stewardship efforts? If so, please call Harry Heffer at 441-8035 or go to www.extension.unl.edu/city/health/environment/klkb/awards.htm. Deadline is March 16.

Entries for Master Conservationist Program Due April 1

Youth and adults who have implemented soil and water conservation practices in both rural and urban areas are eligible to enter the 2006 Master Conservationist Recognition Program. The deadline for entries is April 1.

The Master Conservationist program includes categories for production agriculture (farming and ranching), residences, communities and private businesses as well as youth groups and individuals. Master Conservationist program brochures are available at the extension office.

The Master Conservationist program is sponsored by the Omaha World-Herald and the UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Recognition plaques will be presented at the annual NARD banquet Sept. 25 in the Kearney Holiday Inn. For more information, go to http://anpuls.unl.edu/mas terconserv.pdf or contact Dick Fleming at 472-8742 or e-mail rfleming@unl.edu.
Explore Career Options at Big Red Academic Camps

The 2006 Big Red Summer Academic Camps feature 10 career exploration camps hosted by Nebraska 4-H and UNL faculty members. The camps are residence camps held on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus. Housing and food are provided.

After spending several fun-filled days exploring a specific topic such as movie-making or fashion design, youth showcase their work at a special “capstone event” which family members are invited to attend.

Brochures and registration forms are available at http://bigredcamps.unl.edu or at the extension office. For more information, call 472-2805. 4-H members are encouraged to apply for a scholarship — application is on the Web site. Save by registering before April 1!

Big Red Summer Academic Camps

* Child Development June 11-16 grades 9-12 $350/$400
* CSI Nebraska June 11-16 grades 9-12 $375/$425
* Calendology™ June 11-16 grades 9-12 $375/$425
* Fashion Design June 11-16 grades 9-12 $350/$400
* Heronimistry June 11-16 grades 9-12 $300/$350
* Media Mania June 11-16 grades 9-12 $350/$400
* Movie-Making June 11-16 grades 9-12 $450/$500
* Theatricals June 11-16 grades 9-12 $300/$350
* Web Design and Animation June 11-16 grades 9-12 $375/$425
* Unicameral Youth Conference June 11-14 grades 9-12 $200/$250

Scholarships available.

For more information, go to http://www.nebraskahorse council.org/Expo2006.htm

4-H Volunteer T-Shirts Available

4-H volunteer T-shirts with above pocket design are available for sale at the extension office. Shirts are burgundy, 50/50 blend and available in sizes S, M, L, XL & XXL. Cost is $6.50.