The NEBLINE, January 2000

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Who is your house healthy?

Lorene Bartos
Extension Educator

Happy 2000!! The Y2K SCARE is past. Even so, it is necessary to stay prepared for future disasters and emergencies. Now is the time to look at the new year and make plans for the environment of the home. A yearly maintenance check is very important and can save time and expense. What are your plans for the new century? Are you planning to remodel, build a new home or keep things the way they are? Regardless of your plans, looking forward and making a check of the home can benefit your family in this new decade. Start by doing a self-inspection or walk-through of your home. Begin by touring your household. As you tour, look for biological pollutants, minor repairs that need to be made, appliances that need to be repaired or replaced, moisture or water damage and other things in your home may be a hindrance to the health of the family. Since Americans spend up to 90% of their time indoors, often at home, breathing clean indoor air is necessary for good health.

Biological pollutants are or were living organisms. These pollutants travel through the air and are often invisible. Some common indoor biological pollutants are: animal dander (minute scales from hair, feathers or skin); dust mites and cockroach parts; fungi (molds); infectious agents (bacteria or viruses); and pollen. Even very clean homes may permit the growth of biological pollutants. Nutrients and moisture are essential for growth. The conditions can be found in many locations, such as bathrooms, damp or flooded basements, wet appliances (such as humidifiers and air conditioners) and even some carpets and furniture.

Molds are many times detected by a musty odor. Growth of mold can often be seen in the form of a discoloration, ranging from white to orange and green to brown and black. Mildew is a common mold. Mold requires moisture, thrives on organic materials and grows best in warm temperate climates. To prevent mold from growing, keep surfaces and household textiles clean and dry. The relative humidity in the home should range between 30 and 60 percent. Reduce humidity by using exhaust fans, venting clothes dryers to the outside and increasing the air flow in problem areas.

If replacing carpets are on the agenda for the new year, the Carpet and Rug Institute suggests the following guidelines: Choose a carpet certified to have low VOC emissions. VOCs are volatile organic compounds such as petroleum distillates, formaldehyde, mineral spirits, chlorinated solvents, trichloroethylene, etc. Arrange to roll out the carpet/pad/cushion to vent for 24 to 48 hours before installation. Plan installation of carpet in mild weather conditions to allow for doors and windows to be open. Increase ventilation for a few days after installation. When old carpets and pads are removed, carefully remove the dust that has collected as this is a good collection point for airborne contaminants.

If you have an older home, check for asbestos and the use of lead-base paint. Any surface painted prior to 1980 could contain lead. Asbestos can be found in resilient floor tiles and sheet flooring, steam pipes, boilers and furnace ducts, roofing and siding shingles.

Plan to clean some of the areas that get slighted. Remember to check the air conditioner, humidifier, dehumidifier and refrigerator. Clean the furnace filters and clean the vents in the bathrooms. Also check the dryer vent.

When you finish the tour of your home, make a list of things that need to be cleaned, replaced or repaired. Prepare a time line and make a budget to cover the cost that may be incurred. Start the new century on the right foot with a home that is safe and healthy for your family. (LB)
Humidity in home effects plants too

Dry air in your home not only makes you feel uncomfortable, but it also harms your plant’s growth. Moisture in the air is essential to create a disease-free and humid environment. Most houseplants grow best at 40 to 60 percent humidity, but can tolerate levels as low as 20 percent. Unfortunately, home heating systems take moisture out of the air, and houses commonly have lower than a 20 percent humidity level in the winter. How do you tell if your plants need more humidity? Look for these danger signs:

- Yellow, wilt and fall off the plant.
- Many flowering blooms and yellowed leaf edges.
- Dried up flower buds and yellowed leaf edges.
- Fusil leaves turn yellow, wilt and fall off the plant.

The foliage plants which prefer a more humid environment include the thinner leaved plants such as ferns, philodendron and spider plant. Each and succulents are native to deserts and they can tolerate low humidity levels.

You can minimize the damaging effects of low humidity to your plants by following proper watering practices.

- Plant tissue dries out because the plant loses water faster than it can take water up from its roots. Our plants have a harder time when you forget to water them and the soil dries out. Water plants before the soil dries out. Your front door, a beacon to visitors, is the house’s focal point and the garden is planned on either side of it are appropriate. Taller plants are suitable for corners, where they will funnel the viewer’s eye toward your doorway plants and front door. Houses that are to tall appear shorter if the corner plantings extend like wings on each side, with the tallest plants at or near the corners.

Trees frame the house, focusing interest on it as the main feature of your property. Plant trees whose mature size is in scale with the house, or low houses will look dwarfed and tall houses will appear even taller than they actually are.

Select trees to match the house design. Deeply angled roof lines and dormer windows call for pyramidal trees such as spruce. Trees with rounded or horizontal form, maples and dogwoods, are better companions for the low lines of a ranch type dwelling.

- Low shrubs and ground covers along house walls provide a smooth transition from building to lawn. Shrubs along the front wall reduces the apparent height of a tall building.
- Having open spaces with natural mulches and ground covers in the planting can make low-built houses appear more massive.

The simpler a planting near the house, the better. Use only a few kinds of shrubs, but plan for some variety in size, form and texture. Consider adding areas for flowers or ornamental grasses, but keep these at a minimum height. Select shrubs whose natural height and growth covers along house walls provide a smooth transition from building to lawn. Shrubs along the front wall reduces the apparent height of a tall building. Having open spaces with natural mulches and ground covers in the planting can make low-built houses appear more massive.

Air layering tropical plants

Air layering is a simple method of propagating indoor ornamental plants that have become overcrowned. No special growing facilities are needed. All that is needed are sheets of plastic, tape and twist ties and sphagnum moss.

The idea behind air layering is to create a damp, temperate environment on the stem to encourage root growth. The plant will do the rest. The newly rooted branch is cut and then potted as an independent plant. Rooting time varies from a few weeks to months.

Tropical plants can be air layered almost anytime. Roots seem to grow faster when layering is done during late winter through spring, while the plant is actively growing.

Have the following tools ready: a sharp pruning knife, moistened sphagnum moss, rooting hormone, clear piece of plastic, tape and twist ties.

Choose a branch that is at least pencil-thick. Many tropical plants will root anywhere along the stem, but layering at the node is recommended. Remove the leaves at the node. Make a diagonal cut one-third to one-half way through the stem just below the node, then cut the extrusion upward toward the node. If you want to use a rooting hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Take a handful of the hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Take a handful of the hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Take a handful of the hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Take a handful of the hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Take a handful of the hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Take a handful of the hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Take a handful of the hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Take a handful of the hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Take a handful of the hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Take a handful of the hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Take a handful of the hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Take a handful of the hormone, dust the powdered into the fresh wound. Wrap the plastic around the moss. At this point remove the twist ties. Leave the plant in its plastic envelope.

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Amaryllis – Save that bulb for next year

What do you do with that amaryllis bulb you got for Christmas now that it is done flowering? Throw it out? NO! With proper care you can get it to bloom again next year.

When blooming ends, and the danger of frost is past, amaryllis plants can be placed outdoors in a sunny spot. Sink the pot to the rim in a flower bed among your other garden plants. The bulb is storing food for next year’s flowers during this time so proper watering, fertilization and light will pay dividends in larger or more flowers next year.

In the fall, watering and fertilization should stop, the yellow leaves removed close to the top of the bulb, and the pot moved indoors to prevent freezing. Place the pot in a cool cellar to “rest” until around the first of the year. Start watering and fertilizing once new growth begins. (MIM)
Winter bubbles

How does blowing bubbles in the winter affect the bubbles? Try this recipe and find out!

Materials:
1 cup dishwashing liquid
2 cups warm tap water
Plastic bowl
4 tablespoons glycercine
1 teaspoon sugar
Bubble blower

Procedure:
1. Mix the dishwashing liquid and the warm tap water in the plastic bowl.

2. Add the glycercine.
3. Add the sugar.
4. Go outside on a cold night and blow bubbles with the solution. What do you notice about the bubbles?

5. Add 2 drops of dishwashing liquid inside and compare these with the ones you blew outside.

Explanation:
Water and dishwashing liquid form a thin film that can be inflated with air to form a bubble. Soap bubbles are shaped by the balance between the outward pressure of the gas inside and the force of surface tension holding the liquid of the bubbles together.

Surface tension is the force of the molecules in water attracting one another. Sometimes the bubbles appear to be motionless. If it is cold enough, the bubbles will sparkle as they freeze, and if they hit the snow, they will bounce. (ALH)
Low commodity prices in recent years have prompted a group of producers in Lancaster County to explore production options other than the production of “bulk commodities.” This group has formed a steering committee made up of representatives of the Lancaster County chapter of Farm Bureau, plus several agency personnel, including extension staff. The group calls themselves the Southeast Nebraska Area Producers (SNAP). They have been meeting monthly to explore options, the major goal being to improve profitability in grain production.

An option that shows promise is to convert a portion of the grain production in the area to “specialty” or “value-added” grains. A number of specialty grains have come on the market in recent years. These crops provide income that gives them greater value when they are processed into certain animal feeds and into food products for human consumption as compared to traditional varieties.

Why aren’t more farmers growing value-added grains? Specialty grains have met with substantial acceptance as alternatives to bulk commodities by crop producers for several reasons. First, these are crops that must be produced in such a way that cross-contamination from off-type grains is held to very low levels or eliminated almost entirely. This requires extra time and labor to thoroughly clean harvesting, harvesting, grain handling and storage to prevent any cross-contamination that can occur as a result of convection currents that can draw in moist air at the bottom hatch, fans and ducts after the aeration is complete. Grain temperature changes about 50 degrees faster than the moisture content, so the air’s relative humidity is of little concern during grain cooling. Once grain temperature is reduced to less than 50 degrees F, fans can be run intermittently to remove any remaining periods of high humidity. Cover hatches, fans and ducts after grain is cooled for winter storage to prevent any snow from blowing into the bin. Cover the fan whenever it’s not running to prevent re-wetting that can occur as a result of convection currents that can draw in moist air at the bottom of the bin during wet weather.

Grain check can save crop

Stored grain should be checked every two to four weeks to ensure temperature and moisture levels will not support insect development. Moisture measurement depends on the grain temperature, so it’s best to collect a grain sample at room temperature in a plastic bag or other sealed container, then determine moisture content. Record date for future reference. Be sure to wear a safety harness when entering the bin and that someone is on the outside of the bin to help in an emergency. Grain should be at 30-36 degrees F for winter storage in Nebraska. Maintaining grain temperature below 70 degrees F reduces insect reproduction. Insects become dormant at temperatures below 50 degrees F and are killed below 32 degrees F. Mold growth is nearly zero at temperatures below 40 degrees F. Aeration should have started before the average outdoor temperature was 20 degrees cooler than the grain temperature. Typically, grain is stored shortly after harvest, once in the fall and again in late fall as outdoor temperatures cool. When cooling grain, be certain that the cooling front is pushed all the way through the grain mass before discontinuing the aeration. A cooling front pushed partway through the grain can result in moisture condensation in the boundary layer that can be difficult to remove. This is particularly true if the grain temperature is being lowered more than 20 degrees in one step. The amount of time required for an aeration cooling cycle depends on the airflow rate. The cooling rate can be estimated by dividing 15 by the airflow rate. For example, 75 hours is needed with an airflow rate of 0.2 cfm/bu. Check grain temperature at several locations to determine if the cooling front is complete. Grain temperature changes about 50 degrees faster than the moisture content, so the air’s relative humidity is of little concern during grain cooling. Once grain temperature is reduced to less than 50 degrees F, fans can be run intermittently to remove any remaining periods of high humidity. Cover hatches, fans and ducts after grain is cooled for winter storage to prevent any snow from blowing into the bin. Cover the fan whenever it’s not running to prevent re-wetting that can occur as a result of convection currents that can draw in moist air at the bottom of the bin during wet weather.

Farmers Tax Guides available

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Area producers planning to shift production to value-added grains

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Nebraska Conservation Program

The mission of the Nebraska Conservation Tree Program is to provide high quality seedling stock to rural Nebraska landowners for environmental purposes at cost. The seedlings can only be used for conservation plantings which include wildlife habitat, field windbreak systems, Christmas trees, stream bank stabilization and timber.

The Nebraska Forest Service encourages residents from other states to contact their state forestry agency for assistance in planning, purchasing and planting trees for conservation purposes and to plant trees for beautification in your communities.

Ordering trees

Trees can be ordered in bundles of 25 per species with a minimum order of 100 seedlings. Seedlings, for 2000 delivery, are $62.00 per 100 plus 5% state sales tax and any appropriate city sales tax. Delivery is made by the United Parcel Service. All shipments are made during April.

To place an order for seedlings, obtain an order form from the Nebraska Forest Service, 103 Plant Industry Building, UNL East Campus, Lincoln, NE 68583-0815. (402) 472-6625; local Natural Resources District; local Cooperative Extension office; or your District Forester’s office. Fill out the order form with your name and address, the name and common use of the species desired. Seedlings are to be shipped, the number of seedlings desired for each species (species in multiples of 25 and a total of order of 100 or more) and sign the form. If you have specific questions, you can call (402) 472-6624. If you wish to place a telephone order, dial 1-800-600-1573. Please include a check payable to the Nebraska State Forester for the correct amount.

Selecting trees and shrubs

The basic criteria for plant selection in Nebraska are hardiness and function. Hardiness means the ability to withstand cold, heat, drought and other adverse soil and environmental conditions. Function refers to the intended use of the plant in the landscape. Functional considerations include mature size, growth rates, longevity (how long the plant is expected to live), form, texture, strength, color, flowering habit, insect and disease resistance and other physiological characteristics. No species is perfect, but some species have more desirable characteristics than others. Planting objectives, historically have performed well. Species characteristics such as mature size, color (remember seasonal differences such as spring versus fall color), form and leaf types (important when it’s time to rake leaves) can be identified readily when you are looking at actual plants. Other characteristics such as growth rate and longevity, soil drainage needs, shade tolerance and maintenance needs are equally important but more difficult to determine. Local foresters, arborists or nursery professionals are a good source of information concerning the species characteristics mentioned above.

Once you have selected the species that will perform the desired function in your landscape, visit a reliable nursery in your local area. Nursery plants usually are properly cultivated and trained, have well-developed root and crown systems and are more likely to survive than wild trees. Nurseries also offer a large selection of sizes and species. (DJ)

Fertilizing trees

Fertilize trees only when necessary. If growth is adequate and steady, foliage appears healthy and there has been no major disturbance around the tree, no fertilization is needed.

When fertilizing is necessary, slow release, balanced, granular fertilizer or soil-applied liquids should be distributed over the tree’s entire root zone. Applying fertilizer through holes augured into the soil or with fertilizer spikes is not recommended. Routine trunk and other adhesive trunks of fertilizers are not recommended. (DJ)

Pruning windbreak trees

Resist the urge to prune windbreak trees to look like residential yard trees. Pruning live branches from older trees will decrease density and reduce the efficiency of the windbreak. Remember that the effectiveness of a windbreak is dependent on the overall picture of the windbreak and not on the shape of any individual tree. Although good windbreak management may require pruning under some circumstances, the best rule of thumb is to avoid pruning windbreak trees unless there is a very specific reason to do so.

Branches damaged by ice, wind, animal grazing or bird roosting should be removed. Damage to the central leader of a conifer causes the lateral branches to assume the role of the central leader and begin to grow upward. If left to grow, a double leader may develop, creating a weak spot in the trunk as the tree matures. Forked and multi-stemmed trees are prone to wind breakage, and don’t grow as tall as single stem trees. However, before they are removed, make sure the structural integrity of your windbreak will be maintained after removal.

Pruning is often regarded as a labor intensive effort, but when required, it pays off in a healthy windbreak. A yearly inspection to look for and prune damaged or deformed trees will keep the task manageable and will contribute to a long lived, healthy windbreak. Pruning on a regular basis, generally in late winter, will reduce the likelihood of an expensive pruning or salvage effort later in the life of the windbreak and may limit storm damage. If done on a regular basis, effective pruning can be done with hand clippers and a small pruning saw. A clean cut will heal quickly, reducing the potential of invasion by insects or fungi. Make the cut just outside the swollen branch collar at the base of the branch. If large limbs must be removed, make a small undercut first, then saw from the top. (DJ)

In some agroforestry applications involving high value hardwoods, pruning to improve sawlog quality may be an integral part of windbreak management. Under these conditions, additional plantings of shrubs or conifers may be prepared in order to increase the density of the lower portion of the windbreak. (DJ)

Providing water for winter birds

While water is less important than food to birds, it can make a difference in the number of birds visiting your feeders.

We often think birds do not need open water once the snow has fallen, this is really not true. First, there is often a critical transitory period when there is no snow on the ground, yet all the puddles and small streams have frozen over from the cold. Birds can be attracted to water then? They must fly to a large body of water. Second, birds seek food near water or ice. During winter, birds need water in many different times of a day which may not be practical for most people who work all day. With a bird bath, you can maintain an ice free bath to attract more wild birds and keep them coming back even in sub-zero temperatures. Although a bird bath can be quite costly initially, they quickly redeem their cost when you have a line up of birds waiting for a drink because there is not enough room around the bath. Heaters are completely safe, but make sure they have automatic shut off or heat cycling on/off should the bath freeze. (DJ)

Learn at your convenience

 НуФАКТС (audio) Information Center
 НуФАКТС audio message center offers fast, convenient information. In the Lincoln area call 441-7188; for the rest of Nebraska call 1-800-832-5441. When directed, enter the 3-digit number of the message you wish to hear.

Acreage & Small Farm Insights Web Site
Visit our Internet web site at: http://www.lanr.unl.edu/lanr/dodge/acrage/index.htm to learn about Extension programs, publications and links to other acreage and small farm information.

“Part-time Farming” video

“Part-time Farming” will help develop your country environment and improve your quality of life. Just one hour of “Part-time Farming” provides tips that will save you costly mistakes and precious time. Call 402-441-7180 to order your copy.
A safe kitchen

Kitchens are one of the busiest rooms in the house. Some activities may include: peeling and slicing foods; cooking and baking at high temperatures; preventing harmful bacterial growth in foods and preparing nutritious foods. Even though these activities are routine, they are also dangerous. To keep you and your family safe remember the following:

2. Turn pot handles away from the front of the stove.
3. Keep the kitchen clean to prevent falls and discourage rodents.
4. Have a special place to store knives. Cut food on a clean cutting board.
5. Dry your hands completely before using an electrical appliance. Use appliances that have an Underwriters Laboratory (UL) designation.
6. Store cleaners, disinfectants and insecticides in original containers. Keep them away from food and children to prevent poisoning.

Warm up with some beef stew.

**Beef Stew**
Makes 4 servings

- 2 cups cubed beef
- 1/2 cup sliced carrots
- 1 cup sliced celery
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 2 teaspoons beef bouillon granules

**Orange Mustard Pork Chop Skillet**
Serves 4

- 4 top loin pork chops
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons honey mustard

In non-stick skillet, brown chops on one side over medium-high heat; turn chops; stir in remaining ingredients. Lower heat; simmer covered for 6 to 8 minutes until chops are done (160 degrees F internal temperature; pork will have a hint of pink inside). (AHE)

**Orange Mustard Pork Chop Skillet**

As winter rolls around, power outages is always a concern. Here are some general guidelines to help you cope if your freezer/refrigerator loses power. It’s always wise to keep an appliance thermometer in your refrigerator and your freezer. This will help you determine if your food has stayed at a safe temperature. It’s difficult to tell whether a food is safe or not—when in doubt, remember the phrase: When in doubt, throw it out!

**FREEZER GUIDELINES:**
- All frozen perishable food that has been held above 0 degrees F over 2 hours. Refer to refrigerator section about foods that may be safely stored at room temperature.
- Foods in a separate free-standing chest or upright freezer that is full will stay frozen for about 2 days if kept closed. For greatest safety, TOSS foods in a full-free standing chest/upright freezer after 2 days unless you can verify with a thermometer that the freezer temperature is staying 40 degrees F or lower.
- Foods in a separate free-standing chest or upright freezer that’s only half or partially full may stay frozen up to 1 day, if kept closed. For greatest safety, TOSS foods in a half-free-standing chest/upright freezer after 1 day unless you can verify with a thermometer that the freezer temperature is staying 40 degrees F or lower.
- Most freezers that are part of a refrigerator/freezer combo may keep food frozen up to a day, if kept closed. For greatest safety, TOSS foods in a refrigerator-freezer combination after 1 day unless you can verify with a thermometer that your freezer temperature is staying 40 degrees F or lower.
- If dry ice was obtained and chops after 3-5 days
- As long as when it was frozen:
- Cook refrozen meat immediately after thawing. Cook refrozen meat immediately after thawing. If meat was sold in the freezer for a day or so before it was initially frozen, it will be safe a shorter time after thawing.

**Clean hands campaign**

Have fun using “glo-germ” to teach handwashing to youth and adults. Receive handouts for your group and a copy of reproduc-

Get in the Lincoln area call 441-7188: for the rest of Nebraska call 1-800-832-5441. When directed, enter the 3-digit number of the message you wish to hear.

**What to do if your power goes out:**

- If meat was stored in the refrigerator for a day or so before it was initially frozen, it will be safe a shorter time after thawing.

- If meat is still safe (see above), cook it or refreeze it. Cook refrozen meat immediately after thawing.
Family rituals: what are yours?

Clarice's Column

Clarence Steffens
FCE Council Chair

Pam has called! She gave me the deadline for getting an article written ready for NEBLINE for FCE! That means I must face the reality that I will be writing this column monthly as your FCE Council Chair. Let me briefly introduce myself. I am Clarice Steffens, retired Lincoln Public Schools teacher, who wondered what she would do to stay busy in retirement and now wonders how she ever had time to work. My husband, Herb, is a retired postal clerk who enjoys gardening (to the point where I have been known to beg people to take tomatoes—be prepared), woodworking and living in the country. We have two daughters, two son-in-laws and two grandchildren, all living in Lancaster County.

As you probably know, these articles are written well in advance of publication so I am making some assumptions now. I assume that in all the rush of December we will not forget why there is a Holiday Season and will take time to enjoy the holidays with family and friends. I’m also assuming year 2000 will arrive with no or only minor problems and we will all have a Happy New Year.

The FCE officers met in November to set the following meeting schedule for 2000. January 24, 12 noon - Council meeting. March 27 - Council meeting. June 26 - Council meeting. July 13 - Sizzling Summer Sampler. September 25 - Council meeting. October 24 - Achievement Night. We will continue having clubs share in the planning of meetings so times for meetings will be announced later. Host clubs will be listed in the yearbook. We hope all clubs will share in the planning, attend Council meetings and get to know more club members.

By this time I hope many of you have made reservations for our January 24 Council meeting. The 12 noon meeting will be hosted by the county officers and should be a fun time with food and crafts, in addition to our regular meeting. The craft project should take about an hour and result in your very own tube sock snowman. All the food and craft supplies will be provided for $7.50. Food for this meeting will be donated and after paying for supplies, the remaining money will be placed in the Council treasury. If you haven’t already done so, please call Pam with your reservation. We hope all clubs will be well represented.

Once again, I wish all of you a very Happy New Year.

--- FCE News ---

The February FCE club and community leader training lesson is scheduled for Tuesday, January 25 at 1 p.m. Healthy Homes—Combustion Pollutants will be presented by Lorene Bartos, extension educator. What is odorless, invisible, makes no sound, can be deadly and may be found in your home? It is air pollutants like carbon monoxide. Learn how combustion problems occur and how regular maintenance, safe practices and alarm devices can prevent accidental deaths and other health problems caused by carbon monoxide and carbon monoxide byproducts. This is a lesson that can save lives, lives that could be your friends or family.

Anyone interested is invited to attend. Non-FCE members or groups should call Pam at 441-7180 to preregister so lesson packets can be prepared.

The January FCE Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 24, 2000, 12 noon. We will have lunch followed by the business meeting and a craft project. See Clarice’s column for details.

All FCE members are invited to attend. Make reservations by calling Pam at the extension office, 441-7180 by Friday, January 21.

--- CLARICE'S COLUMN ---

Family rituals: what are yours?

LaDeane Iha
Extension Associate

Members of strong families have deep emotional ties with each other and a keen sense of belonging. Often they think alike about important aspects of life. Cultivating family rituals is one way in which families become strong. They are shared activities that are full of meaning and are satisfying for all family members. Many adults fondly and vividly recall something their family did together when they were young.

In my family, it was Sunday dinners after church and popcorn, fudge and family together- ness on Sunday evenings. Another person remembers that every Christmas he and his brother always iced a special kind of cookie. This simple ritual continued until the two boys left home because it held a special meaning for them. It gave them personal satisfaction and was a sign of the bond and love between them and their mother. A 40-year-old man who now has two children observed, “Family rituals keep families that live in your heart.”

Rituals are important not so much for what is said or done but for the results they yield, the sense of “weness” that grows out of a shared experience and the feeling of rightness that comes from its repetition.

Rituals differ from family to family. Commonly, rituals are thought of only around holidays or special days. However they should be limited to special occasions. One person who studies families remarked, “Families that have the strongest ties have the most rituals.” In

Suggested Books for young readers

Mouse Match: A Chinese Folktales, by Ed Young
Missy: A Story of Young Harriet Tubman by Alan Schroeder, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney.

Books for middle readers

Memories of Ann Frank: Reflection of a Childhood Friend, by Alison Leslie Gold

Popsicles and James Stevenson

Books for older readers

Bone Dance by Martha Brooks

The Window, by Michael Doris, photographs by Ken Robbins Recommended by the American Library Association. (LJ)

--- CLARICE'S COLUMN ---

A safe journey for appliances

For a smooth transition from old home to new, here are a few tips for moving your appliances. For appliances that use water, shut off the water supply and drain all hoses before disconnecting. For gas-fueled appliances, contact the gas utility before disconnecting. Empty the appliance. Remove and wrap all removable parts. Label them clearly and pack them together in a sturdy box.

A clean appliance means a mess-free move. For the interior or exterior, use a non-abrasive, all-purpose cleaner. Rinse thoroughly and dry with a soft, clean cloth. A solution of one tablespoon baking soda to a quart of warm water can also be used to clean the interior. For the exterior, a second option is to apply a creamy liquid kitchen wax to a damp cloth, rub it on and then buff with a clean dry cloth while the wax is still moist.

Tape the power cord to the appliance. Secure doors, lids, drawers, etc. with a quality stripping tape. If possible, use the original packing materials so the appliance is properly braced.

A chance to be trained in Character Counts!

Find out about Character Counts! the “six pillars” and ethical decision-making at a Character Counts! training for teachers, 4-H club leaders and anyone in the community with an interest.

When: Tuesday, January 18, 2000
Time: 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Where: Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road
Cost: $5 Registration: Call 441-7180 to register ahead of time.
Fees will be collected at the door.

All people attending the training will be qualified to teach the curriculum.

If you have questions, call LaDeane at 441-7180. (LJ)

--- CLARICE'S COLUMN ---

Character Counts! Corner

TEAM

The acronym, TEAM, as used by the Character Counts! program stands for teach, enforce, advocate and model. We all want kids to have values and strong character. But good character doesn’t just happen. It’s up to each of us to lay a solid foundation for character development by teaching children the right thing from wrong and by acting as positive role models.

Teach: Teach children that their character counts—that their success and happiness will depend on who they are inside, not what have or how they look. Kids don’t necessarily know the difference between right and wrong—they need to be taught. Explain the words respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring and citizenship. Use examples from your own life, history and the news.

Enforce: Instill the “Six Pillars of Character” by rewarding good behavior and by discouraging instances of bad behavior by imposing fair, consistent consequences that prove you are serious about character.

Advocate: Continuously encourage kids to live up to the “Six Pillars of Character.” Be an advocate for character. Don’t be neutral about the importance of character or casual about improper conduct. Be clear and uncompromising about what you believe.

Model! Be careful and self-conscious about setting a good example in everything you say and do. Hold yourself to the highest standards. Everything you do, and don’t do, sends a message about your values. Be sure your messages reinforce your lessons about the right thing even when it is hard to do. When you slip, act the way you want your children to behave when they act improperly. Be accountable, apologize sincerely—and do better! (LJ)
4-H achievement/activities—what’s it all about?

4-H members will be recognized for their achievements Tuesday, February 8 at 7 p.m. County awards, Outstanding 4-H Members, I Dare You and Meritorious Service awards will be presented.

There will also be presentations and displays of activities that have taken place throughout the year. Come see a demonstration, dance and song groups, judging, speeches and more!

This is an opportunity for all clubs, new or established, to see what opportunities 4-H has to offer and how members, leaders and parents can participate.

Come join the 4-H Council in recognizing 4-H members for a job well done. (TK)

4-H club officer training

All 4-H members are encouraged to attend officer training. Everyone will discover how to conduct a meeting and use parliamentary procedure. 4-H members will also have an opportunity to participate in a mock meeting. (DK/TK)

Saturday, February 12 9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m.
444 Cherrycrest Road, Lincoln

4-H leader training

Tuesday, February 22
9:30 a.m. or 7 p.m.
New and reorganizing leaders are invited to attend this 4-H leader training to assist you in 4-H club management, activities and projects. Please bring your questions, concerns, success stories and 4-H parents. (TK)

4-H Speech Workshop

Plan on attending the 2000 4-H Speech Workshop. It will be Sunday, February 13, 6-7:30 p.m. The workshop will help all ages learn to write and deliver speeches and to gain self esteem. Mark this date on your calendar and I will see you there! (DK)

2000 4-H Calendar

(all events located at the Lancaster Education Center unless otherwise noted)

January
4 4-H Council Meeting .............................................................................................................. 7 p.m.
9 4-H Ambassador Meeting ..................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
9 Teen Council Meeting ........................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
10 Shooting Sports Club Meeting .......................................................................................... 7 p.m.
11 CWF Meeting ...................................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
12 Horse VIPS Meeting ........................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
13 Extension Board Meeting ................................................................................................. 10 a.m.-noon
13 Rabbit VIPS Meeting .......................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
13 Cat Club Meeting ............................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
14-15 4-H Lock-in .................................................................................................................... 8 p.m.-8 a.m.
18 Teen Character Counts’ Training ....................................................................................... 8:30-11:30 a.m.
18 Speech VIPS Meeting ........................................................................................................ 7 p.m.
20 Fair Board Meeting .......................................................................................................... 7:30 p.m.
24 Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting ............................................................................................... 7 p.m.

February
4-5 State Leaders Forum—Lincoln
5 Cattle Weigh-In .................................................................................................................... 8-11 a.m.
7 4-H Shooting Sports Meeting ............................................................................................ 7-9 p.m.
8 4-H Achievement/Activities—What’s It All About? ................................................................ 7 p.m.
9 Horse VIPS Meeting ............................................................................................................ 7 p.m.
10 Extension Board Meeting ................................................................................................ 10 a.m.
10 Cat Club Meeting .............................................................................................................. 7 p.m.
10 Rabbit VIPS Meeting ......................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
12 4-H Officer Training Workshop .......................................................................................... 9:30-11 a.m.
12-13 Horsemanship Around—Lincoln
13 Ambassador Meeting .......................................................................................................... 2 p.m.
13 Teen Council Meeting ....................................................................................................... 3-5 p.m.
13 Speech Workshop .............................................................................................................. 6-7:30 p.m.
17 Fair Board Meeting ........................................................................................................... 7:30 p.m.
22 New Leader Training ....................................................................................................... 9:30 a.m. or 7 p.m.
28 Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting ............................................................................................... 7 p.m.

March
7 4-H Council Meeting ......................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
7 Small Animal VIPS Meeting ................................................................................................ 7 p.m.
8 Livestock VIPS Meeting .................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
8 Horse VIPS Meeting ............................................................................................................ 7 p.m.
9 Extension Board Meeting ................................................................................................ 10 a.m.
9 Cat Club Meeting ............................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
9 Rabbit VIPS Meeting ........................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
10 Speech Contest Entries Due ............................................................................................. 7 p.m.
12 4-H Ambassador Meeting ............................................................................................... 2 p.m.
12 Teen Council Meeting ..................................................................................................... 3-5 p.m.
13 Shooting Sports Meeting ............................................................................................... 7-9 p.m.
15-18 Kansas City Conference—Kansas City, MO
16 Fair Board Meeting ........................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
19 4-H Speech Contest—State Capitol .................................................................................. 1:30 p.m.
23 earth wellness festival—Southeast Community College, Lincoln, NE
25 Turkey Order Deadline ...................................................................................................... 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
25 Rabbit Clinic ..................................................................................................................... 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
27 Leader Training ................................................................................................................ 9:30 a.m. or 7 p.m.
27 Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting ............................................................................................... 7 p.m.
31 Be a Better Gardener Pre-registration Deadline .................................................................. 12 p.m.
31 4-H Horse Leader Training—State Fair Park

April
1 4-H Rabbit Show—Lincoln Building
1 Market Beef I.D.’s for State Fair, AK-Sar-Ben & American Royal Due
1 4-H Record/Awards Books Workshop .............................................................................. 9:30-11 a.m.
4 4-H Council Meeting ........................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
4 4-H Ambassador Meeting .................................................................................................. 2 p.m.
7 Teen Council Meeting ...................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
10 4-H Shooting Sports Club Meeting .................................................................................. 7-9 p.m.
11 CWF Meeting .................................................................................................................. 7 p.m.
11 Horse VIPS Meeting ........................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
12 Extension Board Meeting ................................................................................................. 10 a.m.
13 Rabbit VIPS Meeting ........................................................................................................ 7 p.m.
13 Cat Club Meeting ............................................................................................................. 7 p.m.
13 Invitational Cat Workshop ................................................................................................ 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
15 Kiwanis Carnival—State Fair Park ................................................................................... 7:30 p.m.
20 Fair Board Meeting .......................................................................................................... 7:30 p.m.
25 4-H Leader Workshop .........................................................................................................
30 4-H Music Contest—Dawes School ..................................................................................... 2 p.m.

May
2 4-H Council Meeting .......................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
9 Livestock Booster Club Meeting ....................................................................................... 7:30 p.m.
10 Horse VIPS Meeting ......................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
11 Extension Board Meeting ................................................................................................. 10 a.m.
11 Cat Club Meeting ............................................................................................................. 7 p.m.
11 Rabbit VIPS Meeting ......................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
11 Market Breeder Entries Due ............................................................................................. 7 p.m.
18 Fair Board Meeting .......................................................................................................... 7:30 p.m.
19 District & State Horse I.D.’s, Level Tests & Entries Due .................................................. 9:11:30 a.m.
20 Lamb Tagging Day ............................................................................................................. 9:11:30 a.m.
22 Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting ............................................................................................... 7 p.m.
23 How to Exhibit Leader Training ........................................................................................ 9:30 a.m. or 7 p.m.

June
1 4-H Project Enrollment Deadline
1 Horse I.D. Deadline ............................................................................................................ 10 a.m.
8 Extension Board Meeting .................................................................................................. 7 p.m.
8 Rabbit VIPS Meeting .......................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
8 Cat Club Meeting ............................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
10 Pre-District Horse Clinic—State Fair Park ........................................................................
13 4-H Council Meeting ......................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
13-16 Clover College
Horse VIPS Meeting .......................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
15 Fair Board Meeting ........................................................................................................ 7:30 p.m.
15 Beef, Swine, Dairy Cattle, Goat, Llama, Rabbit & Sheep I.D.’s Due
19-23 District Horse Shows—East
21 Practice Family & Consumer Science Judging .............................................................. 2 p.m.
21 Practice Demonstration ............................................................................................... 2:30 p.m.
26 Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting .......................................................................................... 7 p.m.
26-29 District Horse Shows—West
27 4-H Tree Workshop ...................................................................................................... 2 p.m.

July
11 4-H Council Meeting .................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
7 All Animal Entries for Lancaster County Fair Due
9 4-H Ambassador Meeting ............................................................................................... 1:45 p.m.
9 Teen Council Meeting ................................................................................................... 3:30 p.m.
10 Livestock Booster Club Meeting ................................................................................ 7:30 p.m.
11 4-H Horticulture Contest Workshop ........................................................................... 2 p.m.
12 Horse VIPS Meeting ..................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
12-14 ExpoVisions 2000—Lincoln
13 Rabbit VIPS Meeting .................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
13 Extension Board Meeting ............................................................................................. 10 a.m.
16-20 4-H State Horse Expo—Grand Island
19 Horse VIPS, Grass Plot I.D., Tree I.D. Contests 10 a.m.-noon
19 Lifetime Skills Contest ................................................................................................. 1 p.m.
20 Fair Board Meeting ...................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
21 Demonstration Contest
24 Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting .......................................................................................... 7 p.m.
26 Style Revue Judging—First Lutheran Church
27 4-H Food Booth Training—State Fair Park ................................................................... 7 p.m.
28 Fair Superintendent Meeting ........................................................................................ 7 p.m.
31 4-H County Fair Horse Show ....................................................................................... 7 p.m.
31 4-H Council Meeting—State Fair Park ......................................................................... 7 p.m.

August
1 Entry Day for Lancaster County Fair Static Exhibits—State Fair Park 4-8 p.m.
2 County Fair Judging Day for Static Exhibits
2 County Fair Animal Check-in (4-H Sheep, Swine, Rabbits, Poultry, Angora Goats)—State Fair Park 4-8 p.m.
2 Sheep Weigh-in—State Fair Park 4-8 p.m.
3 All Animals in—State Fair Park 8 p.m.
5 Lancaster County Fair Opens—State Fair Park
6 Lancaster County Fair—State Fair Park
3 Beef Weigh-in—State Fair Park noon
6 All Animals Released—State Fair Park
9 Ak-Sar-Ben Entries Due
10 Extension Board Meeting ............................................................................................ 10 a.m.
10 Rabbit VIPS Meeting ................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
10 Cat Club Meeting ........................................................................................................ 7 p.m.
15 Superintendent’s Dinner .............................................................................................. 7 p.m.
17 Fair Board Meeting ..................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
21 Livestock VIPS Meeting (fair review) ......................................................................... 7 p.m.
23 State Fair Entry Day—State Fair Park
24 State Fair Judging Day—State Fair Park
25 September 4 Nebraska State Fair—Lincoln
28 Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting .......................................................................................... 7 p.m.

September
5-4-H Council Meeting ................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
4 4-H Ambassador Meeting .............................................................................................. 1:45 p.m.
10 Teen Council Meeting ................................................................................................ 3:30 p.m.
10 4-H Open House ............................................................................................................. 6:30-8:30 p.m.
12 Livestock Booster Club Meeting ................................................................................ 7:30 p.m.
13 Horse VIPS Meeting .................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
14 Extension Board Meeting ............................................................................................. 10 a.m.
14 Rabbit VIPS Meeting ................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
14 Cat Club Meeting ........................................................................................................ 7 p.m.
18 4-H Speech Contest ...................................................................................................... 9:30 a.m. or 7 p.m.
19-20 Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Horse Show—Omaha
20-25 Ak-Sar-Ben Livestock Exposition—Omaha
21 Fair Board Meeting ...................................................................................................... 7:30 p.m.
25 Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting .......................................................................................... 7 p.m.

October
1-7 National 4-H Week
3 4-H Council Meeting ..................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
8 4-H Ambassador Meeting .............................................................................................. 1:45 p.m.
8 Teen Council Meeting .................................................................................................. 3:30 p.m.
11 Horse VIPS Meeting .................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
12 Rabbit VIPS Meeting ................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
12 Cat Club Meeting ........................................................................................................ 7 p.m.
17 Fair Board Meeting ..................................................................................................... 7:30 p.m.
17 CWF
19-21 North Central Regional 4-H Forum
23 Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting .......................................................................................... 7 p.m.

November
7 4-H Council Meeting ..................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
8 Horse VIPS Meeting ..................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
9 Extension Board Meeting ............................................................................................. 10 a.m.
9 Rabbit VIPS Meeting ................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
9 Cat Club Meeting ........................................................................................................ 7 p.m.
12 Teen Council Meeting ................................................................................................ 3:30 p.m.
12 4-H Ambassadors
16 Fair Board Meeting ..................................................................................................... 7:30 p.m.
27 Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting .......................................................................................... 7 p.m.

December
5 4-H Council Meeting .................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
10 4-H Ambassador Meeting ............................................................................................ 1:45 p.m.
10 Teen Council Meeting ................................................................................................ 3:30 p.m.
14 Extension Board Meeting ............................................................................................ 10 a.m.
14 Cat Club Meeting ...................................................................................................... 7 p.m.
Husker Feed Grains & Soybean Conference to be held January 19-20, 2000

“AGRICULTURE: Bringing Technology to the Table” is this year’s conference theme. The conference program will highlight a nationally known panel addressing biotechnology’s impact on farming operations. Educational breakout sessions on e-commerce, risk management, estate/tax planning and environments or contact Tom at (402) 441-7180. (TD)

Upcoming speakers for the E.N. Thompson Forum on World Issues are:
Archbishop Tutu
Tuesday, January 25, 2000, 3:30 p.m.
Robert McNamara et al.
Tuesday, February 8, 2000, 3:30 p.m.

UNL Animal Science Department to host “open house”
Prospective students, parents and friends are invited to attend the UNL Animal Science Department “open house” on Saturday, February 5, 2000, 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Guests will have an opportunity to meet faculty and students as well as view the department’s excellent facilities.

Animal Science majors enjoy excellent career opportunities
Animal Science at UNL offers a broad-based curriculum, preparing students for a wide variety of careers. Students select course work ranging from animal management to areas of in-depth scientific study. The Animal Science Department curriculum is designed to meet the needs of students and their program can be oriented to specific career goals. Students majoring in Animal Science can tailor their studies for numerous career in the livestock, poultry and meat industry. An Animal Science undergraduate degree also prepares you for professional study in veterinary medicine. Career opportunities include:
• Animal Management
• Marketing and Technical Service

Nelson and Wheelock complete extension board terms
Extension Board members Lynnette Nelson and Jean Wheelock (FCE Council Representative) recently completed their terms on the Lancaster County Extension Board. The extension staff are grateful for their supporting role in establishing and accomplishing extension education program goals in Agriculture and Natural Resources; Family and Consumer Sciences; 4-H and Community Resources and Economic Development. Recently appointed to three-year terms were Lynda Todd, Assistant Director of Educational Talent Search at UNL; Sheila Kepler, Coordinator of Faculty/Staff Development, Southeast Community College; and Phil Rooney, Public Health Educator, Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department. (GB)

Area producers planning to shift production to value-added grains
Shared solutions
Philip Morris has awarded the Lancaster County Extension office a “Shared Solutions” grant to help finance an effort to overcome many of the present infrastructure shortcomings and ease the transition to the production and utilization of more IP grains in Nebraska. Tom Dorn, Extension Educator working on the project said, “By organizing producers throughout Southeast Nebraska into a producer alliance, together we can produce IP grains in larger volume. By coordinating marketing and delivery of the grain, we may be able to bridge the gap between price and quality and encourage the transition to the production of IP grains.”

What is needed?
If grain producers can be identified that will commit to the production of IP grains, the SNAP leadership can contact processors, shippers and other end-users with the knowledge of how many farmers are willing to produce IP grains. The conversation with the end user then becomes, “Tell us what type of grain you want and we’ll find someone to grow it for you, provided the price is right.” Grain would be produced by the members and stored in on-farm storage. SNAP would sample each bin for quality. Quantity and quality will be recorded in a computerized database thus creating a “virtual elevator” made up of the individual storage structures on a number of separate farms.

Centralized elevators in the area of grain production will then be contacted and grain handling and shipping will be done under contract. Grain will be called into the shipping point from the “virtual elevator” to meet contract specifications. By pooling production in this way, sufficient volume can be created to improve handling, blending and shipping efficiencies. The end result will be that we can negotiate for higher prices at the point of sale.

How can farmers get involved?
Watch future NEBLines and local media for more information or contact Tom at (402) 441-7180. (TD)

Marilyn Waldron retires from NEP
Marilyn Waldron, NEP Nutrition Advisor, retired from the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension team this month. She began her career with the Nutrition Education Program in 1993 as a part of a Lincoln Action Program Grant. She created programs for drug and alcohol rehabilitation adults at CenterPoiNTe, Lincoln Medical Education Foundation Pathways, LMEF WIC, Commodity Foods, as well as five senior center Commodity Foods distribution sites.
Marilyn likes helping people. “I enjoy the things that I learn from the people I teach. It is a very humbling job. I go home feeling thankful for all that I have.”
Marilyn has the ability to work with all ages of people. She provides programs for youth as young as three and for seniors in their 90’s. The senior citizens respond very well to Marilyn’s compassionate teaching style. Marilyn builds upon their life experiences and lets them know that their ideas are respected and valued.
Before joining the NEP team, Marilyn was a sales representative for a national company. She was also supervisor of interviewers with the Bureau of Sociological Research. She and her husband Charles have been married 46 years and have five grown children and six grandchildren.
As a volunteer, she serves meals to the needy at the Matt Talbot Kitchen. She is president of Board of Missions in her church. She loves University of Nebraska football, water skiing, walking, bicycling, traveling and flower gardening.
Marilyn looks forward to more time for family and friends, church volunteer work and travel.

Marilyn Waldron, NEP Nutrition Advisor shares nutrition tips with senior citizens.

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Marilyn looks forward to more time for family and friends, church volunteer work and travel.
What to do if your power goes off: freezer/refrigerator guidelines
continued from page 6

and poultry until there’s no pink in the juices when it’s cut. (Cook red meat until it reaches an internal temperature of 160 degrees F; a safe internal temperature for poultry is 180 degrees F; a safe internal temperature of 160 degrees F for whole poultry, 170 degrees F for poultry breasts and 165 degrees F for ground poultry.) Fish should flake with a fork when it cooked to a safe temperature.

REFRIGERATOR GUIDE-LINES

■ REFRIGERATED ITEMS should be safe as long as the power is out no more than about 4 to 6 hours. Discard any perishable food that has been held above 40 degrees F for over 2 hours or if the refrigerator was off more than 6 hours.

■ Leave the refrigerator door closed; every time you open it, need cold air escapes causing the foods inside to reach unsafe temperatures.

■ If it appears the power will be off more than 6 hours, transfer refrigerated perishable foods, like meat and fish, to a cooler filled with ice or frozen gel packs. Keep a thermometer in the cooler to be sure the food stays at 40 degrees F or below.

■ As a general guideline of whether a food is perishable—consider where it was stored at the grocery store when you bought it. If it was in the refrigerator or freezer section, it’s probably perishable and should be tossed if held above 40 degrees F for over 2 hours. If the label says to “refrigerate after opening,” treat it as a perishable food.

■ If you’re uncertain about whether to toss a food and there’s a toll-free number, call the company and ask.

■ Many foods are no longer processed with as much preservatives, sugar or salt as in the past. Unless the label says the food is safe at room temperature, or the company will say the food is safe, it’s best to toss if it’s been above 40 degrees F over 2 hours.

■ TOSS the following foods if they’ve been held above 40 degrees F for 2 hours or more.

Some pickles and jellies may be safe; others may not. The safest policy is to check with the manufacturer.

■ meat, poultry, fish

■ eggs

■ cheese, milk and other dairy products

■ cut, peel or bruised fruits and vegetables

■ salad dressing

■ mayonnaise

■ pickles

■ relish

■ jelly, jam, etc.

■ fruit and vegetable juices

■ mustard, ketchup and other condiments (mustard/ ketchup may be safe but lower in quality)

■ margarine and butter

(calls the company if you have questions—some forms may be safe while others should be tossed.)

■ These foods should still be safe:

■ unpeeled, uncultivated foods without brushes

■ peanut butter

■ unopened cans of food

■ peanuts, pecans, etc.

■ oil, solid shortening

■ bread, rolls

■ coffee

■ dried fruit

■ coconut

■ nuts

■ If you’ve been storing food in a cooler with frozen gel packs or ice and have kept them at 40 degrees F or lower as verified by a thermometer, keep them no longer than you should keep them in the refrigerator.

For example:

■ Hamburger, chicken, turkey and fish shouldn’t be kept longer than this, TOSS.

■ Likewise, TOSS larger cuts of meat like roasts, chops and steaks after a combined 3-5 days. (AH)

Because of the importance of family rituals, it is easier to begin a new one or even consciously improve or continue an existing one. As we start the new millennium, look for opportunities or activities the family does together and repeat them. Being aware of rituals and the possibility of starting a new ritual can in fact lead to a new ritual. (LJ)

During the last 10 years of growth, many yards are ready for landscape renewal and improvement. New plantings have matured and do not always enhance the landscape. Once a family is aware of the importance of family rituals, it is easier to begin a new one or even consciously improve or continue an existing one. As we start the new millennium, look for opportunities or activities the family does together and repeat them. Being aware of rituals and the possibility of starting a new ritual can in fact lead to a new ritual. (LJ)

Family rituals: what are yours? forgotten continued from page 7

one family the father prepares breakfast every Sunday morning. He has slept on time and to be his hearth and dresser, he always will: “It is just the way we do it. We kids with Dad. It’s our time to be with him. It’s the way our family is.”

Some people feel, maybe rightly so, that our lifestyles—the way we live family life in today’s busy times—work against rituals. Strong families wisely cultivate rituals. They recognize that rituals provide a sense of continuity, understanding and love that strengthen family closeness. Rituals give family members the opportunity of meaning. Set aside some time when all family members are together and take an inventory of your family’s rituals. Ask, “What do we do that has special meaning to us?” “What do we do over and over again that makes each of us feel good?” or “What do we do or say that makes us different from others?”

Once a family is aware of the importance of family rituals, it is easier to begin a new one or even consciously improve or continue an existing one. As we start the new millennium, look for opportunities or activities the family does together and repeat them. Being aware of rituals and the possibility of starting a new ritual can in fact lead to a new ritual. (LJ)

Landscaping the front yard
continued from page 2

The bus will be at the corner in 10 minutes to pick up your children. Then you’ll have to dash out the door to get to work by 8 a.m. But, this morning your son cannot find his shoes, and your daughter says that the dress she bought it. If it was in the grocery store when you considered where it was stored at the grocery store when you bought it. If it was in the refrigerator or freezer section, it’s probably perishable and should be tossed if held above 40 degrees F for over 2 hours. If the label says to “refrigerate after opening,” treat it as a perishable food.

■ REFRIGERATED ITEMS should be safe as long as the power is out no more than about 4 to 6 hours. Discard any perishable food that has been held above 40 degrees F for over 2 hours or if the refrigerator was off more than 6 hours.

■ Leave the refrigerator door closed; every time you open it, need cold air escapes causing the foods inside to reach unsafe temperatures.

■ If it appears the power will be off more than 6 hours, transfer refrigerated perishable foods, like meat and fish, to a cooler filled with ice or frozen gel packs. Keep a thermometer in the cooler to be sure the food stays at 40 degrees F or below.

■ As a general guideline of whether a food is perishable—consider where it was stored at the grocery store when you bought it. If it was in the refrigerator or freezer section, it’s probably perishable and should be tossed if held above 40 degrees F for over 2 hours. If the label says to “refrigerate after opening,” treat it as a perishable food.

■ If you’re uncertain about whether to toss a food and there’s a toll-free number, call the company and ask.

■ Many foods are no longer processed with as much preservatives, sugar or salt as in the past. Unless the label says the food is safe at room temperature, or the company will say the food is safe, it’s best to toss if it’s been above 40 degrees F over 2 hours.

■ TOSS the following foods if they’ve been held above 40 degrees F for 2 hours or more.

Some pickles and jellies may be safe; others may not. The safest policy is to check with the manufacturer.

■ meat, poultry, fish

■ eggs

■ cheese, milk and other dairy products

■ cut, peel or bruised fruits and vegetables

■ salad dressing

■ mayonnaise

■ pickles

■ relish

■ jelly, jam, etc.

■ fruit and vegetable juices

■ mustard, ketchup and other condiments (mustard/ ketchup may be safe but lower in quality)

■ margarine and butter

(calls the company if you have questions—some forms may be safe while others should be tossed.)

■ These foods should still be safe:

■ unpeeled, uncultivated foods without brushes

■ peanut butter

■ unopened cans of food

■ peanuts, pecans, etc.

■ oil, solid shortening

■ bread, rolls

■ coffee

■ dried fruit

■ coconut

■ nuts

■ If you’ve been storing food in a cooler with frozen gel packs or ice and have kept them at 40 degrees F or lower as verified by a thermometer, keep them no longer than you should keep them in the refrigerator.

For example:

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■ Likewise, TOSS larger cuts of meat like roasts, chops and steaks after a combined 3-5 days. (AH)

New home landscape plant and directories are available

New farm/home plant map and directories are available for purchase at the Lancaster County Extension Office. They are published by Farm & Home Publishers, LTD of Belmont, Iowa. Price for the directory is $19.50 (includes tax). They are available for pick-up at the reception desk during office hours. (GB)
Telephone numbers & addresses:
Office (leave message after hours) ........................................ 441-7180
After hours ........................................................................ 441-7170
Composting Hotline ......................................................... 441-7148
NEACTS Information Center ............................................. 441-7188
Extension Office E-mail ..................................................... LanCo@unl.edu
World Wide Web Address ................................................ www.lanc.unl.edu

OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday

Family story night

Spend the evening reading stories to your children. If they are old enough, have them read to you. Ask everyone to act out his or her favorite scene from the book or make up a new ending to the story. Tell stories from your childhood or make up new stories together. Be creative, ask questions about the characters and pictures and most importantly have fun. (LJ)

Extension Calendar

All programs and events will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center unless otherwise noted.

January 13
Extension Board Meeting .................................................. 10 a.m.
Rabbit VIPS Meeting ......................................................... p.m.
Cat Club Meeting ........................................................... 7 p.m.

January 14-15
4-H Lock-in ..................................................................... 8 p.m.-8 a.m.

January 18
Teen Character Counts! Training ...................................... 8:30-11:30 a.m.
Speech VIPS Meeting ...................................................... 7 p.m.

January 20
Fair Board Meeting .......................................................... 7:30 p.m.

January 24
Pet Pals 4-H Club Meeting .............................................. 7 p.m.

January 27
Private Pesticide Training ................................................ 9 a.m. & 1 p.m.

February 4-5
State Leaders Forum—Lincoln

February 5
Cattle Weigh-In ................................................................ 8-11 a.m.

February 7
4-H Shooting Sports Meeting 7 .......................................... 9 p.m.

February 8
4-H Achievement/Activities—What’s It All About? .......... 7 p.m.

February 9
Horse VIPS Meeting ......................................................... 7 p.m.

February 10
Extension Board Meeting .................................................. 10 a.m.
Cat Club Meeting ........................................................... 7 p.m.
Rabbit VIPS Meeting ......................................................... 7 p.m.

February 12
4-H Officer Training Workshop ........................................... 9:30-11 a.m.

February 12-13
Horse Around Clinic—Lancaster

February 13
Ambassador Meeting ......................................................... 2 p.m.
Teen Council Meeting ...................................................... 3-5 p.m.
Speech Workshop ............................................................ 6-7:30 p.m.

February 18-19
Private Pesticide Training ................................................... 9 a.m.

March 3
Private Pesticide Training ................................................... 1 p.m.

Feedback

In order to best serve our subscribers, this form will appear in every issue of The Nebl ine. You can use this form to:
  1. Change your address or order a subscription (please print)
  2. Submit general comments and/or story ideas

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City: .............................................................................. Zip: ..............................
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$5 mailing and handling fee for zip codes other than
68528) ...........................................................................
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Comments: ........................................................................

Story Idea(s): ..................................................................

Return to: University of Nebraska
Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County
444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507

Gary C. Bergman, Extension Educator-Unit Leader

NOTICE: All programs and events listed in this newsletter will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center unless noted otherwise. Use of commercial and trade names does not imply approval or constitute endorsement by the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County.

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Feedback

Got the winter itch? Read this and itch some more

continued from page 3

infestation. If you have a cat or dog, ask your veterinarian to check for Cheyletiella mites. Treating your animal can take several weeks to a month or more but will probably control the problem.
Scabies: This is a specific type of mite that causes excreci- ing itching because the mite burrows under the skin. Scabies mites burrow easier where the skin is thin. They are most common on the hands, wrists and elbows, but may be found on other places on the body as well. Older people whose skin is thinner are most likely to get scabies, but they are very contagious and easily spread. Scabies must be diagnosed and treated by a dermatologist.

Paper mites, sand fleas, and scabies by these names.

Paper mites, sand fleas, and scabies by these names.

Sondra Phillips, Nutrition Advisor

Lancaster County Newsletter
All programs and events listed in this newsletter will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center unless otherwise noted.

Gary C. Bergman, Extension Educator-Unit Leader

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