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Character Counts!

Character Counts!

LaDeane Jha
Extension Educator

We make choices every day. Many of those choices are about doing the right thing and each of those choices involves thousands of messages whirling inside the brain. In a split second, our minds review the facts, explore our feelings, study consequences, compare the options against our beliefs and priorities, consider what other people may think, and then give the cue for action.

Decisions happen quickly, but consequences can last a lifetime. That is why it is important to give careful consideration to all those decisions. Ethics help make decisions. The right thing to do is often not the easy thing to do. Learning to say no to others can avoid times when you feel like saying yes helps build character, but it is hard. Why be ethical? Dale Winsboro asks the questions with the following poem: You may feel the whole world down the pathway of life, And get pats on your back as you pass, But your final reward will be sobering responses from 5,740 high school students across the nation. Some results of the 1996 study include: Nearly one in three high school respondents said they stole something from a parent or relative. Seven out of 10 said they had lied to a parent more than once in the previous 12 months and more than half said they were lied to by a parent.

Two-thirds of high school respondents admitted they had cheated in the previous year and about half said they had done so more than once even though 87 percent indicated that they believe honesty is the best policy. 42 percent of males and 31 percent of females said they had stolen something from a store in the previous 12 months. In this same report, 3,190 adults were surveyed and results were not much better. For example, nearly half of those over 25 indicated they would file a false insurance claim. Clearly ethics training is not being taught or modeled.

Recent studies in youth development identify the formation of strong values and character as one of the critical areas lacking in the lives of many young people. While the strongest source of character development has been the family, families don’t always have the skills needed to foster these values. Changes in the family structure are creating the need for schools and other educational entities to teach values and character development. Given this situation, it is felt that character development programs are needed to provide support to families as they teach character development and to fill gaps that may exist in other programs.

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LaDeane Jha
Extension Educator

Dave Varner to Dodge County

Dave Varner is leaving his position as an Extension Educator with the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County to accept an Extension Educator position in Dodge County. Varner will assume his new position on March 1, 1997 following nearly 10 years with Lancaster County Extension. He was initially hired as an Extension Assistant with the Lancaster office in May 1987.

Dave, however, was first affiliated with Cooperative Extension during the summer of 1986 as a work-study student assigned to Lancaster County while an undergraduate at the University of Nebraska. He later completed his Masters Degree in Agricultural Engineering at UNL and was promoted to an Extension Educator in July 1989.

Dave is a native of Nebraska and presently lives in Wahoo with his wife Leigh and their two children. During his tenure in Lancaster County, Dave has built an outstanding record of agricultural and 4-H youth programs. He was instrumental in creating the 4-H Shooting Sports program and serves on the State 4-H Shooting Sports Advisory Committee. In addition to these accomplishments, Dave is recognized for providing many years of educational activities for a broad sector of Extension clientele. He contributes directly to the development and implementation of a Internet home page for the Southeast Research and Extension Center and every county in the Southeast District including Lancaster County.

He completed and successfully marketed a five part video series entitled “Part-time Farming” which was designed to provide the next generation of farmers with a perspective of a successful farm operation.

The next generation will be the stewards of our communities, nation and planet in extraordinary critical times. The present and future well-being of our society requires an involved, caring citizenry with good moral character.

People do not automatically develop good moral character; therefore, conscientious efforts must be made to help young people develop the values and abilities necessary for moral decision making and conduct.

Effective character education is based on core ethical values which form the foundation of democratic society, in particular, trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, justice, fairness, caring, and civic virtue and citizenship.

These core ethical values transcend cultural, religious, and socioeconomic differences. Character education is, first and foremost, an obligation of families; it is also an important obligation of faith communities, schools, youth and other human service organizations. These obligations to develop character are best achieved when these groups work in concert.

The character and conduct of our youth reflect the character and conduct of society; therefore, every adult has the responsibility to teach and model the core ethical values and every social institution has the responsibility to promote the development of good character.
Shamrocks for St. Patrick’s Day

Oxalis is a group of over 300 species of small plants that produce clover-like foliage and regal, delicate, crimson flowers known as ‘evening blooming shamrock’. The shamrock is well worth considering as a permanent houseplant.

Shamrocks are among the best of the indoor plants because they are easy to grow and have a long bloom period. They can be brought into bloom anytime from fall through spring. The flowers come in a variety of colors, including white, pink, red, purple and yellow and the foliage not only comes in green, but also variegated or purple. Oxalis plants have slender flower stems and fairly low-growing foliage that looks like enormous clover leaves. Their leaves and blooms are sensitive to light, and only open on sunny days. During darkness or cloudy weather the flowers close and the leaves fold up.

Shamrocks will usually bloom for about two months. During this growing period, the plants do best with night temperatures in the 50’s. Water when the soil is barely dry to the touch and fertilize monthly. (MJM)

Over the garden fence

Don Janssen
Extension Educator

Q. I had an awful problem with mildew on my zinnias last year. Is there anything I can do this year to prevent it? Would it be worthwhile to start zinnias indoors?

A. Because last summer was unusually wet, mildew and a host of other plant diseases were relatively common. In ordinary years, mildew is less a problem on zinnias and other annual plants if they’re planted on high ground in full sun. In semi-shady spots or in low areas, where cool, moist air tends to settle, mildew and other plant diseases tend to be more prevalent. It’s rarely worthwhile to spray annual flowers for mildew. Cucumbers, squash and pumpkins, however, sometimes benefit from mildew control.

Q. What are the advantages of raised bed gardening?

A. The primary reason for gardening in raised beds is to improve drainage. Another advantage of raised bed gardening is that the soil tends to dry out and warm up quicker in the spring so plants get off to a faster start. Raised beds also get plants up where people who have trouble bending and stooping over can reach them easier. Some disadvantages are the time and effort it takes to construct them and the need to import soil to the harvest. For instance, a Swiss chard in late March and mid- April does not produce in mid-May and late June. Because Swiss chard has to mature to maturity in 50 to 60 days, a third planting in July should produce a crop in September.

Many people plant warm-season crops Memorial Day weekend. The seeds should be sown outdoors or germinate well at low temperatures and the plants are killed by frost. Sweet corn, muskmelon, pumpkins, squashes and tomatoes are examples of warm-season crops. (DJ)

Fungus gnats

Adult fungus gnats are delicate, gray, dark-gray, or black fly-like insects about 1/6 inch long. They are often seen flying over the soil surface of houseplants, especially of wet areas. They also are seen as you water when they swarm out of the plant. Fungus gnats are attracted to light and in a severe infestation will swarm over the windows. Adult fungus gnats do not damage plant materials but are objectionable and a nuisance to the homeowner. The immature fungus gnats live in the soil and are white, translucent larvae with shiny black heads. The larvae feed on any organic matter and can attain a length of about 1/4 inch.

Female fungus gnats lay up to 300 eggs on the soil surface which hatch in five to six days. The larvae will feed on any organic matter present in the soil for 14 to 16 days. The pupal stage occurs in a silky chamber in the soil. Three to four weeks are necessary to complete the life cycle of the fungus gnat.

Soils containing large quantities of manure or animal matter are most likely to host fungus gnat larvae. Plants grown in a growth medium containing a high percentage organic matter such as peat will have more problems with fungus gnats. Fungus gnat larvae cause damage to the root systems of all established plants by burrowing in the soil and feeding on the roots and sometimes the crowns of plants. Seedinglings, rootcuttings and young plants can be severely damaged or killed by fungus gnat larvae feeding on root hairs or roots. Fungus gnat larvae infestations on older plants are characterized by new growth and foliage that appears to be off color (dull or less vibrant than expected). A severely infested plant may also drop foliage. While damage from the larvae may not be extensive for the established plant, the presence of the adult is considered objectionable.

Once fungus gnat adults and larvae are discovered on the plant, control and prevention comes in several forms. For infested plants, allow the soil to thoroughly dry between waterings. This will kill the larvae through desiccation as well as help prevent future problems. If the plant is of a type that cannot be allowed to dry out, immerse the pot in water and allow to stand for an hour or so. This should drown the larvae. If this doesn’t work, drench the soil with a pesticide such as malathion or diazinon. Be careful to properly measure and apply these pesticides “according to directions for use in a house and take care to provide adequate ventilation. The adults can be killed by using a pyrethrum-based aerosol. Spray the foliage carefully to avoid injury to the roots.

The best way to prevent new or future infestations of fungus gnat is to follow proper watering practices for your plants.

For a listing of NUFACTS horticulture topics, please turn to page 11.

Starter solutions

Garden centers often feature ‘fertilizer for seedlings’ or transplant solutions which claim to stimulate root growth and help reduce transplant shock. Sometimes these solutions are featured alluringly at check-out counters for impulse-purchasing by shoppers buying transplants for their transplants. Ingredients on the label may include phosphorus, vitamins (B-1, B-3, B-5), substances or trace elements like iron, zinc or manganese. Are these solutions worthwhile purchases or a waste of money?

Phosphorus has been shown to reduce transplant shock, particularly in commercial plants. However, its effect in a garden situation will depend on the fertility level of the soil.

Gardens which have been adequately fertilized and enriched with organic matter for a number of years will have a large enough reserve of phosphorus that transplants may show no benefits from using starter solutions. But if the garden soil is high in clay, low in organic matter, or in a new location where topsoil has been removed or replaced, transplants likely will show less transplant shock if a solutefy fertilizer high in phosphorus is applied at planting time.

As for vitamin B-1 (thiamine hydrochloride), 1984 California experiments showed no benefits to tomato, pepper, squash, watermelon, pole bean or sweet corn transplants from vitamin B-1 treatments, even if in combination with added iron, manganese and zinc. The term “root growth stimulants” might be effective in reducing transplant shock, but any beneficial results should not be attributed to vitamin B-1. The rule is to read the label, and not pay extra for worthless ingredients. (DJ)
Farmers along the Platte help feed sandhill cranes!

The Poison Center Hotline saves lives!

Looking for a terrific volunteer opportunity? Help make a difference by donating a few hours of your time at earth wellness festival. This exciting environment and educational event is March 27, 1997 at Southeast Community College–Lincoln. Over 3,000 fifth graders from Lancaster County are registered to attend.

Volunteers are needed to help greet the buses, guide students to classrooms and help presenters with activities. This is an experience you'll never forget. As a valued volunteer, you have an opportunity to help our community a better place to live by educating these young stewards of the earth. You'll also enjoy the experience of working with dedicated community professionals and local businesses who have dedicated their time, talents, and expertise to support this worthy project.

The festival is scheduled from approximately 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You can spend a few hours or all day—it's up to you. Following the festival, Valentina's is providing pizza for all the volunteers and an opportunity to meet and see the earth wellness festival volunteer, contact Syd Hime, Lower Platte South Natural Resources District at 476-2729 or Soni at 441-7180. (SE)

"Quite an organizational feat and all involved should be proud of the gift they have given to the school children and community.” — earth wellness festival volunteer

"I enjoyed seeing the commitment to the effort to teach the kids in an enjoyable way by the presenters and to see the kids enthusiasm.” — earth wellness festival volunteer

"I'm sure I had a positive impact on the kids involved. I was sorry I had chosen to work only half the day.”— earth wellness festival volunteer (SE)

Coloring eggs with natural dyes

This year, plan to have nature help color your Easter eggs with natural dyes. Collect plant material listed below for a variety of shades. Experiment and have fun with this project. The result will be beautiful and unique eggs for your egg hunt.

Dye Material Color Produced
Dandelions Yellowish Red clover leaves Yellowish Orange peels Light yellow Carrots Orange Fresh cranberries Light green Yellow onion skins Dark green Spinach Light yellow Red beets Light pink

How to color the eggs: Take small amounts of food material and place it in a pan, filled with 2 cups of cold water. Bring the water rapidly to a boil and allow to simmer 10 minutes. Turn off heat and cover, allowing dye to steep for 30 minutes. Remove food material and place dye into containers and refrigerate.

When dye is cold, place hard-cooked eggs into dye. Leaving the eggs in the dye overnight in the refrigerator will give the deepest colors. Experiment to see what plants and shades are best. Remove the eggs from the dye and dry on a metal cake rack. Place eggs in refrigerator until it is time to use or hide them. (MIM)

Fence ornaments to prevent rabbit damage

Cottontail rabbits can do considerable damage to ornamental and garden plants any time of the year. In the winter, when no other green food is available, they can severely damage evergreen landscape plants and trees. Rabbits’ tastes vary when it comes to woody plants, but there are certain plants of the rose family, including apple, black and red raspberries and such shrubs as lilac and ornamental trees frequently damaged are mountain ash, basswood, red maples, sugar maple, hawthorn, locust, ironwood, red and white oak, and willow. Sumac, rose, Japanese barberry, dogwood and some woody members of the pea family are among the shrubs damaged.

If you are trying to establish ornamental trees and shrubs this spring, consider fencing them with welded wire cylinders (1/4” mesh) to protect them from hungry rabbits later in the year. To be effective, the cylinders should be 18-20” above the maximum snow level, several inches away from the trunk, and buried 2-3” deep in the soil.

In the spring, rabbits also feed on garden plants of all kinds, causing frustration to serious gardeners. There are some repellents on the market which discourage rabbit browsing, but these repellents are not designed to be used on plants or plant parts destined for human consumption. This means that another method will be needed in the garden. Putting up a garden fence is the best and most effective way to protect a garden or berry patch from rabbits. A fence of two-foot tall chicken wire with the bottom tight to the ground or buried a few inches will do the trick. Be sure the mesh is one inch or smaller so that young rabbits will not be able to get through it. A more substantial fence of welded wire or chain link will also keep pets and children out of the garden, and can be used to trellis vine crops. The lower two feet should be covered with smaller mesh wire. Establishing appropriate fencing should protect your plants and provide relief from the aggravation of rabbit damage. (BPO)

Environmental Focus

Dyes derived from plants are used extensively in the dying of fabrics, but these dyes are also applied directly to hair, skin, and nails. Some of these dyes are also used in food, pharmaceuticals, and cosmetics. While many of these dyes are safe when used properly, others have been shown to cause allergic reactions in some individuals.

One of the most common allergens used in dyes is paraphenylenediamine (PPD). PPD is an ingredient in many hair dyes and can cause a severe reaction in people with allergies. Other allergens commonly found in dyes include quinone imines and aromatic amines. These chemicals can cause a contact dermatitis, a type of skin irritation that can lead to itching, swelling, and redness.

To reduce the risk of allergic reactions, it is important to choose hair dyes that are labeled as “allergen-free” or “allergen-reduced.” It is also important to follow the directions on the product label carefully and to avoid touching the dye to your skin.

In addition to the skin irritation caused by allergic reactions, some people may experience systemic side effects from dye exposure. These side effects can include headaches, dizziness, nausea, and vomiting. In rare cases, exposure to dye can cause respiratory problems, including asthma and respiratory distress.

It is important to take precautions when using dyes. These precautions include:

- Wearing gloves and goggles when applying dye
- Washing hands thoroughly after handling dye
- Not applying dye to damaged or inflamed skin
- Avoiding exposure to the eyes and respiratory tract

If you experience any symptoms of an allergic reaction after using a dye, it is important to seek medical attention immediately. This is especially important if you are experiencing difficulty breathing or other signs of a severe allergic reaction.

In conclusion, it is important to take precautions when using dyes to reduce the risk of allergic reactions and systemic side effects. By following these guidelines, you can enjoy the benefits of using hair dyes without putting yourself at risk.

Arlene L. Hanna
Extension Assistant

Living Green!

Are you Living Green? Living Green means you do things to protect our environment. For example, conserve water by placing a brick in your toilet tank or check for energy loss from your drainage pipes and tile. Bread bags and glossy grocery bags are made into garbage bags and motor oil bottles. Plastic jar lids and syrup bottles can be recycled into auto batteries and garbage basket handles; foam fast food containers can be recycled into toys, desk accessories, and packing peanuts.

- Helium-filled balloons are often used for celebrations or festivities. Use colorful wind spinners or lights as alternatives.
- Reduce the use of polystyrene packing peanuts and recycle those that you must use. Some alternatives include biodegradable products that disintegrate when they become wet.

Do your part to protect our environment. LIVING GREEN!
Preparing CRP for pasture and hay use

During the next year or two, millions of CRP acres will be returned to production. If you are interested in using your CRP as pasture or hayland, consider these details regarding new CRP program.

Many CRP acres containing warm-season grasses need thicker stands to thicken as with prescribed burning in the spring. Obviously, only use fire where it can be handled safely and legally. Firing CRP may not cause other potential problems like wind erosion. Local Extension and NRCS offices have more information available if you are interested.

Another way to reduce dead litter is to incorporate manure. This can be challenging, especially if the terrain is rough or the amount of dead material is great or if burrow animals have built mounds that can plug equipment. The hay removed will have very low forage quality and will need both protein and energy supplements to feed it to livestock. Another method to reduce litter is a technique called "flog grazing." Flog grazing involves placing 30, 50, or even 100 cows per acre on a small area for a brief time period, usually one to seven days. With this high stock density, animals will trample dead litter into the ground and open up the soil for new seedlings and tillers. One additional way to use CRP is as a calving pasture because you get the trampling, the nutrient recycling, and excellent bedding all at the same time.

Feeding high quality hay after calving

Good cow nutrition is crucial from calving time until cows are rebred. If you have a replacement heifer, feed her well before and after calving. Each cow experiences stress after calving because she is producing milk for her calf and preparing her reproductive systems to re bred. As a result, nutrient demands are high. Energy and protein equal about 30 percent and protein needs nearly double after calving. Underfeeding reduces the amount of milk she provides her calf, and it can delay or even prevent rebreeding. If it gets cold, wet, or even autumn, nutrient demands can skyrocket. Winter grass and crop residues are low quality during late winter months because these feeds already have been pretty well picked over. So it is critical that the hay or silage you feed will provide the extra nutrients your cows need.

Not just any hay or silage will do. In the case of equal quality, 10 to 65 percent TDN in her total diet. If she is grazing on poor quality feed, your forage and supplements must make up any deficiencies. Make sure your forage has adequate nutrients, if you haven’t done so, get tested now for protein and energy content. Also determine the nutrient requirements of your cows. Then feed your cows a ration that will meet their requirements. But don’t overfeed. That is wasteful and expensive.

In summary, avoid underfeeding after calving; it can delay rebreeding and slow down calf growth. Use good quality forages to provide adequate nutrition. Young cows will milk well, rebred on time, and produce healthy calves year after year. (WS)

Planning conservation work

Now is the time to begin planning conservation work for the coming year and the Lower Platte South NRD has several different conservation incentive programs to assist you in your efforts.

Since most conservation work is done in the fall following harvest, it is often difficult to get work completed. To help alleviate this problem, the Lower Platte South NRD established the Stream Conservation Program. The program provides a one-time payment of $40 per acre terraced for work completed between May 15 and September 15. This payment is in addition to any cost-share assistance received for building the terraces. Only previously untreated cropland is eligible for the program except for land that is currently planted to wheat.

Another unique conservation program offered by the Lower Platte South NRD is the filter strip program. The purpose of this program is to encourage landowners to establish strips of vegetation adjacent to streams to help protect water quality by filtering sediment and other pollutants from runoff. The program pays producers $50 to $70 per acre per year for a 10-year contract with the higher payment being offered for strips planted adjacent to lakes and streams.

A third program, which is new this year is the Stream Bank Stabilization Program. The purpose of the program is to assist landowners in restoring and protecting stream banks and riparian areas adjacent to minor watercourses. The program will provide cost-share assistance for grass seeding, earth fill, rock riprap, trees, fencing and other components utilized in compliance with NRCS technical specifications.

To obtain additional information on these and other conservation programs offered by the Lower Platte South NRD contact Corey Brubaker at 441-7180 or Paul Zilling at 476-2729. (SCB)

EQIP update

The local work group for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, EQIP, will meet February 6 to discuss the formation of an advisory group to help in identifying priority areas within the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District to be submitted for consideration. EQIP is a new USDA program which replaces the Agriculture Conservation Program, Water Quality Incentives Program, Great Plains Conservation Program and the Conservation Reserve Program. If you are interested in participating on the advisory group, contact Paul Zilling at the Lower Platte South NRD Office (402) 476-2729. (SCB)

New CRP Sign-up Announced

The USDA has announced that the next sign-up period for CRP will be March 3 to March 28, 1997. For information regarding this sign-up, please contact the Lancaster County FSA office at 423-9683. (SCB)

Records-keeping emphasis of swine program

Nebraaska’s top farrow-to-finish swine producers made a profit of $8.14 per hundredweight of hogs sold in the first half of 1996. This is despite record corn prices. These top producers have an average 186 sows in inventory, use the University of Nebraska Swine Records Analysis Program as a guide to management decisions. The program helps managers of all size operations put into perspective the plethora of data and opinions available in today’s changing swine industry. Without good records and knowledge of the facts, there is no way to manage these decisions. In summary, avoid underfeeding after calving. If you have a replacement heifer, feed her well before and after calving. Each cow experiences stress after calving because she is producing milk for her calf and preparing her reproductive systems to re bred. As a result, nutrient demands are high. Energy and protein equal about 30 percent and protein needs nearly double after calving. Underfeeding reduces the amount of milk she provides her calf, and it can delay or even prevent rebreeding. If it gets cold, wet, or even autumn, nutrient demands can skyrocket. Winter grass and crop residues are low quality during late winter months because these feeds already have been pretty well picked over. So it is critical that the hay or silage you feed will provide the extra nutrients your cows need.

Not just any hay or silage will do. In the case of equal quality, 10 to 65 percent crude protein and 60 to 65 percent TDN in her total diet. If she is grazing on poor quality feed, your forage and supplements must make up any deficiencies. Make sure your forage has adequate nutrients, if you haven’t done so, get tested now for protein and energy content. Also determine the nutrient requirements of your cows. Then feed your cows a ration that will meet their requirements. But don’t overfeed. That is wasteful and expensive.

In summary, avoid underfeeding after calving; it can delay rebreeding and slow down calf growth. Use good quality forages to provide adequate nutrition. Young cows will milk well, rebred on time, and produce healthy calves year after year. (WS)

Pork Central helps Nebraska producers

Pork Central is a one-stop shop for swine producers, located at the University of Nebraska, North East Quest Center. Pork Central has received 320 calls within the last six months. Of those, 224 questions were on production practices and 96 were on management issues.

Producers face many issues concerning producers. These include production costs and efficiency, adoption of new technologies, networking with other producers, and contract production arrangements. Producers are encouraged to call Pork Central at (800) 767-5287 for access to information from a wide variety of resources, including NUC specialists. To learn about upcoming events or educational opportunities, ask for the Pork Central Educational Bulletin Board.

Pork Central is a joint program of Nebraska Cooperative Extension and the Nebraska Pork Producers Association. (WS)
Pesticide certification

A common question asked Extension Educators is, “Am I an acreage owner, am I required to be certified to use chemicals?” The answer to this question cannot be answered in one simple statement. The fact of the matter is that we must ask several basic questions to determine if this person really “needs to be certified.” The Federal Government requires pesticide applicators to register each of their products with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) whether as a general use or restricted use pesticide (commonly known as RUP’s). Restricted use pesticides can be used only by certified applicators. In most cases, anyone can apply general use pesticides without being certified. The word pesticide is the common term for any chemical used for the control of a pest. Examples of pesticides would include insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, rodenticides and others. Regardless whether the pesticide is general use or restricted use, the instructions on the label of the pesticide container must be followed. Failure to do so could result in a violation of the federal law in the use of that pesticide. Accrue dwellers soon discover the need to apply one or more of the various pesticides; but, sometimes lack critical information on how to handle these chemicals in a manner safe for themselves and the environment.

For this reason alone, it is important to learn as much as possible about how to safely use pesticides. Cooperative Extension will conduct classes this month for persons wishing to become certified private pesticide applicators. This training will be open for persons living on acreages as well as agricultural producers. Those interested may attend one of three sessions to be held at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, March 21; or 9:00 a.m., Saturday, March 22. There will be a $5.00 registration fee for each participant at the training sessions. For more information contact Ward Shires, Extension Educator (441-7180); (WS)

Acreage Insights

Protecting drinking water

Keeping drinking water pollution-free is an issue of concern to everyone. It’s also the focus of a national video conference being organized by the League of Women Voters Education Fund.

"Tools for Drinking Water Protection" is a live, 90-minute interactive broadcast that will be presented Wednesday, March 19 from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Pre- and post-conference discussions with local experts and leaders interested in water quality will accompany the event, beginning at 1:00 p.m. and educational materials will be available.

Extension Educator Lorene Bartos, who is helping coordinate the video conference locally, said she hopes it will help mobilize community dialogue and lead local decision-makers to take a closer look at pollution prevention measures for community drinking water supplies.

The video conference portion of the program will be broadcast live by satellite. During the broadcast, national experts on water quality will focus on regulatory and non-regulatory measures for preventing drinking water pollution.

Participants will learn about practical planning and management tools for creating successful pollution prevention programs such as guidelines for establishing water monitoring programs, land use planning, public education and contingency planning.

People hear stories of unsafe drinking water. This video workshop will help us evaluate the status of our drinking water protection plans here and give us information we need to improve drinking water quality,” said Bartos.

Conference participants also can speak directly to some of the country’s top community drinking water experts via phone, FAX and the Internet.

Broadcast panels are Dusty Hall, environmental manager for Dayton, Ohio; Ken Lustig, director of environmental health for the Panhandle Health District of Coeur d’Alene, Idaho; and Jon Witten, president of Horsley and Witten Inc. of Boston, MA.

The Lincoln site links with more than 300 other sites across the country, all of which receive a national satellite feed from the Public Broadcasting System (PBS). In Nebraska, where a dozen sites are downlinking the conference, the event is a cooperative effort of University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension, The Groundwater Foundation, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Nebraska Cooperative Extension, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, Nebraska Association of Resource Districts, the League of Women Voters and local water supply agencies throughout the state.

For more information, contact Bartos at 441-7180. (LB)
Eat Right America® stresses “all foods can fit”

Pop quiz. If you asked a group of Americans what five foods they “cannot live without,” what might they say? Most likely, pizza, pasta, chicken, ice cream, chocolate and french fries will top their list. These are the all-time favorite foods that callers to the American Dietetic Association (ADA’s) Consumer Nutrition Hot Line named during a recent survey. Nonetheless, when asked about eating healthfully, 75 percent of the people surveyed said they “need to eliminate certain foods,” such as sweets, fried foods, and high fat items from their diets.

“Pasta, chicken, chocolate, ice cream, pizza and french fries are as American as baseball and apple pie, and can be part of a healthful eating plan,” said Nancy Schwartz, Ph.D., R.D., who directs ADA’s National Center for Nutrition and Dietetics (NCND). “People don’t need to give up their favorite tasty foods. All foods can be part of healthful eating when consumed in moderation.”

As part of its 1997 National Nutrition Month® Campaign celebrated in March, NCND is spreading the word that “all foods can fit” into a healthful diet and that enjoying a variety of foods encourages life-long, healthful eating habits. “Balancing out a variety of selections over the course of a day or week, with an emphasis on grain products, fruits and vegetables, can lead to an overall healthful eating pattern,” Schwartz said. “Moreover, physical activity is an essential component of a healthful lifestyle.”

In a recent national survey conducted by ADA, 80 percent of the respondents said they recognized the importance of good nutrition, but only 35 percent said they are doing all they can to have a balanced eating plan. About 65 percent of those surveyed cite fear of having to give up their favorite foods or spending too much time preparing healthful meals as obstacles to better nutrition. “These obstacles are more imaginary than real,” says Schwartz. “Make healthy choices that fit your lifestyle so you can do the things you want to do.”

Schwartz recommends the following guidelines:

• Be adventurous: Expand your food repertoire to include a variety of foods.
• Be flexible: Go ahead and balance what you eat and your physical activity over several days. No need to worry about just one meal or one day. And, physical activity doesn’t have to be done in one big burst—small increments of activity can add up to a continued on page 11
Hey, you can count on me!

We'll all say it at one time or another, and probably meant it at the time. But other things came along and we forgot to do what we promised. Be more responsible! That's another one we have all done.

ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT YOU DO

• do their share
• How do you teach responsibility?
• at home, the best way to teach respecting others, of course. Are you reliable? Do you do your best, or give up easily? Are you disciplined? Do you blame others? Do you keep your word? Your kids will do just as you do!
• Let children learn responsibility at home by giving them age-appropriate tasks and directions. Then let them do the job. If they don't do it, encourage them, but don't take over. Opportunities to learn responsibility at home include:
  • cleaning their room and part of the common living space
  • taking care of pets or a garden
  • keeping their own calendar
  • at school, children learn responsibility by:
    • doing homework on time
  • taking care of something you don't want

For more information, please contact Karen Larsen with the Lancaster Area Agency on Aging. (LB)

It is time to think about spring housekeeping. Some tips to help make the job easier:

• Store cleaning supplies where you use them (in the kitchen and bathroom), so you don't have to keep going from room to room to find them. By cleaning as you go (wiping the bathroom vanity after use, etc.) dirt won't accumulate and clean ups will be faster.

• Clean your dust mop before storing it. To avoid a dust cloud, put a damp paper bag over the head of the mop before shaking it.

• To clean small areas like countertops, spray or gel products are convenient and easy to use. To clean larger areas, like floors or walls, powders or liquids mixed in a pail of water are more effective.

To prevent streaks when cleaning large vertical areas (walls, etc.), start at the bottom and work up. Overlap areas as you clean and use a circular motion. (LB)

More grandparents raising grandchildren

The U.S. Bureau of Census estimated in 1994 that approximately 3.7 million children less than 18 years of age were living in a home headed by their grandparent(s), a 40 percent increase during the past decade. For more than a third of these children, neither parent is present in the home. Historically, grandparen
tal care has been in response to the needs of the grandchildren in cases of death, divorce or abandonment. Today's grandparents are more likely to be taking on an increasing role due to dysfunctional parents who are unable or unwilling to care for their own children due to drug and alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy, unemployment, child abuse and neglect, incarceration or emo
tional instability. Problems that are breaking families apart are leaving children at risk, neglected and uncared for. Grandparents across the country, regardless of income, background, or race, are assuming this responsi
bility. They did not expect to be parents again. Grandparents who take care of their grandchildren need support.

For more information, please contact Karen Larsen with the Lancaster Area Agency on Aging. (LB)

Expect your teen to be different within limits

Adolescence is a time when teens are struggling to define personal values, direction and independence. They must be allowed the free
dom, within reason, to develop this independence even though you, as a parent, may not always agree with or like their choices. Discuss your personal opinions with your teen and establish guidelines together.

For instance: Allow your teen to choose and listen to “his” music as long as a previously agreed upon volume control is maintained and the music does not contain bad language.

Bear in mind that how your teen dresses probably does not hurt anyone, unless it offers suggestions or sends a clear message. This should be discussed with your teen.

Be honest with your teen but also maintain an open mind. Being a role model and sharing your views and values plays an important role in your teen’s growth into adulthood. (LB)
Lancaster County high school seniors, you have a second opportunity to apply for several scholarships provided for 4-H members planning to attend institutions of higher learning after high school. The following scholarship applications are available at the Extension office: Kiwanis (one for $250), Jonathan Backes (one for $500), Birdie Hutchinson (one for $200), Havelock Business Association (one for $250) and 4-H Council (five for $300 each). Applications for these scholarships are due by June 9, 1997. Each scholarship has different requirements, so request only those applications that fit your needs.

Kiwanis $250. Must be a high school senior and currently enrolled in 4-H. Selection based on 4-H projects, scholastic standing, activity involvement and financial need.

Birdie E. Hutchinson $200. Must enroll in the College of Human Resources and Family Servces and major in home economics. Selection based on 4-H projects, scholastic standing, activity involvement and financial need.

Jonathan Milligan Backes Memorial 4-H Scholarship $500. Must enroll full-time at the University of Nebraska, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Must be a high school senior currently enrolled in 4-H, with a minimum of three years 4-H experience. Selection based on 4-H projects, scholastic standing, activity involvement and recommendations.

Havelock Business Association $250. Must be a high school senior and a 4-H, FFA or FHA member in good standing from Waverly High School or Lincoln Northeast High School. Selection based on 4-H, FFA and FHA projects or programs, scholastic standing, activity involvement and financial need.

4-H Council $500. Must be a high school senior, currently enrolled in 4-H, a minimum of three years 4-H experience. Can be used for any post secondary education. (LB)

Scholarships available

The 4-H Bucket Calf Workshop will be held Thursday, March 27, at 7:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry Creek Road. The workshop will cover:

1. How to select a calf.
2. Where to buy a calf.
3. How much to pay.
4. What facilities are needed to care for a calf.
5. Keeping a calf in good health.
6. What to feed a calf.
7. Using grooming tools.

Any 4-H or Cloverbud member over the age of five interested in learning about the 4-H bucket calf project is welcome. Parents are encouraged to attend. Bring a friend to learn more about 4-H.

Call Janice Halling, superintendent, at 402-785-5345 if you have any questions. (AF)

Bucket Calf Workshop

Growing Up Female retreat April 19-20

Growing Up Female is a special mother-daughter retreat scheduled for April 19 and 20, 1997 at the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center in Gretna. This retreat is an excellent opportunity for mothers and their 11-13 year old daughters to spend a special time together learning effective communication skills and building self-esteem.

Workshop sessions include opportunities to learn more about sexuality, techniques for dealing with peer pressure and the importance of individual family values.

The cost for each mother-daughter pair is $65. The fee includes meals, snacks and lodging. Registration is limited, so it is suggested that you register as early as possible. Registrations are due no later than April 7, 1997. Applications and more information are available at the Extension office, or you may fill out the application below. For more information, contact LaDeane at 441-7180. We encourage other female care givers such as stepmothers or grandparents to attend. (LJ)

Music contest reminder

Do you have a 4-H group that likes to sing and dance? If you do, mark April 20 on your calendar and start practicing.

The 1997 Music Contest will be held on this date at 4:00 p.m. at Dawson Middle School Auditorium. A partial list of rules was published on page eight of the January News. Stop by the office or call Mike to get a registration form. All registrations are due to the office by April 11. (MF)
It’s time again to mark your calendar for all of the upcoming show dates and deadlines. Remember, deadlines are firm—plan ahead!

The dates and locations of the 1997 District Horse Shows have been announced.

June 17—Hayes Center
June 18—Lexington (English)
June 19—Valentine
June 20—Chadron (English)
June 23—Seward
June 24—Freemont (English)
June 25—Bloomfield
June 26—Albion (English)

The deadline to submit ALL forms (entry, horse ID, level verification and money) to the Extension office is Friday, May 23. All forms will be available at the April 4-H Horse VIPE Meeting.

2006 PAK 10 4-H Judging clinics and contests

Livestock
Date: Thursday, March 20, 1997
Time: 6:00 p.m. Registration • 6:30 p.m. Clinic & Contest
Results will be tabulated after the contest and announced by mail.
Place: Saunders County Fairgrounds, Wahoo, NE

Dairy
Date: Saturday, April 12, 1997
Time: 10:00 a.m. Registration • 10:30 a.m. Contest
Results will be tabulated and announced immediately following the contest.
Place: UNL Dairy Research Farm, Mead, NE

Horse
Date: Tuesday, June 10, 1997
Time: 6:30 p.m. Registration • 7:00 p.m. Contest • 9:00 p.m. Clinic
Results will be tabulated and announced immediately following the clinic. (9:45 p.m.)
Place: Skyline Ranch Arena, Elkhorn, NE/Rain Location TBA

Poultry
Date: Thursday, June 19, 1997
Time: 9:00 a.m. Registration • 9:30 a.m. Clinic • 11:30 a.m. Lunch Break • 12:30 p.m. Contest
Results will be tabulated and announced immediately following the contest. (3:00 p.m.)
Place: UNL Agricultural Research & Development Center, Ithaca, NE

For more information: Contact your local UNL Cooperative Extension Office. (CB)

Focus on 4-H
Family is an important part of the 4-H program. One Lancaster County family is a perfect example of 4-H in the family! At the Selin household there is almost always something going on that involves 4-H. Gary and Marty Selin along with their children, Kevin, Kelly, Courtney and Garret live in Lincoln and have been active with 4-H in this county for five years. The family’s 4-H background goes way beyond those five years however. Both Gary and Marty were active as youth in 4-H clubs in their home state of North Dakota.

Gary and Marty are both leaders of a 4-H club. Hands Across America (formerly known as the Crazy Eights) is the club Marty leads and Kelly and Courtney are members of. Other members of Hands Across America are Kay Clinch (project leader), Cindy Fiala (project leader), Jenny Fiala (junior leader), Lisa Benes, Karen Clinch, Nina Contreras, Alyssa Fiala, Becky Fiala, Brenda Fiala, Elizabeth Konor, Monica Rettschler, Rachel Rettschler and Colleen Zuerlein. The club has done several community service projects. Recently they prepared and served a dinner for the hungry at the Matt Talbot Kitchen. Each 4-H member prepared a complete meal including beef stew, salad, biscuits or bread, and dessert. All together they served 70 people.

The club also participates in Meals on Wheels by delivering meals to senior citizens. Group projects for “Hands Across America” this year include Child Development, Heritage Treasures and a Do Your Own Thing—Career Exploration. Marty developed the Career Exploration program for her club after hearing a presentation at the State 4-H Leader’s Institute in which Extension Educator Gary Bergman discussed the importance of 4-H in preparing young people for the career world of tomorrow. Gary is busy with his own club, the Rocketeers, which his son Kevin is a member of. Other members include Matthew Hyland, Joey Kreifels, Nathan Kreifels, Ryan Luebbers, Nick

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The time is fast approaching for all 4-H members interested in showing up for the 4-H turkey project. The turkeys will arrive Wednesday, April 23. You have to order at least 10 turkeys ($4 each). Payment and application forms are due no later than March 17. If you are interested in participating please contact Cindy Blome at the Extension office by Monday, March 10. (CB)

Counselors needed at the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center this summer
If you are 14 years of age or older and enjoy working with youth and sharing your skills, this is a great opportunity for you. Camps are held at the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center during June and July. Camp counselor applications are available at the Extension office and due by April 15. A training will be held at the 4-H center June 7-9 for all selected counselors. (LB)

4-H horse judging team—top five in nation
The Lancaster County 4-H Horse Judging Team members can still be seen walking at least 5 feet off the ground after placing third in the “Horse Judging Contest” and fifth in the “Overall High State Award” given at the National 4-H Horse Classic. The contest was held in Denver, Colorado, January 9-12.

The team consisted of Laurissa Salbalka (member of Freedom Riders), Merici Vinton (member of Apple Hill Gang), Lisa Rieck (member of Hunter’s Pride) and Kala Ball (member of Freedom Riders) who was unable to judge due to her participation on the UNL Judging Team but was an active supporter and cheerleader. Melodie Nielsen served as their coach and Janet Ball was their adult sponsor.

Each member judged halter, performance and gave oral reasons as parts of the contest. Merici Vinton placed fifth for overall individuals in halter classes and the entire team placed third. Laurissa Salbalka placed third and Merici Vinton placed second for overall individuals in performance classes and the entire team placed third. Lisa Rieck placed ninth for overall individuals in the oral reasons classes.

The team received money from the State 4-H Youth Development fund, Lancaster County 4-H Council and Lancaster County 4-H Committee purchased matching team jackets for each member. Congratulations to each team member and “special” thanks to Coach Melodie Nielsen, Janet Ball and everyone involved with all of the agencies and committees that made their trip possible. (CB)
The 4-H Japanese Exchange Program is one of the largest exchange programs involving North American and Japanese youth in the world. Since its beginning in 1872, some 30,000 students have stayed with families in 39 states, including Nebraska, and more than 4,000 American students have made reciprocal visits to Japan.

Host family applications are available now. For an application or additional information please write or phone the Lancaster County Extension Office. (GB)
Character Counts! continued from page 1

and at the office without offending political, racial, religious, gender or sexual orientations and sensibilities. The hope was that by using a consistent language with kids, they could learn good character could be reinforced and better understood.

CHARACTER COUNTS! teachers are to ask themselves three questions before they act:

1. Have I thought about the way my words and actions may help or hurt others?

2. Am I living up to the ethical principles of the Six Pillars of Character by being trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring and a good citizen—even if I have to give up other things I want?

3. If I cannot find a way to live up to one of the Six Pillar principles without violating another, am I making the choice I think is best for society in the long run.

Good character requires the insight to see what is right and the courage to do it, regardless of the cost in popularity, money, prestige or pleasure. We will never be better than the way we treat other people. By considering the needs of other people as highly important, we give ourselves the greatest gift: honor and integrity. The commitment of adults to be models of good character and spend time with young people can make a difference.

Young people yearn for the wisdom that is gained from experience, the emotional wisdom of the heart. And the wise young people we know, the young people who have faith in their own ability to make wise choices, the young people who are believers in the 4-H program.

Focus on 4-H

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Rasby, Jeff Siedlack and Shaun Swift. He started the club five years ago with a group of nine boys interested in model rockets. The club would get together, have a business meeting and watch the rockets. Each year they have a picnic where they launch their rockets. The club has grown both in numbers and in projects. Now club members are very active in shooting sports, entomology, rockeiy and animal projects. During meetings they often have speakers who cover a variety of topics including gun safety, taxidermy (which Gary does himself), and blacksmithing. The Rockeiers have teamed up with Hands Across America to participate in programs such as On Your Own in Rural America. The Sehn's also host a Recognition Banquet for both clubs each year at their home. Club members and their families come and awards and gifts are presented. Each 4-H member has an opportunity at the banquet to present about their accomplishments and highlights for the year.

Gary and Marty are strong believers in the 4-H program. They share that through participation, their own children and the other youth are gaining important career skills as well as gaining responsibility and confidence. Kevin, age 14, and Kelly, age 12, are both very active in their clubs. Along with all the activities, they are working on projects in areas such as computers, clothing, entomology, heirloom treasures and animals. Three year old Garrett is happy to help with the rabbit projects and sample cooking projects.

Gary, Marty and their children are planning to move this year. We will certainly miss them and wish them the best in their new home: The Extension office and the Lancaster County 4-H program thanks the Sehns for all of their great contributions to youth in Lancaster County!

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**Nebraska Cooperative Extension Newsletter**

Lancaster County

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**NOTICE**

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

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**Extension Calendar**

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

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**March 1-2**

- KFOR Lawn and Garden Show—State Fair Park

**March 2**

- 4-H Speech & PSA Contest—Nebraska State Capitol Hearing Rooms, Lincoln ... 2:00-4:00 p.m.

**March 4**

- Teen Learn & Serve Conference—East Campus
- Grain Sorghum Seminar—Gage County Extension Office, Wilber ........................................ 1:00 p.m.
- Chemigation Certification Training—Saline County Extension Office, Beatrice ............ 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- 4-H Council Meeting ......................................................... 7:00 p.m.

**March 5**

- 4-H Small Animal VIPs Meeting ........................................... 7:00 p.m.

**March 6**

- Chemigation Certification Training—Dodge County Extension Office, Fremont ...................... 9:00 a.m.

**March 7**

- 4-H Cloverbuds VIPs Meeting ........................................... 1:30 p.m.

**March 8**

- CWF Fundraising—ARDC, Ithaca, NE ... 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- Acreage and Small Farm Owners Workshop—ARDC, Ithaca, NE ............................ 1:00 p.m.

**March 9**

- 4-H Teen Council Meeting ........................................... 3:00-5:00 p.m.

**March 10**

- Lancaster County 4-H Shooting Sports Club Meeting ........................................ 7:00-9:00 p.m.
- Extension Board Meeting ........................................... 7:00 p.m.

**March 12**

- 4-H Horse VIPs Meeting ........................................... 7:00 p.m.

**March 13-16**

- Kansas City Conference—Kansas City, MO

**March 14**

- ExpoVisions Leadership Team & Residence Hall Counselor Applications Due

**March 15**

- Camp SIT (Staff in Training) Applications Due

**March 17**

- Be a Better Gardener preregistration deadline
- 4-H Turkey Applications Due

**March 18**

- Star City Rabbit raisers 4-H Club Meeting ........................................... 7:00 p.m.

**March 20**

- PAK 10 Livestock Judging Contest—Wahoo
- Private Appraisers Certification ........................................... 7:00 p.m.
- Fair Board Meeting ........................................... 7:00 p.m.
- 4-H Rabbit VIPs Meeting ........................................... 7:00 p.m.

**March 21**

- Private Appraisers Certification ........................................... 1:00 p.m.
- “Youth Gangs in America”—satellite teleconference—Lancaster Extension Education Center or Home Economics Building, UNE, East Campus, Room 1 12:30-2:30 p.m.

**March 21-22**

- Bake & Take Days

**March 22**

- Private Appraisers Certification ........................................... 9:00 a.m.

**March 24**

- FCE Council Meeting—Genealogical Library, 3000 Old Cheney Road, Lincoln 1:00 p.m.
- FCE Cultural Arts Entries Due
- Be a Better Gardener Introduction Workshop ........................................... 7:00 p.m.

**March 25**

- FCE Leader Training, Estate Planning ........................................... 1:00 or 7:00 p.m.

**March 27**

- ewf—Southeast Community College, Lincoln ........................................... 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
- 4-H Bucket Calf Workshop ........................................... 7:30 p.m.

**March 28-29**

- Confidence Course Workshop—Gretna, NE

**April 1**

- 4-H Market Beef IDs due for State Fair and Ak-Sar-Ben (contact the Extension office)
- 4-H Action Team Applications Due
- 4-H Council Meeting ........................................... 7:00 p.m.

**April 5**

- Kiwanis Carnival—Grandstand Building (2nd floor), State Fair Park, Lincoln .... 7:00-9:00 p.m.

**April 6-12**

- National 4-H Conference—Chey Chase, MD-Washington, D.C.

**April 9**

- 4-H VIPs Meeting ........................................... 7:00 p.m.

**April 11**

- 4-H Music Contest Registration Due

**April 12**

- PAK 10 Dairy Judging Contest—ARDC, Mead, NE

**April 13**

- 4-H Teen Council Meeting ........................................... 3:00-5:00 p.m.

**April 14**

- Lancaster County 4-H Shooting Sports Club Meeting ........................................ 7:00-9:00 p.m.
- CWF Meeting ........................................... 7:00 p.m.
- Extension Board Meeting ........................................... 7:30 p.m.

**April 15**

- 4-H Camp Counselor Applications to Eastern Camp

**April 17**

- Fair Board Meeting ........................................... 7:00 p.m.

**April 19**

- 4-H Performance Swine Weigh-in—State Fair Park ........................................... 9:00-11:00 a.m.

**April 19-20**

- Growing Up Female—Eastern NE 4-H Camp, Gretna