The NEBLINE, April 2010

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Volunteer to Make a Difference!

Lincoln/Lancaster County Benefits from Nearly Three Million Volunteer Hours Each Year

Lorene Bartos
UNL Extension Educator

How are you making a difference with your time? Nebraska has the second highest rate of volunteering in the United States.¹ In Nebraska, 38.9 percent of the population volunteers. Are you one of them? Volunteering is a privileged status in today’s society more than ever. A question that is asked many times is “Why should I volunteer?” Most volunteers say it is because of the rewards they receive. Not financial rewards, but the feeling of satisfaction from the volunteer opportunity. With a slow economy, the opportunities are greater. There are also more people with time available.

Research tells us people have many reasons for volunteering and each is for a different reason. People give the following reasons for volunteering:

• Giving something back to society
• Use spare time
• Share skills
• Have fun
• Scholarship / graduation requirement
• Personal growth and benefit
• Learn new skills
• Meet new people
• Develop self-esteem
• Community service
• Career exploration

Volunteering is an opportunity available to all age groups and many areas. Opportunity areas include education, health, sports, sharing a skill, religious projects, prisons, museums, veterans neighborhood parks, shelters for battered women and children, homeless shelters, prisons, schools, colleges, and many more.

Many civic organizations provide their members with a variety of volunteer opportunities. These organizations need members to volunteer to make possible many youth activities and sports.

Realizing the worth of volunteer hours is important to the community. The estimated dollar value of volunteer time in Nebraska is $15.93 per hour². Last year non-profit organizations in Lancaster County reported to Volunteer Partners 120,046 volunteers giving 2,704,125 hours. This amounted to $43,076.71. Volunteer Partners is a local organization with the mission of connecting volunteers with the needs of the community.

We all tend to think more of those in need during the holidays, but volunteering is welcome and necessary all year. We all need to be aware making our communities, our nation, and our world better is a 365-day-a-year responsibility — and there is always something we could be doing to help.

To connect with local volunteer opportunities, go to the Volunteer Partners Web site at http://volunteerpartners.org or look in the newspaper for a listing of needs.

Remember: Volunteering is not nice, it is necessary!

¹Source: Corporation for National & Community Service, www.nationalservice.gov
²Independent Sector — 2007 is the latest year for which state-by-state numbers are available.

Ten Tips for Wise Volunteering

1. Research the causes or issues important to you

Look for a group that deals with issues about which you feel strongly. You may already be giving money to one of these organizations and may be a good place to volunteer.

2. Consider the skills you have to offer.

While most nonprofits are eager to find volunteer help, they have to be careful when accepting the services you offer. You may be asked to come for an interview, fill out a volunteer application, describe your qualifications, and your background — just as you would at an interview for a paying job.

3. Consider volunteering as a family.

If you would like to move into areas which will make a difference, these tips help you make a good choice and match.

4. Would you like to learn something new?

If you enjoy outside work, have a knack for teaching, or just enjoy interacting with people, you may want to look for volunteer work which would incorporate these aspects of your personality.

5. Don’t over-commit your schedule

If you have some time to share or give to make a difference, these tips help you make a good choice and match.

6. Nonprofits may have questions, too

A lot of organizations might ask you whether you are the right person for the job. As you seek volunteer opportunities, here are some questions you might want to ask:

7. Virtual volunteering.

Many civic organizations provide their members with a variety of volunteer opportunities, go to the Volunteer Partners Web site or look in the newspaper for a listing of needs.

8. Give voice to your heart through your giving and volunteering!

Volunteering is an easy and rewarding way to get involved with the 2010 USA National Games for Special Olympics! See page 10

UNL Extension Volunteering

Last year, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County programs benefited from approximately 1,440 volunteers investing 24,450 hours of time. Volunteers contribute to the 4-H Youth Development program, Master Gardener, Nutrition Education Program (NEP), Family Community Education (FCE) and other extension programs. In addition, 4-H and FCE members often volunteer in community service projects (see back page for one 4-H member’s service project).
Calibrating Hand-Held Sprayers

Tom Dorn
UNL Extension Educator

Do you need to spot spray weedy patches in the lawn or pasture with a hand-held sprayer? We will discuss a simple step-by-step calibration procedure that ensures you apply the correct amount of pesticide to comply with the product label and so you will achieve satisfactory results.

In order to apply the recommended amount of chemical through a sprayer, you need to know two things:
1. The quantity of total spray output you will be applying per unit of area, e.g., gallons per acre (GPA); and,
2. The recommended amount of product to apply per acre.

I recently came across a simplified method of calibrating hand-held sprayers. This methodology works for calibrating either compressed air (pump-up) sprayers or sprayers with a motor driven pump to create pressure (hand guns). The following procedure illustrates the steps required to properly calibrate hand-held sprayers. Most of the procedure is the same whether you are using a compressed air or powered sprayer. Italicized text applies only to compressed air sprayers.

Determine the Amount of Chemical to Add to the Tank
7) Divide the useful capacity of the tank (step 8) by the fractional acre covered per tank (step 7) to determine the amount of product to add per tank of spray.

How to Measure Small Quantities of Pesticide
You could measure small quantities of pesticide using a number of different measuring devices. Three common examples are:
• A measuring cup (Dedicate a measuring cup for garage use only. Never use the same cup that is used for cooking.)
• A tablespoon (Tbsp) (If you are using an old tablespoon from the silverware drawer, check volume by pouring water from a measuring spoon into the spoon designated for pesticides to check the actual volume.)
• A disposable syringe calibrated in milliliters (These are sold at veterinary supply and farm supply stores). This is my personal favorite because you suck chemical into the syringe instead of pouring chemical from the bottle into an open measure which can spill on your hands or clothes. A syringe accurately measures any volume up to its full capacity.

The calculations below demonstrate how to compute the chemical needed for our example using these three fluid volume measuring devices.

- 1.9 fl.-oz. / 8 fl.-oz./Cap = 0.24 Cup per tank. Add just under 1/4 cup of product per tank.
- 1.9 fl.-oz. / 2 Tbsp per ounce = 3.8 Tbsp. Add just under 4 Tbsp per tank.
- 1.9 fl.-oz. / 29.6 milliliters (ml)/fl.-oz. = 56.2 ml. Add just over 56 ml per tank.

Measure Spray Output
1) Note the “full” mark on the spray tank. There will be space above the mark for compressed air.
2) Determine the useful volume of the spray tank by measuring the volume of water needed to fill an empty tank to the full mark.
3) Using only water, fill the container to the full mark. Start the motorized pump or pressurize the tank, then test the spray pattern. Add pressure and/or adjust the spray tip until you are satisfied with the spray pattern.
4) Measure and mark a test area 18.5 feet x 18.5 feet square.
5) Spray the test area in the manner you would normally do when controlling the target pest and record the time in seconds to treat the test area.
6) Pump up the pressure again and spray into a container for the same number of seconds it took to “treat” the test area (step 5) and measure the fluid ounces (fl.-oz.) caught in the container. Calculate the number of fl.-oz. caught in the container will be equal to the chemical needed for our example using these three fluid volume measuring devices.

Pioneer Farm Family Awards
Due May 1

For the 55th year, the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben Foundation and the Nebraska Association of Fair Managers will recognize Nebraska Pioneer Farm Families whose land has been owned by the same family for 100 years or more. Titled the “Nebraska Pioneer Families,” this program recognizes the historical information as well as signatures (the owner(s) signature verified by Lancaster County for more than 100 years will be recognized at the Lancaster County Super Fair on Friday, Aug. 7 at 5:30 p.m. during the Family Barbeque. Applications can be obtained by contacting Sue Bulling at the Lancaster Event Center at 441-6545 or Deanna Karmazin at the extension office at 441-7180. The deadline for submitting nominations is May 1. Families with land in other counties should contact their County Fair Office. Please be sure the forms are filled out in full with all of the necessary signatures (the owner(s) signature verifies the historical information as well as the engraving request) before mailing.

New Tall Fescue Varieties Worth Consideration

Tall fescue is a pasture grass we often have resisted using because it can contain some compounds that can harm livestock. Bruce Anderson, UNL forages specialist, says that is changing. Tall fescue is a high yielding and persistent cool-season grass. Compared to other grasses, fescue grows especially well in the fall so it often is used for winter grazing.

Traditional fescue varieties often had an intense fume, or endophyte, that produces chemicals that help the plant resist insects and diseases, which is good. But some of the chemicals also affect body temperature regulation, blood flow, and feed intake in livestock. Herd can be very sensitive, Mazes can abort or have stillborn foals, or they may fail to produce milk. In cattle, we often see rough hair coats and often some spent standing in water or shade during summer.

Cows produce less milk and often have difficulty conceiving. Intake can be especially low during summer, so weight gains also are low. In winter, a condition called ‘fescue foot’ can cause animals to lose hooves, ears, or tail switches during cold weather.

Many new fescue varieties, though, have been developed to be either ‘endophyte free,’ or they contain a novel, safe endophyte. These fescues are very safe to graze. Research here in Nebraska under both dryland and irrigated conditions has shown many of these varieties are highly productive and have good survival in our area. Many producers are beginning to use them very successfully in their grazing programs. Anderson suggests they are especially well suited for cow-calf operations. He has even planted some on his own farm.

Tall fescue used to be a grass we avoided, but since new varieties do not have the toxins of old fescues, consider using it for your new plantings. Think about it.

Source: Bruce Anderson, UNL Forage Specialist
Heat Treatments for Bed Bugs

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

One reason bed bug infestations are increasing is because they are resistant to pyrethroids, the most commonly used insecticide products used inside homes. This resistance is widespread. University of Kentucky researchers have discovered bed bugs collected across the U.S. have one or two gene sequences that enable them to detoxify pyrethroid insecticides. This explains why we are seeing problems with bed bug control.

Other treatment approaches are needed. One of the newest approaches is to use heat to eradicate bed bugs. Like all animals, bed bugs have an optimal range of temperatures for survival. Studies show adult bed bugs immediately die at 120°F. Their eggs die at 114°F. A heat treatment is using heat treatments in Lincoln and other places in Nebraska. They are using a Thermal Remediation system developed by Temp-Air. Mike McHale, Plunkett’s Multi-Housing Operations Manager and Mike Volnek, Service Supervisor, were kind enough to let me tag along on a recent job so I could learn about how this system works.

The treatment took place in a one-bedroom apartment her in Lincoln. Before the treatment begins, Plunkett’s technicians place 24 wireless temperature sensors in the most insulated areas of the apartment. These sensors send temperature data to an on-site computer where technicians can remotely (and more comfortably) monitor temperatures. Some items, like candles, aerosol cans, and even Florida orange juice do not tolerate temperatures above 120°F. These items were removed from the apartment or placed in the refrigerator. Heat must be distributed evenly so furniture was pulled away from walls, drawers were pulled out, and boxes were emptied. Mattresses were set on edge. Residual insecticides were applied to outside-facing walls to prevent bed bugs from migrating outward once the heat is turned on.

Once the prep work was done, technicians placed large electric heaters in the apartment along with large fans to circulate the heat. According to McHale, once the sensors temperatures reach 120°F, they continue heating for 4-6 hours or more, depending on the infestation level. This extended heat treatment makes sure all bed bugs and their eggs are killed.

This system uses four electric heaters per apartment which run on 220 volts. Most apartments don’t have the electrical capacity to run them, so the Thermal Remediation system has a generator housed outdoors in a trailer.

There are several advantages of heat treatments. First, inhabitants are not exposed to insecticides, especially in sleeping areas. It is necessary to discard beds and furniture and laundering isn’t needed. Another advantage; Plunkett’s guarantees heat treatments at least for a period of time. They won’t guarantee the apartment free of all future infestations, only the current one.

This treatment is pretty invasive. Because all the furniture is moved around, it will take some time for the inhabitant to put the place back together. It is also fairly expensive. McHale told me they charge $1,400 to heat treat a 900-square foot apartment.

For more places Thermal Remediation is being used for bed bug control, check out http://www.thermal-remediation.com/news.aspx.

Wildlife Repellents an Option in Certain Situations

Understand the strengths and weaknesses of repellents before you buy the “hype.”

One each, our office receives many calls from folks who are upset with local wildlife damaging plants and property. Many people want to know if there is something they can spray or sprinkle on their plants or yard to keep animals out. The short answer is “No.” Repellents are an option for wildlife damage reduction, but rarely work the way you want. Before you spend your money on repellents consider the following:

1. Animals can just walk on by. The first problem with repellents is, animals can simply walk past an offensive smell. Think of all the times you have smelled bad and repulsive odors. Did it stop you from going where you needed to go? Probably not. Now consider it from an animal’s point of view. It has a choice. Continue to eat and smell a bad smell or not smell a bad smell and starve. Which path do you think it will take? How about states? The most commonly used, cross commercially available repellents.

2. Animals get used to repellents. Often, by habituating the treatment area to the smell of the repellent. The signs of a habituating animal would be an increase in frequency and intensity of the behavior, a decrease in the amount of smell used, and a decrease in the amount of time spent in the area.

3. People do nothing. For example, people habituate to the smell of the repellent and don’t use it. This can result in negative impacts on the treatment area.

4. People follow directions. In fairness to the repellent manufacturer, sometimes repellent fail because the user doesn’t follow the instructions. Most repellents have to be reapplied after a rain, heavy dew, or due to plant growth. If a taste or tactile repellent is effective, it can only continue to be effective if it is still on the plant. Your costs add up.

5. When the animals have no choice. Under dire circumstances, animals have no choice but hold their noses and eat bad tasting food. If they don’t, they will starve. No repellent can drive away an animal that only has death as an alternative option.

Is There Anything That Works?

There are some repellents that may work for you in certain situations. Remember none of these are going to be 100 percent effective — they are only one of the tools you should be using. Here are some examples:

Terrestrial Repellents. There are some products available for animals like deer, that can be applied to plants. The plants take the repellent up through their roots and make them less desirable for deer to graze on. The products are quite effective on plants you don’t want to eat. Example products are Deer Stopper® and Repel®.

Visual Repellents — Sight.

These devices are used to scare animals away. To have any effectiveness, you need to move them around to different locations. Flashes of light will help repel birds. You can purchase a UltraPlus tape to repel birds like woodpeckers.

Auditory Repellents — Sound.

There are sounds of distressed animals and birds or noises of predators that can be used to frighten animals. The effects are short-term, but these devices may help you get a situation under control. The devices can be expensive and will most likely annoy your neighbors. At the present, there are no ultrasonic devices you can just plug into an outlet that work in the real world.

Dilatory Repellents — Smell.

Most animals are trying to dodge or adapt quickly to these repellents. You should also know urine products are “urine” — which may offend your nose and have potential health hazards. Save your money.

Tactile Repellents — Touch.

Some products are designed to harass an animal’s desire to touch. Sticky products are used to repel pigeons who don’t like giving their feet. These products also collect dirt and can effect the appearance of a building. The sticky product can also trap dirt and can effect the appearance of a building. The sticky product can also trap dirt and can effect the appearance of a building.

Source: Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Control

Rabies Confirmed in Local Horses

Soni Cochran
UNL Extension Associate

Dr. Annette Bredhauer, DVM, Nebraska Public Health Veterinarian has confirmed three cases of rabies during the past seven months in Lancaster County. The cases were not clustered in one area of the county and occurred during the past seven months.

Rabies is a virus most commonly transmitted in saliva from a rabid animal to another animal through a break in the skin. Local veterinarians assume the recent cases involving horses were the result of horses coming into contact with rabid skunks. Skunks are a common source of the rabies virus.

Horses are naturally curious and if they saw a strange animal in their barn or paddock, they would check it out. A horse could easily get bit by a skunk and you would never know until it is too late. The symptoms of a horse with rabies vary, so it is a disease best diagnosed by a veterinarian. In the meantime, a horse with rabies can expose humans and other animals to the disease.

Preventing rabies in horses is as easy as making sure your animals are vaccinated. We encourage you to contact your veterinarian for his/her recommendations on vaccinating horses and other animals on your property.

For information on skunk control and management, visit http://lancaster.unl.edu/pet/stunks.html or contact your local extension office.

Environmental Focus

April 2010

FOR MORE INFORMATION
For research-based information on how to manage wildlife damage problems, visit the Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management at http://iwdm.org/. 
Microwave ovens can play an important role at mealtime, but special care must be taken when cooking or reheating meat, poultry, fish, and eggs to make sure they are prepared safely. Microwave ovens can cook unevenly and leave “cold spots,” where harmful bacteria can survive. For this reason, it is important to use the following safe microwaving tips to prevent foodborne illness.

### Microwave Oven Cooking

- **Arrange food items evenly in a covered dish and add any liquid, if needed.** Cover the dish with a lid or plastic wrap; loosen or vent the lid or wrap to let steam escape. The moist heat created will help destroy harmful bacteria and ensure uniform cooking. Cooking bags also provide safe, even cooking.
- **Do not cook large cuts of meat on high power (100%).** Large cuts of meat should be cooked on medium power (50%) for longer periods. This allows heat to reach the center without overcooking outer areas.
- **Stir or rotate food midway through the microwaving time to eliminate cold spots where harmful bacteria can survive and for even more cooking.**
- **When partially cooking food in the microwave oven to finish cooking on the grill or in a conventional oven, it is important to transfer the microwaved food to the other heat source immediately.** Never partially cook food and store it for later use.
- **Use a food thermometer or the oven's temperature probe to verify the food has reached a safe minimum internal temperature.** Cooking times may vary because ovens vary in power and efficiency. Always allow standing time, which completes the cooking, before checking the internal temperature with a food thermometer.
- **Cook foods to the following safe minimum internal temperature:***
  - Beef, veal, lamb steaks, roasts, and chops may be cooked to 145°F.
  - Ground beef, veal, and lamb to 160°F.
  - Egg dishes, casseroles to 160°F.
  - Leftovers to 165°F.
  - Stuffed poultry is not recommended. Cook stuffing separately to 165°F.
  - All poultry should reach a safe minimum internal temperature of 165°F.
  - Cooking whole, stuffed poultry in a microwave oven is not recommended. The stuffing might not reach the temperature needed to destroy harmful bacteria.

### Microwave Defrosting

- **Remove food from packaging before defrosting.** Do not use foam trays and plastic wraps because they are not heat stable at high temperatures. Melting or warping may cause harmful chemicals to migrate into food.
- **Cook meat, poultry, egg casseroles, and fish immediately after defrosting in the microwave oven because some areas of the frozen food may begin to cook during the defrosting time.
- **Do not hold partially cooked food to use later.**
- **Cover foods with a lid or a microwave-safe plastic wrap to hold in moisture and provide safe, even heating.**
- **Heat ready-to-eat foods such as hot dogs, luncheon meats, fully cooked ham, and leftovers until steaming hot.**

### Avoid Microwaving Foods

- **in their take-out containers, unless labeled microwave-safe.**
- **Microwave plastic wraps, wax paper, cooking bags, parchment paper, and white microwave-safe paper should be safe to use.** Do not let plastic wrap touch foods during microwaving.
- **Never use thin plastic storage bags, brown paper or plastic grocery bags, newspaper, or aluminum foil in the microwave oven.**

### Cooking Safely in the Microwave Oven

- **Stir or rotate food midway through the microwaving time to eliminate cold spots where harmful bacteria can survive and for even more cooking.**
- **When partially cooking food in the microwave oven to finish cooking on the grill or in a conventional oven, it is important to transfer the microwaved food to the other heat source immediately.** Never partially cook food and store it for later use.
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- **Cover foods with a lid or a microwave-safe plastic wrap to hold in moisture and provide safe, even heating.**
- **Heat ready-to-eat foods such as hot dogs, luncheon meats, fully cooked ham, and leftovers until steaming hot.**

### After reheating foods in the microwave oven, allow standing time. Then, use a clean food thermometer to check food has reached 165°F.

### Containers & Wraps

- **Only use cookware specially manufactured for use in the microwave oven.** Glass, ceramic containers, and all plastics should be labeled for microwave use.
- **Plastic storage containers such as margarine tubs, take-out containers, plastic bowls, and one-time use containers should not be used in microwave ovens.** These containers can warp or melt, possibly causing harmful chemicals to migrate into the food.
- **Microwave plastic wraps, wax paper, cooking bags, parchment paper, and white microwave-safe paper should be safe to use.** Do not let plastic wrap touch foods during microwaving.
- **Never use thin plastic storage bags, brown paper or plastic grocery bags, newspaper, or aluminum foil in the microwave oven.**

### Stretch Your Food Dollar by Using Beans as a Main Dish

#### Recipes with 5 Ingredients or Less

**Three Bean Chili** *(8 servings)*

- 3 (15 ounce) cans beans (suggest a colorful mix – such as red, black, and Great Northern beans)
- 1 (16 ounce) jar salsa
- 1 (28 ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 (4 ounce) can chopped green chilies
- 1 teaspoon chili powder

In large saucepan, combine all the ingredients plus 2.5 cups of water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer 10-30 minutes or longer, if you prefer. Serve and top with shredded cheese, if desired.

**Black Bean Soft Tacos** *(8 servings)*

- 1 medium onion
- 2 (8 ounce) cans black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (15 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 (4 ounce) can chopped green chilies
- 1 tablespoon chili powder

In a nonstick skillet, sauté onion in beans, tomatoes, chilies, and chili powder. Bring to boil and simmer until mixture thickens. Spoon onto tortilla and top with cheese, if desired.

**Bean Salad** *(6 servings)*

- 1 (15 ounce) can garbanzo beans or pinto beans
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes
- 8 ounce grated or melted cheese

Top with favorite dressing

Mix ingredients together. Can be served over torn lettuce leaves.

**Apple Bean Bake** *(6 servings)*

- 1 (16 ounce) can pork and beans
- 2 golden delicious apples, cored and cubed (other variety, if you prefer)
- 2 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

**Microwave Method:** Combine ingredients in a 1-1/2 quart casserole. Cover with plastic wrap. Microwave uncovered on high 6 minutes. Turn and stir. Microwave on high another 4 minutes until the apples are tender.

**Stovetop Method:** Combine all ingredients in a 1-1/2 quart saucepan. Simmer until the apples are tender. Stir occasionally.

**Nachos with Beans** *(6 servings)*

- 1 (15 ounce) can beans – suggest pinto, red, black, or pinto beans (beans can be flavored by mixing 2 tablespoons of taco seasoning with beans)
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes
- 8 ounce grated or melted cheese

Drain and rinse beans. Flavor with taco seasoning, if desired. Beans can be chilled or heated. Place other ingredients in serving dishes so each person can “make their own nachos, starting with the tortilla chips.”

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**Mardel Meinke**

**UNL Extension Associate**

Beans are called a “super food” for good reason. A bean is actually a seed, packed full of nutrients. Beans are a vegetable that provide important vitamins and minerals. They are also a low-fat, low-sodium, cholesterol-free source of protein, and are also part of the meat and beans group. Beans are a unique food that counts as either a vegetable or protein, but not both at the same meal.

Beans are a very good source of iron and calcium and may reduce the risk of heart disease and certain cancers because they contain anti-oxidants. They are inexpensive and widely available. Beans do not have a strong flavor on their own, so can easily take on and complement other flavors in food. They can complement meats or take the place of meat, as a protein source in a meal.

While much of the world relies heavily on beans as a protein source, Americans are learning to cook a wider variety of foods with beans. There are so many kinds of beans available in food stores, and they are convenient, since canned beans are already cooked and ready to use. Sometimes flavors are added to canned beans and may be labeled “chili beans,” for example. Do not drain and rinse these, since flavor would be lost. But, with regular canned beans, drain and rinse them under running water to reduce the gaseous affect.

The following bean recipes require few ingredients and can be doubled and frozen for a later meal. Flavor is often enhanced when cooked a second time. Also, anytime we “cook once and eat twice,” we save money and preparation time.

**Black Bean Soft Tacos** *(8 servings)*

- 1 medium onion
- 2 (8 ounce) cans black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (15 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 (4 ounce) can chopped green chilies
- 1 tablespoon chili powder

In a nonstick skillet, sauté onion in beans, tomatoes, chilies, and chili powder. Bring to boil and simmer until mixture thickens. Spoon onto tortilla and top with cheese, if desired.

**Bean Salad** *(6 servings)*

- 1 (15 ounce) can garbanzo beans or pinto beans
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes
- 8 ounce grated or melted cheese

Top with favorite dressing

Mix ingredients together. Can be served over torn lettuce leaves.
Spring is really coming! Most of the snow is melting away. I found my way to the clothesline the other day to hang out my sheets. I don’t know of a better smell than of things that have been hung out when it is cold. I noticed several deadlines of which you should be aware in the State Newsletter sent out recently. Also, I would like to see a good representation from Lancaster County at the Southeast District Meeting in Wahoo on April 22. Please plan to attend. My “item” this month I found in the paper and thought it was worth repeating. “Reach out and touch someone every day.” People love that human touch — holding hands, a warm hug or just a friendly pat on the back.

More Fun in Your Family Life!

There’s hardly a family expert who would not agree with the message family fun is vitally important for healthy living. If you merely teach children how to cope with problems you haven’t taught them how to experience joy. We’re finding in our research just because a person isn’t down doesn’t mean he or she’s up. Here’s how to teach this important life skill:

1) Make ordinary things fun. One great thing about fun, it doesn’t have to cost anything, and it doesn’t have to take extra time. Psychologists say happiness is actually just a way of looking at your life, being willing to use any opportunity to laugh, that might come your way.

2) Teach your children the magic of anticipation. Kids learn from their parents how to look forward to things. It’s important to sit down with your children daily and talk about upcoming happy events — to show them how to anticipate good times. It doesn’t have to be a major event, like a trip to Disney World or a holiday with tons of presents. A simple, like talking about next weekend, will do just fine.

3) Help your children be realistic about what’s going to happen. You get your kids in the mood for anticipating the wonderful things about to take place, and suddenly their imagination may step back and reflect on it. Parents should be careful not to push their child in to adopting their analytic style. It’s okay to let your child simply experience the wonderment of something, like rolling in a pile of leaves. Don’t make her think she has to put a label on what she’s feeling.

4) Get in the habit of savoring the moment. Children tend to be absorbed in the experience, while adults may step back and reflect on it. Parents should be careful not to push their child in to adopting their analytic style. It’s okay to let your child simply experience the wonderment of something, like rolling in a pile of leaves. Don’t make her think she has to put a label on what she’s feeling.

5) Take plenty of strolls down memory lane. It’s okay to reminisce about old times, to savors things that happened in the past and keep them alive in your child’s memory. Taking photographs and gathering souvenirs are very good ways. Also, tell stories about things the child has done.

6) Encourage your children’s playful side. You can show your kids how to be light, how to take pleasure from life, how to be pleased with themselves. When you laugh at a child’s jokes — even the earliest rudimentary ones like putting his shoes on his ears — you’re helping develop what the world will later call his marvelous sense of humor, and when you put your shoes on your ears, the child’s doing the same thing as showing your child you share completely in his sense of fun.
Easter Lily Care

Mary Jane Frogge
UNL Extension Associate

When buying a lily, look for a plant with flowers in various stages of bloom from buds to open or partially opened flowers. Foliage should be dense, rich green in color, and extend all the way down to the soil line. This is a good indication of a healthy root system. Look for a well-proportioned plant, one that is about two times as high as the pot. You also should check the flowers, foliage and buds for signs of insects and disease.

At home, keep your lily away from drafts and drying heat sources such as appliances or heating ducts. Bright, indirect light is best with daytime temperatures of 65–75°F. Water the plant only when the soil feels dry to the touch, but do not over water. To prolong the life of the blossoms, remove the yellow anthers (pollen-bearing pods) found in the center of each flower.

Do not throw away you Easter lily after it is done blooming. You can save the bulb and plant it outdoors. Easter lilies can be replanted outside after the blossoms are gone. Plant the Easter Lily outdoors as soon as the ground can be worked. Select a sunny site with well drained soil. Set the top of the bulb six inches below the soil surface. Cut off the old flowers, but leave the stem and leaves. Do not cut back the stem until it dies down in the fall, then cut it off at the soil surface. After the soil surface freezes in late fall, mulch the soil and do not remove the mulch until new growth begins in the spring.

Blue false indigo grows three to four feet tall and three to four feet wide in an upright habit. This exceptional perennial grows across a wide range of zones and is one of the most adaptable native species. Newly emerging shoots produce violet-blue, lupine-like flowers in erect 10-inch racemes atop flower stems extending well above the foliage mound of clover-like, bluish-green leaves. The spring flowers are present for three to four weeks. The flowers give way to inflated seed pods which turn charcoal black when ripe and which flower arrangers consider to be ornamental. The common name, blue false indigo, refers to the use of this perennial by early Americans as a dye.

**Baptisia australis, 2010 Perennial Plant of the Year**

Blue false indigo is an excellent plant to anchor the back of the border. It is also valuable for cottage gardens, native plant gardens and native area of prairies and meadows.

It is best as a specimen or planted in small groups. Blue false indigo can be used with bulbs and other spring flowering perennials to make interesting combinations.

Each year, members of the Perennial Plant Association vote on the Perennial of the Year. The Perennial Plant Association’s goal is to recommend perennial plants that meet the following characteristics: low maintenance, relatively pest and disease resistant, multiple seasonal interests, and readily available.

Source: Perennial Plant Association

**Upcoming Composting Workshops and Demonstrations**

Each spring and fall as you clean-up your yards and gardens, there is always a large pile of leaves, grass clippings and other duff material to be removed. Instead of throwing it away, recycle it. One of the key components of good composting is brown or dried organic matter as well as green grass clippings. So, now is the time to utilize these materials in a compost pile. Learn how to be successful with composting by attending a composting workshop or demonstration sponsored by UNL Extension in Lancaster County and the City of Lincoln Recycling Office.

**Composting Workshops**

- **Wednesday, April 14** – Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry creek Rd., 6:30 p.m.
- **Wednesday, April 15** – Charles H. Greer Library, 56th Street, 6:30 p.m.
- **Tuesday, Oct. 12** – Loren Corey Eiseley Library, 1530 Superior Street, 6:30 p.m.
- **Wednesday, Oct. 13** – Bess Dodson Walt Library, 6701 S. 14th Street, 6:30 p.m.
- **Thursday, Oct. 14** – Anderson Library, 3615 Touseland Ave., 6:30 p.m.

**Composting Demonstrations**

are presented at the Pioneers Park Nature Center’s backyard composting demonstration area. These demonstrations will show you how to be successful with backyard composting. You will see three types of composting bins and how to use them.

**Demonstrations will be held:**
- **Saturday, April 10, 9:30-11:30 a.m.**
- **Saturday, May 8, 9:30-11:30 a.m.**
- **Saturday, Sept. 11, 9:30-11:30 a.m.**
- **Saturday, Oct. 9, 9:30-11:30 a.m.**

**Sign Up for Free E-mail Horticulture Newsletter**

HortUpdate is a FREE e-mail newsletter from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension which provides timely information to the lawn and landscape industry. This e-mail includes current lawn and landscape problems with control recommendations and a seasonal “To Do” list. To subscribe, go to http://extensionhorticulture.unl.edu.
Tips for Organic Gardening

Laurie Hodges
UNL Vegetable Scientist
and Sarah Browning
UNL Extension Educator

Weeds compete with vegetables for light, water, and nutrients. Weeds interfere with harvesting and can harbor many insects and diseases. While completely eliminating weeds in the garden is not realistic, several strategies can help limit or reduce weed competition.

First, reduce the weed seed bank. Raw manure, immature compost, hay or straw may contain weed seeds. Clean all tillage equipment after use to prevent contamination from adjacent garden sites. Definitely do not allow weeds to form seed heads. Seeds can lay dormant for years and continue to infest the garden sites. Don’t allow weeds to mature and produce seeds.

Mulches — Mulches shade the soil to prevent weed seed germination and smother the growth of weeds. Both organic and plastic mulches are available to gardeners. Mulches can be added to the crop throughout the growing season, or the crop can be seeded or transplanted into an established mulch. Another form of mulch is cover crops. Cover crops can be grown during the summer to suppress weeds for the fall garden. Examples of cover crops include barley, corn gluten, flax, rye, mustard, and vetch.

Plant Spacing — The critical weed competition that occurs early in the season is between rows to shade the plants or between rows to shade the plants or between rows to shade the plants.

Mulches can be effective for weed control, but they do not prevent weed seed germination. Mulch must be added early in the season to be effective. Mulches can also help protect water from evaporation, but they can also allow many weeds to germinate and grow. Mulches can help reduce the use of herbicides.

Crops with a deep root system, such as corn, soybeans, and melons, can be grown in the same area as cover crops. Cover crops can help reduce the use of herbicides.

Plan for Disease Prevention

Home gardens are often bothered with diseases that are harvested. Many gardeners have found proper planning and following recommended control practices keep vegetable losses to a minimum.

Selection of a disease-resistant variety is one of the best ways to prevent disease. Selecting a disease-resistant variety is one of the best ways to prevent disease. Selection of a disease-resistant variety is one of the best ways to prevent disease. Selection of a disease-resistant variety is one of the best ways to prevent disease.

When to Water

To many people, one of the most enjoyable aspects of home gardening is watering. It is also very important. However, many gardening problems, such as poor yield, poor quality, poor fertility, bitter fruit, sunscald, disease problems, and a dozen other things, can be related to poor or improper watering techniques. Gardening is a form of manipulation. Home gardeners can manipulate the environment to make the garden grow better. Watering is one of the most important factors in manipulating the environment.

When to water the garden by examining the soil, not the plants. If the soil surface appears dry, scratch the surface to a depth of about one inch to determine if moisture is present. If the soil appears relatively dry, watering is necessary. If sufficient moisture is available, wait a couple of days before watering. Watering is necessary once every 3-5 years. If this cannot be done, water the garden soil to a depth of at least 6 inches.

Organic herbicides — Organic herbicides can be used by gardeners. These include acetic acid (vinegar), citric acid, and corn gluten. Commercial products are available.

Vegetables of the same family are host to the same pests and diseases. Crop rotation is effective with soil-borne diseases as well as foliar diseases. Rotation periods are three to five years and may be difficult in a fall garden. However, it is still beneficial to rotate crops and remove diseased plants or crop debris as quickly as possible. Container plantings can become part of the rotation for added space.

Mulch retains moisture and reduces weed growth. Flame weeding is effective for weed control in summer-grown vegetables. Vegetable gardens can be rotated as needed. Flame weeding can be used for disease management in the same garden. However, it is still beneficial to rotate crops and remove diseased plants or crop debris as quickly as possible.
April 11 Deadline For 4-H Pick-a-Pig Project
The pick-a-pig project was designed to give urban youth the opportunity to participate in a 4-H Livestock project. There is a minimal cost to participate. The 4-H member will be required to attend weekly meetings and training sessions at a local farm. Those participating will learn about swine production, nutrition, management, and how to keep records. They will get the experience of showing swine at the Lancaster County Fair. For more information or to sign up, contact Deanna at 441-7180 or dkarmazin2@unl.edu. Sign up deadline is April 11.

Jammie Jamboree, April 10
Learn basic sewing skills as part of the 4-H Clothing Level 1 project and make jammie bottoms on Saturday, April 10, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherryvly Creek Road, Lincoln. Open to all youth (need not be in 4-H). Adults are welcome.

Bring your sewing machine, basic sewing equipment (such as scissors, pins, measuring tape, etc.), pull-on pajama bottom patterns (one simple pattern is Simplicity 3553), prewashed flannel or 100% cotton fabric (no one-way design fabrics or plaid) and matching thread. Also bring a sack lunch. Sign up by April 9 by calling 441-7180. Jammie bottoms may be entered at the county fair and styled in the Style Revue under Clothing Level 1.

Deb DeWald
Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Deb DeWald as winner of April’s “Heart of 4-H Award” in recognition of outstanding volunteer service. She has volunteered with 4-H for about seven years. She is currently superintendent for the 4-H & FFA Sheep show at the Lancaster County Super Fair. She has a son who is an independent 4-H member and Deb likes to get others who do not have the time commitment for traditional 4-H clubs to still become involved.

Deb says, “I like being a 4-H volunteer because it is a great way to meet people and an opportunity to help the kids get involved with livestock and the community. I work for University of Nebraska—Lincoln and like to get youth interested in the opportunities the University gives them to combine their talents and interest in animals as an adult. My favorite experience as a 4-H volunteer is the great support and encouragement staff make it a pleasure to volunteer.”

Congratulations to Deb. Volunteers like her are indeed important. Nominate your favorite 4-H volunteer by submitting the form available online at lancaster.unl.edu or at the extension office. Nominations of co-volunteers welcome.

State Horse Stampede Results
Several Lancaster County 4-H members participated in the State Horse Stampede held at UNL East Campus in February. Congratulations to all! Below are the purple ribbon winners.

ART CONTEST
Senior Division: Eli Dearmont (Reserve Champion), Ashley Wiegand (Honorable Mention), Ivy Dearmont, Nicole Oestmann, Jessica Scheebe, Ian Schuster, and Lexi Wolfe
Junior Division: Alja Whitehall

DEMONSTRATION CONTEST
Senior Division, Individual: Cory Peters (Reserve Champion)
Senior Division, Team: Eli Dearmont and Hannah Ronnau (Reserve Champion)
Junior Division, Teams: Lexi and Mackenzie Wolfe (Champion), Ivy Dearmont and Spencer Peters (Reserve Champion)

QZ BOWL
South Prairie Wranglers 4-H Club: Marie Ludtke, McKenzie Leudtke, Erika Peters, Hannah Ronnau, and Dylan Wolfe, coach Kendra Ronnau (Third Place)

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QZ BOWL
South Prairie Wranglers 4-H Club: Marie Ludtke, McKenzie Leudtke, Erika Peters, Hannah Ronnau, and Dylan Wolfe, coach Kendra Ronnau (Third Place)
Nearly 25 youth learned crocheting basics at a 4-H Basic Crocheting Workshop in February. Crocheting is part of the 4-H Clothing project. Photos are online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h.

4-H Pillow Party Taught Basic Sewing Skills

At a 4-H Pillow Party in February, 17 youth learned basic sewing skills as part of the 4-H Sewing for Fun project. They all went home with a pillow they sewed! Photos are online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h.

4-H Speech Contest

The 2010 4-H Speech Contest will be held Sunday, April 18 at 1:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherry creek Road, Lincoln. The Speech Contest provides 4-H'ers the opportunity to learn to express themselves clearly, organize their ideas and have confidence. Register by April 12 by calling 441-7180 or emailing dkrmaxmin@unl.edu with name, speech title and age division.

Contest divisions and requirements:
• 4-H clover kid: 5–7 years old, read or recite any story, short story, nursery rhyme, poem, pledge, etc...
• Novice: 8–9 years old, recite 2 minutes in length, any topic related to 4-H.
• Junior: 10–11 years old, recite 2–3 minutes in length, any topic about a 4-H experience.
• Intermediate: 12–13 years old, recite 4 minutes in length, encourages participants to talk about a 4-H project you would like others to enroll in.
• Senior: 14–19, 5–8 minutes in length, a timely topic related to 4-H.

For speech resources and examples check out our Web site at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Speech/Speech.html.

P.S.A. Contest

In the Public Service Announcement (P.S.A.) Contest, 4-H'ers will create a “radio commercial” recorded on a cassette tape or CD by Monday, April 12. P.S.A. must promote 4-H and should be 60 seconds. State 4-H asks for P.S.A.s to be general enough to be used anywhere in Nebraska at anytime of the year. Sound effects and background noises are encouraged (copyrighted material may not be used). If you do not have the capabilities to record a P.S.A., contact Deanna at 441-7180 to set up a time.

NEW for 2010:
• All P.S.A.s will use the state theme as the basis for their PSA. The 2010 PSA theme is “Meet the Future.”
• All 4-H PSA’s must include the following tag line within the length of the PSA: “Learn more about the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension 4-H Youth Development Program at 4h.unl.edu and know how to register!” The tag line is included in the 60 second time limit.

Results and comment sheets will be handed out at the 4-H Speech Contest on Sunday, April 18. Additional contest information, PSA guidelines and examples can be found at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Contest/P.S.A.html.

4-H Pillow Party Taught Basic Sewing Skills

At a 4-H Pillow Party in February, 17 youth learned basic sewing skills as part of the 4-H Sewing for Fun project. They all went home with a pillow they sewed! Photos are online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h.

Many Schedule Changes

Many 4-H & FFA activities have been shifted one day to or from an entirely new time. Please see Fair Book for complete schedule changes.

• Annual exhibit check-in — Tuesday, Aug. 3, 8–9 a.m.
• Annual exhibit judging and judging — Wednesday, Aug. 4
• Static exhibits released — Monday, Aug. 9, 7–11 a.m.
• Horse show pre-fair briefing/cleaning and decorating stalls — Monday, Aug. 2, 6–9:30 p.m.
• Cleaning & decorating cattle stalls — Tuesday, Aug. 3, 3–9 p.m.
• Horse shows — Saturday, Aug. 7, 3–8 p.m.
• All livestock animals — check-in and weigh-in Thursday, Aug. 5 in the morning; animals must be in stalls by Noon.

Livestock Clinics

4-H/FFA is offering several livestock clinics: Sheep Fitting Clinic: Thursday, Aug. 5, 2–3 p.m. Swine Fitting Clinic: Thursday, Aug. 5, 3–4 p.m. Cattle Fitting Clinic: Thursday, Aug. 5, 3–4 p.m. (followed by the Cattle Fitting Contest) Dairy Clinic: Friday, Aug. 6, 10 a.m.

4-H & FFA Gate Admission

4-H/FFA families can get a free 4-H/FFA car pass from the extension office (available July 1–Aug. 6). A 4-H/FFA car pass is good for gate admission for all passengers in one vehicle each day Aug. 5–9. 4-H/FFA families are asked to enter Gate 3.

Premiums Payout Procedures

No checks will be issued! No changes or corrections will be made on premium amounts after 14 days.

• Static Exhibits and Contests: Premium payouts for all static exhibits and contests held before and during the fair must be picked up on Monday, August 9, 7–11 a.m. in the Fair Board Office. With proper identification, parents, guardians, 4-H club leaders, FFA chapter advisors will also be permitted to pick up and sign for exhibitor premiums.

• Horse Exhibitors: Premium payouts will be made to 4-H members, their parents or their 4-H leaders on Monday, August 9, 10 a.m. in Pavilion 2. The entire 4-H club must have removed all bedding from each stall in order for premiums to be received. Signatures from all representatives receiving payments will be required.

4-H Camp Scholarshp

The fair offers several livestock clinics: Sheep Fitting Clinic: Thursday, Aug. 5, 2–3 p.m. Swine Fitting Clinic: Thursday, Aug. 5, 3–4 p.m. Cattle Fitting Clinic: Thursday, Aug. 5, 3–4 p.m. (followed by the Cattle Fitting Contest) Dairy Clinic: Friday, Aug. 6, 10 a.m.

New in 4-H at Fair

See the Fair Book for detailed information about each of the following:
• There are now statewide “Express Yourself” exhibits which relate to the new communications curriculums. “Picking Up the Pieces,” “Putting It Together,” and “The Perfect Fit.” Unit 2 and 3 exhibits are eligible for the State Fair.
• There are new State Fair entries for Banners and Posters categories. They will remain as county only exhibits. Some of the new Express Yourself classes are similar to old poster classes (i.e. 4-H Advertisement Flyer and Elephants & Elephants, Junior and Senior). Many other project areas still have state-fair eligible poster classes that relate to specific projects.
• Power Mechanics — miscellaneous engineering exhibits have been added for example lawn mower engine, restored car, restored motorcycle, lawn mower overhaul etc.
• Houseplants have replaced Horticulture Container Plants.
• Style Revue now has a class for Clothing Level 1 Make One Buy One.
• A Dog Skill-A-Thon Contest has been added to help prepare youth for the statewide Dog Skill-A-Thon. No collaboration date is changed from date in Fair Book to July 2.
• Dog Creative Kennel Contest — exhibitors are encouraged to design and decorate their dog kennel using the theme “Super Dogs at the Super Fair!” Entries will be judged on originality, creativity, and decorations.
• Rabbit Dressage classes will now have age divisions instead of all ages.
• Livestock trailer parking will be just north of the Cattle Trough.
Make History by Volunteering with the 2010 USA National Games

The Special Olympics 2010 USA National Games will be held July 18–23 in Lincoln. Organizers expect 3,000 athletes, 1,000 coaches, 8,000 volunteers and 15,000 family members and friends to come to Lincoln for the event. The Games and competition will be based around the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Lincoln community. The 2010 USA National Games anticipates being one of the largest sporting events of its kind in the world in 2010, let alone perhaps the biggest event ever to be held in the state of Nebraska.

Volunteering is an easy and rewarding way to become involved with the Games. The Games would not be possible without the help of more than 8,000 dedicated volunteers.

There is something for everyone and no shortage of diverse ways to get involved. Your participation is vital to our success! Volunteer dates: July 17–24, 2010 (one day prior to and after competition days).

Volunteer positions: security, event logistics, welcome committee, delegations services, awards, receptions, ceremonies, information services, technology, cheering committee and more.

Volunteer requirements:
• 16 years of age and older
• Under 16 years of age, please come be a “Fan in the Stands” for any sporting event during the week of the 2010 Games
• Each volunteer must have separate email accounts
• Participate in volunteer training
• All volunteers must be present for volunteer screening
• Optimal: Two days or more volunteer commitment (approximately two 8 hour shifts July 17–24)
• Minimum: One day volunteer commitment (approximately one 8 hour shift July 17–24)

For more information about the Games or volunteering, please visit www.2010specialolympics.org.

4-H for Youth with Special Needs

Approximately 6.7 million school-aged children in the United States have disabilities. Involving youth with disabilities in 4-H can result in a satisfying experience for all involved.

Defining Youth With Special Needs

Special needs youth include children with a wide range of disabilities, that is, limitations on their ability to perform certain skills. Common disabilities include physical, mental, and developmental disabilities such as Attention Deficit Disorder, Autism, and Down’s Syndrome.

Involving Youth With Special Needs

Involving special needs youth in your club or activity may take some special consideration but can be quite easy if you follow these steps:

Learn about and help other 4-H’ers understand the disability with respect for the child’s feelings and preference for privacy. This can be accomplished by talking to the child’s parents, researching online or at the library, contacting local support of advocacy groups (i.e., Muscular Dystrophy Association, etc.), or attending local Special Olympics, where you can see how trained volunteers work with a variety of children with special needs.

• Find out how the disability affects the particular child with whom you are working. Remember that each child with a disability is a unique individual. This means that different children with the same disability may display a variety of characteristics. Talk with the parents to become familiar with the child’s ability levels, special challenges, and other individual needs.

• Make sure to select or match the ability level of the child. For example, a child in a wheelchair could participate in a project or designing a raised garden bed or participating in container gardening. Modification may also mean modifying program requirements. For example, in an animal science project, youth without a disability may be required to take care of the animals on their own, while a special needs child may be paired with a teen leader or older 4-H members for assistance through team work. Look at the objectives of the project or activity and help the child set reachable goals to meet the objectives. The child should be involved in the setting of the goals and the adaptation of the program as much as possible. The modifications to the program must be designed to meet the child’s ability levels and the goals of the project while still challenging the child to consistently improve his or her own personal best. The important factor here is to focus on the similarities among special needs youth and not to concentrate on the differences.

• All youth have a basic need to belong and to feel accepted by the group.

• Additional specific leader training/support. Help with learning about and understanding appropriate accommodations and educational resources is available through the county 4-H office.

Special Needs Guidelines

Here are some guidelines to remember when working with special needs youth.

• Involve the child and his/her parents, as much as possible, in setting goals and modifying the program to meet the child’s needs.

• Treat each child, special needs or not, as an individual who has certain talents, skills, strengths, and needs.

• Provide plenty of recognition and positive reinforcement.

Make sure your expectations for each child are based on efforts made toward reaching a set goal. Don’t be “easy” on a special needs child just because of the disability.

• Remember that the 4-H motto, “To take and give” does not mean always blue ribbons and other awards. Personal growth (ability to handle frustration or communicate better), gaining and using new knowledge (planting and taking care of a garden), and feelings of accomplishment (succeeding in any new challenge, no matter how small it may seem) are also important accomplishments.

• Take the time to learn, and to teach other 4-H’ers, the correct terminology for the child’s disability, as well as any equipment which the child may use. Sometimes the common terms are considered insensitive or rude.

• Many people with physical disabilities would prefer to discuss their disability rather than have everyone ignore it or pretend not to see it. How this is handled should be determined by consulting the child and his/her parents.

• Different training areas where the child’s abilities are diminished or different and where they are “normal.” For example, people often shout at visually impaired people as if they also cannot hear. Don’t assume anything about a child’s 4-H office disability; remember that each child is an individual.

• With volunteering in schools becoming a common practice, today’s youth often have a greater awareness and understanding and comfort zone in interacting with their special needs peers than in the past. Usually the fact that a child is “different” ceases to be a problem for the other children in a group, and adults reach the same comfort level.

Source: Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station Cooperative Extension. “4-H for Youth with Special Needs” (part of a new 4-H Leaders Training Series online at www.nja.rutgers.edu/volunteering/4h)
Husker Sunday at Westfield Gateway, April 25

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln will be at the Westfield Gateway Shopping Center on Sunday, April 25 for the first-ever Husker Sunday event. Husker Sunday is designed to help high school juniors and seniors begin their college search.

Students of all ages and adults can attend to experience a glimpse of college life at UNL. Representatives from UNL undergraduate colleges and student affairs offices such as Scholarships and Financial Aid, University Housing and Admissions will be on hand. Meet Heisman Trophy winner and Husker legend Eric Crouch! Highlights of the event include free T-shirts to all high school students who visit each exhibit and drawings for a free laptop computer and University Bookstore gift card. Westfield Gateway mall will offer additional promotions and discounts on Husker Sunday. More information about Husker Sunday is available online at huskersunday.unl.edu.

Open House Events

Big Red Open House
April 12 — Spend a day on campus learning more about academics, student life, scholarships, and the Husker spirit!

Super Saturday
April 24 — A visit day built by students for students!

Husker Sunday
April 25 at Westfield Gateway Shopping Mall

Junior Wednesdays
Wednesdays through April 28 — A Husker Weekday tailored for juniors.

For more information or to register, see http://admissions.unl.edu

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension educational programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture. We assure reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act for assistance contact UNL Extension in Lancaster County at 441-7180.

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For an East Campus tour, contact Laura Frey at 472-4445 or lfrey2@unl.edu

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln is an equal opportunity educator and employer with a comprehensive plan for diversity.
Pedersen’s Plant Service Project Earns 4-H Diamond Clover Program’s Highest Honor

Editor’s note: Kyle Pedersen is the first Lancaster County 4-H member to earn the top Level 6 in the Nebraska 4-H Diamond Clover Program, a relatively new statewide program. Youth can progress from Level 1 up to Level 6. Level 6 requires a major service-learning project that benefits a 4-H member’s community.

Kyle Pedersen
Lancaster County 4-H member

My project had two parts. The first part was to move plants from a garden owned by an avid gardener to a children’s home, and the second was to start a 4-H club for the children living at the home. I taught the club members how to take care of plants, and they were able to have their own garden. The idea to move the plants came from the owners of the children’s home. It was fun to see how the truckloads of transplants survived and thrived in their new home (around flagpoles, office building, and the four homes). The plants were a good improvement to the homes, but I got the idea of forming a 4-H club when I saw the children on the grounds and imagined how they could benefit from the 4-H learning experience.

I started the 4-H club and we did a project at each meeting to help introduce the kids to 4-H. I enjoyed seeing the excitement in the children when they formed their own club and participated in club activities (planting shamrocks, making cookies and tray favors for a retirement center, growing a vegetable garden, and learning to identify flowers, vegetables, trees, and weeds).

I helped the community by working with the kids and by beautifying the landscape while carrying on the gardener’s legacy. I felt like I had made a difference by giving the kids a 4-H experience they would not have had otherwise.

Nearly 200 plants were transplanted from a gardener’s yard in Fall 2008.

Can You Guess It?

Did you guess it? Find out at http://lancaster.unl.edu

Watch Chicks Hatch Online with EGG Cam!
http://lancaster.unl.edu/eggcam

Now with streaming video in near real time!

EGG Cam will feature poultry hatching through the end of May!

Become a Facebook Fan!

Teen Council 4-H’ers Lead Lock-In

In January, more than 20 4-H Teen Council members organized and led the overnight 4-H Lock-In for 45 fourth & fifth graders. The teens prepared snacks, led games, presented craft activities and more.

Making Friends at the Lock-In

The 4-H Lock-In is a great way for kids to make new friends as well as get interested in 4-H. This year’s theme was Juke Box Hero. We had many different activities for the 4th and 5th graders to do including home made guitars, creating music videos, learning about musical instruments as well as snacks and games. I think all of the kids had a great time, and I know all the teens enjoyed putting it together. The Lock-In is a hit every year.

— Jeff Cassel, Teen Council Vice President

Music in the Making

The 2010 Teen Council Lock-In was a music themed extravaganza. 4th and 5th graders learned about different instruments and made some of their own. They also learned different dances like the cupid shuffle. They participated in games, crafts, education, and food before settling down and watching movies until they drifted off to sleep. The next morning the weary teens woke the children. Milk, juice, and doughnuts were served for breakfast. The Lock-In was a successful night that went swimmingly.

— Kyle Pedersen

Fun for All!

I thought that our Lock-In this year was a great success. The music theme was great for both boys and girls. The kids loved making their own music videos, learning about instruments, and interacting with the Teen Council members. We had a really fun group of leaders who kept the night rolling. There was fun had by all!

— Ellen Muehling, Teen Council President