Family and Couple Strengths

Getting Connected, Staying Connected

Maureen Burson
UNL Extension Educator

What is the truth about couples and families today? How are families doing? Even though the news might indicate otherwise, the best information available indicates, in general, couples and families are doing reasonably well.

Dr. John DeFraise's Research Identifies Six Key Family Strengths

What makes a successful family? The answer is in the strength of the relationship rather than the structure of the family.

Dr. John DeFraise, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension Family and Community Development Specialist Emeriti and colleagues2 have conducted research over the past 35 years involving 28,000 family members in 38 countries. Their research accentuates the positive to show clearly the value of family relationships are created and maintained and simply how happy couple and family members are in 38 countries. Their research indicates how happier and more successful families are compared to similar families. Their research looks into early life and midlife at year one and at 15, 20, and 30 years. The study examined marriages of 1,681 people over a 20 year span, the longest time frame yet for observing how marital happiness impacts physical health. Published in June's Journal of Marriage and Family, Dr. Hollist and colleagues2 looked only at participants who remained married to the same person in order to pinpoint the health effects of marital quality over time. They broke the group into early life and midlife at year one so they could see if marital happiness affected young couples differently than midlife couples. The participants reported on the happiness they felt in their marriage as well as the problems they experienced in their marriage.

Some of the findings:

• A strong connection between good health and marital quality for both age groups.
• For young couples — their happiness in the marriage had a greater affect on their health than the problems they experienced. Focusing on marital happiness (or as another researchers calls it, marital friendship) is important for health.
• For midlife couples — their problems were a greater predictor of health than happiness. Paying attention to how well they resolve problems is critical for improvements in health.

Hollist says, "For young couples, time should be spent building friendship and shared connection."

Practical Application

Practical application of this research strengthens families and communities in Nebraska. UNL Extension has published a book and series of 20 NebGuides, "Getting Connected, Staying Connected," which focus on building and maintaining strong couple and family relationships:

• NebGuides — "Getting Connected, Staying Connected," explores the attributes and experiences of strong families. The series of 20 NebGuides are available free online at http://go.unl.edu/880 (under Family Life). Focusing on the strength of relationships rather than the structure of the family is an integrated part of UNL Extension programs such as Co-Parenting for Successful Kids (for families experiencing custody and divorce), Guardianship Training (newly appointed guardians and conservators), child development professional staff development, and education through technology outreach.

1. Robert B. Miller of Brigham Young University, lead author, based upon Alan Booth, Penn State effort involving detailed surveys.
2. Article adapted from the following sources:
 "Study: Happy marriages mean healthier spouses" http://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/studiday/article/study-happy-marriages-mean-healthier-spouses

UNL Extension NebGuide “Getting Connected, Staying Connected: How Couples Can Ensure a Meaningful and Happy Life Together” is excerpted on page 10 of this issue.

IN THIS ISSUE

Slow Cooker Soups — Free Class, Nov. 7

see page 4

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Nov./Dec. 2013
Nebraska — the fruit production hub of the Midwest? Today Nebraska is famous for its bountiful production of grain and livestock, but in the late 1800s and early 1900s, Nebraska was a nationally recognized fruit-producing state.

Nebraska’s move toward fruit production began in the early 1850s as pioneers crossed the Missouri River at Brownville on the Brownville Ferry. Many settlers homesteaded near the crossing in Nemaha County located in southeast Nebraska.

Publications from the Nebraska Horticultural Society, which began publishing its yearly proceedings in the 1850s, tell us that during this period, Judge J. W. Hall of Brownville, planted the first apple tree in what was to be the state of Nebraska. The variety was unknown, but reportedly, the tree bore yellow fruit claimed to be as sweet as honey and exhibited amazing vigor, resulting in production 17 months after planting. The yellow fruit and fruit quality were attributed to the rich soil of the region, and a fruit production industry was born. The first crop consisted of both trees and small fruits were produced throughout Nebraska in both commercial and smaller plantings.

The majority of commercial production took place in eastern Nebraska with the greatest concentration found in the southeast area of the state. Commercial orchards with hundreds of acres were planted. Most homesteads had groves of fruit trees to supply their needs. Apples, peaches, plums, apricots, pears and tart cherries were planted throughout the region. Small fruits such as raspberries, blackberries, gooseberries and grapes also were produced.

The face of Nebraska’s fruit industry began to change following the Great Depression and the Armistice Day freeze on Nov. 11, 1940. During the late 1930s into 1940 Nebraska experienced a prolonged drought. The growing season of 1940, was very warm and dry, and the first freeze normally experienced in October never came. As the rain began to fall, nourishing the fall-canopied trees, the rain fell heavier and the fruit trees pulled in the moisture. Temperatures dropped overnight from the 60s to below zero causing the trunks of the trees to rupture in the moisture. Hundreds of acres of commercial orchards, as well as, countless smaller plantings of fruit crops were destroyed. Between cleanup costs and the economic times, few trees were replaced and orchards were converted to row crops.

Today, Nebraska growers are showing renewed interest in planting a few fruit trees in their yards or on acreages. Many remember the day when their grandparents planted fruit trees to supply their needs. Many people aspire to grow them. They require proper care and will not produce fruit until the tree is 2 or 3 years old. Once the tree begins to produce, the tree must be pruned to achieve optimum production. Full sun is classified as at least six hours of direct sunlight daily, preferably during midday for most fruit crops. Both soil drainage and air drainage also are important factors to consider. Heavy clay soils that retain water can lead to reduced vigor and death. Reduced air flow can lead to a buildup of cold air which can result in bud loss and, in extreme cases, even plant death.

Once it has been determined the site is suitable for growing fruit, it’s time to begin the fun part, which is choosing what to plant. The options are almost too many because of all the types of fruit and the varieties found within each type that can be grown in Nebraska. Apples, peaches, pears, Asian pears, plums, apricots and tart cherries are all tree fruits that can be grown.

Several factors must be taken into account when choosing what to plant. Is the variety adapted to our growing zones? (Nebraska falls into zones 4 and 5.) Will the mature size fit into the site? Is the variety self-fruitful or is a pollinator required?

Mature size may be the most important factor to consider. Mature fruit tree size is classified as standard, semi-dwarf or dwarf. Tree size can be dictated by either genetics or by grafting. Grafting is essentially splicing two types of trees together — two types of apples, for example. The rootstock is the portion of the tree that contains the roots and the scion wood is the portion that is “spliced” onto the rootstock and becomes the upper portion of the tree. The scion takes on certain characteristics of the rootstock. The rootstock can dictate the mature size of the tree.

A standard tree will have no size modification and may reach a size inappropriate for the site. Semi-dwarf trees reach a height of 8-15 feet. Dwarf trees range from five to eight feet tall and ultra-dwarfs and dwarf types need to be supported because they are capable of producing a crop that will be too heavy for the tree to physically support without the help of a stake or specially-designed trellis for multiple trees.

Fruit trees are classified as either self-fruitful and not requiring a pollinator, or self-unfruitful and requiring a pollinator. Even if a variety is classified as self-pollinating, it’s a good practice to plant a second genetically different variety that will act as a pollinator. Using a pollinator on a self-pollinating variety will maximize the pollination and result in a superior yield. Fruit trees are classified as either early, mid- or late-season bloomers. Be sure to match the blooming period of the pollinator and the tree to be pollinated. Ideally, the bloom period should be the same. A mid-season blooming pollinator can be used to pollinate either an early- or late-season variety with varying success. An early and late-season paring would generally not result in successful cross pollination.

Resistance to disease and insect pests is another characteristic to consider when choosing what to plant. Most fruit trees are susceptible to a variety of diseases and insects, but some are more susceptible than others. Choosing resistant varieties will reduce the amount of work needed to control disease and pests.

Apples

More than 2,500 apple varieties are grown in the United States with Red Delicious being the most frequently-planting variety. Apples tend to bloom later than many fruit trees so the likelihood a crop will escape a normal frost and produce fruit is good. Apples can be either self-unfruitful or self-fruitful, with the majority being self-unfruitful and requiring a pollinator. Two commonly planted varieties, Jonathan and Golden Delicious, are considered self-fruitful and also work well as pollinators. Two other commonly-planted varieties, Jonagold and Winesap, are poor pollinators and should not be used for the purpose.

Here are three disease-resistant apple varieties suitable for Nebraska:

- **Liberty** — is classified as a high-quality “dessert apple.” It’s resistant to apple scab, cedar apple rust, fire blight and mildew. Liberty is an annual producer ripening in mid-September; zones 3-7.
- **Freedom** — is a multipurpose apple suitable for both eating and cooking. It is resistant to apple scab and moderately resistant to mildew, fire blight and cedar apple rust. Freedom ripens in late September; it is an excellent keeper and will store until January under proper conditions; zones 3-9.
- **Enterprise** — has excellent fruit quality and shows immunity to apple scab with high resistance to fire blight and cedar apple rust, as well as moderate resistance to powdery mildew. It ripens mid-October and is a good keeper; zones 4-8.

Peaches

Peaches are a wonderful fruit and many people aspire to grow them. They come with one major drawback; many varieties available for zone 4 production. Choose a variety with a later bloom period, which will reduce the chances of being hit by a late frost common to Nebraska. Most commonly-available varieties of peaches and classified as self-fruitful and do not require a pollinator, but as with apples, yields can be increased by using a second pollinating variety.

- **Reliance** — is very cold hardy and produces medium to large yellow-fleshed fruit. It’s classified as “free-stone” meaning the flesh readily separates from the pit. It’s not as flavorful as harder varieties, and ripens late July to early August; zones 4-8.
- **Red Haven** — is a freestone peach that produces medium to large yellow fruit. see FRUIT TREES on next page
Select Outdoor Yard Lights for Security and Energy Savings

Shawn Shouse
Iowa State University Extension Agricultural Engineer

Many rural residences and farmsteads use yard lights to provide night security and to illuminate driveways and buildings after dark. Selecting the right light will produce results you want while saving energy.

How Much Light?
Light intensity is measured in foot candles. One lumen of light energy falling on one square foot creates one foot candle. For general yard security and movement, a light intensity of one half to two foot candles is recommended. This light intensity can be created by 100–175 watts of lamp size mounted 25 feet above the ground and serving no more than 8,000 square feet. Higher light intensity may be desired in areas of high activity or near building entrances.

What Type of Light Fixture?
Unshielded fixtures direct light in all directions. Even standard downward-facing fixtures can lose one third of their light to the sides. A full parabolic reflector fixture will direct the most light to the ground in your target area and allow desired light intensity with a smaller lamp.

What Type of Lamp?
Lamp efficiency is one factor to consider and is measured in lumens of light per watt of electrical consumption, vary widely. Some lamps are slow to start or reach full intensity.

Standard incandescent and halogen lamps produce only 15–20 lumens per watt, but come on almost instantly. These lamps are fairly short-lived, but do not suffer from frequent on-off cycles. They are best where the use time is short and the lamp is easy to access to change bulbs.

Compact fluorescent lamps create 45–100 lumens per watt, but take time to warm up to full output and require special ballasts to start reliably below 40 degrees. They are not well suited to cold climate yard lighting.

High intensity discharge (HID) lamps such as mercury vapor, metal halide and high pressure sodium lamps have high output efficiency of 30–100 lumens per watt and lasting life. They require time to start and are best used where they are left on for extended periods. Metal halide lamps are nearly twice as efficient as mercury vapor, and high pressure sodium lamps are slightly higher. Low and sodium arc discharge lamps have the highest efficiency, but are infrequently used because of their driving complexity.

For general yard lighting that will stay on for extended hours, high pressure sodium is often the lamp of choice, followed closely by metal halide. Payback period on replacing a mercury vapor fixture with a smaller, more efficient high pressure sodium fixture can be as short as 2–4 years.

What Controls are Needed?
Many yard lights are pre-wired with a photocell that will turn the lamp on at dusk and off at dawn. The time of initiation can be saved by using a controller that can additionally turn the lamp off for the latter portion of the overnight hours. Called “half night” or “selectable time,” these controls, devices save energy and reduce unwanted light pollution.

For local area lighting at building entrances, walkways or work zones such as fuel tanks, consider motion sensor controls.

Good yard lighting increases safety, provides security and enhances the appearance of your residence.

Choosing the right light for your needs can improve effectiveness and save you money.

Information for this article was gathered from these good resources:

- "Yard Lighting," by Scott Sanford, University of Wisconsin, www.uwex.edu/energy/yard_lighting_UW.pdf
- "Saving On Archways: What You Need to Know," (SFPS-06), offer from the Wisconsin State University Online Store at www.extension.iastate.edu/store

FRUIT TREES

continued from previous page

It’s a good producer of firm fruit and is resistant to leaf spot; zones 5–8.

- **Loring** — produces medium-size firm fruit with red skin and yellow-cream, gummy, bitter-tasting, and good quality; zones 6–9.

- **Montmorency** — is birds love them! As soon as they are ripe, they ripen to a dark red. This tree bears large fruit that stores well. It will cross pollinate with Bartlett; zones 4–9.

- **Anjou** — is a green pear with a slightly yellow skin that ripens when ripe. This tree bears large fruit that stores well. It will cross pollinate with Bartlett; zones 4–9.

- **Comice** — is a dessert pear, with large fruit that ripens yellow with a touch of red. This pear is self-fruitful but yields better with a separate pollinating variety; zones 4-9.

- **Armstrong** — produces large freestone fruit with good flavor. It has very good disease resistance and is self-fruitful; zones 4–7.

- **Sungold** — also is very hardy and blooms mid- to late- April. It produces medium-size freestone fruit that is self-fruitful with limited disease resistance; zones 4–8.

- **Tart Cherries**

Tart Cherries tend to be very good producers. Flowering takes place later in the spring, allowing crops to be produced most years. Trees are less than 15 feet tall with some varieties, such as North Star, only growing to five feet. The major problem with tart cherries is birds love them! As soon as they are ripe, the birds move in, so be prepared to harvest when you start to see that the birds are interested in them.

- **Bartlett** — is considered the standard for pears. Very productive with large, juicy fruit suitable for eating or canning, ripens in late August and is best if picked mature but green, and ripened off the tree. It’s somewhat early to harvest so it yields better using a separate pollinating variety; zones 4-9.

- **Hargrand** — is very hardy and blooms mid- to late-April, this variety produces large freestone fruit with good flavor. It has very good disease resistance and is self-fruitful; zones 4–7.

- **Montmorency** — considered the standard for tart cherries. It is very productive, bearing firm medium-size, bright red fruit. The tree blooms in early May and fruit ripens in July; zones 4–9.

- **Balaton** — blooms and yields 6 to 10 feet tall. It has small, deep red fruit with red flesh; zones 3–8.

Prepare Horses for Winter

Horses need access to shelter and should be fed additional hay during adverse winter weather.

As winter approaches, horses need a different level of care to ensure good condition while they fight the cold weather. Much of horse care depends on where they are kept during the winter, says University of Nebraska–Lincoln horse specialist Kathy Anderson. If horses spend winter in a pasture, their shoes should be removed. Often, ice and snow can build up and cause the horses to trip. If horses are wintered indoors, their hooves should at least be trimmed and reset.

Nutrition requirements also change in winter. It’s important to maintain a condition score of 6–7. A horse in this condition has enough fat across its flank, neck, ribs and down its topline that it would be necessary to push a little to feel the bones. The nutritional value of winter pasture grasses also is slim so horses should be fed some type of hay — round bales, square bales, grass hay or alfalfa — as well as salt and mineral. Stalled horses’ nutritional requirements don’t change much from summer, but they have enough hay left to generate body heat and maintain their weight. Horses should always have an open source of water.

If horses are kept outside, their coats should be allowed to grow. This isn’t as critical for horses kept inside, but unless they are in a heated barn clipped horses should be covered in blankets to keep them from getting sick.

As the number of daylight hours decreases, horses’ coats grow thicker because of amounts of light affecting hair growth. If the horses are on a lighting program, take them off far enough in advance so their coats can grow thicker. People who continue to show their horses in winter should keep horses inside and on a 16 hour per day lighting program from 6 a.m.–10 p.m. Horses wintered outside need a shelter to block the wind. A shelter could be as simple as a thick shelterbelt or a three-sided shed with an opening that points away from primary winds. Also, continue to deworm horses every 60 days and vaccinate them for rabies if there is a rabies problem in the area.

For more information on winter horse care, see University of Minnesota Extension’s “Equine Winter Care” online at www.extension.umn.edu/Agriculture/horse/care/ equine-winter-care.

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For more information on winter horse care, see University of Minnesota Extension’s “Equine Winter Care” online at www.extension.umn.edu/Agriculture/horse/care/ equine-winter-care.
Follow these basic safety rules when using a slow cooker:
- Wash your hands before, during and after food preparation.
- Always start with a clean slow cooker, utensils and work surface.
- Always thaw meat and poultry in the refrigerator before cooking in the slow cooker. This will ensure complete cooking.
- Cut meat into pieces to ensure thorough cooking. Large pieces of meat are not recommended for slow cookers because they do not cook quickly enough to avoid bacterial growth.
- If you cut up meats or vegetables ahead of cooking, refrigerate these perishable foods until you are ready to use them.
- Because vegetables cook slower than meat and poultry, place the vegetables in the slow cooker first. Place the meat on top of the vegetables and top with liquid, such as broth, water or a sauce.
- For easy cleanup and care of your slow cooker, spray the inside of the cooker with nonstick cooking spray before using it. Slow cooker liners also ease cleanup.
- Fill the slow cooker no less than half full and no more than two-thirds full. Cooking too little or too much food in the slow cooker, will result in longer cooking times.
- Slow cooker soups offer several advantages:
  • they are an energy efficient method of cooking
  • they are a cost effective method of cooking
  • they are less expensive and often less tender meats become tender
  • flavors blend wonderfully as the ingredients simmer
  • they are an energy efficient method of cooking
  • a convenient way to cook in

Lazy Day Beef & Vegetable Soup
(Makes 6 to 8 servings)

2-1/2 pounds beef stew meat, cut into 3/4-inch pieces
2 cans (14 to 14-1/2 ounces each) reduced-sodium beef broth
1 can (15 ounces) chickpeas, rinsed, drained
1 can (14-1/2 to 15 ounces) no-salt added diced tomatoes, undrained
1 cup water
1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
2 cups frozen mixed vegetables
1 cup uncooked ditalini or other small pasta

Shredded Romano cheese (optional)

Combine beef, broth, chickpeas, tomatoes, water, Italian seasoning, salt and pepper in a 4-1/2 to 5-1/2-quart slow cooker; toss to coat well. Cover and cook on HIGH 6–8 hours. Sprinkle cheese on top, if desired. Can also serve leftovers within four days!
FAMILY & COMMUNITY EDUCATION (FCE) CLUBS

Home & Family Living

How Nebraska Parents Enjoy Time With Their Children

Maureen Burson
Extension Educator

Spending enjoyable time together is one of the six charac-
teristics which UNL Extension Specialist Dr. John DeFrain's research indicates is a key family strength (see page 1). This means family members like to be with each other and spend a consider-
able amount of time enjoying each other's company.

Here are a few of the thou-
sands of creative ideas Nebraska parents have shared when asked: What are some of the positive "magical moments" or "family traditions" which your children enjoy? Most are very low cost!

Meals
- Making favorite meals together.
- Eating dinner around the table.
- Eating tacos on Tuesday.
- Baking muffins every Sunday morning.
- Grocery shopping on Sundays.

School and Extracurricular
- Coming home to a "gift" on the first day of school.
- Shopping together for school supplies.
- Attending every performance and award ceremony to celebrate my child's successes.
- Attending sporting events and playing sports together.
- Coaching my children's sports teams.

Indoor Activities
- Listening to music and dance, goof off and act silly together.
- Making beaded necklaces together.
- Making up crossword puzzles about favorite cartoons.
- Painting finger and toenails.
- Playing board games together.
- Playing with legos.
- Pretending we are super heroes.
- Renting a movie and eat on a towel in the living room (our picnic) and cuddle together with a bowl of popcorn.
- Sleepovers with cousins.
- Watching gerbils run around the bathtub while cleaning out their cage.
- Drinking a glass of milk and reading a book at bedtime.
- Staying up 30 minutes past bedtime and choose one activity of child's choice.

Outdoor Activities
- Playing ball in the yard.
- Walking in the neighborhood.

How long will we be in the Holiday mode?
"Thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never have enough."

Payment time in February and March always come faster than expected.

Consider gifts of service.
Give coupons for babysitting, a meal, housecleaning, lawn moving or other such tasks.
Watch for sales and take a chance on items which normally go on sale just before the holidays. Sometimes by waiting for the last minute sales you can save a bundle. Watch for sales or special buys year round to find just the right gifts for teachers, special friends and family.

Holidays
- Spending holidays at grandparent's farm.
- Going to church on Christmas Eve.
- Hunting for Easter eggs in the front yard at Mother's house.
- Playing with a bowl of popcorn.
- Telling jokes.
- Talking about our dreams together.
- Watching gerbils run around the bathtub while cleaning out their cage.
- Drinking a glass of milk and reading a book at bedtime.
- Staying up 30 minutes past bedtime and choose one activity of child's choice.

Other Activities
- Talking about our dreams together.
- Telling jokes.
- Visiting friends and family.
- Attending tribal reunions.
- Going to the Children's Zoo and the Children's Museum.
- Gathering with extended family to watch Husker football.
- Meditating together during stressful times.

Holiday Gifts Needed for ExCITE/Headstart
A good community service project for the holidays is helping the less fortunate by providing gifts for the ExCITE/Headstart programs. This program is in need of over 500 gifts for children birth to 5-years old. Literacy is being emphasized again this year, so books and items to encourage reading are suggested (such as puppets, puzzles, small toys, etc. relating to story books). The goal is to give each child a book. Gifts should be unwrapped (except those that are decorated) and put in a gift bag. In this class, you will learn:

- Defensive driving techniques, new traffic laws and rules of the road.
- How to deal with aggressive drivers.
- Techniques to handle driving situations such as left turns, right turns, driving in the rain and snow.
- How to use anti-lock brakes, air bags and seat belts and other safety features.
- Learn to drive defensively and be more aware or driving hazards.
- Consider gifts of service. Give coupons for babysitting, a meal, housecleaning, lawn moving or other such tasks.

AARP Driver Safety Course, Nov. 20
An AARP Driver Safety course will be presented in Lincoln as a one 4-hour session on Wednesday, Nov. 20, 9 a.m.—1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road. A certified AARP instructor will teach the course. Cost is $12 for AARP members and $14 for non-members payable at the door. To register for the class, call 402-441-7180. Please arrive a few minutes early to complete check-in and registration procedures.

AARP members must bring their membership card with their I.D. number as well as their driver's license. Payment by check is required — charge/credit cards are not accepted, nor is cash. In this class, you will learn:

- Defensive driving techniques, new traffic laws and rules of the road.
- How to deal with aggressive drivers.
- Techniques to handle driving situations such as left turns, right turns, driving in the rain and snow.
- How to use anti-lock brakes, air bags and seat belts and other safety features.

There is no test. Course participants may be eligible to receive an insurance discount from some companies — contact your insurance agent for further details. For more information about the course, go to www.aarpsafetysc.org or call 1-888-227-7669.
Some people call the Extension office about “gnats,” but to an entomologist, a gnat is a small fly. Two flies (very small flies) have two wings which places them in the order Diptera. To reproduce, all flies require moist, organic matter for their larvae to breed in, and each species has a definite breeding preference. Flies can come indoors if doors and windows are open or screens are ill-fitting, but large numbers indoors suggest they are breeding inside. The key to solving these infestations is to first identify the fly, which will give clues about what might be the breeding site. To capture small flies for identification, hang sticky fly tape above the area where you are seeing them. It is inexpensive and readily available.

Control involves location and elimination of breeding sites. Insecticides are rarely helpful. The most common small fly infestations found indoors are:

- Drain flies (also called moth flies, filter flies or sewage flies).
- Fruit flies (also known as pomace or vinegar flies).
- Phorid flies (also called “scuttle flies,” “humpback flies or coffin flies…ick!”).
- Fungus gnats

Drain Flies (Psychodidae)

These grayish-brown flies often hover over the sink or bathtub drain. Under magnification, they look similar to ticks, but their bodies have no air conditioner or dehumidifier to keep humidity levels low. Hard surfaced floors that don’t collect dust is helpful. Specially-made mattress encasements can be installed on mattresses and help reduce dust mites in bedrooms.

Fungus Gnats (Fungivoridae and Sciaridae)

In 2008, the spotted winged drosophila (SWD), Drosophila suzukii, was found in the western United States. It is now found in other states, including Nebraska. Like D. melanogaster, SWD has red eyes. The males are easy to identify because they have a single dark spot on each wing. Female SWDs have serrated ovipositors that can cut into healthy fruit to insert eggs. This species, native to Japan, can be especially damaging to Asian pears, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, cherries and strawberries, some varieties of grapes and other fruits. Neighbors: Fruit flies are best controlled by discarding overly ripe fruit or placing it in the refrigerator. Check for rotting tomatoes, onions and potatoes. Wash soft drink or beer bottles and cans before putting them in recycling bins to eliminate these areas as potential breeding sites. To reduce fruit flies in home gardens, discard overly ripe fruit and vegetables throughout the growing season. Because D. melanogaster is attracted to CO2, a simple, inexpensive, yeast trap will catch fruit flies. For directions, go to “Managing Fruit Flies: Make Your Own Trap” online at https://lancaster.unl.edu/pest/resources/fruitflytrap.html.

Phorid Flies (Phoridae)

All flies tend to breed in disgusting places, but phorid flies are more disgusting than most. These flies breed in sewage water from leaky pipes or drains. Often these drains are underneath toilets or garage disposals. Because of where they breed, phorid flies are considered to be a public health threat. Phorid flies are about the same size as fruit flies and also yellowish brown, but they do not have red eyes. Adult flies have the odd habit of running along a horizontal surface, stopping and then running again before they take off, which is why they are also nicknamed scuttle flies. The key feature of phorid flies is the wing venation which is unique. They have two heavily sclerotized veins on the leading edge of each wing.

Fungus Gnats

Fungus gnats are small, dark, delicate-looking flies with slender legs and long body. They’ll be near potted plants and may pop across the soil surface. Fungus larvae feed on fungi in the top two to three inches of soil. The life cycle from egg is three to four weeks at room temperature.

Drain Flies (above: magnified) (right: approximate size)

Common fruit fly (above: magnified) (right: approximate size)

Phorid fly (above: magnified) (right: approximate size). They have two heavily sclerotized veins on the leading edge of each wing.

Spotted winged fruit fly male (above: magnified) (right: approximate size)

Fungus gnat (above: magnified) (right: approximate size)
Christmas Tree Selection and Care

Good quality artificial trees are time-saving, clean, safe and attractive. Yet, for many individuals even the best quality artificial tree lacks the beauty, charm and style of a real tree.

A few decisions should be made before going out to buy a Christmas tree. Decide where you are going to place the tree in the home. Also, decide on the size (height and width) of the tree you want.

Christmas trees may be purchased from cut-your-own tree farms or as cut trees in commercial lots. Tree species commonly available at tree farms and commercial lots include Scotch pine, white pine, Fraser fir, balsam fir, Douglas fir, white spruce and blue spruce. Trees cut and purchased at cut-your-own tree farms are obviously fresh. A list of tree farms in your area can be found at the Nebraska Christmas Tree Growers Association. www.nebraskachristmastreegrowers.com.

Carefully check trees at a commercial tree lot to insure the freshness of previously cut trees. Freshness can be determined with a few simple tests. Gently run your hand over a branch. The needles on a fresh tree will be pliable. Those on a dry tree will be brittle. Another test is to lift the tree by the trunk and lightly bounce the base on the ground. Heavy needle drop indicates a dry tree. A fresh tree will drop only a few needles.

When looking for a tree, select one that has a straight trunk. A tree with a straight trunk will be much easier to set upright in the stand. Check the diameter of the trunk to make sure it will fit in your tree stand. A tree with a bare side may be fine if you intend to place it in a corner or against a wall.

Once home, place the tree in a cool, sheltered location if you do not intend to set it up immediately. A garage or shed is often a suitable storage site. Put the base of the tree in a bucket of water. Saw off one inch of wood at the bottom of the trunk before bringing the tree in the house. A fresh cut will help increase water uptake. Place and secure the tree in its stand and fill the reservoir with water. Check the water supply as least once a day and add water as needed. Promptly remove the tree when it begins to dry and drop needles.

Source: Iowa State University

UNL Grassland Studies Fall Seminar Series

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln’s Center for Grassland Studies is in its 19th season of annual fall seminar lecture series. The seminars, which may be taken for academic credit and are also free and open to the public, are held most Mondays and are also free and open to the public, are held most Mondays and are also free and open to the public.

Each year, Nebraska’s Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) sell tree and shrub seedlings for windbreaks, erosion control, wildlife habitat and other conservation purposes. Each NRD runs its own tree planting program. You must contact your local NRD to order seedlings. Their forestry staff can help you with a planting plan and offer suggestions on which species would be best suited to your needs.

Most of Lancaster County is part of the Lower Platte South NRD, 3125 Portia St., PO Box 83581, Lincoln, NE 68501; 402-476-2729, www.lpsnrd.org.

The southeast corner of Lancaster County is part of the Nemaha NRD, 448 N. 12th St., Tecumseh, NE 68450; 402-335-3316, www.nemahanrd.org.

Source: Nebraska’s Natural Resources Districts

Garden Guide

Minimize traffic on a frozen lawn to reduce winter damage.

Inspect trees and shrubs for bagworm capsules. Remove and destroy them to reduce next year’s pest population.

Start reviewing your garden notes to help with next year’s plans.

Check fruits, vegetables, corms and tubers you have in storage. Sort out any that show signs of rot and dispose of them.

Clean power tools of all plant material and dirt. Replace worn spark plugs, oil all necessary parts and sharpen blades. Store all tools in their proper place indoors, never outdoors where they will rust over the winter.

Remove all unneeded fruit from fruit trees and rake up and destroy those on the ground. Also, rake and dispose of apples and cherry leaves. Good sanitation practices reduces insects and diseases the following season.

Be sure not to store apples or pears with vegetables. The fruits give off ethylene gas which speeds up the breakdown of vegetables and will cause them to develop off-flavors.

African violets do well when potted in small pots. A good general rule is to use a pot one-third the diameter of the plant. Encourage African violets to bloom by giving them plenty of light. They can be in a south window during dark winter months. They bloom beautifully under fluorescent lights.

Clean and fix all hand tools. Repaint handles or identification marks that have faded over the summer. Sharpen all blades and remove any rust.

After the ground freezes, mulch small fruit plants such as strawberries. One inch of straw or leaves is ideal for strawberries.

Order seed catalogs now for garden planning in January. For variety, consider companies that specialize in old and rare varieties or wild flowers.

Bring out the bird feeders and stock them with bird seed for the birds. Remember to provide fresh water for them too.

House plants with large leaves and smooth foliage such as philodendrons, dracaena and rubber plant, benefit if their leaves are washed with a damp cloth to remove dust.

A home weather station that includes a minimum-maximum thermometer, a rain gauge and a weather log is recommended.

For variety, consider companies that specialize in old and rare varieties or wild flowers.

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House plants with large leaves and smooth foliage such as philodendrons, dracaena and rubber plant, benefit if their leaves are washed with a damp cloth to remove dust.
Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Steward & Kris Spath as co-winner of November’s “Heart of 4-H Award” in recognition of outstanding volunteer service. The Spaths have volunteered for Lancaster County 4-H for 12 years in a variety of ways:

- Both have helped with the Stevens Creek Stairs 4-H club, helped with setup for the county fair, provided livestock for judging contest practice, provided sheep for young 4-H’ers to have an animal project, and donated to the Youth Livestock Premium Auction.
- Kris has been ringman at the county fair 4-H/FFA sheep show, tabulated results for the Livestock Judging Contest, was announcer for this year’s county fair Elite Showmanship Contest and provided transportation for youth to attend livestock judging contests in Kearney.
- Steward has assisted with moving livestock animals to the arena for the Livestock Judging Contest.

“Our lives are full of friends, family and activities,” says the Spaths. “It is important for youth to understand where their people who are not around animals on a daily basis,” say the Spaths. “It is important for youth to understand where their food comes from. Our favorite experience as a 4-H volunteer is watching youth get excited about doing well with their projects at the livestock show.”

Lancaster County 4-H thanks the Spaths for donating their time and talents. Volunteers like them are indeed the heart of 4-H!

- Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence — 4-H clubs which meet criteria outlined by the state 4-H office are recognized as a “Club of Excellence.” Some of the criteria includes: choose/ elect youth officers, have one club project (related to curriculum) which they do together, and complete one community service project. Forms are to be filled out by club leaders.

“Lancaster County deadline for these statewide awards is Dec. 31.”

Lancaster County 4-H award forms and college scholarship applications are due Dec. 31. Recipients will be announced at Lancaster County Achievement Night on Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2014. Forms are available at http://go.unl.edu/4has and the extension office. Most online forms are available online and at the extension office. A handout, “Overview of 4-H Recognition,” is available online and at the extension office.

Award & Scholarship Forms Due Dec. 31

**Lancaster County 4-H Volunteers Must Be Rescreened in 2013**

If you have not submitted a 4-H Youth Protection Volunteer Screening form this year, please do so before Dec. 31. Every four years, all Nebraska 4-H volunteers must be rescreened through the 4-H Youth Protection Volunteer Screening. This year, 2013, is the year our district must be rescreened. The form is available at the extension office or online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4hclub. The screening ensures a safe, positive and nurturing environment for all youth involved with the Nebraska Youth Development program. If you have questions, please contact Extension at 402-441-7180.

### Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence

- **4-H Council** — six $500 scholarships to active Lancaster County 4-H members who have excelled in their involvement with the 4-H program.
- **4-H Teen Council** — two $250 scholarships to Lancaster County 4-H’ers who are active in 4-H Teen Council.
- **Lincoln Center Kiwanis** — one $1,000 scholarship to an active Lancaster County 4-H’er.
- **Lancaster County 4-H Scholarship** — one $200 scholarship to a Lancaster County 4-H member attending Raymond Central High School.
- **Nebraska Association of Fair Managers Martha & Don Romeo Scholarship** — two $500 scholarships to Nebraska 4-H’ers. Each applicant must have exhibited his/her projects in a county fair or at the State Fair within the last four years. Lancaster County 4-H selects county finalist. Note: Deadline is Dec. 1.
- **Nebraska 4-H Foundation Scholarships** — two $1,000 scholarships to Nebraska 4-H’ers. One scholarship is for a junior 4-H’er and one for a senior 4-H’er. Information will be posted at www.ne4hfoundation.org. Deadline is March 15.
- **Nebraska Association of County Extension Boards** — two scholarships to UNL College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources or College of Education and Human Sciences. Note: Deadline is March 15.
- **Nebraska 4-H Council camp scholarships** — May 1 — preference given to applications submitted by March 1.
2013 Horse Awards

The 2013 4-H Horse Awards Night was held Oct. 1. The evening recognized top achievements at the Lancaster County Super Fair and other accomplishments throughout the past year. 4-H volunteer Jeff Rawlinson was Master of Ceremonies, and the Nebraska FFA N’H Heaves 4-H Club distributed programs. Harmony Hill 4-H Club led the Pledge of Allegiance and 4-H Pledge, and Salt Valley 4-H Club distributed snacks. Hannah Ronnau edited the Highlights Reel (which will be posted soon at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h). Congratulations to all Lancaster County 4-H’ers for their achievements in 2013!

HORSEMANSHIP ADVANCEMENT LEVELS

The Nebraska 4-H Horse Project advancement levels are designed to serve as guides for instruction and evaluation of each member’s progress. The correct handling of horses is emphasized from the beginning level to the most advanced level. 84 Lancaster County 4-H’ers achieved 7 new horsemanship levels this year. Four horsemanship levels were recognized: Walk/Trot, Level I, Level II and Level III. Each level is a huge accomplishment.

Walk/Trot — Nicole Ackland, Felicity Bowers, Anna Cooper, Haley Fast, Bailey Hampton, Carmen Hillhouse, Matti Larsen, Carly Makone, Kali Maytum, Alex Napolitano, Nicole Pickering, Noah Pomajek, Mackenzie Robles, Tyler Sampson, Linder Schroeter, Elise Shriver, Grace Spaulding, Alexandra Wahner, Gracie Wahner, Emma Jo Whaley, Zery Williams

Level I — Lillie Beach, Trinity Bohaty, Clara Bradbury, Madi Brandt, Ellie Bunz, Emily Burmude, Anne Cashmere, Emily Cashmere, Ashley Clegg, Christy Cooper, Kate Cooper, Jennifer Daharsh, Megan Dunley, Emmi Dearmont, Ethan Erdkamp, Katelyn Erdkamp, Ela Gerlach, Misa Higgins, Brianna Kroeger, Harper Lawson, Liv Long, Marler Moss, Katherine Moeyer, Andrew Morlan, Alyson Murgard, Paige Nissen, Sierra Sander, Lydia Teegerstrom, Chloé Stander, Alexa Starner, Cadi Wilbeck, Emma Wilson

Level II — Madi Brandt, Emily Cashmere, Christy Cooper, Kate Cooper, Megan Dunley, Ela Gerlach, Brianna Kroeger, Kristin Louden, Caison Meyer, Jenna Mohrmann, Andrew Morlan, Paige Nissen, Madison Sobotka, Emma Songdoreth, Aussia Starner, Bethany Wachter, Emma Wilson

Level III — Chloe Brinson, Jordan Lebsack, Nicole McConnell, Haylie Pointer

HORSE INCENTIVE AWARDS

4-H’ers logged the hours they spent working with or learning about horses. More hours invested, the more valuable the reward! This year, 54 4-H’ers participated. The Incentive Awards are sponsored by the Lancaster County 4-H Horse Volunteers in Program Service (VIPS) Committee.

Bronze (minimum of 100 hours or points) — Brooke Bennett, Ellie Bunz, Karli Combschafer, Jennifer Daharsh, Ethan Epstein, Alex Finkner, Ali Hasanum, Cyann Hennekevitch, Satrina Kyhn, Matti Larsen, Kali Maytum, Alyshyn Murgard, Grace Spaulding, Ali Wahner, Gracie Wahner, Olivia Wheeler

Silver (minimum of 183 hours or points) — Nicole Ackland, Brittney Albers, Chloé Brinson, Christy Cooper, Kate Cooper, Caidie Davis, Caitlin Davis, Dany Drbal, Katelyn Erdkamp, Emily Hanagan, Justine Gall, Megan Hansen, Grace Kim, Jordan Lebsack, Tony Masinelli, Sierra Nelson, Spencer Peters, Bailey Peterson, Nicole Pickering, Aussia Starner, Chloé Stander, Lollie Teegerstrom, Bailey Vogler, Juden Vogler, Erika Warner, Jeni Warner, Jenni Warner, Cadi Wilbeck, Emmalyn Wright

Gold (minimum of 366 hours or points, and completed horse record book) — Ashley Clegg, Haley Fast, Aubrey Hayes, Kenzi Hayes, Kenzie Meyer, Bailey Bowers, Emma Songdoreth, Bethany Wachter

JUDGING AWARDS

The Horse Judging Contest at the Lancaster County Super Fair emphasizes how much 4-H members know about horses as they judge four or more classes of horses. Senior division participants also give oral reasons. Buckles sponsored by Grimm Umberger’s family.

Elementary Division — Clara Bradbury (1st place), Joshua Romnau (2nd place), Aussie Stander (3rd place), Ally Quinn (4th place), Ellie Bunz (5th place), Misa Higgins (6th place), Alissa Louden (7th place), Madi Brandt (8th place), Kenzy Hayes (9th place), Emmi Dearmont (10th place)

Junior Division — Jacob Romnau (1st place), Madison Sobotka (1st place), Ashley Clegg (2nd place), Kenzie Mayr (3rd place), Aubrey Hayes (4th place), Bryanna Louden (5th place), Ashley Bradbury (6th place), Alissa Louden (7th place), Emma McConnell (8th place), Sarina Kyhn (8th place), Elizabeth Robnett (9th place)

Senior Division — Bailey Sobotka (1st place), Sierra Nelson (2nd place), Anna Heusinger (3rd place), Brittany Albers (4th place), Haylie Pointer (5th place), Caitlin Davis (6th place), Ashley Dembsinger (7th place), Allison Dembsinger (8th place), Erika Warner (9th place), Spencer Peters (10th place)

HORSE COURSE CHALLENGE RESULTS

The horse Course Challenge is a Lancaster County Super Fair 4-H contest. Study material is based on the horse course.

Elementary Division (everyone who took the test received a purple ribbon!) — Aussie Stander (1st place), Chloé Stander (2nd place), Katherine Meyer (3rd place), Madeline Polk (4th place), Emmi Dearmont (5th place), Ellie Bunz (purple), Kieran Burkey (purple), Kenzi Hayes (purple), Sidney Schleiger (purple)

Junior Division (everyone who took the test received a purple ribbon!) — Ashley Clegg (1st place), Lucy Polk (2nd place), Haley Fast (3rd place), Nicole Ackland (4th place), Elizabeth Robnett (5th place), Dani Drbal (purple ribbon), Aubrey Hayes (purple), Cassie Meyer (purple), Nicole Pickering (purple), Alysa Whitehall (purple)

Senior Division — Justine Gall (1st place), Megan Luchiske (2nd place), Brooke Bennett (3rd place), Ivy Dearmont (4th place), Erika Warner (blue ribbon), Taylor Woods (blue ribbon)

ALL-AROUND BARRELS

Franklyn Manning Family Trophy for All-Around Barrels

Juniors — Nicole Finkner (her time was 1:37.30)

ALL-AROUND TRAIL

Dick and Cookie Confer Top Trail Award for all-around champion of the Lancaster County Super Fair 4-H Trail obstacle class — Bailey Peterson

ALL-AROUND RANCH HORSE

Three age division awards for Lancaster County Super Fair All-Around Ranch Horse are sponsored by Brian and Shannon Vogler.

Elementary — Hadley Tutt (horse “Katzie”)

Junior — Elizabeth Robnett (horse “Sassy Sadie”)

Senior — Haylie Pointer (horse “Doc’s a Real Playboy”)

ALL-AROUND COWBOY/COWGIRL

Three age division awards for Lancaster County Super Fair All-Around Cowboy/Cowgirl are sponsored by the Nebraska Roping Association and Saddy Rod intriguing.

Elementary — Adam Smith

Junior — Jadin Vogler

Senior — Karen Wolfe

ALL-AROUND CHAMPION

Wilhelmina Wittstruck Memorial Award for Lancaster County Super Fair

All-Around Champion Individual — Madison Sobotka

All-Around Cowboy/Cowgirl awards

Dick and Cookie Confer presented the Award for All-Around Trail

Dwayne Wittstruck presented the Wilhemina Wittstruck Memorial Award for All-Around Champion

Special guest Tim Miles, Head Coach of Nebraska Men’s Basketball, spoke to 4-H families about following your dreams and focusing on NBA -- your “Next Best Action.”
How Couples Can Ensure a Meaningful and Happy Life Together

The following is excerpted from University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension NebrGuide “Getting Connected, Staying Connected: Co-Parenting for Successful Kids Online and onsite classes” by Alice Henneman, Extension Educator for Family and Consumer Sciences. The entire NebrGuide is online at www.anrpubs.unl.edu/send/NebrGuide1211.pdf.

At the National Extension Association for Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS) 2013 Annual Session in September, two University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension Educators at the Lancaster County staff received national awards.

Maureen Burson, Extension Educator:
• Continued Excellence Award — Nebraska Winner for continuing excellence during her 28-year UNL Extension career. She has served as state president, president-elect, and chair of several committees. This award recognizes NEAFCS members who have been actively involved in professional improvement programs, the promotion of professional development of others, and leadership.
• Public Relations — Marketing Package (team award) for Co-Parenting for Successful Kids onsite and online classes. Marketing efforts included: 1) targeted marketing to attorneys, district judges and court clerks, and 2) general public marketing through multiple print materials, news articles, and online promotion. This award is for outstanding marketing promotion packaging a class, program or pertinent Family & Consumer Sciences issues.

Alice Henneman, Extension Educator:
• Communications — Internet Education Technology Award, 2nd place national winner (team award) for a monthly food theme calendar online at http://food.unl.edu/web/fb/seasonal-ideas. The calendar provides resources, tips, and recipes for selected national food and health themed days, weeks and months. This award encourages excellence in communications in Internet education technology including a web-based program, web pages or online courses.

Two Staff Members Win National Awards

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension “Co-Parenting for Successful Kids” classes for parents experiencing divorce, separation, and custody are offered online and at onsite locations statewide. These research-based classes meet Nebraska court-mandated requirements. Cost is $50. Scholarships are available for income-eligible participants.

Online participants may take the class in one approximately three hour setting or break it up into segments. They have 30 days to complete the course. To register for the online class, go to http://go.unl.edu/coparenting. Onsite classes are held in Lincoln at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 447 Cherry Creek Road. Pre-registration is required.

Upcoming dates are:
• Nov. 21, 9–12:30 p.m.
• Dec. 12, 9–12:30 p.m.
• Jan. 9, 9–12:30 p.m.
• Feb. 13, 9–12:30 p.m.
• March 13, 9–12:30 p.m.
• May 8, 9–12:30 p.m.
• June 26, 12:30–4 p.m.
• Aug. 14, 9–12:30 p.m.
• Sept. 11, 12:30–4 p.m.
• Oct. 23, 9–12:30 p.m.
• Dec. 4, 9–12:30 p.m.

For more information or to register for an onsite class, call 402-472-7180 or go to www.extension.unl.edu/divorce.

The following is excerpted from University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension NebrGuide “Getting Connected, Staying Connected: Co-Parenting for Successful Kids Online and onsite classes” (G2143) written by a team of University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension Educators. The entire NebrGuide is online at www.anrpubs.unl.edu/send/NebrGuide1211.pdf.

There have been innumerable studies of how couples and families successfully manage the stressors they face in everyday life together and how they endure severe crises when they arise. These very specific approaches to living ensure that couples and families do not create problems for themselves, and also work well together to minimize the difficulties they face when the world thrusts problems upon them.

Strong families and happy couples look for something positive and focus on it. For thousands of years, people have seen hard times as being both dangerous and difficult, but also full of opportunity. For a period of crisis in their life, they look for something positive and hold onto it. While both parents are reframing the situation. People seek to look at the situation in a different light, from a different angle, through a different lens.

Strong families and happy couples pull together rather than pull apart. Strong families don’t see a problem as an individual’s problem, but as a challenge for everyone and a reason for everyone to work together. When the young wife said to her very old gentleman, “If Grandpa John could get through all of these things and survive, I’m sure that, in a kind and smiling man, I certainly can.” Strong families and happy couples adapt new roles in a flexible manner. In a difficult situation, each member of the family steps forward and does what needs to be done. The family’s problems will not be solved by one individual, but need to be solved by all working together.

Strong families and happy couples know how to compartmentalize their worries and pain. In a critical time, it is often necessary to set one’s worries and sadness aside for a time and focus on basic survival.

Strong families and happy couples eat well, exercise, love each other, get adequate sleep, and nurture their spirit. In stressful times we often make the mistake of working harder rather than being wiser. Difficult times in life are debilitating physically and emotionally, and the no-pain-no-gain approach is not the answer. Pushing-pushing-pushing leads to physical and emotional breakdown, pure and simple.

Strong families and happy couples create a life full of meaning and purpose. Everyone faces severe crises in life. Some crises can be avoided, while others are inevitable. To be best prepared for these hard times that will hit us all, it is important to be creating a useful life of service in our family and community. This brings a richness and dignity to our lives. It strengthens us and gives us hope during the troubles we are forced to endure.

Strong families and happy couples actively meet challenges head-on. Troubles are like cars. They don’t usually fix themselves. But oddly enough, people often waste a lot of time thinking that health problems, money problems, relationship problems, whatever problem they face, will somehow fix themselves. Though on rare occasions this seems to happen almost magically, most problems need active intervention. Couples need to work together with confidence to meet the difficulties that life throws at them.

Strong families and happy couples know how to go with the flow to some degree. In the face of many crises in life, human beings are relatively powerless. The loss is so great and the challenge is so daunting that a family or couple may recognize that they will not be able to resolve the crisis. In light of these overwhelming disasters that we are sometimes forced to confront, we must learn to simply, “Let go, let God.”

Strong families and happy couples are prepared in advance for the challenges in life. The strong family is focused on how to grow and nurture strong family and couple relationships. As parents, nurturant couple relationship as well as the family relationship becomes a model for the children to follow as they grow up in the family. Parent strategies include caring for one another in the family and commitment toward family members, especially in difficult times. Modeling behaviors strengthen couple and family bonds in both challenging and calm times, and are examples that children can draw from to prepare them for handling challenges in their own adult relationships.

Strong families and happy couples know how to laugh and they know how to cry. The ability to laugh at the foibles of strong families is that they are fun-loving. Couples and families who enjoy life together enjoy a good laugh. They don’t laugh at each other or at other people. They laugh at themselves.

Strong families and happy couples do not blame others or blame fate. They do not react to crises as victims. They don’t suffer their life as “my life,” but as “our life” — the past, the present, and the future — to prepare them for handling challenges in their own adult relationships.

Strong families and happy couples take life’s challenges one day at a time. One woman who was in very desperate circumstances after her daughter died, said that for months, she actually lived life one minute at a time. “It was hard even to breathe. I was so broke.”

Strong families and happy couples realize that suffering can be a catalyst for positive personal growth. By definition, is a turning point.

Strong families and happy couples face spiritual life with the grand procession of life. Strong couples are aware that as individuals, we are very small, really quite insigniﬁcant, with so many poor and bad things. But we are all connected — the past, the present, and the future — to something much bigger and more important: to life itself.

Co-Parenting for Successful Kids Online and Onsite Classes

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension

“Co-Parenting for Successful Kids” classes for parents experiencing divorce, separation, and custody are offered online and at onsite locations statewide. These research-based classes meet Nebraska court-mandated requirements. Cost is $50. Scholarships are available for income-eligible participants.

Online participants may take the class in one approximately three hour setting or break it up into segments. They have 30 days to complete the course. To register for the online class, go to http://go.unl.edu/coparenting. Onsite classes are held in Lincoln at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 447 Cherry Creek Road. Pre-registration is required.

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For more information or to register for an onsite class, call 402-472-7180 or go to www.extension.unl.edu/divorce.
Nebraska Lecture on Anti-Bullying, Nov. 7

"Creating a Kinder World: Empowering Youth to End Bullying," is the subject of this free lecture, which includes a reception, and a live webcast. Scheduled for 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 7 in the Nebraska Union auditorium, the lecture is sponsored by the UNL Research Council, Office of the Chancellor and the Office of Research and Economic Development, in partnership with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

Swearer's lecture, part of The Distinguished Lecture Series, is free and a reception will follow. Live webcast will be available approximately one week after the event for later viewing. For more information or to register, go to http://research.unl.edu/nebraskalectures. An archived video of this presentation will be available one week after the event for later viewing.

Swearer will discuss factors underlying bullying, and how to develop prevention and intervention approaches that empower youth to make positive choices. A national expert on the issue, Swearer presented her research at a 2011 White House bullying prevention conference and currently serves on the research board of the Born This Way Foundation founded by pop singer Lady Gaga and her mother, Cynthia Germanotta.

Swearer’s lecture, part of The Nebraska Lectures: Chancellor’s Distinguished Lecture Series, is sponsored by the UNL Research Council, Office of the Chancellor and the Office of Research and Economic Development, in partnership with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

For more information or to view the live webcast, go to http://research.unl.edu/nebraskalectures. An archived video of this presentation will be available approximately one week after the event for later viewing.
Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Expo Results

The 86th Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Stock Show was held in September at the CenturyLink Center in Omaha. The Ak-Sar-Ben 4-H Horse Show was held in September at the Lancaster Event Center in Lincoln. More than 2,000 4-H families from an eight state area participate in this all 4-H Expo. Categories of this 4-H only competition are dairy, feeder calf & breeding beef, market beef, market broilers, meat goats, market lamb, market swine, rabbit, dairy steer, and horse. Below are the Lancaster County 4-H purple ribbon winners (rabbit results not available as of press time).

Complete results are at www.rivercityrodeo.com.

McKenzie Beach  Horse - 5th overall (Reserve Champion)
Cole Cooper  Horse - 7th overall (Reserve Champion)
Grace Kim  Horse - Sr English Equestrian (5th overall)
Anna Heusinger  Horse - Sr Western Pleasure (5th overall)
Nicole McConnell  Horse - Jr Western Horsemanship (Reserve Champion)
Kate Rawlinson  Horse - Premiere Exhibitor (Champion)
Peyton Goracke  Market Lamb - 3rd overall (Reserve Champion)
Morgan Chipp  Horse - Intermediate Showmanship (Reserve Champion)