

Jean's Journal

Jean Wheelock
FCE Council Chair



Happy Holidays! 'Tis the season to be sharing. So many of us have been blessed with

much and during this season, people are very generous to others. As rich as our country is, there are many who won't have a warm meal or a place to sleep that is warm and safe. We have several organizations that help

those who need it, so as we begin to think of what we can do for our own families, let us not forget our neighbors.

My two year term as FCE chair has been completed and I'm very proud of the clubs who have helped make a difference in our community. Congratulations to our new officers, Clairice Steffans, chair; Lynn Bush, vice-chair; Marcene Polivka, secre-

tary and Joy Kruse, treasurer, as they carry our ideals and programs into the new century. Please join us for an exciting council meeting January 24, 2000 at 1 p.m.

It has been a pleasure to serve and may we have much goodness and kindness in our world.

Happy New Year & Century



Jeanette Priess, Bonnie Damm, LaVonne Millwood, Helpful Homemakers, 40 years



Stella May Ehlers, Individual Member, 60 years



Eleanor Cyr, Phyllis Speidel, Winona Ketelhut, Junerose Kayser, Busy Belles Club, 50 years



Joyce Champoux, Helpful Homemakers, 30 years



Ann Meier, 49 years, 45 years. Presenting award Jean Wheelock, FCE president and 10 year member.

What children want during the holidays

Chances are your children have a long list of gifts they'd like to receive during the holidays. Are you frustrated because they don't seem to understand the spirit of the season? Maybe they just need some coaching.

According to Jo Robinson and Jean Coppock Staeheli in their book *Unplug the Christmas Machine*, children really want four things during the holiday season.

1. Relaxed and loving time with the family. During the holiday season, lives become crowded with program practices, shopping trips, and parties. Even when parents are at home, they are often busy with holiday chores, plans, and money worries. Lots of gifts and attention when the holiday arrives won't make up for your absence now. "Children," say the authors, "want love in a steady, constant way."

They advise setting firm

priorities so you can give your children the attention they need. Consider turning down some social invitations to spend more time with your family.

2. Realistic expectations about gifts. Children who think only about gifts at this time of year can feel terribly let down when the holidays are over. Their new toys can't possibly be all they thought they would be after they've waited for them for weeks. Robinson and Staeheli suggest making other parts of the holiday as exciting as opening presents.

"Children," say the authors, "want and need their parents to define the celebration for them." Talk with your children about gifts and your own sense of values. Then plan family activities in which gifts play only one part. Shift the focus from receiving to giving by making special treats or crafts for neighbors and friends, a

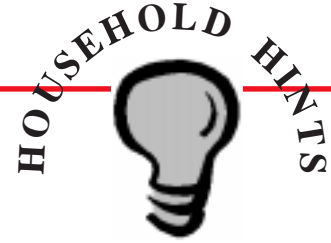
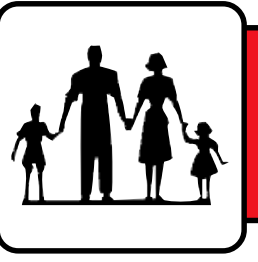
homeless shelter, or a crisis nursery.

Also, plan exciting family activities to look forward to before and after you open gifts. "That way," say Robinson and Staeheli, "gifts start taking their rightful place in the activities." They also suggest teaching your children the difference between commercials and regular television programs. Robinson and Staeheli believe that as powerful as commercials are, a parent's influence can be more powerful. They suggest watching an hour of television with your children and having them yell "Commercial!" each time a new one appears on the screen. Then talk about what you have seen. Help your children learn that the purpose of advertising is to sell products.

3. An evenly paced holiday season. Because stores start

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Family Living



by Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

Holiday stain removal

Beverages (wine, alcohol and soft drinks): Sponge with cool water. Soak for 15 minutes in 1 quart of lukewarm water, 1/2 teaspoon liquid dish detergent and 1 tablespoon of white vinegar. Launder. If stain remains, soak in an enzyme presoak for 30 minutes.

Candle wax: To remove candle wax from washable fabrics, first remove any wax buildup using a dull knife. Place the stained area between clean paper towels and press with a warm iron; or spray or sponge with dry-cleaning solvent, then rub with heavy-duty liquid detergent before washing. Pressing the wax of colored candles between paper towels may set the candle dye more permanently by making it harder for the solvent to penetrate the wax. Once the buildup is removed, treat any remaining spots with a pretreat laundry product. Then, launder in the hottest water safe for the fabric, using a bleach that is safe for the fabric.

Nail Polish: Apply nail polish remover, amyl acetate or acetone to back of stain over absorbent material. Do not use if fabric is acetate, triacetate or modacrylic. Rinse and launder. (LB)

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January FCE leader training

The January Family and Community Education (FCE) leader training lesson, Herbal Remedies is scheduled for Thursday, January 6, 1 p.m. Alice Henneman, extension educator will present the lesson. This lesson will focus on the use of herbs and herbal remedies as an alternative approach in health care. The topics that will be addressed in this lesson include a description of herbs and herbal therapy, general guidelines for consumers to use when making decisions about the use of herbs for health purposes and information about the regulation of the herbal market. (LB)

Character Counts! Corner

What parents can do

As parents, most of us are painfully aware of all the things we don't control—like the content of television, movies and music; the values of peer groups; and the impact of highly publicized bad examples. It's easy to feel powerless. But it's a mistake and an abdication of responsibility to underestimate the impact we have and how much more we can do. Michael Josephson, relates that a study of National Merit Finalists revealed that an unusually high proportion of these high achievers had two major characteristics in their home: first, there were lots of books and a great emphasis on reading, and second, there was a family tradition of eating dinner together regularly. It makes sense. Filling our house with books not only emphasizes the importance of reading, it is also a way to surround children with opportunities and examples that build their minds and character. Eating dinner together is about being involved, spending real, serious time in a family setting, guiding the way our children think and behave. These things don't happen by accident. We have to adjust our schedules to our family duties and consciously create an environment that nurtures and supports our highest values. Sure there are exceptions, but generally our children will value what we value. And since none of us is perfect, we have to be self-conscious about emphasizing our best not our weakest characteristics. What we say to and in front of our kids is terribly important. And so is what we do. Everything sends a message. What we read or watch on TV. How we handle our relationships. How we deal with anger and frustration. What attitudes we convey about drinking, drugs and sex. All of these send a strong message to children—is it one we want them to receive and replicate?

Adapted from a Michael Josephson Radio Broadcast from September, 1999. (LJ)

