

Clarice's Column

Clarice Steffens
FCE Council Chair



Pam has called! She gave me the deadline for getting an article ready for NEBLINE

for FCE! That means I must face the reality that I will be writing this column monthly as your FCE Council Chair.

Let me briefly introduce myself. I am Clarice Steffens, retired Lincoln Public Schools teacher, who wondered what she would do to stay busy in retirement and now wonders how she ever had time to work. My husband, Herb, is a retired postal clerk who enjoys gardening (to the point where I have been known to beg people to take tomatoes—be prepared), woodworking and living in the country. We have two daughters, two son-in-laws and two grandsons, all living in Lancaster County.

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

The FCE officers met in November to set the following meeting schedule for 2000.

January 24, 12 noon - Council meeting
March 27 - Council meeting
June 26 - Council meeting
July 13 - Sizzling Summer Sampler
September 25 - Council meeting
October 24 - Achievement Night

We will continue having clubs share in the planning of meetings so times for meetings will be announced later. Host

clubs will be listed in the yearbook. We hope all clubs will share in the planning, attend Council meetings and get to know more club members.

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

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

- FCE News -

The February FCE club and community leader training lesson is scheduled for Tuesday, January 25 at 1 p.m. Healthy Homes—Combustion Pollutants will be presented by Lorene Bartos, extension educator.

What is odorless, invisible, makes no sound, can be deadly and may be found in your home? It is air pollutants like carbon monoxide. Learn how combustion problems occur and how regular maintenance, safe practices and alarm devices can prevent accidental deaths and other health problems caused by carbon monoxide and combination byproducts. This is a lesson that can save lives, lives that could be your friends or family.

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

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

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

Family rituals: what are yours?

LaDeane Jha
Extension Associate

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

In my family, it was Sunday dinners after church and popcorn, fudge and family togetherness on Sunday evenings.

Another person remembers that every Christmas he and his brother always iced a special kind of cookie. This simple ritual continued until the two boys left home because it held a special meaning for them. It gave them personal satisfaction and was a sign of the bond and love between them and their mother. A 40-year-old man who now has two children observed, "Rituals are family keepsakes that live in your heart."

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

Rituals differ from family to family. Commonly, rituals are thought of only around holidays or special days. However they should not be limited to special occasions. One person who studies families remarked, "Families that have the strongest ties have the most rituals." In

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Suggested Books for young readers

Mouse Match: A Chinese Folktale, by Ed Young

Minty: A Story of Young Harriet Tubman by Alan Schroeder, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney.

Books for middle readers

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

Popcorn, by James Stevenson

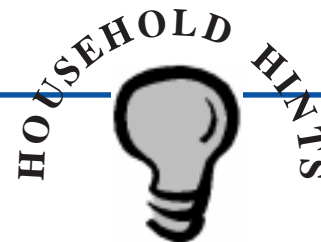
Books for older readers

Bone Dance by Martha Brooks

The Window, by Michael Doris, photographs by Ken Robbins

Recommended by the American Library Association. (LJ)

Family Living



by Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

A safe journey for appliances

For a smooth transition from old home to new, here are a few tips for moving your appliances.

For appliances that use water, shut off the water supply and drain all hoses before disconnecting. For gas-fueled appliances, contact the gas utility before disconnecting. Empty the appliance. Remove and wrap all removable parts. Label them clearly and pack them together in a sturdy box.

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

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

A chance to be trained in Character Counts!

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

When: Tuesday, January 18, 2000

Time: 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Where: Lancaster Extension

Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road

Cost: \$5

Registration: Call 441-7180 to register ahead of time. Fees will be collected at the door.

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

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

Character Counts! Corner TEAM

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

Teach!

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

Enforce!

Instill the "Six Pillars of Character" by rewarding good behavior and by discouraging instances of bad behavior by

imposing fair, consistent consequences that prove you are serious about character.

Advocate!

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

Model!

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

