

# Clarice's Column

Clarice Steffens  
FCE Council Chair



It's a cold, snowy, gray afternoon as I begin to think about an article for the March

NEBLINE. Even though our winter has been quite mild, I appreciate knowing that by this time of year, spring can not be too far off. At our house, you also know spring is just around the corner because the orders from the nurseries have already begun to arrive. Soon a corner of our basement will become a mini greenhouse as the seeds are started and home-grown tomatoes will begin their journey to our table for summer enjoy-

ment.

In January, our thoughts were still with snow and cold as a good number of you attended the council meeting. Many snowmen, each with his or her own personality, were created by our talented members. We also enjoyed a very good lunch and a very nice installation of officers. Thanks to all who attended.

Our thoughts will definitely be on spring as we meet for the March Council meeting at 1 p.m. on March 27. Start looking for those long forgotten hats and gloves as we are invited to a Tea Party hosted by the Busy Bees, Emerald and Tuesday Tinkers Clubs. No excuses for not wearing a hat as we will have a few extras on hand for the

meeting. Please join us for a cup of tea and a fun afternoon. The host clubs have also asked that we each bring a dozen cookies (with recipes) for a cookie exchange.

Spring also means that applications are due for the FCE scholarship. This scholarship will be presented to a Lancaster County graduate. Applications should be received at the extension office by April 1.

I hope to see many of you on March 23 at the **earth wellness festival** at Southeast Community College. You will enjoy your day with many of Lancaster County's fifth graders.

See you at the Tea Party!

## Family Living



by Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

### Wallpaper Remover Solution

To remove wallpaper, use one cup of vinegar to one gallon very hot water. Wipe it on, wait a couple minutes, then pull or scrape it off. (LB)

## - FCE News -

### FCE Scholarship

A \$125 scholarship provided by Lancaster County FCE Council is available for a graduate of a high school in Lancaster County or a permanent resident of Lancaster County majoring in family and consumer science or a health occupation. This is open to full-time students beginning their sophomore, junior or senior year of college in the fall of 2000 or who have completed two quarters of study in a vocational school. Applications are due April 1 in the extension office. (LB)

### FCE Council

It's Tea Party time in Lancaster County. The March 27, 1 p.m. FCE Council meeting will feature a Tea Party and business meeting. All members are asked to "dress up" with hat and gloves and come for tea. Bring one dozen cookies for a cookie exchange. All FCE members are invited to attend. (LB)

### FCE Leader Training

The April FCE leader training, "Heart Healthy Foods that Help You Keep on Ticking," will be March 28, 1 p.m. You'll taste heart-healthy foods, take home 33 tips on heart healthy and FUN things you can do for your health and receive LOTS of materials and good-for-you recipes from the American Heart Association and Nebraska Food Commodity Groups! Alice Henneman and Lorene Bartos, Extension Educators, will present this training.

If you are not an FCE member and would like to attend, call 441-7180 to pre-register so materials can be prepared.

## Child Care Providers Conference

Saturday, April 8

8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Lancaster Extension Education Center

"Creating a Galaxy of Stars" is the theme of the conference for daycare providers of infants and toddlers. Speakers include Kathy Moore, Voices for Children, George Williams, Ph.D., Shirley Trout, Parent Educator and author and many more. Cost is \$10 which includes lunch. For a conference flyer call the extension office, 441-7180 or Family Service, 441-7949. Preregistration is due March 24. In-service hours will be given for this conference. Plan now to attend. (LB)

## Help Your Child Bike Safely



With the rapid approach of spring, children will soon have their bicycles out of storage and may be asking for new ones. A few facts to remember about bicycles will help keep kids safe.

A big bike "to grow into" is not easy to learn on or to ride safely. A child should be able to sit on the seat with knees straight and feet flat on the ground. Also make sure he can straddle the bike with at least one or two inches between the top bar and

crotch.

Always insist on bike helmet use. A brain injury cannot be cured! Bike helmet use can reduce the risk of head injury by 85 percent when worn correctly. Make it clear to your child they must wear a helmet on every ride. (LJ)

## National Poison Prevention Week March 19-25



The theme of National Poison Prevention Week 2000 is "Children Act Fast...So Do Poisons!" This means that parents must always be watchful when household chemicals or drugs are being used. Many incidents happen when adults are using a product but are distracted for a few moments. Children act fast and adults must make sure that household chemicals and medicines are stored away from children at all times.

The kitchen, bathroom and the garage or storage area are the most common sites for accidental poisonings. Ask yourself the following questions and take steps to fix any situations that you may answer "no" to.

### The Kitchen

1. Do all harmful products in the cabinets have child-resistant caps? Products like furniture polishes, drain cleaners and some oven cleaners should have safety packaging to keep little children from accidentally opening the packages.

2. Are all potentially harmful products in their original containers? Labels on the original containers often

give first aid information if someone should swallow the product.

3. Are harmful products stored away from food?

4. Have all potentially harmful products been put up high and out of reach of children?

### The Bathroom

1. Did you ever stop to think that medicines could poison if used improperly? Many children are poisoned each year by overdoses of aspirin.

2. Do your aspirins and other potentially harmful products have child-resistant closures?

3. Have you thrown out all out-of-date prescriptions?

4. Are all medicines in their original containers with the original labels?

5. If your vitamins or vitamin/mineral supplements contain iron, are they in child-resistant packaging? A few iron pills can kill a child.

### The Garage or Storage Area

1. Did you know that many things in your garage or storage area that can be swallowed are terrible poisons? Death may occur when people swallow such everyday substances as charcoal

lighter, paint thinner and remover, antifreeze and turpentine.

2. Do all these poisons have child-resistant caps?

3. Are they stored in the original containers with the original labels?

4. Have you made sure that no poisons are stored in drinking glasses or pop bottles?

5. Are all these harmful products locked up and out of sight and reach?

If you think someone has been poisoned, call your Poison Control Center immediately. The phone number can be found on the inside cover of the yellow or white pages of the telephone directory. Keep the number on your phone. Poison Control Centers maintain information for the doctor or the public on recommended treatment for the ingestion of household products and medicines. They are familiar with toxicity (how poisonous it is) of most substances found in the home or know how to find this information. The number for our local Poison Control Center is 1-800-955-9119. (LJ)

## Character Counts! Corner Responsibility

For many, learning to take personal responsibility is a lifelong process. It is far too easy to blame someone else for everything that happens. We have all heard about the court cases where parents, police, neighbors or teachers are blamed for a wrong-doing. It seems hard for some to accept personal responsibility for actions and accept the natural consequences of those actions. The idea it is someone else's fault is far too pervasive.

How do we teach responsibility? It's important to let children volunteer or to assign them tasks to do. Then we need to let them do them. If they run into difficulty, encourage but don't take over. Learning to persevere is an important aspect of responsibility. Caring for animals or plants, earning money for projects or trips and completing projects are all building blocks for responsibility. At home, the best way to teach responsibility is to model it. Are you reliable? Do you do your best or give up easily? Are you disciplined? Do you blame others? Do you keep your word? Your kids will do just what you do. (LJ)

