

Lines from Lynn

Lynn Bush
FCE Council Chair

I hope everyone is enjoying their summer in spite of too much heat and too little rain.

As I reflect back on this summer, I can honestly say I am a survivor, I have survived graduation, lots of company, 10 hour work days so I could take time off for "oodles" of ball games, excessive heat and humidity and even

another birthday.

However, as I write this, I have only worked eight hours today, the weather is cooler and breezy and I have nothing marked on my calendar. Ah...the good life!

I was in Grand Island at a ball game on July 15. I missed the Sizzling Summer Sampler. I have heard from several people it was a success. They enjoyed the style show, the food, as usual got an A+. Sixty-five people

attended.

The Family Community Education (FCE) Convention is coming up Aug. 19-20. Be sure to mark you calendar for Sept. 23, our next council meeting. You'll get a report from Joy, Ann and Donna on the convention.

It's almost time for FCE clubs to reorganize. While you're sitting in the air-conditioning hoping for rain, also be thinking of ways to bring more members into the FCE organization.



★ FCE News ★

Family Community Education (FCE) Council Meeting

The Family Community Education (FCE) September Council meeting will be Monday, Sept. 23, 7 p.m. at the Walt Branch Library, 6701 S. 14 St. The meeting will follow a tour of the library. All interested FCE members are invited to attend.

FCE Leader Training

The October FCE and community leader training lesson "Energy Isn't the Only Thing You will Save" will be presented Tuesday, Sept. 24 at 1 p.m. by Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator.

The rising energy costs can hit both householders and communities in the pocketbook. Requests are up 47 percent for housing energy assistance in Nebraska. Residential prices for natural gas, heating oil and propane are 40-100 percent higher than a year ago. Dollars lost in energy costs are not available for other household and community needs. Explore new energy efficient materials, how to locate more efficient appliances and equipment, changes in windows and ways householders can save energy and dollars.

Non-FCE members interested in attending should pre-register by calling Pam at 441-7180 a week before the lesson so materials can be prepared. (LB)

Be Involved at School

Can you believe the summer school vacation is nearly over and the time has arrived to prepare for the new school year. Amid the excitement of buying new clothes and school supplies, it may be time to assess your commitment to involvement in your child's education.

Over the past two decades a body of research has evolved that shows the importance of strong parent involvement in education. Academic achievement for children and schools is linked to parental involvement and meaningful partnerships in all areas of school and commu-

nity life

Increasing numbers of two breadwinner families, one-parent families and parents who hold more than one job makes time an issue for nearly everyone. However, in spite of busy lifestyles, many parents simply don't know what to do or how to do it. The following are a few suggestions.

- Provide a home environment that supports children's learning needs.
- Volunteer to provide some assistance at school if at all possible.
- Become an activist and deci-

sion-maker in organizations such as the local PTA/PTO, or community advocacy groups that advise local school boards and school districts.

- Attend school sponsored activities.
- Maintain open channels of communication with teachers and continually monitor children's progress in school.
- Tutor children at home using specific learning activities designed by the teacher to reinforce work being done in the school.
- Be positive about school. (LJ)

The Power of Stories

LaDeane Jha
Extension Educator

An orphan boy sat on a great stone mending an arrow. And the stone spoke, "Shall I tell you stories?" The boy said, "What are stories?" The stone answered, "All things that happened in the world before this." From the stone came all the stories that people of the Seneca Nation tell one another.

— A Seneca Indian Tale

Stories are the basis of all cultures and it is speculated they are so enduring because they have served a vital purpose over time. Most stories are passed on orally and have existed as (1) a form of entertainment; (2) a means to educate; and (3) a way to transmit culture from generation to generation. Family stories are a way to communicate beliefs, attitudes, feelings, customs and traditions among generations. Appreciation of the past, pride in your present family

and a rich legacy for the future are results of telling family stories.

How are Family Stories Generated?

One of my favorite childhood memories is sitting in a room crowded with family relatives and listening to an uncle regale us with story after story about growing up as part of my grandparents family. He was a

see *STORIES* on page 11

Family Living



by Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

The colder the water, the more difficult it is to get clothes clean. Greasy soil is more difficult to remove in lower temperatures and laundry detergents are less effective in cold water. For best results, wash using a warm wash cycle and use cold water for rinsing.

Teens: A Delicate Balance

LaDeane Jha
Extension Educator

As any parent knows, life with a teen is an adventure for which most of us are ill-prepared. We remember what we were like as teens (or maybe sometimes conveniently forget) and often we desperately want our teens to avoid some of the disappointments, hard knocks and mistakes we experienced at a similar age. The result is the challenging task of finding the right balance between support and control. We all know as our children grow and mature we need to gradually give them additional responsibility and independence. What is difficult is knowing where the balance is. There is a danger of exerting too much control, but there is an equal danger in accepting the notion that at certain ages teens become independent and there is no longer a need for support and guidance.

So what can parents do? One of the first steps is to make changes in our attitudes about parenting teens. Taking the time to be actively involved with teens is often more useful and rewarding than worrying about too little or too much control. By

giving our full, undivided attention to teens we send a strong message we care about them and we are willing to make our relationship a priority.

At all stages of development, parents should model the behavior we expect from our children. If we expect teens to behave in certain ways, we need to make sure our own behaviors support the desired outcome. How can we expect teens to obey traffic regulations if they see a parent consistently speed, refuse to wear a seat belt or react to traffic situations in an angry and aggressive manner? We teach by what we model.

As parents we have the ability and the responsibility to counter the trend of letting go too soon. We also have the ability and responsibility to let our teens gradually assume more control over their lives. Teens still need guidance and support in abundance from parents while still being acknowledged as capable and increasingly independent people.

By taking an active and positive approach to parenting, we can help teens develop the assets and values that will help them through the challenging adolescent years and beyond.

American Character Week

Sept. 6-17

For more information about American Character Week, visit www.charactercounts.org/acw

CHARACTER COUNTS! Corner

When your children return to school in the next few weeks, most of them will be exposed to character education as a regular part of their school day. Children will be encouraged to be TRRFCC — Trustworthy, Respectful, Responsible, Fair, Caring and good Citizens. This message will be taught, modeled, enforced and advocated. Youth will have opportunities to practice each of the Six Pillars and your help in reinforcing those core, universal values is important to your child's character development. If you would like more information contact the office at 441-7180 and ask for a Character Counts! brochure. (LJ)



Make It Yourself with Wool Contest

The 2002 District III Make It Yourself with Wool Contest will be held Nov. 2 at the Lancaster Education Extension Center. Entry deadline is Oct. 19. A new category this year is "Made for Others." Youth and adults are encouraged to enter. This contest is to promote the beauty and versatility of wool fabrics and yarns. Applications are available at the Extension Office, 441-7180. (LB)