

# Clarice's Column



**Clarice Steffens**  
FCE Council Chair

Have you remembered to write 2002 on your checks this month? Seems we just got used to writing 2001 and it was gone! I've always heard time passes more quickly as you grow older and now I really believe that! Two thousand one was a very eventful year and 2002 will, no doubt, be the same. Let's hope for a more peaceful New Year.

The January Council meeting will be held Jan. 28 at

noon. Lunch will be provided by the incoming officers and we will be making a surprise craft. The new officers will be installed.



The cost of the lunch and craft supplies will be \$7.50 and reservations should be made by Jan. 23 by calling Pam at the extension office, 441-7180.

The remaining Council meetings for the year will be March 25, June 24 and Sept. 23. The Sizzling Summer Sampler has been tentatively set for July 15 and Achievement Night is scheduled for Oct. 21.

It's not too early to start planning an entry for the Heritage Skills Contest. This year the categories are rugs, handcrafted toys and spinning and weaving articles. Entry forms are due at the state level by May 1.

The Council will be offering a \$250 scholarship to 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 scholarship is open to full-time students beginning their sophomore, junior or senior year of college in the fall of 2002 or who have completed two quarters of study in a vocational school. Applications will be due April 1 in the extension office. Call Pam at the extension office for an application form.

Serving as Vice Chair and Chair for the Lancaster County FCE clubs has certainly been a learning experience for me! It has been many years since I was a 4-H leader, so this has been an opportunity to again become acquainted with the many things extension has to offer the community. I have had the privilege of meeting many members of FCE, the extension educators and their assistants. It has been a good experience for me and I thank all of you for the opportunity.

Please join us at the extension office for the January Council meeting. This is an opportunity for you to enjoy some time with old and new friends. Everyone is welcome. Happy New Year!

## ★ FCE News ★

### Family Community Education (FCE) Council Meeting

The January FCE Council meeting will be Monday, Jan. 28 at noon. The council officers will prepare lunch. A craft activity will follow the business meeting. The cost for the meal and craft supplies is \$7.50. Please call 441-7180 to preregister. All FCE members are invited to attend and join in the fun. (LB)

### FCE Leader Training Lesson

The February FCE leader training lesson "Positive Communication in Families" will be given Tuesday, Jan. 29 at 1 p.m. This lesson will look at aspects of family communication that bring family members closer together and offer some suggestions for activities that help increase positive interaction in the home. Research at the University of Nebraska for almost 25 years has focused on the qualities of strong families and how we can put these findings to practical use. One of the important family strengths is positive communication.

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

## Living on Less

LaDeane Jha  
Extension Educator

The past year was one of economic uncertainty and confusion for many. Some families have seen a drop or even a loss of income and others are concerned about losses in retirement funds and other investments. For many families the undesirable effects of a cut in income can be minimized by following three basic survival skills: substitute, conserve and utilize existing resources. By managing resources better, many people realize their situation is not as bad as it seems.

Economizing is a principle that means allotting personal and family resources where they will do the most good. It does not

necessarily mean to buy less of an item—it might even imply purchasing more. For example, suppose you decide to increase family income by looking for a different job. A successful job search may require certain clothing or a skill you do not have. It may be worth your while to invest in those resources. However, if you spend more in one area you must decrease spending in other areas.

**SUBSTITUTE** — Find substitutions. Eat at home rather than out. Cook from basics rather than using convenience foods. Rent rather than buy costly equipment you seldom use. Most importantly, develop the habit of thinking, "What could I substitute that would do the job for less?"

**CONSERVE** — Avoid

waste. Keep your family healthy and your skills and possessions in good condition. Try to get the most use or satisfaction out of each trip in the car, each use of the oven, each load in the washing machine, each dollar invested in clothing. Continually ask yourself, "How can I make this resource last longer? How can I use it more efficiently?"

**UTILIZE** — Find new uses for resources you already have. Could you rent out a room in your home? Could you car pool? If you bake, sew, tend your own small children or clean your own house, could you expand these into income-producing activities? Think to yourself, "What talents, time or other resources do we have as family members that could be put to use in a new, more productive manner?"

## Make Good Money Choices

Every day we make choices about how to spend money. Too often these choices are made without planning. A spending plan or budget for your household is essential. They will help you live within your income, spend your money wisely, and reach personal goals.

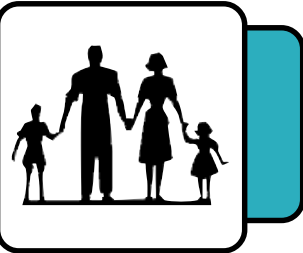
These steps can help you make good money choices.

1) Set your monthly and yearly financial goals.

- Determine your monthly income.
- Add all of your fixed expenses and the monthly portion of your yearly expenses. This is the amount you are obligated to spend in one month.
- Subtract the amount you are obligated to spend in one month from your monthly income. This is the amount you have left for flexible

- expenses.
- Add your fixed expenses and your flexible expenses. Subtract this figure from your monthly income. The amount you plan to spend monthly should not be greater than your monthly income.
- Keep track of what you actually spend on flexible items. Avoid spending more than you planned. (LJ)

## Family Living



by Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

After the holidays, take a few simple steps to keep your linens in fine shape for years to come. Always clean linens before storing to prevent stains and creases from setting. Do not starch before storing as starch may attract unwanted insects. To store linens without unsightly creasing, roll them around empty paper towel or wrapping paper tubes or hang on hangers in the closet. (LB)

## Joy Breaks

Want to get off to a good start in 2002? How about re-discovering your ability to play? "Take a 'Joy Break' from whatever stress-producing activity you are currently engaged in and give yourself permission to play," says Cynthia Schuster of Ohio State University. She suggests you take a piece of paper and divide it into four vertical columns. Mark each column as follows:

- Joy Breaks, Less than 5 minutes
- Joy Breaks, Up to 30 minutes
- Joy Breaks, Up to 2 days
- Joy Breaks, 2 days or longer

Now come up with a list of ideas of fun things you enjoy doing. When you've depleted your list of ideas, put them in the appropriate columns on the card. If you are like the majority of individuals who complete this activity, your ideas probably fit into the last two columns. You have few ideas about how to have small doses of fun. Challenge yourself to think "outside the box" and realize fun comes

in various size doses.

Try some of these ideas for shorter joy breaks:

- Read the comics of funny pages of the newspaper to start your day.
- Read your horoscope. If you don't like what it says, write your own.
- Do an anonymous good deed ... just because.
- Spoil yourself a little. Buy something you've always wanted even though you don't need it.
- Curl up and read something of no educational value whatsoever.
- Go to an afternoon movie.
- Daydream.
- Take an evening "stroll" instead of a "power walk."

Make it a habit to add "joy breaks" throughout your calendar, and then notice the significant improvement in energy, enthusiasm, flexibility, teamwork and productivity.

Sources: McGee-Cooper, A., & Trammell, D. (1994). Time Management for Unmanageable People. (LJ)

## Helping Your Child be a Good Sport

Have you ever walked away from a sporting event completely disgusted by the way some parents behave? Is it any wonder some children have difficulty with the concept of good sportsmanship? The following are some ways in which parents can help children be good sports.

Model good sportsmanship. Children tend to act much like their parents. If good behavior is expected of children, parents should be held to just as high a standard.

Praise children for the

see GOOD SPORT on page 11

## CHARACTER COUNTS! Corner

### Crying Wolf

A shepherd boy who watched a flock of sheep near a village brought out village members two times by crying out, "wolf, wolf." When his neighbors came to help him, he laughed at them for their pains. The wolf, however, actually showed up at last. The shepherd boy now really alarmed shouted in agony and terror. "Please do come and help me, the wolf is killing the sheep." However, no one paid any heed to his cries—no one rendered any assistance, the wolf destroyed the entire flock.

Moral: There is no believing in a liar even when he speaks the truth. (BR)

