



## Community Focus

### STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

#### Dr. Jha Granted Five-Year Courtesy Appointment in AgLEC



Recently Extension Educator Dr. LaDeane Jha (above left) was granted a five-year courtesy appointment in UNL's Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication (AgLEC). This represents an exciting opportunity for additional collaborative work between AgLEC and Lancaster County Extension. Dr. Jha is noted for her exceptional teaching and outreach education work throughout our local community and within the Cooperative Extension system. She received the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension "Distinguished Educator" Award in 2000. (GB)

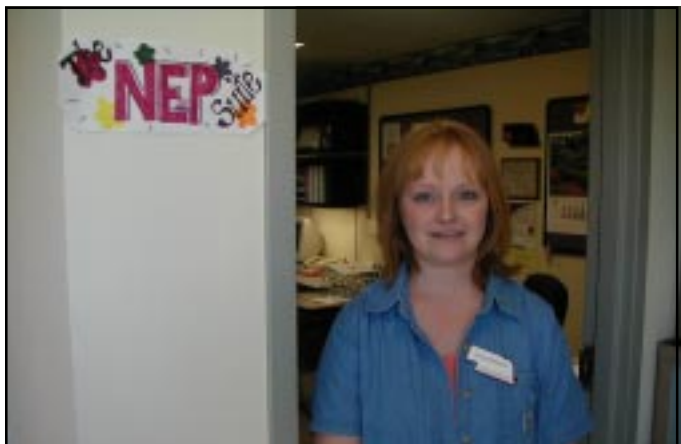
#### Meinke and Kraft Receive Promotions

Extension Assistants Mardel Meinke (left) and Ellen Kraft (right) were recently promoted to extension associates. Recognized for their valuable work and dedication, they are also commended for their accomplishments. Ellen's responsibilities include the 4-H school enrichment program with emphasis in teaching embryology, and providing leadership for the 4-H horse, rabbit and poultry programs.



Mardel works in the Nutrition Education Program with primary responsibilities in teaching teen parents and young families how to provide safe nutritious meals on a limited budget. She has provided major leadership in developing a series of 12 monthly group lessons. (GB)

#### New Nutritionist Joins NEP Staff



Dana Willeford (above) has recently joined the Lancaster County Cooperative Extension Office. She began working as an extension assistant for the Nutrition Education Program (NEP) on April 1st. Dana is a Nebraska native and graduated from the University of Nebraska-Kearney in May 1998 with a B.S. in Nutritional Science and Dietetics.

Dana moved to Lincoln in 1999 and began working for Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department as a WIC program nutritionist. Dana and her husband, Dennis, have two children Derek, 8, and Madison, 1. (DW)

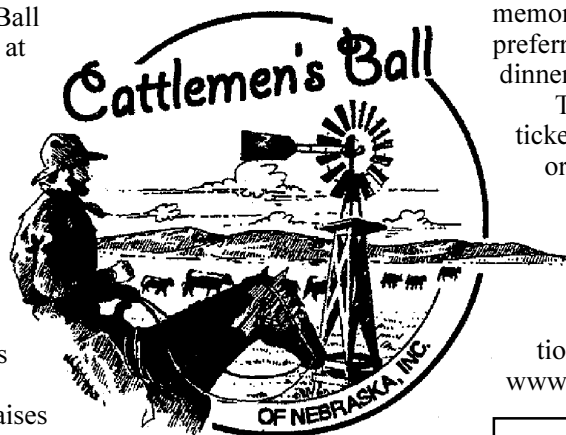
## Enjoy Cattlemen's Ball and Support Cancer Research

The 2002 Cattlemen's Ball of Nebraska will be June 1 at the Benes Cattle Company, located 25 miles northwest of Lincoln, near Valparaiso. Hosts for the 2002 event are Ermin and Delores Benes, Dan and Kathy Benes and their families.

The annual Cattlemen's Ball showcases rural Nebraska, promotes beef in a healthy diet and raises money for health care research. All of the money raised stays in Nebraska, with 90 percent of the proceeds going to the University of Nebraska Medical Center's (UNMC) Eppley Cancer Center and 10 percent directed to health care in the Valparaiso area.

Cattlemen's Ball activities starts with a brunch at 10 a.m. for Trailboss ticket holders.

Afternoon and evening activities are open to Top Hand and Trail Boss ticket holders. Activities include an art show, live auction, trailer lock-up, hayrack rides, horseshoe



pitching, cowboy poetry and celebrity team penning.

At 5:30 p.m. is a prime rib dinner catered by Chances R.

The main attraction is the Honky Tonk Tailgate Party which starts at 8 p.m. and is made up of solo artists Daryle Singletary, Rhet Akins and Wade Hayes. After the concert is a country western dance with music by Blackwater.

Top Hand tickets are \$60 each. Trailboss tickets are \$500 for 2 tickets and include a champagne reception, com-

memorative gift, brunch, and preferred seating for the evening dinner and concert.

Tickets are limited. For tickets call 1 (800) 666-8071 or send a check to Cattlemen's Ball of Nebraska, P.O. Box 181, Valparaiso, NE 68065.

For more information, visit [www.cattlemensball.com](http://www.cattlemensball.com)

#### Volunteers Needed

Preparing for the Cattlemen's Ball will take lots of volunteers! Corrals, displays, stages, and chairs need to be setup and torn down. Some tentative volunteer dates are May 21-22 and May 29, 30, 31 for setup and of course days following June 1 for tear down and cleanup.

People interested in volunteering can call Ken Sabata at (402) 784-3154.

## Congratulates Extended to Arabic Computer Class Graduates

Lancaster County Extension is proud to recognize the recent graduates of the *Arabic Beginning Computer and Internet* class. The students gained experience navigating the internet and can now contact friends and relatives through free e-mail accounts created in class.

Graduates include: Nasr Eldin Mahmoud, Ibrahim Fadol, Abbadi Kambal, Mohammed Al-Bezerji, Mourad, Mourad, Mahmood Aziz, Kahkil-Al-Daraji, Abdalla Omer and Adnan AL-Fatlawi.

Sief Mahagoub taught the course with assistance from the Lincoln Action Program and Faces of the Middle East. (SM)



## Food Habits in the Middle East



Boshra Rida  
Extension Volunteer In  
Service To America

The preparation of and seasonings used vary from country to country but the people of the Middle East region eat lots of complex carbohydrate food like vegetables, fruits, beans, pasta, rice and other grains. Only moderate amounts of protein from fish, poultry and red meat (lamb and beef) are consumed. Many countries use olive oil, a primarily monosaturated fat that is naturally cholesterol free.

There are three meals in a typical day. The breakfast may contain bread, cheese (there are different kinds of cheese), cream (in Iraq cream is often accompanied with extract of concentrated date juice), cream cheese, butter, eggs, jam, milk, tea, coffee and in some countries fried spicy ground chickpea

or chickpeas with sesame oil sauce.

The main meal is the lunch which may be composed of bread, rice or bulgur (wheat and rice are eaten all over the Arab world and almost no meal is eaten without them). However, each country has its own cooking method. Rice is often accompanied by a stew of okra, eggplant, squash, potato, spinach, green beans and dry beans or mixed in with either nuts, raisins, saffron, chicken or meat. In some countries (Syria, Lebanon) they use cracked wheat more often than rice. Cracked wheat is a whole wheat which has been boiled, then dried and ground. It requires little cooking as it has already been cooked. There are a variety of recipes made of rice or cracked wheat and meat (kobbah).

Vegetables play an important role in Middle Eastern cooking. They appear in stews, salads and often eaten raw on their own.

They are fried, baked, blanched, boiled and even pickled. In addition to vegetables, herbs like parsley, mint, coriander, dill, basil, bay leaf, cress, thyme, marjoram and garlic are used often.

Fruit is often served at the end of a meal. It is eaten in many ways either on its own, chopped up in salads or used for decorating sweet dishes. Fruit also is used in pudding, making syrups and juices.

Meats like red meat (lamb and beef) and poultry are not eaten on a daily basis and are always accompanied with either rice or bread. A variety of fish are used in Middle Eastern cooking. However, only certain fish are suitable for particular dishes, due to size, oiliness and distinctive flavor. Fish is quite often eaten in Iraq. One of the best ways of eating fish is grilled over a charcoal fire. Barbecuing or frying will also give good results.