

# Lines from Lynn

**Lynn Bush**  
FCE Council Chair

According to the calendar, spring has arrived. However, I think Mother Nature is having trouble letting go of winter. At least she gave us some rain.

Mark your calendars for the next Council meeting, Monday, June 23, 7 p.m. We will meet at the Lancaster Event Center, 84 and Havelock Street, for our business meeting and a tour of the facilities. Clubs hosting the evening will be Live & Learn and Salt Creek Circle. Everyone is invited to attend.



Thank you to all who participated in the Cultural Arts Contest. We had some beautiful quilts. Now is the time to start another project for next year's contest. The categories will be painting, hand stitchery, creative writing and glass.

Has your club decided to put a basket together for the raffle at State Convention? It's not too late. Our goal is to have every club contribute a complete basket or at least items to complete a basket. The money



*Irene Colburn, a member of the Helpful Homemakers FCE Club, with her quilted wall hanging was selected to represent Lancaster County in the Cultural Arts Contest at the Family & Community Education State Convention in August.*

raised from this project goes for scholarships on the state level.

## ★ FCE News ★

### Family Community Education (FCE Upcoming Dates)

- June 23** — FCE Council Meeting, Lancaster Event Center, 7 p.m.
- July 14** — Sizzling Summer Sampler (watch the May NEBLINE for full details)
- Aug. 18-19** — Nebraska Association for Family & Community Education Clubs State Convention, Syracuse

# When War Is in the News

The United States is at war. Many troops have been mobilized. The president has described some of the evil actions of the country with which we have concerns.

Children probably do not understand the politics of this situation. For many, especially the youngest children, war is a distant event and they do not pay attention to it. But many others are likely to be confused. They see parents being deployed and leaving their children behind. Seeing children in the news attracts other children's attention. They may wonder if their own parents will be called to go away. Older children may be confused when they hear differing opinions and recommendations. Many words are being used that are not familiar to children.

### Some Parents are Being Deployed

For children whose parents are being deployed, there are special pressures. They need to deal with secrecy, uncertainty, separation and major changes in their lifestyle. They will not know where the family member is going or when or even if he or she will return. The remaining parent needs to take on different roles. If both parents are in the military, the children may need to adjust to living with other relatives or substitute parents. They will need to adjust again when the deployed family member returns home.

### Children May be Confused

Most children are likely to be confused by the current events. Their confusion may vary depending on their age.

Younger children will hear a number of unfamiliar words and may not understand what they mean. Many children may confuse Afghanistan and Iraq. They may confuse Osama bin Laden with Sadaam Hussein. There are good reasons for that confusion; many adults are confused as well. Children, especially younger ones, also confuse fantasy with reality and historic events and figures with current ones. They may connect unrelated current events, such as assuming the Columbia shuttle disaster is related to the conflict with Iraq. They may be more sensitized to war and violence in general after the events of September 11, 2001.

### War May be a New Topic for Parents

Most parents do not include war in their daily conversations with children. Some never talk about it. This author has conducted interviews with children and parents beginning several months after the September 11 attacks. Almost 25 percent of parents reported they never talked to their children about war. Over 40 percent of children reported they hadn't had such conversations with their parents. This means some parents thought they talked about it, but the children either didn't remember or didn't recognize the topic. So some parents may need to discuss this topic with their children for the first time and others may need to repeat some things they have said before.

### There are Contrasting Attitudes About the War

Some people are working hard to prevent war, while others are actively supporting it.

Children will hear about protests and peace marches, and they will hear about speeches and actions to support military action. They will probably want to know how their parents feel about it. Parents should explain how they feel. They can describe what action they are taking. They also can explore with the children how the children can express their own opinions.

### Tips and Cautions

Listen and talk. Let children know it is okay to talk about war and peace. Listen for misunderstandings. Let the children guide you in the discussions. Remember this will probably not be only one discussion.

Consider using books and art to communicate. Children may be able to express ideas in drawings that they cannot put into words. Reading a book about a topic makes it less threatening. It is easier to talk about someone else than to talk about our own feelings.

Be careful about painting the other side as the enemy. It is more helpful to children to talk about "bad actions" rather than "bad people." Help them understand people can choose their behaviors. Even if they have done something bad in the past, they can choose to do something good in the future.

Help children understand the United States is not angry with the Iraqi people. Explain the leaders of our country are upset with the decisions of the other government.

Help children understand religious differences. Explain Islam is a religion that is practiced by many people in the world. Help them understand

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## Family Living



by Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

### Don't Send Your Money Down the Drain

There are many ways to conserve water and lower your water bill. Repair leaky faucets promptly, and install aerating, low-flow faucets and showerheads. The biggest water-user in a home is typically the toilet. Install low-flow toilets or place a plastic container filled with water or gravel in the tank of your conventional toilet. (Be sure it does not interfere with the toilet's flush mechanisms.)

In the kitchen, scrape, don't rinse, off large food pieces and add food wastes to a compost pile rather than using a garbage disposal. If you use a dishwasher, soaking or pre-washing dishes is generally only recommended in cases of burned-on or dried-on food. Run your dishwasher when it is full, but not overloaded. And don't use the "rinse hold" setting for just a few soiled dishes.

For laundry, wash full loads or use the appropriate water-level setting.

## National Infant Immunization Week April 13-19, 2003

- Immunizations are one of the most important ways parents can protect their children against serious diseases.
- Each day 11,000 babies are born who will need to be immunized against 11 vaccine preventable diseases before age two.
- We can now prevent more diseases than ever before. Because we can prevent more diseases, parents are often not aware of what it takes to fully immunize a child.
- Infants and young children are particularly vulnerable to infectious diseases; that is why it is critical that they are protected through immunization.
- Parents and caregivers need to take responsibility for their child's vaccinations. They are encouraged to become informed consumers and keep a record of each immunization.
- Immunizations are extremely safe thanks to advancements in medical research and ongoing review by doctors, researchers and public health officials. (LB)

## Child Care Providers Conference

**Saturday, April 26 • 8 a.m.–4 p.m.**  
Lancaster Extension Education Center

"Your Game Plan for a Winning Team" is the theme of this year's conference. Speakers include Jody Isernhagen, UNL; Pam Dolberg, Family Service; Pat Enevoldson, Southeast Community College; Sharon Cheney, Humorist and more.

**Cost is \$10. For a conference flyer call the extension office 441-7180 or Family Service, 441-7949.**

Preregistration is due April 15.

In-service hours will be given for this conference. (LB)

## CHARACTER COUNTS! Corner

### Understanding the Golden Rule

Treat others the way you want to be treated. It means to treat people with respect by being polite, kind and courteous. It also means to accept the differences of individuals without prejudice and to treat others with decency and show consideration by listening to them. It doesn't mean if someone insults you, you should insult him in return, because you can't fight fire with fire. It may be hard to like someone who bullies and teases, but showing them respect and kindness may help them learn how people should be treated. Be positive and treat others with dignity. (BR)

