

EXTENSION HIGHLIGHTS

4-H Embryology Web Site Named 1 of 22 "Great Web Site for Kids"

The American Library Association recently announced that the 4-H Embryology Web site (lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Embryology) was one of 22 Web sites selected for inclusion in the Association's 2003 Great Web Sites for Kids. Great Web Sites for Kids are those considered the best Web sites for ages birth to 14, outstanding in both content and conception. Selected sites demonstrate especially commendable quality that reflects and encourages young people's interests in exemplary ways.



The American Library Association's Great Web Sites for Kids selection committee represents community (public) librarians, elementary school, middle school and university librarians from across the country.

Hosted by University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County, the 4-H Embryology Web site is beginning its third successful season on the Internet. Chickens, ducks, turkeys, peacocks, quail, pheasant and Guinea fowl have hatched on EGG Cam to the delight of students and teachers who tune in to watch.

The Web site has been recently redesigned by Extension Associate Soni Cochran. Newly added resources include candling and hatching movie clips created by Extension Assistants Marty Cruickshank and Vicki Jedlicka.

Jedlicka Receives Award of Excellence

Vicki Jedlicka, Publication and Media Assistant at UNL Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County, was selected as the Commissioner's Award of Excellence winner for November 2003. The County Commissioner's Award of Excellence recognizes county employees who consistently provide outstanding service and work that demonstrates exemplary personal commitment to Lancaster County.



(L-R) Vicki Jedlicka and Gary Bergman.

She was nominated by Extension Educator and Unit Leader Gary Bergman in the area of productivity. Gary wrote, "Vicki Jedlicka is very deserving of individual recognition for the quality and quantity of her work. She exceeds expectations on a regular basis and routinely provides suggestions that enhance productivity and our agency's professional presentation of materials to the public."

Vicki's duties include monthly layout of THE NEBLINE, designing flyers, brochures and posters for educational programs, and sending news releases to the media. She has been an instructor at 4-H Clover College, teaching youth how to design posters, T-Shirts and stickers.

Grantsmanship Training Scheduled for May 3-7

The Grantsmanship Training Program will again be offered to the Lincoln community May 3-7, 2004. The intensive, "hands-on" workshop covers all aspects of researching grants, writing proposals and negotiating with funding sources.

Designed for both novice and advanced grant seekers, the program participants are given follow-up services, including expert grant proposal reviews for a full year following training. To maximize personal attention, the group size for the workshop is limited.

Since 1997, Lancaster County Extension has hosted the Grantsmanship Training Program. Approximately 120 individuals representing various Lincoln and area agencies have participated to date.

For more information and to register, as early as possible, contact The Grantsmanship Center at (800) 421-9512 or go to www.tgci.com. (GB)

Your Family's Winter Disaster Plan Can Keep You Snug and Safe!

If you knew a disaster was coming, wouldn't you make preparations to protect yourself and your family? While we may not know when the next big ice storm is coming, you can take steps to keep your family safe now. The first step is updating your family's disaster plan, learn and follow some simple winter safety rules Emergency Management Agency advises.

Family Disaster Plan

During a year, there are a lot of potential disasters that could impact your family: a Hazardous Material accident could force your family to evacuate your home; a winter storm, an earthquake or tornado could cut off basic services such as gas, water, electricity or phone service.

There are six basic types of supplies you should have packed in a special container (such as a large trash container, a backpack or a duffel bag) in case of a natural or man-made disaster. Those supplies include:

- Water — store one gallon per person per day.
- Ready to eat canned food, canned juices, high-energy

foods, vitamins, comfort foods and of course special foods for infants or family members on a special diet.

- First aid supplies including bandages, antiseptic, soap, latex gloves, non-prescription drugs such as aspirin, antacid, anti-diarrhea medication, etc.
- Clothing and bedding to include sturdy shoes, rain gear, blankets, hats, gloves, thermal underwear and sunglasses.
- Tools and emergency supplies such as: battery operated radio, flashlights, fire extinguisher, pliers, shut off wrench, matches in a water proof container, liquid soap, personal items, household chlorine bleach.
- Special items for an infant, medication for family members, books and games for entertainment and important family documents.

Winter Storm Preparations

One of the key rules is to keep ahead of the weather this winter by listening to the latest weather reports on local radio and television. In preparing for a

severe storm or blizzard, you should have the following items readily on hand at home:

- Several days supply of non-perishable food and drinking water.
- Extra blankets.
- A battery operated radio.
- A flashlight and fresh supply of batteries.
- An emergency or backup heating system.

Be sure to check for an adequate supply of heating fuel and be aware of the fire hazards posed by the prolonged use of stoves, fireplaces and space heaters.

The safest place to be during a winter storm or cold snap is indoors. Dress properly before venturing outdoors. Wear several layers of loose fitting, lightweight clothing. Outer garments should be tightly woven, water repellent and hooded.

Avoid overexertion when outdoors, including when snow shoveling. Be aware that cold weather itself, without any physical exertion, puts an extra strain on the heart.

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Use and Care of Home Humidifiers

Humidifiers are commonly used in homes to relieve the physical discomforts of dry nose, throat, lips and skin. The moisture they add to dry air also helps alleviate common nuisances brought on by winter heating, such as static electricity, peeling wallpaper and cracks in paint and furniture.

Some federal studies have shown that ultrasonic and impeller (or "cool mist") humidifiers can disperse materials, such as microorganisms and minerals, from their water tanks into indoor air.

Proper care and cleaning of ultrasonic and impeller humidifiers are important to reduce potential exposures to microorganisms, such as bacteria and molds. Microorganisms often grow in humidifiers equipped with tanks containing standing water. Breathing mist containing these pollutants has been implicated as causing a certain type of inflammation of the lungs.

The federal government has not concluded that the dispersal of minerals by home humidifiers poses a serious health risk.

However, researchers have documented that these humidifiers are very efficient at dispersing minerals in tap water into the air. In addition, some consumers are bothered by a "white dust" that may appear on surfaces during the use of these devices. Most importantly, minerals in tap water may increase the development of crusty deposits, or scale, in humidifiers. Scale can be a breeding ground for microorganisms.

Using water with lower mineral content will reduce exposures to these materials. Use bottled water labeled "distilled." While distilled water still contains some mineral content, it likely will contain lower mineral content than most tap water. Distillation is the most effective method for removing minerals from water.

It is important to use a humidifier only when conditions require it, to use the correct moisture setting for existing conditions and to clean it thoroughly. To clean, empty the tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and refill the water in portable humidifiers daily to reduce any

growth of microorganisms. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for changing water in console humidifiers. Be sure to unplug the unit from the electrical socket first.

Clean portable humidifiers every third day. Empty the tank and use a brush or other scrubber to clean it. Remove any scale, deposits, or film that has formed on the sides of the tank of interior surfaces and wipe all surfaces dry. Clean all surfaces coming in contact with water with a three percent hydrogen peroxide solution or a bleach solution of one teaspoon of bleach per gallon of water. Rinse the tank thoroughly with several changes of tap water to prevent dispersal of chemicals into the air during use.

The young, the elderly, and people with lung diseases or respiratory allergies may be particularly susceptible to certain types of airborne pollutants. Following these recommendations reduces the potential for dispersal of microorganisms and minerals from your humidifier.

SOURCE: Shirley Niemeyer, Ph.D., home environment specialist, NU/IANR (LB)

Red Letter Days

Is the University of Nebraska a choice for your education? High school seniors and parents are invited to Red Letter Days, an open house style campus visit. From 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., participants will tour campus and attend information sessions. Upcoming visitation days are Jan. 30 and Feb. 16. Go to the Web site to register: admissions.unl.edu/registeredletter.html. (GB)

Thinking of College?

Some resources which might be of help to students and parents:

- College is Possible Web site at www.CollegeIsPossible.org

Call or stop by the extension office for your free copy of the following:

- "Going to College (100 tips on Getting Ready)" brochure
- "College Spending #101" publication

Scholarship Update

Nebraska Grain Sorghum Producers Assn. \$400 scholarship for ag-related career. Application deadline: Feb. 1. Call (402) 471-3552.

Ak-Sar-Ben offers twenty \$10,000 scholarships; application deadline: Feb. 11.

Call Deanna Karmazin at 441-7180 for information on these and other scholarships available through 4-H.