

EXTENSION HIGHLIGHTS

4-H Interns Assist Extension Staff During Summer



Extension's 4-H interns (L-R) Brenda Fiala and Steve Landon

Each summer, two interns join the 4-H staff at the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County and provide much needed assistance for Clover College, the County Fair, contests, workshops and other activities as needed.

Intern Steve Landon is assisting Extension Associate Deanna Karmazin in the livestock areas. Steve is a junior at University of Nebraska-Lincoln, majoring in Diversified Agriculture. Steve grew up on a farm near Greenwood and was a very active 4-H member for 10 years, showing cattle and other projects.

Intern Brenda Fiala is assisting Extension Associate Tracy Kulm in the family and consumer science areas. Brenda grew up in Lincoln, and has been involved with Lancaster County 4-H for nearly 13 years. She was a member for nine years, participating in many projects and club activities as well as 4-H Teen Council and Citizenship Washington Focus. Since then Brenda has volunteered as a Clover College presenter and assistant and a Clover Kids judge. She graduated in May from Hastings College with a degree in elementary education. Brenda will complete her student teaching this fall in Chicago, IL. She is very excited to be working with 4-H youth this summer!

Partners in Pollution Prevention Intern Assists Businesses and Producers

The Partners in Pollution Prevention (P3) program is a 12-week program which is part of a UNL civil engineering class.

P3 intern Amanda Koelling is working at the UNL Cooperative Extension office. Amanda will assist agricultural producers with nutrient management plans

to help them prevent nutrient rich runoff that can be dangerous to water supplies. She will also visit small businesses to assess their work situations, provide research options and a detailed report on how to conserve resources. As another part of her internship, Amanda will provide public education on pollution prevention to various civic groups. She is a senior at the University of Missouri-Columbia, majoring in biological engineering.

The P3 program is in its eighth year. During the first seven years 95 program interns have worked with 229 Nebraska businesses. Based on responses from 43 business participants, following intern recommendations have the potential to each year divert 3.7 million pounds of solid waste from landfills, reduce hazardous waste by 24,500 gallons and save \$561,000. More information about the program is online at www.ianr.unl.edu/p3.



Amanda Koelling

Neighborhood Cleanups Make a Difference

Helen Mitrofanova
Extension Educator

Neighborhood cleanups are one-day events that occur in the spring, summer or fall. Cleanups allow residents to get rid of hard to dispose of items at a lower cost than what they would pay at a transfer station or other private businesses. Working together can make a difference in our neighborhoods and our city.

Your highly visible work not only will boost neighborhood pride, but help fight crime. Time and time again, in cities across our nation, neighborhood crime has dropped after cleanup and beautification efforts. A litter-free flower bed is not just a pretty sight, it is a sign of a community that cares.

Unfortunately, not everyone knows where to begin. We will provide you with the outline which you can use as guidance in organizing your neighborhood cleanup.

1. Find and Organize Volunteers

Gather your neighborhood committee and other key members of your community. At your first meeting, allocate responsibilities among your committee members. You may wish to form different subcommittees that may include the following: *location, volunteer recruitment, refreshments, publicity, site captains, etc.*

2. Choose Sites

Be realistic in choosing sites; do not expect to clean the entire community. Select one or more target areas that can be reasonably done in one day with the number of volunteers you are expecting to recruit. Appoint a site captain for each area you intend to clean.

3. Determine the Needs/Supplies

Prior to the cleanup, evaluate the condition of each site and determine any special needs. Things to look for include: types of trash (loose papers vs. garbage trapped in fences, etc.); junk cars or other large items,

which may require special equipment to move; potentially hazardous materials (chemicals, broken glass, etc.). You will need to consider the following, according to the site chosen:

- Types of tools (rakes, brooms, shovels, etc.)
- Heavy equipment (pay-loader, backhoe, etc.)
- Number of trash bags
- Gloves, maps, first aid kits

Other optional support sources you may seek include:

- Refreshments (coffee, donuts, snacks, lunches)
- Publicity (flyers and posters)
- Restroom facilities

4. Create Partnerships

You may be able to obtain the above materials by securing the cooperation of local businesses, community centers, non-profit organizations and city officials. One neighborhood group in Chicago planned a cleanup; they sought the involvement of the local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and several environmentally oriented groups whose roots were outside the community. The result: a big crowd and dramatic difference in the neighborhood appearance.

Consider cooperation with other groups, even if they are not in your neighborhood: school groups, youth organizations, fraternal organizations, ethnic societies, conservation groups, garden clubs, historical societies, labor unions and religious organizations. These organizations always are looking for activities and they can share their successful strategies with you.

5. Publicize the Event

You should contact local media to secure pre-event publicity and day-of-event coverage for the community. You may print newsletters, posters and flyers to recruit volunteers. Hanging a promotional banner over a frequently traveled road two weeks prior to the cleanup will raise interest in your community. It is important to remember to get permission from local authorities before beginning promotional efforts.

6. Planning the Cleanup Day

Secure the use of a cleanup center at or near the sites and plan set-up details. The cleanup center should be stocked with trash bags, tools, refreshments, first-aid kits and other needs. If your sites are spread out and around the neighborhood, you may wish to find a volunteer who can periodically check on all sites in a roving "supply car."

Determine where filled bags will be placed for pick-up by the municipal trucks and notify the public works department of the locations. In determining the schedule of events for the day, please consider the following:

- Registration of volunteers
- Assignment of volunteers to site captains
- Safety lecture by site captains
- Distribution of trash bags/tools
- Loading of trucks
- Lunch/refreshments after cleanup
- Entertainment

7. Follow-up

If possible, it is always nice to reward every volunteer with some small token of appreciation. You may write thank you letters to key volunteer groups and participated businesses.

In order to preserve the hard work you have done, you may wish to work with the city and community leaders to keep the neighborhood clean via litter prevention and beautification programs.

Research shows people litter for three main reasons. First, they feel no sense of ownership for a property, even a public park. Second, they think someone else will clean up after them. Third, they see litter already accumulated and think a little more will not matter. What is the message for community groups? Clean up the neighborhood and then maintain a litter-free environment with individual and group efforts and continuing community education.

Finally, enjoy a clean community!!!

Source: Based on materials from "Neighborhoods: A Resource and Reference Handbook," Keep Chicago Beautiful Project.

Meetings Scheduled to Discuss Changes to County HVAC and Plumbing Codes

The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners recently updated and adopted the Lincoln Plumbing Code and the Lincoln Heating, Ventilating and Cooling (HVAC) Code, including the licensure requirement for all persons who engage in these trades to be registered as a contractor by the City of Lincoln's Building and Safety Department. The Board has since delayed the licensing requirements until July 1, 2005, and will offer an opportunity for those who are not licensed to be grandfathered.

The County Board and Building and Safety Department will hold two informational meetings to discuss the proposed requirements for grandfathering contractors who do work in Lancaster County. These meetings are scheduled as follows:

Wednesday, July 7 at 7 p.m.

Firth Community Center, 311 Nemaha, Firth

Thursday, July 8 at 7 p.m.

Raymond Woman's Club, Main Street, Firth — across from Post Office.

A public hearing on the requirements will be held on a date to be announced. For more information, please contact Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer at 441-7447. (GB)

Host 4-H Families Wanted for International Visitors July 24-25

The Mayor's Committee for International Friendship is hosting 18 youth (ages 12 to 18), from Morocco, Lebanon and Egypt, who are participating in "The American Experience: Arab Youth Initiative," sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, Youth Programs Division. The State Department would like to have these youth spend a weekend on farms with 4-H families. We would be most pleased if we can find families who would be willing to host one or two students July 24-25 (including overnight). If you would be willing to host one or two of these students, please contact Dolores Mather at 488-4228.