

EXTENSION HIGHLIGHTS

Branson Recognized for 30 Years of Service to Lancaster County

Pam Branson, part of the support staff for UNL Cooperative Extension, was recently recognized at the annual County Employee Service Awards Luncheon for 30 years of service. County employees were recognized for milestone anniversaries of 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 and 45 years. Honorees received gift certificates to "Shop Lincoln" (redeemable at more than 200 merchants) in an amount commensurate with years of service.



(L-R) Pam Branson and Ray Stevens, chairman of Lancaster County Board of Commissioners

There was also a recognition ceremony during the County Commissioner's meeting. Chairman Ray Stevens thanked the employees for their years of loyal service to Lancaster County.

Pam says she has seen lots of changes during her 30 years. She started as support staff for the 4-H program and then supported the Agriculture/Horticulture areas. Currently she assists with the areas of Environment of the Home, Nutrition & Food Safety, Community & Leadership and Family & Community Education clubs. "The best part of working with Extension is the people — both the staff and the public," Pam says. "I really enjoy working at the County Fair and seeing the accomplishments of the youth."

Extension thanks Pam for her many — and continuing — contributions!

Hanna To Retire After 14 Years with 4-H

Extension Associate Arlene Hanna will retire in June after 14 years at UNL Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County. The public is invited to a retirement reception in her honor on Thursday, May 27, 4-6 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center.

Arlene's major responsibilities have been the 4-H School Enrichment science program and small animal 4-H projects.

More than 58 Lancaster County schools participate in 4-H School Enrichment projects which include Embryology, Garbology, Blue Sky Below My Feet, Vermicomposting and 4-H Water Riches. Embryology and Garbology are core subjects in the Lincoln Public Schools science program. Arlene led development of the Garbology curriculum and assisted with the Embryology curriculum. She also spearheaded the creation of **earth wellness festival (ewf)** (a collaboration of 11 community partners) and its yearlong school curriculum — and served as co-chair for nine of its 10 years.

Lois Mayo, science curriculum specialist at Lincoln Public Schools, says, "Arlene Hanna has made a tremendous impact on the science curriculum at LPS and more importantly, the education of students. This year alone, Arlene impacted over 7,500 students. Arlene gets things done and is a team player. She always puts students first. She is one of a kind!"

In 2003, Arlene received Ventures in Partnerships' (VIP) highest honor — a "Continuing Service Award." In 2001, VIP presented Arlene with a "Pioneer Award." In 1997, Arlene received the "Distinguished Extension Assistant" award from Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association.



Arlene Hanna explains vermicomposting (composting with worms) to second graders at Prescott Elementary.

NWT Members Identify Quality Indicators of Good Neighborhoods

Neighborhood associations in Lincoln neighborhoods adjacent to the university, as well as other interested associations, send their president or representative to the monthly Neighbors Working Together (NWT) meetings. NWT is an outreach program designed to connect UNL with community members. During these meetings neighbors share upcoming events, successes, concerns and issues they deal with in their neighborhoods.

The last NWT meeting was held April 3 at Elliot School. Participants developed a list of quality indicators of good neighborhoods. Indicators are small bits of information that reflects large system; indicators give people a sense of a bigger picture. The term indicator is derived from the Latin verb *indicare*, meaning "to point out or proclaim." Through the brainstorming process the following indicators were generated:

- Deterioration of older neighborhoods
- Small town atmosphere
- Respect for other property
- Safe environment
- Connectivity of neighborhoods
- Neighborhood spirit/enthusiasm
- Community identity
- Outreach programs/information sharing (meetings, newsletters, etc.)
- Strong relationships with city government, schools, churches, businesses, etc.
- Building partnership with Lincoln Urban Development department
- Leadership development
- Diversity
- Citizenship

This was the first meeting addressing the issue of quality indicators of good neighborhoods. The process is in its initial stage. However, the process of developing indicators is just as important as the indicators themselves. By convincing community members

to consider how to measure the overall well-being of neighborhoods, neighborhoods are stimulated to create new visions of the future, develop new working relationships across the boundaries, and define their assets and opportunities in new ways.

NWT is one of four projects in the Community Outreach Partnership Centers (COPC) program, a federally funded grant through the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. The major focus of NWT is building leadership capacity, particularly through neighborhood associations. The most important outcome is not only information sharing, but also forming of friendships and partnerships. For more information about NWT, contact Project Director Dan Wheeler at 472-4749 or dwheeler1@unl.edu. (YM)

Lincoln/Lancaster County Preparedness Fair June 12

The Lincoln/Lancaster County Preparedness Fair will be held June 12, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 3000 Old Cheney Road in Lincoln. The event is free and open to the public.

"We live in a different world than we did before September 11, 2001," says Joe M. Allbaugh, director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). "We are more aware of our vulnerabilities, more appreciative of our freedoms and more understanding that we

have a personal responsibility for the safety of our families, our neighbors and our nation.

"We know disaster preparedness works. We can take action now that will help protect our families, reduce the impact an emergency has on our lives and deal with the chaos if an incident occurs near us. We know disaster can strike at any time. We all have a personal responsibility to be ready."

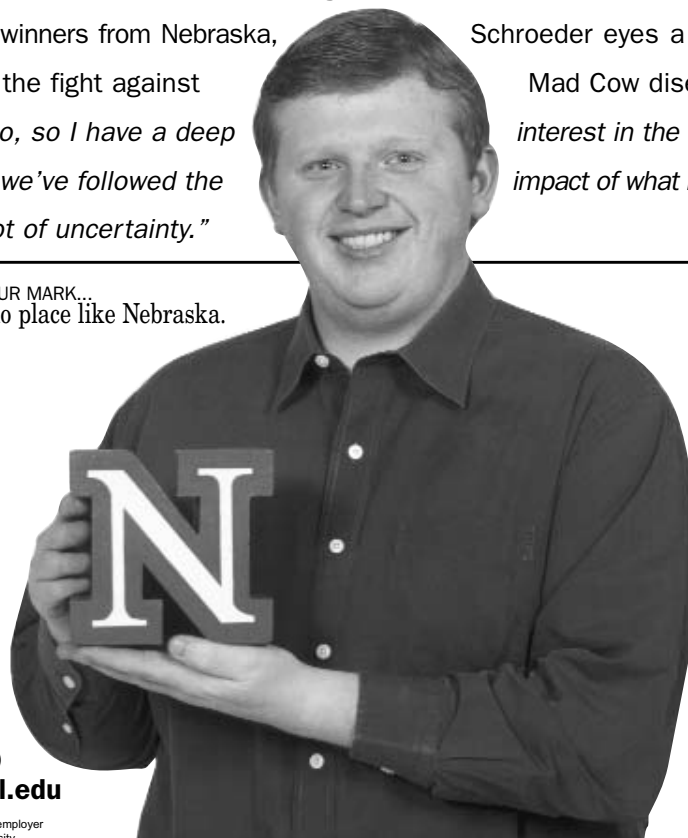
You will learn what governmental agencies and local organizations can and will do during emergency situations, as

well as, what you personally can do to be prepared and lessen the impact on your family and friends should a disaster strike. Information will be available regarding local resources that can help you become more personally prepared. You can also learn what happens with services such as banking, food supplies, animal control and insurance when a disaster hits. Participants will also learn how to assemble a 72 hour emergency kit and long term food, water and fuel storage. (LB)

This Nebraska student fights for homeland security on the food science front.

DAVID LEE SCHROEDER of West Point, Nebraska, a food science and technology and agribusiness double major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, was one of just 101 students nationally to receive a prestigious Homeland Security Scholarship. One of two scholarship winners from Nebraska, Schroeder eyes a possible internship focused on the fight against Mad Cow disease. "I am a cattle producer too, so I have a deep interest in the (Mad Cow) situation. In classes, we've followed the impact of what happened in Canada. There's a lot of uncertainty."

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Pick Up a Lancaster County Fair Book

The Lancaster County Fair (held Aug. 4-8 at the Lancaster Event Center) invites YOU to enter an exhibit or participate in a contest! The 2004 Fair Book includes all the information needed. Open Class exhibits and contests are open to ages 6 and up. Fair Books are available at the Lancaster Event Center, the extension office, Lincoln libraries, village banks & post offices and other locations. It is also available online at www.lancastereventcenter.com/fair.html and at lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Fair.