



by Lorene Bartos, UNL Extension Educator

## Rise and Shine with Clean Bed Linens

**Comforters, quilts and mattress pads** — Check the care labels. Some can be laundered at home, while others require dry cleaning. Queen- or king-size comforters can be quite bulky. Some large capacity or front loading high-efficiency washers and dryers may be able to accommodate this bulk. But regular size washers/dryers may not be large enough. In this case, look for a laundromat that has large-capacity machines. For washables, pre-treat heavily soiled areas with a pre-wash product. For in-home drying, toss a few white tennis balls or dry, clean towels in with your comforter or mattress pad. This will help keep the filling from clumping up.

**Blankets** — Although most blankets are washable, check the care labels to be sure. Follow the recommended instructions for water temperature and wash cycle. Read the label to determine the best method for washing and drying your electric blanket.

**Sheets** — Check the linen closet for sheets that have migrated to the back of the shelves. If they haven't been used for many months, wash them to remove dust.

**Pillows** — Read and follow care label instructions. Wash two pillows at a time, agitating only one or two minutes on a gentle cycle. Machine dry. During the drying cycle, periodically take them out and fluff them to prevent clumping and to promote even drying.

## Staying Clean All Winter

With the shorter, colder days of winter come added time spent indoors; extra jackets, blankets and comforters; and snow or mud tracked indoors. Here are some tips to help keep your home clean all winter:

- Encourage family members to leave their shoes at the door. You might consider placing a box or special mat by the door to help catch melting snow from shoe and boot soles.
- If you have pets that venture outdoors, consider keeping a towel by the door to give pets a quick rubdown — especially paws — before letting them back in the house.
- Place throw-rugs in high-traffic areas — even over other carpets — to keep wall-to-wall carpets from aging prematurely and make quick-cleaning as easy as shaking out a rug.
- Carpet and upholstery cleaners can help save carpets and furniture! Most winter stains from snow or mud are easy to clean, but be sure to read the cleaning label carefully and follow directions closely. Using the wrong cleaner can ruin fabrics.
- Sand and grit tracked into the house can scratch tile floors. Regular cleaning will help keep kitchen and bathroom floors safe and clean.
- Vacuum upholstery regularly to catch small soil and food particles before they work their way into fabrics.
- Keep jackets, blankets and comforters clean all winter by washing them once a month.
- Since winter is “cold and flu season,” keep a steady supply of hand soap at every sink. Encourage regular hand washing.

Source: Soap and Detergent Association

## Rules for a Better World in 2006

Did you ever stop to think how much better the whole world would be if we:

- Always finished the jobs we started
- Kept our promises
- Rejoiced in another's good fortune
- Respected others' feelings
- Tried to be fair
- Helped willingly when necessary
- Refused to enjoy ourselves at another's expense
- Steered clear of untruths and deceit
- Avoided tattletales and gossips
- Always strived to see the good in everyone
- Overlooked petty troubles or imagined slights
- Always remembered the golden rule and tried to “do unto others as we would have them do unto us.”

## FAMILY & COMMUNITY EDUCATION (FCE) CLUBS

### President's Notes — Janet's Jargon

**Janet Broer**  
FCE Council Chair



This year Erich and I rang in the new year with four grandchildren celebrating (staying) at our house for six days. Their parents had gone to the exciting Alamo Bowl. Two other grandkids who live close by joined us frequently, too. A special award should go to the neighborhood couple who stopped by for a holiday drink on New Year's Eve, as the front door entryway was a dramatic stage for My Little Pony activities. When the

parents returned to reclaim the children, a six-year-old grandson announced to me we were no longer the “boss in charge” of him and the five-year-old wanted to spend another night with us!

It is with great sadness I tell you Judy Chapman died very unexpectedly on Nov. 29. I extend sympathies from all FCE members to her son Edward and his family. She is deeply missed as a friend, co-worker and FCE member.

The last two years have

been most rewarding for me in growth of friendships, skills and duties (such as a timetable to write monthly newsletters) and knowledge of community affairs. I am delighted I have had this experience and I encourage each of you to grow a little more in these areas. The extension staff offers lots of help and you can't



fail; I strongly urge you to consider a county office to support this wonderful group of homemakers. You are essential to keep our families strong.

## FCE News & Events

### Upcoming Leader Training Lessons

Here is the schedule for this year's community and FCE leader training lessons. All lessons will be presented at 1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road in Lincoln. Non-FCE members or groups should call Pam at 441-7180 to register for these lessons so materials can be prepared for your organization.

- **Jan. 26 — Embracing Entrepreneurship: New Economic Power for Your Community.** UNL Extension

Education Lorene Bartos will present this lesson. It includes a discussion of what is meant by the term “entrepreneur,” the significant contributions entrepreneurs make to national/state/local economics, problems faced by entrepreneurs when starting new businesses, identifying local entrepreneurs and finally, ways communities can be supportive of budding entrepreneurs. A list of agencies supporting entrepreneurs will be provided in this program.

- **Feb. 23 — Health of Children.** UNL Extension

Educators Alice Henneman (a registered dietitian) and Lorene Bartos will present this lesson. Focus will be on helping Nebraska children and their families develop basic skills in food preparation in order to plan and make healthy meals and snacks; adopt a family physical activity plan and develop a positive and healthy self-esteem for the entire family. Whether you are a parent, grandparent or family friend, this program will help you better support the health of children.

## Make Valentine's Day a Celebration of Family Love

The count down to Valentine's Day is on with stores full of candy, flowers, cards and gifts. This year begin making it a family tradition to celebrate the day together. Make Valentine's Day a day to show your family/friends how much you love them and encourage them to do the same.

Prior to Valentine's Day, sit down as a family and brainstorm ways to show each other how much you care without spending a lot of money. The following are a few suggestions for a variety of ages:

- Cut plain white paper to fit around a flat chocolate candy bar, decorate the paper or write a message on it, wrap the paper around the candy bar and glue it in place.
- Crispy Kisses: Make a batch of Rice Krispie treats and scoop the warm mixture into a lightly greased four-ounce funnel, will look like a large Hershey Kiss. After it cools, wrap it with aluminum foil and add a paper tag with personalized message.
- Arrange a time to do something special with each family member during the week of Valentine's Day. For example:

a young child may chose to make a special craft or bake heart shaped cookies or a teenage may enjoy going to the local gym and shooting baskets with the family. Whatever the activity, it is important to provide an opportunity to spend quality time together.

- Put a special Valentine's treat in your family members lunch. For example: make a sandwich in the shape of a heart or put their favorite candy in their lunch bag with a note of encouragement.

Whatever you decide to do, telling the person how much you care is what really matters!

The following activities can be done as a family on Valentine's Day:

- To start the day, make and serve heart-shaped pancakes. Use a squeeze bottle to draw a heart shape on the griddle or make a regular round pancake and cut a heart using a heart-shaped cookie cutter. Top the pancakes with special toppings, berries, whip cream etc.
- Plan a family dinner with all the trimmings. Decorate with ribbon down the center of the table; lay cut

out hearts around; and use your very best plates, napkins and candles. Leave a special Valentine's letter, you have written, at each family member's seat. The following are a few suggestions for your special menu:

- Heart shaped pizza
- Spaghetti with heart-shaped meatballs (spread the meat out on waxed paper, about a fourth-inch thick and cut with a cookie cutter)
- Make a special dessert, such as raspberry tarts, a heart-shaped cake decorated with candy hearts
- Following supper, spend the evening as a family. If you have your wedding on video, watch it together or look through your wedding album with your children. It is important children see their parents love each other and how important their marriage is to the entire family. This not only provides a strong foundation for the family but it also models positive behaviors.

Whatever you plan for Valentine's Day, please remember “home is where the heart is!”