

FAMILY & COMMUNITY EDUCATION (FCE) CLUBS

Presidents' Notes—Bonnie's Bits

Bonnie Krueger
FCE Council Chair



November is a big month for changes. First, on Nov. 2 we will be turning our clocks back. Next be sure and get out and VOTE on Nov. 4.

Veterans Day is Nov. 11. Some may think Veterans Day commemorates great victories or honors great war heroes but it is more than that... it honors the millions of Americans who served their

country when asked and thousands who died. As we celebrate Veterans Day, keep in mind the enormous debt we owe to the veterans of this nation.

When was Thanksgiving first proclaimed an annual national holiday? Despite singular proclamations for days of thanksgiving by George Washington, John Adams and

James Madison, it was not until the middle of the Civil War when Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday of November 1863 to be a day of national thanksgiving. Since then, Thanksgiving has been observed annually.

In December, the year is ending and a new year will soon begin.

May you all have a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Hope to see you all at Achievement Night, Oct. 27.



FCE News & Events

Achievement Night

The 2008 FCE Achievement Night will be Monday, Oct. 27, starting with dessert at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is asked to bring canned food or paper products for the annual FCE Food

Bank Campaign. Gloria Hall of Palmyra will present a program "Gramma's Aprons." Clubs and members will be recognized for years of membership. Call the extension office, 441-7180 and leave your name at the front desk, if you plan to attend.

Skip the "Humbug!" 10 Tips to Relieve Holiday Stress

Few families will match the idyllic images captured in holiday advertisements, but most can find joy in the holiday season and after.

Charlotte Olsen, specialist with Kansas State University Research and Extension, encourages everyone to extend the thankfulness typically associated with Thanksgiving celebrations throughout the holiday season—and into the new year.

"Feeling grateful for home, family, friends and life in general spills over into other activities and to others who sense your gratitude," Olsen said. Gratitude itself can have a calming influence.

"A little planning can go a long way in relieving family stress—and holiday stresses," said Olsen, who offered the following time- and stress-management tips:

- Start early to plan family and other gatherings.
- Involve others, so everyone will be informed. Surprises can add stress unnecessarily.
- Be responsible. If the family is planning a potluck and you promised to bring the main dish, be on time, with enough food to serve everyone expected.
- Ask adult children what they would like to bring, rather than making arbitrary assignments. Let's face it—a daughter-in-law may enjoy making fruit salad, but not piecrust.
- Explain house rules to children.
- Leave disciplining others' children to the children's parents.
- Plan age-appropriate activities, such as soccer or touch football, table or board games.
- Keep the peace—try not to

bring up touchy topics.

- Don't overstay—everyone needs his or her own space and time for self.
- No family nearby? Call a local chamber of commerce or community service organization and volunteer to help serve a community dinner or give time to a food or toy drive.

"Focus on others, rather than yourself," said Olsen, who suggested inviting others to join in a potluck, watch a movie or sports event to share the day.

"Calling family and friends can help those who are alone stay connected," she said.

And, if you like and can treat yourself to an afternoon off, new book, video or craft project. The dog might like an extra walk, too.

Source: Charlotte Shoup Olsen, Kansas State University Extension

Holiday Spending Tips

Unplanned and impulsive holiday spending can be the final straw that breaks a family's financial back. Here are some money management tips for a peaceful holiday season:

- **Decide before you go shopping what you can afford to spend.** Be sure everyone in the family understands the money limit and how far the total amount has to stretch.
- **Consider gifts of service.** Give coupons for babysitting, a meal, housecleaning, lawn moving or other such tasks.
- **Think green when making your holiday lists.** Use towels, grocery sacks or newspaper to wrap

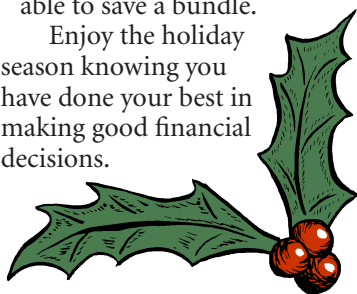
gifts. Reuse gift bags and boxes.

- **Keep track of holiday spending,** especially if you are using credit cards and accounts to delay bills. One idea is to wrap a card around each credit card and note what is purchased, the date and amount. This also works well for debit cards. Try keeping a "running" total figure so you'll know at a glance just what's owed on a particular account. Another idea is to use a small notebook to help you keep tabs on your credit and debit use.
- **Use "cheap money" sparingly.** Deferred payment accounts which let you wait until February

or March before payments begin may be an incentive for you to spend more than you normally would or have. Keep your head, February and March always comes faster than you expect.

- **Take a chance the items which normally go on sale** just before the holidays will still be available in the eleventh hour and you'll be able to save a bundle.

Enjoy the holiday season knowing you have done your best in making good financial decisions.



by Lorene Bartos, UNL Extension Educator

Keep Kitchen and Bathroom Clean During Guest Season

Extra bathroom and kitchen traffic means extra work to keep surfaces and appliances clean and smelling fresh. Here are some tips to make your kitchen and bathroom welcoming during the holidays.

Kitchen:

- Keep disinfectant wipes or sprays handy to quickly clean counter tops, cutting boards, the microwave and the stove top.
- Keep handwashing soap at the kitchen sink.
- Either replace cloth hand towels regularly or stock up on paper towels.
- Give the kitchen a quick sweep as a final clean-up step after each meal.
- Keep the sink clear by scrubbing pots as you go rather than facing a sink full of dishes after you eat.

Bathroom:

- Rinse the tub after each use to keep soap film and hard water deposits from forming. Mist surfaces with a spray cleaner right after use while the walls are wet and warm and you can skip rinsing, wiping and scrubbing.
- Leave shower curtains/doors open after showers to let the tub and surfaces air-dry and help prevent mildew.
- Use toilet bowl cleaners in tablet or gel form to keep your toilet bowl clean.
- Spray window treatments with fabric refreshers to help keep them looking and smelling fresh.

Housecleaning Ergonomics

How to Clean the House Safely

Injuries are no stranger to those involved in sports, but did you know you can be at risk of injury from everyday activities such as cleaning your house? You can get tennis elbow without ever lobbing a ball!

But elbows aren't the only body parts at risk. Improper or overuse of muscles and tendons in the fingers, hands, arms, shoulders, neck and back, as well as repeated movements and awkward postures, can cause fatigue and strain that may permanently damage soft tissues. These aches and pains, known as Repetitive Strain Injury or Cumulative Trauma Disorder, can require medical attention. Twisting to clean in areas behind hard-to-reach pipes, straining to dust a light fixture out of arm's reach or leaning on both knees while you clean the tub can cause body aches.

Some common mistakes people make when cleaning house and some suggestions for avoiding new injuries and minimizing flare-ups of existing ones are

Bending Basics—When housecleaning, bending is almost like breathing—most of us don't even give it a thought! We bend to pick up cleaning supplies or bend to clean in corners and crannies. If you are in the habit of hunching your shoulders and bending over from the waist, you are a candidate for back strain. To help avoid this, bend at your knees and keep a hollow in your back. Practice this bending technique until it becomes second nature.

Knee Knowledge—If a task like scrubbing the floor or cleaning the tub calls for getting down on your knees, don't put pressure on both knees at the same time. Instead, kneel on one knee and then switch to the other one every minute. Alternating knees will minimize and disperse the pressure.

Reach Right—Reaching farther than your full arm extension can put strain on both your shoulders and your spine. Use a sturdy stool or stepladder so you don't hyper-extend your back. Use cleaning and dusting products including wands or poles that extend your reach.

Lift Light—Whether you're picking up the laundry basket or the cleaning bucket, bend from the knees and keep the back straight as you lift straight up. To help avoid back strain, keep the load close to your body. If the load is heavy or awkward, don't lift it by yourself—get a buddy to help.

Take Stretch Breaks—Whether you're scrubbing the floor or folding laundry, stand up and gently stretch your body several times an hour. Your spinal column is surrounded by fluid containing nutrients. Each time you move your spine, those cells receive much-needed nutrients that will help prevent stiffening.