

## Make a Cornucopia From the Garden



Mary Jane Frogge, Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County

**Mary Jane Frogge**  
Extension Associate

Decorate for the fall season with a cornucopia filled with materials collected from your garden and landscape. Start with a horn shaped basket available at most craft stores. From the garden, collect pumpkins, winter squash, ornamental corn

and gourds. From the orchard, collect apples and pears. From the landscape, collect pinecones, acorns, ornamental grasses, tree and shrub leaves with fall color. Perennial flowers like tall sedum and goldenrod can be used fresh or hang dried. Perennial plants with unique or colorful pods include Oriental poppy and Chinese lanterns.

Enjoy your display through

the fall, then when the snow begins to fall, turn it into a winter decoration. Collect greenery from pines, spruce, arborvitae, junipers and fir trees. Add red apples and cranberries. Red and white roses or carnations will complete your winter arrangement. Fancy up the pinecones by dipping them in white, silver or gold paint. Have fun, be creative and enjoy!

### 2018 Training for New Master Gardener Volunteers in Lancaster County Begins in February. Please Join Us!

- Do you want to learn more about vegetable gardening and landscaping?
- Do you have a passion for tree planting?
- Do you enjoy volunteering and sharing your knowledge with others?
- Master Gardener volunteers serve an important role to extend horticulture education and outreach from Nebraska Extension.

For more information, contact Mary Jane Frogge at 402-441-7180 or apply online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/mastergardener>



## GARDEN GUIDE

### THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

Mary Jane Frogge, Extension Associate

Start reviewing your garden notes to help with next year's plans.

Clean power tools of all plant material and dirt. Replace worn spark plugs, oil all necessary parts and sharpen blades. Store all tools in their proper place indoors, never outdoors where they will rust over the winter.

Check fruits, vegetables, corms and tubers you have in storage. Sort out any that show signs of rot and dispose of them.

Minimize traffic on a frozen lawn to reduce winter damage.

November and December is a good time to inspect trees and shrubs for bagworm capsules. Remove and destroy them to reduce next year's pest population.

A home weather station that includes a minimum-maximum thermometer, a rain gauge and a weather log is a good gift for a gardener.

Remove all mummified fruit from fruit trees and rake up and destroy those on the ground. Also, rake and dispose of apple and cherry leaves. Good sanitation practices reduce insects and diseases the following season.

Be sure not to store apples or pears with vegetables. The fruits give off ethylene gas which speeds up the breakdown of vegetables and will cause them to develop off-flavors.

African violets do well when potted in small pots. A good general rule is to use a pot one-third the diameter of the plant. Encourage African violets to bloom by giving them plenty of light. They can be in a south window during dark winter months. They bloom beautifully under fluorescent lights.

Clean and fix all hand tools. Repaint handles or identification marks that have faded over the summer. Sharpen all blades and remove any rust.

After the ground freezes, mulch small fruit plants such as strawberries — 1 inch of straw or leaves is ideal for strawberries.

Order seed catalogs now for garden planning in January. For variety, consider companies that specialize in old and rare varieties or wild flowers.

## Teaching Children Gratitude & Kindness

**Jaci Foged**

Extension Educator

The holiday season is upon us, and with the end of the year comes family visits, irregular schedules, lots of snacks, goodies and presents. In these times of celebration and giving, adults might wonder how they can support children with the concepts of gratitude and kindness.

Merriam-Webster defines gratitude as the state of being grateful; thankful. And, kindness as the quality or state of being kind, treating people with kindness and respect.

### Understanding Emotions

Preschool children can easily identify basic emotions associated with facial expressions. These emotions include: happy, mad and sad. However, it is not until about 7 years of age when children are able to identify the more complex emotions such as gratitude, pride or jealousy. In addition, children's understanding of these complex emotions continues to increase through their teenage years.

I am sure at some point in time, you have asked a child to say "I'm sorry" when they hit another child or knocked down a friend's block tower. If the young child had a good understanding of emotions and the ability to see the perspective of others,

they might actually feel they are sorry. If they did not, as most young children don't, they would merely be echoing the words.

You, like me, want to raise kind, compassionate children. Children who willingly, and at the right time, offer up a hug or a "sorry" all by themselves. So, how can adults help young children learn about gratitude and kindness?

### Three Ways to Support Young Children

**Help your child name emotions** — Help children to talk about their feelings and give them names. For example, "Your sister started Kindergarten today and you are sad. You miss your sister." Labeling your child's emotions helps your children to develop a vocabulary for talking about their feelings, and eventually other people's feelings too. Books are a great choice to help children learn about different emotions. Some of my favorites include *Glad Monster, Sad Monster, The Way I Feel and The Rainbow Fish*. When possible, try to relate the story back to your child. When reading *The Rainbow Fish*, you might say, "I bet the little blue fish was so sad after the rainbow fish said he wouldn't share one of his scales. Do you remember how sad you were yesterday when you dropped your ice cream cone on the ground? You started to cry, and I picked you up and held you

before we cleaned the ice cream up together. I bet the little blue fish was so sad, he swam away to cry too."

**Give back to others** — It is helpful to plan activities throughout the year where you facilitate kindness with others. This could be as simple as cleaning out your child's toy chest and talking with them about giving the toys to children who might not have any. Last year, our 4-H club leader facilitated a project for the group to make ornaments for our local care center. The project did not stop with the homemade gift. Each family was also asked to prepare cookies to deliver along with the ornaments and spend time talking with the elders at the care center. At first, the children were a little nervous to talk with the elders, but with time, they warmed up and enjoyed sharing in the elder's stories.

**Show that you care — be specific** — Spread kindness through specific praise. In one of my workshops, we were discussing the concept of delivering specific praise to children when they do something good. Sometimes we are stuck in a rut where we simply tell children (and adults too) "Good job" rather than something more specific such as "good job hanging your coat up." If we want children to display this good behavior again, then we need to ensure we are specific when it comes to delivering the message.

### Rethink the Gift

Many of you have probably already been out shopping for the perfect gift for your loved ones. Sometimes the best gifts are the ones given from the heart. Some of my favorite gifts (given and received) teach children about gratitude and sharing kindness with others. In my 12 years of being a mom, I have received several gifts of coupon books that were good for "free hugs, folding laundry, doing the dishes, etc."

One year, my youngest daughter did not fully realize it was her dad's birthday until the moment we decided to give him his gifts to open. She whispered that I needed

to wait and she went straight to her room and quickly drew and colored him a beautiful mosaic picture on a simple 3" x 5" note-card and wrote "I love you dad" on the back. Naturally, her father was beaming when he realized she quickly made this gift for him just so she had something personal to give him. The best part was not even the present; it was the smile on our daughter's face that showed us she knew she made a difference.



Hand-drawn mosaic picture as a birthday gift

### Upcoming Learning Child Trainings

Nebraska Extension teaches several early childhood development classes for child care providers. Listed are upcoming classes held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road (unless location otherwise noted). For additional information or to sign up, contact Jaci Foged at [jfoged2@unl.edu](mailto:jfoged2@unl.edu) or 402-441-7180.

**CPR/AED and First Aid Training** — Saturday, Nov. 4, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Open to anyone. \$40 per person.

**Nutrition & Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC)** — Tuesday, Nov. 7 and Tuesday, Nov. 14, 12:30-3:30 p.m. (must attend both dates). Free. Register by Nov. 1 at <http://go.unl.edu/novnapsacc>