

FUN News

for

People, Recognition, Enthusiasm, Communication

Panhandle District Monthly News

Volume 3 Number 1

January, 2008

Greetings for 2008!

I personally am wondering where time is flying to. Just yesterday I thought we were ringing in the new millennium and now here it is 2008. I'm looking forward to what this new year will bring and hope you are facing the new year with the same enthusiasm. We've got many things going in our programming year. I'm just now getting 2007 accomplishments and 2008 goals pulled together and I have to tell you, "What an impressive effort comes from this unit!"

The District Newsletter was a hit a couple of years ago and helped all of us get to know each other a little better. Thanks to the efforts of those who are working on this, you will have continued opportunity this year to send us your news, stay in touch, and celebrate our successes together.

This is a good time for me to get in the "balance" talk. I believe each of us works better when we keep our lives in perspective and in balance with things we need to do on a personal level. I'm not the best at scheduling vacation time in advance (we tend to go at the last minute too often) but that is on my change list this year. In fact, the Boeckner household is getting their calendars together very soon to plan a special trip this summer. What will you do to plan time off this year and enjoy another side of life?

Linda

Out with the Old ... In with the New

The New Year is here . . .
the Old Newsletter is back!!

It is amazing how fast a year and a half can zip by. If you were keeping track, that is how long it's been since you received the last FUN PREC Newsletter. Many have expressed how much they have missed reading this, so we are starting again to "share the news".

Some of the old headlines will return, along with some new ones. News articles and suggestions for improving the newsletter are always welcomed. Email your news or ideas to Sharon Holman at sholman1@unl.edu.

Past issues of the PREC Newsletter (Jan-Dec 2005 and Jan-July 2006) will be archived on the newly developed (and under construction) Panhandle Staff web page at www.panhandle.unl.edu/staff/staff.htm. You will need to bookmark this website since it cannot be accessed from our main web page. It has restricted access, which means staff will be asked to provide a username and password. Type phrec (all lower case) in both places. Besides the past and present newsletters, you will find many useful Panhandle and UNL resources and information on this web page. Please take a look and provide any ideas or suggestions for this web page to Dave Ostdiek (dostdiek4@unl.edu) or Sharon Holman (sholman1@unl.edu).

2006-2007 Highlights

Service Awards were presented to Panhandle District Employees in October at the 2007 Fall Conference.



Tom Holman - 20 yrs.



John Smith - 25 yrs.

Susan Harvey received her Masters of Science degree in Entomology in December, 2006 from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Congratulations!!



Thirty-four support staff from the Panhandle District had the privilege of attending a three-day 7-Habits for Highly Effective People workshop in January, 2007. Thanks to the Panhandle District specialists', educators' and assistants' for allowing their support staff to participate in this great workshop. A reunion for this group is being discussed.

IANR Outstanding Employee Award



Jim Margheim received the IANR Outstanding Employee Award - November/December 2006



Lori Howlett received the IANR Outstanding Employee Award - June 2007

Along with these, many other important events took place in 2006-2007 in the Panhandle District. Feel free to send that information to sholman1@unl.edu to be included in future newsletters.

Happy Birthday!

We would like to have some fun and recognize everyone's birthday throughout the year. Only names and days will be listed in the newsletter (no years or ages). Each month the "birthday people" will be listed in the newsletter and then on the "third Tuesday" of each month we will have a "birthday party" in the break room at 10:00 am. The "birthday people" are invited to bring treats to share so we can all help celebrate your special day!

Please email Sharon Holman - sholman1@unl.edu and give her your birthday (month and day only). If you do not want your birthday listed, please indicate that to Sharon as well. This will give the necessary permission to appropriately recognize and extend a special birthday wish. Who knows - there may be a fellow employee born on the same day!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

to all of you with a birthday in January.

Sorry this may be a belated wish for some of you!

Because the "third Tuesday in January" has come and gone, we will move "the party" to the fourth Tuesday. If you have a birthday in January, you can bring your treats next week on Tuesday to celebrate your birthday.



Don't Just Survive - Thrive!

Increasingly, the sense of control is getting more elusive -- meetings, interruptions, deadlines, computer problems, staffing issues, information overload, travel schedules, towering files, unrelenting emails - we face a merciless toll of demands on our time. Effective time management has become an urgent priority for both workplace performance and personal sanity.

Author Unknown

Making life faster does not make it better. Enjoy the opportunity to savor each moment, each encounter, each experience.

Ralph Marston

Employee in the Know



Erin Sturdivant
UNL Extension - Scotts Bluff County
Administrative Assistant

My name is Erin Sturdivant, formerly Erin Mecklem. I recently was married to Eric Sturdivant. We were married in a Nevada State Park called Valley of Fire, this past September. We then took a trip to Alaska to enjoy the outdoors where we kayaked, fished and went on a zip line. We are currently now living in Torrington, Wyoming. My husband runs the Bloedorn Lumber store in town and keeps very busy. Also as an addition to my family my husband had a son who is now our son. Tater is full of energy and keeps us both on our toes. He is all boy and is the joy in our lives.

I grew up right here in the Nebraska panhandle. I went to school in Morrill and then continued on to Lincoln at the University and to get my degree in AgBusiness/AgEconomics with a minor in Animal Science.



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Emily Erdman
UNL Extension - Scotts Bluff County
Receptionist/Secretary

Most of you have either spoken with me over the phone or have met me at the office. I have been the Scottsbluff County Extension Receptionist for 2 years now!!!! I am married to Craig Erdman from Bayard.

Craig and I have 2 children; Pheobe, our cat, and Phog, our dog. Pheobe came to live with us shortly after we were married. She was used to being the only child until after a long day at the county fair last summer, we came home with Phog. I think Pheobe has hated us ever since. Craig and the "children" and I live in

Scottsbluff. Since we live between his parents in Bayard and my parents in Yoder, Wyoming, it makes it easy for us to visit both sides of the family whenever we want. I'm also beginning my second year of piano lessons. I'm looking for a marathon to run so I can keep myself in the running discipline.



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Alina Surber
NEP Assistant Educator
Scotts Bluff and Morrill Counties

I grew up in Peru, Nebraska and graduated from Auburn High School in 2003. I then attended Wayne State College from August of 2003 until December of 2007, when I graduated with a degree in Family and Consumer Sciences Education and Foods & Nutrition. Ryan and I got married this past summer. We moved to Scottsbluff in December from Wayne, Nebraska. I enjoy cooking, camping, jogging, traveling and being with friends and family.



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Remember to share your news!!

Please send to: sholman1@unl.edu

Get your walking shoes out and dust off the pedometers. Registration is now and the program runs from February 1 to May 1, 2008. N-Lighten Nebraska is a team wellness program focused on healthy activity and eating. Teams of 2-10 people can participate. Adult teams may enter in the weight loss, basic activity or advanced activity divisions. There are several giveaway prizes associated with this program plus every entrant will receive a T-shirt and will have free entry in the Cornhusker State Games Volkswalk in July. University of Nebraska Extension has been a partner with the Nebraska Sports Council since the inception of the N-Lighten Nebraska program 5 years ago, and has provided the nutrition tips that are part of the program. In 2006 the team from the Panhandle Center earned the honor of being the top place finisher in Scotts Bluff County. Get Ready, Set and Go for N-Lighten Nebraska. Debra Underhill is coordinating this year's event for the Panhandle Research & Extension Center - contact her at dunderhi@unlnotes.unl.edu or 308-632-1316 for more information or to register with the PREC team.



New Year Trivia

1. The celebration of the new year is the oldest of all holidays. Where and when was the first celebration held?
2. Where did the tradition of making New Year resolutions start?
3. Where did the tradition of using a baby to signify the new year begin?
4. What is the song that is heard on the stroke of midnight on January 1 each year?
5. The Chinese New Year falls at the time of the first full moon after the sun enters Aquarius (late January through mid-February). The Chinese will celebrate 2008 as the Year of the _____?
6. What are some traditional New Year foods, which are thought to bring good luck if eaten on New Year's Day?



A 92-year-old, petite, well-poised and proud man, who is fully dressed each morning by eight o'clock, with his hair fashionably coifed and shaved perfectly, even though he is legally blind, moved to a nursing home today. His wife of 70 years recently passed away, making the move necessary.

After many hours of waiting patiently in the lobby of the nursing home, he smiled sweetly when told his room was ready. As he maneuvered his walker to the elevator, I provided a visual description of his tiny room, including the eyelet sheets that had been hung on his window.

"I love it," he stated with the enthusiasm of an eight-year-old having just been presented with a new puppy.

"Mr. Jones, you haven't seen the room; just wait."

"That doesn't have anything to do with it," he replied.

"Happiness is something you decide on ahead of time. Whether I like my room or not doesn't depend on how the furniture is arranged ... it's how I arrange my mind. I already decided to love it. It's a decision I make every morning when I wake up. I have a choice; I can spend the day in bed recounting the difficulty I have with the parts of my body that no longer work, or get out of bed and be thankful for the ones that do.

Each day is a gift, and as long as my eyes open, I'll focus on the new day and all the happy memories I've stored away. Just for this time in my life. Old age is like a bank account. You withdraw from what you've put in.

So, my advice to you would be to deposit a lot of happiness in the bank account of memories!

"Remember the five simple rules to be happy:

1. Free your heart from hatred.
2. Free your mind from worries.
3. Live simply.
4. Give more.
5. Expect less.

Author Unknown



What's Cooking?

Our guest chef this month is Bob Harveson. For those of you who may not know, Bob is quite a cook. He is always bringing some great smelling dish for lunch. This is the recipe that he serves for Super Bowl parties.

Jambalaya
Bob Harveson

2 T. vegetable oil
3-4 lb. chopped chicken (breasts and/or pieces or 1 whole cut-up chicken)
4 c. chopped onion
3/4 c. sliced onion
1-2 stalks celery, chopped
1 bell pepper, chopped (to taste)
5-6 cloves garlic (or to taste)
3 T. minced parsley
½ c. ham*
1 lb lean pork*
6 smoked sausages, sliced ½ inch thick**
3-4 t. salt
1 t. black pepper
½ t. cayenne pepper
½ T. Chili powder
2-3 crushed bay leaves
½ t dried thyme
1/4 t/. ground clove
1 t. dried basil
1/4 t. mace or nutmeg
1 ½ c. long grain white rice
3 c. water

* Optional - I use whatever may be in the freezer or refrigerator. This recipe is good for cleaning out your refrigerator.

** I use one package of smoked sausage (such as Hillshire Farms).

Brown chicken parts in oil and remove from heat. Cook vegetables, parsley, ham and pork on medium heat for 15 minutes or until meat is browned. Add sausage and seasonings and continue cooking and stirring for 5 minutes more. Then add the chicken, rice and water. Mix gently. Bring to a boil, cover pot and turn the heat to very low. Cook for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Raise heat to medium and uncover the pot during the last 10 minutes. Stir gently as rice dries out. Place into bowls and add 2-3 spoonfuls of black beans (cooked with garlic and bacon).

Serves 4 Texans or 8-10 other people.

New Year Trivia Answers

1. It was first observed in ancient Babylon about 4000 years ago. In the years around 2000 BC, the Babylonian New Year began with the first New Moon (actually the first visible crescent) after the Vernal Equinox (first day of spring).

2. That tradition also dates back to the early Babylonians. Popular modern resolutions might include the promise to lose weight or quit smoking. The early Babylonian's most popular resolution was to return borrowed farm equipment.

3. The tradition of using a baby to signify the new year began in Greece around 600 BC. The use of an image of a baby with a New Year's banner as a symbolic representation of the new year was brought to early America by the Germans.

4. "Auld Lang Syne" is sung at the stroke of midnight in almost every English-speaking country in the world to bring in the new year. At least partially written by Robert Burns in the 1700's, it was first published in 1796 after Burns' death. Early variations of the song were sung prior to 1700 and inspired Burns to produce the modern rendition. An old Scotch tune, "Auld Lang Syne" literally means "old long ago," or simply, "the good old days."

5. 2008 is the Year of the Rat and begins on February 7, 2008 and ends on January 25, 2009. This is the first year in the cycle of 12 animal signs. In China, people born in a Rat Year (1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996) are considered to be courageous and enterprising. They are clever and bright, sociable and family-minded. They have broad interests and strong ability in adapting to the environment and able to react adequately to any changes. They are gifted in many ways and have an easy going manner. They are active and pleasant, tactful and fantastic, and are able to grasp opportunities. They seem to have interests in everything and hope to participate in doing it and usually do it very well. are said to be logical realists, shrewd, charming, ambitious, and inventive. Of course, the entire horoscope must be considered when making any personality assessment. (Do you know any Rats?)

6. Many cultures believe that anything in the shape of a ring is good luck, because it symbolizes "coming full circle". For this reason the Dutch believe that eating donuts on New Year's Day will bring good fortune. Many in the U.S. and other cultures celebrate the new year by consuming black-eyed peas or other legumes. Cabbage is consumed by many, because cabbage leaves are considered a sign of prosperity, being representative of paper currency. In some countries, rice is a lucky food that is eaten on New Year's Day.



Happy New Year!!