



# FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES Newsline

March 2008

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## Poison Prevention Week is March 18-24

While accidental poisoning is the second-leading cause of home injury death, many parents and caregivers are overlooking simple steps that can help keep family members safe.

More than 2 million poisonings are reported to Poison Control Centers across the county each year.

In observance of National Poison Prevention Week, slated March 18-24, the Environmental Protection Agency is reminding families how to take precautions and properly use and store dangerous household chemicals to avoid accidental poisonings.

Debbie Richardson, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service parenting assistant specialist, said accidental poisonings are an all-too-often occurrence.

“Every 13 seconds a poison control center receives a call about an unintentional poisoning,” Richardson said. “Of the estimated 2 million poisonings per year, more than half of them involve children under the age of six. In addition, 70,000 of the calls concerned the potential exposure to common household pesticides.”

Parents and other caregivers must understand the danger household cleaners, chemicals and cosmetics may present to young children. Any label containing the words “caution,” “warning” or “danger” should be locked away and stored out of children’s reach.

Without proper safety measures in place, a child’s natural curiosity, coupled with their inability to read or understand product labels, can result in a tragic accident.

“Hand-to-mouth behavior and imitation are normal for children. Anything within their reach will most likely end up in their mouths,” she said.

“Common household items, from medications and cleaners to automotive fluids and pesticides, present serious risks to everyone, especially children.”

Children are not the only people who are at a greater risk for a poisoning exposure in the home. Older adults also are at risk.

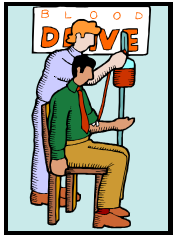
Richardson said older adults, especially those who are taking multiple medications, face an increased risk for accidental poisoning.

“A recent survey conducted by the Home Safety Council shows that nearly one in 10 caregivers of an older adult age 50 or older recently reported that their loved one had experienced a poisoning incident at home, more frequently from taking the wrong medications,” she said.

Some tips to help protect your family from accidental poisoning include knowing what things in and around your home could poison you; put child safety locks on cabinets to safely store cleaners, medications, cosmetics, chemicals and other poisons; keep all of these products in their original packaging with the labels on them; do not mix household products together because their contents could react with dangerous results; have a service person check heaters, stoves and fireplaces every year to ensure they are working properly; and install a carbon monoxide detector near the bedrooms and furnace to warn you of high levels of CO, a deadly gas you cannot see or smell.

“Be sure the post the Poison Control Hotline number by every telephone in the house. The number is 1-800-222-1222. Be sure to post other emergency numbers as well.” Richardson said. “This number will connect you to emergency help in your area. Use this number immediately in the event of a possible poisoning. You also can call the hotline if you have a question about poisons.”

## OHCE Blood Drive



Our next blood drive is Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> – 11:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. **Each HCE** group is requested to bring five (5) dozen homemade cookies to the Blaine County Fairgrounds. Patsy Davis is the chair of this committee, if you have

any questions please contact her. Special T-shirts will be given to donors.

## Meals on Wheels

The Watonga Senior Citizens are asking the county HCE groups to assist their organization. They need volunteers to run the Meals on Wheels route. You would only need to carry meals on 3 days of the week. You can volunteer as a group or as an individual. Call Pansy Hollis at the Center to help out.

## County Association Meeting

Our County Association meeting will be held Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at the Blaine County Fairgrounds. Registration will begin at 5:30 p.m. with the meeting scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Pleasant Valley is hosting this meeting and has asked each group to assist with a covered dish meal.

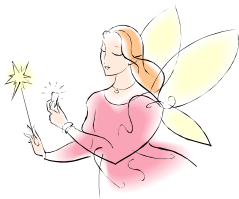
Pleasant Valley – Main Dish  
Jolly Workers – Salads/Vegetables  
Domestic Engineers – Desserts

Each group is also responsible for three (3) door prizes and their duties as assigned in the 2008 HCE Yearbook. Hope to see a good group present for our meeting.

## Tooth Fairy Pillows

We will meet on Monday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. to complete the Tooth Fairy Pillows. I will bring the sewing machines from the Extension Office and everyone else will

need to bring personal hand sewing supplies. Thanks for your help with this project to celebrate Dental Health Month in February.



## NW District OHCE Meeting

This looks like a great meeting! (Refer to insert) Hope that we can have a good delegation attend. Our registration will be due March 17<sup>th</sup>. Pre-registration is \$13 and includes lunch, after the due date cost is \$18. Note the options for arrival on Friday and the Tours on the Move on Saturday afternoon.

There will be a box provided for the “**Support Our Military Families**” at the NW District Meeting. Just to let our men and women know we CARE and support them. If you cannot go, but want me to take items, please drop them off at the Extension Office before April 5<sup>th</sup>.

### Items we can send:

- Coffees, hot chocolate mix, powder creamer (no liquids), drink mixes (Kool-Aid, Gatorade, Tang, etc.); microwavable-non-perishable (just add water) foods like soups, mac/cheese; vacuum-sealed packets of tuna & chicken.
- Snack items which fit easily into pockets: single pack trail mix, granola bars, beef jerky, cookies, nuts, chips, pretzels, energy bars, Pop-tarts, cheese/peanut butter, crackers, etc.
- Individually wrapped candies which are easy to carry in pockets: Twizzlers, Tootsie varieties, bubble gum, Skittles, Sweet Tarts, etc.
- Personal care items: hand sanitizer packets, sunscreen lip balm, baby wipes, travel size shampoo/conditioners, toothpaste, lotions, eye drops, bug repellent.
- Other helpful items could be: blank greeting cards (birthday/anniversary, etc.) small pencil sharpeners, disposable cameras, books, board games, playing cards, DVDs/CDs.

### Items you CANNOT send:

Obscene material: magazines, film, video, cards, articles, etc. Horror comics are prohibited. Any material depicting nudity or semi-nudity, pornography or sexual items. No authorized political materials. No pork or pork by-products. *I will have a box available at the office during the month of March to collect items!*

## OHCE Green Cookbook

The much anticipated reprint of the Green OHCE Cookbook is now a reality! We will pick up the order at the District meeting in April. Our price for each book is \$8 and sell for \$10. The extra \$2 will be profit for the County. I have ordered 50 copies. You can reserve your copy by calling the Extension Office today.

## HCE Leader Lessons

The lesson for your March meeting will be presented Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup> – 10 a.m. at the Fairgrounds. We will be looking into the health benefits of honey and how to use more honey in your cooking. Paula Post, Kingfisher FCS, will be the presenter.

“Herbs and Their Uses” will be presented Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. at the Fairgrounds. Bring a friend or prospective member as we study the many different herbs, growing herbs and how to use herbs in your home/cooking.

## A Good time To Organize Your Photos

When ‘Old Man Winter’ keeps you indoors, try a project that will bring you great satisfaction-sorting through yeas of photo clutter and accumulations. If you are like me, just the thought of organizing your family photos can be overwhelming. Maybe, one of these solutions will motivate you for the task:

- Use small mini-albums. Mini-albums have 25 – 50 pages and can be used to put pictures together based on a theme such as “Cars I Have Owned” or “Thanksgiving Dinners”. With small albums, it makes looking for a certain picture much easier.
- Use a top-loading scrapbook. If you wish to be more creative, fill pages with photos and other collections of memorabilia. Referred as ‘scrapbooking pages’ these are a great way to share photos and memories with loved ones. They can make gifts for special occasions throughout the coming year.
- Three-ring binders with page protectors. These are great for those larger photos like family portraits and generational photos. Make sure the page protectors are archival safe and acid free so you can pass down a picture of your great-great-grandparents in the same condition as you received it.

Time spent organizing family photographs is not a chore at all, it is a labor of love – providing many memories for yourself and future generation.

## OHCE Week

We will be celebrating Home and Community Education week March 4-10, 2008. Be making plans now on how your group will share with others in the community about OHCE.

## Eight for ‘08



**Simple changes sure to make 2008 your healthiest year yet!**

**A new year brings a new opportunity to take better care of yourself.**

### 1. **The Dish on Goodness**

Fruits and vegetables increase your intake of cancer-fighting antioxidants. Fiber-rich foods boost satiety, which helps with weight loss.

### 2. **Snooze and Win**

Consider a midday nap. The reduction of stress may help lower your risk of heart attacks.

### 3. **Run From the Sun**

Switch to a moisturizer with sunscreen, and cover up. Your healthiest glow will be from having clear, soft skin for years to come.

### 4. **Laugh It Up**

No matter what makes us laugh, it is the closest thing to exercise when it comes to working the abs. It releases serotonin and dopamine that enhance our sense of well-being and optimism. Laughter is an antidote to chronic pain and helps people heal faster.

### 5. **Broaden Your Palette**

Lift your spirits by adding color to your life. Paint a room a soothing green or sunny yellow. It can inspire you to love your surroundings.

### 6. **Less Stress, More Happiness**

Ongoing stress can lead to all sorts of problems, such as sleep trouble, headaches, and lack of energy. Get a grip on tension: Find what relaxes you, and then do it.

### 7. **Work It Out**

Make strength training part of your exercise routine to improve bone density, muscle strength, and overall fitness. Aim for 15 to 20 minutes on alternate days three times a week. Use free weight or an exercise machine.

### 8. **Take Charge**

It's up to you. Know what makes you happy and sad, and steer your life in the direction you choose – instead of being blown about by everyone else. Break the mold. Create your future on purpose, not by default!

Adapted from Eight for '08 – Southern Living, January 2008

# NW District OHCE Meeting

April 5, 2008

## “Spirit of Spring”



**Ponca City High School**  
927 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street

Host counties **Kay, Logan & Noble** have planned a meeting sure to satisfy many interests!

### Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup> ~ Tours

Start early and see Ponca City. Marland Mansion offers a guided tour at 1:30 p.m. and self-guided tours at any time. Guided tours may be arranged at no extra charge to meet your schedule for groups of 8 or more. Other sites to see include Pioneer Woman Museum, and Marland's Grand Home.

**Free sites** to visit include Ponca City Art Center, Ponca Theater, Standing Bear Park and Museum, City Hall, Ponca City Library, and ConocoPhillips Museum. Information about these sites can be found in the Ponca City Welcome Bag available through your Educator.

Those touring sites on Friday may receive extra tickets for \$200 in Chamber of Commerce prizes by telling staff at each site you are an OHCE member!

If you cannot tour on Friday, “Tours-on-the-Move” are offered Saturday in lieu of two on-site PM workshops!!

## Luncheon Menu

*Turkey, Brisket & Baked Ham*  
*Scalloped Potatoes*  
*Salad*  
*Dinner Roll*  
*Cookies*  
*Iced Tea Lemonade*

*Spring themed door prizes & darling table favors!*

### Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup> ~ Agenda

- 8:15 AM Registration & Refreshments  
(Nametags provided)
- 8:45 AM Sing-A-Long
- 9:00 AM Call to Order ~ Business Meeting

#### Morning Sessions

- Presidents' Session (FCS Educators also attend)**
- State Lesson: **Clutter's Last Stand**
- State Lesson: **Forming Community Coalitions**
- Membership: **Recruitment & Making Local Brochures**
- Treasurers' Session**
- State OHCE Project: **Just Let Them Know We Care!**
- Healthy Living: **Organic Gardening**
- Cultural Enrichment: **Standing Bear: Native American Civil Rights Leader**
- Family Issues: **Genealogy ~ Finding Your Roots**

### Luncheon

#### Afternoon Sessions 1:15 – 2:15 PM

“Tours on the Move” continue through **both PM sessions**. One tour is a Ponca City Driving Tour via van with a guide; minimal walking required. The other tour is Marland Mansion Walking Tour (an elevator is available in lieu of stairs.) Tours on the Move are \$6 each, filled on first registration received basis.

**Ponca City Driving Tour (1:00–3:30)**

**Marland Mansion Walking Tour (1:00-3:30)**

**Trunk Showing of Today's Quilts**

**“Make & Take” Scrapbooking Project** (\$1 at the door)

**Beginning Computer Use** ~ back by popular request

**Fun Dances**

**Quick & Easy Decorating**

**Genealogy ~ Finding Your Roots**

**FCS Educators Session**

#### Afternoon Sessions 2:30 – 3:30 PM

**Ponca City Driving Tour**, continued

**Marland Mansion Walking Tour**, continued

**“Make & Take” Scrapbooking Project** (\$1 at the door)

**Trunk Showing of Today's Quilts**

**Decoupage Plates**

**Intermediate Computer Use**

**Dressing Up Foods with Garnishes**

**Italian Cooking**

**Home Fire Safety**

**Pre-registration of \$13 includes most sessions & the luncheon.** “Tours on the Move” are an additional \$6. Registration is due to County Treasurer by March 17<sup>th</sup>. Late registration is \$18.

\*Ponca City tourism packets for local OHCE groups were provided to FCS Extension Educators. Contact the Extension office if your local group needs a city map with dining, lodging, shopping & entertainment information! Although no registration is required for Friday activities, please note on your registration form how many may be in town on Friday.

## Tax Refunds Should be Used Wisely

Although it seems like the holiday decorations just now made their way back into the attic, Oklahomans are preparing for tax season.

Many Oklahomans will be receiving a refund check from the IRS, said Sissy Osteen, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service resource management specialist.

It's a good idea to make plans now how that money will be spent. "For some tax payers, once that check arrives it seems to get spent quickly if a plan isn't in place."

Consumers who carry credit card debt should consider paying off or paying down their balances with the refund. Credit cards with the highest interest rate should be paid off first. As balances are paid in full, consider closing those accounts. Keep only a card or two that feature a low interest rate.

Osteen said consumers who would like to see how much a one-time additional payment will save interest charges should visit [www.powerpay.org](http://www.powerpay.org). This Web site will calculate how much interest can be saved, if a consumer makes a one-time large payment, or if additional funds are added to the minimum monthly payment.

"You may be surprised at how much money you can save in interest charges alone," she said. "For the future, set a goal to pay the entire balance before the grace period ends. An even better option is to develop a budget so you can pay cash for your purchases.

Tax refunds could also be used to start or add to an emergency fund for unexpected expenses. Try to add to this account each pay period to build savings.

Homeowners who have been putting off major home repairs due to poor finances could use their tax refund for this purpose. Or invest the money in an IRA. Osteen said it is also a good idea to invest in yourself.

"Take a course or other job training to improve your knowledge and marketability," she said. "Money spent on education could lead to raises or promotions that would pay back your tuition investment many times over." Tax payers who routinely receive a large refund should review their withholding statements. Determine if the refunds resulted from excess with-holdings. A one-time refund may have been the result of unusual deductions.

"If the refund was due to excess withholding, reduce the amount held from your pay," Osteen said. "This will result in more money each pay period and could eliminate the need for using credit cards to cover expenses. The extra money also could be put in a savings or money market account where the taxpayer gets the benefit of the interest of the government.

## Clean Kitchen Sponges Correctly

Many of us use kitchen sponges because they are effective, inexpensive and reusable. But because they are reusable, they can create problems with food-borne pathogens, yeasts, and molds. Using contaminated sponges can spread germs around your kitchen.

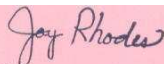
Tests to determine the best way to disinfect kitchen sponges have been conducted by the Agriculture Research Service of the USDA. ARS soaked sponges at room temperature for 48 hours in a solution to simulate a dirty sponge. Each sponge was then treated one of 5 ways in hopes of reducing or eliminating contamination. Cleaning methods tested included: soaking in 10% chlorine bleach, soaking in lemon juice, soaking in demonized water, heating in a microwave or washing in a dishwasher.

The scientists chose these methods because they're commonly used in most household kitchens. They found that two methods were most effective. Microwaving sponges killed 99.9999 percent of bacteria present on them, while dishwashing killed 99.9998 percent of bacteria, yeasts and mold. These simple and convenient treatments can help ensure that contaminated sponges don't spread food-borne pathogens around household kitchens of today's busy families.

This newsletter is one way of communicating educational information to the citizens of Blaine County in the area of Family & Consumer Sciences. For free subscriptions, contact the Extension Office at 580-623-5195.

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