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Program offered for students

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Kansas has a program that offers a unique chance for high school and college students to experience what it's like to work in natural resources conservation. Through the Kansas Apprentice Program (KAP) students can work as an apprentice in their local Natural Resources Conservation Service field office, area office or state office.

Conservation Service do for agriculture and the environment. All students will be considered for the Kansas Apprentice Program whether they have an urban or agriculture background.

The Kansas Apprentice Program will also offer students an opportunity on starting a career in working with natural resources. An apprentice position allows a student to participate in a variety of hands-on learning experiences, including engineering surveying, staking conservation practices like terraces

and ponds, water quality activities, environmental education, and natural resources camps.

Apprentices will gain experience and knowledge that will help them make career choices. Whether or not they go to a college or technical school, their work experience will be good for job applications or resumes. Also, many scholastic scholarships require applicants to have completed some form of community service, and apprenticeship could fulfill those requirements. Applicants must be at least 14

years of age. Hours are flexible to fit the student's schedule.

Prospective apprentices are welcome to stop by their local Natural Resources Conservation Service office and talk to the staff about the program. Additional information about the Kansas Apprentice Program and other natural resources activities can be found on the Natural Resources Conservation Services website at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov. Or, contact the Kansas Apprentice Program State Coordinator, Lonnie Miller, 785-764-1931.



Norma

Lurn

Irene

Girls get together for a nice reunion

By Karen Krien

"The Raile Girls" recently met for a reunion in Abert, S.D., and enjoyed spending four days together.

The girls were the daughters of George and Pauline Raile of Eureka, S.D. They were all born and raised on a farm in that area.

Norma (Butcher), Bird City, is 85 years old; Irene is 86 years old; and Lurn is 87 years old. Mrs. Butcher

said they all look forward to being 100 years old some day.

"Good luck is needed," she said.

There was also an older brother Ruben, who died in a boating accident at Lake Eureka. He was 50 years old.

Also accompanying Mrs. Butcher to the reunion was her son Earl LeMar, who flew in from San Jose, Calif. Mrs. Butcher said he made the reunion possible.

Plain Sense Holiday Stress

The stress of the holiday season is something that is discussed and written about every year. Society defines this time of year as full of merriment, parties and social gatherings where everyone is happy and joyful. The media, advertisements and songs foster high expectations. Stress does not come only from holiday related activities. It is understandable to feel less than happy when dealing with a significant life change or loss, such as divorce or the death of a loved one. Loneliness, health problems, family grudges, drinking problems and job pressures can also contribute.

When a person doesn't feel so cheery, they think that something is wrong with them. Quite often, those feelings of discouragement are due more so to trying to do too much, and attempting to make the holiday season a wonderful experience for all involved. Taking on that much responsibility can result in a big strain on a person, as well as on the rest of the family.

Opinions, attitudes and expectations for celebrating the holidays are not the same for everyone. Personal history and past experiences

differ, and affect how individuals and families view holiday activities. Wanting others to react in a certain manner or to change their behavior, is just not realistic, and can result in frustration and bad feelings for all involved. For some reason people are expected to behave differently (usually better) during the holiday season, and when that doesn't happen, others who are involved in the planning and preparation tend to feel that they failed in their efforts. The reality is that strained relationships cannot be mended in one day. Expecting other family members to get involved, to be sociable, and to get along just may not be possible. For them or for you!

Not everyone should have to celebrate the holidays in the same way. In fact, it should even be all right to not celebrate; to slow down and simplify the season. A person should be able to feel at ease saying "no" to some requests, including gifts, uncomfortable family gatherings, and unrealistic time commitments.

Contributed by Karen Beery, LCPC, Consultation and Education Department

Niece works with FEMA on the coast

Donna (Wittmeier) Larsen, niece of Gudrun Schoenrogge, St. Francis, returned to Sioux Falls, S.D., after spending two weeks working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The first two days were spent in Atlanta, Ga., for training, shots, issuance of materials and dividing up into teams. Teams of 100 people each were sent to Dallas, Houston and San Antonio to work in the shelters with evacuees of Hurricane Katrina.

There were four separate shelters in San Antonio. The shelter Ms. Larson was assigned to in San Antonio had 1,700 evacuees and 21 Federal Emergency Management Agency people.

The shelter was actually run by the Red Cross but had the help of several agencies including Federal Emergency Management Agency, Salvation Army, Veteran's office, Social Security, PO Food Stand, both dental and medical clinics, just to name some.

All of these agencies worked together to help the evacuees get back on track with their life and to replace Social Security cards,

identification and driver's licenses which had been lost. Every person in the shelter had their own story of how they were rescued and what they went through.

Many of the stories were tragic. They had lost family members to drowning and some were victims of horrible crimes. Many spent four to five days without food or water and with the same wet, dirty clothes they had on when they left.

Each person was set up with a post office box and voice mail phone so they would have some way for people to contact them.

Several people were reunited with family members who were separated throughout the states. A vast majority of the evacuees in New Orleans could not read.

Many of the people have already relocated and found jobs in the San Antonio area. Busing had been set up to take over 100 children to various schools in the nearby area. The evacuees were very patient, polite and extremely thankful for what little could be done for them.

Ms. Larson said it was a very rewarding experience for the volunteers to be able to help in whatever way they could.

Post Office offers tips for mailing packages

More than 20 billion cards, letters and packages will be delivered by the U. S. Postal Service between Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve.

To ensure packages arrive safely and on time, Saint Francis Postmaster Penny Sheldon and Bird City Postmaster Sonja Weeden have some packaging tips:

The box - Choose a box with enough room for cushioning material around the contents. If you are reusing a box, cover all previous label and markings with heavy black marker or adhesive labels.

Cushioning - Place the cushioning all around your items. Close

and shake the box to see whether you have enough cushioning. Add more newspaper, Styrofoam, or bubble wrap if you hear items shifting.

Sealing - Tape the opening of your box and reinforce all seams with 2" wide tape. Use clear or brown packaging tape, reinforced packing tape or paper tape. Do not use cord, string or twine because they get caught in mail processing equipment.

Correct address - Using a complete and correct address is critical for efficient delivery. Be sure to use the correct ZIP Code. Need help find a ZIP Code? Go online at www.USPS.com and click on "Find a Zip Code," or call 1-800-ASK-USPS/1-800-275-8777.

Placing an index card with the sender's address and recipient's address inside the package will help the Postal Service re-pack boxes that were improperly wrapped and came apart during transporting and processing.

Packages being mailed using postage stamps and weighing 16 ounces or more can be left for the letter carrier to pick up but cannot be deposited into a blue street mailbox.

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