

FORD-IROQUOIS

EXTENSION LINE



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Helping You Put Knowledge To Work

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Reflections for Thanksgiving 2009

It's November already! As we turn the calendar, our thoughts naturally transition to Thanksgiving and all that it means to us as Americans and specifically to our family and friends in east central Illinois. I encourage each of you to take a few moments from your busy schedule and reflect on the freedom we often take for granted. Do you realize the price that has been paid for you?

In addition, this time frame provides us with a wonderful opportunity to verbalize with family members across multi-generations as to what is most important in our lives. Maybe this is the topic and time of year that we should be making a list and checking it twice. Now that the list has been made, we must make a conscious effort to include these concepts and activities in our daily, weekly, or monthly routines. Children grow up so quickly. Parents, grandparents, and other caregivers must take full advantage of these memory building experiences. Remember, you are building the future of your family, community, and world.

What did you include on your list of priorities for Thanksgiving? Is it the delicious turkey dinner with all the trimmings? OR those special family traditions? OR visiting with loved ones from miles away? OR other activities such as the afternoon nap, football game, or walk in the woods. Kudos to you if your family has the vision to invite someone from your community to join you, knowing they would otherwise be facing hunger, loneliness, and disappointment. What a perfect example of friendship and caring for your children to be a part of, not only on Thanksgiving, but also throughout the year.

Let's reflect on some of the traditions found at the very first Thanksgiving in Plymouth (1621) and compare them to our celebrations in 2009. According to the History Channel, this was an autumn harvest feast enjoyed by the early colonists and Wampanoag Indians. "While the cooking methods and table etiquette (they



didn't even have forks) have changed as the holiday has evolved, the meal is still consumed today with the same spirit of celebration and overindulgence."

The only documented items on the menu were venison, seal, and wild fowl (wild turkey, goose, duck, crane, swan, partridge, and eagles). Most likely, the Pilgrims' menu also included seafood (cod, eel, clams, lobster); grains and Indian corn; vegetables (pumpkin, peas, onions, lettuce, radishes, and carrots); fruits (plums and grapes); nuts (walnuts, chestnuts, and acorns); along with herbs and seasonings (olive oil, liv-

erwort, leeks, dried currants, and parsnips).

Kathleen Curtin, Food Historian at Plimoth Plantation, provides us with a list of foods that were probably not found on the first Thanksgiving feast. Many of these are synonymous with our modern day gatherings, including ham (not yet butchered), sweet potatoes and regular potatoes (not common), corn on the cob (kept dried at this time of year), and cranberry sauce (had cranberries, but no sugar). Instead of pumpkin pie, the Pilgrims may have eaten stewed pumpkin at their feast.

After the first Thanksgiving in 1621, it took over 200 years before Abraham Lincoln officially proclaimed Thanksgiving Day as a national day of thanksgiving, praise, and prayer in 1863. It was celebrated on the last Thursday of November each year until Congress declared it a legal holiday in 1941.

University of Illinois Extension offers many interesting facts about the history of this celebration on its *Turkey for the Holidays* website at www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/turkey/. Be sure to read page 4 of this issue of the *Extension Line* for help in planning and preparing your holiday meal.

On a lighter note, the National Turkey Federation has presented a live turkey and two dressed turkeys to the President every year since 1947. The President does not eat the live turkey. He "pardons" it and allows it to live out its days on a historical farm.

Have a safe and happy Thanksgiving!

Karen Moore
County Extension Director

First Annual 4-H Auction

You are personally invited to attend...

Ford-Iroquois Youth Committee and Ford-Iroquois 4-H Foundation are proud sponsors of the 1st annual 4-H Auction. It will be held on **Saturday, January 23, 2010** at **Christ Lutheran High School** (201 W. Lincoln) in **Buckley**. The day's events will begin at **4p.m.** with a pork burger meal and silent auction. The live auction will follow at 5 p.m.

Background: A new \$20 program fee is being introduced

statewide for the 2009 - 2010 year. This program fee will apply to all 4-H members who are part of a sustained 4-H experience including 4-H community clubs, Cloverbud groups, special interest clubs or after school groups meeting on a regular basis.

No individual will be denied participation in 4-H due to inability to pay. Thus, Youth Committee and 4-H Foundation members in the Ford-Iroquois Unit are working diligently on the 4-H Auction. Proceeds from this event will help cover the cost of the \$20 fee for each 4-H member.

ATTENTION 4-H LEADERS AND 4-H FAMILIES:

You may access additional donation forms and other marketing materials to help make this a successful event. A special page has been created on our website for the 4-H auction. You will find the link under "Today's Features" OR you can scroll down to "Quick Links" (under the main program icons).

Please contact Karen Moore at the Extension Office at 815-268-4051 if you:

- have questions
- would like to volunteer your time for the 4-H auction
- would like to donate an item for the 4-H auction.

November Local Government Education Telenet to Focus on Legislative Updates

University of Illinois Extension, Ford-Iroquois Unit announces the next session of the 2009 - 2010 Local Government Education telenet series. "*Legislative Update*" will be held on **Thursday, November 19** from **3 - 5 p.m.** It will provide all local government officials with a review of current State and Federal legislative issues.

Officials will learn the progress of these State and Federal legislative issues and the impact they have on Illinois local governments and the communities they

serve. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss new legislation with professionals who specialize in State and Federal legislative issues.

The program will be offered at the Ford-Iroquois Extension Office in Onarga. (The session will also be taped for those unable to attend at the scheduled time.) The telenet program provides the opportunity for county officials to earn 2 hours of Certified County Official (CCO) credit by attending the session. The CCO

program is a partnership of the Illinois Association of County Board Members and Commissioners (IACBMC) and U of I Extension.

Cost is \$5 per session. Pre-registration is requested at least one day prior to the presentation to assure that proper handouts are available for all participants. Call the Extension Office or register on our website .

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