

Item for the Post – Donna Krug, District Director, Cottonwood Extension District – Great Bend Office

Celebrate National Family Week

Happy Thanksgiving! For more than 45 years, the week including Thanksgiving has been proclaimed National Family Week. This observance was the idea of Mr. Sam Wiley, a teacher, basketball coach and school administrator in Indiana, who observed the stark difference in children who came from strong supportive families and those who were not being raised in a traditional family unit. He conceived of the idea to set aside a time during Thanksgiving – when families traditionally gather to give thanks for their many blessings – to recognize the important role family plays in our society.

The coronavirus pandemic is changing the way many families will celebrate Thanksgiving this year. Gatherings will be smaller and may just include the people we are spending the most time with. In times of change and challenge, families can provide the love, acceptance, guidance, support and instruction to be able to adjust.

Look for some activities that can include family members who may be joining the celebration through technology instead of in-person. Zoom or FaceTime can include things like a scavenger hunt or a talent show. At many of our family Zoom meetings we have encouraged everyone to bring a joke to share. Laughter really is good for the soul!

The coming week would also be a great time to check on elderly friends who may not have family checking on them frequently. Offering to drop off needed groceries or home goods plus a short visit would mean so much.

National Family Week is a time to be thankful for the family as a national heritage and resource. It is a time to recommit ourselves to the concept of the family. But let's not stop at the end of the week; celebrating your family should always be a priority. Remember, families are the nurturers, caregivers, role models, teachers, and counselors for the next generation. Take time out from your busy schedule to “Celebrate” your family!

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