

'Turnabout is fair play' in non-traditional marriage

By Val Swinton

For 30 years Hughes Shanks worked for the Social Security Administration. He and his wife Lela raised four children and Lela, though she had a college education, chose not to work. The Shanks seemed like a typical American family.

But as Hughes neared retirement age, he chose a new profession and a not-so-typical new career, Hughes became a homemaker.

"I became pretty good at it," he says proudly. "I adapted to it."

With Hughes tending the home fires, Lela had the time to begin and develop a new career. She is now a representative for CETA, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, a government program to train the unemployed for new jobs.

Professional homemaker

Hughes and Lela Shanks were guests yesterday at the weekly Women/Speak

series at the Nebraska Union.

Hughes told a audience of about 10 people that homemaking is a profession like any other.

"It's an experience that combines many, many skills if you're going to be good at it," he said. "I begin by preparing breakfast, I prepare her lunch. If company comes, I'm the one that serves as hostess, serving the drinks and everything."

Hughes looks at his job as any professional would, stressing experience as the most important ingredient.

"Practical application takes three to five years," he said, adding he's been at it about three years now. "In five years my bread won't be good *Sometimes*. It will be good. *Period*."

Job hunting frustrating

When Lela Shanks went job hunting after 27 years out of the job market, she said she became bitter.

"I got bitter because people just treated

me like I had been dead for 25 or 27 years."

But she said, she shrugged off suggestions that she go back to school, because she felt raising a family had given her enough experience to handle a lot of jobs.

"I had been engaged in something, working with people, working with a family and I felt I had aquired skills. I felt I could get a job that used those skills."

The Shanks insist they are adjusting very well to their "reversed role relationship."

Relationship works well

"It has worked out great for both of us," Lela said. "I never liked to cook, so he does that," Hughes said he was acquiring recipes even before he acquired his new profession."

The Shanks, who live in Lincoln, say they are learning to cope with problems that are opposite those they used to face. Even the four children, most of them now

grown and on their own, have taken the role reversal in stride.

"Our kids, I think they're learning a lot of things and I think they're getting a big kick out of it," Lela said.

Lela had a journalism degree when she married Hughes, but stayed home to raise the children at the insistence of her husband. But it wasn't easy. She said it took about 10 years to get used to the fact she wouldn't be pursuing her chosen career.

Hughes came from a family of 12, and said he had to do a lot of household chores normally delegated to the daughters of a family. He credits that early family experience with helping him adapt to his new career.

And he had a warning for the female members of the audience.

"Girls, you can cripple those daughters-in-law by the ways you raised your sons," he said. "Some men don't know anything."

ASUN boost helps carpool

By Shelley Smith

Lincoln residents are doubling up, but not just to keep warm this winter, according to an increased membership in the city carpool program.

Shirley Maly, director of the program, said people, students specifically, are finally "learning the advantages of carpooling," and credited their new awareness to a publicity drive sponsored by ASUN.

"They (ASUN) really have helped us out," she said.

The program, which recently was funded again by local and federal governments, uses a computerized system to match car poolers who have similar schedules and locations. ASUN's Committee on Campus Life adopted the program in early September to allow computer use for students also also.

Distributing brochures

CCL carpool chairman Marianne Clifford said nothing was done to publicize carpooling last semester because the committee was not organized. This semester, she said, the committee is distributing brochures to faculty and students and placing advertising in the *Daily Nebraskan*.

UNL police headquarters is the place to register for the program. Police Captain Kenneth Markle said the response has increased since the advertisements have appeared in the *Daily Nebraskan*.

He said he has received about eight registrations a week compared to last semester's three per week.

Maly said 44 students joined the program last semester and the response is expected to be greater this semester.

Response not as high

However, Parking Coordinator John Duve said he felt the response from students is not as high as it should be. He said many students feel it is inconvenient to carpool and won't "get out and find someone to pool with."

"When the gas prices went up before, people just absorbed the high cost," he said. "I don't know why people stand for it. But we can't force people to carpool."

Duve said rising gas prices might produce incentives for students to carpool.

According to the brochure printed by the city carpool program, students can save about \$10 a week by carrying extra passengers.

Preferred parking

But, he said, students must really want to carpool before they ever will do it.

Duve said the parking department has been "kicking around" the idea of allowing preferred parking places for carpoolers, but nothing has been established.

Maly said many employees offer similar incentives to their employees who carpool.

"It makes a great deal of difference," she said.

However, she said the carpool program itself cannot provide any incentives. They must come from the employer.

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