

Two UNL students celebrate summertime Thanksgiving

By Kathy Stokebrand

A Nebraska-style Thanksgiving family dinner was featured in the November issue of the Ladies Home Journal, much to the surprise and delight of family members, including two UNL students.

Jane Matzke, a senior finance major and her cousin Cathy Hove, a senior secondary education and English major, said they were pleased and flattered by the way New York journalists perceived their Nebraska family.

The idea to feature the Matzke family in the Thanksgiving issue of the national magazine originated a year ago. Matzke said her mother had seen an invitation in the magazine for readers to share their family holiday traditions.

Her mother presented the idea to the Matzke family at Thanksgiving last year, and while everyone was in favor of the idea they doubted they would be chosen. Nonetheless, family recipes were collected and a scrapbook was compiled for their entry in the early part of January, Matzke said.

Toward the end of May, the Matzke's received word that they were chosen. Hove said family members were flabbergasted after being chosen.

The Matzke family, consisting of grandmother Matzke, her four children and their spouses and 13 grandchildren, were told that the mock Thanksgiving would have to be held sometime this past summer. The family decided they wouldn't do it if everyone couldn't be there, Matzke said, so everyone made an effort to attend. A weekend around the Fourth of July was picked and the reunion was moved from one family's home to another because it was larger and had air-conditioning, Hove said.

The family's 13-year-old celebration usually lasts from Wednesday until Sunday but for the article the festivities began on Friday. Five people from the magazine, including the managing editor and chief food editor, arrived on Thursday.

Thanksgiving for the Matzkes includes "olympic" competition for the grandchildren. Table tennis, cribbage, Candyland, and checkers are among the games the cousins compete in.

First, second and third places as well as sportsmanship



Photo by Mitch Hrdlicka

Jane Matzke (left) and Cathy Hove had their family Thanksgiving tradition documented by the Ladies Home Journal. The special celebration occurred in July to accommodate magazine reporters.

medals are given. Grandmother Matzke also gives each grandchild a silver dollar.

For the family portrait, Matzke and Hove said a few items were added to the original menu by the food editors for artistic purposes. Also the turkey was baked only enough to brown it.

However, all of the Matzke recipes were tested in the Ladies Home Journal test kitchens, they said. The food editor also helped prepare the food for the picture.

Hove said the entire family felt comfortable working with the magazine editors and crew. Everything was

informal with no covering up, although there was some "hamming up" in front of the photographers, she said. Very few questions were asked.

"They just listened and watched," Matzke said.

The family was glad to have the chance to get together and took advantage of it.

"It was neat because it was a good excuse for the family to be together again and it was neat to have others think it was special too and want to share that specialness," Matzke said.

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