

February 26, 2024
Heidi Darby
Buffalo County Extension
For Immediate Release

Winter – Time to Plan Your Summer Vacation

Late winter can begin to get you down. We all see how colder weather, icy walking paths, and early darkness can make us want to hibernate. These long dark days and limited outside time can affect not only our physical well-being but our mental fitness as well. One way to push the blues away is to start planning your summer vacation. Thinking of summer plans can help lift your spirits. Studies have shown that families come home from vacations happier and more relaxed. Those same studies show that those planning a vacation were happier as it gave them something to look forward to.

Some can find stress in the planning process but there are steps to take to make it easier for you. The best first step is to gather your family and share ideas on what they want to do. You wouldn't want to spend time planning something that your family won't enjoy. Thinking about what they enjoy, do your kids want to go camping? Would they enjoy an overnight in a hotel with a pool better? Start by asking each of your family members to put together a list of what they like and compare notes to see what comes up as a common theme. You might be surprised to see what each family member wishes to do. I know in our family we had some very different ideas on what a vacation was.

Growing up on a family-owned dairy farm did not include a lot of summer vacations. Our vacations were trips to the sale barn and the County Fair. It's probably odd to have a favorite sale barn but to me, the barn in Norfolk, NE was the best. I loved the dining area with the lunchroom trays, the carpeted seating area around the sale ring, and a fun store full of tack and supplies. I cannot forget to mention the catwalk over all the pens. It was "the best" when we got to walk up there and look down on all the cows or horses. Probably not really a vacation hotspot but I still have memories of going there with my family.

That is what vacations are all about, making memories. Whether it's a sale barn, a State Park or just a night in a hotel with a pool, it's the memories that matter. While enjoying all those fun moments, remember to take a lot of photos to preserve your memories of the trip. A great place to put those photos is a scrapbook. Scrapbooks make it easy to look back on and reflect on even when the weather is unfavorable, and the winter is long. Grab a blank scrapbook, some stickers and turn your kids and grandkids loose with their imagination. What you will end up with is an enjoyable memory book for that specific vacation that will live on for years to come.

As an added activity, summer vacation scrapbooks can be submitted as a 4-H project to your local County Fair. Our judges enjoy interviewing youth and seeing their eyes light up as they tell us about their scrapbooks and their photos. Whether it is a scrapbook from their vacation or even a group of photos of their favorite activity, we would love to see them. If you have any questions on this project or others, please contact your local Extension Office.

Heidi Darby

4-H Extension Assistant

Nebraska Extension in Buffalo County

1400 East 34th St. Kearney, NE 68847 308-236-1235