



## Something about Growth

A message from Mary Crosby, Chair

This is a joyful time of year when family and friends come together with grateful hearts in celebration of the gifts we value in one another. It is also a time to celebrate the freedoms we share, including the right to breathe air free of secondhand smoke. December 1, 2010, marked one and a half years of clean indoor air in Nebraska. The opportunity to breathe without breathing in the toxins of secondhand smoke is priceless, and one gift I'm very thankful for.

My gratitude for tobacco-free environments is extended to those who tirelessly work to educate policy makers, community members and youth on the benefits of living tobacco-free. The passage of the Clean Indoor Air Act in 2009 was a historical milestone in Nebraska's history, but this coalition knows the work is not done.

In Nebraska, tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death claiming more than 2,200 lives each year. Furthermore, tobacco costs Nebraska \$537 million annually in health care costs, including \$134 million in annual Medicaid expenditures. What's even more astounding is 36,000 children alive today will ultimately die prematurely from smoking.

Thankfully, the passion and commitment to change the environment and to combat death and disease caused by tobacco exists in Cass County! On August 26, 2010, TFCC held its first annual executive retreat. Volunteer members in attendance represented several agencies including Alegent, PRIDE-Omaha, Inc., Sarpy/Cass Department of Health, Cass County Tourism, LiveWise Cass County, Tobacco Free Nebraska, and the Plattsmouth Community Center. The executive team discussed education and outreach strategies; defined opportunities to grow membership; learned about the history of Cass County; and participated in dynamic group building activities. The retreat was a phenomenal opportunity to learn about one another and to discover how we can continue to make life-changing contributions to the community.

As the executive committee looks to 2011, we encourage those who are not current members to consider joining us at our bi-monthly meetings or joining the coalition as an advocate member. Finally, we challenge current members to find opportunities to have conversations about the mission and goals of TFCC with family members, friends, co-workers and faith communities.

We truly appreciate your efforts to create a healthy, tobacco-free environment in your own home, and your commitment to saving lives.

***Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to all!***



TFCC members Mary Crosby, Dorothy Shamblen, Joan Friedman and Jenny Steventon participated in the first annual retreat at The Fitzgerald Hotel on 8/26/10.

**Tobacco Free Cass County** is a dynamic coalition comprised of health-related organizations, individuals, and educational groups working together to strengthen tobacco control and prevention efforts in Cass County.

### Mission

To inform the public about death and disease caused by tobacco and secondhand smoke and to serve as a resource for stronger standards that protect children from tobacco addiction as well as all of Cass County from breathing toxic tobacco smoke.

### Tobacco Free Cass County

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Plattsmouth, NE 68048

Phone: (402) 740-8260 or (402) 593-3022  
Email: [nosmokejoan@hotmail.com](mailto:nosmokejoan@hotmail.com)

### Tobacco Free Cass County Executive Members

Mary Crosby, *Chair*

Carol Fadke, *Vice Chair*

Jenny Steventon, *Secretary*

Geri Hennessy, *Treasurer*

Joan Friedman, *Coordinator*

Alegent Health Midlands, *Fiscal Agent*

## Trying to Quit?

Call the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline

**1-800-784-8669**  
**(1-800-QUIT-NOW)**

[www.QuitNow.ne.gov](http://www.QuitNow.ne.gov)

## Fitzgerald Hotel is Recognized for Exemplary Tobacco-Free Policy

Healthy living extends beyond what is consumed by the body. Rich McFeely, general manager of the Fitzgerald Hotel in Plattsmouth, understands that a clean environment is a key factor in the wellness of an individual.

On August 26, 2010, members of Tobacco Free Sarpy recognized the Fitzgerald Hotel for opening its doors with a 100 percent tobacco-free policy. McFeely prepared for opening day by strategically placing No Smoking signage in each hotel

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## Fitzgerald Hotel is Recognized for Exemplary Tobacco-Free Policy continued...

unit. Tobacco-free policies in hotels and on campuses are a growing trend in Nebraska. The Nebraska Clean Indoor Air Act - effective June 1, 2009 – had been preceded by countless businesses and community agencies implementing voluntary smoke-free and tobacco-free policies that go above and beyond current law. Even school districts are even taking note of the health and safety impact of tobacco-free campus policies.

To learn how your business or school can implement a tobacco-free campus policy, call (402) 593-3022.

## Tobacco-Free Cass County Youth

### TFCC Youth Participate in No Limits Summit

Live Wise / Tobacco-Free Cass County youth attended the Fall 2010 No Limits Youth Summit in Cozad, Nebraska. The theme of the two-day event was "Take a Stand Against Big Tobacco".

Participating youth were greeted with an eye-opening session which included a video of quotes and statements made by big tobacco companies of their marketing tactics toward youth. One quote caught the attention of the attendees, "If they have lips, we want them." The revelation that tobacco companies research strategies to get them hooked astounded them, and generated a lot of discussion.

Weekend activities include a scavenger hunt; the organization of advocacy projects to take back to their community; creative expression groups; and breakout sessions on media, policy and activism activities.



### New Surgeon General's Report on Tobacco and the Body

On December 9, the U.S. Surgeon General released the report, *How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease: The Biology and Behavioral Basis for Smoking-Attributable Disease*. The report found that smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke causes immediate harm to the human body, triggering physical changes that lead to cancer, heart attacks, lung disease and many other serious illnesses. For more information, including links to the full report, executive report and highlights, <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/>.



TFCC Chair, Mary Crosby, presents Fitzgerald Hotel Manager, Rich McFeely, with a Certificate of Appreciation.



### Meet our Youth Coordinator, McKinsey Wyant

Born and raised in Plattsmouth, McKinsey has a passion for contributing her time and talents to educating youth on the benefits of living a drug-free life.

McKinsey graduated from Plattsmouth High School, and earned a Bachelors in General Studies with a mass communications emphasis from University of Nebraska at Omaha.

She is grateful for a growing community of youth who are excited to be part of a drug-free youth group, and who are passionate about empowering their peers to also make healthy life choices.



### Become a TFCC Member

Membership in Tobacco Free Sarpy is **free** and allows for great networking and resource sharing in our community.

For more information, call **Joan Friedman** at **(402) 740-8260**, or [nosmokejoan@hotmail.com](mailto:nosmokejoan@hotmail.com).