

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

Muhlenberg County Newsletter

**Cooperative
Extension Service**
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September 2011

Dear Homemakers,

Our new club year has started and it looks to be a busy one. Your Council met on August 25 and there is excitement in the air for our upcoming events. Club members will receive our new “yearbook” at the September club meetings. For members at large, your books are at the office for you to pick up or we will send you one at your request. Fall seems to be in the air. I look forward to working with you in these coming months.



Sincerely,

Laura Holt
Laura Holt
County Extension Agent
for Family & Consumer Sciences

Calendar:

- September 1 - Homemakers at Farm Bureau Day, 11-2; Deadline for signing up for Christmas trip
- September 8 - Maple Manor Birthday, Imitation Club
- September 12 - Travel Committee, 9:00, office; Apron Friends Club meets
- September 13 - World’s Greatest Baby Shower, 5:00 for exhibit; Graham Club meets
- September 14 - Harmonizers Club meets
- September 15 - Couponing Class, 6:30, office
- September 16 - Election Day Bash committee, 9:00 office; Recycling committee 11:00, office; Health Matters - Families on the Move, 2:00, Wellness Center
- September 20 - Imitation Club meets; Neighborhood Club meets
- September 21 - Forever Young Club meets
- September 22 - Homemaker Council, 9:30, office
- October 1 - Apple Pie Judging, Lovell’s Orchard (need 2 volunteers)
- October 5 - MCV work day, Princeton
- October 6 - *Pie and Cobblers* lesson training, 9:30, office
- October 9 – 15 - Homemaker Week, information booth at Uncle Lee’s and Wal-Mart
- October 14 - Silent auction items due at office for Bean Supper
- October 16 - Health Matters - Families on the Move, 1-4, Wellness Center (2nd Sunday)
- October 17- **BEAN SUPPER**



Ovarian Screening

Muhlenberg County’s day for FREE ovarian screening is November 4 in Paducah. This free screening has saved lives and I encourage you to consider taking advantage of the screening. Please call the office to sign up for an appointment. I will have to call UK and cancel any time slots not taken by October 15. Don’t wait.



A special thank you to Faye Green for serving as our International Chairperson for the past 5 years (or more). Faye has stepped down after years of having this responsibility and we thank her for serving on the Council in this position.



Couponing Group

Due to the successful couponing class we will be having a “coupon group” meeting once a month at the Extension Office. The first meeting will be September 15 at 6:30 p.m. Bring your couponing supplies and ideas to share with the group.

Homemaker Shirts

Several have said they would like to order a new Homemaker shirt. They are ¾ sleeve, polo collar, 3-4 buttons, royal blue. Prices are s-xl - \$20.00; 2x - \$21.50; 3x - \$23.00. Please place your order and pay by September 30 to have the shirts in time for the bean supper on the 17th.



Sew Simple Gifts

Pennyriple Area Master Clothing Volunteers will be hosting a “Sew Simple Gifts” event on November 1 between the hours of 9-2 at the Caldwell County Extension Office in Princeton. Volunteers will be teaching a class on Christmas aprons and Christmas stockings. The deadline for registering is October 18 to your local Extension Office and the fee is \$20. Participants are asked to bring their own sewing machine, sewing supplies and a sack lunch. Your pattern and fabric will be furnished and you are encouraged to bring trims or decorations from home to decorate your stocking.



September 24 Play

If you are interested in traveling to Pine Knob Theater to see *At the Hop* on September 24 please let JoNell Mallay know at 657-2361 so she can order tickets.



Our fall area meeting will be October 28 at the Christian County Extension Office. This year's theme is *Puttin' on the Gritz*. Rosemary Clooney, portrayed by Bet Stewart, will be the guest for the morning and there will be a viewing of the latest fashions in the afternoon. Homemakers are encouraged to come dressed with glitz and bling or you will be asked to contribute to the Ovarian Cancer Research Fund. Registration is \$10.00 and is due by October 20. Checks are to be made to Muhlenberg County Homemakers.

Covered Bridge Trip to Mason County



Carmen Grace Couponing Class 101 Speaker



Family Financial Management

More Holiday Enjoyment for Less



Have you started the Christmas holiday shopping countdown yet? It may sound crazy, since we are still enjoying the hot days of summer, but with only slightly over 100 shopping days left, it is time to start thinking about a holiday budget. To avoid the holiday crunch on your wallet at the end of the year, plan for holiday expenses throughout the year.

Also, it is important to realize that Christmas is not the only expensive holiday in the next three months. Halloween ranks as the third most expensive holiday, following Christmas and Valentine's Day. This may be a surprise, since typically the holiday does not involve large gift giving or family events. Nonetheless, the price of costumes, candy, and decorations adds up. Preparing early for holiday expenses can reduce stress and your after-holiday bills, regardless of the holiday you are celebrating.

Develop a specific budget for each of the upcoming holidays. Talk early with family members to determine their expectations for travel, food, and gift-giving. As you develop your budget, determine which items are must-haves, such as the turkey for Thanksgiving Dinner, and which items would be nice if you have a few extra dollars.

Developing a budget for Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas at the same time can help you stretch your finances over all three holidays and not overspend on one specific holiday. You will also want to think about how you will pay for holiday shopping. You are less likely to overspend if you pay with cash rather than using a credit card. If you are using cash, once all of your cash is gone, you are finished with your holiday shopping. Another option: Many stores now offer layaway plans. If you use a store layaway option, be certain to check the return or sale policies and keep track of all payments. Finally, remember that holiday sales can be tempting, but once you are in the store, stick to your original budget.



Taking the Scare Out of Halloween

- Shop local consignment or thrift stores for costumes. Call and ask if they have a special costume sale. Also consider selling some of your children's costumes from previous years. Often consignment stores will offer buying discounts to their sellers.
- Be creative: Search your closets, as well as Grandma's, for items that you can turn into a costume.
- Do an internet search for easy DIY (do-it-yourself) Halloween costumes.
- You certainly do not want to be a Halloween scrooge and not pass out candy, so search local ads for Halloween candy specials. Try not to buy too much. This adds extra cost, and you will also be tempted to eat the leftovers.
- If you can, buy small amounts of candy at a time, which spreads the expense over several weeks. However, you may want to hide the candy at home to make certain that it lasts until Trick-or-Treat. If you wish to use candy alternatives, pencils, erasers, raisins, pretzels, dried fruit, and cereal bars are healthier options.



Thrifty Thanksgiving

- Give both you and your wallet a break. Instead of preparing Thanksgiving dinner with all of the side dishes, plan a Thanksgiving pot-luck. You can provide the turkey and ask friends and family to bring a side dish or dessert.
- If finances are tight, reduce travel expenses by only visiting family on one holiday, either Thanksgiving or Christmas. Enjoy the other holiday with your family and friends who live near by.
- Plan holiday meals ahead of time, shop grocery deals and look for coupons. Look for in-season produce, such as sweet potatoes and fall squash.
- In many families, people enjoy spending time together more than they do the actual gift received. Consider a nice dinner out where each person pays for their own meal, playing games, taking a family walk, if that describes your family.
- Make a list of all friends and family for whom you would normally purchase a gift and then talk with them about setting a spending limit on gifts.
- Before heading to the store, decide on a dollar amount that you will spend on each person.

Written by: Jennifer Hunter, Ph.D., Assistant Extension Professor, Family Financial Management

Holidays on a Budget

The holiday season can be costly to our pocketbooks and also to the environment. Follow these tips to enjoy a cost friendly, green holiday season.



- Save and reuse holiday decorations from year to year.

- Decorate using items from your backyard or the local farmers' market. Hay bales, mums, pumpkins, gourds, dried flowers, leaves, and branches can be used throughout autumn. Evergreen sprigs, pinecones, and dried fruits are beautiful during the holiday and winter season. After the season is over, these items can be composted.

Written by: Ashley Osborne, Extension Associate for Environmental and Natural Resource Issues. August 2011.



This September: Remember, Prepare, Plan with your Family

This September will mark the ten year anniversary of 9/11 and we ask you to take time to remember those lost as well as time to make sure you are prepared for future emergencies. September is National Preparedness Month (NPM), which was founded after 9/11 to increase preparedness in the U.S. It is a time to prepare yourself and those in your care for an unexpected emergency.

Emergencies can happen anytime and anywhere. If you've seen the news recently, you know that emergencies can happen unexpectedly in communities and families just like yours. This September, please prepare in the event your family must go for a few days without electricity, water service, access to a supermarket or local services. Just follow these three steps: Get a Kit. Make a Plan. Be Informed.

Get a Kit

Keep enough emergency supplies on hand for your family – water, non-perishable food, first aid, prescriptions, flashlight, and a battery-powered radio. If you own pets, remember to include their food and supplies in your supply kit. Your local Extension Office has information available as well as the Ready Kids family-friendly website (Ready.gov/kids) featuring instructions on what families and teachers can do to prepare for emergencies and the roll kids can play in that effort. Spanish material is available at Listo Niños (Listo.gov).

Make a Plan

Discuss and agree on an emergency plan with your family.

Be Informed

In addition to the Ready.gov site, free information is available from federal, state, and local resources to assist you. Contact your local emergency management agencies to get details on specific hazards in your area, local plans for shelter and evacuation, ways to get specific information before and during an emergency, and how to sign up to receive emergency alerts if they are available.

As FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate reminds us, "Individuals and families are the most important members of the nation's emergency management team. Being prepared can save precious time if there is a need to respond to an emergency."



Recipes

Carrot Casserole

- 1 bag carrots, cooked, mashed & drained
- ½ c. melted butter
- 1 c. sugar
- 3 tbsp. flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. cinnamon
- 3 eggs, beaten

Combine all ingredients and put in greased 2 quart casserole. Bake at 400° for 15 minutes; reduce heat to 350° and continue baking for 45 minutes. Serves 8.

Quick Ratatouille

- 2 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped bell peppers
- 1 cup chopped zucchini
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup diced eggplant, skin on
- 3 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 1 cup canned pasta sauce (tomato based)
- ½ cup water
- 2-3 tablespoons fresh or ½ tablespoon dried basil
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

NOTE: This recipe can easily be doubled or tripled.

1. Sauté chopped bell peppers, zucchini, onion, eggplant and garlic in oil until tender, about 15 minutes.
2. Add the pasta sauce, water, basil, and pepper.
3. Simmer until vegetables are tender, stirring from time to time.

OPTION: Yellow squash can also be used in this recipe.

Best Buys for September: Cabbage, Grapes, and Pears

Tip: Know the use of different varieties of produce. This will allow you to choose the best quality and least expensive fruits and vegetables for your purposes.

In dwelling, live close to the ground. In thinking, keep to the simple. In conflict, be fair and generous. In governing, don't try to control. In work, do what you enjoy. In family life, be completely present." --Lao Tzu,
Chinese philosopher

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