

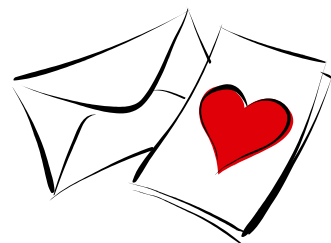
FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES



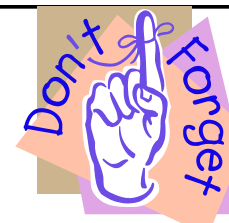
**FCS NEWSLETTER
JAN-FEB 2012**

Cooperative Extension Service
Mercer County
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



DATES



- JAN
14—2nd Saturday Quilting, 9am
**
16—MLK DAY Events, 8-11am
19—CAP MTG, 10am
19—Sewing Circle, 1pm-8pm
20—LUCI @ Senior Center, 11:30am
**
23—District Board MTG, 10am
**
30—Barn Quilt MTG, 5pm
31—MLK follow up MTG, 6pm
- FEB
2—Interagency MTG, 12 noon
3—LUCI @ SAVE-A-LOT, 10am-2pm
**
8—Mercer Fair Board MTG, 7pm
9—Estate Planning, 6:30pm
9—Fiber Arts, 6:30pm
11—First Aid & CPR/AED
11—2nd Saturday Quilting, 9am
**
13—Coupon Swap, 5:30pm
14—VALENTINE'S DAY
14—Diabetes Support MTG, 11am
14—Wilderness Trace Quilt Guild, 7pm
16—CAP MTG, 10am
16—Estate Planning, 6:30pm
17—LUCI at the Senior Center, 11:30am
**
23—Estate Planning, 6:30pm

WINTER GREETINGS! With the cold coming in soon, lots of planning has been going on here at the Extension Office. Looking ahead to the entire year we have some old favorites and some new to you programs coming. Take advantage of the estate planning workshops that are scheduled for February. Also, take a look at our sewing programs including new Sewing-4-Charity opportunities. Each month we will emphasize a themed topic within the open sewing events—scheduled during the day and at night, come join us in sewing in 2012. Coupon swaps will continue every second Monday—we also will take your unused coupons to add to our swap meet. Join us for weight management in the form of Meltdown Mercer County! Don't forget to call about our upcoming field trips to the Capitol to see your Senator and State Representative in action. See you soon!

Luci Hockersmith,
Luci Hockersmith
County Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences

MELTDOWN MERCER COUNTY

\$20.00 per person for the series. Registration includes a t-shirt, chance at CASH Grand Prizes to the winners of each of four possible categories:

- ◆ Most Inches Lost
- ◆ Most Pounds Lost
- ◆ Highest Reduction of Body Fat%
- ◆ Highest Reduction of Body Weight%

Prize amounts will be determined by number of registrations. Each week of this 10-week series, we will explore an aspect of weight control through healthy eating and living, share healthy recipes and ideas, and weigh-ins. To be held, this program must have at least 10 participants enrolled. If there are not enough participants, you will be notified and your money will be returned. If you have questions, call Luci Hockersmith at 859.734.4378. Please call for the registration form. Send completed form and payment to reserve your space in this program. Registration and payments must be received by January 24, 2012 at the official weigh-in.

Mondays,
January 24-March 27, 2012
12:00-12:30 pm OR 4:30-5:00 pm
(your choice of two sessions)
AWARDS SESSION ON FRIDAY, MARCH 30, 2012

**ESTATE
PLANNING
SERIES**

Thursdays at 6:30 pm

FEBRUARY 9th, 16th & 23rd

FREE to attend!

MEAL provided!

Simply RSVP
by calling
859.734.4378



**MONDAY,
February 13,
2011
at 5:30 pm**

Couponing Tips

with Sara Talbott,
Fayette County Agent for
Family & Consumer Sciences

All events listed are open to the public and attendance is FREE, unless otherwise noted. For more info, call the Mercer County Extension Office: 859.734.4378

Don't Let a Winter Fall Cause Winter Blues

Source: Amy Hosier, Extension Family Life Specialist, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture

With snow covered sidewalks or ice that is hard to see, it is very easy to slip and fall in the winter. To lower the odds of a fall:

- Carefully shovel steps and walkways to your home or hire someone to shovel for you.
- Do not walk on icy or snowy sidewalks; look for sidewalks that are dry and have been cleared.
- Wear boots with non-skid soles so you do not slip when you walk.
- If you use a cane, replace the rubber tip before it is worn smooth. You might also buy an ice pick-like attachment that fits onto the end of the cane to help keep you from slipping when you walk with the cane. (You can find these at medical supply stores.)
- Ask your healthcare provider whether it is safe for you to shovel snow or do other hard work in the cold.

Resource: The American Geriatrics Society (AGS) Foundation for Health in Aging. (2011). Winter Safety Tips for Older Adults.

January is National Radon Action Month

Source: Ashley Osborne, Extension Associate for Environmental and Natural Resource Issues, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has designated January as National Radon Action Month. Radon is a radioactive gas produced from the natural breakdown of uranium, which is found in soil, rock and water. Radon can move up through the soil and enter homes through cracks in the foundation, floors and walls, gaps around service pipes and by way of construction joints. Once inside radon can build up. Any home, whether new or old, well-sealed or drafty, with a basement or without, can have radon problems. Breathing air containing radon can be harmful to your health. According to the Surgeon General, radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. Take action this January by testing your home for radon. Many county health departments throughout Kentucky provide free radon test kits to residents. If your county does not offer free test kits contact the Kentucky Radon Program at (502)564-4856 to request a free test kit.

References:

KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services: KY Radon Program. 2011. Available at <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/info/phps/radongas/> (accessed September 28, 2011).

United States Environmental Protection Agency. 2010. A Citizen's Guide to Radon. Available at <http://www.epa.gov/radon/pubs/citguide.html> (accessed September 28, 2011).

United States Environmental Protection Agency. 2011. National Radon Action Month. Available at <http://www.epa.gov/radon/nram/index.html> (accessed September 28, 2011).

FREE Ski Adventure for Military Service Member Parents and Teens!

Source: Lauren Smith, Extension Military Adventure Camp Coordinator and Kerri Ashurst, Senior Extension Specialist, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture

Do you know a military parent and teenage child who would like to have lots of fun at a free camp this winter? If so, then share this great opportunity with them. The Military-Extension Adventure Camp grant is offering a free skiing and snow tubing adventure. The camp will be held January 6 through January 9, 2012 at Snowshoe Mountain Ski Resort in Elkins, W.Va. Military parents and children can attend from any state. Any branch of the military can participate in the camp. This includes Active Duty, Reserve and National Guard. Priority will be given to families who have had at least one deployment. No gear is needed and families do not need to have any experience. All they have to do is get to Versailles, Ky., to ride the charter bus or go directly to the ski resort in W.Va. The grant will take care of the rest! This camp provides a way for military parents and their teenage children to try new adventures together as a team. Families will also get to meet other military families. One participant who attended a previous camp stated, "I enjoyed getting to spend time with my son and experience events that I have never participated in before in my life. It was enjoyable to interact with fellow soldiers and their kids and to share stories. I would love to be able to go next year!" Join us for this exciting, FREE family adventure!

To sign up, please follow these instructions:

1. Go to <http://www.ca.uky.edu/hes/fcs/militarycamp/>
2. Click on the link that says "2011 Military-Extension Adventure Camp Application"
3. Fill out the packet by following the instructions
4. Send a completed packet back to the address on the first page

Sustainable Eating for the

New Year Source: Janet Mullins, Extension Specialist for Food and Nutrition, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture

Toward the end of 2011, the earth's population reached the 7 billion mark. If everyone around the world ate as we do in the United States, there would only be enough food to feed about 3 billion people. Just as we think about conserving the energy used for transportation and running our homes, consumers need to consider how they can eat in a more sustainable way. Plant-based diets with small amounts of high-quality protein are a more earth-friendly and healthier way to eat. Home gardens and locally grown foods use less energy for transportation than foods shipped from far distances. Composting food scraps to enrich garden soil decreases waste. Reusable grocery shopping bags can reduce waste by eliminating paper or plastic bag production. Buying, preparing and eating in a mindful way are good for you and the earth.

What is Good for Your Heart is Good for Your Brain

Source: Amy Hosier, Extension Family Life Specialist, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture

Sometimes people are at higher risk for Alzheimer's disease and stroke due to risk factors they cannot control. Such risk factors may include advanced age, family history or ethnicity. There are risk factors you can control, however, to help improve both heart and brain health. It starts with your heart. It is the heart's job to pump and circulate blood throughout the body, including the brain. The brain receives 15 to 20 percent of the body's blood supply. The blood brings many materials necessary for the brain to function properly and also removes materials from the brain. As the brain ages, it naturally begins to shrink and lose volume. Therefore, a healthy heart is important because the stronger it can pump blood, the healthier and bigger your brain may be.

To keep your heart and brain healthy:

Watch your numbers

- * Blood pressure – desirable blood pressure is less than 120/80
- * Blood sugar – desirable fasting blood sugar is less than 100 mg/dL
- * Body weight – keep your body weight in the recommended range
- * Cholesterol – desirable cholesterol is less than 200 mg/dL

- ◇ Make healthy lifestyle choices
- ◇ Stay mentally active
- ◇ Remain socially involved
- ◇ Stay physically active
- ◇ Reduce your intake of fat and cholesterol
- ◇ Don't smoke

Resources:

AARP. (2010). Heart Health Linked to How the Brain Ages. American Heart Association, American Stroke Association, and the Alzheimer's Association. (2011). What's Good for Your Heart is Good for Your Brain.

Country Ham Curing Workshop

Monday, January 16, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

Mercer County Cooperative Extension Office

Workshop fee - \$30. (includes one ham, cure mix and supplies) Anyone interested in learning how to cure a country ham, Dana Anderson, Mercer County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development will be leading the group. The country ham workshop participants will cure one ham over the course of the next eight months. In January, participants receive their ham and are responsible for trimming and applying a curing mixture to each ham. The cure will be pre-made (from Finchville Farms) and will consist of salt, sugar and spices. Hams will then be hanged in the Mercer County Country Ham Barn and will be monitored for the next eight months. In May, participants will meet again and wash hams and rehang in ham sock. Then in August, hams will be ready for consumption. Anyone interested in signing up please call the Mercer County Cooperative Extension Service at 734.4378, class is limited to 20 participants. Deadline to sign-up will be 4:00 p.m. on Friday, January 13.

Aluminum Tab Collection: DEC - JAN Donations

Madrene Houy
Shaunna Burger
Deanne Noonan



A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL!

Reminder: The tab collection contest will start very soon in the schools and runs until Spring Break. Let your favorite student turn in tabs for his or her classroom.

NOTICE

The University of Kentucky is committed to a policy of providing opportunities to people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.

The University of Kentucky is an equal opportunity university. Questions concerning compliance with regulations may be directed to the Institutional Equity & Equal Opportunity Office, 13 Main Building, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0032, 859.257.8927 or at <http://www.uky.edu/evpfa/eo>

**Winter Weather Policy:
If Mercer County Schools are closed,
then Extension programs are
cancelled.**

<p>CPR/ First Aid*</p> <p>CLASSES</p>	<p>American Heart Association®</p> <p><i>Learn and LiveSM</i></p> <p>\$40.00</p> <p>Must have 6 pre-registered to conduct each session. First aid portion is 9 am-12noon. CPR portion is 1-3pm. AHA. Dates are:</p> <p>FEB 11 APR 14 JUN 09 AUG 11 OCT 13 DEC 8</p> <p>*Does not include Health Provider - by request only</p>	
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Tips for Taking the Stress Out of Tax Season

Source: <http://content.govdelivery.com/bulletins/gd/USAGOV-252bdf?reqfrom=share>

- 1 They say nothing in life is certain except death and taxes, and with tax season right around the corner, you might be starting to worry about the latter.
- 2 But with the help of USA.gov, you don't have to stress about filing your taxes. Here's what you need to know to make the process simple:
- 3 The deadline to file your taxes this year is April 17. The deadline is pushed back two days because of the weekend and Emancipation Day, a Washington, D.C. holiday. If you can't make this deadline, you can request an extension and file your taxes later, however, if you owe money, you still need to pay by the April 17th deadline.

If you think you could use some help filing your taxes, find out if you're eligible for free tax counseling. The elderly, military members and their families and people with low to moderate incomes may be eligible for free tax counseling. The IRS has trained tax counselors who might be able to answer your questions. The IRS makes it easy to file your taxes online using the e-file system. The benefit to online filing is that it's free, it reduces the risk of making a mistake and it lets you get your refund more quickly. If you decide you don't want to file online and would rather submit a paper return, make sure you have all the forms you need. You can download them online from the IRS or may also be able to find them locally at your post office, credit unions, office supply or grocery stores. You will also find instructions to fill out the forms that you can read online or download to a Kindle device. Once you've filed your taxes, you can track your refund status easily to find out when you'll get your money. If you e-filed you will be able to get your refund information 72 hours after the IRS receives your information. If you filed a paper return, you can check your refund status in three to four weeks. You can also check the status of your refund using IRS2Go, a mobile app available for iPhone and Android devices. By following these five tips and getting your return in early, you'll be able to watch your refund roll in and avoid that last minute scramble.

Chocolate is a Sweetheart of a Candy

Source: Janet Mullins, Extension Specialist for Food and Nutrition, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture

Cocoa is one of the richest food sources of healthful antioxidants. Consumers can look for new products designed to enhance chocolate's health benefits and reduce the sugar content. Eating a small amount of rich, dark chocolate provides instant enjoyment. The higher the cocoa content, the more antioxidants the candy contains. The human love affair with chocolate began over 3,000 years ago, when it was served as a frothy, spicy, cocoa-like drink in Central America. While chocolate will never be as healthy as fruits and vegetables, it is a way to be sweet to your Valentine in a healthy way.

Enjoying Nature in Winter

Source: Carole Gnatuk, Senior Extension Specialist for Child Development, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture

Winter is no excuse for staying indoors! Richard Louv, author of *Last Child In the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*, tells us that "...there's no such thing as bad weather, just the wrong clothes". He argues that for younger generations of children — and adults — nature is something to watch, consume, wear or ignore. Children are taught to avoid direct nature experiences. Yet, research finds that our mental, physical and spiritual health is dependent to a large degree on our direct contact with nature.

To counter the trend of staying indoors or in the car playing video games, Louv suggests many ways to play outdoors, even in winter. Dress in water-proof, warm clothes and boots. Then, when it is raining, "pour outdoors." Go puddle-stomping, ditch-damming and leaf-boating. Learn from the sky about the various types of clouds and their meanings for weather. Two great books about the sky and clouds and building a backyard weather station are *The Cloudspotter's Guide* by Gavin Pretor-Pinney, and *The Kids' Book of Weather Forecasting* by Mark Breen, Kathleen Friestad and Michael Kline. Try wildlife photography with digital cameras. Such cameras are small for stashing in pockets and they also eliminate the use of film. In winter, without leaves on the trees, birds, animals and their tracks in mud or snow are more easily seen. The zoom feature permits exciting close-ups and settings are sensitive for lower light conditions. Which tracks belong to which creatures? Walk quietly in the woods!

Select a tree for special watching all year long. Yes, you can hug it! Photographs and stories can highlight its life during every season. In winter, it can be fun to notice how the snow falls on it or where the moss grows. Are there more branches that grow on one side than another? Such growth patterns show the way the wind blows against it most of the time. The tree protects itself by growing more branches on the side away from the wind. What does the tree look like after a big windstorm? Did some branches fall to the ground? Which ones? In winter, you can create bark rubbings and compare the patterns to other trees. Studying bark is one way to identify the species of trees. As March rolls around and the tree shows signs of life, record them with your camera. It is fascinating to watch the formation of buds and their opening to reveal the baby leaves. In areas of abundant snowfall, children like to build igloos, dig a snow cave and go sledding or snowshoeing. There is endless fun and healthy exercise in the winter months. Dress for the weather and enjoy!

Reference:

Louv, R. (2008). *Last child in the woods: Saving our children from nature-deficit disorder* (2nd edition). Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill/Workman Publishing Company ISBN-13: 978-1-56512-605-3

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Sewing Programs 2012



Sewing with assistance at the Mercer County Extension Office:

✂ Every Thursday evening

4pm-8pm

✂ 3rd Thursdays

1pm-4pm

✂ 4-H: 2nd & 4th Mondays

3:30pm-5pm

✂ Sewing-4-Charity: 4th Mondays

5pm-8pm

JAN Sewing Machine 101

FEB Pillowcases & Decorative Pillows

MAR Serger Basics

APR Window Treatments

MAY Summer Skorts, Flour Sack, Pillowcase & Sundresses

JUN Repurposing t-shirts

JUL T-shirt Quilts

AUG Working with denim, repair & patching

SEP Back to School: sew on a button, hemming & seams

OCT Around the Kitchen: Apron and Potholders

NOV Decorative Gift Bags for the Holidays

DEC Tote bags & Handbags

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Mercer County Sewing Circle



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