

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Maryland Association for Family and Community Education, Inc. Newsletter

DECEMBER

- 1 State Dues and Membership Forms due to NAFCE
- 6 10:00 AM MDAFCE Board Meeting, Montgomery County Extension Office Cancelled
- 31 **Counties Annual reports due Vice President for Program; County's Presidents' Reports due to State President; Membership Appreciation Award due to Vice President for Program**

JANUARY

- All Month Complete and Mail Annual Reports
- 31 End of County 2021-2022 Essay and Artwork Contest

FEBRUARY

- All Month **Birthday Month – Collect & send pennies to State FCE Treasurer (Pennies are for postage for the newsletter)**
- 1 “Look What’s Happening” deadline for items to Editor
Start county judging of Essay and Artwork Contest
- 7 10:00 AM MDAFCE Board Meeting, Place TBD
- 20 Send county winner of Essay and Artwork Contest to State President

MARCH

- All Month Women’s History Month
- 1 Heart of FCE & Spirit of FCL Award entries due State President
- 7 10:00 AM MDAFCE Board Meeting, Place TBD
- 8 International Women’s Day

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CHARACTER COUNTS!® Contest

Send your CHARACTER COUNTS!® contest winning entry to Libby Wade, MDAFCE President by February 20, 2022.

MDAFCE Web Site is www.mdafce.org

Send newsletters, calendars and information to Libby Wade at dunade@aol.com. Check your county web site for accuracy.

Newsletter Deadline: February 1

Send all articles, Bulletin Board items, address changes and trivia for the newsletter to:
Jean Purich, 15500 Gallaudet Ave,
Silver Spring, MD 20905-4196 or
email to jcpurich@cs.com.



“The best way to cheer yourself is to try to cheer someone else up”.

Mark Twain

FROM THE PRESIDENT

"I will begin by repeating myself! Who would believe that after more than a year and a half, we would still be immersed in the pandemic, COVID-19. I hope that everyone is doing well. As we are now approaching the holiday season, all I want is for everything to get under control and we can celebrate with our friends and family. I was reading an article about looking forward and having a positive attitude. I know it is very difficult to stay positive with all of the restrictions we have, but with modern technology – telephones and computers, we do have the means to stay in touch with our friends and family. I think we need to make plans for what we can do for each other. What do they need? What can we offer? Can we talk to them about what they need and what we can do about it? Do we, ourselves, need help and is there someone we can ask to help us? My family has always gotten together during the holidays. Last year we did not. This year I hope on seeing my family in small groups. What are your plans? Can you think of something you can do for others? Let us stay positive and hope that next year will bring an end to this pandemic.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year to one and all.

Libby Wade, President
dunade@aol.com

301-831-8661



own rules and boundaries in which to operate both alone and in conjunction with each other. No one part was to be greater than the other. If one part tried to become greater than the others, the checks and balances built into each one's powers kept the offending one in check. If our government was a chess game, the 3 players would be kept in check (or in balance) with each other, so as not to create an imbalance in the duties and policies each branch must carry out to effectively run the services it was created to do for the benefit of the citizens of the United States. Yes, our government was created for and by the people of the United States. We are the employers; they are the employees.

Over the years, during different presidencies, we can see where one or two of the branches have tried to expand their powers beyond what is in their charters to operate. For example, the executive branch has used different situations to use the "Executive Order" function to push forth policies that the legislative branch would not support. With partisan animosities at an all-time impasse, the cooperation between the executive and legislative branches has become more like a compaction one suffers from not eating enough fiber. The result is nothing gets done, heels get dug in deeper, and the employers are left wondering if the system is so broken that it cannot be repaired.

With the dangerous enemies we have both inside and outside of our country, we cannot afford to have our checks and balance system of government become ineffective. Cooperation, compromise, and respect for the other's political stances must be brought back into play. The representatives we send to Washington DC (legislative, executive, and judicial) must be educated in those three ideals starting with their family upbringing and in their schooling. These old-fashioned ideals are the building blocks of how we treat each other as human beings.

The current questions and soul searching that is going on in this country about race, equality, social justice, and what it means to be "American" in America, all come down to how we treat and perceive each other. Does "We the People" mean we or just me and not them. The arguing that continues on up into the top echelons of our government affects all of us and impacts how our government functions for us as a whole. We really don't have to

NEWS FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Blurred Lines of Responsibility

The results of today's ineffective and confusing government policies are the product of blurred lines. What blurred lines? I think it goes back to the continuous transgressing of the boundaries that were created by the country's founding fathers of a government built upon a system of checks and balances. The Judiciary, Legislative, and Executive branches all had their

worry about how America will stand up and protect itself against the enemies outside of our boundaries. If the people within our government and

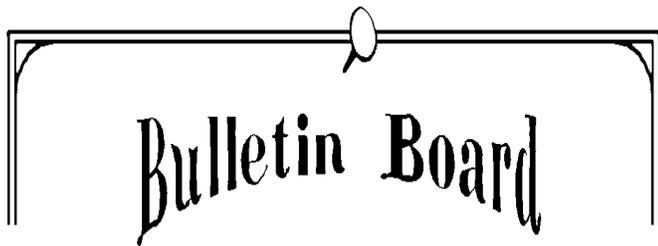


our society itself do not practice the “golden rule”, the lines drawn in the sand about this policy or that political stance won’t matter in the long or short run. We may end up dragging

our short history as a democracy into the realm of past history.

Debra Rausch
rauschda@gmail.com

301-498-8806



Continued recovery for Sue Van Slyke (Prince George’s County) and Elizabeth Heagy (Carroll County) after recent illnesses.

Request for prayers and healing vibes for Charlene Dillingham, Montgomery County, who has begun chemotherapy and dialysis. We hope she is soon on the road to recovery.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Copies of the treasury report are available from Elizabeth Heagy, Treasurer at momheagy@yahoo.com or 410-857-3388.

IN AND AROUND MARYLAND

CARROLL COUNTY

On August 10th Carroll County FCE had their first meeting for 2021. The Ag Center here was open and they agreed we could meet. Due to my health issues, I was not able to go, but Debi Gibson was there and she was in charge on the meeting. She said 6 people showed up. Terry Serio, CES educator was to give a talk on spices but she also had health

problems so she will try to make it to our next meeting on November 8th.

Debi said since there was no program, they talked about what everyone had been doing and what programs they would like to have this year. At the Ag Center we cannot serve food so everyone brought their own lunch and we ate together. Waltraut’s daughter, Laura Celland, brought her and also stayed for the meeting. Maybe we can get her to become a new member.

We are now sending everything for Waltraut to her daughter’s address at Laura’s request. Also Laura recently called me to let me know that Waltraut is being moved to the Assisted Living part of Carroll Lutheran Village due to health problems. If you wish to send her a card please use the address 3110 Slasman Road, Finksburg, MD 21048 and Lauren will take it to her.

Linda Payne to installed Debi Gibson as our new president.

Our next meeting is scheduled for November 8th and Terry Serio will be talking about Cooking with spices. Again, everyone is asked to bring their own lunch and to bring a friend with them to the meeting. I am hoping to be able to attend. Debi said she was going to see if people who come to this meeting want to meet in December for a Christmas Party. She has games we can play & we have always had a Christmas Party in the past. As we plan meetings for this next year, we will share the dates with you in the future.

I also hope other County Ag offices open so other counties can also have meetings in 2022.

Elizabeth Heagy, Carroll County
momheagy@yahoo.com 410-857-3388

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Several of our clubs have begun to meet in person. What a welcome relief! It is so great to see and speak to one another in person. We also have planned all of our 2022 programs and projects and are very hopeful to be able to attend all in person.

We have continued to hold blanket drop off days at the Extension office parking lot. Except for the wonderful students and adults that come and bring their beautiful creations, I’m beginning to feel like someone up to no good - meeting in the parking lot all the time. And the donations of yarn, fabric

and stuff we have been getting – a result of people cleaning out, I suspect. We are so grateful for all.

We have continued to collect socks, hats, and gloves to donate along with our blankets, some of which are going to the shelters and food banks.

One private school has agreed to participate in the Essay and Art work contest. Hopefully we will get many entries.

We seem to be coming out of the pandemic but we all must do our part by getting the vaccine and boosters when we are supposed to. Listen to the scientists and the doctors. We each must do our part.

Merry Christmas and stay safe.

Jeanne Purich
jcpurich@cs.com

301-384-2805

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

We are getting smaller. Sue Van Slyke, our president, is getting settled in assisted living. The change is a big one and we have her in our prayers for adapting to this change and send her our best wishes. Debbie has been dealing with her husband's lymphedema and doctor visits....we hope they lessen and the condition gets better. Alicia is working and approaching 20 years with Montgomery County Fire Department. She is looking forward to a second career helping people in some fashion. We haven't met except through the executive board of MDAFCE. We shall have to see what the coming year brings us.

Debra Rausch
rauschda@gmail.com

301-498-8806

Set the World Rejoicing

There's never a rose in all the world,
But makes some green spray sweeter;
There's never a wind in all the sky.
But makes some bird's wing fleeter.
There's never a star but brings to heaven
Some silver radiance tender,
And never a rosy cloud but helps
To crown the sunset splendor;
No robin but may thrill some heart,
His dawn like gladness voicing.
God gives us all some small, sweet way,
To set the world rejoicing.

MEMBERSHIP

Our 2022 FCE membership drive is progressing. As of November 1, 2021, we have 91 members, including **2 new members**.

Don't forget that you can receive an FCE Star pin for every new member you recruit **plus** a chance for you and your new member to attend our October 2022 Maryland FCE conference free. We had 118 members in 2021. Can we exceed that count in 2022? Let's try. Please contact me if you need a membership form. Stay safe and healthy!



Jeanne Gillis, Membership Chair
101 Rolling Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20877-2043
(301) 926-1038
jeannegillis2326@gmail.com

Useful Household Hints

Measuring Cups

Before you pour sticky substances into a measuring cup, fill it with hot water. Dump out the hot water, but don't dry the cup. Next, add your ingredient, such as peanut butter, and watch how easily it comes right out.

Beach sand

Take baby powder to the beach. Keep a small bottle of baby powder in your beach bag. When you're ready to leave the beach, sprinkle yourself and kids with the powder and the sand will slide right off your skin.

Broken Glass

Use a dry cotton ball to pick up little broken glass pieces of glass -- the fibers catch ones you can't see!

Reheat Pizza

Heat up leftover pizza in a non-stick skillet on top of the stove, set heat to med-low and heat till warm. This keeps the crust crispy.

FALL FLAVORS AND WARM WINTER MEALS

Lately, it seems that seasons are shorter – except for summer. I’m writing this in early November, and it’s currently 72° outside. Who knows what the weather will be like by the time this newsletter is distributed?

One thing we do know is that when colder weather comes, many of us will be craving comfort foods, and perhaps a break from barbecue. Thankfully, we might even be able to attend family/friend holiday gatherings in person this year! And we might even find the time and inclination to cook.

What follows is not a list of recipes, but ideas for creating easy, healthy, seasonal meals. After all, a recipe is a suggestion (unless you’re baking – then it’s science). Not everyone loves spicy food, red peppers, etc. Some folks won’t eat anything bland, or they might have allergies. There are personal preferences, of course. Therefore, here are some guidelines for your own creations.

I love using my crockpot, especially in cooler weather. There’s something soothing about the aromas filling my home. It’s especially useful for soup. Those of us who live alone or with a partner can decant portions and freeze them for later use. You don’t need a crockpot, however. A large soup pot on the stovetop works well. Just keep the heat at a simmer for an hour or two.

Soup is very forgiving. For example, if a recipe calls for butternut squash and your store is out, use sweet potatoes or canned pumpkin puree. If you don’t like onions, leave them out. Gather the vegetables you like or have on hand, some sort of protein (leftover chicken, any variety of beans, or brown ground meat on the stove, drain the fat, and add it to the pot). Add the spices you prefer (basil, thyme, marjoram, or any spice blend you like). For a change of pace, try a Greek variation – oregano, mint, garlic, and basil. Add some fresh lemon juice and handfuls of fresh spinach at the end of cooking. Heat until the spinach wilts.

For a more filling meal, add rice, barley, or quinoa to the pot. Adding cooked pasta at the end of cooking time is another way to pump up the meal.

Chicken is another staple that works well in the crockpot or in the oven. One of my favorite company meals is Chicken Marbella, from the Silver

Palate© Cookbook. The recipe can be found online. It looks (and tastes) fancy, but it’s just a matter of marinating the chicken overnight, then cooking it in either the crockpot or the oven. There are seldom any leftovers.

Another crowd-pleaser is Chicken Cacciatore. There are more recipes than can be listed, so go to Google and find something that includes ingredients you like. You might also want to look up Hunters’ Chicken. Similar, but heartier. A few shakes of poultry seasoning will give the dish an unexpected boost of flavor. Zucchini or butternut squash works well with these dishes and provides extra nutritional value. Add a side of pasta or some good bread to mop up the gravy.

If you’re hosting a holiday meal and expect vegetarian guests, here’s a way to present a festive dish: Cut a large circle off a pumpkin around the stem, scrape out the seeds, and roast it in the oven until it’s slightly soft but still holds its shape. Now spread an assortment of vegetables on a sheet pan – butternut squash, zucchini, tiny potatoes, portabella mushroom chunks, peppers, etc. Toss with olive oil, thyme, salt black pepper and garlic powder (to taste, as always). Fill the pumpkin shell with the roasted veggies and serve with a side of quinoa (which is a good source of protein). For extra flavor, cook the quinoa (or rice or barley) in vegetable broth or stock. (This recipe suggestion is also vegan). If roasting a pumpkin is not practical for you, serve the vegetables in a soup tureen. Any leftover vegetables and quinoa can be incorporated into soup or a frittata. The roasted veggies will give the meal a unique flavor.

For those of you who crave comfort food but focus on healthy eating, www.foodnetwork.com/healthy posts recipes that adjust old favorites to reflect better nutrition.

If you prefer to cook with a specific recipe, try www.hungry-girl.com or www.skinnytaste.com or look up sheet-pan cooking – a quick and easy meal idea. Or simply open Google, list the ingredients you want to use, and be prepared to see a list of recipes that incorporate what you have on hand.

Wishing you all a safe, healthy* and happy holiday season. I hope it’s better than last year’s.

*Please don’t forget to get your flu shot!

Susan Goldberg

susan.m.goldberg@gmail.com

10 Ways to Fight Off the Winter Blues

By Therese Borchard for Sanity Break



If you're human, chances are you've woken up on a gray, wintry day and wanted to stay in bed. For older people, and for folks with a condition like Raynaud's phenomenon who are sensitive to the cold, it's even tougher. I am not a huge winter fan, so I have to work extra hard on my mental health during the colder months.

Here are a few techniques to keep in mind.

1. Behave Like You're from Minnesota

I learned an important lesson the year I lived in Minneapolis during the blizzard of 1996, when snow hit the ground in October and didn't leave until the end of May: These people adapt! They love it. They make a trip to L.L. Bean in the fall, get all the necessary gear, and go ice-fishing, ice-skating, snowshoeing, and do everything in their power to appreciate the very elements that I cursed. By February, I couldn't take being inside anymore, so I followed suit. I started running in the snow, having fun with the icicles that would form inside our car, and throwing up a pail of water and watching it come down as snow from our apartment balcony. Once I tried to act like a Minnesotan and stopped resisting the cold temperature, the better I tolerated it.

2. Wear Bright Colors

I have no research supporting this theory, but I'm quite convinced there is a link between feeling optimistic and sporting bright colors. It's in line with the "faking it 'til you make it" desperate attempts to trick your brain into thinking that it's sunny and beautiful outside - time to celebrate spring! - even though there's a blizzard with sleet

causing some major traffic jams. So, make a conscious effort to wear bright green, purple, blue, and pink, and sometimes all of them together.

3. Stock Up on Vitamin D

Since we get most of our vitamin D from the sun, it's a good idea to take a vitamin D supplement during the winter months. So many diseases are correlated with low vitamin D levels, especially depression. The National Institutes of Health's recommended dietary allowance for vitamin D is 600 international units (IUs) a day. But *The New York Times* best-selling author Joseph Mercola, DO, suggests that adults take as much as 5,000 IU per day. Certain foods are good sources of vitamin D, including cod liver oil, swordfish, salmon, tuna, milk, yogurt, sardines, eggs, and cereals fortified with vitamin D.

4. Make a Book and Movie List

Winter is a great time to get to those books and movies you've been meaning to read and watch. A friend of mine challenged herself to read all the classics during the months she wasn't positioned on the sidelines of her son's lacrosse field. Since plenty of research has indicated that humor can relieve pain, watch comedy.

5. Hang with Positive People

This is especially critical in the winter when you're typically spending a lot of time inside with people chatting over a cup of coffee. If the negativity gets too thick, it can become suffocating. When individuals associated themselves with happy people, they are more likely to be happy themselves.

6. Try Something New

For a while now, we've known about neuroplasticity - that the brain changes and develops over the course of our lives. We are not stuck with the noggin we were born with. As our neurons send and receive information about the task at hand and become more efficient, it takes less effort for them to communicate to the next cell what is going on. Trying something new essentially rewires our brain. Take advantage of your days indoors to learn a new musical instrument (or maybe just a new piece of music), try your hand at a new card game, or maybe cook up something different for dinner.

7. Start a Project

There's no time like winter to start a home project, like de-cluttering the house or purging all the old clothes in your kids' closets. Projects like organizing bookshelves, shredding old tax returns, and cleaning out the garage are perfect activities for the dreary months of the year.

8. Eat Winter Mood Foods

If you have a slow cooker, winter is a great time to experiment with tasty mood-boosting soups and stews. Some great fall and winter ingredients to include are squash (a great source of magnesium and potassium), eggplant (which contains fiber, copper, vitamin B1, and manganese), sweet potatoes (full of pantothenic acid, vitamin B6, biotin, and anti-inflammatory flavonoids), and turmeric (which assists with immune-inflammatory or stress pathways and hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal axis activity).

9. Use a Bright-light Therapy Lamp

Bright-light therapy has proven to be an effective treatment for SAD (seasonal affect disorder) because, less sunlight affects our circadian rhythms. Light boxes - flat screens that produce full-spectrum fluorescent light, usually at an intensity of 10,000 lux - are the typical light system used for SAD in clinical studies. Some health clubs offer light-box rooms where you can go sit in front of the boxes if you can't afford to buy one for yourself. It's important to position the light box according to the manufacturer's instructions, and to use it at the same time each day, typically for 30 to 60 minutes. Most people get the best results when they use a light box before 10 a.m.

10. Sit by the Fire

It's primal, that feeling you get when you stick your face into a hot glowing body of flames. There's something so consoling about staring into the embers and warming your hands by their heat. But you need not go to the trouble of building a fire in your house: You can borrow someone else's fire — even a coffee shop's - or you can simply light a few candles and enjoy a primal moment to remind you that you belong to this world of human beings that have sat around fires for thousands of years to get warm and enjoy a moment of stillness.

ACWW News Important Days in OCTOBER



In October, we celebrated four important days relevant to the Associated Country Women of the World, and rural women everywhere. On October 11th, we marked the International Day of the Girl Child, on October 15th we celebrated the International Day of Rural Women. The next day was World Food Day, and the following day was the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

ACWW believes that rural girls are our future. Twenty-five percent of the world's population are rural women, and the empowerment of young women and girls is critical for the sustainable food systems and the eradication of poverty. When the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations launched the UN Decade of Family Farming in 2019, they highlighted the importance of keeping agriculture viable and sustainable for future generations of family farmers. This means giving girls equal opportunities to inherit and use family farms, ensuring access to education and in particular agricultural education. Crucially, addressing unequal access to resources and financing, limitations in maternal and reproductive healthcare, and the physical and metaphorical distance between rural women and the politicians who make decisions which most affect them. The greatest barrier standing in the way of progress is governments who choose to ignore the reality of life for women and girls, those same women and girls upon whose labor the success of the nation depends.

Supporting younger women in your community is a vital part of empowering younger women. It is also crucial that older women lobby to secure rights to healthcare for younger women and themselves, so that the next generation of women has control over their future and decisions.

Magdie

Magdie de Kock, ACWW

FRENCH TOAST CASSEROLE FOR OVERNIGHT GUESTS

Prepare this the night before:

In a small saucepot, melt one stick of butter or margarine with 3 Tbs. light corn syrup and 1 cup granulated brown sugar. (Regular brown sugar will scorch & burn. The granulated type comes in an hourglass plastic container with a yellow & white label). Cook over low heat until mixture is syrup-y. Set aside.

Tear a loaf of challah bread or 6-8 Italian-style bread rolls into chunks. Set aside.

Whisk together 8 eggs, 2 tsp. vanilla and 2½ cups milk

Assemble casserole: Pour the syrup into a greased, deep 9x13 baking dish. Scatter the bread chunks over the syrup. Pour the egg/milk mixture over everything.

(Don't put the bread onto the syrup until you're ready to add the milk, or the bottom pieces of bread will soak up all the syrup). You might want to add raisins or chopped dates or chopped apple chunks in with the bread. Press the bread into the batter so none of the chunks are dry. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.



First one up in the morning: heat oven to 350°F. Remove plastic wrap from casserole dish. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Bake for 45-60 minutes until the top is lightly browned and the eggs aren't runny.

As people serve themselves to the casserole, the built-in syrup on the bottom will be scooped up with the French toast. Enjoy!!

Maryland Association for
Family and Community Education
15500 Gallaudet Avenue
Silver Spring Maryland 20905

