

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Maryland Association for Family and Community Education, Inc. Newsletter

DECEMBER

- 1 State Dues and Membership Forms due to NAFCE
- 2 Maryland FCE Board Meeting, 10 AM
MC Extension Office
- 10 **Cookie Exchange and Crafts**, 9:45 AM
Extension Office Garage
Refreshments: Lunch Bunch
See page 4 for details.
- 15 Send outreach and meeting reports to Jeanne Purich

JANUARY

- All Month Complete and Mail Annual Reports
- 13 FCE Blanket Making Day, 10 AM – 3 PM
MC Extension Office Garage
- 31 End of County 2024-2025 Essay and Artwork Contest

FEBRUARY

- All Month **Birthdays 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
- 5 Maryland FCE Board Meeting, 10 AM
MC Extension Office
- 9? FCE Blanket making, 10 AM – 8 PM
Extension Office garage
- 11 “I Am Not Content; an Hour with Frances Perkins” – a program by Kathie Mack
9:45 AM, Extension Office
County Association Meeting
Refreshments: Derwood
- 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
- 3 Maryland FCE Board Meeting, 10 AM
MC Extension Office
- 8 International Women’s Day
- 13 International Day (Thursday) – Greece, 10 AM
MC Extension Office
- 17 FCE Blanket making, 10 AM – 3 PM
MC Extension Office garage
- 25 MC Executive Board meeting, 10 AM
MC Extension Office

CHARACTER COUNTS!® Contest

Send all CHARACTER COUNTS!® contest entries to Jeanne Purich by January 31, 2025.

MDAFCE Web Site is www.mdafce.org

The website is a great way to find information and see what FCE is doing. It is also a good resource for new and potential members. Send any information for the website to Libby Wade at dunade@aol.com.

Newsletter Deadline: February 1

ANYONE can send articles, announcements, Bulletin Board items, address changes and trivia for the newsletter to: Jean Purich, jcpurich@cs.com.



Your mind is a garden, your thoughts are the seeds. You can grow flowers, or you can grow weeds

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I thought we had a Great Conference!! I hope everyone who attended liked the speakers. I especially enjoyed the stories about the White House from the usher's point of view! Even though it's a year away, we need to think about speakers for next year. What did you like best? Can you let the Board know of any topics and/or speakers you would want to have.



I now need to get ready for Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. I get together with my family. It's hard to think of presents that they would want. I hate to say it but now that the nieces and nephews are older, I am relying on money so they can get what they want or need. We do find it hard to get all of us together in person. We usually have to do several different meetings rather than all at the same time.

Lastly, what about New Year's resolutions! What can I do next year to help myself and others have a good time and help others with what they need? What are your resolutions? Maybe we can share our resolutions with each other.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

Libby Wade, MDAFCE President
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NEWS FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR PROGRAM

The Maryland Association for Family and Community Education held its annual conference from October 21-22, 2024, in the same wonderful Eastern Shore location as last year. Our hotel was on the Kent Narrows, with a view of the Chesapeake Bay and many nearby opportunities to eat seafood.

A highlight for those who came early on Sunday was a narrated boat cruise out of St. Michaels on the Miles River. After the cruise, some

of us visited the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum nearby.

On Monday and Tuesday, conference attendees appreciated informative presentations on chocolate fudge (Jill Sandler of The Chocolatier's Palette); food safety in the kitchen (Cheryl Bush of Queen Anne's County Extension); *White House Usher*; *Stories from the Inside* (Christopher B. Emery, author); Fact or Fiction — Homecare Myths Dispelled (Kathleen McGuinness, healthcare industry expert); Exploring Our Eastern Shore History and Heritage (Gail Owings, Executive Director of Eastern Shore Heritage, Inc.); Birds of the Chesapeake Bay (Judy Wink, Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center); and Spilling the Beans on Beans (Amber Beall and Kathie Mack of MCAFCE). Martha Moser led us in the découpage of seashells and Ginny Hagberg led us in gentle exercise between sessions.

The conference also included an awards ceremony and a business meeting where revised bylaws were voted on and reports were given. Our final activity was to draw raffle tickets for five lovely gift baskets members had prepared. A good time was had by all! Please join us next year. Some photos from the conference may be seen at: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/zHEYVJ9Ru1UnVreA8>

Kathie Mack, MDAFCE
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Thoughts and good wishes to Adele Washington who had knee replacement surgery.

Our deepest sympathies to Barabara Perry on the loss of her husband Lowell and to Diane Kendall and Brenda Peters on the loss of their father.

Our sympathies to Ellen Robinson and family on the loss of a beloved mother-in-law, Shirley Robinson.

VIEWS FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC POLICY

The Election has finally almost ended, with the exception of some contests still to be called for the House. After all the yelling, name-calling, finger-pointing, outrageous claims made to and about each other, the campaigning is done. For a while. Until the contestants for the next political offices open for occupancy gear up for a battle/war of words, gestures, media, and promises to outdo their competition in thought, word, and deed.

We go through this national event every 2 years for congressional seats and every 4 years for the executive seat of president. We call this democracy in action. Sometimes we choose well and sometimes.....well, I won't digress in that direction. My personal feelings about the choices that have been made, have been clearly expressed in prior newsletters.

I am interested in what will be the ramifications of these choices and what will occur because of them, not only to our democratic institutions, but to you and me, the American public in total. And, remember, our society as a whole, stands or falls together, is affected by the public policies of the government that was elected to office that will affect all of the people all of the time, not just a targeted few.

How do these new public policies affect us? The deportation of targeted mass numbers of people from our country to counteract the fear that all immigrants are taking away our jobs, should be looked at closely. Do we really see hordes of "legal citizens" standing in line to take on those food harvesting, meat packing, restaurant staffing, nursing home attendant, construction, hotel maintenance, or other manual labor jobs that no one wants? Many workers in these areas are skilled and trained. Sending them away leaves a vacuum here, and the country they are sent away to gets a valuable resource- a trained worker. What do we do to fill those vacated jobs? Recruit migrant workers in other countries to fill the bill? Doesn't this sound redundant?

We have heard the old saw "A leader is only as good as the people he/she chooses to work with/support him/her." This leads the discussion to the people being delegated to implement the leader's policies. When FDA/Medicine becomes weaponized

with unscientific & erroneously projected public policies, ex. non-fluoridation of our waters (leading to more cavities in the mouth) and the "anti-vax" movement being implemented as public policy, then this opens the door for the people who are carrying out medical policies who are not qualified or trained to do so. If we don't vaccinate, the diseases we vaccinated against will attack the public as they did 50 or 100 plus years ago. We vaccinate to protect the body against the disease. We did not eradicate the germs themselves. This is just one public policy area where ignorance is deadly to all of us.

Multiply the carrying out of unthought out policies by the unqualified appointees that are being mentioned daily in our media, and it seems the immediate future of our federal government public policy should be of great concern to each one of us. The next two years are going to change us as a nation. The question is will it be for the good or bad of all of us. And, will the damage done to society, you & I, be repairable by the time the midterm elections take place?

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Our 2025 FCE membership drive is underway. As of November 10, 2024, we have 80 members, including 2 new members. **Please give a warm welcome to our 2 new members: Jane Shaub and Mary Walsh!** We are still trying to meet our goal of 100 members. So, please know that it's not too late to renew **AND/OR** recruit! Remember that you receive an FCE Star pin for every new member you recruit **PLUS** a chance for you and your new member to attend our October 2025 Maryland FCE Conference for **FREE**. Hint: Make your holiday shopping easy with a gift membership! You can always contact me for a membership form. Stay safe and healthy.



Jeanne Gillis, Membership Chairman
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Montgomery County President's Paragraphs

Planning for 2025

We are planning all the 2025 programs and activities. We will start with our blanket day in January and add informational programs starting in February. Please use your new handbook (see below) to mark your calendars **now** (so you don't double book with that dentist appointment!) as we have some very interesting programs planned.

The **Handbook** will be distributed in December. The Handbook is a very useful guide that contains all the programs and dates of activities for FCE in 2025. It is also a quick reference to enable you to contact your local and state officers. The handbook explains FCE continuing programs, the role of National FCE and most importantly keeps you informed of county and state events.

Cookie Exchange

December 10, 2024 at 9:45 AM
MC Extension Garage

Come and share some Holiday cheer. We will have some fun, eat a few cookies and then go to lunch. That is, after we exchange cookies. Bring 4 dozen cookies, the recipe and an extra empty container.



FCE Blanket Making (MC Extension Garage)

January 13, 2025 Monday 10 AM – 3 PM
February 7, 2025 Friday 10 AM – 8 PM
March 17, 2025 Friday 10 AM – 3 PM



As of October, we have produced 1,079 blankets and 717 newborn hats for 2024. We continue to work with MCPS to provide Student Service Learning (SSL) hours for students for

blanket, hat and scarf making. We engaged with 148 students and awarded 4111 SSL hours to students as of October.

We are always looking for more yarn; if you know of anyone who is cleaning out their closet, keep us in mind.

February is Birthday Month

Happy Birthday to us!
Remember that February is FCE's birthday month. Clubs/individuals should collect a penny for each year of a member's life (or \$1.00 so no one will know your age) and send to Jeanne Gillis. The fund helps defray mailing costs of the newsletter.



"I Am Not Content; an Hour with Frances Perkins"

Kathie Mack

February 13, 2025 at 9:45 AM

MC Extension Office

County Association Meeting

Frances Perkins will visit FCE for our February program. Ms. Perkins was the first woman to be a Cabinet Secretary (Secretary of Labor for Franklin Delano Roosevelt) and she was largely responsible for the Social Security benefits so many of us enjoy. Kathie Mack will bring Ms. Perkins to the stage.

"International Day - Greece"

March 13, 2025 at 9:45 AM

NOTE: MEETING DAY IS THURSDAY

Jeanne Purich

MC Extension Office

Experience the culture and food of Greece. You will be treated to food and photos of this beautiful land.



Stay well and safe. Remember to smile.
Have a good Holiday season, spend time with family and if you have a pet, give him an extra treat – it will make you feel better.

Jeanne Purich

Jeanne Purich, MCAFCE President

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The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is often described as an international bill of rights for women. It defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. CEDAW provides the basis for realizing equality between women and men through ensuring women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life — including the right to vote and to stand for election — as well as education, health and employment. States parties agree to take all appropriate measures, including legislation and temporary special measures, so that women can enjoy all their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

On December 18, 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. It entered into force as an international treaty on September 3, 1981, after the 20th country had ratified it. By the 10th anniversary of the Convention in 1989, almost 100 nations had agreed to be bound by its provisions. As of April, 2022, Iran, Palau, Somalia, Togo, United States and the Holy See has signed but not ratified CEDAW.

The Convention was the culmination of more than thirty years of work by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), a body established in 1946 to monitor the situation of women and to promote women's rights. The Commission's work is instrumental in bringing to light all the areas in which women are denied equality with men. These efforts for the advancement of women have resulted in several declarations and conventions, of which CEDAW is the central, most comprehensive document.

Among the international human rights treaties, the Convention takes an important place in bringing the female half of humanity into the focus of human rights concerns. The spirit of the Convention is rooted in the goals of the United Nations: to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity, value and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women.

Candy Corn Was Originally Called “Chicken Feed.”



Candy corn may be the most maligned confectionary — it's rare that the tricolored treat ever tops the list of beloved fall candies. Yet somehow it returns with flair each fall, an unyielding symbol of the season. While the waxy, triangular kernels have essentially remained the same since their creation in the 1880s, one thing *has* changed about candy corn: its name. In its earliest years, candy corn was called “Chicken Feed,” a catchy name appealing to rural Americans during a time when nearly half the country's population worked on farms.

Not much is known about candy corn's origin, though credit for its creation often goes to the Wunderle Candy Company, a Philadelphia venture that first produced the candy during the 1880s. However, another manufacturer — the Goelitz Confectionary Company, which would grow into the modern Jelly Belly Candy Company — further popularized the treat around 1898, designing packaging featuring a rooster and the tagline “Something worth crowing for.” By then, the treat was called “candy corn.” At a time when most real corn was planted for animal feed, candy corn was a novelty play on the idea that corn could actually be enjoyable for humans.

Making the miniature kernels was a time- and labor-intensive process done entirely by hand. Workers called “runners” walked backward along a conveyor belt packed with cornstarch molds, lugging buckets filled with a hot, sugary slurry that slowly dripped out through a hole. Each pass contributed one of the candy's iconic yellow, orange, and white layers, which cooled into shape. Today, the process is nearly entirely mechanized and much faster, allowing candy corn factories to produce about 9 billion of the kernels each fall, just in time for seasonal snacking.

Q. How do you keep your car from being stolen?

A. **Buy a standard shift model**

Q. How do you send a message in code?

A. **Write in cursive**



CHARACTER COUNTS!®

Maryland FCE's essay and artwork contest winner, Nataname Girma, receives National FCE second place certificate at St. Camillus church.

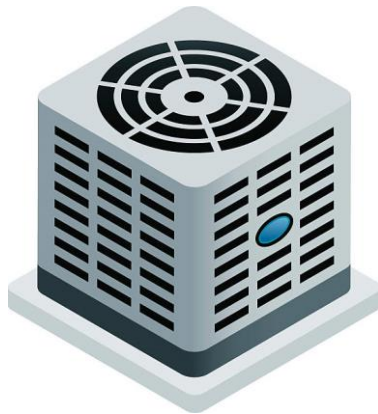


This took place in St. Camillus church after the regular Wednesday morning mass and assembly. Pictured are Jerri Hunt, Kathie Mack, Nataname, school principal Sam Chapa and Ms. Girma.

Clearing the Air: Air Conditioners and Asthma or Allergies

Allergens are tiny airborne particles that can trigger an asthma attack. The big five triggers are dust mites, animal dander, cockroaches and their droppings, mold and mildew, and pollen. Although there is no sure way to prevent asthma, it can be managed by reducing exposure to these allergens.

Pollen is a particular problem during the spring and summer months. Keeping the windows closed will keep the pollen outside, where it belongs. And on warm summer days, an air conditioner can be an asthma sufferer's best friend. But, ironically, that best friend can be the source of other asthma triggers: mold and mildew.



Good maintenance practices, along with regular cleaning, will prevent mold and mildew buildup. Another bonus: clean, well-operating air conditioners are more efficient, which helps control energy costs.

Room Unit Maintenance

Turn off the power or unplug the unit before you begin.

At the beginning of the season, vacuum the evaporator coils. These can be found immediately behind the front grille.

Using a level, check the installation. The unit should slant slightly toward the ground so that the condensed water flows out of the unit.

Change disposable filters at regular intervals during the season.

Permanent filters should be cleaned several times during the season. Remove the filter and lay it flat in the sink. Sprinkle detergent over the surface, and then fill the sink with about one inch of hot water. Let the filter soak for about 15 minutes. Rinse it well with warm water. Make sure it's thoroughly dry before reinstalling it.

If the unit stays in the window all year, cover it during the off season. If you remove and store it anyplace that is prone to dampness, such as a cellar or a garage, raise the air conditioning unit off the floor with a few pieces of wood. This will protect it from moisture on the floor.

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for your unit.

Central System Maintenance

A yearly service call by a professional should include washing the condensing coils and vacuuming the evaporator coils. During the summer, there are a few things you should monitor.

Disposable filters should be changed several times during the season. Permanent filters should be washed, using the same method as for room unit air conditioners.

Leaves and fallen branches can clog the fan grille on the outdoor condensing unit, which can cause moisture buildup and affect the air conditioner's efficiency. Check the unit regularly, especially after winds and rain.

Air Ducts

Air ducts should be cleaned every 3 to 5 years. If yearly maintenance is done and filters are changed, this may be able to be increased to every 6 to 8 years.

When to Choose Antibacterial Soap



Global Handwashing Day is October 15!

We all know that washing your hands with soap and water helps to prevent illness. This is through a combination of the friction of scrubbing hands together, the properties of the soap to break up and trap germs and grime, and the action of the water to wash everything down the drain. But have you ever wondered about what kind of soap you should be using? The best soap is the one that works for you. But there is an additional component you may want to look for if you need more protection against disease.

In many hospitals and doctors' offices you'll see antibacterial soap. This is hand soap that has an added active ingredient that kills bacteria. Should you have it in your home? The answer may depend on your circumstances. For many healthy individuals with robust immune systems, regular soap and water is all you need. However, if someone in the home is immunocompromised or recovering from an injury or medical procedure, extra precautions can be helpful.

The key is to match your cleaning needs to the needs of your household to keep everyone happy and healthy. As more health care happens in homes and outside of doctors' offices, products like antibacterial soaps, disinfectant wipes, and laundry sanitizers can add an extra level of protection for the most vulnerable. Fortunately, these options are currently available on store shelves.

Hand sanitizer

Hand sanitizer (also known as **hand antiseptic**, **hand disinfectant**, **hand rub**, or **handrub**) is a liquid, gel, or foam used to kill viruses, bacteria, and other microorganisms on the hands. It can also come



in the form of a cream, spray, or wipe. While hand washing with soap and water is generally preferred, hand sanitizer is a convenient alternative in settings where soap and water are unavailable. However, it is less effective against certain pathogens like norovirus and *Clostridioides difficile* and cannot physically remove harmful chemicals. Improper use, such as wiping off sanitizer before it dries, can also reduce its effectiveness, and some sanitizers with low alcohol concentrations are less effective. Additionally, frequent use of hand sanitizer may disrupt the skin's microbiome and cause dermatitis.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers, which contain at least 60% alcohol (ethanol or isopropyl alcohol), are recommended by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) when soap and water are not available. In healthcare settings, these sanitizers are often preferred over hand washing with soap and water because they are more effective at reducing bacteria and are better tolerated by the skin. However, hand washing should still be performed if contamination is visible or after using the toilet. Non-alcohol-based hand sanitizers, which may contain benzalkonium chloride or triclosan, are less effective and generally not recommended, though they are not flammable.

The formulation of alcohol-based hand sanitizers typically includes a combination of isopropyl alcohol, ethanol, or *n*-propanol, with alcohol concentrations ranging from 60% to 95% being the most effective. These sanitizers are flammable and work against a wide variety of microorganisms, but not spores. To prevent skin dryness, compounds such as glycerol may be added, and some formulations include fragrances, though these are discouraged due to the risk of allergic reactions. Non-alcohol-based versions are less effective and should be used with caution.

The use of alcohol as an antiseptic dates back to at least 1363, with evidence supporting its use emerging in the late 1800s. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers became commonly used in Europe by the 1980s and have since been included on the World Health Organization's List of Essential Medicines.

Due to their effectiveness and easy accessibility, the use of hand sanitizers increased during the COVID pandemic and has remained so.

Leftover Turkey Casserole



Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons butter (*unsalted*)
- ¼ cup flour
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper (*coarse ground*)
- 1 cup turkey gravy
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 cup mozzarella (*shredded*)
- 3 cups cornbread (*cut into 1 inch chunks*)
- 3 cups turkey meat (*chopped, cooked*)
- ½ cup peas (*frozen*)
- 1 cup carrots (*chopped*)
- 1 cup green beans (*chopped frozen*)

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350° and add the butter to a medium sized saucepan melting it on medium heat.
2. Add the flour to the pan and whisk well together for 1 minute before adding in the gravy, milk and mozzarella. Whisk until smooth.
3. Add the cornbread, turkey, peas, carrots and green beans to a 9×13 pan and cover with the gravy before cooking for 20-25 minutes covered, followed by 10 minutes uncovered.

Enjoy

**Maryland Association for
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