

# HEALTHY, WEALTHY, AND WISE

Practical Knowledge for Everyday Living



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## Agent's Corner

'Tis the season to be jolly. But, unfortunately, it also seems to be the season to overeat, over spend, and over indulge.

Don't let the holidays get you down. If you're feeling grumpy and totally holiday cheer-less, give yourself a break. Take a breath. Relax. Learn to stop sweating the small stuff.

And remember, if things don't go as perfectly as you planned, there's always next year.

*Samantha Kennedy*

Samantha Kennedy, M.S.  
Family & Consumer Sciences Agent

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### DID YOU KNOW?

The longest recorded flight of a chicken is thirteen seconds.



The youngest pope was 11 years old.



In 1836, Alabama was the first state to declare Christmas a legal holiday.



In 1907, Oklahoma was the last state to declare Christmas a legal holiday.

### Consumer Alert: Gift Cards

Gift cards can be a great gift for the person who has everything. They are convenient and flexible gifts that allow the recipient to choose what he or she really wants.

However, many gift cards may not be the bargain the buyer was hoping for. Hidden fees can drastically decrease the value of the card.

Some of these fees are as follows:

**Purchase Fees.** These may be charged when you buy a gift card and are in addition to the cost of the card.

**Monthly Fees.** These may be deducted

from the card's balance each month the card carries a balance.

**Inactivity Fees.** These apply if the card is not used within a certain time period (this may differ from card to card).

**Transaction Fees.** These may be assessed for all transactions or for certain types of transactions (such as ATM withdrawals).

**Miscellaneous Fees.** These may be charged for balance inquiries or card replacement services.

Always read the fine print before making a gift card purchase.



## SECTION A: THE GOOD LIFE



### Realistic Resolutions



**The key to reaching your goals is to make them as realistic as possible.**

Are you one of those people who makes resolutions every year and then breaks them within the first month? It may not be that you lack the fortitude to reach your goals; your goals may just be too lofty.

The key to sticking to your resolutions is setting realistic goals. Many of us would like to lose thirty pounds, but thinking that

big can be daunting. Think about lowering your goal to something more manageable, like losing 5 or 10 pounds.

If reading more is your goal, then instead of choosing *War and Peace* as your initial goal, try something shorter, like *The Great Gatsby* instead.

If changing your diet is your goal, instead of quit-

ting soda cold turkey, for instance, you may want to just cut back from five to two cans a day.

Making resolutions can be discouraging if they are consistently broken. Setting more realistic goals can improve your chances of sticking with them. Otherwise, you should just resolve to never make another resolution.

### Gift Wrapping Got You Down?

Tired of the same old wrapping paper? Go from blah to beautiful in a few easy steps.

Instead of using seasonal gift wrap, try using an assortment of “generic” paper in solid colors or subtle patterns.

Line gift boxes with colorful tissue paper. It can

add bulk to gifts as well as much needed cushion for more fragile objects.

Seasonal stickers or tags are an easy way to add a festive adornment to any package without going over-the-top. You can easily create your own gift tags using colored paper or card stock, a hole

punch, and some scalloped edge scissors.

Decorate your package with raffia ribbon or metallic pens. Use wire ribbons for beautiful bows.

Cut off the fronts of pretty greeting cards and attach to any gift box or bag for a festive touch.

*“I love California; I practically grew up in Phoenix.”*

*Dan Quayle*



**Don't let the season get you down. The simple act of laughing can be a great stress reliever.**

### Relieving Holiday Humbug

Got the holiday doldrums? Feel like skipping the holiday season altogether? Don't fret!

Many people feel the blues this time of year. Stress brought on by too much worry and the strive for perfection can turn anyone into a scrooge.

Give yourself a break. Perfection, like lofty resolutions, is impossible to attain. So what if only half the string of twinkle lights wants to work? Let it go.

Too much stress can be hazardous to your health. And stress, aggravated by

overindulgence at the holiday table, can zap all your holiday cheer away.

Take the time to enjoy the season, to laugh at Uncle Bob's silly jokes, to sing a few carols off-key.

Life's too short to waste it worrying about the small stuff.

## SECTION B: HOME ON THE RANGE



### Curbing Your Holiday Appetite

According to the National Institutes of Health, holiday eating can result in an extra pound or two a year. Over time, this can add up.

With so many delectable treats within arm's reach, controlling your holiday eating can be a challenge. But it is not impossible.

Here are a few tips to help

you control your eating this holiday season:

Plan time to exercise. Exercise relieves stress and helps control weight gain. Try going for a 10 to 15 minute walk once or twice a day.

Before going to a party, eat a light snack such as raw veggies or fruit. This can curb your appetite

and lower your chances of over-indulging.

Don't stuff yourself. Your body will tell you when it is satisfied. Enjoy smaller portions and savor each bite. This will give your stomach time to signal your brain that it's full.

Be careful about alcohol intake. Alcohol is high in "empty" calories.



**Overeating can make you feel less than your best. Avoid this holiday pitfall.**

### Figs, Figs, the Wonderful Fruit

Figs are a very unassuming fruit. Sure, we've all heard of Fig Newtons and that holiday classic, figgy pudding. But what does the average Jane actually know about figs? Could she pick one out of a lineup?

Figs are fat-free, sodium-free, and cholesterol-free.

They are an excellent source of fiber, providing 20% of the daily allowance in just one serving. They are high in other nutrients as well, such as potassium, calcium, and iron.

Figs are also jam-packed with antioxidants and phytochemicals, sub-

stances found in fruits and vegetables that help reduce the risk of certain types of cancer.

Figs were once considered a food of the gods and for good reason. They are versatile and tasty; an easy way to satisfy your sweet tooth in a healthy way.

*"A bachelor's life is no life for a single man."*

*Samuel Goldwyn*

### Flavor of the Month: Egnog

Try this recipe for a traditional holiday treat!

#### Ingredients:

6 eggs  
1 cup + 1 tablespoon sugar  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
3/4 cup brandy  
1/3 cup dark rum (optional)  
2 cups whipping cream  
2 cups milk

#### Directions:

Beat the eggs for 2 or 3 minutes with an electric mixer on medium speed until very frothy. Gradually beat in the sugar, vanilla, and nutmeg. Turn the mixer off and stir in the cold brandy, rum (if wanted), whipping cream, and milk. Chill before serving. Sprinkle individual servings with more nutmeg. Makes 2 1/2 quarts.

Note: All liquids should be very cold. Refrigerate in advance.

# SECTION G: ODDS & ENDS

## Volunteer News: HCE & The Guild

**HCE News:** The next meeting for the HCE, scheduled for Monday, December 4, is CANCELLED. We will meet January 8, 2007 at 3:00 pm in the Haley Room. Congratulations to our new officers: President—Vicki Cole, Vice President Cory Garrison, Secretary/Treasurer Louise Auger. We are looking forward to a new exciting year in HCE. Remember “Reach out with HCE”.

**GUILD News:** Mark your calendars NOW! Christmas Party December 4, 2006 starting at 12:00 pm. Please bring a covered dish to share and a wrapped gift (\$5.00 maximum) to participate in the Christmas Gift Exchange Game. We will have live entertainment courtesy of Fletcher Music. It will be a day of festivities. If you have any questions feel free to call the office. NOTE: TIME CHANGE —12:00 pm—3:00pm.

## December Birthdays

Claire House	December 4
Rosalie Maslin	December 7
Helen Galus	December 21
Sue Diadone	December 24
patsy monk	December 28

## A Special Announcement:

**Happy Birthday  
to  
Michalina Lesiuk  
November 7**

## Upcoming Events & Important Dates

December 4, 2006 12:00—3:00 pm	Guild Birthday/ Christmas Party
December 9, 2006 8:00 -11:00 am	FCS Annual Breakfast with Santa
December 25 & 26, 2006	CES Office Closed Christmas Holiday
January 1, 2007	CES Office Closed New Year Holiday
January 8, 2007	Guild Birthday Lunch HCE Meeting

## Manatee County Extension Service

*Solutions for your life.*

Samantha E. Kennedy, M.S.  
Family & Consumer Sciences  
1303 17th Street West  
Palmetto, FL 34221  
Phone: 941-722-4524  
Fax: 941-721-6608  
Email: skennedy@ufl.edu

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

