



Beaver County

Family and Consumer Sciences


Newsline

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List What's Great in Your Life


New Year Resolutions are often made in hopes of self improvement. Some very popular resolutions are to lose weight, stop smoking, and to exercise more. Before you make your list of changes needed, start off this year by focusing on what's already great in your life!

 Start by making a list of things you are already good at or are good about you. You never have to share this list but somehow seeing an actual list of good things about yourself is sure to be a morale booster. Can you play an instrument, ride a horse, or know a poem by memory? Are you a good cook? Perhaps you make the best pumpkin pie and the holidays wouldn't be the same without it. Have you ever trained a dog or built something with your own two hands? Are you good at cards, crossword puzzles, or Sudoku? Do you have beautiful handwriting or know calligraphy? Maybe you volunteer; list the ways you make a difference.




 If you have writer's block, ask your friends and family what they think is great about you. They will almost certainly come up with good things to say that may even surprise you.

 Also include on your list things that are great with your life: family, friends, a nice home, and possessions. Count your blessings. Have you been blessed with plenty of luxuries? You may not list them but remember those creature comforts such as heat and electricity, sanitation, clean water, abundant food, an education, health care, or an income. These seemingly simple things make our lives truly great! What we take for granted every day may be another's greatest wish.

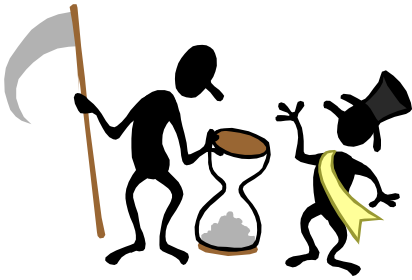
 Now while you are feeling good, share the joy. Send a quick note or email to someone you know and tell them something that you think is great about them. Wouldn't it make their day to get a sincere message from someone they respect thanking them for being a fabulous friend, or pointing out what a laugh they are to go out with? And wouldn't that also be a really fun, life enhancing note to send out?



 Take a few minutes and start writing. Write out your own "What's Great in My Life" list and then send out a note to enrich someone else's life. Recognize that you have talents, abilities, gifts and interactions with others that set you apart and make you unique. Then tackle your New Year Resolutions to turn your negatives into positives by concentrating not only on what needs improving, but also by acknowledging the worthy qualities that you already have in your life.

Based on an article, "New Year's Resolutions—What's Great In Your Life" by Stuart Brown at www.firstscience.com

NEW YEARS



The celebration of the new year is the oldest of all holidays. It was first observed in ancient Babylon about 4000 years ago. In the years around 2000 BC, the Babylonian New Year began with the first New Moon (actually the first visible crescent) after the Vernal Equinox (first day of spring).

The beginning of spring is a logical time to start a new year. After all, it is the season of rebirth, of planting new crops, and of blossoming. January 1, on the other hand, has no astronomical nor agricultural significance. It is purely arbitrary.

The Romans continued to observe the new year in late March, but their calendar was continually tampered with by various emperors so that the calendar soon became out of synchronization with the sun.

In order to set the calendar right, the Roman senate, in 153 BC, declared January 1 to be the beginning of the new year. But tampering continued until Julius Caesar, in 46 BC, established what has come to be known as the Julian Calendar. It again established January 1 as the new year. But in order to synchronize the calendar with the sun, Caesar had to let the previous year drag on for 445 days.

Other traditions of the season include the making of New Year's resolutions. That tradition also dates back to the early Babylonians. The early Babylonian's most popular resolution was to return borrowed farm equipment.

Traditionally, it was thought that one could affect the luck they would have throughout the coming year by what they did or ate on the first day of the year. For that reason, it has become common for folks to celebrate the first few minutes of a brand new year in the company of family and friends. Parties often last into the middle of the night after the ringing in of a new year. The song, "Auld Lang Syne," is sung at the stroke of midnight in almost every English-speaking country in the world to bring in the new year. An old Scotch tune, "Auld Lang Syne" literally means "old long ago," or simply, "the good old days."

It was once believed that the first visitor on New Year's Day would bring either good luck or bad luck the rest of the year. It was particularly lucky if that visitor happened to be a tall dark-haired man.

Traditional New Year foods are also thought to bring luck. Many cultures believe that anything in the shape of a ring is good luck, because it symbolizes "coming full circle," completing a year's cycle. For that reason, the Dutch believe that eating donuts on New Year's Day will bring good fortune.

In some regions, rice is a lucky food that is eaten on New Year's Day. Black-eyed peas and other legumes have been considered good luck in many cultures. The hog, and thus its meat, is considered lucky because it symbolizes prosperity. Cabbage is another "good luck" vegetable that is consumed on New Year's Day by many. Cabbage leaves are also considered a sign of prosperity, being representative of paper currency.

<http://wilstar.com/holidays/newyear.htm>

Q&A

Contact me with your questions and I'll try to answer them in this column.

Q. Can you catch a cold from being in the cold?

A. No, exposure to cold temperatures doesn't cause colds. Colds are caused by viral infections. However, it is true that more people catch colds when the temperature is cold outside. This may be related to increased time spent inside during cold weather — where you have closer, prolonged contact with others who may be sick. Also, many cold-causing viruses thrive better when humidity is low — in the colder months of the year. The best way to prevent a cold is to wash your hands thoroughly and frequently. However, it's still not a bad idea to bundle up for comfort in winter.

Source: mayoclinic.com

Past Newsletters are available on-line on our web at <http://countyext.okstate.edu/beaver>.

New Year's Resolutions for the Family's Soul

Rather than the usual diet and exercise promises, let's get down to the basics for truly nourishing, achievable New Year resolutions now. Take these steps to add more love in your family's lives.

- ♥ Bring on the laughs. Put more humor into your life. Rent a comedy film once a week, and giggle family-style. If you have a child within the ages of 10 to 15, watch her sense of humor emerge now.
- ♥ Schedule a weekly dinner. Even if you have to add it onto the kitchen wall calendar, plan a family meal. Aim for participation. Let different family members decide the menus each week and cook together. This kind of a meal delivers emotional nourishment - a commodity we all need, but teens especially.
- ♥ Commit as a family to volunteer within your community. This can be as simple as cleaning out your wardrobes regularly to donate clothes and toys to a local charity shop or shelter.
- ♥ Document your family history. Gather all those scattered photographs into an album. Draw a family tree. Take a genealogy course, even if it means just searching the Internet. Teens need a sense of belonging, and this is a way to create the extended family that so many of us have lost in our daily lives.

- ♥ Look after yourself. Discover a ritual that makes you feel good - a hot bath every night, fancy flavored tea, a manicure, or an evening out with your best friend. As the stress of daily life intensifies, we have to be good to ourselves and pass on this coping mechanism and concept of self-love to our children.
- ♥ Swap a hug for a yell. Next time you are ready to let yell at your child - even if you have a good reason - hug her instead. Take a few deep breaths. Then offer a calm reprimand. You'll be teaching anger management as well as giving love when she needs it most.
- ♥ Perform one kind gesture a day. Be courteous when you're driving. Say hello and smile at a stranger. Pick up some litter. Tell your child about your good deed. Vie to see who can do more random acts of kindness. Show your family that 'It's cool to be kind'.
- ♥ Get in touch with the natural world. It is the best antidote for our fast, materialistic world. Look up at the sky: watch the sunrise or the sunset. Walk outside in the snow, wind or rain. Buy a plant, and watch it grow. Visit the parks and outdoor spaces in your area.

You don't have to make all of these New Year's resolutions, but even one will make you feel good.

By Charlene Giannetti and Margaret Sagarese from <http://www.ivillage.co.uk>

Landscape Quilts Presentation on Jan. 31st



If you ever made pictures in school using scissors, glue, and colored paper, you've already had your first lesson in landscape quilting. Learn more about Landscape Quilts on January 31st at 1:30pm in the Extension Office.

With a landscape quilt, you can capture the personalities of the seasons, the abundance of a flower garden, or the tranquility of a lake in fabric. Learn how to start with an inspiring picture from nature and turn it into a magnificent wall quilt.

Based on video series (available for borrowing) this lesson will explain basics such as selecting the right fabrics, using fabric markers to change or add color, and how to messy cut.

This presentation will also be the HCE Leader's Training for the February HCE Lesson.

HCE REPORTS WORK DAY on January 19th. Come to the Extension Office at 10:00am. Please bring clippings and photographs of HCE sponsored activities. Let's have State Award Winning Reports again this year! Reports must be postmarked by February 1st, 2006.

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Sudoku

Sudoku (sūdoku), sometimes spelled Su Doku, is a logic-based placement puzzle. The puzzle was designed by Howard Garns, a retired architect and freelance puzzle constructor, and first published in 1979. Sudoku initially caught on in Japan in 1986 and attained international popularity in 2005.

The rules to the puzzles are simple. Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. There's no math involved. The grid has numbers, but nothing has to add up to anything else. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic. Puzzles can range from easy to very difficult.

There's no right or wrong place to start – but we do have to start somewhere, so let's look at the three boxes at the top of the puzzle.

There's a 1 in the middle box, and a 1 in the box on the right – but the box on the left still needs a 1. At first glance you might think the 1 could go into any of the seven empty cells. However, the 1 cannot go in the top row of the box, because the top row of the grid already has a 1. A grid-row has room for only one of each number. Nor can the 1 go in the second row of the box because the second row of the grid already has a 1. There's only one place left for the 1 to go.

For more information, search the web for SUDOKU. There are several sites you can play on-line for free or print off the puzzles for later. Several puzzle books are also available.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sudoku>

EASY SUDOKO PUZZLE

				9	6	2		1
				1		4	8	
4	2				8		5	9
	5		1	6		8		
2		9				1		3
		6		2	9		4	
7	8		9				1	6
	9	2		8				
6		4	5	7				

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easy

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