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Did You Know?

Dear Kim,

Happy Holidays from the UME-PGC Staff! It has been our pleasure this year to send you our monthly newsletter, SOLUTIONS IN YOUR COMMUNITY. We hope that you have enjoyed our updates about healthy eating, local food and agri-tourism events, gardening tips, and information about classes we offer in the community. Please take the time to enjoy your family and friends at this time of year- and Think Snow!



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Happy Holidays,



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Karol Dyson

Capitol Area Extension Director

University of MD Extension

**Check Back in 2016 for Upcoming Events happening in
Prince George's County**

2nd Annual Community Garden Winter Work Day

The 2nd Annual Community Garden Winter Work Day was a huge success! This year we had 62 volunteers from University of Maryland- College Park, Parkdale High School, Northwestern High School, William Wirt Middle School and Paint Branch Elementary. We accomplished some major tasks and couldn't have done it without our volunteers, thank you!



UMD-CP student volunteers pictured with Betti Gregus, Community Garden Coordinator, and Testudo.

10 Financial Tips for the Holidays

Many Marylanders have a lot more holiday cheer than cash this season but we have also gotten smarter at making good spending decisions. The holidays can be a stressful time for you and your wallet. If you don't want to begin the New Year with a lot of debt, it's important to make smart decisions. The presents, and parties, the special foods, and the long list of family obligations can cause unnecessary stress. It doesn't have to be that way! The holidays should be a time of joy and togetherness with family and friends.

Here are a few tips that may save you some of your hard earned money and reduce your stress:

1. **It is important to decide how much you can spend BEFORE you start shopping.** Set your holiday budget before you begin shopping. Santa isn't the only one who should be checking his list twice. Set a gift budget and stick to it.
2. **Make sure to include the little extras that we often overlook such as postage and shipping costs.** Little extras can really add up. Use cash as often as you can. It makes you accountable.
3. **Shopping online? Allow time for shipping thus avoiding express shipping fees which can really add up.** Free shipping is a very common holiday promotion. You can search for free shipping codes on freeshipping.org and RetailMeNot.com.
4. **The cost of Christmas cards and postage can add up. Why not send a holiday email or holiday postcards?** The postage is less. Cut your old Christmas cards from last year and make your own postcards. Call and wish your friends and family happy holidays!
5. **Use pretty pages from a magazine to wrap gifts or let your children decorate plain paper.**
6. **Make Christmas tags from old Christmas cards or cut a piece of wrapping paper and fold it in half.**
7. **Grocery stores are having sales on holiday foods. Why not buy a few items a week so you won't have sticker shock?** If you cook your turkey in a large cooking bag you won't need to buy an expensive name brand turkey. Any brand of turkey will be delicious!
8. **Entertainment is a fun part of the holiday season. Have a fun family night planned for decorating the tree, wrapping presents and baking. Why not bake extra goodies to give as gifts?**
9. **Drive or walk around your community to look at the Christmas lights.**
10. **Play board games with family and friends.**

Remember it isn't how much you spend, it really is the thought that counts. Keep a level head about holiday spending and you won't suffer from buyer's remorse because remember.... January is coming!

You will welcome the New Year without the added stress of holiday debt. Happy Holidays!

Making Cent\$ of It All....

Patricia Maynard

FCS Educator

Environmental Academy Students Present at The White House

On Tuesday, December 1st, 2015, The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Energy's Advanced Research Projects Agency organized student presentations on "Raising the Profile of Agriculture".

Students in the Academy of Environmental Studies at Gwynn Park High School and High Point High School were invited to represent PGCPSS and MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences) at the event. The students showcased the innovative activities taking place in the Academy of Environmental Studies.



Students from Gwynn Park High School and High Point High School with MANRRS National President and UMES Recruitment and Retention Coordinator. This opportunity was an extension of a partnership with University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES). UMES is currently working with multiple schools through Maryland to develop MANRRS and Jr. MANRRS chapters, developing bright leaders for the future of agriculture and related sciences.

The meeting was attended by agricultural and food researchers, and other experts with representatives from industry, non-profit organizations, and government shared their ideas for bolstering agricultural science and research and for recruiting students interested in science, technology, engineering, and math to tackle the global challenges of sustainable food and energy production.

Did You Know...

Did you know... that two Prince George's County farms were featured on [Maryland Farm & Harvest](#) ? Check out [John Isabelle Acres Farm](#) and [Miller Farms](#), two fine agriculture operations in Gorgeous Prince George's!



[Maryland Farm & Harvest](#)

Did you know...that there are two community input sessions coming up regarding Prince George's County's [Resource Conservation Plan](#)? The RCP will combine the related elements of green infrastructure planning and rural and agricultural conservation into one functional master plan in order to streamline the process, meet state requirements for planning

elements, and more efficiently update existing plans and maps. Join the Prince George's County Planning Department on January 5 or 6. Download the [flyer](#) for more information.



Did you know... It is time for Producers to start updating their Nutrient Management Plans. Plans need to be completed, reviewed and returned to producers prior to nutrient applications. Producers need to check their soil test results and make sure they are current. Soil samples need to be taken every three years. Chris Dowell is in the Prince George's County office on Mondays and Tuesdays to assist with your nutrient management plans, or other days by appointment. Send him an email at csdowell@umd.edu or call him at 301-868-8783 for more information.

December Recipe: Banana Nog

Courtesy of [Food Network](#)

- 1/2 firm (slightly under-ripe) medium banana
- 1/3 cup lowfat plain yogurt
- 3 Medjool dates, halved and pitted
- Large pinch freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 cup ice cubes

Put the banana, yogurt, dates and nutmeg into a blender. Blend on high until the mixture is mostly smooth, about 1 minute. Add the ice cubes and blend until completely smooth. Add 1 to 2 tablespoons of cold water if needed to adjust consistency.



We are hope you enjoy family and friends during the holidays and we look forward to serving you in 2016! Happy Holidays!



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MARYLAND
EXTENSION
Solutions in your community

This newsletter is brought to you by University of Maryland Extension, [Prince George's County](#). University of Maryland Extension (UME) is a statewide non-formal education system funded by federal, state, and local governments within the University of Maryland - College Park and the University of Maryland - Eastern Shore. Our mission is to support Maryland's agricultural industry; protect its valuable natural resources; enhance the well-being of families and individuals, both young and old; and foster the development of strong, stable communities.

The Prince George's County office, partially supported by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, serves the community from two locations including the main Extension office in Clinton and the Center for Educational Partnership in Riverdale.

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