Welcome to the March issue of "Solutions in Your Community", the University of Maryland Extension, Prince George's County newsletter! This month you'll find highlights from recent programs as well as two important upcoming events that may interest you.

UME staff reach out to the community through workshops, clinics, print and online resources, small group/individual consultation, and media efforts. We're here to serve the community.

We hope you enjoy the articles and opportunities presented here. Let us know how we can help you to develop solutions in your community by emailing me at: kdyson1@umd.edu.

Karol Westelinck Dyson
County Extension Director

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Become a Maryland Master Gardener!

Mark your calendars for the next Maryland Master Gardener Training on

Monday, March 11, 2013. See flyer for all the details.

This important program is designed to train volunteer horticultural educators for University of Maryland Extension- the principal outreach education unit of the University of
Maryland. Participants receive 40-50 hours of basic training from University of Maryland professionals and then agree to work in their communities to teach Marylanders how to cultivate garden spaces and manage landscapes sustainably using research-based information.

Register Now for the Second Annual Growing Community Gardens!

Register now for: Growing Community Gardens

A gathering for Prince George's County gardeners to build community, learn from each other, and gain gardening skills

Saturday, March 23, 2013, 10 am - 3 pm
University of Maryland Center for Educational Partnership, 6200 Sheridan St., Riverdale, MD 20737

Join us for workshops, networking, and lunch. All workshops taught by Prince George's County Master Gardeners:

**Workshop 1**: Weed ID & Control, Kelley Oklesson & Joe Mudd
**Workshop 2**: Composting in Your Plot, Edi Butler
**Workshop 3**: Season Extension, Jennifer Fairfax

$10.00 per person. Register at Eventbrite.com before March 16th. Contact Christie Balch at cbalch@umd.edu for more information.

Hosted by University of Maryland Extension Prince George's County

**Sponsored by**: MOM's Organic Market
Maryland Agricultural Council, Inc.
Eric C. Olson, Council Member, District 3, Prince George's County Council
Prince George's County Farm Bureau, Inc.

University of Maryland Extension programs are open to all citizens and will not discriminate against anyone because of race, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, or national origin, marital status, genetic information, or political affiliation, or gender identity and expression.

FSNE to Celebrate "Earth Day" with District Heights Elementary School

District Heights Elementary School will celebrate Earth Day 2013 with Food Supplement Nutrition Education (FSNE) programming! The school has been collaborating with the Prince George's County Health Department FSNE Program since June 2012, when a garden was built in the school's enclosed courtyard. Since then, the school has organized an after-school Garden Club that teaches students about the benefits of eating fresh fruits and vegetables grown in a garden.

This year, under the leadership of Principal Marlowe Blount-Rich, the school is continuing to utilize FSNE curricula (Growing Healthy Habits, Read for Health, and Grow It, Eat It, Read It) and will host an Earth Day celebration that emphasizes healthy eating habits made possible through growing fruits and vegetables. Earth Day activities include: making recycled rain gauges, garden pinwheels and making recycled paper.

The collaboration between the school and FSNE is growing stronger, as the school plans to incorporate the Growing Healthy Habits curriculum into its Science Improvement Plan for all grade levels. The school's Earth Day celebration is sure to be an exciting educational event for the students at District Heights Elementary School.

Innovative Strategies to Teach Middle School Youth about Healthy Eating
The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) with the University of Maryland Extension in Prince George's County partnered with Benjamin Stoddert Middle School in Suitland for approximately 10 weeks to implement an after school series of nutrition/healthy cooking lessons with the fitness/gardening club students, approximately 14 middle school youth. During the workshops, the EFNEP educators taught a variety of nutrition topics pertaining to: MyPlate, Healthy Snacking, Fast Food, and Food Advertising. In addition, these youth prepared healthy recipes, such as Mango Smoothies, Healthy Pasta, Vegetarian Chili, and Homemade Trail Mix.

After learning about the core messages, these middle-school students were assigned to create a special video project about their knowledge/skills gained. One group of youth showcased their new cooking skills by making a cooking show segment, and the other group made a public service announcement (PSA) about the importance of physical activity.

The two video segments were combined to make one final video that was shared with the entire class. As a result, these youth learned how food advertising/media affects their food choices; learned to read nutrition labels and make better decisions when eating out; and learned the important skill of cooking healthy, delicious recipes, especially the kind of recipes that they would like to make and eat at home.

***Check out our latest blog

Updates about First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move Campaign:
First Lady Michelle Obama just introduced a huge collaborative effort that will make healthier, MyPlate recipes easy to find and share at Pinterest.com. Also see the Whitehouse.gov site for more information.

Four Leaf Clover
by Esther Mitchell

The most common clover most of us encounter is white clover. It is also know as the shamrock although its botanical name is *Trifolium repens* and it is a member of the pea family. White clover grows among turf grass, crops, and in a large number of other landscapes. Most of us look at it as a weed in our lawn. White clover can tolerate close mowing, and can grow on many different types of soil, but prefers clay. It is considered to be a beneficial component of natural or organic lawn care due to its ability to fix nitrogen and can out-compete lawn weeds. Natural nitrogen fixing reduces leaching from the soil and can reduce the incidence of some lawn diseases that are enhanced by the availability of synthetic fertilizer. It stays green year round and can be a substitute for that ever evasive turf grass lawn we spend money on. It sends up white flowers that bees are attracted to and make a special type of honey. You've heard of clover honey, well that is where it comes from. Clover can be perennial (comes back each year or annual-only for the particular season). White and Red Clover are perennials.

Good luck finding a 4-leaf clover. It's a mutation of the common, three-leaved clover so it's not all that common, only occurring 1 in every 10,000 three leaf clovers. Four leaf clovers do exist and one is just waiting for you. Good Luck!

Source: information taken in part from the web

Have Carts - Will Travel!
by Bettie Wallace
All across Prince George's County, the University of Maryland Extension's (UME) Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) educators are armed with these rolling "gems." Many of you may wonder what is in these carts. These gems are carrying vital and "life sustaining" nutrition education materials for families that are most in need. Housed in these carts, you will find all sorts of educational materials based on MyPlate: visual aids in the form of hand-outs and presentation materials, food models featuring every kind of fruit and vegetable that we should be eating, as well as the kinds of drinks and cereals that should be avoided due to the overwhelming amounts of sugar, etc. Also included in these carts are fresh food items to cook or make during their food demos, which are usually appetizing small food tastings for the attendees, such as 3-Can Chili or a fruit smoothie.

Additionally, the food models are broken down into portion sizes to show just how much a serving size should be for each food group, such as half-cup or full-cup. Many packages, even drinks for that matter, contain two or more serving sizes, therefore increasing the total amount of calories consumed if all is eaten at one meal. The food nutrition label is a "hot topic" in the classes that our educators teach and is explained to our clients so that they really get the message and can determine for themselves what is a healthy, nutritious food or a food that is less healthy and should be eaten less often. Using the appropriate aids, students are shown how much sugar is contained in a 20 oz. bottle of soda. They are amazed to actually see that there are 17 teaspoons of sugar (already pre-measured by our educators) in one, 20-oz. soda, for example.

Our EFNEP educators teach both adults and children how to improve their nutrition and how to shop for nutritious food without breaking their budget. Our educators are diligent in their assignments as they move throughout the county, and we applaud their efforts. So, the next time you see these educators with their rolling carts in your neighborhood - know that their work is "LIFESAVING!"