



Improving Family,  
Resources & Health

## CLOSE TO HOME

### TAKING THE GREED OUT OF YOUR KIDS CHRISTMAS

- ✦ Limit the time children watch television. Have available videos or pre-recorded TV programs minus the advertisements.
- ✦ Many of the toy ads show happy kids and happy parents, and—best of all—happy parents *interacting with* happy kids. Kids may seem “greedy” asking for this toy and that gadget. But any of them are reacting to the image of happy interaction with parents rather than to the toy itself.
- ✦ To shift the emphasis from *getting stuff*, young children “dictate” a letter to apparent or older sibling describing his/her day. The children could then draw a picture for each activity to make their own “comic strips” or illustrated letters to mail.
- ✦ Very young kids should not be involved in food preparation if there is risk of burns. But here are some ideas suited for young ones.:

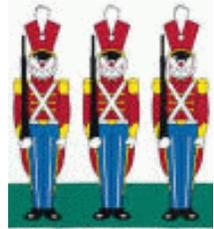
\* Make peanut butter candy. Combine peanut butter, honey and powdered milk (dry rather than reconstituted). Mix, knead and roll into balls. Roll in chopped nuts or colorful sprinkles. Freeze until time to give or enjoy at home.

\* Combine a raw egg yolk with a little bit of water and divided into several custard cups. Add a different food coloring to each cup. The children can paint a design on each raw sugar cookie. You will need a paint brush for each paint pot. Baking the cookie will make the yolk “paint” safe to eat.

\* Youngsters can decorate small paper bags when it is time to divide and deliver the goodies. Secure the goodies inside by folding down two or three inches of the top of the bag. Use a paper punch to make two small holes (through all four layers of bag) a few inches apart. Thread a generous length of curling ribbon through the holes, tie securely, and curl riotously.

### Plan your holiday spending

Put on paper your anticipated holiday expenses. In addition to presents, estimate meals and treats, decorations, postage, cards, wrapping supplies, travel, etc. Evaluate as realistically as you can—do you have the cash, time and energy to accomplish everything on your list and still enjoy the holidays? Setting priorities (and letting other things go) may be better for your sanity as well as your cash flow.



Don't look to buy gifts to impress. Look to give gifts that will be loved. Talk to your friends and family to see if they would like a challenge this year. Consider theme gifts such as an ornament or t-shirt exchange with a price limit. Look for fun and creative ways to express your love without busting your budget. Maybe your extended family would appreciate sharing one gift per family rather than gifts for each individual.

Don't look at budget planning as a chore or as something that is depressing. *Look at it as a challenge that you know you can handle.* Take pride that you are planning this year better than ever before! (Source: Adapted from FlyLady Holiday Mission #10. Note: FLY=Finally Loving Yourself.)

### Control Credit Card Use

- 💰 If you use a credit card during the holidays, keep the card in an envelope so you are more aware that you are getting the card out yet again.
- 💰 Keep a running total of your charges on the envelope.
- 💰 Keep the receipts in the envelope for your records.
- 💰 When the statement comes, if you can't pay it off completely, pay as much as you can. If you charged \$1000 on a credit card at 10% and made the minimum payment (2% of the balance) each month, you would pay more than \$500 in interest and it would take almost 10 ½ years to pay off the credit card used for one Christmas!



# Recipes from our house to yours

This holiday season, we at Extension would like to share with you some of our

personal holiday traditions and recipes that help make this time of year special and memorable. Happy Holidays!

*Every Christmas morning, Betty and her husband Paul share Christmas breakfast at the home of Paul's sister. They have scrambled eggs and ham, along with Betty's favorite part: Butterscotch Sticky Buns.*

*There's usually a crowd, so they always make two pans. "I got this recipe from Betty's mother. We've been doing this for at least 15-20 years. Ever since my kids were little," says Lisa, Paul's sister. "And now they have kids of their own. Everybody drops in," she says. It's a nice family tradition. It really is."*

## Butterscotch Sticky Buns

18 frozen rolls  
 ½ box butterscotch non-instant pudding  
 ½ cup melted butter  
 ½ cup brown sugar  
 ½ cup chopped pecans, walnuts, or almonds  
 ¼ cup raisins (optional)

Lightly grease or spray with a non-stick vegetable cooking spray an angel food or bundt cake pan. Line frozen rolls evenly in pan. Sprinkle brown sugar and pudding evenly across the rolls. Pour melted butter on top. Sprinkle with chopped nuts and raisins. Let rise overnight. Bake 20 - 25 minutes at 375°, until tops of rolls are nice and brown. (*Leisa Wanders*)

*Pat has an English walnut tree, so she started looking for a way to use all those walnuts. Now, every year for Christmas she makes sugared walnuts to give to family, friends and neighbors. "It's a lot of fun," Pat says, "and my favorite holiday tradition." Pat's favorite sugared walnuts are spiced, orange, or mint.*

## Sugared Walnuts

1½ cups sugar  
 ⅓ cup liquid\* (see below for flavors)  
 1 teaspoon white corn syrup  
 ¼ teaspoon salt  
 3 cups walnut halves and pieces



Cook first four ingredients to softball stage (236° - 240°). Remove from heat. Add nuts, stir till creamy and nuts are coated. Turn onto waxed paper. Separate and cool.

**\*Orange Flavored:** Liquid = ½ cup orange juice & 1 ½ teaspoon grated orange rind.

**\*Mint Flavored:** Liquid = ½ cup milk, a few drops green food coloring, and ½ teaspoon mint flavoring after cooking is complete.

**\*Spiced:** Liquid = ½ cup water, ½ teaspoon nutmeg, ½ teaspoon cloves, and 2 teaspoons cinnamon.  
 (*Pat Fugal*)

---

*According to Linda, her family always makes an English Trifle for a pre-Christmas/birthday party. Linda's mother first made this recipe when she was a little girl. Her family celebrates six birthdays at one time, so they always make four English Trifles! "The recipe is great," Linda says. "It just wouldn't be the same holiday gathering without it."*

## English Trifle

One angel food cake broken into 1" pieces  
 One large package raspberry-flavored gelatin, prepared according to package directions  
 2 cups raspberries (fresh or frozen & thawed)  
 1 cup pecans  
 1 cup crushed pineapple, drained  
 2 bananas, sliced  
 One large box vanilla pudding, prepared according to package directions.  
 Whipping cream and sugar

Into a trifle bowl break angel food cake into one-inch chunks. Pour raspberry-flavored gelatin (prepared according to package directions) over cake. Leave in refrigerator overnight. Sprinkle with fruit, then pecans; cover all with a prepared package of vanilla pudding. Let set several hours until pudding is set. Top with sweetened whipped cream. Decorate with additional nuts and raspberries. (*Linda Steiner*)

## Substitutions for Wine & Liquor in Cooking

### Soups & Entrees

Dry (unsweetened) red wines:

Water

Beef broth, bouillon,

consomme

Tomato juice (plain or diluted)

Diluted cider vinegar or red wine vinegar

Liquid drained from canned mushrooms

Dry (unsweetened) white wines:

Water

Chicken broth, bouillon, or consomme

Ginger ale

White grape juice

Diluted cider vinegar or white wine vinegar

Liquid drained from canned mushrooms

### Cheese Dishes (Fondue & Rarebit)

Beer or ale:

Chicken broth

White grape juice

Ginger ale

### Desserts

Brandy: Apple cider, peach or apricot syrup

Rum: Pineapple juice or syrup flavored with almond extract

Sherry: Orange or pineapple juice

Kirsch: Syrup or juice from black cherries, raspberries, boysenberries, currants, grapes or cherry cider

Cognac: Juice from peaches, apricots or pears

Cointreau: Orange juice or frozen orange juice concentrate

Creme de Menthe: Spearmint extract or oil of spearmint, diluted with a little water or grapefruit juice

Red Burgundy: Grape juice

White Burgundy: White grape juice

Champagne: Ginger ale

Claret: Grape or currant juice or syrup or cherry cider

*Note: to cut the sweetness of the syrups, dilute with water. Also, there are many flavor extracts, such as almond or pineapple, that can be added for interesting flavors.*

Flambeaus or Flaming Desserts: The only substitute that might be used is a sugar cube soaked in lemon extract, then set atop a dessert and burned.

(Source: Winnifred Jardene)



# Homemade soap & much more!

Treat yourself to a fun demonstration that shows you how easy it is to make personal care products using botanical ingredients—no animal by-products, no mineral oil, no petroleum products—just pure botanicals.



Come see how to make bars of soap, lotions, lip balm, sea salt scrubs, and bath fizzies. When back home, a helpful handout will guide you through the steps of making personalized products to enjoy yourself or to give as gifts. There will also be a discussion of how different scents affect us.

Advance registration is \$8, which includes a bar of soap and a lotion to take home. You choose the scent! The products you receive are a \$7.50 value—so the class costs you only 50¢. What a deal! You may either call 851-8460 to pay by credit card or send a check to USU Extension at 100 East Center, Rm L600, Provo 84606. (Registration paid at the door will be \$9.)

The class will be Monday, November 22, from 4-5:30 in room L700 on the lower level of the County Administration Building at 100 East Center in Provo. (It is the building east of the Historic County Courthouse.) Off-street parking is accessible from 100 South. Call Judy at 851-8460 if you have questions.

### Where Does a Burglar Enter a House?

- ☛ 34% through the front door.
- ☛ 23% through a first-floor window.
- ☛ 22% through the back door.
- ☛ 9% through the garage.
- ☛ 12% through the basement, a storage area, or from the second floor.



Source: National Burglar & Fire Alarm

## Peak burglary season has arrived

The holidays are a joyous time for many. Unfortunately, they are also a time of increased home burglaries. The number of burglaries rises dramatically during the holiday season of November and December and when people take vacations in July and August.

According to statistics from the U.S. Department of Justice home burglaries in 1999 hit one home in 30 with 42 % of all reported household burglaries occurred during the day and 32 % at night with 26% unknown.

### Simple Safety Steps

There are many steps homeowners can take to protect their homes. Most are simple, such as installing deadbolts on all outside doors and making sure all doors and windows are securely locked before leaving home.

For nighttime protection, adequate outdoor lighting is an important deterrent that will make your house less attractive to a burglar. However, keeping outdoor floodlights on all night can be somewhat expensive, so the use of motion detectors is recommended.

### Motion Detectors

A motion detector is an inexpensive device that automatically turns on the lights it controls. When the device detects the presence of a person within its sensing range, it turns its lights on. After the person is no longer in its sensing range, it turns the lights off.

### Timers

You can give your home a “lived-in look” to deter burglars by using rotary timers to turn room lights,

different times to make it appear that someone is in the house.

For year-round convenience, the use of electronic timers to control porch lights and landscape lighting allows you to program a variety of on and off sequences during the night. They are installed in the wall and replace regular wall switches.

Another solution for controlling indoor lights is to install powerline carrier (PLC) devices that replace standard switches and receptacles and use your home's existing wiring to control lights and appliances. With PLC devices you can program the lights in your home to turn on and off at preset time intervals. You can even control your lights and appliances remotely from a telephone keypad.

### Setting Up a Good Defense

Security experts advise putting certain lights in your home on timers all year long, not just when you are away from home. This sets up a routine that gives your home a lived-in look that deters burglars. The locations recommended are near your front and back windows. Remember to keep the curtains drawn. Most home burglars are semi-professional thieves or amateurs who may live in the neighborhood. They typically spend less than two minutes trying to get into a door or window before giving up and looking for an easier target. By setting up a good defense, with deadbolt locks, windows that lock securely, and good lighting, you can safeguard your home when you're away.

***“They typically spend less than two minutes trying to get into a door or window before giving up and looking for an easier target.”***

chew on, extension cords. For safety's sake, keep them out of reach

## Holiday Electrical Safety Tips for Children

The sparkle of holiday decorations is a delight to children. They're also a source of potential accidents, including decorations that get plugged into an electrical outlet. To keep infants and toddlers out of harm's way this holiday season, we offer these simple safety tips.

- The best place to start looking for potential electrical hazards is not at adult eye level, but at *child level*. This means getting on your hands and knees and seeing the world from a child's perspective. ■ Christmas tree lights, for example, can beckon a child to grab hold of a strand for a closer look—or worse, if they end up in an infant's mouth. To prevent the risks, start the lowest strand of tree lights out of the reach of infants and toddlers. It's also a good idea to avoid ■ Extension cords are another potential hazard this time of year. Children like to pull on, and sometimes even radios, and TVs on and off during the night. The lights don't have to be on long, but you do want to have several lights going on and off at

and out of sight. But don't run extension cords under carpets or rugs, because walking on cords could break the insulation and possibly cause a fire. ■ While crawling around on the floor, look for other electrical cords that can be a hazard. A lamp cord dangling from a table, for example, invites a child's curious hands to pull on it. This could send the lamp toppling down onto the child, causing injury. By using a cord reel, you can shorten the cord and help avert an accident.

- Finally, take a look at the electrical outlets on the wall. While they hold no appeal to you, to an infant or toddler they're an open invitation to poke something in the holes. And if that something happens to be metallic, sparks could fly. To prevent problems, put outlet caps on all exposed electrical outlets. There are many types to choose from, such as outlet caps that completely close off unused outlets. You can also install tamper-resistant outlets and tamper-resistant wallplates and adaptors which are available at hardware stores and home centers. (Source: *Home Electricity* from the Leviton Institute)



## Hinton Around the Yard & Garden

**HORTICULTURE NEWSLETTER  
by Adrian C. Hinton,**

**USU - Utah County**



Thanksgiving Dinner

### GREETINGS FROM THE COUNTY AGENT



As I write this, the rain is falling in the valley and the snow is coming down in the mountains ( 24+ inches). Hopefully, this is the beginning of the END of this five-plus year drought! We are still waiting for our first general killing frost in Utah County.

As the season ends, please plan on coming to our major Master Gardener Social on December 7 at 6:00 p.m. at the County Administration Building, 100 East Center, in L700.

Plan on bringing your favorite dish to share at our

potluck dinner.  
Bring a recipe to share if you'd like as well

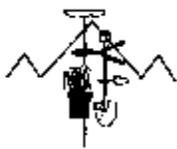
This is a great time for all the old and new Master Gardeners to get acquainted and share great ideas. Also, we'll have lots of great prizes. See you there!!!

This year has been an almost perfect growing season. I wish you a continued great harvest. Happy Thanksgiving and a Cool Yule and a Fabulous First!!!

### TIMELY TIPS FOR NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

by Paul Wilkey, Master Gardener/Horticulture Assistant

1. Clean weeds and grasses from around trees and shrubs to prevent them from being damaged by mice.
2. Cover strawberries with straw or mulch to protect from freezing.
3. Be sure to wrap shrubs and evergreens that can be injured by snow and deer.
4. Be sure to move indoor plants away from heat vents to help keep them from drying out.
5. Now is a good time to start a window container herb garden.
6. Fruit trees often suffer from trunk splitting from temperature swings during the winter. SNOW WHITE LATEX PLANT may be put on the trunk by November 1<sup>st</sup> to help prevent damage.
7. Drain all sprinklers and hoses to prevent freeze damage.
8. Use a weed n' feed plus iron lawn winterizer to insure a healthy start on your spring lawn.
9. DO NOT let leaves accumulate on lawns. This will cause problems with fungus next spring. Also cut lawn down to 1 ½ inches per winter.
10. Last but not least, have a happy and safe Thanksgiving and Christmas from all of us at U.S.U. Extension.



## *The Master Gardeners Corner*

### FALL SOCIAL

We are looking forward to seeing each of you this December 7, (6:00 - 9:00) at our thriving Master Gardener Social. We are anticipating a great turnout this year and so have opted for a larger space by using L700-900 in the County Administration Building. There will be door prizes, food, awards & colleagues. We will also have a special presentation regarding an opportunity to visit the Pacific Northwest this summer for a variety of garden tours.

Come visit with friends, enjoy the food, and end the year well. See you there!

## MG BUSINESS

At the Master Gardener Social we will have the opportunity to add a Vice-President to our board. If you would like to run or have any nominations, please call the Extension office at 851-8460, ext. 2.

## *Annual Dues*

Annual Dues for Master Gardeners are collected in December. This year the fee has been changed to \$13. The \$3 increase will include a year subscription to this newsletter. We appreciate the use of "On the Home Front" to reach all of you since doing our own newsletter was very costly. Send dues to: Master Gardener Association, 100 East Center, Rm. L600, Provo, UT 84606

## *Bug of the Month*

*Here's a little known beneficial insect that you won't want to smash.*

**Rove Beetles** (family Staphylinidae): These beetles are usually long and skinny. They are black or brown, with very short wing covers (most of the abdomen shows and is often bent upward). Some species are parasitic in ants' nests and a few are scavengers, but most adults and larvae prey on mites, other insects and worms.



## *Living Christmas Trees*



In recent years there has been a growing interest in using live Christmas trees and then planting them into the yard after Christmas.

There are a few things to be aware of if you plan to use a live tree this year. First, choose a variety suitable to be used as a live Christmas tree, and a variety that is also suitable for this area.

Some suggested varieties would be Scotch or Austrian Pine, Colorado Blue Spruce and Balsam Fir. Be sure you have space in your yard to accommodate a grown tree of the kind you select.

1. Proper handling is important if you want your tree to survive for outdoor planting. A few simple rules to follow are:
2. Buy a tree in a container or one that is balled-in-burlap. Choose one that is not too big and is easy to handle.
3. If possible, prepare the hole in advance when the ground is easy to dig. Dig a hole at least half again as big as the root ball. Keep the hole and dirt dug out from freezing by lining it with straw and covering with plastic.
4. Move the tree indoors gradually to a garage or porch first, then indoors. Keep it indoors no longer than about a week. It should be kept out of direct sunlight and away from heat vents.
5. Use only miniature lights. Because of the heat that larger lights give off, they could damage your tree.
6. Water your tree, but only enough to keep the root ball from drying out. Too much water along with the warm temperatures may break the tree's dormancy and encourage new growth, which would only suffer winter damage when set outside again.
7. After the holidays, take the tree outside gradually, just as you brought it in.
8. Plant in pre-prepared hole. Containerized trees could be stored indoors in a protected area and the base insulated with straw and then planted the next spring. They should be kept moist throughout the winter if there is not sufficient snowfall.



**Hinton Around  
the Yard and Garden**

## Selecting A Tree

A few simple procedures can make the selection of a “perfect”

Christmas tree easier.

- ◆ Determine where in your home you will display your tree. With this in mind, you will be able to tell what height you will need and whether all four sides must be suitable for display.
  - ◆ You should select a tree that is the right height for the space you have chosen for it. Cutting large portions off either end will alter the natural taper of the tree.
  - ◆ Freshness is an important key when selecting your tree. The needles should be resilient, but not brittle. Run your finger down a branch—the needles should adhere to each twig.
  - ◆ Shake or bounce the tree on the ground lightly to see that the needles are firmly attached. If only a few drop off, the tree is fresh and with proper care should retain its freshness indoors throughout the holiday season.
  - ◆ The limbs should be strong enough to hold ornaments and strings of electric lights and the tree should have a strong fragrance and good green color for the species.
  - ◆ Check the tree for freshness, cleanness, health, and trimming and be sure it displays the best qualities for the particular species.
- Following these steps should insure a healthy, attractive tree, but the care of your tree does not stop here.

- \* If you buy your tree several days before it will be set up and decorated, store it outside. Cut the butt of the tree at a diagonal about one inch above the original cut—this opens the pores and aids in the absorption of water. Place the butt end in a container of water.
- \* When you bring it into the house, saw the butt again, squaring off the diagonal. This facilitates placing the tree in a stand as well as aiding absorption.
- \* Keep the butt end of the tree in a container of water the entire time it is in the house. Refill the container daily as the tree requires a lot of water. Sprinkling water on the branches and needles before you decorate the tree will help retain freshness.
- \* Be sure that the base of the tree is well supported and the tree is placed away from fireplaces, radiators, electric heaters, televisions or any other source of heat.
- \* Open flames, such as lighted candles, should never be used on or near the tree. In addition, never leave your home with the Christmas tree lights still on.
- \* The longer the tree is indoors, the more combustible it will become. Check electric light cords for fraying and worn spots that could easily lead to fires. Also do not overload the electric circuits and avoid placing electric toys directly under the tree. Be sure to avoid the use of combustible decorations.

Following these care and precaution measures should insure an attractive tree that stays fresh indoors for more than a week and a holiday season free from Christmas tree mishaps.

## PONDS - A Winter Wonderland

by Pat Fugal

Many people turn their pond pump off in the winter. Not having the water circulating allows the pond to freeze over and lessens evaporation. Also, if you turn off your pump, you won't have to worry about ice buildup in streams or waterfalls.



If you turn off the pump, make sure it will not freeze. Follow the manufacturer's directions for winter pump maintenance.

If your pump is in a skimmer container at the side of your pond, you will need to add water periodically as evaporation, splashing and freezing may lower the water level below the intake opening. You can attach a garden hose to your washing machine's hot water tap filling the pond and melting the ice near the skimmer intake. The warmer water helps melt the ice from underneath.

If you leave your pump running in the winter, you will have running water where the water emerges, even though streams, waterfalls and ponds may freeze over with water flowing beneath the ice. In a cold winter, you may have the only bird drinking fountains around, so get yourself a pair of binoculars and a bird book for Christmas and enjoy the view!



## Christmas Tree Care



**UPCOMING PROGRAMS TO ATTEND:**

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

Take the Greed out of Your Kids' Christmas . . . . . page 1  
 Plan Your Holiday Spending . . . . . page 1  
 Control Credit Card Use . . . . . page 1  
 Recipes From Our House to Yours . . . . . page 2  
 Substitutions for Wine & Liquor in Cooking . . . . . page 3  
 Homemade Soap & Much More . . . . . page 3  
 Peak Burglary Season Has Arrived . . . . . page 4  
 Holiday Electrical Safety Tips for Children . . . . . page 4  
 Greetings From the County Agent . . . . . page 5  
 Timely Tips for November/December . . . . . page 5  
 Master Gardener's Corner . . . . . page 6  
 Living Christmas Trees . . . . . page 6  
 Selecting a Christmas Tree . . . . . page 7  
 Ponds - A Winter Wonderland . . . . . page 7  
 Master Gardener Social Invitation . . . . . page 8

Mention or display of a trademark, proprietary product, or firm in text or figures does not constitute an endorsement and does not imply approval to the exclusion of others suitable products or firms.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  
 SERVICE  
 UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
 Utah County Office  
 100 East Center, Rm. L600  
 Provo, Utah 84606

---

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PRSR STD  
 POSTAGE & FEES PAID  
 COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERV-  
 AGRI

It's time to renew if  
 your expiration date  
 is 11/2004 or 12/2004

*Invitation  
to all  
Master Gardeners*

**What:** Master Gardener Social  
**Where:** County Administration Building  
 100 East Center, Room L700  
 Provo, UT 84606  
**When:** Tuesday, December 7  
 Time: 6:00 pm  
**Bring:** One dish to share

*Prizes for all members & colleagues*



This newsletter is an educational effort of the Utah County office of Utah State University Extension, 100 East Center, Room L700, Provo, UT 84606.

The phone for USU Extension is 851-8460. If you do not have a touch tone phone, stay on the line and the receptionist will help you. With a touch tone phone, at the greeting press the number of the desired subject:

- 5) garden, yard, trees, insects
- 2) food, finances, clothing, housing
- 3) pastures, field crops, dairies
- 4) 4-H and youth



**Please check**

If the date on your mailing label says 11/2004 or 12/2004 it is time to renew your subscription. Make check payable to "Utah State University" and mail to address above.

Send \$3 to renew for 1 year (6 issues).

Utah State University Extension is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and educational organization. We offer our programs to persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability.