Basic Home Maintenance Course

If you are either a new homeowner or a long timer, this course could be for you. The Buncombe County Center of North Carolina Cooperative Extension is offering a five-session Basic Home Maintenance Course beginning **Tuesday, June 5**. The two-hour class will be held from **5:30-7:30 pm** on **June 5, 7, 12, 14 & 19** at the Extension Center, 94 Coxe Avenue, Asheville. Some of the topics to be covered are: saving on your heating and cooling bills, basic plumbing repairs, interior and exterior maintenance, landscaping and lawn care, indoor air quality, common household pests, etc. The course also offers “hands-on” repairs which include: faucets, drywall, and screens. The fee of $20 includes all materials. Pre-registration **is** required by calling 828-255-5522.

The First Mother's Day

Are you a new mom or do you know someone who is a new parent? It can be a very joyous occasion to bring the new baby home, but it can also bring some adjustments to your family. These are tips to help deal with the stress of being a new parent. We are not always prepared for the changes in the relationship between Mom and Dad. New moms also are not usually ready for those “after-baby-blues” that can occur.

- You need to get enough sleep. Newborns sleep about 15 to 16 hours but not all at once and not always on your schedule. Take time to rest when the baby does and after your baby is a little older you can work on nighttime routines like baths, reading, or listening to calming music. Dads may find they also need to catch up on sleep especially if they wake up with the baby at night to help moms out.

- Ask for help when you need it. This may be just someone to be there while you take a relaxing bath or catch some time for yourself. If you are extra tired or feeling those “after-baby-blues”, as you get used to being a new mom, just having someone around to talk to or to step in to help change a diaper can be helpful. Remember, if they are not a help, it is okay to ask them to visit another time when you do have more energy, just gently tell them you need to rest now or the baby needs to rest.

- Don’t expect to have everything go perfectly. Each baby is different.

- Take time for each other. You may feel closer with the new baby but there may be times that the stress pulls you apart as well. Share your feelings about being a new parent – both the good and the bad. Make a date and let a trusting friend or family member take care of the baby. Take the baby out for stroll and talk about adult things for a change. Realize that both of you are going through an adjustment and be good to each other. Your love life will get back to normal eventually, but just helping each other out may be the best way to show you still love and care.

Inside:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foodborne Illness or Flu</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing Safe in the Sun</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Your Financial Life Easier</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pamper Your Mind, Body &amp; Spirit</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canning &amp; Preserving Made Easy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying in Your Home for a Lifetime?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NC State commits itself to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. NC State welcomes all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.
Is it a Foodborne Illness or is it the Flu?

In the past year we have had two major foodborne illness outbreaks that have led many of us to wonder is my stomach upset or is my diarrhea from a foodborne illness or just an everyday virus? It is hard to tell. Both can cause similar symptoms and when you are feeling bad the last thing you want to do is go to the doctor for a lot of tests. A foodborne illness is usually due to microorganisms that are swallowed. Depending on the type of organism, the amount of infected food eaten and the number of organisms eaten, the onset of symptoms can be from a few hours to days. This can make it hard to determine just what made you sick, since often you were not infected by the last food you ate. The most common symptoms are diarrhea, abdominal cramps, and nausea. To determine the exact microbe, tests usually need to be conducted. An outbreak is determined when there is a pattern or a series of confirmed tests that link the positive infection to a specific food, event or location. You can always consult your healthcare provider if you think that you may have a foodborne illness. You should seek your healthcare provider, if you have diarrhea and any of these conditions are true.

- High fever (temperatures over 101.5° orally)
- Blood in the stools
- Prolonged vomiting that prevents keeping liquids down (which can lead to dehydration)
- Signs of dehydration, including a decrease in urination, a dry mouth and throat, and feeling dizzy when standing up
- Diarrheal illness that lasts more than 3 days

The best way to avoid foodborne illnesses is to protect yourself by cooking to the correct temperatures, separating raw meats or poultry from other foods that are cooked or will be eaten raw or lightly cooked, chilling food so that microorganisms do not have the chance to grow and multiply, and cleaning your hands and surfaces thoroughly with soap and warm water, and washing produce with running water. For more information call our office.

Playing Safe in the Sun

There is never a safe time of year to be exposed to the sun. While many think they only need protection in the summer it is important to apply sunscreen daily before going outside. Skin cancer is by far the most common cancer in the U. S. with 1 in 5 individuals being diagnosed. There are two types of skin cancer: non-melanoma which is the most common and Melanoma which can be fatal.

While some skin cancers appear to be influenced by heredity, most are caused by sun exposure. Although most occur in adults, studies have shown its development may be related to our behavior as children. The two primary triggers are accumulated lifetime exposure to the sun and severe sunburns. This means the more we spend in the sun over our lifetime the greater the risks of developing skin cancer.

Protecting children is important since we get most of our lifetime exposure before the age of 18. Because of this children need to know how to “play safe in the sun” by finding shade, wearing coverup clothing, and using sunscreen. One severe sunburn before the age of 18 appears to significantly increase the risk for developing Melanoma. Eye damage can lead to cataracts and blindness when older. Each time children go outside – think of the clothes they wear – clothes that cover the body like long pants vs. shorts, shoes vs. sandals, long sleeves vs. sleeveless, etc.

When going outdoors everyone should wear a hat with at least a 3” brim. This will help protect the head, ears, neck, and face. The use of sunglasses will protect the eyes. Using sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor SPF 15 will give 2 hour’s of protection. Both lotion and lip balm should be applied 30 minutes before going outside. Use broad spectrum products that protect against both UVA and UBA rays.

Remember, there is never a safe season against the sun—protect yourself year round. For programs on Sun Safety, please contact the Extension Center at 828-255-5522.
Make Your Financial Life Easier

Now that income taxes have been filed and all the necessary paperwork to get them ready is over, it's time to take a look at how to get things in a simpler state for next year.

- Organize your personal and financial papers to make sure you and your family can quickly find what you need;
- Get rid of the excess papers you're sure you don't need;
- Look into consolidating accounts or concentrating your business with fewer financial institutions;
- Sign up for direct deposit of your pay and benefit checks and other regular income;
- Having a certain sum automatically transferred each month to a savings or investment account can help you get into the saving habit;
- Arrange for an automatic withdrawal from your checking account to cover a recurring expense such as a mortgage loan or utility bill; and
- Explore bill paying by phone or online, which not only saves time and money (instead of writing and mailing checks) but also can help you monitor your account more efficiently than waiting for monthly statements in the mail.

All of these ideas can help you save time, reduce stress, eliminate clutter, lower the fees you pay, and maybe even help you earn a little extra on your savings and investments. They should also help when next year's tax preparation time arrives!

It's Your Time! Pamper Your Mind, Body and Spirit

The 8th annual National Women's Health Week will kick off on Mother's Day, May 13 and will be celebrated until May 19. National Women's Check-up Day will be Monday, May 14. National Women's Health Week encourages women to take simple steps for a longer, healthier, and happier life. The theme for National Women's Health Week 2007 is "It's Your Time: Pamper Your Mind, Body and Spirit." During this week work together to:

- celebrate the extraordinary progress in women’s health
- bring attention to and create understanding of women’s health issues
- encourage women to get regular check-ups
- provide free or reduced screenings for women nationwide
- educate women about steps they can take to improve their physical and mental health and prevent disease

You can also join others in the WOMAN Challenge as women across the country embark on an eight-week walking challenge for better health. The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office on Women's Health is coordinating the WOMAN Challenge to encourage women to get 30 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week. To join go to http://www.womenshealth.gov/woman/index.cfm. The challenge begins May 13.

Canning and Preserving Made Easy Workshops

Learn more about canning or just brush up on the newest information on food preservation from Canning to Freezing to Drying by coming to one of the Canning and Preserving Made Easy programs. These programs are an introduction to canning, pickling, making jams and jellies, freezing, drying and storage. The workshops will be held at the Mountain Horticultural Crops and Research Center in Fletcher on Saturday, May 19 and Wednesday, June 6 from 9:30 am to 5:00 pm. The cost for materials and a Ball Blue Book is $20. Come to one section or to all. Call our office for more information.
Can You Stay in Your Home for a Lifetime?

As the baby boomers begin to age past their 60’s, the question that needs to be asked is “where do you want to live when you retire?” Most midlife and older Americans say they want to stay in their current home for as long as possible, and now is the time to make the changes to achieve this goal. Your home will be ready for a lifetime of living if it can pass these three questions: is your home an easy visiting home, is it easy living, and easy on the budget?

An easy visiting home means your home has a no-step entrance, a bedroom or sleeping area and a full-sized bath on the main floor. A home with this design will allow either visitors or the homeowner in a wheelchair to be comfortable.

An easy-living home allows for space to be used for activities you enjoy, is updated for safety and security, and has added features for convenience and comfort. Examples of the latter are handrails in the bath and lever type door handles.

Easy on the budget means the home has had energy conservation improvements including appliances that are Energy Star®. Having a home that is energy efficient will save money now and in the future.

If your house doesn’t pass these questions, you need to develop a long-range plan to make the necessary improvements as time and resources will allow. For additional information on making home modifications contact the Extension Center.

Individuals with disabilities who would like to participate in any program mentioned in this newsletter, but who need special assistance to do so, should call the Extension Center at 828-255-5522 at least five days prior to the event.