

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Maryland Association for Family and Community Education, Inc. Newsletter

DECEMBER

- 1 State Dues and Membership Forms due to NAFCE
- 4 Maryland FCE Board Meeting, 10 AM
MC Extension Office
- 12 **Cookie Exchange and Crafts**, 9:45 AM
Extension Office Garage
Refreshments: Lunch Bunch
See page 4 for details.
- 15 Send outreach and meeting reports to Jeanne Purich

JANUARY

- All Month Complete and Mail Annual Reports
- 5 FCE Blanket Making Day, 10 AM – 3 PM
MC Extension Office Garage
- 31 End of County 2023-2024 Essay and Artwork Contest

FEBRUARY

- All Month **Birthday Month – Collect & send pennies to State FCE Treasurer**
(Pennies are for postage for the newsletter)
- 1 “Look What’s Happening” deadline for items to Editor
Start county judging of Essay and Artwork Contest
- 5 Maryland FCE Board Meeting, 10 AM
MC Extension Office
- 9 FCE Blanket making, 10 AM – 8 PM
Extension Office garage
- 13 “Music Magic – Music Therapy for the Aging Brain” Kathie Mack, Jeanne Purich
9:45 AM, Extension Office
County Association Meeting
Refreshments: Derwood
- 20 Send County winner of Essay and Artwork Contest to State President
- 27 MC Executive Board meeting, 10 AM
MC Extension Office

MARCH

- All Month Women’s History Month
- 1 Heart of FCE & Spirit of FCL Award entries due State President
- 1 FCE Blanket making, 10 AM – 8 PM
MC Extension Office garage
- 4 Maryland FCE Board Meeting, 10 AM
MC Extension Office
- 8 International Women’s Day
- 14 International Day – Maylasia, 10 AM
MC Extension Office

CHARACTER COUNTS!® Contest

Send all CHARACTER COUNTS!® contest entries to Jeanne Purich by January 31, 2024.

MDAFCE Web Site is www.mdafce.org

The website is a great way to find information and see what FCE is doing. It is also a good resource for new and potential members. Send any information for the website to Libby Wade at dunade@aol.com.

Newsletter Deadline: February 1

ANYONE can send articles, announcements, Bulletin Board items, address changes and trivia for the newsletter to: Jean Purich, jcpurich@cs.com.



“Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you.”

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

“We are here, not because we are law-breakers; we are here in our efforts to become law-makers.”

Emmeline Pankhurst, leader of the UK suffragette movement

FROM THE PRESIDENT

We had a great Annual Conference. The speakers all presented great programs and it was wonderful that the changes that we needed to make to the schedule were handled extremely well. I thought that the new location of the Holiday Inn Express in Grasonville, MD was a good change from Westminster. Thank you to everyone who planned, presented, and organized this great time. In addition to the programs, I was pleased to visit the Wye Mill and the Old Wye Church. I hope that all who attended had as good a time as I did.



Now is the time to get ready for the holidays. It gets very hectic around my house with trying to plan getting together with everyone; both family and friends. I have to admit that I don't do a lot of cooking but buy the readymade heat and serve meals from places like Cracker Barrel. Their food tastes just as good to me. Then there is the traveling. Two hours down to Mom's and my younger sister's, one hour to Dennis' brother's, and thirty minutes to my older sister's. What day to go where and how long to plan on staying - all very important decisions. I hope you all have a great holiday season and can visit ALL the relatives!

Libby Wade, MDAFCE President
dunade@aol.com 301-831-8661

NEWS FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR PROGRAM

The Maryland Association for Family & Community Education held its annual conference over October 16-17, 2023. This year we went to a new place — Grasonville in Queen Anne's County. Our hotel was on the Kent Narrows, with a view of the Chesapeake Bay and a chance to eat seafood. Conference attendees appreciated informative presentations on oysters (PowerPoint® presented by the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center); It's About Thyme (presented by Queen Anne's County Extension); Friendly Fire - Quakers and Feminism;

we decorated cookies that became our dessert for dinner; and what happened at the ACWW Triennial meeting in Malaysia last May. We were also treated to tours of the historic Wye Mill and the Old Wye Church, both dating to Colonial days. In the evening, we enjoyed Songs and Stories from the Age of Sail on the Chesapeake Bay, presented in costume by Steven Lampredi from the Ship's Company Chanteymen. Our final meal together was a delicious lunch of homemade chicken pot pies served in the Old Wye Church parish hall. After lunch we drew winning raffle tickets for the four lovely gift baskets members had prepared. The conference also included an awards ceremony and a business meeting where reports were given. A good time was had by all! Please join us next year.

Please see the photos from the conference at:
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/CjkiQufmML31y4PG6>

Kathie Mack, MDAFCE Vice President for Programs
kpmack2@gmail.com 301-270-5367

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Our 2024 FCE membership drive is underway. As of November 1, 2023, we had 75 members (45 individuals, 3 families, and 29 seniors), including 2 new members. Please give

a warm welcome to our 2 new members: Elaine Gurganus and Shahnaz Tabibi. It's not too late to renew **AND** recruit! Remember that you receive an FCE Star pin for every new member you recruit **PLUS** a chance for you and your new member to attend our October 2024 Maryland FCE Conference for **FREE**. Hint: Make your holiday shopping easy with a gift membership! You can always contact me for a membership form. Stay safe and healthy.

Jeanne Gillis, Membership Chairman
101 Rolling Rd, Gaithersburg, MD 20877-2043
jeannegillis2326@gmail.com



NEWS FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Public Service vs. Private Agendas

“You couldn’t make this up if you tried.”

One hears comments such as this when something truly extraordinary or completely off the wall occurs. It would seem that the politics being practiced by our elected representatives for the so called “good of the people” fits the latter definition! I have harped on this topic before, but the ends to which certain politicians will go to push forth their own agendas does not equate to the job description they were elected to fill, namely, to conduct business for the citizens who elected them. They weren’t sent to Congress or the Senate to shut down the government. They were hired to conduct the “give and take” that goes on in the act of governance, in other words, to act in the people’s interest, not their own.

We are becoming numb to the shenanigans that happen each time a difference comes up between the two parties. Threats of shutting the government down, holding up military promotions, and clogging up the system of vetting and confirming federal positions, like ambassadorships, keeps the federal system from running smoothly and threatens our national security. The world is out there watching how America practices its democracy and carries out its national and international responsibilities. If our political leaders can’t work together civilly, how can we expect needed legislation to be passed?

The tone that has been set for becoming a public servant isn’t very conducive in encouraging young people to want or to strive to become a public servant. It is expected for 4-year-olds to act out. It is not so for 40, 50, or older people. The viciousness of American politics has become worse, not better, in spite of all the modern knowledge that our society has. Man has become meaner, not kinder, in spite of all the self-help methods that are available to us. This change in our social behavior and the continued breakdown of civility and compromise has become of great concern to the survival of “the American Way”. Will the American citizen and our governing bodies be recognizable in 50 years if we don’t start going back to “loving our neighbors, as ourselves”?

Debra Rausch
rauschda@gmail.com

301-498-8806

REPORT FROM THE TREASURER

I presented the proposed Maryland FCE 2024 budget at the conference and it was approved. The budget includes an increase in ACWW dues to 69 pounds (about 98 to 100 US dollars) and bonding insurance for \$248 annually, which includes protection against computer fraud. The previous insurance contract had expired. The Triennial conference (actually held in four years due to pandemic) was in Malaysia and \$1800 was spent to send the delegate, Chris Hager. The amount budgeted for each year for ACWW was reduced to \$400 (the next conference will be in Ottawa, Canada in 2026). During 2023, we sent memorial gifts of \$100 each to National FCE for Elizabeth Heagy and Helen Totura. MDAFCE has budgeted for 100 members (we still need a couple more to make that total).

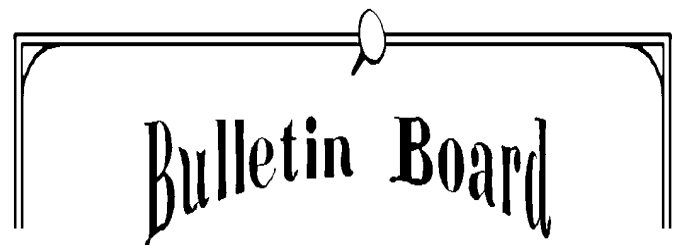


The 2023 conference on Kent Island, had a total of 36 people attending, including 3 commuters. In addition to registrations, \$259 was collected from the basket raffle, \$12 from quilt pins and \$15 from FCE pin sales. The \$71 we received for the Rural Women in Action Fund will be sent with the ACWW and CWC dues.

Copies of the treasury report are available, please email me.

Chris Hager
econchris@earthlink.net

301-279-2037



Thoughts and good wishes to Adele Washington who is having knee replacement surgery in November.

Speedy recovery to former member, Pat Kenney, who took a fall and broke her tibia and fibula (near her ankle). She is in rehab.

Montgomery County President's Paragraphs

Planning for 2024

We are planning all the 2024 programs and activities. We will start with our blanket day in January and add informational programs starting in February. Please use your new handbook (see below) to mark your calendars **now** (so you don't double book with that dentist appointment) as we have some very interesting programs planned.

The **Handbook** will be distributed in December. The Handbook is a very useful guide, and contains all the programs and dates of activities for FCE in 2024. It is also a quick reference to enable you to contact your local and state officers. The handbook explains FCE continuing programs, the role of National FCE and most importantly keeps you informed of county and state events.

Cookie Exchange

December 12, 2023 at 9:45 AM

MC Extension Garage

Come and share some

Holiday cheer. We will have some fun, eat a few cookies and then go to lunch.

That is, after we exchange cookies. Bring 4 dozen cookies, the recipe and an extra empty container.



FCE Blanket Making (MC Extension Garage)

January 5, 2024 Friday 10 AM – 3 PM

February 9, 2024 Friday 10 AM – 8 PM

March 1, 2024 Friday 10 AM – 3 PM



We made 1,517 blankets and 420 newborn this year. We continue to work with MCPS to provide Student Service Learning (SSL) hours to students for blanket, hat and scarf

making. We have worked with many students this year and awarded 708 SSL hours to 21 students as of November.

We are always looking for more yarn; if you know of anyone who is cleaning out their closet, keep us in mind.

February is Birthday Month

Happy Birthday to us!

Remember that February is FCE's birthday month. Clubs/individuals should collect a penny for each year of a member's life (or \$1.00 so no one will know your age) and send to Jeanne Gillis. The fund goes to help defray mailing costs for the newsletter.



"Music Magic

Music Therapy for the Aging Brain"

Kathie Mack, Jeanne Purich

February 13, 2023 at 9:45 AM

MC Extension Office

County Association Meeting

Music Magic will have you tapping your foot as you explore why music is so powerful in our brains, why music learned years ago is recognized by the aging brain while something learned yesterday is not, and why moods are so powerfully affected by music. The lesson uses song title recall, songs with hand motions, and ends with a seated line dance. Participants will gain insight into Music Therapy for the Aging Brain.

"International Day - Maylasia"

March 14, 2023 at 9:45 AM

Chris Hager

MC Extension Office

Experience the culture and food of Maylasia and hear about the ACWW triennial. You will be treated to foods and photos of this beautiful land.



Stay well and safe. Remember to smile. Have a good Holiday season, spend time with family and if you have a pet, give him an extra treat – it will make you feel better.

Jeanne Purich

Jeanne Purich, President
15500 Gallaudet Ave
Silver Spring MD 20905

jcpurich@cs.com



16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

Human Rights Day

10 December 2023 marks the 75th anniversary of one of the world's most groundbreaking global pledges: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This landmark document enshrines the inalienable rights that everyone is entitled to as a human being – regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

“We must stand firm against rising intolerance and build a future of dignity, security, justice & human rights for all.”

UN Secretary-General António Guterres

Women's Rights are Human Rights

We call on governments worldwide:

Invest in prevention to eradicate violence against women and girls.

10 DECEMBER

Human Rights Day



Associated Country
Women of the World

www.acww.org.uk

Registered Charity
No.1174798

HOPE

There's no doubt about it – the world can be a frightening place right now. However, we can still be hopeful and not helpless as we enter a season of joy, peace, and generosity of spirit.

Psychologically emphasis on the positives in life rather than the negatives, improves your quality of life and self-esteem, reduces stress and offers a sense of purpose.

Unfortunately, some of us are still trapped in the cycle of fear and inertia that the 2020 lockdown produced. Current events might have reinforced these feelings.

The poet Emily Dickenson likely imagined a bird that sits on your heart and never leaves when she wrote, “Hope is a thing with feathers that perches on the soul . . .” Beginning with Thanksgiving and throughout December it's important to focus on the things that we can look forward to, and things we can do to promote positive feelings in others. We can offer help to neighbors who live alone or do a kind deed, such as feeding a stranger's parking meter. If you can afford it, pay for a senior's or a soldier's meal in a restaurant – anonymously.

Sincerely compliment a stranger whose clothing or hat catches your eye. Let the harassed mother with whiny children get ahead of you in line. Kindness costs nothing, and it's a value worth spreading. We don't know the details of anyone else's life. Your small effort can make a world of difference to someone who's quietly struggling.

If you're on Facebook, look up Random Acts of Crochet Kindness (RAOCK.com). The individual members of that group use bits and pieces of leftover yarn to create small, secret gifts to be left in shopping carts, at gas stations, in Little Free Libraries or on library shelves, etc. – butterflies, bookmarks, hearts, cats, snowflakes – 20-minute projects that are packed in Ziploc bags to be found unexpectedly. A tag with the gift describes the project (briefly) and emphasizes that the item is free. Some finders will post a picture of their treasure and describe the joy and hope the surprise brought them during a difficult time. One such shared picture showed a girl who found a crocheted heart at a rest

stop on the way to her uncle's funeral. Imagine how the emotional atmosphere in the car changed for the whole family!

Pinterest offers multiple projects of a similar nature. Some projects are aimed at involving children. If they grow up in an atmosphere of spreading hope and kindness it can only benefit the world – and themselves.

Surround yourself with positive people, not folks who find fault with everything and suck all the happiness out of the room. MoCo Blanket Days and events can fit the bill for positivity!

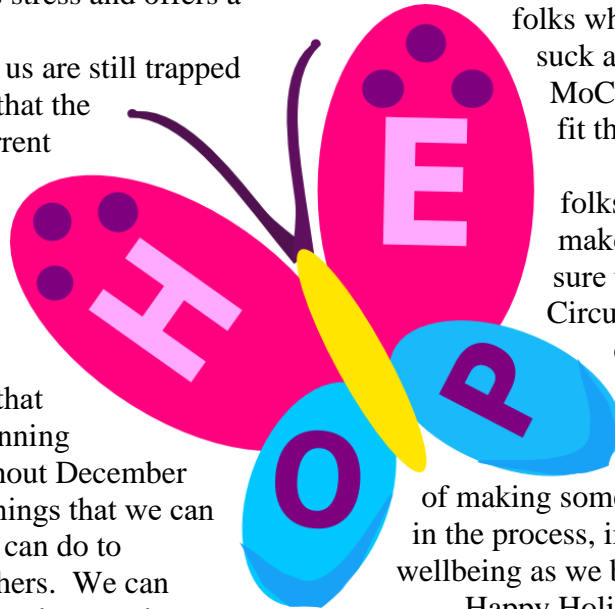
Abraham Lincoln said, “Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be”. I'm not sure that's always possible.

Circumstances can overcome us some of the time. But by incorporating small acts of hope and kindness into our daily lives we're increasing the likelihood of making someone else's life a bit better. And in the process, improving our own sense of wellbeing as we bring a bit of joy to the world.

Happy Holidays, Everyone!

Susan Goldman

susan.m.goldberg@gmail.com



EXERCISE and YOUR HEART

To maintain a healthy heart, it is recommended to engage in **both aerobic exercise** (such as jogging, swimming, biking) and **strength training** (such as weightlifting, bodyweight exercises). Aerobic exercise can help decrease your heart rate and blood pressure, improve your breathing, and reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke. Strength training can help raise good cholesterol, lower bad cholesterol, and reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke. Both types of exercise should be done at least twice a week and work all of your major muscle groups.



Do what you can. If you can't walk or stand for long, do “chair” exercises. Sit and use weights (dumbbells work well) to get that aerobic exercise.

GRANDPARENTS AND CHILD SAFETY

An Overview of Today's World

The Bottom Line

Grandparents can be bewildered by today's safety recommendations: yes, to car seats and bare cribs; no to walkers. There are many new medicines now, too. Some of them can be dangerous for children who swallow only one tablet. Grandparents' medicines are among the most dangerous causes of childhood poisoning.

It's easy to be nostalgic for the good old days. Memory Lane is a pleasant place, winding past family holidays, lazy summers, laughing children, and grandkids baking with grandma or picking out a treat with grandpa. Grandmothers, grandfathers and grandchildren still love spending time together. But other things have changed since those Memory Lane days. And when it comes to child safety, a lot has changed.

We tend to forget some of the problems of the "good" old days, when children:

- Fell down the steps in their baby walkers;
- Died of diseases we now can prevent;
- Got their heads stuck between the crib bars;
- Pulled fluffy bedding over their heads;
- Flew out of open car windows during a crash;
- Died of aspirin poisoning.

We might wish for an older, simpler time. But today's children are growing up today, not yesterday. And today, we know much more about making a child's environment as safe as possible.

- Baby walkers are no longer sold.
- New immunizations prevent old diseases.
- Crib safety standard and new types of window blind cords help prevent suffocation.
- The "Back to Sleep" campaign has had a positive effect on SIDS deaths.
- Car seats and bike helmets protect children.
- Child resistant packaging has saved children's lives.

But grandparents can be bewildered by today's safety recommendations. They raised their own

children safety. Why doesn't the "old" way work anymore? (And what on earth is "tummy time"?)

The heirloom crib is not safe; it might have lead paint, the slats are too far apart, the side drops down. Infants must sleep on their backs in bare cribs – no pillows, blankets, or stuffed toys.

Infants must be in car seats, facing the back of the car, in the center rear seat – and it must not be a hand-me-down seat. This applies in every vehicle. Grandma's car too.

Children should wear helmets as soon as they begin riding trikes, and certainly when they begin riding bike – every time they ride.

The old window blind cords must be cut so children can't wrap the loop around their necks.

And the list goes on...locking outlet covers, toilet seat locks, trigger locks, clothes without drawstrings, flame-proof pajamas, and drawer latches, to name just a few.

Another change: today's world contains many more medicines and poisons than back in the good old days. In fact, today's grandparents live longer and remain healthier than their own grandparents. There are effective medicines for high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, heart disease, cancer, chronic pain, and many other conditions. These same medicines, life-savers for adults, pose a grave danger to today's grandchildren. It's been shown that many of the prescription drugs that children get into belong to grandparents.

Unfortunately, many of these are extremely dangerous to children. For some medicines, a single tablet can kill a child. For other, a child who swallows even one pill must be in the hospital for at least 24 hours.

It is clear that child-proofing is a basic part of being a grandparent. Parents can insist that every place their children spend time be child-proofed. Parents can help grandparents navigate today's injury prevention world.

If you have questions on poisons and poison prevention, specialists are available 24/7 at 1-800-222-1222. You can also check the poison control web site at www.poison.org.

Rose Ann Gould Soloway, RN, BSN, MSED
Clinical Toxicologist



Slow-Cooker Beef and Barley Stew with Mushrooms



INGREDIENTS

- 1 (2- to 3-pound) chuck or round beef roast, trimmed of fat and cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 large onion, diced
- 8 to 10 ounces medium whole white button or brown mushrooms, stems trimmed
- 3 celery stalks, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ cup red wine
- 2 cups beef stock
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup pearl barley

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fill the bottom of a large frying pan or skillet with canola oil and set over medium-high heat until the oil is hot. Season the meat generously with salt and pepper.

2. Working in batches, add a single layer of meat to the bottom of the pan. Let it sit for 2 to 3 minutes until the cubes loosen and are seared golden-brown. Flip the cubes and sear the other sides. When all sides are seared, remove the meat to the insert of a slow cooker that holds at least 4 quarts. Sear the remaining meat in batches. If there is any liquid in the pot after the last batch is finished, pour it over the meat. Place the pan back on the stove.

3. Heat 1 teaspoon of canola oil in the pan and cook the onions with a pinch of salt until they are translucent and brown around the edges. Add the mushrooms and another pinch of salt, and cook until they have released all the moisture and have turned golden-brown. Add the celery and cook until just softened.

4. Clear a space in the middle of the vegetables and sauté the garlic until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in the thyme and bay leaf.

5. Pour the wine into the pot to deglaze, scraping up all the browned bits from the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon as the wine bubbles. Let the wine reduce down until most of it has evaporated or been absorbed by the vegetables. Transfer everything to the slow cooker.

6. Add both stocks to the slow cooker and top with enough water to cover the meat and veggies by about 1/2 inch. Cover and cook for 4 hours on low. Stir in the barley, cover again, and cook until the meat and barley are tender, about 2 hours more on low. Skim off any fat if desired, taste, and add salt and pepper as needed.

**Maryland Association for
Family & Community Education**
15500 Gallaudet Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20905

