

Make the Holidays a positive experience

Happy Holidays! While the decorations, songs, and traditions of the holiday season bring images of smiling children, tasty food, and merry gatherings, often we must work at keeping ourselves positive. If we are not careful, peace on earth is sometimes forgotten in long shopping lines. Joy to the world can be lost in congested traffic. Decking the halls can create havoc.

Keeping the true spirit of the holidays is the healthy thing to do, but how?

Following are some tips for coping with holiday depression and grief.

General Holiday Blues
Many people seem to suffer from holiday blues as they struggle with the festive atmosphere surrounding them during the season. Many factors can contribute to feelings such as stress, financial limits, unrealistic expectations, fatigue, and absence of family and friends. There are many demands during this time such as shopping, parties, travel, and houseguests.

It can also be a time of reflection, self-examination, and the unknown future of the New Year.

Here are some suggestions to help keep a positive attitude during the holidays.

- Plan ahead. Much of the stress associated with the season comes with last minute preparations. Take stock of priorities and pace yourself.
- Get plenty of rest. This is a busy time for a lot of people. If you are rested, you will enjoy all the activities more.

- Avoid excessive eating and drinking. Such behaviors will only increase the negative feelings, whether at the moment or the next day.

- Set realistic expectations for yourself and others. The fantasy families we see in the media are not good measuring tools. Be honest about what you can and cannot do. Remember this is a season of holidays, not just one day. Spread activities out over time to decrease the stress and increase the enjoyment.

- Reach out to friends you have not seen for a while. Spend time with people that are supportive and caring. Rekindle those positive relationships.

- Do something different. Create a new tradition. Here is a list of possibilities:

- Do something for someone else. Volunteer with a group that represents your beliefs and serve in some way.

- Dreading the family gathering? Take interest in each of your relatives as you speak to them in a much deeper way than ever before. You

may enjoy them for a change.
• Play and be creative. Do something childlike. Better yet, play with a child. You will find it deeply satisfying.

• Instead of making out a wish list help a child make out a "grateful" list. Encourage thinking of all the things for which the child is grateful and list them on paper.

• Find free activities such as window shopping, school recitals or community events. The good news is that while most holiday blues may be intense and unsettling, they are usually short-lived. They usually subside after the holiday season is over and daily routines are resumed.

Remember, you may be having a normal response to a stress-filled time of the year, and you don't have to suffer unnecessarily. Find someone to talk with who can help you through this difficult time—a family member, friend, member of the clergy, physician, or professional counselor.

Holiday Depression and Grief
But not all 'holiday blues' are as simple as a reaction to the fast pace of the season. Often intense sadness is felt when someone has recently suffered a significant loss, the loss of a job, or a move that creates distance from friends.

If someone you know is experiencing great difficulty because of a significant loss, here are some coping tips.

- Acknowledge the loss and feelings. It is important to recognize grief as a normal and natural process. Avoiding the fact that someone or something is missing will not eliminate the feelings.

- Find a way to include the memory. Plan some activity that will honor the missing person. This could be as simple as a moment of silence or displaying a picture.

- Do not isolate. It is important to plan ahead and not be alone. Choose safe and comfortable people to be with during the holidays.

- Avoid excessive alcohol consumption. Alcohol and drugs are used as a way of trying to avoid. However, they only increase the negative feelings.

- If you or someone you know is struggling with feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, or isolation, help is available from anywhere in the state by calling your local community mental health center or dialing 911. For a complete list of comprehensive care crisis lines, visit http://dmhmr.chs.ky.gov/files/CMHC_Crisis.pdf. For further information on mental health, visit <http://dmhmr.chs.ky.gov/MH/>.



Pictured above are the members of the Rockcastle County FFA Chapter, who competed and brought home a first place title for our chapter in the Agricultural Sales Competition. Pictured from left to right: Matthew Evans, Daniel Bustle, Brandon Cole, Matthew Whitaker, and Donald Sowder.

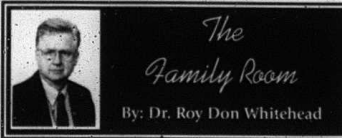
FFA Dedication and Domination

By Rockcastle County FFA Reporter

Mark Dychehouse

The Rockcastle County FFA Chapter competed in another day of fall Regional Field Day Competitions at Whitley County High School. The Rockcastle County FFA Chapter competed in the Regional Welding

contest, the Regional Small Engines Contest, and the Regional Agricultural Sales Competition. Our chapter dominated in the Agricultural Sales Competition, and the Small Engines Contest, our chapter also brought home an excellent third place in the Welding Contest.



The Family Room
By: Dr. Roy Don Whitehead

"Peace on Earth" seems an unlikely option this Christmas. War continues in Iraq and in many other countries around the world. People are killing each other even in places where there is no war. "There is no Peace on Earth" seems a more likely conclusion to draw. For those optimistic enough to believe that peace is a possibility, where should they begin?

"Peace on Earth" begins at home. Violence at home is still the most likely reason for a woman to be killed. Violence at home scars the kids and injures the adults. Violence at home spreads fear and anger throughout the household.

As a counselor I have had couples say to me, "Our children don't know we fight." That is denial of the worst kind. The children have most likely overheard Mom and Dad fighting when the parents thought they were asleep.

Even if the children have not heard, they "know." Kids have a sophisticated radar system that is tuned in to Mom and, secondarily, to Dad. When Mom is happy, they know it. When Mom is scared, they also know.

While they may not have seen the actual conflict, they sense that something is amiss. They know that Mom is upset and Dad is angry. Violence at home affects them even if they have never seen it.

It is still true that most of the violent acts at home are committed by men. Yes, women are also capable of violence, but men lead the way. Approximately five percent of domestic violence is committed by women. Ninety-five percent of the time, the male is the aggressor.

What is it that makes some men so violent? Why is "peace on Earth" simply a pipe dream for many?

(Cont'd D8)



Pictured above are the members of the Rockcastle County FFA Chapter, who participated and brought home an excellent first for our chapter in the Small Engines Contest. Pictured from left to right: Josh Mullins, Brian Powell, Nathan Doan, and Matthew Faulkner.



Pictured above are the members of the Rockcastle County FFA Chapter, who competed and brought home a third place title for our chapter in the Welding Contest. Pictured from left to right: Brian Powell, Nathan Doan, Robby Mink, and Shay Mullins.



Happy Holidays to You and Your Family

Sigmon Farm
Bill & Nancy Sigmon & family

Tips for healthy holiday eating for people with diabetes

Cookies, cake, candy - many Americans come face to face with temptation this time of year as they attend parties and family gatherings. Holiday treats abound and it seems everyone is serving large meals. For people living with diabetes, healthy holiday eating is essential because proper weight management and proper blood sugar control is very important to maintaining good health.

"For individuals with diabetes this can be an especially challenging time of year because in addition to rich foods and holiday stresses, people step out of their usual routines," says Fouad R. Kandeel, M.D., Ph.D., director of the City of Hope Gonda Diabetes Center in Los Angeles. "Diabetics People with diabetes must maintain vigilance over their blood-sugar levels, their medication, their diet and exercise."

People living with diabetes can successfully maintain their diets during the holiday season if they take care to adapt traditional recipes to reduce sugar, fat and carbohydrates. Here are two suggested recipes:

Egg Nog
Yield: 8 servings
Serving Size: 6 oz.
4 cups fat-free milk
1 cup egg substitute
Sugar substitute to equal 4 Tablespoons of sugar
3 Teaspoons rum extract or 1 teaspoon vanilla
Ground nutmeg

Combine milk, egg substitute, sugar substitute and extract. Beat with rotary beater or electric mixer until blended. Chill thoroughly. Stir before serving and sprinkle with nutmeg.
Exchanges: 1/2 carbohydrate exchange, 1/2 milk

Total Carbohydrates: 6 grams
Calories: 50
Pumpkin Bread
Yield: 1 loaf (12 servings)
Serving Size: 1 slice
Nonstick cooking spray
1-1/2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
1 Teaspoon baking soda
1 Teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 Teaspoon baking powder
1/4 Teaspoon cloves
1/4 Teaspoon salt
1/3 Cup reduced-calorie margarine, softened
1/2 Cup sugar
6 Packets Sweet One® sweetener
2 Large eggs
1 Teaspoon vanilla extract
1 Cup cooked or canned pumpkin
1/2 Cup fat-free milk
1/4 Cup walnuts, finely chopped
Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray 8-1/2 x 4-1/2 x 2-1/2 inch loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray; set aside.
Sift together flour, baking soda, cinnamon, baking powder, cloves and salt. In a separate bowl, cream margarine, sugar and Sweet One®. Beat in eggs and vanilla; beat in pumpkin.

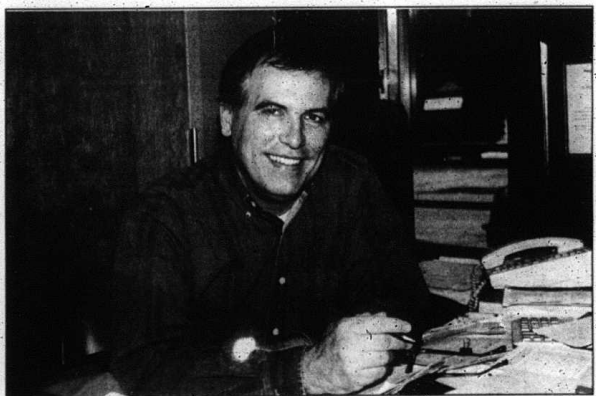
Stir dry ingredients into pumpkin mixture alternately with milk, stirring until blended after each addition. Stir in walnuts.

Pour into prepared loaf pan. Bake 50-60 minutes or until wooden pick inserted in middle comes out clean. Turn onto wire rack and cool.
Exchanges: 1-1/2 carbohydrates, 1/2 fruit, 1/2 fat

Total Carbohydrates: 28 grams
Calories: 135

For more information about diabetes research and treatment at the City of Hope Gonda Diabetes Center, please call 1-800-826-HOPE or visit www.cityofhope.org.

Merry Christmas



May this great season find each of you in health and good will for your neighbors and families. My personal wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

County Judge-Executive Buzz Carloftis