University of Idaho Extension

Spring Edition 2012

Rollin' In The Dough

A Family and Consumer Issues Newsletter for Latah County and North Central Idaho Residents

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A Note From Karen

Haaapppy Neeewww Yearrrr! !!

It always gives me such relief to enter into a new year. It is a time for us to start over… a fresh slate… a time to regroup and right wrongs.

I recently had a conversation with a friend about New Year 's Resolutions. Resolutions! The word just makes you want to abandon your efforts before you even start, doesn't it?

I tend to be a little rebellious in nature (for those of you that don't know me well ☺) and I don't use the word "resolution". Mostly because I have NEVER made it through January 15th with one. I prefer to use the word "Goal". I am striving to reach a destination. The dictionary describes a resolution as "to come to a definite or earnest decision about something". Can any of us say this? Life happens; things get in the way. I personally don't want to feel defeated when I am working towards a "goal". It is all about word choice.

Hence, a goal is defined as "**1.** the aim or object towards which an endeavor is directed, **2.** the terminal point of a journey or race. Hmm… I would much rather travel on a "journey towards a wanted destination".

In addition, people tend to make way too many resolutions only to see 2/3 of them crash and burn.

- Be thoughtful when determining your goals for the year.
- Be realistic in what you can accomplish.
- Don't be afraid to Dream.
- Don't look at the unachieved goals as failures. Look at them as future opportunities of success.
- Be positive. If you say you can't do it, you will live your words.

I have 3 goals for the year. One is to pay off my car by the end of the year. I will reach this goal. Look for my results in the Spring 2013 edition. ☺

For other goal setting ideas and tools to help you reach yours, give me a call, shoot me an email or stop by and visit. I love to share.

Holiday Spending Hangover

Karen Richel, Latah County Extension Educator

It's January. The start of a new year… but last year's bills are weighing heavy on your pocketbook. How can you recover from this holiday spending hangover? And what's more, how can you keep from repeating the same spending frenzy again next year? Here are some tips to help you through this year's debt….

- Control your cash – Create a plan. If you have unruly debt, tame it and take control. Know how much money you have to work with and make it work for you. This might mean living below your normal means until you get the debt paid off… putting off a big expense or entertainment expenses until the holidays are in the distant past.

- Control your credit – Pay more than the minimum on credit cards to avoid paying more interest than you need to. Double your credit card payments. Pay the higher interest rate accounts first. And, please STOP. Don't charge more on your credit cards. Digging a deeper hole will only lead to a longer "hangover".

- Return unwanted items – Aunt Betsy gave you a hideous sweater (she has always been a little devious ☺). Consider returning items that you don't want or don't need and any duplicate items you may have received. The money saved can be used for other items you need and may free up some needed cash to help pay bills.

- Sell your stuff – Having a yard sale is probably not at the top of your list for January (burr!!!) but you could sell some of your unwanted items on eBay, craigslist or Palouse Ads?!?

- Get your money back from Uncle Sam – If you are getting a tax refund, do your taxes early. This is a great way to get the needed dough to pay off your debt earlier or to start saving for the holidays next year.

The time to start preparing for next year is now…

- Start TODAY – Build your holiday expenses into your budget starting in January to avoid sticker shock in December. Karen has a great holiday budget planner to help you get started. Give her a call.

- Budget your Christmas dollars before you shop and make a list and check it twice – If you go in with a goal of who you want to buy for and what you want to buy, you will leave with more money in your wallet.

▪ Start a Christmas fund/holiday spending account – Can't seem to save the money on your own? This will help. You can have money drafted right out of your account the same day it is deposited – out of sight, out of mind. Then when you are ready to start shopping the day after Turkey Day, you have all the cash you need to buy your loved ones the presents of their dreams and enough to deck your halls too.

▪ Use layaway – Do you really need to have the present in your possession before Christmas? This allows you to buy the good deals and pay for your items before you need them. Remember not to miss a payment though or you might find your priceless finds back on the shelf.

▪Shop online first – This makes it harder to buy on impulse and you can usually snag a deal or two by comparison shopping.

▪Leave the credit cards at home – 'Nuff said?

▪Change your traditions – Many families feel the strain of the holidays. Talk to yours. You may find that a homemade present, a simple gift exchange or a combined family present might just be the ticket. A free night of babysitting might be more valuable than another box of chocolates… or that ugly sweater. Sorry Aunt Betsy. ☺

▪Don't go if you don't have the dough – this is a hard concept but… stay away from the stores and don't overspend on presents if it is going to put you in a bind in the future. Remember, the credit you spend today is the cash you earn tomorrow.

The holidays are my favorite time of the year but they have a way of adding unnecessary stress. Don't spend yourself into a stupor and regret the financial decisions you have made. For more ideas on savings, useful financial resources or a list of upcoming workshops, call Karen at 208-883-2241 or email at krichel@uidaho.edu.

University of Idaho Extension
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Spring Class Offerings at U of I Extension

Our classes are being offered at different times this spring to accommodate different schedules. If you would like to attend one of these workshops but the timing doesn't match your schedule, please contact Karen and she will let you know about future workshops that may fit better.

FEBRUARY

Balanced Living

Do you feel out of balance, out of control? Is your life running you down and negatively affecting your health? If so, don't miss this five-part series to achieve greater balance and learn ways to Balance Your Time, Manage Your Stress, Feed Your Body, Move Your Body, and Rest Your Body.

Bring your lunch and learn about the following topics:

Dates:	Monday, February 3 – Balance Your Time Weds., February 6 – Manage Your Stress Friday, February 8 – Feed Your Body Monday, February 10 – Move Your Body Weds., February 13 – Rest Your Body	Time: Place: Cost:	12:00 – 1:00 p.m. 220 E. 5th Street, Second Floor Conference Room (Federal Building) in Moscow FREE

Attend all 5 classes and increase your chances at a really cool door prize. To reserve your space, contact Karen Richel at krichel@uidaho.edu or (208) 883-2241 by **January 27th**.

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MARCH

University of Idaho Extension
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Passing treasures and property on to family members can be a difficult subject for many to deal with. Talking about end-of-life issues is always hard. Preparing loved ones and getting your life in order… sometimes overwhelming. Come and join us for the day and learn how to manage all of these topics.

Date:	Saturday, March 24
Time:	9:00 – 2:00 p.m.
Place:	Latah County Fairgrounds, Middle Room, Moscow
Cost:	$15 for Materials

Plan to come for all three sessions and join us for lunch. We will be providing lunch for those that register for all three sessions. Prepayment and preregistration is required by March 9th. Please contact Karen Richel for payment methods at krichel@uidaho.edu or 208-883-2241.

Agenda for the Day

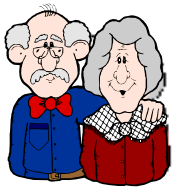
Welcome – 9:00

Who Will Get Grandpa's Farm? – 9:05 – 10:20

Communicating with family members about transferring farm ownership can be a delicate topic. Dad wants to pass the farm onto Junior but Junior wants to take another career path. Grandpa doesn't want to slow down but Dad thinks he should. This workshop provides strategies, theories, approaches and scenarios to help open lines of communication and determine the future of the farm.

Break – 10:20 – 10:30

Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate? – 10:30 – 12:00



Have you thought about your personal possessions and who would get them after you are gone or after a major life change occurs? "Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?" presents information to help you pass on your personal possessions according to your wishes. We will talk about the factors you should consider when passing on possessions, what you want to accomplish, what fair means, the different distribution options and consequences, and how to manage conflicts that arise. (Handouts are free; however, an optional workbook is available for $10 each. Exact change is required.)

Lunch – 12:00 – 12:30

Organizing Your Financial Paperwork – 12:30 – 1:50 p.m.

How many times have you wished you could put your hands on an important document only to have no idea where it is? What if there was a disaster or a death in the family? Would you know where to find all of your financial information quickly? We will talk about why it is important to have your financial paperwork organized, what you need to save, where you need to save it, and how long you should keep it around. (A notebook and DVD is in your material fee.)

Evaluations and Goodbyes – 1:50 – 2:00 p.m.

10 or more participants are needed to avoid rescheduling these workshops. Please make sure to register if you are interested in attending any of these workshops. We would love to have you!

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication or program information or reasonable accommodations need to contact **Karen Richel** one week prior to the event at (208) 883-2241, krichel@uidaho.edu

Other Stuff!!!

Small Steps to Health and Wealth™ Online Challenge Begins January 15

Just in time to rescue failed New Year's resolutions to improve health and personal finances, the Cooperative Extension system is launching an online *Small Steps to Health and Wealth™* (SSHW) Challenge called "Winter 2012 SSHW Challenge." This free six-week program, open to anyone who enrolls online, will be held from **Sunday, January 15, through Saturday, February 25, 2012**. Prizes will be awarded for participants who report the highest point totals.

To sign up for the SSHW Challenge, follow the "Challenges" link on the *Small Steps to Health and Wealth™* Web site at http://njaes.rutgers.edu/sshw/. Set up a user name and password and download a simple one-page user's guide with instructions about how to proceed. Enroll in the Challenge titled "Winter 2012 SSHW Challenge."

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Just In Time Parenting Newsletter
The Resource for Families with Young Children.

The JITP team has worked up a new user-friendly (and pretty) portal for families to enroll in the newsletter. Go to http://parenting247.org/jitp for the improved site.

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Tax Help – Yes, It Is That Time Again!!!

Tax time is right around the corner. When you are getting ready to start your taxes, check out http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=107626,00.html. You may find that there are free tax preparation sites (VITA sites) and resources that can help you file free and get more of your dough back.

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Contact the Latah County Extension Office if you have
Family and Consumer Questions.
We are always glad to help!!!
Karen Richel, krichel@uidaho.edu, 208-883-2241

A RIDDLE…

You are driving down the road in your car on a wild, stormy night, when you pass by a bus stop and you see three people waiting for the bus:

1. An old lady who looks as if she is about to die.
2. An old friend who once saved your life.
3. The perfect partner you have been dreaming about.

Which one would you choose to offer a ride to, knowing that there could only be one passenger in your car? Think before you continue reading.

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This is a moral/ethical dilemma that was once actually used as part of a job application. You could pick up the old lady, because she is going to die, and thus you should save her first. Or you could take the old friend because he once saved your life, and this would be the perfect chance to pay him back. However, you may never be able to find your perfect mate again.

YOU WON'T BELIEVE THIS.....

The candidate who was hired (out of 200 applicants) had no trouble coming up with his answer. He simply answered: 'I would give the car keys to my old friend and let him take the lady to the hospital. I would stay behind and wait for the bus with the partner of my dreams.'

Sometimes, we gain more if we are able to give up our stubborn thought limitations. Never forget to 'Think Outside of the Box.'

Have a question?

Want to add a friend to my subscription list?

Karen Richel

Financial Educator

University of Idaho Extension – Latah County

P.O. Box 8068 / 220 E. 5th Street, Room 336

Moscow, ID 83843

208) 883-2241

Fax (208) 882-8505 krichel@uidaho.edu