

TAKING TIME

by Rebecca Escott
Extension Home Economist



Family Celebrations Create Strong Families
Celebrate — to commemorate an anniversary or holiday with festivity; to honor publicly; to have a good time.

In my childhood family, you could count on Sunday night bed-times being filled with laughter and giddiness. We also were guaranteed "Wacky Cake" for dessert on the anniversary of my parents' first date. And odd as it may seem, there was great celebration when we let the cows out of the barn and into the pasture for the first time each spring. These were some of my family celebrations.

My grandparents used to host an open house for the entire neighborhood each time their Night-Blooming Cereus flowered. The bloom would last only one night, and a sign in the front yard would invite guests to see the bud open shortly after dark. "Night-Blooming Cereus Tonight Neighbors and Viewers Welcome".

Having special festive moments or traditions within the family are important. These times give each member a sense of sharing and connectedness.

Here are some familiar and not-so-familiar suggestions for creating unique family celebrations. Celebrate the first day of spring,

Christmas in July, or half-birthdays. Once each month designate a "Winning Family Night" where you salute each other for your personal qualities and achievements. Use your best dinnerware and candles. Write short notes describing things you like about other family members. Read them before beginning the family banquet. You may want to make a cake. You could even make homemade trophies from paper cups or milk cartons.

As an alternative, you may salute one person at a time. Choose a special plate or placemat that would be a symbol for family celebration. Each time you wanted to honor a family member for a special accomplishment or "just for being" place that dish at his or her space at the table. These festivities remind children and adults that you are proud of them and that they are important to the family.

A less-involved way of creating family traditions is to develop a routine of going places together — the library, the farmer's market, a park. An activity becomes a tradition if you repeat it at the same time each month or each year.

Spring begins in March, you may want to mark the change of

seasons by taking an hour that weekend to pick up trash along your road or highway. This not only fosters family togetherness, it also promotes caring for the land.

These celebrations focus on people not things. They give each of us a new sense of confidence.

They remind each person that others care and that they all are important.

Consumer confidence is down. Government systems seem to be in chaos. Family celebrations are one small effort to bring some stability and confidence back into our com-

munities. What can you celebrate? Rebecca Escott is a Home Economist with Penn State Cooperative Extension in Lehigh County. Penn State is an affirmative action equal opportunity university.

Surviving Tough Economical Times

No matter who you talk to these days they are feeling the effects of today's economic slow down. Penn State Cooperative Extension of Wayne County would like to help residents make it through this tight money period. The following resources are offered free to the public at the Wayne County Extension Office, basement of the original Courthouse, 925 Court St., Honesdale.

Taking Control of Your Money — A five-part money management series. This series takes you step-by-step through the money management process. You will set personal and financial goals, look at where you are spending your money now; learn to set up a spending and saving plan, organize your records, learn to manage credit, determine your net worth, and more.

Money Management Videos — Available for free loan "Tracking Your Spending" and "Making Ends Meet" are available for you to borrow for one week free of charge. There is a refundable \$5 deposit required when you rent. This will be refunded when you return the tape. A \$1 per day late fee is charged for all late tape returns.

Fudge-It-Budget Book — This easy to use booklet helps you plan your expenses. You list your sour-

ces of income and the expenses you must pay each month in the book. Writing down what you have coming in and what you must pay out will help you make sure you can pay your bills each month. The book is free and may be picked up at the Wayne County Extension Office, Courthouse, Honesdale.

When Your Income Drops — If economic misfortune strikes you or your family in the form of

reduced income, is there anything you can do to ease the burden? Definitely yes and this four-page bulletin outlines ways you can adjust to a lower income, reduce stress and stretch your limited dollars.

Living On Less — Are there ways you can cut the amount of money you are now spending? These free publications will help you stretch the dollars you have.

Berks Executive Board

The Berks County Farm Women Executive Board meeting was held recently at the Agriculture Center with 22 members attending.

The meeting was opened by president, Joan Loeb.

Devotions were given by Dorothy Stricker of Group #7.

For roll call, we were to tell "If there were Olympics in farming, what would we win the gold medal in?"

The groups will participate at the bingo in the main building at Berks Heim on April 9.

The Berks Heim volunteer dinner will be held on April 23 at the 4-H building. Two ladies from each group are invited.

Janet Schlegel reported for agri-

business. The dates for the Scenic River Festival are July 30 and 31 and August 1 and 2.

The Spring Rally, hosted by Lancaster County, will be held on May 27, at the Host Resort and Conference Center, Lancaster.

During the year 1991, four new members were received into Berks County Farm Women groups. A certificate was awarded. Another certificate was received for 100% in safety programs during 1991.

An invitation was extended to each group by Group #11 who will have a fashion show at Boscov's in Lebanon on March 23 at 8 p.m.

The next County Board meeting will be held on May 4th at 8:00 P.M. at the Agriculture Center.

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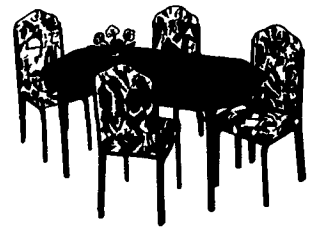
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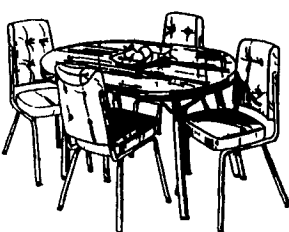
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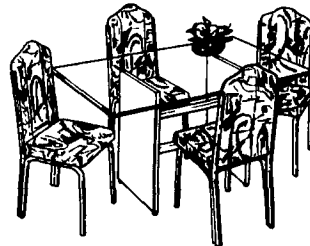
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