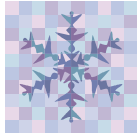


# Living Well in Baker County

**Dear Extension Friend:**

January 2008



I want to take a moment and say "Happy New Year" to each and every one

of you. I hope your holiday was very much enjoyed and you took the time to relax and unwind.

With the holiday's now behind us, we're in the recovery mode. Many of you may have made a new year's resolution to take a better and closer look at your finances. This month's *Money Matters* article will hopefully get you started in

the right direction.

Many of you, like millions of other Americans, may have opted to take a better look at your health by eating right. Take a look at the *Healthy Lifestyles* article regarding the

obsession in weight and the importance in January's Healthy Weight Week. In the *Food Safety* section is a GREAT opportunity for you to develop an expertise in the area of food and nutrition.

With the new year I wanted to roll out a new section in the newsletter appropriately titled, Aging. The new section is

geared toward the older individual and/or those who serve as caregivers.

This month's article is about hearing loss. It gives tips on how to carry on a normal conversation when experiencing this problem.

Sincerely,

Melanie Thomas  
FCS Agent  
Baker County  
Phone: (904) 259-3520  
Email: mlthomas@ufl.edu



**Inside this issue:**

<i>Money Matters</i>	1-2
<i>Healthy Lifestyles</i>	2
<i>Food Safety</i>	3
<i>Special Events</i>	3
<i>Aging</i>	4

## Money Matters: Post Holiday Financial Blues

When the holidays have come and gone, we are often still left cleaning up the mess. I am not referring to unwanted gifts, leftovers, spills, and stains from relatives. In fact we should focus on the mess that is hardest to clean, the financial mess that can come from a fun but expensive holiday season.

You may have overspent like many other Americans. It can be difficult to avoid the traps of sophisticated marketing techniques utilized during the Holiday Season. "I have succumb to holiday marketing displays, purchased a present that I had no intention of purchasing merely because at that moment it looked like the perfect gift." Whatever the reason overspending can leave us with a Holiday spending hangover; increased debt. Michael Gutter, Financial Management Specialist with the University of Florida highlights several helpful things you can do.

### Do you know how much you spent over the Holidays?

Take a moment to sort that out, it will help you be prepared for next year. Was it the amount you intended? You can do this by gathering your receipts or as your bills and statements come in the mail. You should sit down and determine exactly how much you spent on the holidays. While this may not be a fun task, the best way to avoid making the same mistakes year after year is to get organized.

### Give your credit a holiday!

If you are like many Americans, you probably relied on at least some credit to travel, for gifts, for food, etc. While you are planning out your repayment plan, you should put the cards away. Do not take them with you unless you need them for refunds or exchanges.

*Continued on page 2, see Money Matters*

## Money Matters: Cont'd

### Set up and Stick to a debt repayment plan or strategy!

This need not involve a third party, just an honest discussion and different choices on your part. By working through the first two items, you can create a timeline to paying off your debt. One great tool for this is called PowerPay (<https://powerpay.org/>). In fact this free online program can help you organize your debts, create a calendar for repayment, and even show you how to most efficiently use extra money to pay down your debt more efficiently.

### Avoid Post-Holiday Sales!

I know this is when some of the best deals are. You can save so much money by buying things on sale. However, my grandmother used to say, "You could go broke practicing that type of saving." By not going to those sales, you will be able to engage in real savings!!

### Start Saving or Save More!

It becomes difficult to meet your expectations for the holidays year after year without planning ahead. By knowing what you spent this past year you can set up a goal to have a certain amount in a savings account to use for the next holiday season. Imagine how much sweeter it would feel to not owe anything for all of the things you enjoyed. Plus use some of those months to start putting money (or additional money) aside for your future.

Contact the Baker County Extension office at 904-259-3520 for help with any and all of these issues.

Source: Gutter, University of Florida

## Healthy Lifestyles: Overweight Hysteria

In a culture inundated with gaunt female idols, dieting fads and exercise plans, it's hard to remember that the medical focus of all this began by promoting health. Somehow it became twisted into a cult of thinness that is far from healthy.

Healthy Weight Week reminds people of the value of a healthy nondiet lifestyle and helps them move ahead to improving their health in positive ways. It celebrates normal habits that prevent eating and weight problems, rather than intensifying them.

This year, Healthy Weight Week takes place between January 20 and January 26.

"The hysteria over weight is causing tragic problems. Health experts are only beginning to realize the risks that people of all ages and sizes are taking in efforts to pare down their bodies to thin ideals. Risks range from depression to eating disorders, heart arrhythmias and sudden death," said Francie M. Berg, whose organization Healthy Weight Network started Healthy Weight Week 15 years ago and the Slim Chance Awards 19 years ago.

The Slim Chance Awards, to be presented on Tuesday, Rid the World of Fad Diets & Gimmicks Day, highlight the year's "worst" weight loss schemes. The 2008 awards expose the false advertising by Evercleanse and three other diet aids. **Worst Product** was Hoodia-Herbal; **Worst Claim**, Bio SpeedSLIM; **Worst Gimmick**, Hollywood Detox Body Wrap; and **Most Outrageous Claim**, Evercleanse.

"It's outrageous and offensive that the Evercleanse hucksters are telling people they are excessively heavy due to waste stuck within their colons," said William M. London, EdD, MPH, Professor, Health Science Program, College of Health and Human Services, California State University, Los Angeles, and a member of the

panel evaluating the diet promotions.

If toxins and waste were really retained in the body, the human race would not have survived, said Vincent F. Cordaro, MD, an FDA medical officer. "The whole concept is irrational and unscientific."



Healthy Weight Week also honors businesses that portray an appreciation of size diversity, with the Women's Healthy Weight Awards given on Thursday. The 2008 honorees are the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty (business), [PlusSizeYellowPages.com](http://PlusSizeYellowPages.com) (cataloging), and How to Look Good Naked (television).

More size tolerance is needed, said Berg, a licensed nutritionist and adjunct professor at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine. Today, you can hardly open a newspaper or turn on the TV without hearing about the costs of overweight and obesity in America. However, she points out, some of these concerns may be misplaced and, in fact, a moderate amount of body fat may be beneficial.

Research at the National Center for Health Statistics, CDC, published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (Nov. 7, 2007, and Apr. 20, 2005), shows the fewest deaths are associated with overweight, and higher health risks actually are linked to underweight and even so-called normal weight.

Berg's recent books *Underage and Overweight: Our Child Obesity Crisis* and *Women Afraid to Eat*, articulate the damage to children and women by the obsession with thinness in our society, and encourage them to improve their lives in lasting ways, by living actively, eating normally, relaxing and feeling good about themselves and others.

Source: [www.healthyweight.net](http://www.healthyweight.net)

## Food Safety: Master Food and Nutrition Education Classes Begin

Would you like to develop expertise in the area of food and nutrition and share your knowledge with others? A Master Food and Nutrition Education program is being offered by the Cooperative Extension Service, University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. The program is designed to provide food and nutrition training for selected individuals in Northeast Florida.

Master Food and Nutrition Educator is a title given to individuals who receive in-depth food and nutrition training from County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agents and agree in return to give 50 hours of volunteer service, in the next year, helping the local County Extension Office.

The County Extension Offices in Duval, Baker, Clay, Nassau, and St. Johns counties have joined together to train volunteers. The program is open to all residents in the previously listed counties. Master Food and Nutrition Education training will be held at the Duval County Cooperative Extension Service office in Jacksonville on Wednesdays beginning February 13, 2008, and ending April 9, 2008. Training sessions begin at 9:30 a.m. and last until 4:00 p.m. Training will include topics such as nutrition and health, herbal cookery, food safety, and the latest food preservation updates in dehydration, canning, pickling, jelly making, and freezing techniques. After completing the training, each participant will be given one of the best food and nutrition reference books available. The book is a compilation of Extension Service fact sheets and bulletins that apply specifically to our region.

There will be a charge of \$75.00 to cover lab supplies for the course. Applications for a limited number of openings in the class are now being taken at the Baker County Extension Office.

Contact Information:

Application Deadline: 2/1/2008

Melanie Thomas, Agent  
Family and Consumer Sciences  
Baker County Extension Office  
1025 W. Macclenny Avenue  
Macclenny, FL 32063-4433  
(904) 259-3520



Anyone may apply for the program regardless of race, color, sex, age, disability, religion, or national origin. Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations should inform the Extension Office at time of registration.

### Events for January:

JANUARY IS CERVICAL HEALTH  
AWARENESS MONTH

The United States Congress designated January as Cervical Health Awareness Month.

- 11% of United States women report that they do not have their Pap test screenings
- In the United States, About 10,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year and about 3,700 women die in the USA each year from this disease.

Even if a woman has had the HPV/cervical cancer vaccine, she will continue to require her regular cervical cancer screen by the Pap test and HPV test when recommended. At this time, the vaccine only protects against 70-80% of the potential cervical cancer cases. Since the 1940's, The Pap test has reduced cervical cancer rates in the United States by more than 70%. The Pap Test, like the one you receive regularly, is the single most effective cancer screen in the history of medicine. Remember to have your regular Pap test and HPV test when recommended.

**Early detection saves lives.**

### Important Dates:

January 20-26th—  
Healthy Weight Week

February 1— Application  
Deadline for Master Food  
and Nutrition Educator  
class.

**University of Florida  
Baker County Cooperative Extension**

1025 West Macclenny Avenue  
Macclenny, FL 32063

Phone: (904) 259-3520  
Fax: (904) 259-9034  
Email: mlthomas@ufl.edu

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 17  
Macclenny, FL 32063

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

Extension programs are open to all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, handicap, or national origin. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person needing a special accommodation to participate in any activity, should contact the Baker County Cooperative Extension Service at 1025 West Macclenny Avenue, Macclenny, FL 32063 or telephone (904) 259-3520 no later than seven (7) days prior to the event. Hearing impaired persons can access the foregoing telephone by contacting the Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8770 (voice) or 1-800-955-8771 (TDD).

## Aging: Hearing Loss

About 30% of people over 60 and 50% of those over 85 have some type of hearing impairment. Hearing loss affects the older person's ability to talk easily with others. For example, older people often have trouble hearing higher pitched tones. They also may not be able to make out sounds or words when there is background noise. Conversations may be difficult to hear, especially if the speaker has a high voice or there is background interference.

Older persons may be frustrated or embarrassed about not being able to understand what is being said. They may have to ask people to repeat themselves, or endure shouting when a speaker tries to be heard. Older persons may hold back from conversation out of a fear of making inappropriate comments. They may tire from concentrating and straining to hear. As a result, the older person may withdraw from friends and family and outside activities.

Hearing loss doesn't have to cause social isolation and emotional distress. Simple changes in behavior and the home environment can increase the elder's ability to carry on a normal conversation.

- Speak clearly and in a normal tone of voice. Do not shout.
- Get the older person's attention before speaking.
- Look directly at his/her face and at the same level.

- Eliminate background noise from radio and television.
- Try using different phrases with the same meaning if you are not getting your point across.
- Build breaks into your conversation.
- Use facial expressions or gestures to give useful clues.
- Repeat yourself if necessary, using different words.



Older adults need routine hearing exams by qualified professionals. Have hearing checked by an audiologist to be sure that another problem is not causing the hearing loss. If a hearing aid is needed, work with the audiologist to find the right brand and fit. If you are a caregiver, provide plenty of support and encouragement to the person who is adjusting to the hearing aid.

The aging body does change. Some systems slow down, while others lose their "fine tuning." As a general rule, slight, gradual changes are common, and most of these are not problems to the person who experiences them. Sudden and dramatic changes might indicate serious health problems. A program of regular, thorough health check-ups and self-examinations will identify changes that may be cause for concern.

Source: *Smith and Gove, University of Florida*