

Maine Extension *Homemakers*

July – September, 2022



Presidential Ponderings

To our faithful homemakers and staff in UMaine Extension. Summer is here and there are lots of things to do after not being able to do so for two years. Our fairs are back and homemakers are

participating and smiling.

Thank you to all who showed up for our Spring meeting. It went real well and staff did an amazing job with getting all things ready. (maybe we should have them do all the spring and fall meetings?) We are getting ready for the Fall meeting, which will be October 1, 2022 and we hope you will be there. We will be electing a new President, as I have served out my term, as well as having served an extra term during COVID, for good measure! It has been a good and enjoyable time as a Homemaker.

We would like to know of some things that you would like to see us do. No ideas will be dismissed. Have wonderful and enjoyable summer.

Around the State

Androscoggin County has seen a new group form, called Living Innovations. These individuals are interested in lots of crafting and are interested in becoming community volunteers.

Aroostook County

Aroostook Celebrated Lavone Walters, who has been a member of Extension Homemakers for 60 years! Members of the Caribou Homemakers helped hand out 260 Cherry Tomato plants as part of The One Tomato Project. Members of the Spragueville group made May Baskets and delivered them to the long-term health care facilities in Presque Isle.



Cumberland County

Cumberland County Extension Homemakers had their spring meeting in April. The members discussed how the group should move forward since membership is down and many clubs are not meeting regularly. They decided that for the rest of the year they will have meetings every three months beginning with a picnic in July as a way to re-connect with each other. Marie Temm led the group in a window-box flower activity that was sponsored by Skillins. She brought in mini-daffodils, lettuce, and a variety of other flowers for each participant to create their own window-box garden that was both pretty and practical. She also taught about the special needs of growing flowers and veggies in a small container indoors.



Cumberland County Homemakers

Franklin County

Members have been busy making adult cover-ups. Over 260 colorful cover-ups were made and donated to local health care facilities throughout Franklin County. Eight more quilts were delivered to Troop E in Bangor. Quilts for Troopers ensures there are two quilts kept in all State Trooper vehicles for use when children are experiencing trauma and need the comfort or covering of a blanket.



Hancock County

Homemakers in Hancock County met in June and will take part in a Recruiting Event on July 30 in conjunction with 4-H Jamboree Day.

Oxford County

Oxford County Extension Homemakers held their spring meeting in May with a catered luncheon and an organized painting activity. After the catered luncheon, the group discussed the future of OCEH and decided to continue meeting as Homemakers, but dissolve

individual clubs. Going forward they will meet as a group for field trips, activities, and luncheons while they take time to get re-connected with each other after a long, COVID-driven absence from one another. Many thanks to Tayla Mann, Oxford County Admin Specialist, for helping to organize the fun activity whereby each participant got a paint kit with a canvas, brushes, apron, and paints to create a guided painting of a jar of fireflies in the night sky



York County

A new group has formed in York County and it is 18 members strong! They are The Modern Day Homemakers and they prefer to meet online and share ideas. We cannot wait to meet them at a future state meeting

Highlights from the MEHC State Spring Meeting

Homemakers from around the state gathered in Bangor on May 21st for the first state-wide meeting since 2019. The by-laws were updated and passed, new officers were presented by the nominating committee, and a new vice president and a new secretary were installed. A new Treasurer, Ellen Kavin, was presented by the nominating committee and voted into office. Ellen will be installed at the fall state meeting in October. Also happening at the fall meeting will be the voting of and installation of a new

president as current President Bea LaPlante's term will expire.



Installation of Judy Mann as Vice President



Installation of Amy Palmer as Secretary



Presentation of Coins for Caring to Life Flight Maine

Table decorations and summer-themed door prizes were generously provided by Franklin County and Sylvia Simmons from Oxford County.

Many thanks to TeaMainea for their wonderful presentation about brewing the perfect cup of tea. While the original topic was the history of tea, our presenter skillfully morphed the topic into something a bit more timely and provided samples of several different teas to try. There were so many great questions from the

homemakers! Thank you all for making our presenter feel welcome.

Maddie Gray, a 4-H member from Androscoggin/Sagadahoc Counties, led the group in a short presentation about creating safe passwords and being safe online. Although there was a technology snafu, her interesting topic kept the crowd asking questions. Bridging the gap between old and new is always in style, and we thank young Maddie for walking our "experienced" group members through some new techniques!

'Janet's Jammies' was voted on to be the state-wide project for 2022-2023. Janet Brzozowski loved to sew, especially making matching pajamas for her extended family, as well as sewing for others. When a heart transplant operation failed in 2020, Janet left behind a family who wanted to spread her love of sewing and giving, and created "Janet's Jammies" that calls on volunteers to stitch flannel pajama bottoms to be paired up with cotton t-shirts to be donated to kids in need throughout the state of Maine. Each pair of pajama bottoms will feature a red felt heart, to symbolize Janet's heart. Patterns in S, M and L sizes will be mailed out to all county Presidents. Sewing can begin as soon as the patterns are received and each county is asked to make 45 pairs of pajama bottoms. Ideally, 15 of each size. Pajamas will be brought to the November 7 Advisory Board Meeting in Bangor where, following the business meeting, tops and bottoms will be paired up, wrapped in tissue paper, and packaged in zip-top bags for distribution. We are looking at two state-wide organizations to determine which is willing and able to accept 300 pairs of pajamas and distribute them to children in need in all counties in Maine in time for Christmas. United Way and The Maine Foster Care System/DHHS are the two organizations being considered. For questions, please contact Lisa or Cathy.

Agricultural Fairs in 2022

Waterford Worlds Fair: July 15 - 17
Pittston Fair: July 21 - 24
Union Fair: July 27 - July 31
Bangor Fair: July 28 - August 6
Northern Maine Fair: July 30 - August 7
Topsham Fair: August 7 - 14
Skowhegan State Fair: August 11 - 20
Maine Farm Days: August 24 - 25
Acton Fair: August 25 - 28
Piscataquis Valley Fair: August 25 - 28
Pembroke Trotting Park: August 20 - 21
Washington County Fair: August 27 - 28
Windsor Fair: August 28 - September 5
Blue Hill Fair: September 1 - 5
Harmony Free Fair: September 2 - 5
Springfield Fair: September 3
Clinton Lions Agricultural Fair: September 8 - 11
Litchfield Fair: September 9 - 11
Oxford Fair: September 14 - 17
New Portland Lions Fair: September 16 - 18
Farmington Fair: September 18 - 24
Common Ground Country Fair: September 23 - 25
Cumberland Fair: September 25 - October 1
Fryeburg Fair: October 2 - 9

Gardening Tips for July and August and September

Water your containers more deeply. When the heat hits, plants confined to containers need extra water to prevent stress. Check them first thing in the morning and again in the afternoon for soil moisture and signs of wilt. Certain containers in full sun may need daily or even twice daily watering during heat waves. Always water deeply enough that water runs out the drainage holes.

Fertilize annuals and tender perennials. Apply fertilizer every two weeks during the growing season. Cut back to once a month as the growing season begins to shorten. Choose a diluted solution of organic fertilizer such as fish or seaweed emulsion

Mulch. One of the best things you can do for your landscape during the heat of summer is to

add mulch. Mulch is a great way to help keep the moisture in the soil while adding a neat and finished look to your yard.

Monitor for pests. Be on guard for Infestations of insects including, but not limited to, thrips, tomato fruit worm, squash vine borer, tomato hornworm, spider mites, [chinch bugs](#), scale, snails, and [slugs](#).

Monitor for disease. Inspect plants for diseases such as [septoria leaf spot](#), [powdery mildew](#), and rust.

Monitor for beetles. Inspect plants for [Japanese beetles](#) (*Popillia japonica*) on gourds, pumpkins, and squash.

Additional information can be found in the Cooperative Extension publication catalog: extension.umaine.edu/publications/

Harvest on a regular basis to keep plants producing.

Peppers: Pick peppers at any stage of development. The longer fruits stay on a plant, the more intense flavor becomes -- sweet peppers grow sweeter, and hot peppers develop a stronger burn.

Herbs: It's best to pick herbs before they flower. Harvest herbs on a dry morning, after dew has dried. The exception is mint, which you want to pick at midday, when essential oil concentrations in leaves are greatest. Avoid harvesting herbs following a rain, when foliage is wet.

Tomatoes: Even though tomatoes continue to ripen after picking, fruits develop greatest flavor when allowed to ripen on plants. The exception is cherry tomatoes, which are prone to splitting. Pick these tasty morsels as soon as fruits start showing color.

Make sure mower height is raised so you're cutting grass higher. When grass is taller, it shades soil beneath, which reduces water evaporation from soil. Taller grass generally has deeper roots, which helps it withstand drought better.

August is the month to order peony roots. You should have peonies in the ground about a month before the average first frost date.

The heat and humidity of midsummer bring with them plant diseases. Inspect your plants for any diseased foliage, and remove it. Dispose of it properly; do not put it in the compost pile where it can continue to spread disease to plants via the compost. Also, disinfect your tools, such as pruners, between each plant to avoid spreading disease.

September is the month to:

Prep the garden for the next growing season. This might mean amending soil, building new raised beds or paths, and planting or moving flowering perennials, shrubs, or trees.

September is an excellent time to take a soil test to will help to determine what, if any, amendments your soil needs. For more information about soil testing, see UMaine Extension bulletin #2286, Testing Your Soil.

Order fall bulbs. If you already have bulbs, it's time to plant them.

Divide perennials such as peonies, daylilies, irises, and hosta. September also means digging up the tender corms of gladiola, dahlia, and tuberous begonias.

Clean up those bird feeders. Wash well to rid the feeders of mold and mildew. Hummingbird feeders can be cleaned and stored for the next season. Salvage the last of the tomatoes by removing any blooms from the plants. This will indicate to the plant that it's time to ripen fruit instead of produce.

Bring your houseplants back inside. Check them for insects first. Once inside, cut back on watering and fertilizing.

Plant new shrubs and trees in September, which will leave them plenty of time before winter to establish without getting stressed.

Do you Remember?

In the last issue, we asked how many of you knew what historical event happened on May 11, 1934? Hint: John Steinbeck wrote about it in his novel "The Grapes of Wrath." The event was The Dustbowl. "Between 1930 and 1940, the southwestern Great Plains region of the United States suffered a severe drought. Once a semi-arid grassland, the treeless plains became home to thousands of settlers when, in 1862, Congress passed the Homestead Act. Most of the settlers farmed their land or grazed cattle. The farmers plowed the prairie grasses and planted dry land wheat. As the demand for wheat products grew, cattle grazing was reduced, and millions more acres were plowed and planted.

Dry land farming on the Great Plains led to the systematic destruction of the prairie grasses. In the ranching regions, overgrazing also destroyed large areas of grassland. Gradually, the land was laid bare, and significant environmental damage began to occur. Among the natural elements, the strong winds of the region were particularly devastating.

With the onset of drought in 1930, the over-farmed and over-grazed land began to blow away. Winds whipped across the plains, raising billowing clouds of dust. The sky could darken for days, and even well-sealed homes could have a thick layer of dust on the furniture. In some places, the dust drifted like snow, covering farm buildings and houses. Nineteen states in the heartland of the United States became a vast dust bowl. With no chance of making a living, farm families abandoned their homes and land, fleeing westward to become migrant laborers."



Photo courtesy of USDA.gov

20th Century Match Up!

A Challenge for you this issue, can you match the event to the correct year?

Artificial life begins -- the first robot built	1908
Bombing of federal office building in Oklahoma City kills 168 people	1927
Bureau of Investigation (FBI forerunner) was established	1945
Charles Lindbergh makes the first solo nonstop transatlantic flight in his plane The Spirit of St. Louis	1952
Puerto Rico becomes a U.S. commonwealth	1963
Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., delivers his "I Have a Dream" speech before a crowd of 200,000 during the civil rights march on Washington, DC	1995
The Barcode was invented - The first product to use the barcode technology was a 10-pack Wrigley's Juicy Fruit Chewing gum that was scanned at a grocery store in Ohio.	2006
The crossword puzzle invented by Arthur Wynne	1974
The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the population of the United States has reached 300 million	1913
United Nations is established	1921

Mark Your Calendars

July is National Nectarine, Raspberry and Hot Dog Month as well as National Grilling Month.

August is International Peace Month, and National Back to School Month as well as National Sandwich Month and National Water Quality Month.

September is National Classical Music Month and National Fall Hat Month, National Preparedness Month, National Sewing Month and National Potato Month.

October 1 State Fall Meeting in Bangor at Eastport Hall. Details coming soon.

October 31 Enrollment Forms for 2023 submitted to County Office Support Staff and Angela Martin (Packets will be mailed to County Presidents in August)

November 7 MEHC Advisory Board Meeting
Packing and Wrapping Janet's Jammies

November 9 Snow Date for MEHC Advisory Board Meeting

Recipes In Honor of National Grilling Month and National Spice Blend Day (September 4th)

Grilled Stone Fruit

Stone Fruits are in season, and are excellent choices for grilling. Select a variety of stone fruits (choose from nectarines, peaches, apricots, or plums) and thoroughly wash under cool running water. Dry, cut in half and remove the stone, or pit. For ease of handling, you may wish to thread halved fruit on skewers. Lightly sprinkle sugar on each cut side of the fruit, and let stand until sugar is dissolved. Place fruit, cut side down, onto grill (not too hot or the sugar will quickly burn). Grill until sugar caramelizes and turns a golden brown. Remove from heat and serve warm. For an extra special treat, serve with vanilla ice cream.

TIP: Spray grill racks with cooking spray before placing fruit on the grill to reduce sticking.

Convenience Salt-Free Seasoning Mix

<https://extension.umaine.edu/publications/4029e/recipes-13/>

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 teaspoons dry mustard
- 1-1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1-1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon dill weed
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- Combine and place in an airtight container; store in a cool place. Use in place of salt to season food.

Meet Your County Advisory Team

What is the “go-to” snack your advisory team reaches for when they need a pick-me-up? Cathy reaches for Cheeze-Its, Lisa goes for Wheat Thins crackers and sharp cheddar cheese, and Angela is known to grab dry roasted peanuts. What is your favorite snack to reach for?

Members recognized for 60 Years of membership:

- Mary Soper-Hancock County
- LaVone Walters-Aroostook County



Mary Soper, from the Hancock County Extension Homemakers, was recognized for 60 years of membership at the May 21 Spring Meeting of the Maine Extension Homemakers Council. According to Mary, “Extension was the best thing

that ever happened to me.” Congratulations, Mary, on this milestone!

The Extension Homemakers Creed

- *Let us be aware of and be concerned for each other.*
- *Let us do all things in a caring manner and with true enjoyment.*
- *We truly believe in the home and community involvement that living in a free county allows us.*
- *May our examples provide a beacon for others to follow and may our efforts ensure a future for homemakers everywhere.*

– Caroline Mayo, Author,
Franklin County Homemaker
Adopted 1995



RETURN
ADDRESS
HERE

The University of Maine is an EEO/AA employer, and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Director of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5754, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).