

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Maryland Association for Family and Community Education, Inc. Newsletter

www.mdafce.org

Happenings

March

All Month Women's History Month

- 1 Heart of FCE, Spirit of FCL Award, Outstanding Unit Award
Entries due to Libby Wade, State President
- 2 State Board Meeting 10:00 AM. MC Extension Office
- 6 FCE Blanket Making, 10 AM – 3 PM. Montgomery County (MC) Extension Office Garage
- 8 **International Women's Day (ACWW)**
- 10 Association Meeting 9:45 AM. MC Extension Office, Refreshments: Burtonsville
Program "Whole Grains: Nutrient Dense Food for a Healthier Diet"



April

- 6 State Board Meeting 10:00 AM. Montgomery County (MC) Extension Office
- 9 Thursday Association Meeting 9:45 AM.
International Day Program "Tea with the Queen" by Mary Ann Jung
- 13 FCE Blanket Making, 10 AM – 8 PM. MC Extension Office Garage
- 15 All State Reports, Outstanding and Superior Unit Awards due to NAFCE
- 25 - 5/2 ACWW Triennial meeting in Ottawa Canada
- 25, 26 Gas and Steam Engine Show. Agricultural History Farm Park. Free admission
- 29 **ACWW Women Walk the World**

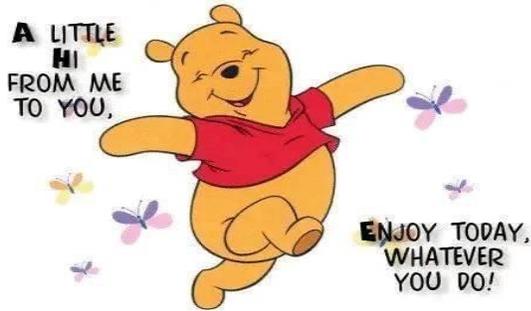
May

- 1 Look What's happening Deadline
- 4 State Board Meeting 10:00 AM. Montgomery County (MC) Extension Office
- 12 FCE Blanket Making, 10 AM – 3 PM. MC Extension Office Garage
- 15 Set-up for Spring Luncheon
- 16 Spring Luncheon, MC Extension Office 10:30 AM - 2 PM
"FCE SOARS" See pages 5 & 8 for details.
We will engage in Women Walk the World prior to lunch.
- 25 Office Closed (Memorial Day)
- 26 Montgomery County Executive Board Meeting, 10 AM, Extension Office

June

- 2 State Board Meeting 10:00 AM. MC Extension Office
 - 12 FCE Blanket Making, 10 AM – 8 PM. MC Extension Office Garage
- All Month - Nominees for State Officers, Group I: (taking office in odd years) President elect, Vice President for Program, Secretary. Group II: (taking office in even years) President-elect becomes president, Vice President for Public Policy, Treasurer**

FROM THE MARYLAND FCE PRESIDENT



It is a new year, and we have been having an extremely cold, snowy and icy year. With meteorological spring coming March 1, maybe we will get a reprieve and have sunny warmer temperatures.

My husband and I have been having some health issues, but we hope to be on the mend soon.

We are going to have our Annual Conference at the Holiday Inn Express Kent Island, 1020 Kent Narrows Road, Grasonville, MD 21638. It will be October 12 - 13, 2026. Mark your calendar now so you will be ready to send in that registration form when it is available. We have some suggestions for programs but would love for you to give us more ideas. Please talk about it at your local meetings and call or email me with your topics. If you have the topic and a person that can present it, that would be even better! Also, if you know of any tours or sites to visit, please let us know that also.

Libby Wade, MDAFCE President
dunade@aol.com 301-831-8661

Check out the WEB with MDAFCE www.mdafce.org

Send calendar updates, information and stories of interests for the web page to Libby Wade at dunade@aol.com.

Newsletter Deadline: May 1

Send all articles, Bulletin Board items, recipes, address changes and trivia for the newsletter to:

Jean Purich - jcpurich@cs.com.

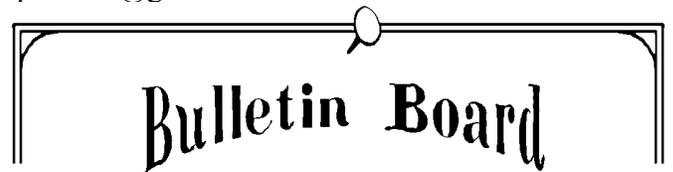


PROGRAM NOTES

Terrific programs are being organized for the rest of 2026 by Montgomery County FCE, and of course at the state level we are working to arrange another wonderful conference in October. These Program Notes will describe the programs chronologically. We hope many of you will be able to attend (and invite friends).

- Tuesday, March 10th at 9:45am. **Whole Grains: Nutrient Dense Food for a Healthier Diet!** FCE members Pat Fewell and Kathie Mack will present this slide talk from the National FCE conference last summer. It is found online as Hearth Fire #83.
- Tuesday, April 9th at 9:45 am. International Day will feature **Tea with the Queen**. Queen Elizabeth I (Mary Ann Jung) will take us back to Tudor England.
- Saturday, May 16th at 10:30 am. **FCE SOARS** (Scholarship, Outreach, ACWW, Resilience, Service) is the theme of our Spring Luncheon. Details on page 5. Please see registration form elsewhere in this newsletter.
- Tuesday, September 8th at 9:45 am. **Off-the-Beaten Path in Montgomery County**. Ralph Buglass of Montgomery History will show us 10 fabulous but lesser-known spots in our county.
- Sunday, October 11th to Tuesday, October 13th Our **Maryland FCE annual conference** will be held once again at the Holiday Inn Express in Grasonville, Maryland. Further details are not available yet, but we are developing ideas for informative sessions and interesting excursions. Please let us know what you would like to see and hear!

Kathie Mack,
MDAFCE Vice President for Programs
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Speedy recovery to Libby and Dennis Wade who are having health issues.

And to Jeanne Gillis who has been under the weather.

Susan Hughes is recovering after surgery.

Marcie Burroughs has recovered from a fall.

PUBLIC POLICY NOTES

As can be deduced from my previous public policy articles, my mental state runs from “are you kidding?” to “what is wrong with these people?” to “are we seeing our beloved democratic experiment die in front of our eyes?” Daily we go from wanting to laugh at all the idiocy being done by a group of people with no clue to the damage they are doing to our institutions, our alliances, our safety nets, our hard won freedoms purchased by those who fought and died for them, and to the core values we have espoused to our many patriotic generations since 1776. It is timely that this is the 250th year of America as a “work in progress”. I believe the progress has been halted in its steps since January 20, 2025.

Why do I say this? I think we have come to a tipping point with recent comments made by President Trump about “possibly nationalizing the midterm elections in 15 or so areas” that he was talking about when asked about the FBI going to Fulton County, Georgia, to confiscate 2020 election ballots from them. He keeps reiterating that he won the 2020 Presidential Election, even after 2 recounts that proved he lost by over 7 million votes. Elections are controlled by each state, not the federal government. If something should happen to those original ballots during transport, how could anyone question any conclusions made about them in a court of law? Recent special elections run in different states have been won by democrats. The House Republicans have a slim majority of 1 vote. That, and with many legal case wins in the courts against many of Trump’s policies, the MAGA movement is worried the midterm elections in November may end up electing a democratic congress (all 432 seats are up for election) and senate (many republican senators are either retiring or have decided not to run). If this kind of move were made in a third-world country, it would be called a power grab.

We are being desensitized to all the nonsensical things we have been exposed to since last year—the decapitation of the federal civil service, it’s IG oversight agencies, independent agencies (Bureau of Labor

Statistics, for one), safety net programs (Medicaid, Social Security, Affordable Healthcare Act Subsidies, SNAP benefits), trying to control the free press, broadcast media, and law firms who espouse different policies than the administration, tariffs, Greenland, Venezuela, Gulf of America, and using the military and hastily trained ICE agents to carry out aggressive raids on undocumented immigrants in a cruel and unusual manner. In short, the purpose of these actions is to deflect any reaction to these policies by wearing down any dissent because there are so many of these actions. The current protests in Minneapolis, Chicago, Los Angeles, Portland, and other cities show these actions aren’t working. And this pattern can be recognized by more & more citizens: the tearing down of America from within is a non-starter. The killing of American protesters (citizens) and detaining of 5 year old children has awakened the public at large to a sense of “going too far”; that is, awakening them to asking questions of what is right or wrong about the pictures we are seeing with our own eyes on our TV’s, podcasts, internet, and other media; in other words, our national consciousness of what it truly means to be an American today, in this time, is being questioned.

In conclusion, at this moment, I will not resort to name-calling, or any other disparaging remarks. What is happening in our country now is a test we are being put through; whether we pass or fail will depend on whether we support the values and institutions that made our country unique in the world: supporting a constitution and rule of law that made America great before this recent movement took a great deal of shine of our self-worth. If we continue down this road, liberty’s shining torch will either be much diminished or will fall upon just any other standard third world autocracy that will be short-lived and just a blip in the stream of history.

Debra Rausch,
MDAFCE Vice President for Public Policy
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Editor’s note. The opinions expressed here are solely those of the writer.

MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP

As of February 8, 2026, we have 82 members, including **2 new members**. Please give a warm welcome to our new members: Lori Barber and Mary Reeves. **IT'S NOT TOO LATE!** You can still renew, or better yet, sponsor a new member! I will be forwarding Batch 2 membership forms in March. Don't forget that you can receive an FCE Star pin for every new member you recruit, **AND** a chance for you and the person you recruited to attend our October 2026 Maryland FCE Conference for **FREE**. Can you help us to increase membership to over 90 members? With all the snow/ice and cold, many are ready to enjoy FCE's good company, excellent programs and a chance to support our charitable efforts. Please contact me if you need a membership form (it can also be found on the website). Stay safe and healthy!

Jeanne Gillis, Membership Chairman
jeannegillis2326@gmail.com 301-926-1038

Our Outreach Projects

Montgomery College Scholarship:

Two \$2,500.00 nursing scholarships were awarded for the 2025-2026 school year. Our recipient is **Ashley Owusukoko**. Hopefully she will be able to come to the spring luncheon.

Jeanne Gillis

Laytonsville Veterans' Home

I recently took magazines, notebooks, personal care items and gently used jeans and T-shirts to The Home. The Home can use gently used, clean towels and twin sheets.

Pat Fewell

The Ranch

I visited The Ranch with magazines, jeans and shirts. They will again be happy to have our donation of "plants" after the Spring Luncheon.

Helen DeRoo

WHAT EXACTLY IS "EXTRA-VIRGIN" OLIVE OIL?

Olive Oil Has Been Produced by Humans for Millennia

Although it's not definitively known which culture first began pressing olives for culinary uses, the earliest historical evidence of olive oil being produced by humans is a clay pot relic found near Galilee, Israel, that bore olive oil residue. The pot was made between 7,000 and 7,600 years ago, and it's thought that the Neolithic people in this area were only just learning how to make clay pots at the time. The oldest known olive oil press was also found in this region, near the modern-day city of Haifa, Israel; the press is slightly younger than the oil pot, at only 6,500 years old.

Extra-Virgin Olive Oil Is Defined as the Pure, Unprocessed, Unrefined Oil of an Olive

Although it's well known that extra-virgin olive oil is the highest grade of olive oil, many people don't know how its method of production differs from that of other kinds of olive oil. In order for olive oil to be classed as extra-virgin, it must be made by grinding olives and then cold-pressing them to extract their oil, without the use of heat or chemical solvents. Olive oil is also required to have no more than 0.8% acidity in order to qualify as EVOO, per the European Commission, as well as zero median defects. As a result of these stipulations, extra-virgin olive oil is lighter in color and flavor than lower grades of olive oil and has a fruity, slightly peppery flavor and odor.

It Takes 11 Pounds of Olives to Make a Quart of Olive Oil

Olives have a surprisingly low yield when it comes to oil. It takes about 11 pounds of olives to make 32 ounces - or one quart - of olive oil. That's between 5,200 and 8,000 olives, depending on the variety. This is also the reason olive oil is often more expensive than other kinds of edible oils. About 90% of the world's harvested olives get slated to become oil (the rest will become table olives).



Montgomery County President's Paragraphs

**“Whole Grains:
Nutrient Dense Food for a Healthier Diet”
Pat Fewell and Kathie Mack
March 10**

Association Meeting 9:45 AM Extension Office

Grains are the seeds of grass grown for food. These plants are also called cereals. The world's population eats grains mostly from the “big 3” (corn, rice, and wheat) in their refined form. It is recommended that at least half of the total grains of our daily food intake should be whole grains. Learn more about these amazing foods.

**International Day
“Tea with the Queen”
THURSDAY April 9
Association Meeting 9:45 AM
Extension Office**

Queen Elizabeth will join us for tea and teach us the proper way to conduct ourselves in Tudor society. Come, enjoy a delightful morning.



**FCE Blanket Making
Extension Office Garage
March 6 Monday 10 AM – 3 PM
April 13 Friday 10 AM – 8 PM
May 12 Tuesday 10 AM - 3 PM
June 12 Tuesday 10 AM - 8 PM**

Come and sit a spell, bring a sandwich and we will provide drink and dessert and enjoy a wonderful day comforting others.

During 2025, FCE members, students and friends made 1,385 blankets (29,468 total since 2002) and 701 baby hats (15,630 total).



**WOMEN WALK THE WORLD FOR ACWW
Wednesday, April 29**

On or around ACWW Day, April 29, 2026 friends throughout the world are joining in **Women Walk the World**, aiming to raise funds for ACWW's work. ACWW would like members to take part by arranging walks locally. We will do our walk prior to lunch at the May 16th Spring Luncheon, but you are welcome to get sponsors and arrange a walk on your own.



**Spring Luncheon,
Saturday May 16
“FCE SOARS”**

(Scholarship, Outreach, ACWW, Resilience,
Service)

10:30 AM Extension Office

Plans are underway for the Spring Luncheon. The Burtonsville Club is organizing this wonderful event. As FCE members, we know what pleasure, friendship and knowledge we get from being FCE members.

We always hope that our two Montgomery College scholarship students will be able to join us at the Spring Luncheon.

Members are to provide a 6-pack of annual flowers or vegetable plants for The Ranch and/or Laytonsville Veterans Home.

Also, please bring a “Book for a Newborn”.

Registration form is on page 8 or you can sign up at any blanket or informational meeting. Cost is \$20.

Jeanne Purich

jcpurich@cs.com

Cold remedies that work

If you catch a cold, expect to be sick for 1 to 2 weeks. That doesn't mean you have to feel awful. The following might help you feel better:

- **Drink plenty of fluids.** Water, juice, clear broth or warm lemon water with honey help loosen stuffiness, called congestion. These also help prevent losing too much fluid, called dehydration. Don't drink alcohol, coffee and sodas with caffeine. They can make dehydration worse.
- **Rest.** Your body needs rest to heal.
- **Sip warm liquids.** Many cultures use warm liquids, such as chicken soup, tea or warm apple juice, for colds. Warm liquids might ease stuffiness by increasing mucus flow.
- **Try honey.** Honey may help coughs in adults and children who are older than age 1. Try it in warm tea or lemon water.
- **Add cool moisture to the air.** A cool-mist vaporizer or humidifier can add moisture to your home. Moisture might help ease stuffiness. Change the water daily. Clean the unit as the maker instructs.



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE
WOMAN FARMER
2026

The **International Year of the Woman Farmer** recognizes and celebrates the critical contributions women make to agriculture and food systems worldwide. It is a global opportunity to raise awareness, amplify women’s voices, and advance action that supports women farmers at every level.

Women farmers play a **vital role in food security, sustainable agriculture, and rural economies**. From growing and processing food to managing households and communities, their work underpins resilient food systems and supports livelihoods across generations.

Despite their contributions, women farmers often face significant barriers, including limited access to land, education, financing, and decision-making opportunities. Their work is frequently unrecognized, even as they carry a disproportionate share of agricultural and caregiving responsibilities.

ACWW plays an active role in advancing the goals of the International Year of the Woman Farmer by amplifying the voices and experiences of women farmers worldwide. **Through storytelling, partnerships, and targeted projects, ACWW's work aims to increase visibility, strengthen recognition, and support meaningful action that reflects the everyday realities of women in agriculture.**



Your donations to the Rural Women in Action help fund the work of ACWW.

ACWW Central Office has moved!
Since 19 June 2023, we are located at:
ACWW, The Foundry, 17 Oval Way
London SE11 5RR, UK

ACWW Born in 1929. Still relevant today.

Reaffirming the words of our founders and the statements that led to the formation of our organization, ACWW calls for co-operation among women’s organizations to ensure action to secure meaningful, quality education for all young people. The advancement of education is a pathway to the relief of poverty and the relief of sickness and preservation of health.

Our work is rooted in the fundamental principles of human rights, and we work on behalf of those left furthest behind. ACWW stands against discrimination in all its forms, and works towards gender equality, accessibility, global citizenship, solidarity with those facing discrimination, and sustainable development.

We will work with peers to redress racial inequalities and leverage our partnerships to ensure positive joint working, promoting, sharing, and learning from best practice wherever possible to encourage greater accountability and advocate for meaningful change. ACWW commits to being an anti-racist organization and aims to equip all members to address racism within their own communities and collaborate to ensure that the voices of women of color and indigenous communities are heard.

ACWW priorities

- **Status of Women**
 - including women’s rights & the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- **Status of the Girl Child**
 - including children, family, work / labour, refugees / migration
- **Health – including HIV/AIDS**
- **Agriculture**
- **Water & sanitation**
- **Literacy**
- **Communication**

4 March 14

“No one cares how much you know, until they know how much you care”.
Theodore Roosevelt

Five Food Additives That May Harm Your Health

Studies suggest these ingredients might be linked to increased risks for your gut, heart and even fertility.

Abridged from The Washington Post,
August 20, 2025

A striking new report from the federal government this month found that Americans on average get about half their calories from ultra-processed foods that have been linked in studies to increased rates of obesity and chronic disease. One reason ultra-processed foods might be so hazardous to your health is that they're often loaded with chemical additives, such as synthetic emulsifiers, preservatives and sugar substitutes. These additives are designed to enhance the flavor, texture, color and shelf life of hot dogs, ice cream, chicken nuggets, sugary cereal, protein bars and other processed food.

Here are five that have been linked to health problems — along with ways that you can spot and steer clear of them.

1. Carboxymethyl cellulose

Carboxymethyl cellulose is a synthetic emulsifier that improves the texture of ultra-processed food, in part because it prevents oil and water from separating. It's commonly found in such food as ice cream, candy, cookies, salad dressing, sauces and some peanut butters. Studies have found that it may disrupt the gut microbiome and can trigger intestinal inflammation and other digestive issues. Look on food labels for CMC, cellulose, cellulose gum, sodium CMC, or E466.

2. Polysorbates

Polysorbates are a group of emulsifiers in such things as ice cream, salad dressing, icing, baking mix and frozen dessert. They serve a lot of functions in ultra-processed food. They keep ice cream from melting, they make flavored yogurt smoother and creamier, and they extend the shelf life of other processed food by preventing ingredients from separating. But studies suggest that they can alter your microbiome, disrupt the mucus that lines your gut, and promote inflammation. Look on food labels for polysorbate 20, polysorbate 40, polysorbate 60, or polysorbate 80.

3. Butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA)

BHA is a synthetic preservative widely found in food such as breakfast cereal, potato chips, frozen pizza, canned soup and cured meat, in spite of the fact that in 1991 the National Toxicology Program

declared that BHA was “reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen.” Look on food labels for BHA.

4. Propyl paraben

This preservative is widely used to prevent mold and bacteria in a variety of packaged foods such as tortillas, pastries, jams and baked desserts. However, it can mimic estrogen and disrupt hormone signaling, leading to diminished fertility and other problems in men and women and even breast cancer. It has been banned from food in Europe for almost 20 years. Look on food labels for propyl paragon, E216 or propyl 4-hydroxybenzoate.

5. Erythritol and xylitol

Erythritol and xylitol belong to a group of low-calorie sweeteners called sugar alcohols. These are added to a variety of products, including low-carb ice cream, protein bars, sugar-free dessert, chewing gum, breath mints and candies.

Unfortunately, they are digested very slowly, which can lead to such issues as gas, bloating, abdominal pain and diarrhea. Studies also suggest that they can increase the risk of cardiovascular problems. If you want to avoid sugar alcohols, here are a few things you can do:

- Look for sweet foods marketed as keto, low-carb, sugar-free or zero sugar. They're often made with sugar substitutes.
- Look at the nutrition facts label. Food manufacturers sometimes list the amount of sugar alcohols in their products under the section for total carbohydrates.
- Look at the ingredients list. Sugar alcohols typically end in “-ol,” such as xylitol, erythritol, maltitol and sorbitol.

SOME THOUGHTS

LESS MONEY is spent annually on medical research than on hairdos.

STUDENTS OF human behavior say a person rarely throws a tantrum when alone.

TO EQUAL the feat of a golfer's ‘hole-in-one, say the calculators, a basketball player would have to sink an 88-foot shot.

LOOK UP “demean.” Conflicting definitions. Means both “to behave properly” and “to lower character, status or reputation.” Curious word.

COUNTRIFIED weather watchers figure the barometer is falling when they see birds perched along the phone lines. Lowering air pressures makes it hard to fly, they say.

Spring Luncheon May 16, 2026

Registration is due by May 8, 2026

“FCE SOARS”

Registration and get together **10:30 AM**

Program **11:00 AM**

Lunch **12:30 PM**

Announcements/Door Prizes **1:30 PM**

Make check payable to MCAFCE for \$20.00 per person and send to:

Jeanne Gillis 301-926-1038

101 Rolling Road

Gaithersburg MD 20877-2043

Name

email (if no email use phone number)

You can also register on the sign-up sheet available at each meeting.

**University of Maryland
Montgomery County Extension
18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, MD 20855**

FIRST CLASS MAIL

