Area Meetings

Thanks so much for a great area meeting. I sure hope you enjoyed the program as well as the craft. Please remember that I can always use ideas for our craft during our area meetings so if you see anything cute please share it with me.

Festival of Trees

Thanks to those that purchased apple juice and cookies for the Festival of Trees. What a great cause that is. Everyone really enjoyed your refreshments and several of the workers of the weekend made comments to me yesterday on how much they enjoyed you being there. The first ones to mention how much they enjoyed you were the girls with the books. We learned this year to use the small bathroom cups instead of the larger ones and that we don’t need napkins when they are placed in the plastic bags. The plastic bags sure made Monday a lot easier with all of the little school children. I have requested to find out the date earlier in 2009 so that all the items can be brought into the office at the November area meeting and if it is not too early – we can, as a group, bag the cookies together. Again, thank you for a great service.

January Meeting

I will be meeting with each of your clubs in January. If you decide to change the date please let me know as soon as possible. I will be installing new officers at that meeting along with going over the new calendar for the year and giving out your new notebooks. Please let us know as soon as possible the location of your January meeting so I will go to the right place.

Achievement Day Theme 2009

I asked at the November area meeting to give me ideas by December 1st for Achievement Day. To date, I have received the following:

*Discovering the Latino Culture* and *Salute to Volunteerism*. **Presidents:** Please talk this over with your members at your December meeting and let me know the results. After I have heard from all the clubs I will let you know the results. This is what I have for responsibility for Achievement Day:

- **Harmony** – hostess and name tags
- **Jacksonville** – corsages
- **Meadow View** – tea/coffee
- **Sneads Ferry** – club woman gift for each club

**Book reports are due by January 20, 2009**

**Scrapbooks are due by January 26, 2009**

Standard of Excellence Form

The Standard of Excellence Club form is due to me by January 15th. Please make sure I have it by then since I have to have it to our district person by February 1st. Many of the dates are changing since the state meeting is in the fall.
Cruise Update

We have 93 people going with us on our cruise. We are leaving the morning of the 10th of January and will be coming back on the 17th. I wish all of you were going with us but understand that someone has to hold the county down.

Recipe Corner

Eggnog Cheesecake

* 1 cup graham cracker crumbs
* 2 Tb white sugar
* 3 Tb melted butter
* 3 (8 oz) packages cream cheese, softened
* 1 cup white sugar
* 3 Tb all-purpose flour
* 3/4 cup eggnog
* 2 eggs
* 2 Tb dark rum or 4 Tb rum favoring
* 1 pinch ground nutmeg

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. In a medium bowl combine graham cracker crumbs, 2 tablespoons sugar and butter. Press into the bottom of a 9-inch spring form pan. Bake in preheated oven for 10 minutes. Place on a wire rack to cool. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. In a food processor combine cream cheese, 1 cup sugar, flour and eggnog; process until smooth. Blend in eggs, rum and nutmeg. Pour mixture into cooled crust. Bake in preheated oven for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 250 and bake for 45 minutes, or until center of cake is barely firm to the touch. Remove from the oven and immediately loosen cake from rim. Let cake cool completely before removing the rim.

2009 Recipe Challenge

Okay, Ladies! I’m putting out a challenge. During 2009 the Recipe Corner is going to be a forum for you to share your favorite recipes with other ECA members. I ask that you submit as many recipes as you would like to. Each month we will print one or two recipes in this space. Don’t worry if yours isn’t printed. All recipes submitted will be compiled and shared with everyone in November of 2009. I know each of you have recipes that you would like to share, so send them to me at 4024 Richlands Highway, Jacksonville, NC 28540 or electronically at robin_seitz@ncsu.edu Please put “Recipe Corner” in the subject line. I look forward to all the yummy recipes I’ll get.

Thanks, Robin

Merry Christmas

This year has been a wild year. I have truly been reminded of what life is all about and what means most in life. That is the people that you surround yourself with and the love you give and get from them. We have lost several ECA members and my immediate and extended family has been in the tornado from the Wizard of Oz. I pray that you take time during the holiday season to be with the ones you love or at least take time to tell them how important they are to you. All of you are important to me and I am blessed to have you in my life. Thanks for all you do for the citizens of our county. Happy Holidays.

Dear Dogs and Cats,

The dishes with the paw print are yours and contain your food. The other dishes are mine and contain my food. Please note, placing a paw print in the middle of my plate and food does not stake a claim for it becoming your food.
and dish, nor do I find that aesthetically pleasing in the slightest.

The stairway was not designed by NASCAR and is not a racetrack. Beating me to the bottom is not the object. Tripping me doesn't help because I fall faster than you can run.

I cannot buy anything bigger than a king sized bed. I am very sorry about this. Do not think I will continue sleeping on the couch to ensure your comfort. Dogs and cats can actually curl up in a ball when they sleep. It is not necessary to sleep perpendicular to each other stretched out to the fullest extent possible. I also know that sticking tails straight out and having tongues hanging out the other end to maximize space is nothing but sarcasm!

For the last time, there is not a secret exit from the bathroom. If by some miracle I beat you there and manage to get the door shut, it is not necessary to claw, whine, meow, and try to turn the knob or get your paw under the edge and try to pull the door open. I must exit through the same door I entered. Also, I have been using the bathroom for years -- canine or feline attendance is not required.

The proper order is kiss me, then go smell the other dog or cat's butt. Rather than the other way around. I cannot stress this enough!

To pacify you, my dear pets, I have posted the following message on our front door:

To All Non-Pet Owners Who Visit & Like to Complain About Our Pets:

1. They live here. You don't.
2. If you don't want their hair on your clothes, stay off the furniture. (That's why they call it 'fur niture."
3. I like my pets a lot better than I like most people.
4. To you, it's an animal. To me, he/she is an adopted son/daughter who is short, hairy, walks on all fours and doesn't speak clearly.

Remember: In many ways, dogs and cats are better than kids because they:

1. Eat less
2. Don't ask for money all the time
3. Are easier to train
4. Normally come when called
5. Never ask to drive the car
6. Don't hang out with drug-using friends
7. Don't smoke or drink
8. Don't have to buy the latest fashions
9. Don't want to wear your clothes
10. Don't need a 'gazillion' dollars for college
11. And finally, if they get pregnant, you can sell their children.

EVERY DAY IS CHRISTMAS
Author Unknown

Every day is Christmas when you have the kind of mind
That stores up all the goodness and the sweetness it can find.
When you don’t need an occasion
to spread a bit of cheer,
But just keep on a-giving
of yourself throughout the year.

Every day is Christmas,
with a gaily wrapped surprise,
When you’ve learned to see the friendship
in someone else’s eyes.
When you try a little harder,
and complain a little less,
Holding fast to all the fervor
of the faith that you possess.

Every day is Christmas
when you’ve found that you can be
More concerned with words like ‘you’
and less with ‘I’ and ‘me’.
When it’s fun to do a favor
and to lend a helping hand,
When being understood means less
than when you understand.

Every day is Christmas
with a beauty deeply cast,
When you find it doesn’t matter
if you’re first or if you’re last.
When you can face your conscience
and be glad of what you are,
Then every day is Christmas
with a stable and a star.

Peggie L. Garner
County Extension Director