

Extension Notes

Personal Column for December 28, 2010

By Gary Hall, ISU Regional Extension Education Director

An Extension New Year

Where do you begin? With a new year starting many times we take stock of what took place last year and begin to consider our options for 2011. If you are thinking about where to start with the New Year, allow me to suggest some topics.

The beginning of the New Year can be the start to better money management. Start a new budget or take a few steps toward healthier finances to make the entire year more enjoyable. Start the year off right and put your money stress at ease with ISU Extension education.

Snowed in by another Iowa winter storm? Although hibernation is an attractive option, the younger members of your household may want to explore the winter wonderland. Before they succumb to frostbite, entertain them in the great indoors -- and help yourself, as well -- with some ideas from ISU Extension.

- Live Healthy Iowa - Organize a team and join other Iowans in the challenge to change your choices and change your life.
- 4-H Fun and Games - The Iowa 4-H website provides many links to online games and other sites that teach and entertain.
- Studio 4-H - Learn about media production with Iowa Studio 4-H, a virtual media production 4-H club that connects youth from around the state online.
- Join Clover Kids - Get the youngest kids involved in 4-H projects and clubs.

The trees are bare and the garden is covered in ice or snow. However, not all is bleak for avid gardeners. Evergreens, houseplants and more can become indoor substitutes for green thumbs. Extension provides some ideas. Force an amaryllis and a paperwhite narcissus indoors. You can brighten up the indoors by forcing these flower bulbs. Try a new houseplant. Just picking one out at the garden center gives you a sense of being far away from the ice and snow.

You can find information about these topics and a ton of others by going to the ISU Extension website at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu> or stop in or call your local Extension office. They are eager to help you in 2011!

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