

Next Council Meeting

March 10 @ 3PM

Enrollment - CLOSED

Enrollment for this year (24-25) is closed. Clubs with any new members between now and June 2025 will have 2 options:

1. Have new member pay dues but keep dues in the club. Money will not go to the county.
2. Allow new member to attend club meetings as a guest without paying dues until June 2025 and have them pay dues in July 2025 when enrollment will open again.

Name Tags

The County Council received name tags. Presidents, if there are members in your clubs that would like a name tag, please get a list of those individuals to Natalie.

Volunteer Hour Reporting

Individual club presidents will determine how volunteer hours are collected. If you do not turn in your hours at your club meetings, turn them into the Extension Office to be recorded. **Those in multiple clubs, only report hours to ONE club.**

Community Connection

- **January** - Partnering with Leitchfield Women's club to collect items for Butterfly Farms. Items accepted: small bottles of water, granola bars, peanut butter crackers, gallon zip lock bags, cleaning wipes, paper towels, general hygiene items.
- **February** - No collection of items. Homemaker members are encouraged to participate in a volunteer day at the Alliance Food Pantry 10-11am on Wednesday, February 12.
- **March** - Non-perishable food items to be donated to Alliance Food Pantry.
- **April** - TBD
- **May** - TBD

Contests, Scholarships, and Grants

There are some KEHA contests and award applications that are due on March 1st. You can find which ones in the chart provided in your yearbook or in the KEHA manual online.

Lesson Ballot

Lesson Ballots for the 2025-2026 program year can be found in this packet. Please vote for your lesson choices, there is no limit on how many lessons you can vote for. Clubs may complete the ballot together and list a number of people voting for each lesson. If voting as an individual, place an X beside the one's you wish to vote for and return them to the Extension Office. If you vote individually DO NOT vote in your club, and vice versa. **Return to the Extension Office by April 2, 2025.**

Bingocize

Join the Fun with Bingocize! Looking for a way to stay active, connect with others, and have fun? Bingocize® combines the excitement of bingo with easy exercises to improve balance, flexibility, and strength. This engaging program is perfect for older adults and anyone looking to enhance their fitness while having a great time. No special equipment is needed, and all fitness levels are welcome! Don't miss out—play, move, and win with Bingocize! Lessons will be taught by Marlessa Stark with Lincoln Trail Area Development District. RSVP to the Grayson County Extension Office by calling (270) 259-3492 or emailing grayson.ext@uky.edu



Davita Dialysis Bags

We were able to make 30 gift bags for DaVita Dialysis patients and staff. They were so grateful to receive some special gifts during the holidays! Thank you to everyone who donated and/or helped make the bags.

Club Updates and Announcements

Block of the Month - As of now, the Block of the Month Club will not meet for the rest of the program year (now through June 2025). Tracy is hopeful she will be well enough to begin this club again in July. In the meantime, please keep her in your thoughts and prayers.



Chairman Updates and Announcements

Scholarship Committee - 2 more members are needed to review senior scholarships in early April. Thank you to Kay Wolfe who has already volunteered. This opportunity will take 1-2 hours of time to review and score scholarships to determine who will receive \$500 towards their continuing education. Contact Cherie Seadler or the Extension Office if interested.

Environment, Housing, and Energy – January is Radon Awareness Month. To read more about Radon's impact on our health and environment, view the . - Jenny London

Family and Individual Development –

- Mark your calendars for March 14th, 2025. The GC Homemakers will venture to Owensboro, KY to visit the Museum of Fine Art and have lunch. More information will come out soon! – Denise Barrett
- March 21st – Pathways to Wellness Comedy Night at the GC Extension Office. More info to come! - Denise

HOMEMAKER NEWS & NOTES

- Continued

Food, Nutrition, and Health - There will be a Homemaker Member Volunteer Day at the Alliance Food Pantry Wednesday, February 12th 10-11AM. The Food Pantry is located at 2203 Brandenburg Rd, Leitchfield, KY. Please carpool if able because of limited parking. – Teresa Buckles

Management and Safety – Register for CODE RED. Code Red is an emergency notification system to help keep you and your family safe in the event on an emergency. Alerts are sent from your local public safety agency by mobile app, SMS text, email, and more. For more information, visit www.graysoncountyky.gov/gcem

Staff Resignation Notice

Holly has resigned from her position as staff assistant. Her last day was January 21st. She is moving back to Tennessee to her childhood home and we wish her nothing but the best! For now, Ally and Mary can take care of what you may need.

2025 KEHA Sate Meeting

- May 6-8, 2025
- For more information, visit keha.ca.uky.edu/content/state-meeting-information
- Lodging
 - Hyatt Regency Lexington - 401 W High St, Lexington, KY 40507
 - Room blocks are now open for reservations
 - Room rate - \$149 + tax/night
 - 1-4 people per room
 - Group rate ends April 7
 - Online reservations can be done www.hyatt.com/en-US/group-booking/LEXRL/G-KEHA
 - Phone reservations
 - (800) 233-1234
 - Group code G-KEHA for conference rate

FFA Alumni Donations

Shannon Harp has asked any homemaker member interested in supporting our local FFA Alumni Association to make a cake or pie to be auctioned off at their annual banquet on February 20th at the Extension Office. If you would like to make something to donate, please bring it to the Extension Office on February 20th after 11AM and Shannon will get it registered for the auction. Proceeds from this banquet will go to support local FFA students.

Area Council Meeting

Area Council Meeting will be held on February 4th at the Marion County Extension Office. Shirley Thompson, Denise Barrett, and Shannon Harp will represent our county. Information about carpooling will be sent out to individuals attending soon.

January Lesson Materials – Strong Bones for Life

Materials can be found on our website (grayson.ca.uky.edu/fcs/homemakers). If you would like a copy of the materials, stop by the Extension Office to pick one up or request a copy be mailed to you. Due to the length of the publication, we are not able to send it out with the printed newsletters.

HOMEMAKER NEWS & NOTES

- Continued

Recipes of the Month

Cheese Strata

Ingredients:

- 8 slices white bread
- 6 eggs
- 2 C milk
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 T minced onion
- ¼ C butter, melted
- ¾ lb grated cheddar cheese (3 cups)
- 1 chopped red pepper (optional)
- 2 C cubed ham (optional, or substitute bacon as desired)

Directions:

1. Cut the crust off bread and cube.
2. Beat eggs. Add milk, seasoning, onion, and butter. Alternate bread and cheese layers in an unbuttered 9"x13" baking dish. Pour liquid (with or without optional ingredients) over top. Refrigerate overnight.
3. Bake at 350 degrees for about one hour or till firm.

Notes:

- serves 8
- This recipe is good as a main dish for any meal or when cut into small bites as an appetizer or party food.
- It also makes a protein-rich, pleasing dish when you find you have an excess of ham, milk or leftover white bread.

Ham and Corn Chowder

Ingredients:

- 2 T butter
- 1 med. onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 C diced ham
- 3 C corn - fresh, frozen, or canned
- 2 large potatoes, peeled & diced
- 4 C chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 C evaporated milk or heavy cream
- salt & pepper to taste
- 1 tsp. thyme
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika (optional)
- 2 T all-purpose flour (for thickening if desired)
- Serving options: chopped green onion garnish, shredded cheese or bacon bits

Directions:

1. In a large pot sauté onion in melted butter for about 5 minutes. Add garlic & sauté for another 1-2 minutes.
2. Add ham and cook till heated through. Add broth and diced potatoes and cook another 10-15 minutes until potatoes are tender.
3. Add corn, thyme, and paprika and salt & pepper to taste.
4. Bring to boil, reduce heat, and simmer an additional 5 minutes.
5. If desired to thicken; make a slurry by stirring in a small amount of chowder liquid to the flour in a heatproof cup & whisk until there are no lumps. Add this mixture into the pot stirring to thicken.
6. Stir in milk or cream and simmer about 5 minutes to heat thoroughly. Ladle, garnish and serve!

Homemaker Happenings

Cookie Exchange

A link to the recipe book highlighting the cookies that were at the Cookie Exchange can be found at grayson.ca.uky.edu/fcs/homemakers.



HOMEMAKER NEWS & NOTES

- Continued

My Old KY Home



Sock Monkey Project



Best,

Natalie Paul

FCS Agent, Homemaker Advisor

2025-2026 Homemaker Lesson Ballot | Name +/-or Club: _____

Please vote and return this form to your agent by **April 4, 2025**. **If voting as a CLUB** – place the number of people voting for each lesson next to the title. **If voting as an INDIVIDUAL** – place an X or check mark on the line next to the title. **Please don't vote twice**. If you vote individually, don't vote in your club, and vice versa. Members may vote on as many different topics as they want

___ **Laughter is a Must in Life** : Did you know laughter serves as a powerful tool for building and maintaining healthy, happy relationships? This lesson will test your knowledge on laughter, identify the short and long-term benefits of laughter, explore what keeps you from laughing, and share ways to increase laughter in your relationship.

___ **Mental Health Matters**: Mental health is important for overall health at every life stage— from childhood through older adulthood. It includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being and affects how a person thinks, feels, and behaves. This lesson will highlight why mental health matters and draw attention to symptoms of mental health concerns and resources that are available to help with mental well-being.

___ **Indoor Air Quality + Carbon Monoxide**: This lesson seeks to increase knowledge about indoor air quality, how it can be affected by things in our indoor spaces, how it can affect one's health, and steps for improvement, as well as how to keep safe from carbon monoxide poisoning.

___ **The Big Freeze**: Freezing is the easiest, most convenient, and least time-consuming method of preserving foods. It is a great way to extend the shelf life of many foods, including leftovers. When done correctly, freezing preserves nutrients and maintains quality. This lesson will help you get the most out of your freezer by teaching good freezing techniques for a variety of foods. You will be able to minimize food waste, save money, and save time.

___ **Build a Better Smoothie**: Smoothies are a refreshing meal, snack, or treat that come together in a matter of minutes, are flavorful, and can be packed with important nutrients. This lesson takes you through the basic steps for building a smoothie without a recipe and with ingredients you may have on hand in your home.

___ **Build a Better Bowl**: Often, we think about building a balanced meal on a plate. We have resources to serve as a visual guide for building a balanced plate. But how does that translate when we use a different dish? This serves as a guide for building a balanced meal that fits inside of a bowl – ranging from sweet bowls, with oatmeal or yogurt as a base, to savory dinner ideas using grains, greens, and more as a base.

___ **Making Friends with Food**: Can you think of a time that you labeled foods as “good” or “bad”? Or called someone a member of the “clean plate club” or a “picky eater”? The way we talk about food and eating behaviors can have a lasting imprint, for better or for worse. Small changes might have a big impact on mental and physical health. This lesson discusses the importance of and reframing how we talk about food.

___ **Gardening Safely:** Gardening is a great way to be physically active, enjoy the outdoors, and beautify your home or yard. There are added health benefits to growing your own vegetables, fruit, and herbs, as well. This lesson focuses on the health benefits of gardening, and appropriate tools for the job at hand.

___ **Using Your Air Fryer:** The air fryer has increased in popularity over the last few years and has become a staple in many kitchens. This small countertop appliance offers a healthier alternative to frying food and also is popular for reheating leftovers. This lesson will focus on what air fryers are and how they work. We'll discuss the pros and cons, and consumers will feel informed when buying an air fryer.

___ **Ribbons + Regift: Choos from Your Home or Thrift:** In this fun and creative workshop, participants will explore the art of making beautiful ribbons, discovering unique gift-wrapping techniques, and thrifting for one-of-a-kind packaging items. Learn how to transform everyday materials into stunning presentations that add a personal touch to any gift. Whether repurposing items from home or finding treasures at the thrift store, this lesson emphasizes sustainability and creativity. Perfect for anyone looking to save money, reduce waste, and add flair to their holiday gifting. Join us for an inspiring session where wrapping becomes as memorable as the gift itself!

___ **The Power of Engagement: Strengthening Communities:** In this session, we'll dive into the power of civic engagement and discover how to shape a more vibrant, inclusive community. We will also discuss the impact of community involvement on local decision-making and share practical steps for staying engaged. This session is designed to inspire action and provide tools for making a positive difference in your community.

___ **Stretching Your Dollar: What to Do When the Ends Don't Meet:** "Making ends meet" is getting harder in today's economy. This lesson will cover how to make your dollars and resources go farther. The lesson will provide tips for managing your money in financially tough times and offer strategies for saving on groceries, gas, utilities, and other household essentials. We will explore ways to manage fixed and variable household costs with tips on spending wisely, prioritizing, and saving when expenses are tight.

___ **Healthy Outdoor Cooking Resources:** Spending time outdoors is always fun, but it can be even more fun when you include food. This lesson includes food safety information, outdoor activities, and recipes that meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Participants will also learn about "shinrin-yoku," a Japanese method of forest meditation.

___ **Selecting Sheets:** Cooling? Percale? Bamboo? Sateen? Can someone please tell us what that all means? With so many types of sheets available, it's easy to get confused. Let's put these questions to bed and unravel the mystery of thread count, too!

****Return to Extension Office on or before April 4, 2025****



KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFE: TEST YOUR HOUSE FOR RADON

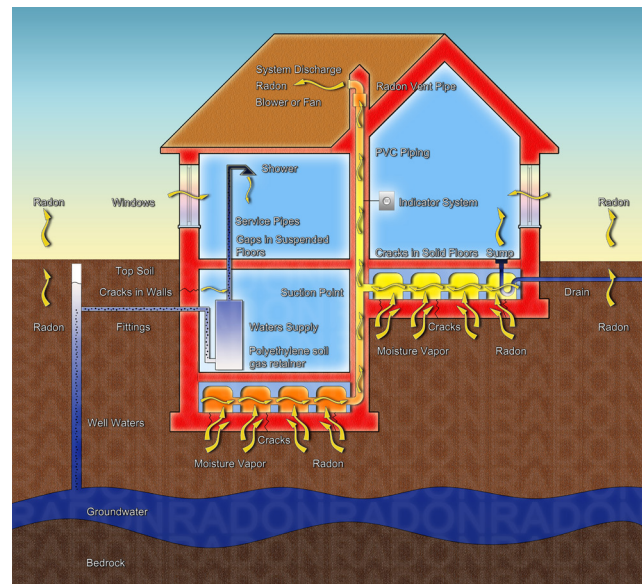
Can you name which cancer is the nation's leading cause of deaths? It may surprise you. The answer is lung cancer. Why should that concern you? Because Kentucky leads the nation in the number of new cancer cases and lung cancer deaths. Not only is this because of Kentucky's high smoking rates but also because of Kentucky's high radon levels. Radon is more than an element on a chemical chart. Now let's learn more about radon, its effects on Kentuckians health, and what steps you can take to address those effects.

WHAT IS RADON?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) identifies radon as a naturally occurring radioactive gas and the second leading cause of lung cancer. Radon can't be seen, smelled, or tasted. Testing is the only way to know the level of radon in your indoor living spaces, work areas, and buildings.

WHERE DOES RADON COME FROM?

Radon comes from uranium which is naturally present in soil, rocks, and groundwater. When uranium breaks down into radium, it then becomes radon, a gas that can then easily move through small spaces. Radon can move between rocks and soil to reach the surface and then enter your home. Since radon is considered moderately soluble, groundwater will absorb it, creating another possible entry point. According to the EPA, radon is quickly dispersed outdoors.



RADON AND SMOKING

Radon causes an estimated 21,000 deaths each year in the U.S. from lung cancer. Additionally, people who are exposed to both radon and tobacco smoke are 10 times more likely to develop lung cancer. Kentucky leads the nation in the number of new lung cancer cases and lung cancer deaths.

RADON IN KENTUCKY

Kentucky has rock deposits of black shale, phosphatic limestone, and other geology that contain uranium and radium where radon can be found. Radon levels can vary greatly, even for homes sitting side by side. The only way to know the radon level in your home or workplace is by testing for it.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE BREATHE IN RADON?

Much of the radon you breathe in and out causes no harm to your lungs. However indoors, it builds up and continues further radioactive decay. Through this decay, it releases ionizing radiation and forms “daughter” elements. Radon daughters are particles that can attach themselves to items in your home and to dust and other particles in the air. When you inhale radon daughters, whether free floating or attached to particles, they can embed in your lungs. As the radioactive decay process continues, alpha particles are released which can damage your lungs and possibly lead to lung cancer. The more time you spend in a space with a high concentration of radon daughters, the higher your chances of lung damage.

HOW DOES RADON GET INSIDE STRUCTURES?

Since radon is a gas, it can easily move from the soil and rock underneath homes and buildings into them. Radon can enter through cracks in the foundation, basements, crawl spaces, joints, floor drains, and other openings. Radon can also be drawn into the house with the use of fans and dryers. The weather can be a factor with indoor radon levels as well. It is recommended when testing for radon to start at the lowest level of the home, such as the basement or first floor.

HOW IS RADON MEASURED?

Radon is measured in picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L). A picocurie is a measure of the rate of radioactive decay of radon. The EPA has set up a guideline of 4 pCi/L of annual average radon exposure as an acceptable health risk, even though any amount of exposure carries risk.

TESTING FOR RADON IN YOUR HOME

There are several options to test for radon. You can find test kits at home improvement stores or online. Use an EPA-approved test kit for accuracy. The kits usually have a label that says, “Meets EPA Requirements.”

The Kentucky Department for Public Health’s Radon Program recommends three testing methods:

- a. You can use a short-term kit which is for tests lasting two to 90 days. Most commonly, people test for two days to one week, but it is important to understand that radon levels do change throughout the year.
- b. The EPA recommends you test your home for one full calendar year when possible. Long-term kits range from 90 days up to a year. You can find long-term radon kits online and at home improvement stores. These tests will record the average radon level during the period you choose to test and provide a better sign of year-round radon exposure in the home than a short-term test.
- c. You can hire a certified testing and mitigation specialist to test your home or building. If you want to hire a professional, find someone who has the technical knowledge and special skills to test then install a radon mitigation system, if necessary.

When you test your home, it is important to find the right testing location.

1. Test the lowest level of the home that is used on a regular basis and where you or a household member spend at least eight hours per week.
2. Place the test kit in a general breathing zone, between two and seven feet above the floor.
3. Place the test kit at least six inches from any walls and five feet from exterior windows and doors.
4. Keep the test kit away from vents or other places where there is frequently moving air.
5. Do not place the test kit in direct sunlight or near areas of high moisture.
6. Keep out of reach of pets and children.
7. Do not move the test kit during testing.

REMOVING RADON FROM YOUR HOME

If your home has tested high for radon (4 pCi/L or higher), experts recommend you have a professional install a radon mitigation system. The mitigation system reduces radon inside your home by either preventing radon from entering or by venting it outside after it had entered. Lowering high radon levels requires technical knowledge and special skills. Contractors who do not specialize in radon reduction could make the problem worse. There are several ways to find a certified contractor.

- a. Search the National Radon Proficiency Program website and enter your zip code at <https://nrpp.info/pro-search/>.
- b. Contact the Kentucky Radon Program at <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dphps/emb/Pages/radon.aspx>.
- c. Check out the Kentucky Association of Radon Professionals website at <https://kentuckyradon.org/>.

There are several proven methods to reduce radon in your home. The most-used method has a vent pipe system and fan, which pulls radon from beneath the house and vents it to the outside. This system does not require major changes to your home. Sealing foundation cracks and other openings makes this kind of system more effective and cost-efficient. Similar systems can also be installed in houses with crawl spaces. The right system depends on the design of your home and other factors such as whether your home has a basement.

After installing a radon mitigation system, test your home again to make sure the system is working. It is strongly advised to retest your home every two years to be sure radon levels remain low. You should also retest your home after any home remodeling projects.

Hardin Stevens
Senior Extension Associate, Family & Consumer Sciences Extension



Photo courtesy of UK College of Nursing BREATHE Program

Given Kentucky's high smoking rates, the large number of lung cancer cases and deaths, and the state's geological features, it is important for all Kentuckians to be aware, knowledgeable, and ready to take action to reduce radon in homes and indoor living spaces. By reducing exposure to radon and its effects on your health, you and your loved ones can breathe easier.

REFERENCES:

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