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During the five weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's, Americans produce an extra one million tons of trash per week compared to any other time of the year. Thinking green this holiday season can include more than just boughs of holly. Whether it is shopping, choosing a gift or entertaining, small changes in your holiday habits can make big differences. Here are a few ideas and suggestions on how to have a wonderful, gift-giving holiday season and still be earth friendly.

Green Gift Ideas

• Consider nonmaterial gifts. Tickets to a sporting

Think Green This Holiday Season

event, movie, play, or concert are a real treat, or make a charitable donation in someone's name.

• Make a photo album, scrapbook, or frame a favorite picture.

• Everyone appreciates a home-cooked meal or baked goodies. Fill a basket with homemade jellies, muffins and cookies. Include the recipe. Dried fruits, drink mixes and roasted nuts are always appreciated. Package gifts from your kitchen in reusable tins, baskets or jars.

• Shop locally. Give honey from a local beekeeper, a painting by a local artist, or handcrafted gifts from other merchants in your community.

• Think durable. Consider how long an item will last before you make a purchase. Often a cheaper item will wear out long before its more durable equivalent.

Eco-friendly Entertaining

• Host a create-your-own-decorations party. Invite family and friends to create and use holiday decorations such as popcorn and cranberry garlands, ornaments made from old greeting cards or

cookie dough, wreaths made from artificial greens and flowers, and potpourri made from kitchen spices such as cinnamon and cloves.

• Make gift-giving occasions festive by preparing punch and serving it in beautiful bowls and pitchers rather than using beverages in cans or plastic bottles.

• Use your best china, glassware and cloth napkins for entertaining. It requires a little more work but reduces waste from paper plates, napkins and disposable utensils. Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

• Thousands of paper and plastic shopping bags end up in landfills every year. Reduce the number of bags thrown out by bringing reusable cloth bags for holiday gift shopping. Tell store clerks you don't need a bag for small or oversized purchases.

• Wrap gifts in recycled holiday paper or funny papers. Use old Christmas cards for tags and hand deliver whenever possible to save energy. Remember to save and recycle used wrapping paper and ribbons from gifts received.

• Approximately 33 million live Christmas trees are

sold in North America every year. After the holidays, look for ways to recycle your tree instead of sending it to a landfill. Check with your county solid waste coordinator to find out if they collect and mulch trees. Your town might be able to use chipmunks from mulched trees for community landscaping projects or hiking trails.

• Remember always to look for items made with recycled content. When buying gifts, check product labels to determine an item's recyclability and whether it is made from recycled materials. Buying recycled encourages manufacturers to make more recycled-content products available.

For more information about how to enjoy an environmentally friendly and festive holiday contact me at the Estill County Cooperative Extension Service at 723-4557 or stop on by at 76 Golden Court in Irvine. I hope you all have a happy and safe holiday season!

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University of Kentucky – College of Agriculture



Estill County
Family & Consumer Sciences

Chelsea K. Bicknell
Estill County Extension Office

Friday, December 18th @ 10am

Holiday Centerpiece Workshop

The Estill County Extension Service and the Estill County Extension Homemakers are sponsoring a Holiday Centerpiece Workshop on Friday, December 18th, 10:00 a.m. to Noon at the Extension Office. Anyone attending will need to bring their own standard size dinner plate. Mike Reed, Powell County Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent, will show everyone how to take a dinner plate and make a centerpiece from natural materials found in the backyard. Cost of the class is \$12.00. You will need to pre-register and pre-pay by Wednesday, December 16th.

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Kitchen Diva
Herbal Vinegars Make Great Gifts

by **ANGELA SHELF MEDEARIS**

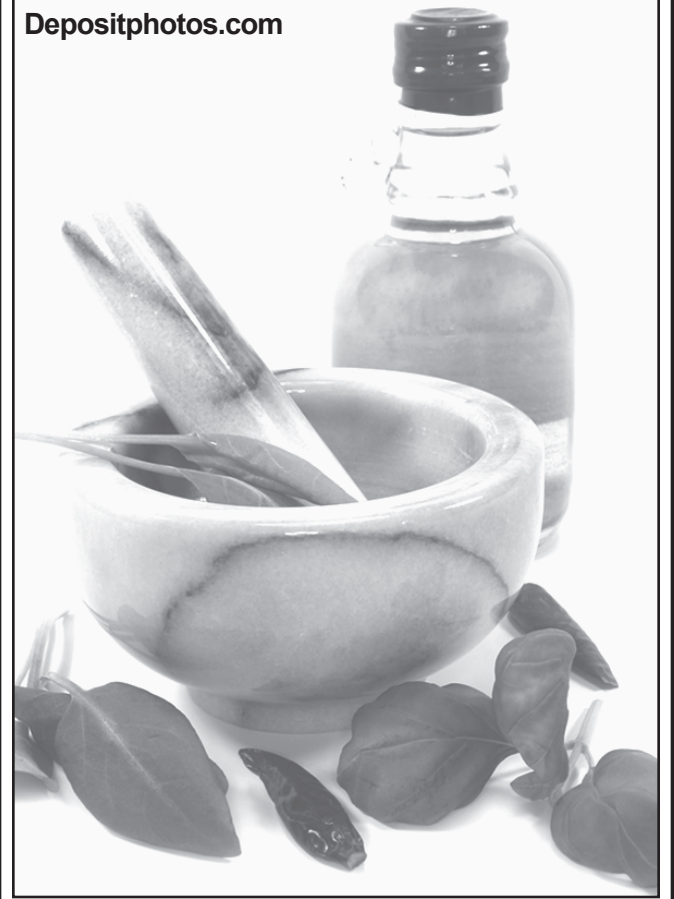
Herbal vinegars are a wonderful gift from the kitchen. They're delicious when sprinkled on salads, vegetables or broiled meats. You can use either fresh or dried herbs, or fresh or frozen fruit when preparing the vinegars. Pouring heated vinegar over herbs that have been slightly crushed helps extract the flavor of the herbs. Almost any type of vinegar with at least 5 percent acidity may be used, except malt vinegar. The flavor of malt vinegar is too strong to blend well with herbs or fruits.

After preparation, herbal vinegars should be stored for one to three weeks in a cool, dark place to allow the flavors to mingle. Herbal vinegars will keep indefinitely, and they make great homemade gifts. (Do not make herbal oils for gifts. Unlike commercial oils, homemade herbal oils lack enough acidity to preserve them. Homemade herbal oils also tend to turn rancid and may cause botulism.)

Decorative bottles like those used for wine or bottled water are perfect containers for your herbal vinegars. Sterilize the bottles or jars with boiling water before using them. Line bottle caps or jar lids with a piece of foil, or place a piece of foil over the mouth of the jar or bottle to prevent the cap from rusting. Bottles with a cork or cruets also are perfect containers.

Place a decorative label on the bottle or jar describing the herbal ingredients used. Containers may be decorated by tying a raffia bow, a few herb sprigs or dried flowers around the neck of the bottle or jar. Wrapping strands of brightly colored yarn or strips of festive wrapping paper that have been dipped in glue also add a decorative touch.

Depositphotos.com



HERBAL VINEGAR

2 cups vinegar (distilled white, cider or wine)
4 to 6 tablespoons of fresh or dried herbs (tarragon, chive, basil, marjoram, dill, sage, rosemary, savory, mustard or bay leaves, in combination or alone)

1. If using fresh herbs, rinse them and pat dry with a paper towel. Bruise herbs with a mortar and pestle or by rolling over them once or twice with a rolling pin. Place herbs in a sterilized jar.

2. In a small, non-corrosive saucepan, heat vinegar until it is warm to the touch, but not hot. If using a microwave, place vinegar in a glass bowl and heat on low power for about 30 seconds. Pour the vinegar over the herbs. Let the mixture cool.

3. Place a piece of foil over the mouth of the jar and seal it tightly. Label the jar and place the herbal vinegar in a cool, dark place for at least 7 days and up to 3 weeks so that the flavors have a chance to mingle.

4. After the flavors have infused, place several layers of cheesecloth inside a funnel and strain the vinegar into a sterilized bottle or jar. Leave at least an inch free at the top of the bottle if inserting a cork or glass stopper. Makes 2 cups.

Angela Shelf Medearis is an award-winning children's author, culinary historian and the author of seven cookbooks. Her new cookbook is "The Kitchen Diva's Diabetic Cookbook." Her website is www.divapro.com. To see how-to videos, recipes and much, much more, Like Angela Shelf Medearis, The Kitchen Diva! on Facebook.

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Community News

Mail announcements to The Estill Tribune,
6135 Winchester Road, Irvine, KY 40336
Call (606) 723-5012; Fax to (606) 723-2743;
or E-mail it to <News@EstillTribune.Com>

Friday, December 4th, 6-8pm

Estill Appalachian Dulcimers

The Estill County Appalachian Dulcimer Club meets Friday, December 11th and every Friday from 6 to 8 p.m. at the First Christian Church, Main Street, Irvine, for anyone who plays an Appala-

chian Dulcimer or anyone who is interested in playing one is welcome to attend.

The Appalachian Dulcimer was designated as the official state instrument of Kentucky in 2001.

Monday, December 9th @ 6:30pm

SE KY Gem, Mineral & Fossil Club

The Southeast KY Gem, Mineral, & Fossil Club will meet Monday, December 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the Eagle's Roost, 214 Main Street, Irvine.

The club invites you to become a part of the group. Individual dues are \$15/year and family dues are \$20/year.

Wednesday, December 9th - 2-5pm

"Nutcracker Sweet" At The Library

Estill County Public Library's staff and board of directors cordially invite the public to celebrate the holidays with us at our annual "Nutcracker Sweet".

Stop by the library between 2:00 and 5 o'clock p.m. on

Wednesday, December 9th, and enjoy some homemade sweet treats, visit with our friendly staff, and find out what the library has to offer. Call the library at 723-3030 for more information.

Dec. 11th @ 7pm & Dec. 13th @ 3pm

Christmas Lighting Contest

The Irvine-Ravenna Kiwanis Club will be "rekindling the Christmas spirit" with a Christmas lighting contest to be held for the cities of Irvine and Ravenna with judging to take place on December 11 & 12, 2015.

Sections are:

- 1.) City of Ravenna homes
 - 2.) Irvine homes south of Broadway to Ravenna city line
 - 3.) Irvine homes north of Broadway to city line on Winchester Road
 - 4.) Apartments and multiple-unit buildings in Irvine and Ravenna
 - 5.) Businesses in Irvine and Ravenna.
- So, untangle those lights,

pull out the inflatables and start decorating! Whether you're a Clark Griswold or a Norman Rockwell, dazzle us with your creation. Be creative and festive to make the Twin Cities into a magical wonderland that people will come to see from near and far, every homeowner's efforts to make the message of hope, peace, love, joy and Spirit of Christmas come alive with your lighting displays.

Judging will take place based on 1) Creativeness, 2) Overall appearance, 3) Originality, and 4) Lights and appearance.

There will be one overall winner and a Griswold Award.

Dec. 11th @ 7pm & Dec. 13th @ 3pm

"Best Christmas Pageant Ever"

River City Players will perform "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" at the Estill County High School auditorium on Friday, December 11th at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, December 13th at 3:00 p.m.

General admission tickets can be bought at River View

Place, from RCP members, or at the door; Children 6 to 12 - \$8, 5 & under free; Adults - \$10. Each performance will have 90 Premium Seating Tickets available for \$12 each; call Jo Ann Smith at (606) 723-3528 for information.

Saturdays, December 12th & 19th

Salvation Army Bell Ringers

Again this year, the Salvation Army Red Kettles will be in place at Price Less Foods, Save-A-Lot, and Stop & Shop on Saturdays, December 12 and 19.

Members of the Irvine-Ravenna Kiwanis Club along with the Estill County Lions Club and other community

volunteers will attend the kettles and accept donations each Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Volunteers to ring the bells are still needed. If you would like to volunteer for 2 hours of bell-ringing on a Saturday in December, please all Steve Garrett at 723-3049.

Sunday, December 13th @ 7pm

Compassionate Friends Candle Lighting Service

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting is held the second Sunday of December at 7:00 p.m. for one hour local time around the globe. It commemorates and honors children, siblings, and grandchildren of all ages who have died from any cause.

The Worldwide Candle Lighting is The Compassionate Friends' gift to the bereavement community. By holding a candle lighting ser-

vice, we remember the lives of the precious children of this world who are no longer with us.

You are welcome to join in the local Candle Lighting ceremony, Sunday, December 13, 2015 at Marcum Wallace Memorial Hospital in Irvine, starting at 6:30 p.m. in the Mercy Room.

The mission of the Compassionate Friends is "Providing Grief Support After the Death of a Child"

Monday, December 14th @ 12 Noon

Healthier Alzheimer's Habits

For centuries, we've known that the health of the brain and the body are connected. But now, science is able to provide insights into how to optimize our physical and cognitive health as we age. Join us to learn about research in the areas of diet and nutrition, exercise, cognitive activity and social engagement, and use hands-on tools to help you

incorporate these recommendations into a plan for healthy aging.

The program will take place at the Madison County Cooperative Extension Office located at 230 Duncannon Lane, Richmond, on Monday, December 14th from 12-1pm. To register for this program, please call 1-800-272-3900. Registration is required.

Tuesday, December 15th @ 4pm

Estill Middle Council Meeting

The Estill County Middle School's next site-based, decision making council's meeting will be Tuesday,

December 15 at 4:00 p.m. in the school conference room. This meeting is open to the public.

Tuesday, December 15th @ 6:30pm

Estill County Lions Club

The Estill County Lions Club will meet Tuesday, December 15th and on the first and third Tuesday of every month at Raders' River Restaurant. The meal is at 6:30 p.m. and business meeting begins at 7 p.m.

Estill County Lions Club is part of Lions Club Inter-

national, with 1.35 million members in 205 countries around the world. We invite those who feel a call to make our community a better place through service to attend and learn about how Lions around the world earn our motto, "We Serve..."

Closed December 23rd thru January 3rd

Health Department Holiday Schedule

The Estill County Health Department will be closed on December 23rd for a staff meeting. In observance of Christmas and New Year the

Estill County Health Department will be closed December 24, 2015 through January 3, 2016. We will re-open on January 4, 2016 at 8:00 a.m.