



We put LIFE back into your weekends!  
407-290-6188

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# Better Home Living™

*The Newsletter That's Both Informative and Fun!*

## What kids want: just to be with you

So-called quality time is nice, like taking your child to the zoo, but the truth is that kids don't really want quality time, they just want time, your time and lots of it.

A report by A.C. Nielson Co. shows parents spend 38.1 minutes a week in meaningful conversation with their children. For working parents, those minutes can be hard to find.

The holidays offer some great opportunities to interact with kids, who are enchanted by the celebration. Shopping, tree decorating, baking and table decorating, all offer time to interact with children.

Clifton Chadwick, a university education professor, says housework and car-pooling are important times to talk with kids. Parents can also establish a family meal and involve kids in food preparation and conversation.

Dads can make time, for instance, involving kids in any routine household activities such as washing the car or making repairs.

As children grow and have homework, sports, friends and activities, established family activities can keep relationships warm.

## The red wine emergency

When a glass of red wine is spilled on your carpet, it requires immediate attention. The longer it stands, the harder it is to remove.

Commercial products like OxiClean and Wine Away do an excellent job of removing red wine stains, but try this homemade version if you don't have either of those on hand.

1. Gently blot the spill with paper towels or a clean cloth. Don't rub or you will force the stain into the carpet fibers.
2. Combine 1 teaspoon carpet shampoo (or dish soap, like Dawn) and 1 cup hydrogen peroxide in a small bowl. Soak a clean sponge in the mixture, squeeze it halfway dry, then gently blot the stain. Continue until the stain lifts.
3. Sponge the stained area with warm water.
4. Blot dry with a clean cloth or paper towels.

If you don't have peroxide, try this: The white wine cure

White wine will neutralize red wine and will make it easier to lift the color off of your carpet or clothing. Simply pour white wine over the stained area and very gently blot the liquid up with a thick towel. Once you have the majority of the spill blotted up, take your favorite carpet shampoo, or clothing stain remover, and clean as you would if the wine stain were a bit of dirt on the carpet.

*Free Cleaning Tips and Specials at [www.betterhomecleaning.com](http://www.betterhomecleaning.com)*



*I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter!*

*Ken Steele  
Better Home Cleaning*

## Happy Holidays!

It's the holiday season! We hope you are able to enjoy your families, friends and co-workers. And we also hope you are able to end 2012 on a cheerful note, making way for the new year ahead.

The true spirit of Christmas includes a dedication to helping those in need. It includes giving hope to others and spreading peace and understanding.

As we enjoy the traditions of this holiday, we are grateful for the men and women of our Armed Forces who are working to defend freedom, secure our homeland, and advance peace and safety on earth.

May we also give thanks for the blessings of our nation and for each of our lives.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for our clients and for our employees, and for your very significant contributions in the year just ending.

May the joy of the holidays renew our commitment to working together for a future of opportunity, peace and success.



## Do You Know...

... someone that could use our services? Perhaps a friend, family member, co-worker, or someone from church?

When a new client signs up for regular cleaning services (weekly or biweekly service) at your recommendation, you will receive half off up to \$50 after their 3rd cleaning!

And you don't need to feel funny about receiving a reward for the referral, because they get the same reward for signing up. They receive \$25 off their second cleaning and another \$25 off their fourth cleaning

Thanks in advance for your help.

## Thanks a Bunch!

Thank you. We were very happy with the cleaning yesterday!

*Jennine H.*

*A special thanks to all these fine folks who referred us...*

*Amy M. and Debbie S.*

## Holiday dinner know-how

It's a season full of cookies, candies and fancy dishes at holiday dinners. Here's how to get through the appetizers and the buffet line without gaining a pound or two that could stay with you forever.

The plan begins at home. Eat breakfast and another meal if the dinner is late in the day. Being famished when you arrive makes overeating a near certainty.

\* If appetizers are served before dinner, look for the fruit and protein offerings. Avoid the high-calorie stuff.

\* At a buffet-style dinner, check the foods before getting in line. If there are 10 foods and you only really like three or four, decide to pick only your favorites.

\* The same idea works for a sit-down dinner. Just because a food is passed to you, it doesn't mean you have to put it on your plate.

\* Holiday desserts can be wonderful. It's OK to take a small serving of more than one, just keep them small.

## Advice from the CDC: Holiday safety and health for families

Wash your hands often. Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps you can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.

Stay warm. Cold temperatures can cause serious health problems, especially in infants and older adults. Stay dry, and dress warmly in several layers of loose-fitting, tightly woven clothing.

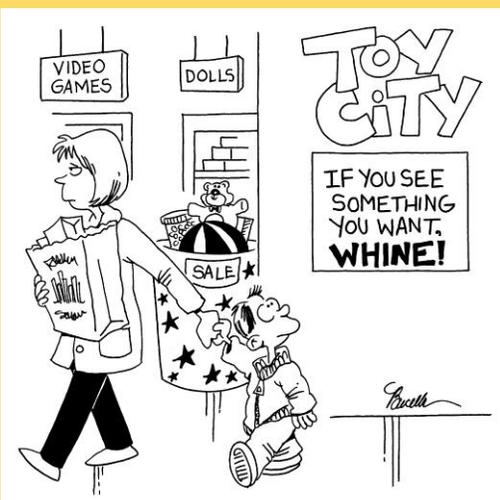
Manage stress. Keep a check on over-commitment and over-spending. Balance work, home, and play. Get support from family and friends. Keep a relaxed and positive outlook and get enough sleep.

Travel safely by car. Whether you're traveling across town or across the country, take steps to ensure that your trip is safe. Don't drink and drive, and don't let someone else drink and drive. Wear a seat belt every time you drive or ride in a motor vehicle. Always buckle your child in the car using a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt according to his/her height, weight, and age.

Watch the kids. Children are at high risk for injuries. Keep a watchful eye on them when they're eating and playing. Have potentially dangerous toys, food, drinks, household items, choking hazards (like coins and hard candy), and other objects out of kids' reach. Learn how to provide early treatment for children who are choking, and make sure toys are used properly.

Prevent injuries. Injuries can occur anywhere and some occur around the holidays. Use step stools instead of furniture when hanging decorations.

Keep candles away from children, pets, walkways, trees, and curtains. Never leave fireplaces, stoves, or candles unattended. Don't use generators, grills, or charcoal-burning devices inside your home or garage.



## Trivia Teaser – 'Tis The Season

1. What did "my true love" send to me on the third day of Christmas? a-Three geese a-laying, b-Three calling birds, c-Three turtle doves, d-Three French hens.

2. What special calendar is used by children to count down the days to Christmas, often with a small gift concealed in a window for each day? a-Advent calendar, b-Wonderland calendar, c-Cracker calendar, d-Moravian calendar.

3. What was the name of Ebenezer Scrooge's late business partner in A Christmas Carol? a-Abel Magwitch, b-Uriah Heep, c-Jacob Marley, d-Edward Murdstone.

4. In Western tradition the feast of Epiphany celebrates the visitation of the Christ child by whom? a-Pontius Pilate, b-The Archangel Gabriel, c-The Little Drummer Boy, d-The Three Wise Men.

5. What singer introduced the song "White Christmas" in the movie musical Holiday Inn? a-Bob Hope, b-Danny Kaye, c-Bing Crosby, d-Ginger Rogers.

6. In A Muppet Christmas Carol, Michael Caine portrayed Ebenezer Scrooge. Who played his clerk, Bob Cratchit? a-Fozzie Bear, b-Gonzo, c-Beaker, d-Kermit the Frog.

7. Which Civil War general sent Abraham Lincoln this message: "I beg to present you as a Christmas present the city of Savannah"? a-William Tecumseh Sherman, b-George B. McClellan, c-Ulysses S. Grant, d-Stonewall Jackson.

8. What TV series was a spinoff of the 1971 TV-movie The Homecoming: A Christmas Story? a-All in the Family, b-The Waltons, c-Little House on the Prairie, d-Happy Days.

9. The poinsettia is native to which country? a-China, b-Australia, c-Mexico, d-Iceland.

10. What 2004 movie was based on the John Grisham book Surviving Christmas? a-Christmas With The Kranks, b-Jingle All the Way, c-I'll Be Home for Christmas, d-Twice Upon a Christmas.

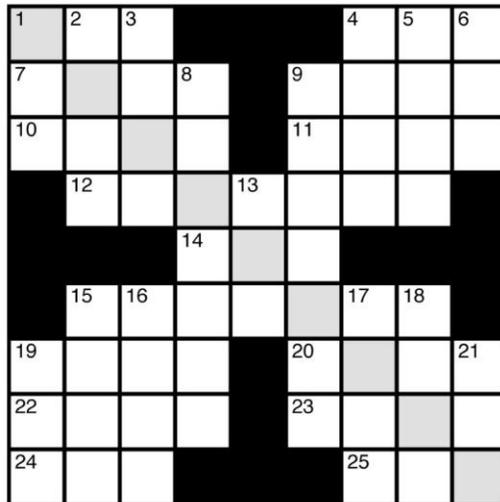
1-d, Three French hens  
2-a, Advent calendar  
3-c, Jacob Marley  
4-d, The Three Wise Men  
5-c, Bing Crosby  
6-d, Kermit the Frog  
7-a, William Tecumseh Sherman  
8-b, "The Waltons"  
9-c, Mexico  
10-a, "Christmas With The Kranks"

Answers to 'Tis the Season

## DOTS AND DASHES

### Across

- Atlanta-based station
- Balaam's mount
- Adriatic and Arabian
- Bounce back, in a way
- Insect feeler
- Like Superman's vision
- Type of skirt
- "I" problem
- Support
- Mrs. in Germany
- Animal classifications
- Speech problem
- Doesn't guzzle
- Start of Psalm 23:4
- Play-\_\_

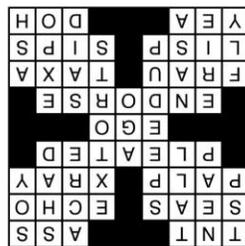


### Down

- Kitchen meas.
- Half-moon tide
- Farfetched, as a story
- "God's Little \_\_"
- Cousin of a herring
- Asian sauce
- Accelerate
- Obtains through intimidation

- "Give it \_\_!"
- Lake or canal
- Org. with a mission
- Aforementioned
- Montreal player
- Type of fishing
- \_\_ Wednesday

The title is a clue to the word in the diagonal.



Make it on the big day or prepare it days or weeks before

## A holiday special: Sweet potato casserole

This tried and true recipe will be a hit at your holiday dinner.

Although the sweet potato relatively low calorie, this recipe includes a lot of sugar, although some substitutions can be made (see below).

On the plus side, the sweet potato is loaded with vitamin A, three times your daily value, plus generous amounts of vitamins C and B6.

### Sweet potato casserole

- 1 40-ounce can sweet potatoes or 2 1/2 pounds cooked fresh sweet potatoes
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted and cooled
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1/3 cup butter or margarine, chilled
- 1 cup walnuts or pecans, chopped

With a potato masher or food processor, puree sweet potatoes. Add milk, melted butter, sugar, eggs and vanilla

extract.

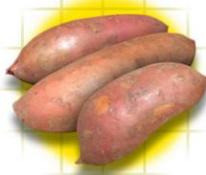
In another bowl, (for the topping) stir together the brown sugar and flour. Slice chilled butter into the brown sugar mixture. With your fingers or a pastry blender, blend in the butter until the mixture is crumbly and evenly mixed. Stir in chopped nuts.

Spread the sweet potato mixture in a greased or spray-coated baking dish and distribute the crumbles over it. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes.

If baked, you can store the dish for 4 to 6 days in the refrigerator or 2 to 3 months in the freezer.

To freeze the ingredients, place the sweet potato mixture in a one-gallon freezer bag and the topping in a quart size freezer bag, and freeze. Store the bags for 2 to 4 days in the refrigerator or 2 to 3 months in the freezer.

If you limit sugar in your diet, reduce the white sugar to 1/2 cup and the brown sugar to 3/4, or substitute Splenda for part of the sugar.





## Better Home Cleaning

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To:

### Your New Issue of Better Home Living Has Arrived!

*Look Inside for Some  
Amazing Money  
Saving Tips and More!*

### Optimists have a lower stroke risk

An American Heart Association study gauged adults over 50 on a 16-point optimism scale. They found that every point increase correlated with a nine percent decrease in stroke risk.

The association thinks optimistic people may make healthier decisions, such as eating well, exercising and taking vitamins.

Another explanation could be that positive thinking protects the brain from stress-related chemicals that can cause anxiety or depression.

### Staff Members Making the News

Shelley and her team have been cleaning homes for the past five years and they've always done a great job for us. The team was recently awarded Better Home Cleaning's highest achievement award for Service Excellence. Congratulations team! Keep up the good work!

All team members of Better Home Cleaning have completed the Annual Safety Training Certification. We're very impressed with the scores and are confident about our staff's performance.

"Whenever you are asked if you can do a job, tell 'em 'certainly I can!'" Then get busy and find out how to do it.

*Theodore Roosevelt, 26th president*

### FREE Cleaning for Ladies undergoing treatment for cancer

If you know of anyone that could use that kind of help please refer them to

**"Cleaning For A Reason"**  
[www.cleaningforareason.org](http://www.cleaningforareason.org).

We're the service provider in our area, but there is a nationwide network of cleaners providing this service if you know someone outside of our area.

### Take the Trivia Challenge and Win a \$5 E-Gift to Starbucks

The first 3 people who call or email with the correct answer will receive the Starbucks E-Gift!

**What neutralizes a red wine stain and makes it easier to lift the color out?**

1 – club soda 2 – water 3 – vinegar 4 – white wine

HINT: The answer is hidden somewhere in this newsletter.