

Pep Talk



A Ministry of Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church
October 2008

Rethink Christmas Spending Habits Now

Retail stores are gearing up for the Christmas season. Even before the fall merchandise is put away, Christmas trees will be displayed with all of their trimmings. We've already received the JC Penny Wish Book Catalog. I turned to the toy section and told my four year old son to look through it to see what he might want for Christmas. It kept him busy for quite awhile. He came to me several times with things he wanted to get right away. In the days that followed, he continued to ask if it was Christmas time, yet.

It made me think about Christmas last year. I always try to get my Christmas shopping done early to avoid rushing around at the last minute; however, I still found myself caught in the madness. Often I don't know what to buy and just wander around looking for an idea. I am always in search of that thoughtful and perfect gift. It can be very stressful! Last year was stressful and I didn't get to focus on Jesus, the best gift of all! This year I want to be a better steward of our money and concentrate on Jesus, while forcing all of the Christmas preparations to the background. In order to do this, I know I must start now.

We can be good stewards of our money and avoid the temptation to buy ourselves into the bigger, better Christmas. Here are some tips to prevent holiday overspending taken from www.focusonthefamily.org. The article is entitled, "How to Budget for Christmas Shopping," by Karen O'Conner.

List the people you want to give to and what you think you may buy them. Take time doing this so you won't have to run out at the last minute for the few people you overlooked the first time. Set an amount you wish to spend on each one.

Add up the amounts for each one in order to arrive at a spending budget. Then do your best to 'beat' it. *Continued on page 4*

Welcome Patti Arnold

Patti Arnold, a veteran leader of BSF (Bible Study Fellowship) will speak on: "When 24 Hours Isn't Enough." Patti says, "I received Christ as a result of attending Bible Study Fellowship in Memphis when my children were preschoolers. I remember what it was like to try to have a quiet time while my children were at home and learned what worked for me through trial and error. Establishing a daily quiet time began with resolve, followed by attempts which sometimes failed. Do not give up!" Patti & her husband Grady have two children (Amy Carter 4/5's) & five young grandchildren.

Today's agenda

- 9:15-9:45 Registration
- 9:45-10:00 Announcements
- 10:00-11:00 Speaker
- 11:00-12:00 Small groups
- 12:00-12:35 Lunch
- 12:35-12:45 Pick-up children

November meeting

Carol Tessier from Ebenezer Counseling will be speaking at our November 18th meeting.

Cell phones

As a courtesy to our speaker, please turn cell phones off or to vibrate when the meeting begins.



Reading Corner

Do you find yourself wandering the children's section at the library aimlessly trying to select just the right books for your little ones to read? If you are like me, the library can be an overwhelming place. Each month in the newsletter, we would like to publish PEP Mom's favorite children's authors or cherished books so that others may benefit from your experiences. If you have a favorite book, series or author, please write a brief paragraph and submit it to Sharon Faulkner (sharonhfaulkner@bellsouth.net) by the first of the month for publishing (remember the "h" between sharon and faulkner in the email address).

At our house, we are currently enjoying the books of Karma Wilson. She writes with a lyrical text that invites children to enjoy Bear, her main character, and all of his adventures. My girls love the pictures and the host of friends that Bear encounters. Her first book, *Bear Snores On*, is one of our favorites and is perfect as we are heading into the winter months. It is about Bear's hibernation and his friends' antics as they party in his cave even as he sleeps. Check out Wilson's Bear series at your library. Your kids are sure to enjoy them!

- Keri Gray



Lonsdale Bear Bucks Sale!

The date for this year's Lonsdale Elementary Bear Bucks sale is Thursday, December 11.

We will have sign up sheets at the November and December meetings for volunteers to sign up to help on the date of the sale as well as pricing and sorting days. This is not a "one man show"—we need lots of help to make this a success!

The donated items provide students with the opportunity to purchase Christmas gifts for their loved ones by using the "bear bucks" they earn in their classroom by demonstrating good behavior, grades, etc.

We are taking donations NOW! There is a bin in the Welcome Hall (labeled Lonsdale Holiday Sale) where you can drop off your items.

Recommended donations include: new or gently used items such as games, toys, puzzles, CDs, videos, DVDs, kitchen items, unused soaps or lotions, note cards, books, etc. Men's items are especially needed. These include watches, wallets, sporting items, gloves, caps, electronics, and sports apparel. Please no oversized items or clothing (except sports apparel). ***Deadline for donations is Friday, December 5.***

Please contact Jessica Harvey (671-3179) or Carrie Gahagan (675-0629) if you have any questions.

Date Night Movie

Fireproof is a powerful movie, centered around marriage. It is a Christian movie, with wonderful reminders about faith, God's love for us, and why having a Christ-based marriage is important. The website, www.fireproofthemovie.com, has a listing of local theaters.

November Nursery Workers List

Please report to "duty" no later than 9:00 a.m.

**M. Hollow, A. Scott, S. Gregory, R. Cooper,
C. Blackston**

Annual PEP Moms Retreat

Save the date for our annual **PEP Moms Retreat February 6th-8th, 2009**. Registration will begin at the November meeting with a \$50 deposit fee.

Join us for a weekend of fellowship, fun, rest, girl time, time with God, time to re-focus, or whatever it is you need!

Back by popular demand, our speaker this year will be our fabulous sister in Christ Marla DeLong. She has spoken to PEP Moms many times and last led our retreat 3 years ago. Anyone who has heard her or met her knows how genuine, real, and down-to-earth she is. She loves encouraging women, wives, and mothers. With three children of her own, she knows and understands our joys and struggles. We hope you will come see for yourself what a wonderful weekend this will be! **Don't delay and register early, there are only 40 spots available!**

Crispix Snack Mix (from Retreat)

Cereal Mixture:

- 7 cups Crispix cereal
- 2 cups dry roasted peanuts
- 1 12 oz. bag of plain M & M's
- 1 12 oz. bag of peanut butter M & M's
- 7 cups small twist pretzels

Caramel Mixture:

- 2 sticks of butter
- 2 cups of light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup of Karo Syrup
- 1/2 tsp salt

Combine cereal mixture ingredients in large roasting pan.* Melt caramel mixture ingredients in saucepan until blended. Add 1/2 tsp baking soda and it will get bubbly and thicken. Pour caramel mixture over cereal mixture and use a rubber spatula to coat cereal mixture. Bake at 325 degrees for 15 minutes and stir every 5 minutes to ensure even coating. Pour over wax paper to cool. Break into pieces and enjoy!

Helen Arnold

A Mom's Helpful Hint

A friend emailed me a great quote the other day in this month's Southern Living magazine from the article "Less is More" (on page 156, to be exact). This saying was cross-stitched and hung in a kitchen.

Use it up

Wear it out

Make it do or

Do without

What a great reminder to be good stewards of our household items, clothes, toys, etc. How easy it is in our culture to go out and buy something new and shiny everyday—we are bombarded with ads everywhere. I want to teach my girls to value what they have and that they don't always get what they want when they want it. What better way to teach that lesson than by daily example.

One thing that gives me great satisfaction is "repurposing" something. I never throw the plastic packages with zippers that linens or toys come in. They are great to store same thing items—like all of our princess dress up accessories or the tiny Polly Pocket or Barbie clothes.

My pantry seems to "eat" chip clips. I'm always looking through drawers for more. Some chip clips are around \$1 each. I started using the leftover office binder clips I had from my small business. They worked great! You get 30 binder clips for \$5.00—can't beat that!

Once you get started repurposing, you'll be hooked. It's a great lesson to teach your children.

Sharon Faulkner

(Continued from front page)

The savings will add up fast. And it will make the shopping experience more fun.

Shop at 'dollar' stores. You can fill up a Christmas stocking or a small basket with useful items (personal tissue packs, batteries, travel toiletries, candy and so on, for a total of \$10 or less).

Use your coupons. Many stores advertise special discounts when you shop on certain days or between specified hours. If you purchase online or through a catalogue, you can 'bunch' items together & get free shipping—another way to save.

Look for 'sale' goods on display tables outside book, hardware and variety stores.

Shop early. Avoid the last-minute rush when inventory is low or choice items are out of stock. Keep your list with you so you are ready to purchase just the right gift when you spot it. If color and size are important, have those details available, as well. You can purchase cards and gift-wrap on sale, as well, and hold them until the following year.

Make your own gifts. Home-made jam and breads, napkins, place mats, drawings, scrapbooks, greeting cards and so on make beautiful presents that mean a lot more than those purchased in a store.

If the shopping and gift wrapping are out of the way early it will definitely create more time to make the season special. I hope you are encouraged to make a plan that

will enable you and your family to focus on Jesus Christ, God's gift to mankind, instead of rushing around trying to get things checked off the list. You can make that decision now and then ask God for the grace to carry it out.

-Carrie Gahagan

PEP Moms Database Coordinator needed for spring semester

Remaining duties include: print name tags for newly joining members & add them to the monthly sign-in sheets, maintain February 2009 Retreat data & print list for Committee. Jill McCurry will be available until the end of 2008 to train replacement. Please contact either Jennifer Cross (966-9300) or Ruth Granroth (671-0307) if you are interested in serving in this position.

Speaker notes...

PEP Mom Directories are available now!

Please see your Small Group Leader for your copy. All paid/registered Moms will get a directory. Please e-mail Jill: jsmccurry@yahoo.com with any corrections.

Small Groups

<u>Group</u>	<u>Meeting Room</u>
Infants	200
1's & 2's	210
3's	212
4's & 5's	Fellowship Hall
K & 1st	223
1st & up	224