

Surviving Winter Storm Through Memories

By Becky Greenwell
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Winter must be the drabest, dreariest, blah season ever. I would even say just yucky. It is so hard to get motivated to do anything productive. With shorter days the sun doesn't make very long appearances, which produces more depression.

Whenever I get those blah days, I look for happy memories. I find most of those memories with my grandchildren. The perfect place to find the memories are in photo albums. My dad called it digging up bones. He didn't like looking at old pictures or videos. He said it depressed him; it reminded him he was getting old. That was sad. I was the opposite. Grand-

children's memories lift me up in no time. I would see a picture and instantly come up with the memory. If there was a good memory story with it, I would more than likely have a column about it.

My grandkids loved giving me subject matter for my columns. They would come by every week and ask what I was writing about. If I didn't have any idea yet, they were ready to tell me about an adventure they had had.

During this January cold, drabby, stay-in-the-house winter storm, that is what I did. I got out the picture albums and some of my older columns. I reread the ones about the grands.

Let me tell you about my grandchildren. I have eleven – 4 girls

and 7 boys. They are all young adults now. I also have one great-grandchild and two more greats on the way this summer. The middle boys are close in age. Whenever they were all here at the same time it was a loud, crazy time.

I enjoy spending time with all the grandchildren, but especially when it is one-on-one. We get to do what they want and go where they want. We had spent a weekend with the youngest one and turned it into a special time. The weekend before he had turned five, but he told me he was going to be 11 pretty soon.

He and G-Daddy had Saturday to themselves and did fun guy stuff. Sunday was my time and he wanted to go to the movie theater to

see Kung Fu Panda 3. He told me all about it before we got there so I knew what to expect.

We got our movie snacks and found the perfect seats and sat back to watch the movie. His eyes were glued to the screen. He took in everything that was going on while snacking on his treats. There were a few giggles that erupted and a few hand gestures mimicking what the characters were doing on the big screen. I spent more time watching him and just drinking in his animated movements and memorizing all the excitement of a five-year-

old going on eleven.

After the movie we went for a late lunch and enjoyed each other's company. I ended up with a to-go box to put my sandwich in for later. I told him to remind me not to forget it when it was time for me to go home.

I spent the afternoon watching him play his video game and he told me all about his character. He let me know how he was going to beat the other guy on the ski slopes. Also, I couldn't play because he wanted to win. I don't think he had to worry about me beating him.

We were having a

good day, and I wasn't ready for it to end. I was enjoying our time together, but evidently, he had had enough grandparents for the past three days. His mother walked through the door and without looking away from his game he calmly stated, "Mackey, Mom's here. Don't forget your sandwich."

I guess that was my cue to leave. I did get a big bear hug, a thank you, and a promise to do it again.

I had happy feelings all week thanks to Trevor B. memories and picture albums. Aren't grandchildren grand.

Eight Unique Gifting Ideas For This Valentine's Day

Gifting is a key component of Valentine's Day celebrations every February 14. Valentine's Day is a mere month-and-a-half after the holiday season, so ideas for more thoughtful gifts may be in short supply. Let these Valentine's day gift ideas serve as inspiration.

1. Custom painted portrait: Many local artists paint beautiful portraits from photographs. Find an image you like and have it made into an even more impressive work of art.
2. Doll likeness: The well known Funko POP! brand known for its pop culture figurines enables customers to create likenesses of themselves or loved ones. You can have custom dolls made in your sweetheart's likeness.
3. Preserved roses: While fresh roses may only last a few days to a week, preserved or "eternity" roses are treated and specially packaged so they can endure and serve as lasting, welcome reminders of Valentine's Day love.
4. Journal or scrapbook: A decorative scrapbook or journal enables your special someone to keep track

of moments spent together and key milestones.

5. First date map: Gift a framed picture of a map marked with the specific location of your first date, whether it was a restaurant, park or museum.

6. Birthstone jewelry: Jewelry is a popular gift on Valentine's Day. Make gifts even more special by finding pieces that include your special someone's birthstone. The American Gem Society offers a handy chart at www.americangemsociety.org/birthstones/.

7. Experiential gifts: Experiential gifts may be just what is needed this Valentine's Day. Some options include a couple's cooking class, tickets to a sports game or concert, a vacation to a romantic locale, or a day or night out on the town.

8. Prepare a favorite recipe: Learn what your loved one enjoys eating the most and then recreate the recipe as a thoughtful gift and dinner at home.

This Valentine's Day, people can consider these unique thoughtful gift ideas.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

4-H NEWS

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY • COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
BY
ANNETTE BUCKMAN
COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT FOR 4-H

Building Life Skills One Meal At A Time

In today's fast-paced world, it's easy for family time to be pushed aside by busy schedules. While many families gather around the table for meals, involving children in the cooking process can add even more value to that time together.

Research shows that young people who help prepare meals are more willing to try new foods. Cooking allows children to explore food using their senses—smelling, touching, and seeing ingredients before tasting them. This hands-on experience helps youth feel a sense of ownership over the meal and encourages healthier eating habits. It also builds self-confidence as they learn basic food preparation skills.

Cooking as a family also opens the door for meaningful conversation. It provides a natural setting to talk about daily life, healthy food choices, and nutrition. Families can also incorporate learning by practicing math and literacy skills as children read recipes, measure ingredients, and follow directions.

Families can make cooking together successful by planning meals ahead of time and assigning age-appropriate tasks. Following food safety guidelines is important, including handwashing and reminding children not to taste uncooked ingredients. Keeping the experience fun and positive helps children stay engaged, even if they are not involved in every step. Most importantly, young people

should always be closely supervised, especially when using sharp utensils or working near hot surfaces.

4-H offers a variety of cooking programs that help young people develop food preparation skills while learning about health and nutrition. For more information, contact the Union County Extension Office.

4-H Happenings

- 2-10 Homesteading Club 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.
- 2-12 Cloverbuds Club 4:30-5:30
- 2-19 TLA – All Day
- 2-19 Livestock Club
- 2-20 Country Ham Curing #1
- 2-24 Camp Kickoff 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Follow Us On Facebook!

To keep up with all the fun events happening in the Union County 4-H Program follow Union County 4H on Facebook for all the latest news, events, and information about 4-H. There you will find interesting articles related to youth/4-H and much more!

Educational programs of the Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expressions, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.

Get moving.

Even a short walk or a few minutes of sunlight can boost your mood and energy. Encourage kids to bundle up and play outdoors. They can build a snowman, walk the dog, or race around the yard. Natural light helps our brains make serotonin, a chemical that helps us feel happy.

Keep a sleeping routine.

Regular sleep, meals, and play times help everyone feel more balanced. Try to keep bedtime the same, even on weekends. Too little sleep can make winter sadness worse. Stay active and have fun.

Exercise releases "feel-good" chemicals that help our brains and bodies. Turn on music and have a dance party in the living room or do family stretches before

Stay Ahead Of Winter Blues

Submitted
By Shea Heady

Source: David Weisenhorn, Senior Extension Specialist, Family and Consumer Sciences Extension at the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment

When the days are short and cold, many people start to feel tired, cranky or down.

Kids can feel this too. The "winter blues" are common when we spend less time outside and more time indoors. While these feelings are normal, there are simple ways families can stay positive and healthy throughout the season.

bed.

Talk about it.

If your child seems extra quiet, tired or sad, let them know it is okay to talk about their feelings. Listen without judging. If sadness lasts more than a couple of weeks, or your child loses interest in things they usually enjoy, talk to a doctor or counselor.

Small changes like getting light, staying active, and talking openly can help your family beat the winter blues and look forward to brighter days ahead.

Contact your local Union County Extension office for more information.

FCS Happenings:

February is heart health awareness month, and we will be hosting the Heart Healthy Luncheon on Thursday, February 26th. Blood pressure

screenings begin at 11:30am with speakers and lunch at 12:00pm. This event is free to attend but you must sign up by February 20th .

There will be a basics of food preservation class on Tuesday, February 24th at 5:30pm at the UC Extension Office.

The first of a three-part "Make It, Don't Buy It" series will take place on Thursday, February 26th at 5:00pm. The topic for the evening will be DIY laundry detergents and green ingredient household cleaners.

Bring your children ages 2-5 to our kindergarten readiness program on the 2nd Monday each month at 10:00am at the UC extension office.

To sign up for any of the events/classes listed above call the extension office at 270-389-1400.

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE FOLLOWING ESTATE HAVE BEEN PROBATED IN UNION DISTRICT COURT. PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS TO FILE AGAINST SAID ESTATES MUST FILE SAME NOT LATER THAN SIX MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THE APPOINTMENT OF THE FIDUCIARY.

Estate of Darcy Coale. Executor/Administrator: Chase Coale, 42400 Soda Creek Lane, Steamboat Springs, CO 80487. Date of appointment January 15, 2026. Attorney: Carrie Ritsert, Singler & Ritsert, 209 Old Harrods Creek Road, #100, Louisville, KY 40223.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Union County Fiscal Court is accepting applications for two Part-Time Groundskeeper positions at Moffit Lake.

Applications can be picked up and turned in at the Union County Judge/Executive's office, located at 100 West Main Street, Morganfield, KY 42437. They may be obtained by emailing jill.hunley@unioncountky.gov, or you can apply online at www.unioncountky.org. Applications will be accepted until 4:00 p.m. on Friday, February 13, 2026.

The Union County Fiscal Court is an Equal Opportunity Employer: All applicants are considered for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability.

2/11c

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Office Hours

Monday thru Thursday, 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Phone (270) 389-0217

TDD 800-243-7834



*This Facility Is An Equal Opportunity
Provider and Employer*

