

the garden

-a monthly newsletter for moms who desire to blossom in their roles of being a mom, wife, and woman-
"For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations." Isaiah 61:11



Sowing the 'Seed of the Word' in our Daily Lives...

Practical, Biblical Encouragement for Moms

Perhaps no one knows more than a mother just how quickly time passes by. We can see this reality in our children each day. Everyone always says it, and I'm seeing more all the time just how true it is: they grow up so quickly. There are times we think a certain season of life will never end, like those seemingly endless evenings of our newborn crying, or the "terrible two's" that can leave us pulling out our hair and wondering if we are going to be able to do this "parenting thing." But other times, when we stop to really enjoy a sweet moment with our child -like those precious bedtimes where they give you a glimpse into the workings of their innocent minds and they kiss and squeeze you until you can't breathe, we realize this is really what motherhood is

about. Moms have a lot of responsibilities, and I know I can feel like life is one big "to



So I commend the enjoyment of life, because nothing is better for a [woman] under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany [her] in [her] work all the days of the life God has given [her] under the sun. Ecclesiastes 8:15

do" list. I can feel frustrated that so much of my time gets used up with daily routines,

chores, paperwork, cleaning, meals, etc. You know the drill. My time gets squeezed between all that, spending time with God, trying to exercise, do things I enjoy, and other obligations to family, people, church, school, and so on. How do we find time to do all we need to do and truly enjoy the journey? I guess for me, I try to enjoy what I'm doing right now and live in the moment. If we don't, we can find ourselves in the mindset of "I'll be happy when..." or "the grass is always greener..." I've learned that things don't really work out that way. Once we've achieved or done something, there's always another hurdle just around the corner. What are we to do? It helps me to just expect it and adjust my attitude.

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Summer 2008
e-newsletter of:



www.momsinbloom.com

Founder/Editor: Wendy Lempner
wendy@momsinbloom.com
Co-Editor: Jenny Flakne
flaknel@aol.com

Dear Fellow Mom,

This summer issue wraps up the first full season of "the garden." I hope this e-newsletter has been a blessing to you. It's been my joy to provide this encouragement for you.

Thank you so much Jenny Flakne, who has been my proofreader and editor. I greatly appreciate her attention to detail which has helped make this a quality publication for you to enjoy.

I hope you make the most of your summer and that it is blessed, fun, & restful!

Blessings, Wendy



This Month's Health "Pick": Plastic Water Bottle Safety

To be all we need to be as moms, we need to take time for us/our bodies

Water is essential for life and during the summer, we need even more water to ensure we maintain good hydration. Many of us use plastic bottles now but there is controversy over their safety due to contamination concerns that the plastic chemicals may leach into the water and harm us or cause cancer. My personal solution has been to switch over to a glass bottle. To help you decide what's best for your family, consider the recommendations from the Green Guide (see www.thegreenguide.com for details)...

Plastic bottles to AVOID (Check the bottom of the bottles to find the number): #3 Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC), #6 Polystyrene (PS), and #7 Polycarbonate. Unfortunately, #7 is used in most baby bottles and five-gallon water jugs and in many reusable sports bottles. **Better Plastics:** #1 polyethylene terephthalate (PET or PETE), has been considered the most safe, #2 High Density Polyethylene, #4 Low Density Polyethylene, and #5 Polypropylene. **Best Reusable Bottles:** Betras USA Sports Bottles, Brita Fill & Go Water Filtration Bottle, & Arrow Canteen. **Better Baby Bottles:** Choose tempered glass or opaque plastic made of polypropylene (#5) or polyethylene (#1), which do not contain bisphenol-A. In general, sniff and taste the bottled water and do not drink it if you taste even a hint of plastic, and keep them away from heat, which promotes the leaching of chemicals. The more you know, the safer you'll be! -WL, R.D.

Sowing the 'Seed of the Word' in our Daily Lives ... cont'd from page 1

At the same time, we can do our best to make time for family in and around the duties of life. As a friend of mine says, "life is so daily." And it is, but we can make the best of the daily-ness of life by infusing some fun, humor, and creativity. As the kids get older, get them involved with those daily chores and get things done more quickly. (Training them at first may take longer, but the pay off later will be sweet and character-building!) But whatever you do, take and make time to really enjoy your child/children. Realize now that your family will change; it won't always look like it does now. At first it's a household with a baby, then toddlers, young children, big kids, teens, and then not long after, young adults out on their own. It can be sad to think about this, but I think it's better to understand this now and be more intentional about enjoying our children and family before those years pass us by. As my children, now 8 and 6 years old, continue to move through different stages

before my eyes, I see how those younger years are slipping by. I suppose my daughter will not always really want me to kiss her feet as I love to do. And if I'm being "real", I won't always want to either. Even worse is that they won't always feel like



Happy Mothers' Day!
Take some time to smell the flowers and enjoy the blessings God has given you. Don't let today slip by without enjoying your family.

they do now when I hug and snuggle with them. And they may just squiggle away. We need to savor this time with them now. I want to get all I can out of these children I

love so much and capture those special moments in my mind and heart.

One way we capture moments in our household is to take lots of pictures and videos. -And we capture just about everything. I even took a picture of Brett standing in the bathroom after he took his first shower on his own (dressed of course). Home videos are their favorite to watch, and the scrapbooks I put together help them remember all the fun things they've done throughout their childhood and what they looked like along the way. They always get a thrill looking at their special books. Sadly, we tend to forget details of our childhood without these reminders. If you are overwhelmed by the thought of scrapbooking, don't fret! Simply slide them in photo albums. That will do the trick too. So be encouraged to take time this summer to have fun with your children and smell the flowers together. Grab those precious moments together.

[Happy Summer!](#) -WL



Kitchen Connection ...Sharing Recipes Our Families Love

Got a recipe you're glad to have?? Don't keep it a secret... email it to Wendy at wendy@momsinbloom.com !

Cranberry Blueberry Pie -from Joyce Nunns' Kitchen (OH)

Filling:

2 cups sugar 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
1/4 cup cornstarch 1- 16 oz. pkg frozen blueberries
2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries

Pastry: for 2-crust pie (make your own or buy ready-made)

In large saucepan, combine all filling ingredients. Cook over medium-high heat until mixture boils, stirring constantly. Reduce heat; simmer until cranberries pop and mixture is very thick. Cool 15 min. Prepare pastry for 2-crust pie using 9-inch pie pan. Heat oven to 425 degrees. Pour filling into pastry-lined pan. Cover with top crust, cut small steam vent holes. Trim edges and flute. Bake for 25-35 min. or golden brown. Cool 2-3 hours before serving. Can be made the day before. Serve with Cool whip or whipped cream.

Summer Turkey Wraps -from Patt Senseman's Kitchen (OH)

This is a great lunch for the beach or the ball field.

Whole wheat tortillas	Spring mix greens
Sliced turkey breast	Red pepper sticks
Prepared bacon slices	Salt and pepper
Swiss cheese	Ranch dressing

Layer all the ingredients on the tortillas. Fold in the ends and roll the tortilla up. Wrap with foil wrap. Refrigerate or place in iced cooler for several hours until ready to eat. Make them in the morning, throw them in a cooler with ice, carrot sticks, and drinks. The wraps will be cold and refreshingly delicious by lunch time.

Patriotic Trifle -from Lisa Streuer's Kitchen (OH)

A delicious dessert for the 4th of July!

1 1/2 cups cold fat free milk
1 pint strawberries, sliced (about 2 cups)
1/2 cup each blueberries and raspberries
1 (8oz.) tub Cool Whip Lite Whipped Topping, thawed & divided
1 (13 oz.) pkg. angel food cake or white cake; cut in 1/2-inch cubes
1 pkg. Jello vanilla flavor fat free instant pudding and pie filling

Pour milk into medium bowl. Add pudding mix. Beat with a wire whisk 2 min. Gently stir in 3 cups of Cool Whip. Place half the cake cubes in a large serving bowl. Top with half the fruit; cover with layers of pudding mixture, remaining cake cubes and remaining fruit. Top with Cool Whip. Refrigerate at least 1 hour. [ENJOY!](#)



Craft Corner: Mosaic Garden Stepping Stone

Here's a fun summer craft idea for you and your child...



Summer is a great time to do some special crafts with your kids. Last summer, my son Brett and I made this frog stepping stone together. It was fun and easy. Just pick up a mosaic stepping stone kit or materials to make one at your local craft store. There are many to choose from. -WL



Nourishment for the 'Soil' ...Sharing the Fruit of God's Work in our Lives

"the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop." Luke 8:15

The Value of Writing it Down...

I've had the privilege of hearing the testimonies of many sweet godly women. The Holy Spirit has impressed upon me that "She may need to remember this some day. This is part of her spiritual legacy and someone she loves will be blessed to know this. *She's got to write this down!*" I want to encourage you to journal because it can help you guard your faith. Life gets crazy and to remember things, we need to write them down. Over the years, journaling can help us remember God's hand in our lives. Journal your prayer requests and you will be reminded that He heard and answered you. You may see your "wait" turned into a "yes" or maybe you'll come to better understand the "no" answer He gave you so long ago. Looking back over your journal may, like reviewing your teen diary, be a humbling and grace revealing experience. You'll be delighted and thankful for how He has matured and enabled you to grow in Him. Perhaps most importantly, you'll have your own personal record of

Leave a spiritual legacy to others by writing down the fruit of God's work in your life. We think we'll remember the details, but we probably won't...

God encounters to strengthen you in times of doubt and trial. The things our Lord shows us are personal, meant to build and strengthen our relationship with Him. Describe the sunset you realized our Awesome Creator made just for you. Recount the affirmation you received in His Word or in a song. Perhaps, like the psalmists, you could pour out your offenses and emotions to

Him who knows you are dust and understands your urge to fight dirty. Thank Him for graciously providing the supernatural ability to obey Him in that situation that has always brought out the worst in you. Praise Him for the peace of Jesus that calmed you in a crisis. John 20:30-31 says, "Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples...

these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." Write it down, dear disciple, someone you love will be blessed to know that your life had Jesus' name written all over it.

-Cynthia Jacobs, Loveland, OH

Babes in Bloom ...Moms Aren't the Only Ones Blooming!

Make the most of your summer-time with your children and family. Here are some helpful ideas...



1. **Keep a routine** -to some degree- kids love routines and like to know what to expect. This can help the days flow better.
2. **Limit t.v. and video games**- Summer is a great time to be physically active and explore. It's healthy to be outside.
3. **Teach responsibilities with age-appropriate daily chores**- Have them make their bed, set the table, fold laundry, etc.
4. **Include kids with taking care of the gardening/plants.** This is a fun way to work as a team and help outdoors.
5. **Think of ways your kids can help others**- Learning to serve others is invaluable. They can sweep, weed, etc...
6. **Play some children's music for them to dance and have**

- fun. Music from VBS is especially great and fun.
7. **Help keep up school aged children's skills**- Purchase and have them work through a workbook for the next school level. Some schools offer these and they're fun too.
8. **Read to and with your children.** Participate in your local library's summer reading program and instill a love for reading. Take books on car trips or for running errands.
9. **Explore summer-fresh fruits and veggies**- Encourage them to try new ones when they are in season and at their tastiest. Try new recipes that include them and maybe grow some of your own!
10. **Set play dates**- the kids will love it and you can take a break!



Calling on God ...the Powerful Prayer of a Woman, Wife, Mother

Don't miss the opportunity to connect with God daily. Tap into His power in your lives!

For yourself:

Lord, Thank you for this beautiful warm weather and a summer of possibilities ahead. Help guide us to have a wonderful summer together as a family and to embrace the activities You have for us to enjoy. Help me find balance between the things I need to do and the things I want to do. I desire balance and time to stop and truly enjoy the beauty and change of pace that summer brings. Amen

For your husband (if applicable):

Lord, Thank You for continuing to be with my husband each day as he goes to work and provides for us. Help strengthen him so he can be a light in the darkness for others. Help him balance his work with all the other demands in his life in a healthy way that includes fun times with the family that create wonderful memories. Please watch over him and keep him safe and healthy and continue to draw him into a closer relationship with You. Amen.

For your child/children:

Lord, Thank You again for my child/children. I look forward to spending time enjoying them this summer. I pray that this is a special summer with them and that we can find plenty of things to keep it fun and also relaxing as well. Help us find a routine that works for us and helps our days flow nicely. Please keep them safe and out of harm's way so they can enjoy all the fun activities of summer. May they truly enjoy all Your awesome creation! Amen.

How Does Your Garden Grow?... Have a Garden? Share it & Your Story Here!

What does your garden or flowers mean to you and your family?

For all of us, whether we are a gardener or simply love flowers, we all enjoy the growth and blooms of summer. I know that I've been anticipating the color we're seeing now and what's yet to come when all my perennials bloom and burst forth their glory. My garden is in its second year and so much more established than a year ago. It's exciting to imagine how full and radiant it will be this summer. My whole family has gleaned so much joy from it that we've expanded this spring and created a second garden. Last year I envisioned it in my mind but waited patiently for the right time to create it. I've learned that timing is everything in so many situations in life. My patience has allowed time for my perennials to grow larger and bear "treasures" to help start the new garden. This solves two purposes, as I'm happy to find a home for the overgrowth. The kids also loved heading to Greenfield Plant Farm to pick out their own perennial to add new variety. They marked theirs with plant markers and take care of them. In life, we are often in such a hurry to attain our goals. But don't forget to enjoy the journey along the way. So much of the fun comes from the anticipation, and patience bears much fruit! -WL



This Issue's Featured Garden:
Wendy Lempner's, Morrow, OH



Family Traditions: Discover the Amazing Creation All Around Us in Nature!

Summer is a perfect time to teach our children of any age how awesome our God is.

Here are a few ideas of fun ways to enjoy nature with your kids:

1. **Hit the trails!** Explore the world around us and connect your children with nature... in your backyard, local or metro park, at a lake, or other place of interest. There is much to learn and discover. Don't forget to take something to collect their "treasures." Check out books from the library on flowers, insects, animals, and birds and show them how amazing and unique they each are. We have a BIG God and so much to learn!
2. **Do some bird watching:** If you don't have a bird feeder, consider getting one to attract a variety of feathered visitors. Kids and adults enjoy watching the action in their own backyard. Get the kids involved with filling the feeder, identifying birds in

a bird book, and peering through binoculars for a closer look.

3. **Prepare and go on a picnic:** This is such a simple and yet very memorable experience for children. The kids can help plan, prepare, and pack the food. This can be very basic or more elaborate. Do what works for your family. Take some activities to do after the meal like Frisbee, a ball, a kite, bubbles, etc.
4. **Visit a fruit farm:** Create a wonderful event for your child/children and take them fruit picking. Find a fruit farm on the web and they will have a blast seeing how we get fruit and bringing some home to enjoy. Maybe they'll learn to love a new fruit!

Whatever you do, enjoy these moments while they're young. -WL

Important Health Tip: Do Your Personal Care Products Contain Unsafe Chemicals?

Check out the items you use daily and see if you might want to make safer choices...



Every day we place our faith in the personal care and cosmetic products we slather on and consume. Many of these products are made to penetrate the skin and therefore work their way into our system. Did you know that the FDA does not require companies to test the safety of their products? It's true. Many of the products, including "big name" ones we use each day without a thought contain cancer-causing ingredients and chemicals that can put us at risk for other health-related problems.

Fortunately there's a very informative website called "Skin Deep" that pairs ingredients in more than 25,000 products against 50 definitive toxicity and regulatory databases. This site educates you on the risk your current product choices may pose and provides specific products that are better choices due to their lower health risks. I just checked out some of our products and it's eye-opening! Some of my facial products are associated with a "high risk" (7 out of 10)! With so many people be-

ing diagnosed with cancer these days, this needs to be of concern to us. With summer approaching, take a few moments to grab your personal care products and log onto: www.cosmeticsdatabase.com to see how your products rate. You can search by category, such as: oral care, skin care, hair care, baby care, makeup, eye care, etc. Then type in and search for your exact products. You can click on your product and read about the specific risks associated with it. Don't forget to check your deodorant as well. I just switched back to my "Crystal Stick Body Deodorant" I used to use that has a "0" risk. I don't want to have cancer-causing chemicals seeping into my under-arm lymph nodes with all the breast cancer in our country. Please look into this for yourself and your family.

Also, choose your sunscreen wisely. Many popular sunscreens pose a "high risk". Fortunately, we can make healthier choices for our families by utilizing this informative database.