Dear County Residents,

As we approach Spring, 2009, the financial climate has not yet brightened. These are scary economic times for most New Jersey residents. The job market worsens, making it tough to keep up with monthly bills. The housing market continues to dip and credit is harder to get. Workers have seen their 401(k)s decimated and retirees living on fixed incomes are hunkering down trying to spend less by slashing their expenses.

As never before, it has become absolutely necessary for people to strive for financial fitness. Track your spending, set up a budget, get rid of consumer debt and establish an emergency fund of 6 to 12 months of expenses. Finally, continue to fund your retirement plans. Try to contribute at least up to your company match... should you have one.

Now for some good news. Patricia Brennan, Professor Emerita, who, as you know, retired from Rutgers Cooperative Extension at the end of 2008, is volunteering her expertise to teach several timely programs this spring. Join us in April, May and June as she helps you navigate these turbulent financial waters.

We are also happy to be sending you the Winter and Spring editions of our Visions newsletters to help you stay physically, as well as financially fit.

Sincerely,

Peter Nitzsche
County Agricultural Agent

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CLASS SCHEDULE

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED
FOR ALL CLASSES, CALL
973-285-8300 X 233 TO REGISTER

THE BEST IS YET TO COME:
HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SECOND ACT

Aging brings with it many emotional, physical and financial changes. Join us to learn key facts and strategies to help you easily navigate new challenges regarding health care, housing, and money management.

Date: Thursday, April 16, 2009
Time: 7-9 p.m.
Place: Morris County Public Safety Training Academy
500 W. Hanover Ave., Parsippany (Morris Township)
Instructor: Patricia Q. Brennan, CFP and Lauren Locker, CFP

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HOW TO COPE WITH TODAY’S SCARY ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

If you are just going into retirement or are already retired and living on a smaller income than you expected because of the bear market we are experiencing, it’s time to change some of your spending and savings habits. This class will give you practical advice to help you cope in a tumbling economy without emptying your bank account... what to do now in order to protect your lifestyle and assets.

Date: Thursday, April 30, 2009
Time: 7-9 p.m.
Place: Morris County Public Safety Training Academy
       500 W. Hanover Ave., Parsippany (Morris Township)
Instructor: Patricia Q. Brennan, CFP

COMMON AND COSTLY MISTAKES IN RETIREMENT

It’s not as bad when young people make mistakes... they can learn from them... they can wait out bear markets. But if you are older and in retirement or you are about to retire, you can’t wait that long. Most likely, you’ll also have to finance a greater share of your health care expenses. So, you have to be careful to avoid making nasty money mistakes. This class will show you how to avoid the pitfalls and make your money last in retirement.

Date: Thursday, May 14, 2009
Time: 1-3 p.m.
Place: Morris County Public Safety Training Academy
       500 W. Hanover Ave., Parsippany (Morris Township)
Instructor: Patricia Q. Brennan, CFP

HOW TO CUT YOUR SPENDING IN RETIREMENT

If you are now retired on a smaller income then you expected to have or because the recent bear market has forced a drop in your income, it may be somewhat difficult to change your spending habits. But, you can do it. The secret is to learn ways to save and stretch, without sacrificing on quality. This class will give you practical, proven ways to enjoy retirement without emptying your bank account.

Date: Tuesday, June 23, 2009
Time: 1-3 p.m.
Place: Morris County Public Safety Training Academy
       500 W. Hanover Ave., Parsippany (Morris Township)
Instructor: Patricia Q. Brennan, CFP

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Peter Nitzsche
County Agricultural Agent
Linda Intili
FCHS Administrative Assistant

HOME STUDY COURSES

If you are interested in any of the following home study courses, please make check payable to: Morris County Extension Service and mail request to: Dept. of Family & Consumer Sciences, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Morris County, PO Box 900, Morristown, NJ 07963-0900.

2009 MONEY MANAGEMENT CALENDAR -- Good money management is a habit. It is an everyday task especially if you need to stick to a plan to make ends meet. The Money Management Calendar can help you see where your money is going day by day. Its purpose is to help you plan and control your family's expenses for the year. There are planning charts for income and expenses with sample charts to help explain how to use them. Cost: $3.

RECORDS & IMPORTANT PAPERS BOOKLET -- Do you find organizing and keeping personal and household records a hassle? Make it easy on yourself by having a simple, compact and easy to complete record book. It contains all the forms and instructions you need. If properly filled out and kept current, this information can help you find records when you need them. The 27-page booklet can also be a guide to you or to others in an emergency. Cost: $3.