



Freedom Wealth **NEWSLETTER**

Brought to you by: **Bill Constain, CEO, RFP, RFC**

www.FreedomWealthServices.com

(904) 373-8349

Inside This Issue:

- Pg. 1** Take a New Approach to Gift-giving This Season
- Pg. 2** Will Playing Halo Improve Reflexes?
- Pg. 2** Health in the News
- Pg. 3** Monthly Quiz
- Pg. 4** Did You Know?
- Pg. 4** Recipe of the Month
- Pg. 4** Thoughts of the Month
- Pg. 5** Stress Busters for the Holidays
- Pg. 5** Before Conflict Explodes, Try This Strategy



Take a New Approach to Gift-giving This Season

The holiday season traditionally includes giving and receiving gifts. But you don't have to spend a lot of money to show how much you care. Here are some creative ideas for low-cost gifts you can make yourself:

- **Recipe book.** Collect some of your favorite family recipes. Put them together in a small book that highlights your family tree.
- **Photos.** One way to make a special photograph even more special: Carefully cut a picture into four equal squares, then paste them onto four sheets of canvas or heavy paper. It creates a nifty effect for a four-piece picture that can hang on any wall.
- **Personal gift cards.** Make your own "gift certificates" that the recipient can redeem for personal (or romantic!) purposes: a day free of chores, a back or foot massage, or something similar.



- **Scrapbooks.** Another use for photos: Create your own scrapbook around a family theme, a special place, a variety of activities, or anything else that has significance for your recipient.
- **Calendars.** Create a calendar using photos of family members—many photographic websites and print shops can help you do this. Or take a standard calendar and highlight special days throughout the year: birthdays, anniversaries, important events, etc.
- **Music.** Burn a CD of the person's favorite songs. Or have a child sing his or her parents' favorite song and record it.





Will Playing Halo Improve Reflexes?

Playing action video games like Call of Duty and Grand Theft Auto may improve your decision-making skills, according to scientists at the University of Rochester.

The scientists tested participants who played games at least five hours a week and compared them with non-gamers in a series of exercises: One involved displaying an array of dots and asking volunteers to quickly determine which direction they were moving, and another test put the volunteers in headphones and required them to identify whether a sound was heard in the left ear or the right.

In both experiments, gamers made the correct decision faster than non-gamers. In addition, when non-gamers played 50 hours of action video games, their decisions improved as well.

Researchers theorize that the brain's ability to make probabilistic inferences is strengthened by fast-paced games; strategy or role-playing games didn't produce the same results.

Health in the News

Don't overdo the holiday eating

The December holidays are a time of joy, remembrance, and food. Mostly food, it seems, and that makes it hard to stick to a healthy diet.

You don't have to wait until New Year's Day to renew your commitment to nutritional sanity, and you don't have to practice complete denial, either.

Follow this advice to maintain some balance:

- **Don't skip meals.** If you avoid lunch in order to offset a big family dinner, you'll probably eat more because you're extra hungry. Eat breakfast and lunch so you're able to control your appetite when the mashed potatoes and gravy come your way.



CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE...



Monthly Quiz

Question 1

NASA is based in which state?

Question 2

Who played the King in "The King's Speech"?

Question 3

Attila was a leader of which tribal empire?

Answer: Texas, Colin Firth, Huns

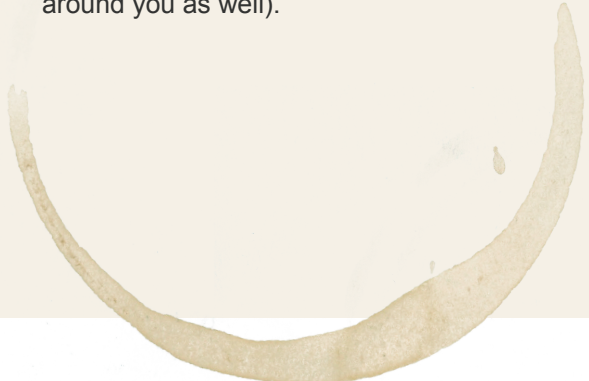
- **Exercise portion control.** Don't overload your plate. Take sensible portions of whatever comes your way, and you won't feel compelled to consume every last bite in order to avoid wasting food.
- **Eat slowly.** Your stomach can fill up before you're aware of it, which means you may eat more than you really want or need—leaving you stuffed and uncomfortable. Make an effort to put down your fork and chew thoroughly between bites, and drink plenty of water before and during your meal.
- **Sit with the right people.** If possible, sit next to a companion whose eating habits mirror the example you want to follow. If your partner is an athlete with an enormous appetite, you'll tend to eat a similar amount, but if you're seating next to someone who'd watching his or her weight, chances are you'll exercise the same self-control.
- **Focus on the holiday.** Remember that holidays are about more than just eating. Make an effort to talk to people and enjoy the season without just concentrating on food.
- **Get right back on track.** If none of the above advice works, don't waste time beating yourself up over it. Just remind yourself of the long-term benefits of healthy eating to motivate your return to good habits.

Caffeine withdrawal: What to expect

Planning on giving up coffee for the health benefits?

If you're pregnant, prone to anxiety attacks, or worried about being addicted to caffeine, giving it up may be a good idea. Just watch for the symptoms of withdrawal. They can include headache, fatigue, drowsiness, and difficulty concentrating.

The symptoms can arise quickly. Medical experts say they generally begin 12–24 hours after your last cup of coffee (or whatever form you regularly take your caffeine in) and can last up to two weeks. So be prepared (and warn those around you as well).



Did You Know?

- There are exactly **1,048,576 bytes in 1 megabyte**
- **Rainbows can only be seen** in the morning or late afternoon (the sun needs to be less than 40 above the horizon)
- **Acorns are poisonous to humans** (if eaten it can cause damage to your kidneys)
- **All hurricanes form over the sea** and can last up to 10 days
- **There are over 225,000 trees** in New York's Central Park
- **Chalk** is made from tiny plankton fossils
- **80% of the world's rose species** come from Asia
- 8.5 million tons of water evaporates **from the Dead Sea every day**
- **Every living thing** on the Earth contains carbon
- **It takes 5 years** for an oyster to produce a medium sized pearl

*Thanks www.did-you-knows.com p39

Thoughts of the Month

There's no shortage of remarkable ideas; what's missing is the will to execute them."

– **Seth Godin**

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex, overwhelming tasks into smaller manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one."

– **William James**

Referral Corner

I want to thank you for your referrals over the years. We always ask our clients, "If they can just refer us one client per year, it would help us immensely." We are grateful to everyone who's referred someone our way, and we always love to have new people become part of our inner circle of friends and family.

Figgy Pudding Cookies

This figgy pudding Christmas cookie has all of the flavors of a traditional figgy pudding in a bite-sized, adorable cookie. It's the perfect addition to your holiday cookie tray.



Ingredients

1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
1/2 cup powdered sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 4-ounce bag of dried figs, diced in small pieces
2 1/4 cups flour
royal icing holly decorations
glaze made with powdered sugar and brandy

Instructions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.

Cream butter, sugar, and bits of dried fig together in a mixer. Add the salt, vanilla, and flour, and mix until the flour is entirely incorporated, and a dough is formed.

Scoop out small portions of dough and roll the dough into smooth circles.

Bake for 10-12 minutes, until the cookie gets lightly browned on the bottom.

Let the cookies cool completely.

Mix one cup of powdered sugar with just enough brandy to form a pipeable glaze.

Drizzle the glaze on top of each mini figgy pudding cookie and top with a pre-made royal icing holly decoration.



Stress Busters for the Holidays

December can be a joyous month, but it's also a stressful time for many people caught up in the rush of holiday planning and family issues.

Here are some helpful hints for reducing stress during what should be a fun and relaxing time:

- **Recognize the signs of stress, such as irritability and anxiety.** Avoid these by getting a handle on things instead of just letting them happen.
- **Allow yourself to say “No.”** Be realistic about what you can and cannot do during this busy month.
- **Watch your diet.** It's easy to overindulge in holiday treats that can affect your mood. Sugar overload will make you sluggish, for example, and the stimulating effect of caffeine may make you overanxious.
- **Exercise.** Not only will it combat those extra calories you're consuming, it will also relieve tension and provide relaxation.

Before Conflict Explodes, Try This Strategy

Conflicts in the workplace can get out of hand when people stop listening to each other and instead concentrate on defending their positions.

When you sense that a simple disagreement is about to spiral out of control, follow these steps:

- **Be quiet.** Once you realize you're not saying anything constructive, stop talking. Let the other person continue until he or she realizes you've disengaged from the power struggle.
- **Listen and ask questions.** Pay attention to the other person's words and try to figure out what he or she really wants. The real issue behind your disagreement may be hidden. Ask questions that will test your theories and draw the other person out: “Do you think I'm questioning your competence?”
- **Respond to what you hear.** Keep probing and paraphrasing until the person calms down and no longer feels threatened or defensive. Once people realize that you're genuinely interested in understanding what they have to say, they'll get back to discussing the situation rationally.



Bill Constain
CEO, RFP, RFC

Freedom Wealth Services
822 North A1A Suite 310
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082

(904) 373-8349
<https://www.freedomwealthservices.com>