

 **Message from Marcie**

It seems that we spend a good part of November and December acquiring, beginning with the Thanksgiving celebration of abundance. Whether it's food, clothing, decorations or gifts for others, the end of the year can be full of excess. This year, you can keep the holidays from adding clutter and stress to your life.

Traditions are very important to people, but if you are overwhelmed by trying to make it the perfect holiday for everyone, this may be the year to scale back on some of the expectations. If you don't have time to create an elaborate meal, ask others to help by providing some of the food, buy some prepared food or share a simpler meal with your loved ones.

If you enjoy seasonal decorations, see if you can pare back the number of pieces you display or limit the amount of space you decorate. To keep decorations from inundating you, pack current accessories and adornments before you bring out new ones for the next holiday. Store like items together in sturdy, labeled containers, then dedicate space for them in a closet, attic or garage. Remember that candles should never be stored in the attic and that plastic boxes protect contents from insects and moisture better than cardboard boxes do.

Simplify gift giving and avoid adding to others' clutter by purchasing gift certificates for services. You can get gift certificates for spa services, restaurants, movies, car washes, groceries, or home organizing (see page 4).

If you need help getting your holiday home organized, call **Organized by Marcie** today for a free evaluation and get started on the path to improving the quality of your life.

*Much of the stress that people feel doesn't come from having too much to do. It comes from not finishing what they started.*

– David Allen

**Subtract Instead of Adding**

Instead of thinking how much more you can squeeze into your day, ask yourself what you can delete from your day, instead. That may sound counterintuitive to someone who has a lot to do; however, you actually will accomplish more.

When you try to do too much, either you don't do it well or you don't finish

everything on your list. Instead, give yourself a reasonable number of tasks to complete in a reasonable amount of time.

Pressuring yourself to complete too much in too little time will only end up contributing to your stress. Pace yourself, whether you are running errands or creating reports and you will feel more productive.

## Charitable Giving

It seems that you get requests in the mail every day for donations from charities, especially as we approach the end of the year. Instead of trying to donate to everyone, pick a handful of charities that have meaning to you. You can space out your support throughout the year, or wait until the end of the year to decide where you will send your money.



Once you decide whom to support, check [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org), [www.charitywatch.org](http://www.charitywatch.org) or [www.give.org](http://www.give.org) to view the mission statement, program goals and financials for the organization. Look for a charity that spends at least 65% of its money on programs and services, with the rest going to administrative and fund-raising costs.

In Montgomery County, for example, [Manna Food Center](#) spends an amazing 94% of its operating budget on providing food to families in need. In contrast, Goodwill Industries spends 82% of its

budget directly on programs and Salvation Army spends 87%.

This is also a good time to sort through closets and cupboards and get rid of things you don't use or need. While you are going through your things, you may come up with items you want to donate to charity.

In order to qualify for a tax deduction, make sure that donated items are in "good condition" or better, in compliance with the Pension Protection Act of 2006. For more information, check with your accountant or the [Internal Revenue Service](#) (1-800-829-1040).

Make your donations by December 31 to qualify for deductions on your 2006 income taxes.

## Organized by Marcie in the News!

*Organized by Marcie's* website was spotlighted in the most recent issue of Aplus.net's newsletter. Read the article by following the link here:

[http://www.aplus.net/Newsletter/news\\_november\\_2006\\_online.php?utm\\_source=november&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=customerofmonth#5](http://www.aplus.net/Newsletter/news_november_2006_online.php?utm_source=november&utm_medium=email&utm_content=customerofmonth#5)

## Organizing Tip – Reduce Junk Mail Solicitations

If you would like to opt out of unwanted mortgage and credit-card solicitations, you can call the Consumer Credit Reporting Industry at 888/567-8688.

An automated system, it requires your Social Security number and birth date. It takes a few minutes to go through all the information and you will need a touch-tone phone.

Another option is to use the online system at <https://www.optoutprescreen.com/?rf=t>.

Either way, you will remove your name, for five years, from the major credit reporting lists that send credit card and mortgage applications. The website also gives you the option of "Permanent Opt-Out," along with the five-year choice.



For more information on reducing your share of junk mail, visit the website: <http://www.privacyrights.org/fs/fs4-junk.htm#getofflist>.



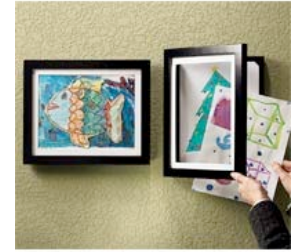
## Product Highlight

Parents are always looking for creative ways to display kids' artwork. For those of you who like to hold onto your children's masterpieces, I just discovered a great idea: the Art Frame from Alsto's.

What sets this frame apart is the fact that you can keep up to 50 pieces of paper in the same frame, eliminating the need to hang your children's work all over your walls. The large frame holds pieces up to 12"x18"

and the small frame is good for 8"x11" artwork.

When your little artist brings home a new piece of artwork, you simply add it to the existing works, in the spring-loaded pocket. For more information, follow the link: <http://www.alsto.com/Parent.asp?product=8991800x&dept%5Fid=7027>



## Gift certificates

If you want to give a meaningful gift to a friend or family member, consider a gift certificate from **Organized by Marcie**.

Instead of creating clutter or giving a gift that might not be "just right," give the people you love the gift of organization.

Perfect for holidays, new parents, newlyweds, graduates, birthdays,

anniversaries or any occasion, you choose how much time you want to give, beginning with a three-hour minimum.

Call 301/219-3789 or send an email to [info@organizedbymarcie.com](mailto:info@organizedbymarcie.com) for more information about purchasing gift certificates.

© 2006 **Organized by Marcie**

Marcie Lovett  
17723 Lochness Circle  
Olney, MD 20832



Call today for a free estimate from a Professional Organizer: 301/219-3789