

# Organizing Round-Up

Volume 4, October – December 2004

A Little Something For Everyone

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The Busy Woman, Inc.

## Last Minute Holiday Organizing

By Susie Glennan

It's that time of year again. Everyone is rushing here and there to get his or her tasks accomplished. Families are getting the house ready for guests and "good food." What is it all for?

Is it an excuse to have our favorite meal?

Is it a reason to get together with family members?

Is it because it's one of the only times of year we get a break from work and school?

In my heart I believe that for everyone in the country, it's a time for all of us to think of others. It's about love, family, time off to rest, joy, peace, showing the people in your life that you care, and so many other wonderful things.

But somehow each year we get caught up in the hype of the Season... "things" if you will. So we shop, make cards, order online, decorate the house, shop some more, have parties, and on and on and on...

What can we do THIS year to make things different? I for one take one day to let the "kids" decorate. The house doesn't have to be perfect this year. It will mostly be the kids putting up the decorations this year. And like last year they'll have such fun doing it! The meal will be simple with turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, salad, some veggies, and of course my favorite, pumpkin pie. That's all I know I can handle this year, as the business is busier than ever, the kids have a heavy homework load and just want to "chill" (as teens say), and my husband is working during the holidays and won't be able to get the time off.

You on the other hand can take control of things by making a plan. That doesn't mean you have to be rigid and unbending. However, a written schedule will definitely make it more fun. If you PLAN your shopping trip with the family with breaks for drinks and rest in between, you can get a lot done. Give everyone a budget on how much they can spend on the family, and then allow them to split up to shop.

As far as family and friends go. Take some time or rather MAKE some time to have a peaceful get

*Last Minute Holiday... - Continued on page 6*

## Bah! Humbug, Clutterbug.

By Mike Nelson

For clutterers, the holidays are the worst part of the year. Instead of "holiday cheer," we have "holiday fear." Guilt, fear and shame are the Christmas gifts we give ourselves. But we start early. Thanksgiving give us a chance to unwrap our unwanted presents early.

I'm not talking to those who are just a little messy or disorganized. We who call ourselves clutterers have piles of papers, magazines, clothes and God knows what littering our lives. We can't just use a few tips on how to get organized and get over it. We have psychological issues that keep us from clearing out our lives. We need to work on the root problems (our inner selves), not just the exterior symptoms (the stuff).

We get paralyzed as the holidays come closer. For many, this is the season to have family over and share good times. For us, it's a time of fearing that the family will come over and obsessing over what we could do about it. We've probably used up every excuse, short of alien abduction (though some have tried that, only to return in January – it only works once), to keep them away. "My house is being repainted. You can't come." "The electrical system is dangerous. You can't come." "My cat is sick. You can't come." "There's a serial killer loose in the neighborhood. You can't come." Does any of this sound familiar? Welcome to the club.

We are lucky to be able to find our way to the bathroom following the trails through the boxes and piles in our bedrooms. So how are we going to have the family over? Should we give them a trail map, like they do at national parks? We could cook a turkey, if we took all the stuff we're storing out of the oven. We've heard that a stove is for cooking, though the microwave works just fine. We've probably given up on dishwashing, so they'd have to eat off paper plates.

And where are they going to sleep? Heck, we have to burrow into our bed under the piles of clothes and books on them. The guest room? Hah! That's a big storage closet.

### SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS

First of all, don't start putting yourself under the stress of feeling like you "have to get organized" by the holidays. It isn't going to happen – the organizing part, that is. You will get stressed out. You didn't get this way overnight and you aren't going to get uncluttered in a few weeks or months.

*Bah! Humbug, Clutterbug - Continued on page 3*



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## TIME...OUR MOST VALUABLE COMMODITY

By Susie Glennan

Have you been shopping out in the real world lately? While I like the hustle and bustle of going to the mall (whether indoors or out), sometimes it becomes a rat race of too many people in one place at one time. We all know how it gets around the holidays. When you're out shopping because you have to purchase something for someone, you don't want to have to fight your way through a store or wait in line for 20 minutes to check out.

The perfect solution to avoid the frustration of shopping in crowds when you "need" to get something is of course, to plan ahead. Ohhh, don't you hate when writers say that? They say it over and over again. "Some" of us just can't manage planning everything ahead. So what I've started doing when I just can't get my act together in advance is to give a card stating that the present would be coming in the mail or at a later date.

I then order what I want online and have the product shipped directly to the person's home. People would rather have "you" at their gathering than have you be late or not there at all because you didn't get their present on time.

Time is becoming the most expensive commodity and giving it to others is a great gift. With such a fast paced world and not enough time for caring and sharing, people are missing out on time with friends and loved ones.

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*Susie Glennan has been happily married since 1982, is mom to 3, and is a Home Maker, Nurturer, Teacher, Author, Professional Speaker, Toastmaster, President of The Busy Woman, Inc., DBA - The Busy Woman's Daily Planner®. She teaches time management seminars, offers FREE consultations with your order, and will help you set up a schedule that's right for YOU. You can reach Susie at <mailto:susie@thebusywoman.com> or 800-848-7715.*

## TESTIMONIALS

Hi Susie,

I just wanted to thank you again for all your personal attention and quick shipment of the new planner pages I ordered. I was so excited to see them in the mailbox yesterday and could not get to fill them out and add them to my planner fast enough (LOL). Your personal calls and attention are wonderful and I never feel pressured to buy more than I need-and as a stay at home mom on a budget-I feel that is sooo important!! You have a customer for life!!!!!!

Sarah Davis - Boonton/NJ

Hi Susie - Thanks for the phone calls today. You were most helpful and kind!

Kris Granor - Horsham, PA

I have used a planner for many years now and have been in search for the perfect purse and planner combination. Well, after more than 10 years and more than \$1,000 spent, my search is now over thanks to The Busy Woman's VIP Purse Combination. I was surprised at how well they stay together and in a matter of seconds, come apart. It makes it so easy to juggle a purse and a planner and the purse is very nice all by itself. The leather has a very nice, soft texture and can easily go from, casual, to the office, and then dressier occasions.

Thank you for finally ending my decade long search.

Sincerely, Rhonda

It's great! I feel so much more "in control"! Thanks again! Lynne

*Testimonials - Continued on page 4*



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## Dancing With My Daughter

By Susie Glennan

These next three months, October – December are when homecoming and winter formal dances take place. One of the most exciting times in a girl's life is her first formal dance. But there's another dance that will take place during this time as well. It's the dance of mother and daughter. Let me explain.

Most girls don't have an array of fancy clothes in their closet, so this is an opportunity for mother and daughter to hit the antique and second hand stores for unique and beautiful items. My daughter and I found an elegant evening gown for her first homecoming dance at a second hand store. Jamie is thrilled to look so glamorous and classy.

Finding gems from days gone by is such a great way to talk with your daughter about your teen years. Relating to good and bad times is what brings you closer together. I remember a story my friend told me. When Katy was 15 her mother loaned her a long strand of black ebony beads. She was warned to treat them with great care. While she was twisting the night away, the strand broke and ebony beads scattered across the dance floor. All of a sudden, everyone stopped in their tracks, got on hands and knees and helped to gather up the precious black beads.

Relating life experiences to your daughter can help her relate to you as a real person having lived in her shoes. However, this can be taken a bit too far, so make it a once in a while special time instead of one of those old common stories of walking 10 miles up the hill in the snow both ways type of thing.

While you're at the antique/second hand store you might try drawing your daughter into the moment by having her tell you who she thinks may have worn that gorgeous old brooch you're looking at. Or perhaps both of you could try on some boas or jewelry and fantasizing about the places you could wear them?

We were blessed by having four friends show up at different times of the day with their own unique jewelry for Jamie to try. Jamie enjoyed every minute of it and I learned more about her tastes.

This was a great chance for us to spend quality time together. It also gave us a break from the frictional moments that are so common between mothers and daughters during the teen years.

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Susie Glennan has been happily married since 1982, is mom to 3, and is a Home Maker, Nurturer, Teacher, Author, Professional Speaker, Toastmaster, President of The Busy Woman, Inc. [www.thebusywoman.com](http://www.thebusywoman.com)



The family doesn't have to come live with you. If they want to visit, get them a motel room. Everyone will be happier. You don't have to cook. Most towns have restaurants. I bet yours does too. They're happy to prepare a Christmas dinner and you won't have to clean up. One advantage of eating in a restaurant is that uncle Sid, who tends to drink too much, won't make as much of a scene in Luby's as he would at home.

You probably have one of the obnoxiously neat relatives whose house looks like it belongs in a home decorating magazine. Have her cook and house the relatives.

### LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS

Having a goal helps motivate us to declutter. Why not set a goal of next year having the family over? To start your path to living uncluttered, start now. It's reasonable to expect that you could get your house in livable shape in a year. But you cannot do it alone. You've tried and tried and it hasn't worked. Get a clutter buddy. That's preferably a fellow clutterer whom you can call (or come over) when you start a decluttering project. By making a commitment to a buddy, you're more likely to get something accomplished.

What can you accomplish? Only a little at a time. If you start with the area that's the least emotionally threatening, you'll get a lot more done than if you start with items that have a lot of memories. One inch of papers is a big enough mountain to climb at first. Anything that takes fifteen minutes is five minutes shy of forever. You may want to go on, and if you do, fine. But don't overdo it. Doing more than an hour of decluttering will sour you for doing more the next day. I bet your clutter will still be there tomorrow.

Where do you find one of these angel clutter buddies? The best source is a Clutterless Recovery Groups meeting. The second best source is [www.clutterless.org](http://www.clutterless.org) where we have a list of online buddies. Another source is a trusted, nonjudgmental best friend. This has to be someone who won't criticize you or say, "Is that **all** you've done?" Pets won't work. My dog is a good companion, but he's a lousy clutter buddy. If you can't find anyone, you can always call me.

©2004 Mike Nelson

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Mike Nelson is a reformed clutterer. He founded Clutterless Recovery Groups in 2000. He's the author of three books on cluttering with solutions based on stopping the emotional merry-go-round, not organizing. They are: *Stop Clutter From Stealing Your Life*, *Clutter-Proof Your Business*, *Stop Clutter From Wrecking Your Family*. He does individual counseling with clutterers and presents seminars nationwide. For a personal consultation, call 409-744-1289.

*Testimonials continued*

WOW! I got the catalog and the products are even more

## Split Pea Soup

2 Large cans chicken broth  
2 lbs. dried split peas (1lb. yellow, 1lb. green)  
1 onion cut in 1/2, 3  
3 cloves garlic  
Handful of baby carrots  
1 cup chopped ham (optional)  
1 cup shredded cheddar (optional)  
\*\* Combine everything but ham and cheese in big pot or crock pot. Simmer until all ingredients are soft. Zing with a hand held blender until smooth. Top with ham and cheese

## Yummy, Fast & Healthy Breakfast Smoothies

1 banana  
1 bag frozen cherries (or fruit of your choice)  
1 tsp. Vanilla  
1 tsp. Cinnamon  
About 3/4 cup milk  
Throw everything in the blender (except milk). Add a little bit of milk and start blending. Add milk until you get the desired thickness. Super healthy, too! This is a great way to get some calcium into those picky eaters.

Submitted by: Julie Miller ~ unique jewelry with a heart  
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beautiful than they are online! Thank you so much! Your business is a real blessing to others!

Gina Scheffler

I've had many canvas tote bags and they all seem to take a beating and soon wear out, get dirty, and look too bad to take anywhere. Several people on the Busy Woman Chatters email group had mention how much they liked it, so I thought I would give it a try. Well, it turned out to be the perfect tote for me. When I carry paperwork to the doctor's office or meetings, I like to put them in file folders. The file folders fit perfectly in the carry-all and stands up so I can see the tab and easily get what I need without fumbling through. It is the perfect size to also hold my planner, snacks, magazines and much, much more.

Well, today I discovered another reason I like the carry-all tote so well. The vinyl lining. I turned over an entire cup of soda in the carry-all and it just wiped right up and still looks good as new. I have ruined and thrown away many other canvas totes that way, but not anymore thanks to The Busy Woman.

Sincerely, Rhonda

Thanks so much for such a personal Order Update Request!! It was pleasure to receive a personal email regarding my order instead of a system generated reply! Just that little bit of "Customer Service" would definitely have me shop again on your website as well as recommend to others about your products and customer service.

Again thanks so much! It is nice to know that people are not always about making a dime!

Billie Jean Strader

I got my new binder and pages. I love the car organizer!! Now I won't be ashamed when it's my turn to drive everyone to lunch and we have to reorganize all the trash on the floors.

Everything is just what I expected, which coming from you, is the best.

Thanks a bunch!

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## Communication Effectiveness Quiz

Check your CEQ: Communication Effectiveness Quotient.

1. How often do you feel intimidated by someone?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

2. How often does intimidation prevent you from speaking up?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

3. Do you shy away from conflict?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

4. How often do you find it difficult to get your point across?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

5. Do you find yourself angry with little idea of how to express yourself?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

6. Are you ineffective in diffusing another's anger?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

7. Do you feel you are ineffective in getting what you want?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

8. Do you feel unappreciated for your efforts?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

9. Do you purposely avoid contact with people that you have had a conflict with?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

10. Do you find conflict emotionally taxing?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

11. Do you "stick your foot in your mouth" frequently?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

12. Do you fail to take into account the values or views of those you are speaking to?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

13. Do you find yourself using humor inappropriately?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

14. Are you uncomfortable with a pause or gap in the conversation?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

15. Are you uncomfortable in groups or making a presentation?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

Continued on next column

Continued from previous column

16. Do you avoid situations where you could speak in public?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

17. Are you uncomfortable speaking to successful people?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

18. How often are you uncomfortable speaking to someone who has different beliefs than you do?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

19. Do you have to force yourself to meet and greet at a public event?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

20. How often are you uncomfortable introducing yourself to strangers?

Always Often Occasionally Rarely Never

Now lets add up your score:

Always = 1pt

Often = 2pts

Occasionally = 3pts

Rarely = 4pts

Never = 5pts

90-100 pts: Silver Tongued Devil

You are an effective communicator! President Reagan would be proud! You are very comfortable with your ability to communicate your needs and make effective use of those abilities to get results in most situations. You will achieve a high level of success in your chosen field.

70-89 pts: Tongue in Training

You are fairly comfortable in most situations and demonstrate some ability to get things accomplished when persuading others of your ideas, but there is some room for improvement. You are less confident and effective in a few interpersonal situations and may benefit by further study or practice in these areas. You will be able to achieve more than the average person because you are on the right track.

50-69 pts: Tongue Impaired

You are uncomfortable in many interpersonal situations and tend to be self-conscious. You have some difficulty in communicating your wants and needs and as a result there are many situations in which you find yourself settling for less. You would benefit a good deal by brushing up on some specific communication techniques and sharpening your skills. You will have a more difficult time achieving your dreams unless you take action now to learn to express your desires to others.

Continued on page 6

together before "everyone's" families start coming in for the holidays.

Do chores a little at a time. For example: Do a MAJOR bathroom cleaning the week before, then during the week make sure everyone wipes the counters and toilet down. To make it even easier have the pre-soaped wipes on hand. It is the same with the dusting. Do a MAJOR dusting NOW. Then have washcloths or paper towels on hand with some Pledge or Endust to do a quick dusting when the time draws near.

Maybe precook your pumpkin pies and freeze them. Then just take them out of the freezer the day before, leave them in the refrigerator until you take the turkey out. Then put them in the oven while everyone is eating dinner.

"We" start holiday dinner at 4:00 in our home. I start preparing the meal in the morning. The kids and dad do a general straightening and wipe downs of counters and shelves, while I'm preparing. Then the kids help me set the table, while I multitask getting the food ready. I hope this year I can get my youngest in the kitchen to cook with me. I think she'll have a ball now that she's older.

I allow the guests to clear the table if they volunteer while many hostesses don't. It's OKAY! Let everyone help. Then you can sit and relax and have a little socializing, all of you together.

Have a GREAT holiday and don't worry if the house isn't perfect. I give you permission! Everyone will still love YOU and your food. But they'll love the time you spend with them even more!

©2002 Susie Glennan

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Susie Glennan has been happily married since 1982, is mom to 3, and is a Home Maker, Nurturer, Teacher, Author, Professional Speaker, Toastmaster, President of The Busy Woman, Inc., DBA - The Busy Woman's Daily Planner®. She teaches time management seminars, offers FREE consultations with your order, and will help you set up a schedule that's right for YOU. You can reach Susie at <mailto:susie@thebusywoman.com> or 800-848-7715 or find information, articles, & products at [www.thebusywoman.com](http://www.thebusywoman.com)

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### 20-49 pts: Tongue Tied

You tend to be accused of saying the wrong things or are afraid to speak up. You are easily intimidated and uncomfortable with conflict or situations in which you disagree with others. You will continue to be dominated by fear and doubt when dealing interpersonally in business and your personal life unless you learn the skills that build your confidence, competence and set you free.

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*Effective communication is a skill that can be mastered with some practice. Effective communicators are happier, better students and are more successful! If you would like more information on effective communication skills, please visit <http://www.ArtOfEloquence.com> Christian FUNdamentals of speech and communication for all ages.*

#### *IF I HAD MY LIFE TO LIVE OVER - by Erma Bombeck*

*(Written after she found out she was dying from cancer.)*

*I would have gone to bed when I was sick instead of pretending the earth would go into a holding pattern if I weren't there for the day.*

*I would have burned the pink candle sculpted like a rose before it melted in storage.*

*I would have talked less and listened more.*

*I would have invited friends over to dinner even if the carpet was stained, or the sofa faded.*

*I would have eaten the popcorn in the 'good' living room and worried much less about the dirt when someone wanted to light a fire in the fireplace.*

*I would have taken the time to listen to my grandfather ramble about his youth.*

*I would have shared more of the responsibility carried by my husband.*

*I would never have insisted the car windows be rolled up on a summer day because my hair had just been teased and sprayed.*

*I would have sat on the lawn with my grass stains.*

*I would have cried and laughed less while watching television and more while watching life.*

*I would never have bought anything just because it was practical, wouldn't show soil, or was guaranteed to last a lifetime.*

*Instead of wishing away nine months of pregnancy, I'd have cherished every moment and realized that the wonderment growing inside me was the only chance in life to assist God in a miracle.*

*When my kids kissed me impetuously, I would never have said, "Later. Now go get washed up for dinner." There would have been more "I love you's." More "I'm sorry's."*

*But mostly, given another shot at life, I would seize every minute...look at it and really see it .. live it and never give it back. Stop sweating the small stuff.*

*Don't worry about who doesn't like you, who has more, or who's doing what.*

*Instead, let's cherish the relationships we have with those who do love us.*

*Let's think about what God HAS blessed us with. And what we are doing each day to promote ourselves mentally, physically, emotionally. I hope you all have a blessed day.*

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## Last Minute Gift Packaging Idea for the Holidays or All Year Long

Items you need: Tissue paper, fabric ribbon at least 2" wide (wired is easiest) for the season or occasion, and plain white gift boxes or those really inexpensive all-in-one boxes that fold flat. With my gift basket business, I normally have these things on hand, but they can all be purchased in one quick trip to a discount store and you can store them in a closet until they are needed.

Open the box. With the tissue paper you can either make a "nest" inside for the gift, or if the gift is just the right size for the box you can lay the tissue paper in the box with the excess laying on the table, place the gift on the tissue paper, and then neatly fold the tissue paper over the top. If the gift is a homemade food item, you can put it in a zip top plastic bag before placing it in the box.

Close the box with either the separate cover or the attached lid. Put a little bit of tape on to keep it closed up.

Next, take the ribbon that you have chosen for the holiday or event, lay it across the top, go down underneath, crisscross and come back up on top, tie it like a shoelace, and trim the ends at a nice length. If you are really handy, you can always hot glue a flower on the bow or make it fancy in some other way.

If you want to do a really big gift, you can take between 3 to 5 boxes, starting with the largest on the bottom and graduating the size to the smallest on the top. They like to shift around a little bit, so you might need to use tape to hold them together (make sure when you tape them together that the tape is under where the ribbon will go), but then wrap them all the same way, starting at the top, go over the whole stack all the way down, crisscross underneath and then all the way up to the top and tie it off with a bow. Wide wired ribbon works really great for these tall stacks.

The neat thing about this is that you don't have to invest in expensive gift boxes or ribbon or tissue or even wrapping paper – But when it's all wrapped up, it looks wonderful!

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Angie Romick is currently the owner and designer of Gift Basket Delights, a gift basket and candy bouquet business which she began in February 2003. Her designs have been featured in Gift Basket Digest Authorities, an on-line trade magazine. Angie specializes in personalized gift baskets and candy bouquets, which feature unique keepsake items and premium gourmet and bath and body products. You can find her products at [www.giftbasketdelights.net](http://www.giftbasketdelights.net) or call 763-862-0827.

## The busy holiday shopping season is coming up. How can we keep our kids safe when out in the crowds?

The 5 tips below from [www.MyPreciousKid.com](http://www.MyPreciousKid.com) can help.

1. Have each child (ages 0-18) wear a physical ID at all times. The ID can be a shoe ID tag or sticker, ID bracelet or ID scope jewelry.
2. Play the "What if..." game with your children. If you ask my toddler, "What if Mommy gets lost?" (they never think they are lost) she will tell you, "Find another mommy, take off my shoe (or bracelet or scope) and ask the mommy to call you!"
3. Make a game of remembering what color each of you is wearing. If you are at a large event, wear matching T- shirts to help identify your group.
4. Have a plan: If we get separated, stay where you are, and Mommy will find you. If you are scared, ask another mommy to stay with you and call me.
5. Have a photo ID of each child in your wallet. In case of separation, you have a photo and description to help others looking for the child. Each adult with the group needs these.

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<http://www.womans-net.com/> Tell us Organizing Round-Up sent you.

While the main focus of this newsletter is to simplify your life and make time for what matters most, it also offers a lot of information that's sure to help you in one area of your life or another.

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So much is happening at The Busy Woman, Inc! Our CAR & HOME Organizers have been featured in Parenting, Good Housekeeping, & Real Simple Magazines, San Antonio Living, CBS Early Show and so many more... all telling others to go to:

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